



# Wyndham Youth Spaces Report

Binarri-binyja yarrowoo Aboriginal Corporation

8 June 2023



**Nous Group** acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, who maintain their culture, country and spiritual connection to the land, sea and community.

This artwork was developed by Marcus Lee Design to reflect Nous Group's Reconciliation Action Plan and our aspirations for respectful and productive engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

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# 1 Executive summary

Across the Kimberley, persistent and complex challenges faced by young people has underlined a need for government and supporting organisations to shift their approach to how they deliver services and support young people, families, and communities.<sup>1</sup> In Wyndham, while poorer health and social outcomes when compared to the general population remain a challenge, particularly for young Aboriginal people, supporting the wellbeing of young people requires deep understanding of place, and the aspirations and priorities of young people living and growing up there.

BBY as the backbone organisation for Empowered Communities East Kimberley (ECEK) has facilitated joint decision making with the Wyndham community to identify local priorities as part of a wider Regional Development Agenda. This project and summary report has been developed in response to a priority initiative in the sub-regional plan, focussed on the safety and wellbeing of young people:

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## Wyndham sub-regional plan, priority five

Youth justice services | Additional support for service providers to continue delivering the youth night patrol, explore a youth safehouse, and generally achieve more consistent service delivery.

A clear imperative has emerged for government at all levels to support locally-led decision making and community co-design of place-based solutions – to empower local communities to collaboratively build long term approaches that meet their needs. This report synthesises further insight from young people, community members and service providers based in Wyndham about what is required to ensure young people in Wyndham are safe and supported to build momentum towards implementation of priority five.

Nous Group (Nous) was appointed by BBY to undertake the community consultation, research, and deliver a summary report to be used by BBY in further decision and potential future funding in partnership with the Wyndham community. The scope of this work was to:

- **Support a locally-led approach to the youth spaces initiative:** to work alongside key organisations in Wyndham to engage with young people and community in a place-based solution(s).
- **Build out identified initiatives with relevant best practice:** understand and leverage best practice approaches to develop initiative(s) that improve youth wellbeing and safety.
- **Ensure connection to the broader support services system:** examine the existing service system through an inclusive engagement methodology to identify opportunities for improvement.
- **Build capacity and capability of Wyndham-based ACCOs and other forums:** develop and follow a co-design methodology with local organisations to empower the community with the skills to undertake similar design work in future.

Insights from consultation in Wyndham highlighted that supporting youth safety and developing ‘safe spaces’ would need to occur across different contexts for young people in Wyndham:

- **Further supporting and uplifting those who support young people** – working in partnership with families and services to equip them with the skills and supports they need to help their young people.
- **Creating space and pathways for young people’s interests and aspirations** – building on young people’s aspirations and economic opportunities through training, skills development, events and role modelling.

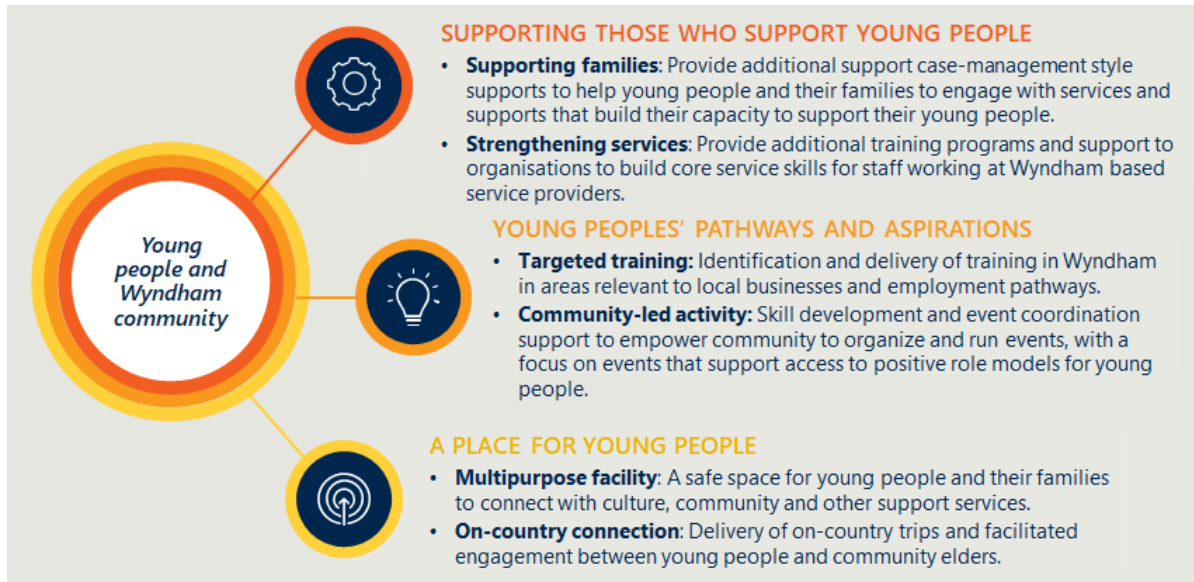
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<sup>1</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Regional Plan 2021 to 2025. Accessed from: [here](#)

- **Expanding a definition of what it means to be in a safe place** – creation of a designated space where young people and other community members can connect to culture, support, and each other, and increasing young peoples’ opportunities to connect with culture and country.

As a result, six interrelated initiatives were identified and developed through consultation that are intended to collectively support better outcomes for young people in Wyndham, set out in Figure 8 below, with further detail on each initiative included in the report.

Figure 1 | Summary of youth spaces initiatives



In implementation of these initiatives, consultation highlighted that:

- Building local capacity and support in the long term is a priority – to reduce reliance on Drive-in Drive-out (DIDO) services and create greater economic pathways within Wyndham.
- Stronger collaboration and partnership are required between local service providers, as well as partners located in Kununurra - to realise the aspiration shared by many members of the community – the initiatives have been designed to be organisationally agnostic.
- Wyndham mob needs to continue to drive these initiatives forward - realisation of these initiatives will require ongoing partnership and leadership within Wyndham, including for the detailed design of initiatives.

The six initiatives support of a staged implementation approach that allows resources to be appropriately targeted and distributed. This approach enables more timely initiatives to be prioritised and delivered sooner, while longer term planning occurs for larger investments. As a result of a broader set of requirements being presented by community, there is some further work across initiatives to develop detailed design and costings for future funding.

## 2 Overview

### **There is a clear imperative to address entrenched community challenges with locally-led decision making and place-based solutions**

In Western Australia (WA) our unique geography, as well as the complex past of Australia and its treatment of Aboriginal peoples, including the ongoing impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma, and continued marginalisation of Aboriginal peoples across WA, are all contributing factors to the current day challenges facing many communities in the north-west of WA.<sup>2</sup> These persistent challenges all have a sizeable influence on the development, safety and integration of young people in communities like Wyndham, where over time, closure of nearby remote communities, reduction in locally provided services and deteriorating local infrastructure and economic opportunity is impacting life and opportunities for young people living and growing in this community. More broadly across the Kimberley (including Wyndham), persistent and complex challenges faced by young people has underlined a need for government and supporting organisations to shift their approach to how they deliver services and support young people, families, and communities.<sup>3</sup>

In response to this, a clear imperative has emerged for government at all levels to support locally-led decision making and community co-design of place-based solutions – to empower local communities to collaboratively build long term approaches that meet their needs. The Commonwealth and WA State Governments have publicly committed to this approach through commitments set out in Closing the Gap principles and targets and in the WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy. Similarly, the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy (KJJS) exists as an initiative led by the WA Department of Justice (DOJ) to develop solutions for young people that are informed by culture and led by Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs).

This approach recognises the connection to community and culture at the core of youth and family wellbeing for many of WA's regional populations, particularly Aboriginal communities. Successful implementation of this approach requires:

- New governance mechanisms that empower community organisations.
- Support for community leadership by building capacity and capability.
- Defining clear priorities and connect these with financial and non-financial resources.

### **Empowered Communities East Kimberley is a critical mechanism to realising and achieving locally-led decision making and implementation**

Empowered Communities<sup>4</sup> – a national policy reform agenda focused on facilitating place-based development and productivity in regions across Australia – is a key mechanism for pursuing place-based and locally-led decision making. It aims to empower Aboriginal communities by providing greater influence over the decisions that impact their region.

Binarri-binyja yarrowoo Aboriginal Corporation (BBY) is the backbone organisation that supports the implementation of the Empowered Communities model in the East Kimberley. It performs key secretariat functions to facilitate joint action and improve the service system by reducing overlap, improving

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<sup>2</sup> Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet (2019), Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>3</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Regional Plan 2021 to 2025. Accessed from: [here](#)

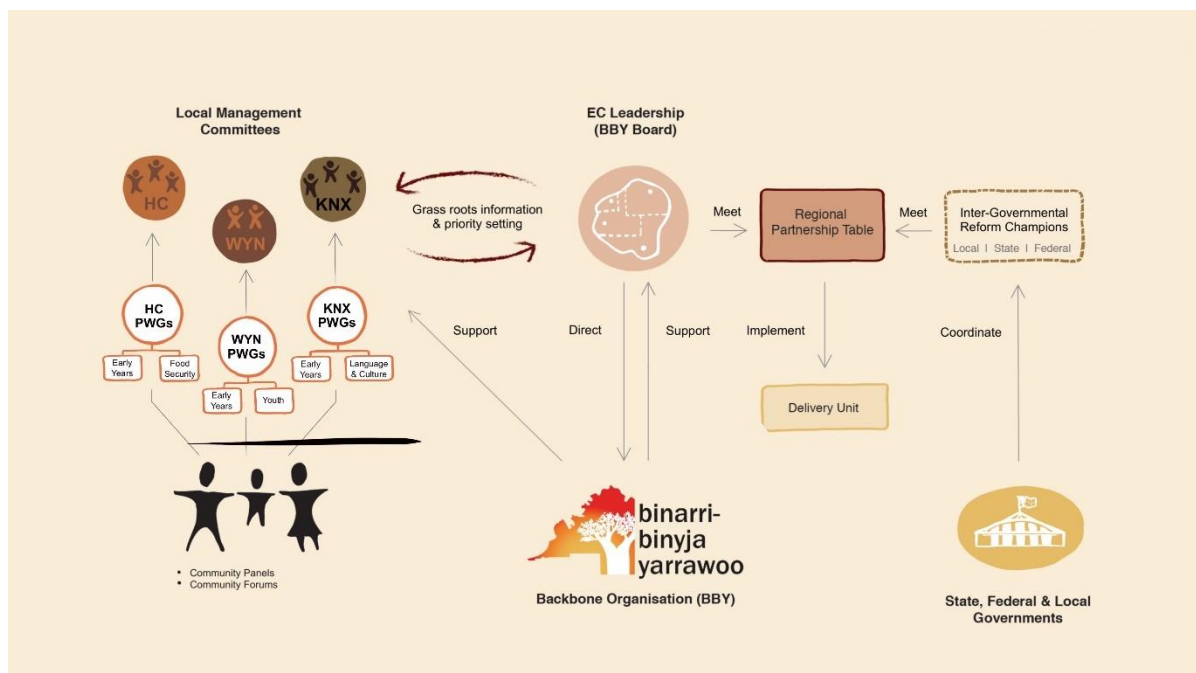
<sup>4</sup> Empowered Communities reform is available on an opt-in basis and currently operates in 10 Australian regions, including the East and West Kimberley.

accountability, and supporting funding outcomes. Empowered Communities East Kimberley (ECEK) has twenty members, and its governance structure is set out in Figure 2 below.

At the core of BBY and ECEK's role is to support joint local decision making through the Regional Development Agenda (RDA).<sup>5</sup> The RDA identifies a set of priority initiatives and reforms for partners to co-design and collectively deliver. This occurs through the development of sub-regional plans that highlight the priority initiatives for each of the major communities in the East Kimberley.

Operating alongside ECEK is an emerging role for youth leadership through the Empowered Young Leaders (EYL) initiative. The EYL initiative is a representative body of young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley that provides a forum for local youth to engage with government and become involved in the design and implementation of services. The continued emergence of this forum reflects the strong appetite among the community to uplift and support young people in the region.

Figure 2 | Empowered Communities East Kimberley governance structure<sup>6</sup>



### Wyndham sub-regional plan, priority five

Youth justice services | Additional support for service providers to continue delivering the youth night patrol, explore a youth safehouse, and generally achieve more consistent service delivery.

### Local decision making has helped identify community-led priorities for Wyndham, with a clear focus on young people and safe spaces

Wyndham has two priority working groups, focussed on early years children, and youth development and safety. The sub-regional plan has identified nine priority initiatives. This project has focussed on developing further detail on priority five of the Wyndham sub-regional plan,<sup>7</sup> which reflect a direct community response to the findings of government inquiries including the

<sup>5</sup> Empowered Communities East Kimberley (2021), Regional Development Agenda. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>6</sup> Graphic supplied by BBY.

<sup>7</sup> Other key priority initiatives in the plan that were directly raised through this project and consultation process include: Connection to Country: development of a coordinated approach to delivery of on-country trips with additional emphasis on involving families and other role models; Enterprise and employment: partnerships with employers and service providers to strengthen work experience and career assistance options for women and youth and; Multipurpose resources centre: an initiative to scope feasibility of developing a central location for youth and families to access clinical support, visiting services, and cultural programs.

Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Trial, and the WA State Coroner's Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley region (referred to as "the State Coroner's Inquest").<sup>8</sup> Further detail on other relevant government policies and approaches is included in Appendix B.

### **This report presents the consolidated insights and next steps for youth spaces initiatives, developed by the Wyndham community and their partners**

Nous Group (Nous) was engaged by BBY to undertake the community consultation, research and deliver a summary report to be used by BBY in further decision and potential future funding in partnership with the Wyndham community. The scope of this work was to:

- **Support a locally-led approach to the youth spaces initiative:** to work alongside key organisations in Wyndham to engage with young people and community in a place-based solution(s).
- **Build out identified initiatives with relevant best practice:** understand and leverage best practice approaches to develop initiative(s) that improve youth wellbeing and safety.
- **Ensure connection to the broader support services system:** examine the existing service system through an inclusive engagement methodology to identify opportunities for improvement.
- **Build capacity and capability of Wyndham-based ACCOs and other forums:** develop and follow a co-design methodology with local organisations including WYAC, NAAC and EYL, to empower the community with the skills to undertake similar design work in future.

This report outlines:

- **The experience of young people in Wyndham:** the context of Wyndham, including what young people love and worry about Wyndham.
- **A focus for future investment:** an overview of the required inputs and intended outcomes of the key initiatives identified by the Wyndham community.
- **Priority initiatives for young people in Wyndham:** a detailed description of each initiative, including its objectives, resourcing requirements, and partnerships with other services.
- **Service system considerations and improvements:** recommendations for improving the system of existing services in Wyndham and integrating the six initiatives with what already exists.

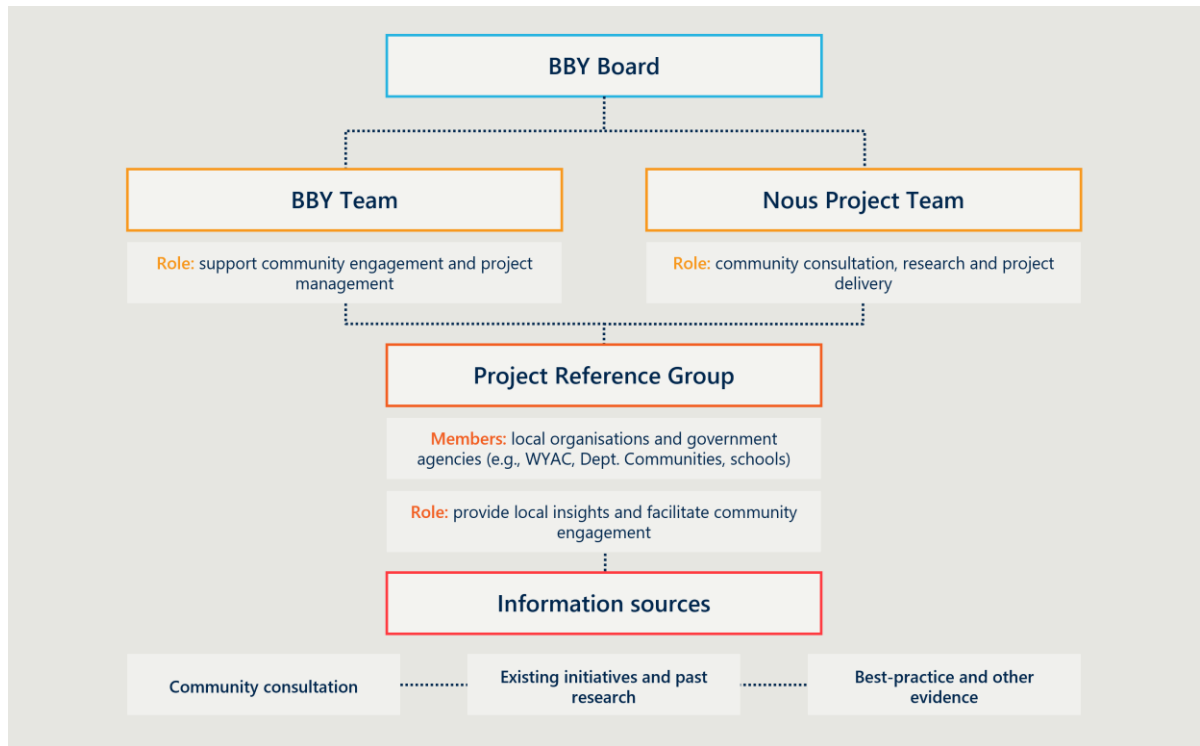
This work was supported by a grant received from the WA Department of Premier and Cabinet through the Kimberley Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Steering Committee. The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in this work is outlined in Figure 3 below, with additional detail regarding the Project Reference Group (PRG) and stakeholder engagement approach provided in the Appendix A.

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<sup>8</sup> Government of Western Australia, Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley region, Western Australia. Perth: Coroner's Court of Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#).



Figure 3 | Wyndham Youth Spaces project



### 3 Experiences of young people in Wyndham

#### Wyndham is an old town with a strong connection to culture, but is constrained by its small population

Wyndham is the oldest and northernmost town in the Kimberley region. The town had a population of 941 during the 2021 census, with more than half of those identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>9</sup> Wyndham, Kalumburu, and the former remote community of Oombulgurri are the traditional lands of the Balanggarra peoples, whose native title is administered by the Balanggarra Aboriginal Corporation (BAC). Wyndham is a small but unique town, with a strong sense of community and strong, local families who have a deep connection to their diverse cultural identity.

In recent decades, Wyndham has experienced significant shifts in its business and service provider landscape. Many employers and services experienced considerable financial and organisational pressures related to navigating operations in a remote community with a small population. Organisations that historically had a local presence (such as Department of Communities, Department of Justice) have since left the community, with many providers now operating from 100 kilometres away in Kununurra and providing services to Wyndham on a drive-in drive-out (DIDO) basis. This has been particularly disruptive to the local service system and left gaps in the availability of services for young people particularly.

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*“Wyndham is a bit of a sleepy town... you only drive by if you're coming here.”*

- Wyndham community member

#### A unique context means there are different wellbeing considerations for young people in Wyndham

Wyndham's history, culture, and economy all contribute to its unique context and challenges. While youth mental health and substance abuse are issues in Wyndham as with other parts of the Kimberley, other social challenges are less severe. For example, the community noted through consultations that public youth crime and antisocial behaviour is not as present in Wyndham as elsewhere. In other parts of the East Kimberley, 'street roaming' and youth justice have reached crisis points, forcing local governments to adopt non-traditional tactics.<sup>10,11,12</sup>

This unique context and its presentation in statistics is inextricably tied to the social and economic

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*“It's pretty rare to have kids wandering around late at night...”*

- Wyndham community member

influences experienced by people in Wyndham. Stakeholders noted in consultation that contextual differences mean the local community has a different set of priorities to other parts of the East Kimberley in considering the social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) of youth and community. This theme featured prominently throughout conversations in Wyndham, with a summary of the factors influencing wellbeing shown in Figure 4. Those that were highlighted as being unique to Wyndham include:

- **Closure of remote communities:** the closure of Oombulgurri resulted in its residents moving to Wyndham and other nearby towns. Members of the community continue to suffer from this trauma long after the closure.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wyndham (WA) 2021 Census All persons. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>10</sup> ABC (2023), Youth crime crisis meeting in Kununurra calls for funding, accountability for agencies, programs. Accessed from: [here](#).

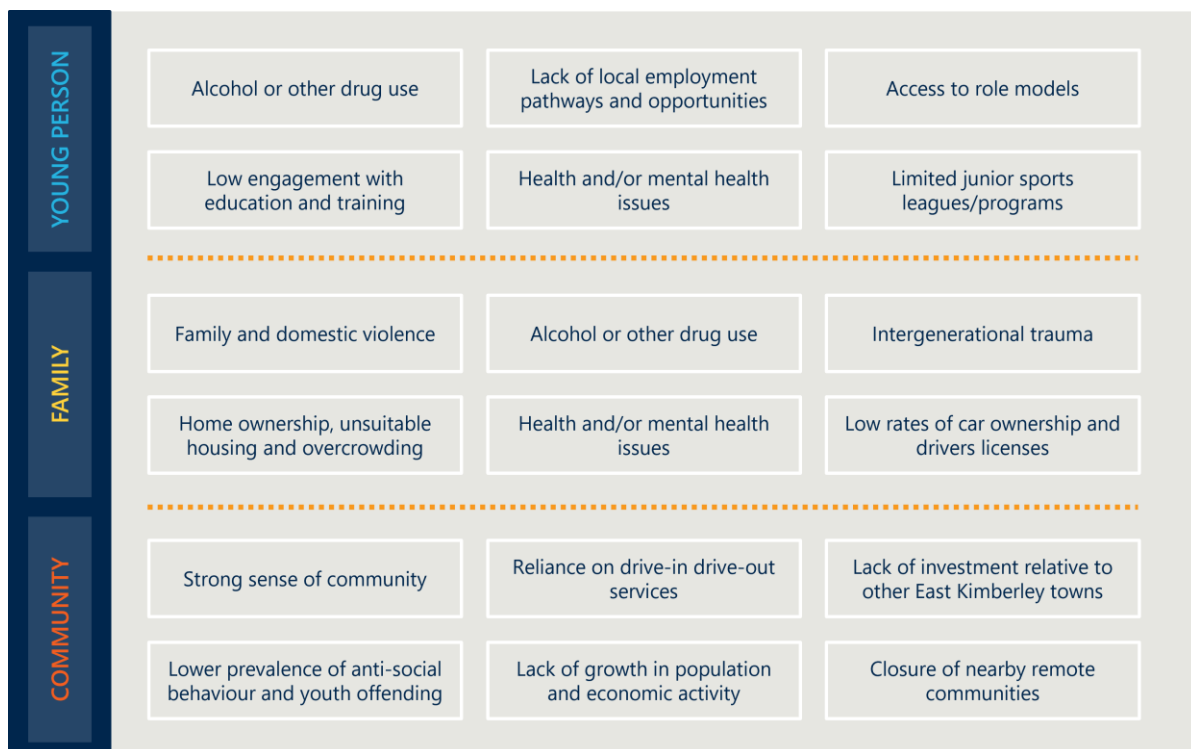
<sup>11</sup> ABC (2022), Hoon zone for stolen cars in Halls Creek. Accessed from: [here](#)

<sup>12</sup> ABC (2022), Kimberley council to install trees, boulders to help stop police chases in Kununurra. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>13</sup> The Guardian (2014), The trauma of Oombulgurri's demolition will be repeated across Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#)

- **Low rates of access to motor transport:** one in five (20.6%) households in Wyndham have no access to a motor vehicle, compared to 14.3% in Broome, and a state average of less than 5% (4.9%). Lack of transportation has several impacts on family wellbeing and creates a tangible barrier to accessing non-local services and to going on-country to experience culture.
- **Overcrowded and inadequate housing:** the availability of safe and adequate housing has a significant impact on health and economic outcomes. Research in Wyndham reveals more than a third of households (34.6%) are considered overcrowded, with many also having structural issues.<sup>14</sup> Almost 20% of private dwellings are unoccupied, resulting in a higher persons per bedroom for Wyndham than other parts of WA.<sup>15,16</sup>
- **Lack of investment and stagnant economic output:** the Wyndham community feels the strong lack of social investment in recent years, as the local economy and population has stagnated. The gross regional product of the Wyndham-East Kimberley local government area (LGA – includes Kununurra) was \$778 million in 2019, down from \$930 million in 2014.<sup>17</sup>
- **Strong sense of community:** despite these challenges, there is a strong and resilient sense of community among the Wyndham population. local youth, families, and service providers all emphasised the imperative to build on the existence of strong local families and community leaders to improve the wellbeing and integration of young people.

Figure 4 | Factors influencing the wellbeing of young people and the community in Wyndham



<sup>14</sup> Ngnowar Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation (2022), Wyndham Housing Snapshot – Sept 2022. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>15</sup> Average persons per bedroom is 1.0 for all of Wyndham, and 1.2 for households with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. This compares to a WA state average of 0.8.

<sup>16</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wyndham (WA) 2021 Census All persons. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>17</sup> Kimberley Development Commission, Economic Activity. Accessed from: [here](#).

## Poorer health and social outcomes remain a challenge in Wyndham, but high youth engagement creates opportunities to improve the service system<sup>18</sup>

More than a third of Wyndham's population is aged 25 years or younger, with a median age of 36 years old.<sup>19</sup> The local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is younger, with a median age of only 30 years old.<sup>20</sup> This trend is consistent with other parts of the Kimberley, where poor health outcomes and social determinants of health are considered partially responsible.<sup>21</sup> Critical health and social challenges in the Wyndham-East Kimberley local government area (LGA) include:<sup>22</sup>

- **The prevalence of youth mental health challenges:** the WA Government's 12 commitments to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing were in direct response to the State Coroner's Inquest into youth suicides in the Kimberley. Rates of mental health related hospitalisations for 10–24-year-olds in Wyndham-East Kimberley are more than three times the WA state average.
- **Alcohol and substance use among adults and youth:** alcohol and other drugs (AOD) have a devastating impact on the wellbeing and development of young people through multiple mechanisms. The State Coroner's Inquest found sufficient information to suggest that some young people may have been affected by Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Consultation in Wyndham also reiterated the impact of alcohol use among families and youth themselves. Hospitalisations of 15–24-year-olds related to alcohol or other substances occur at approximately 300 per 10,000 persons in Wyndham-East Kimberley.
- **Antisocial and offending behaviour among youths:** the prevalence of public youth crime and other antisocial behaviour is an ongoing challenge for communities in the Kimberley. Rates of juvenile offences (aged 10-24) are more than seven times the state average across the Wyndham-East Kimberley LGA that includes Wyndham, Kununurra, and Kalumburu.
- **Difficulty in engaging youth with education, training, and employment:** engagement with schooling is particularly low for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Wyndham-East Kimberley, with attendance rates of 63.3%. Engagement with education through early development, primary and secondary schooling is at least partially related to high rates of developmental vulnerability, and low rates of educational attainment at year 12 or above.

Despite these similar challenges, the Wyndham community consistently described how the needs of their young people are different to other parts of the Kimberley. Young people and their families particularly noted the presence of existing support mechanisms and the strength of family and community ties. Many of these differences were noted in the context of opportunities to further support young people in Wyndham, including:

- **Higher youth engagement and employment in Wyndham:** Wyndham-based organisations emphasise the importance of local hiring as a mechanism to supporting community wellbeing, with WYAC and NAAC two of the largest employers in town. This is reflected in 14% of youth (aged 15-24) being unemployed in Wyndham-East Kimberley, compared to almost 25% in Derby-West Kimberley. Service provider staff expressed the need for additional supports to enable these organisations to attract, retain and develop the skills of young employees.
- **Ongoing work to improve engagement with school:** while low relative to WA state averages, school attendance rates are higher in Wyndham-East Kimberley than nearby LGAs like Derby-West Kimberley.

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<sup>18</sup> Note: statistics related to youth justice, development, and health outcomes are available only for the Wyndham-East Kimberley local government area. This includes Kununurra.

<sup>19</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wyndham (WA) 2021 Census All persons. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>20</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Wyndham (WA) 2021 Census Community Profiles. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>21</sup> Government of Western Australia, Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley region, Western Australia. Perth: Coroner's Court of Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>22</sup> Data reflected was accessed from the Child Development Atlas, unless otherwise stated. Accessed from: [here](#).

Community consultation highlighted the ongoing efforts of local school staff to improve how youth engage with their education, noting opportunities for initiatives to build on this existing work.

- **Lower rates of total crime:** the prevalence of youth and adult crime is not evenly distributed across Wyndham-East Kimberley. In 2021, there was approximately 0.3 criminal offences per person in the town of Wyndham, compared to 0.5 in Kununurra.<sup>23</sup> While this data does not distinguish youth and adult crime, this aligns with themes of community consultation where stakeholders noted lower rates of offending behaviour among youth. This further reinforces the need for different support mechanisms in Wyndham, with an imperative to prioritise safety and development over justice interventions.

## Local young people have broad aspirations but a consistently deep appreciation for their connection to family and culture

The strength of connection to family and culture is a significant determinant of social and emotional wellbeing, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>24</sup> Wyndham is a small, but culturally rich community, with strong families and respected elders. Many of the Wyndham youth consulted through this work expressed the personal importance of family and culture, noting these as some of their most loved aspects of living in Wyndham. When asked what they love about Wyndham and what they dream for the future, young people described:

- **Family and culture:** many of the young people engaged at the local schools and in the community talked openly about their family and cultural connection. Common responses to being asked about favourite activities included on-country trips, camping, hunting, and learning how to cook bush food. Others mentioned their family and noted how they enjoyed learning and telling stories, particularly with grandparents and family elders.
- **Outdoor activities:** other outdoor activities, particularly sports, also featured prominently in young people's responses to what they loved about Wyndham. Several young people mentioned the iconic Bastion and Five Rivers Lookout as somewhere they love to go and get fresh air or clear their mind. All stakeholder groups noted how much local youths love BBQs, fishing, and swimming, noting the Wyndham Swimming Pool as a popular local facility.
- **Structured activities and the recreation centre:** the recreation centre was one of the most noteworthy themes when engaging with young people and other members of the community. The Ted Birch Memorial Youth and Recreation Centre (or the 'recreation centre') represents many things to local youths, hosting structured sports competitions and other activities like discos.
- **Goals and aspirations:** young people engaged through this project had strong and diverse aspirations for the future. Some had professional dreams of becoming a veterinarian or a lawyer, while others wanted to pursue interests in arts and dance. There was also diversity in where young people wanted



*"[What I love about Wyndham is the] opportunities to go out bush."*

- Student at Wyndham District High School

*"[What could be better in Wyndham is] more structured activities."*

- Student at St Joseph's Primary School

<sup>23</sup> Western Australia Police Force, Crime Statistics (2021). Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>24</sup> Australian Government. National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

to live, with some dreaming of moving to Kununurra or other parts of WA, while others were happy to remain in Wyndham with their family and community.

Figure 5 | Consultation with students at Wyndham District High School – Importance of time spent learning from family



### Families and young people feel a lack of investment signals that Wyndham has been forgotten by policymakers

Young people in Wyndham have broad dreams and aspirations that their families and the local community wish to support. However, many stakeholders noted that certain aspects of Wyndham need to be improved to properly enable youth to pursue these dreams and passions. When asked about their concerns and what could be better, young people and other stakeholders raised concerns including:

- **Lack of job opportunities and a clear sense of available pathways:** young people and service providers noted how recent decades has left few employers in town for those who wish to stay. Businesses like petrol stations have closed, and the local bakery was almost shuttered before locating a last-minute buyer. Service provider staff noted that the lack of visible opportunities further exacerbates the challenge in engaging youth with education and schooling.
- **An underinvestment in key facilities relative to other towns:** some stakeholders expressed feeling as though the lack of investment in facilities and infrastructure signalled Wyndham was being forgotten. Young people often drew comparisons between facilities like the Wyndham swimming pool with the equivalent in Kununurra. A particularly common theme was the lack of facilities designed to provide a safe space for older youths and those who have alternative hobbies beyond sport.

- **Limited access and coordination in key services:** some families and service provider staff noted the insufficient coordination in how supports are delivered to young people in Wyndham. The main challenge described was a poor integration and connection of Wyndham-based services with the broader Wyndham-East Kimberley service system. Examples were provided of DIDO services that visit once a fortnight or once a month, but often need to cancel on the day, and fail to reschedule. This has a significant impact on service access for the local community, given Wyndham’s size and reliance on visiting services.
- **Access to substances and negative behaviours:** while not a major theme in consultations, some family members and service providers noted concerns related to the accessibility of alcohol and other vices. Of particular note was the recent re-introduction of cash following a trial of the cashless debit card, that was perceived to be facilitating greater prevalence of gambling and other negative activities.



*“[One of the challenges for young people in Wyndham is] the presence and connection with visiting services.”*

- Service provider

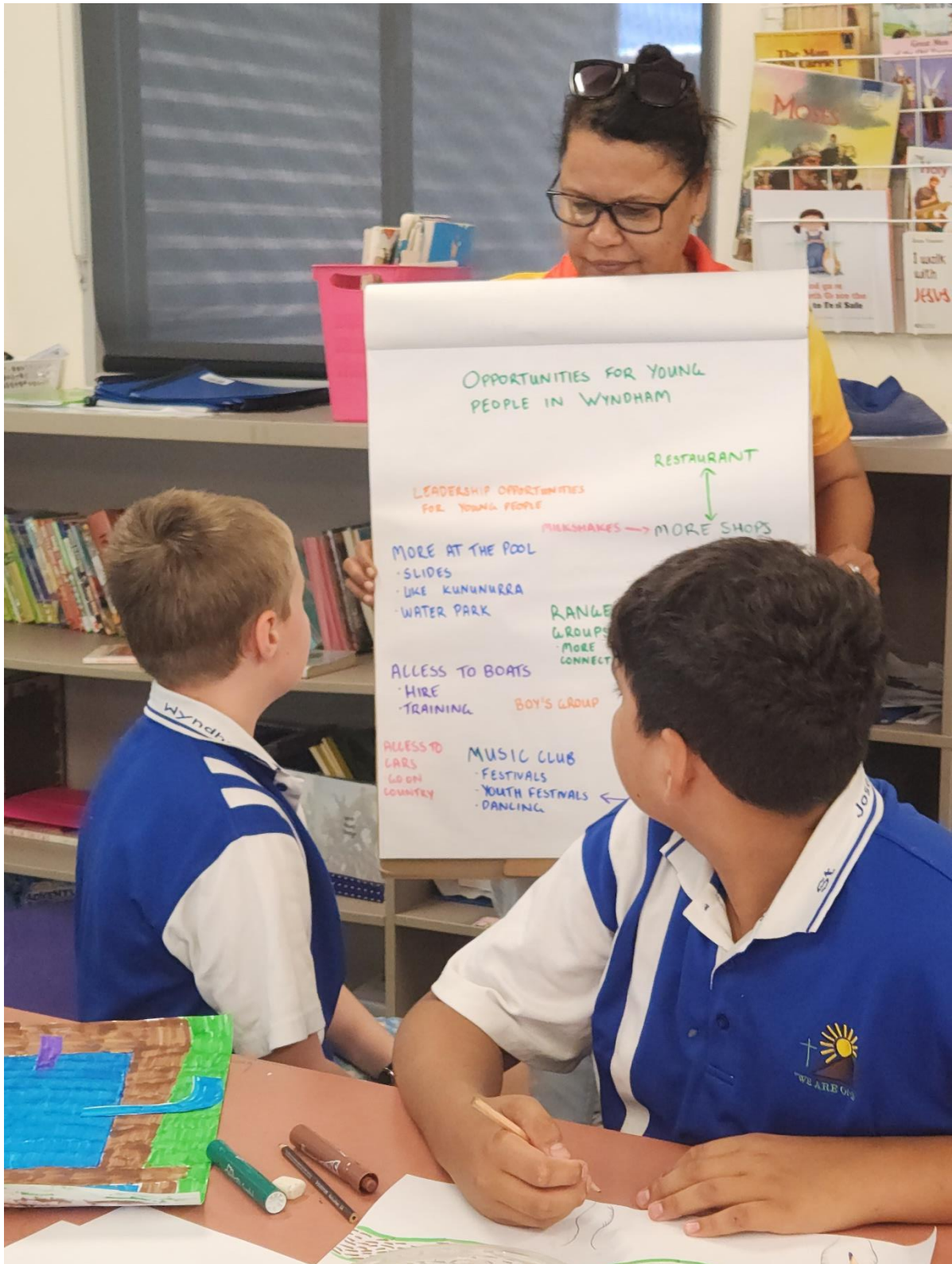
*“[One of the challenges for young people in Wyndham is] kids looking after themselves.”*

- Service provider

**Stakeholders identified several opportunities to address these concerns and build on what people love about Wyndham. These include:**

- More structured sports programs like junior sports leagues.
- Alternative activities like youth festivals, dance clubs, and sports carnivals.
- Opportunities to better connect with culture and community elders including through the availability of hire cars and through the Balangarra Rangers.
- More training and job opportunities delivered in Wyndham in areas like coaching, counselling, and food handling.
- New facilities and youth centres like an indoor sports court.
- Sharing of events and scholarship opportunities with Kununurra to bring engaging education programs like Follow the Dream to Wyndham.
- Improved family engagement in existing programs like the local Young People at Risk group.

Figure 6 | Consultation with students at St. Joseph's Primary School – Opportunities for young people in Wyndham

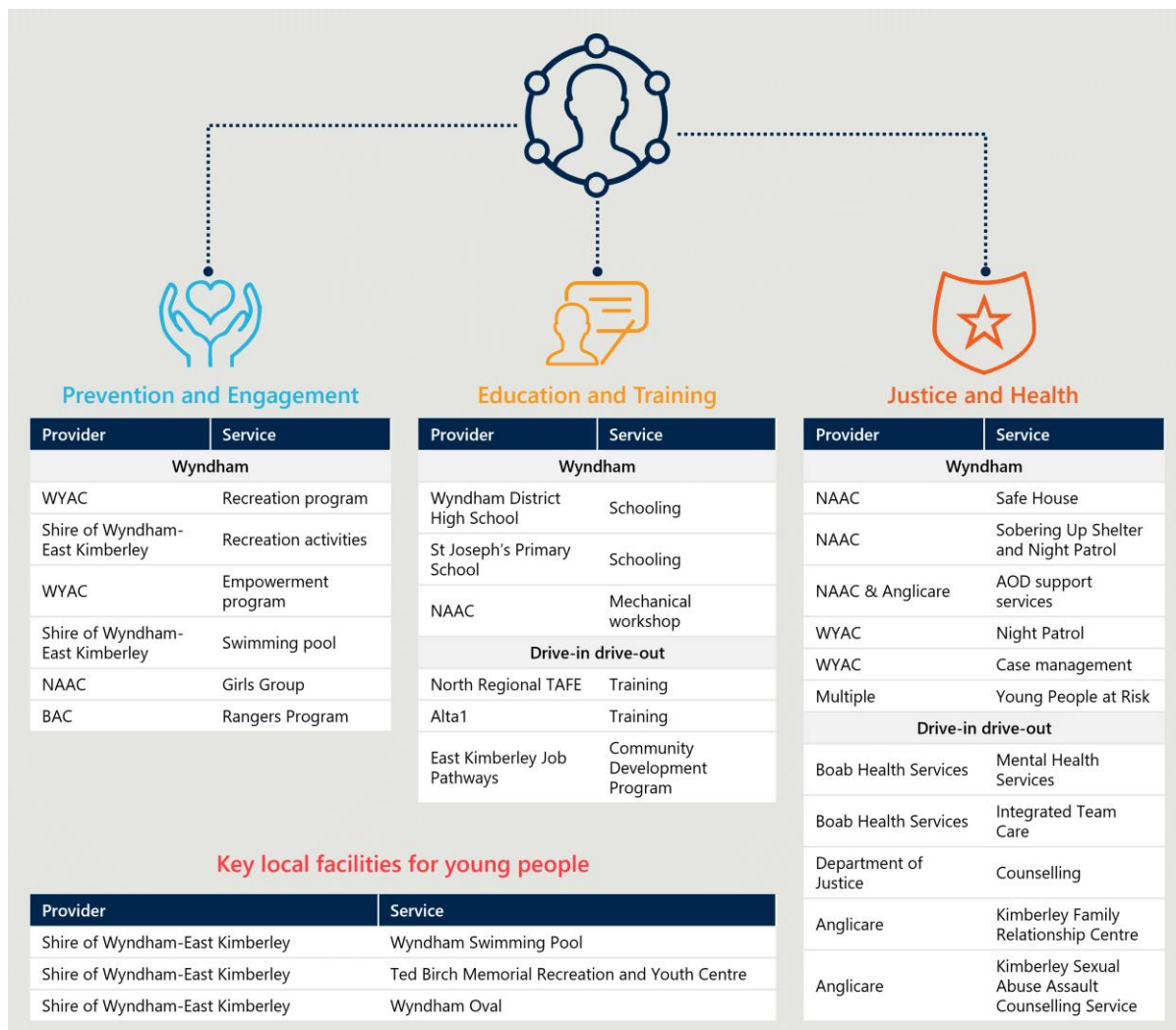




## Youth wellbeing in Wyndham relies on the work of a small number of local ACCOs, leaving gaps in the service system and creating a reliance on visiting services

While consultation with the Wyndham community identified opportunities to improve, many stakeholders expressed a positive view of the work local service providers are already doing to support young people. Two main ACCOs – WYAC and NAAC – provide most of the locally-based prevention, intervention, and engagement programs. Young people’s fondness of the recreation centre and associated activities is partly reflective of the work of WYAC and its programs, given it has historically used that location to deliver its services. However, meeting the complex needs of youth in Wyndham is challenging given the limited number of organisations and strained access to resources. Figure 7 presents an overview of the key services that are currently available for young people in Wyndham, separating programs by those provided locally and by organisations based in Kununurra and elsewhere.

Figure 7 | Overview of key services available for young people in Wyndham<sup>25</sup>



The data presented above further reinforces the perspective of community in highlighting the reliance on local ACCOs and visiting services. Based on these insights, the current service gaps in Wyndham appear to be:

<sup>25</sup> Presented based on data provided by BBY and supported by community consultation. This analysis may not be exhaustive.

- **Limited Wyndham-based family support and integration with the family unit:** service provider staff highlighted a lack of family-based support and prevention programs occurring locally in Wyndham. Stakeholders also noted that existing youth support mechanisms, including the Wyndham Young People at Risk group, have only limited engagement with the families of the youth referred to them. Greater participation of parents and other family members in youth activities was also a key theme in conversations with students at the primary and high schools.
- **Provision of structured engagement activities:** young people and service providers both expressed a desire for more structured recreation and engagement programs. The organisations in Wyndham are approaching capacity in their ability to offer additional programs, with current resources being stretched as far as possible.
- **Lack of a key youth facility or safe space, particularly for older youths:** service provider staff noted that existing facilities like the recreation centre are not well suited to older youths. Stakeholders also expressed a desire that prominent youth safe spaces are operated by, or with the support of, Wyndham-based organisations where feasible.

Consultation with service provider staff was also informative in understanding the unique service challenges associated with operations in Wyndham. These influence the efficacy and viability of local programs and include:

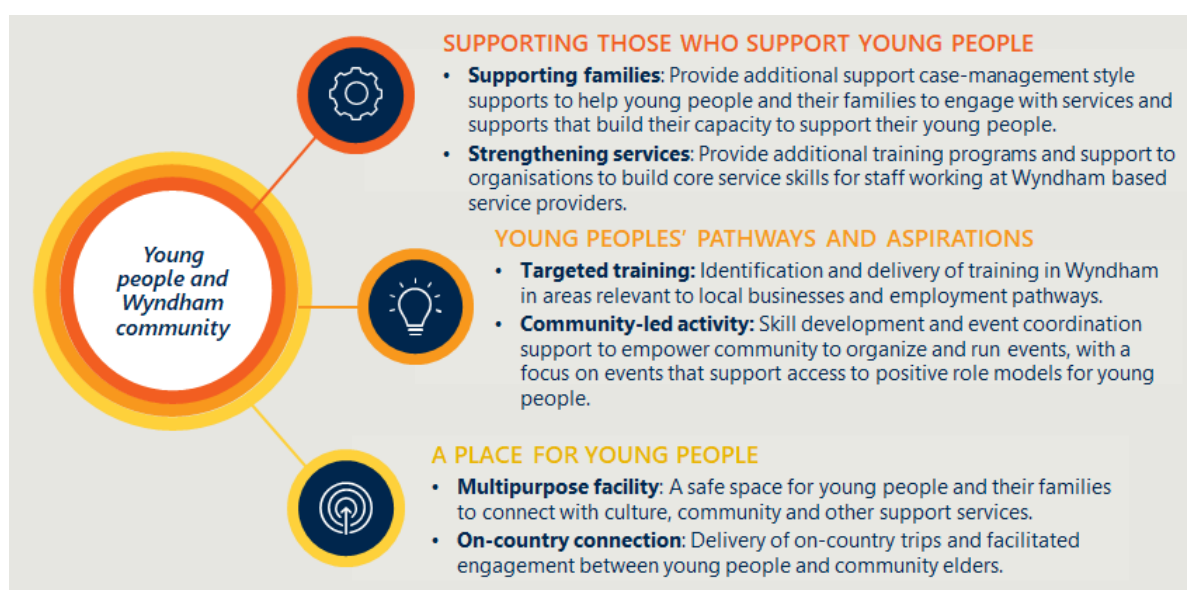
- Resource mechanisms that create funding competition among organisations and hinder the level of collaboration despite aligned goals.
- The nature of life in Wyndham, where young people often look after themselves and younger siblings, requiring providers to deliver programs that cater to a wide range of ages.
- Ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining staff with turnover at local ACCOs and the Wyndham Swimming Pool further straining the ability to provide enough well-designed programs and services.
- A perceived underinvestment of visiting services in developing relationships with the young people they support.
- A concentration of operational skills, with few staff members understanding the broader service system and/or having key capabilities like grant making and outcomes measurement.

## 4 A focus for future investment in outcomes

### This report outlines six community driven initiatives to support youth safe spaces and the holistic needs of young people in Wyndham

As outlined in Section 3, several complex and often unique factors influence the safety and wellbeing of youth and families in Wyndham. Recent community and government forums like the State Coroner's Inquest and the Wyndham sub-regional plan identify safe spaces as a priority solution to respond to these challenges. Similarly, one of 13 recommendations in the Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plan is to "Support Aboriginal Communities to access safe spaces to share stories and knowledge, and support community wellbeing."<sup>26</sup> Insights from consultation in Wyndham (see Appendix A for further details) highlighted that appropriately supporting youth safety and developing 'safe spaces' would need to occur in several forms. Young people and other community members noted that the context of life in Wyndham, as well as the generally unique psychological and social needs of young people, mean that multiple place-based initiatives may be more effective, than a single initiative delivered in isolation. As a result, six initiatives were identified and developed that are intended to collectively support better outcomes for young people in Wyndham, set out in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8 | Summary of youth spaces initiatives

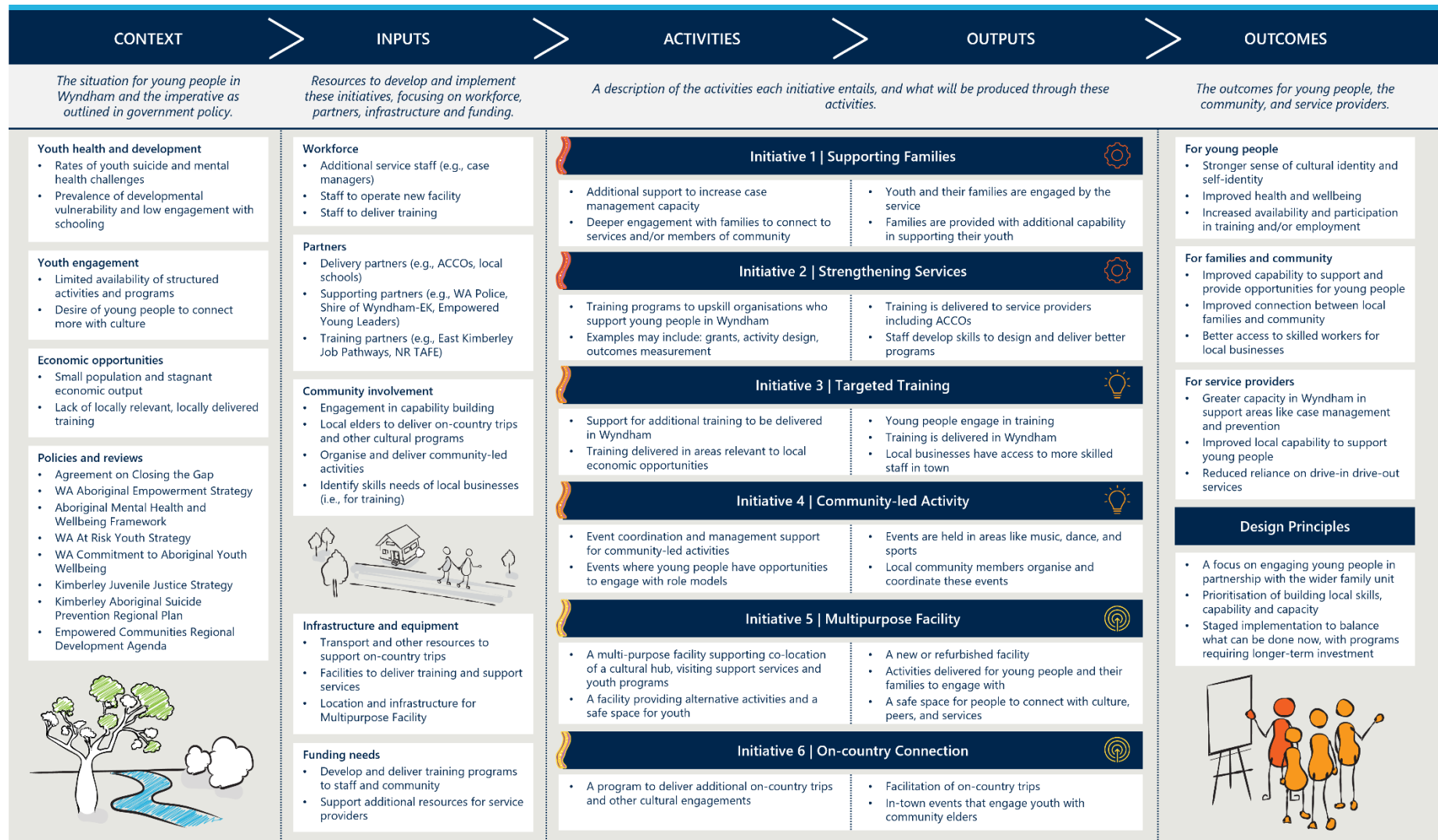


The six initiatives are also designed in support of a staged implementation approach (as outlined in Section 5.1) that allows resources to be appropriately targeted and distributed. This approach enables more timely initiatives to be prioritised and delivered sooner, while longer term planning occurs for larger investments. This also creates opportunities for local organisations to learn from one initiative to the next in refining the implementation approach for subsequent initiatives.

An overview of the key initiatives and their interactions is expressed overleaf in a program logic. Further detail on each of the initiatives is set out in Section 5.

<sup>26</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Regional Plan 2021 to 2025. Accessed from: [here](#).

Figure 9 | Program logic for Wyndham Youth Spaces initiatives

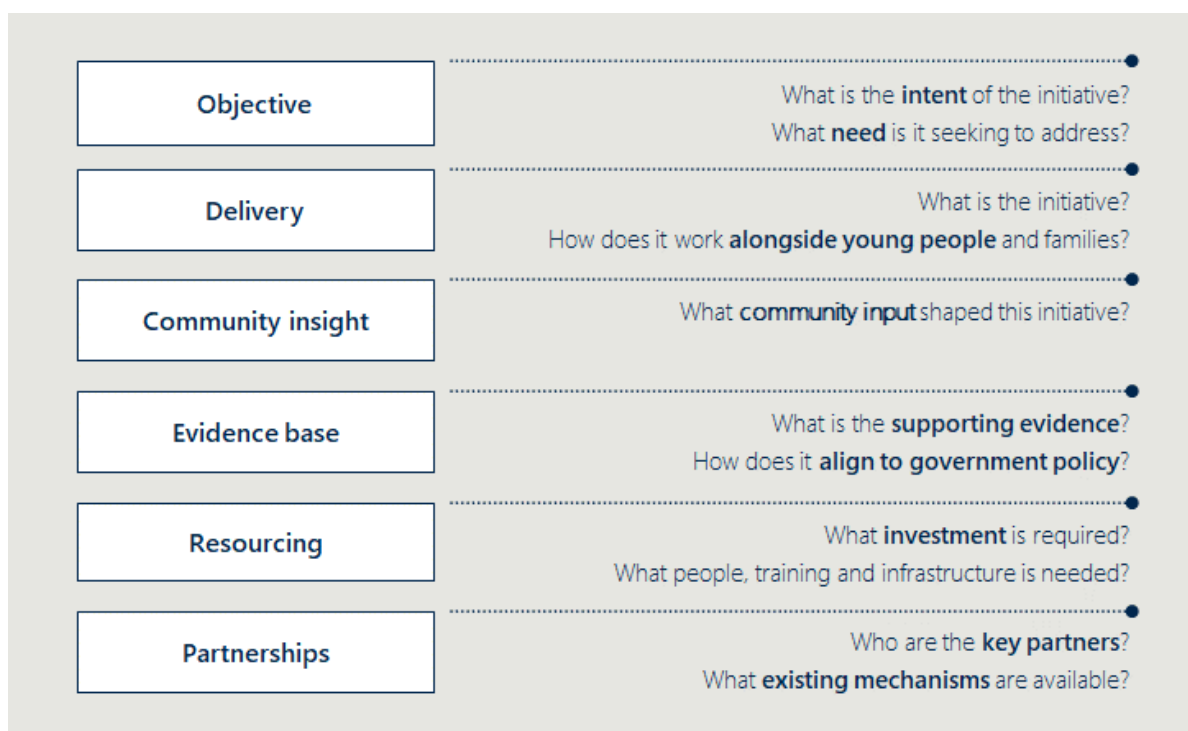


## 5 Priority initiatives for young people in Wyndham

A guiding framework (shown in Figure 10) was developed to ensure the consistent description of each initiative and will be followed in subsequent sections. For each initiative, this report covers:

- **Objective:** the specific challenge or objective being addressed by the initiative.
- **Delivery:** a detailed description of the initiative based on stakeholder input, including the activities involved and how those engage with young people and the community.
- **Evidence base:** the data in support of the initiative, including insights from consultation, alignment to government policy, and the existence of similar programs in the Kimberley and elsewhere.
- **Resourcing:** a high-level description of the people, training and infrastructure required.
- **Partnerships:** an outline of the key organisations and stakeholder groups, noting existing support mechanisms for this initiative to connect with and/or support.

Figure 10 | Guiding framework for initiative development



## INITIATIVE 1 | SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Provide additional support case-management style supports to help young people and their families to engage with services and supports that build their capacity to support their young people.



<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p>A supportive family environment plays a critical role in the context of the wellbeing and development of a young person. While externally provided programs and services are important, their efficacy can either be amplified or limited by what occurs in private settings at home and in the community. The Supporting Families initiative is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the case management style capacity in Wyndham that helps direct youth and families to available support systems, as well as targeted advice and guidance. By providing additional resources to case management supports, organisations in Wyndham will be better equipped to connect youth with clinical and community-based supports.</li> <li>• Engage families in decision-making and support processes to encourage accountability. Involving caregivers and family members through the support process will help ensure a level of understanding and ownership is developed and maintained in relation to the development of the young person involved.</li> <li>• Build the capability and capacity of the family unit that surrounds a young person. Providing family members with new skills and knowledge will better prepare them to support the young people in their lives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery</b></p>	<p>The Supporting Families initiative will provide additional support to increase the case management capacity in Wyndham. It aims to build on existing case management style services available in Wyndham and increase the capacity of a number of local services with existing relationships with local families to engage and connect them to a range of services directly. The initiative seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the case management capacity in Wyndham by providing additional resources to multiple services to facilitate this service and provide choice to families.</li> <li>• Engage the family unit early and throughout case management services to ensure caregivers are aligned with the support being provided.</li> <li>• Build family capability by sharing and developing relevant skills, like in youth mental health and AOD support.</li> <li>• Connect youth and their families to relevant community-based support by identifying opportunities for respected members of the community to provide guidance and direction related to youth development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community insight</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wyndham community members emphasised their strong local community, but that some families and young people needed support to empower them to work with their young people.</li> <li>• Young people and families reiterated the importance of the whole family unit being involved in how young people are supported and connect to services.</li> <li>• Community members raised that there is not always awareness across community of the different types of support available in town and through DIDO services – and that for some families, more targeted support is required to assist them to access these services.</li> <li>• Relationships are important for these types of services to be successful; consultation identified that different families have existing relationships and connection with a number of services, so this role type could be facilitated by more than one service provider, to provide choice to families.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>"If we're looking after our young ones, we need to support their families to support them."</i></p> <p>- Wyndham community member</p> </div>

## INITIATIVE 1 | SUPPORTING FAMILIES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are existing case management supports provided by WYAC, as well as the Key Assets' early intervention and family support program offered in Kununurra and Halls Creek that is set to expand across the East Kimberley, due to the regional need for these services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence base</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strong Families model is a prevention program designed to support families in challenged settings. The program includes skills development sessions tailored to each of the caregiver, wider family, and child.<sup>27</sup></li> <li>• New Zealand's family group conferences are an initiative to support the co-design of family-led solutions for young people in the response to care and protection needs, or youth justice offences.<sup>28</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Resourcing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional case management staff to support existing services and increase capacity for delivery in other local services.</li> <li>• Support to inform and train service staff on engaging with families. This may include development of a framework and process that identifies families and young people who would benefit from additional support and how they are to be engaged.</li> <li>• Funding for local organisations to design and deliver training to families to build their capability in areas like mental health first aid. Resources may also be required to consult with local families and understand the capabilities that would bring the most benefit.</li> <li>• Use of existing facilities would be required to host the engagement between services and families. These services may utilise the Multipurpose Facility detailed in this report once developed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisations operating the existing case management and support programs in the East Kimberley including WYAC (case management and empowerment programs) and Key Assets (early intervention and family support program), and services such as NAAC with existing relationships with families in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Wyndham's Young People at Risk committee that includes WA Police, Department of Communities, Department of Justice, and the local schools. Consultation in Wyndham noted that this existing mechanism could be improved in how it engages the families of young people once referred.</li> <li>• Drive-in drive-out (DIDO) services, particularly those in Kununurra. A core component to the case management support service is to connect families and youth with other relevant supports, requiring a strong partnership and working relationship.</li> <li>• Community elders and other local leaders who can provide non-clinical and culturally safe community-based support. Leaders in the Wyndham community may also choose to be involved in designing how services better engage and connect with families to build their capability.</li> </ul>

<sup>27</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Strong Families. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>28</sup> Oranga Tamariki, About family group conferencing. Accessed from: [here](#).

## INITIATIVE 2 | STRENGTHENING SERVICES

*Provide additional training programs and support to organisations to build core service skills for staff working at Wyndham based service providers.*



<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p>The youth service system in Wyndham is reliant on visiting services and the work of two main local ACCOs that deliver many of the programs and activities. This initiative seeks to empower these local organisations to continue improving how they engage young people and operate as an organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Improve services available for young people by strengthening the capability of the organisations that provide these services.</b> By developing the skills of service staff in Wyndham, this initiative will enable these local organisations to deliver a higher volume of more effective programs.</li> <li>• <b>Improve the connection and knowledge sharing between service providers in Wyndham and other parts of the East Kimberley.</b> This initiative will also aim to improve how local and visiting services coordinate by creating opportunities knowledge sharing and relationship building. The overall objective of this initiative is to transfer capabilities from DIDO organisations to those based in Wyndham, to increase the capacity of local services and reduce the reliance on visiting services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery</b></p>	<p>Strengthening Services is an initiative designed to facilitate and deliver upskilling to service provider staff in Wyndham. This training will occur in areas of identified need that are aligned to activities staff need to perform to acquire resources and deliver support programs for young people. This upskilling may be delivered in multiple forms depending on the receiving organisation(s) and the area of capability.</p> <p><b>Community consultation noted that this initiative could empower local services and facilitate capability development through:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal training delivered by a training organisation once off or as part of an ongoing program.</li> <li>• Secondment of government or corporate staff to build service provider capabilities over an extended period.</li> <li>• Informal skills sharing delivered by DIDO staff on days when they visit Wyndham.</li> </ul> <p><b>Local service provider staff noted that possible capabilities to develop include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to identify funding sources and write compelling grant applications.</li> <li>• Developing performance metrics with funding providers and measuring and reporting outcomes.</li> <li>• Designing and operating structured activities to engage with young people.</li> <li>• Other specific training as identified for particular staff or organisations.</li> </ul>



## INITIATIVE 2 | STRENGTHENING SERVICES

<p><b>Community insight</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment opportunities through local service providers are valued by community, with WYAC and NAAC being among the top employers in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Staff at local organisations noted they can experience challenges in performing ancillary tasks to their core service like writing grant applications and measuring program outcomes. These challenges are both due to their personal capabilities as well as the volume of work.</li> <li>• Local staff are highly valued, and many shared their interest in further developing other skills so that they can support their local community. There is appetite for additional training as staff and young people value the training they currently receive through their employers.</li> <li>• Staff see lots of opportunities to continually improve how youth engagement programs are designed and delivered, so that they can work alongside young people and families to deliver well-structured and diverse activities (such as music and art), as well as sport programs.</li> </ul> <p><i>"We have lots of great local staff, but we are so busy that we don't always have time to take a second or develop new skills."</i></p> <p>- Wyndham service provider</p> <hr/> <p><i>"Organisations that are in town are really important and do a lot of activities for the kids."</i></p> <p>- Wyndham community member</p>
<p><b>Evidence base</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WA Government's Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing to build local capacity and empower communities to lead local approaches (Commitment 8).<sup>29</sup></li> <li>• The WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy to support Aboriginal-led solutions and increase the proportion of services delivered by local ACCOs.<sup>30</sup></li> <li>• The WA Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) Strategy to give ACCOs economic and socio-economic opportunities that build capacity and capability for these organisations to deliver services.<sup>31</sup></li> <li>• The WA At-Risk Youth Strategy includes a focus area (focus area three) and priority outcome (priority outcome 3) related to increasing access to services for at-risk young people by strengthening the capacity of the services system.<sup>32</sup></li> <li>• One of four priority reforms of the national agreement on Closing the Gap is to build the community-controlled sector through capacity building and investment.<sup>33</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>29</sup> Government of Western Australia. Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>30</sup> Government of Western Australia. Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy -Western Australia 2021-2029. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>31</sup> Government of Western Australia, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy 2022-2032. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>32</sup> Government of Western Australia, At Risk Youth Strategy 2022-2027. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>33</sup> Australian Government. Closing the Gap. Accessed from: [here](#).

## INITIATIVE 2 | STRENGTHENING SERVICES

### Resourcing

Supporting this initiative will involve an initial discovery process to identify priority capability areas for local organisations to be trained in, in collaboration with these providers. Importantly, this process would need to map how the capabilities of staff in Wyndham align with processes required to deliver youth programs. While limited resources are needed to conduct this initial process, a representative of the facilitating organisation would need to dedicate time to engage with local staff and conduct brief analysis. Following this initial mapping process, the key resources required would include:

- Funding to engage a training organisation or other external staff to design and deliver training.
- Staff in Wyndham or other resources to organise and facilitate the delivery of training across the three different mechanisms. This responsibility could be performed by a local organisation receiving the training, effectively limiting the need for additional resources.
- Use of basic facilities to host the delivery of training sessions and other engagements. Existing facilities like the Peter Reid Memorial Hall are available in Wyndham to suit this purpose, with the option to utilise the Multipurpose Facility once developed.

### Partnerships

- **Organisations delivering training:** this can be further separated into organisations able to deliver formal training (e.g., North Regional TAFE, Red Cross), visiting services who can provide skill-sharing sessions (e.g., Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley, Department of Communities), and organisations that can facilitate secondment of skilled staff (e.g., Jawun).
- **Organisations receiving training:** the primary organisations to receive training as part of this initiative include local ACCOs, primary and high school staff, and staff at other related organisations.
- **Supporting organisations:** this initiative would also partner with organisations that can provide resources and facilities (e.g., Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley). Partners would also include those able to support the identification of relevant capability areas (e.g., BBY and ECEK members)

Figure 11 | Consultation with students at Wyndham District High School



## INITIATIVE 3 | TARGETED TRAINING

Identification and delivery of training in Wyndham in areas relevant to local businesses and employment pathways.



<p><b>Objective</b></p>	<p>Wyndham’s small population and declining economic output have led to a shift in Wyndham’s business landscape, as private enterprises and service providers have relocated to larger towns like Kununurra. These events, among other factors, have constrained the availability of training and employment opportunities for young people in Wyndham. The Targeted Training initiative is proposed as a community-led response to increase the delivery of training opportunities for Wyndham people who would prefer to train and work locally. The core objectives of this initiative include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the availability of training delivered in Wyndham by supporting existing or new training programs to be delivered locally.</li> <li>• Increase the availability of training in areas relevant to the skills needs and employment opportunities in Wyndham. The broader goal of this initiative is to support the delivery of training that ultimately leads to positive employment outcomes for young people who want to remain in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Support the economic development of Wyndham by increasing the depth of the local workforce. Increasing the availability of locally delivered and locally relevant training will ensure businesses and services in Wyndham have access to potential employees with capabilities aligned to their business needs. This is in direct response to persistent challenges faced by local organisations in hiring and retaining staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery</b></p>	<p>The objective of the Targeted Training initiative is to support training opportunities to be delivered in Wyndham. There are three main components to this initiative:</p> <p><b>Identifying skills gaps in Wyndham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate discussions with local employers and training providers to map existing training opportunities in the East Kimberley and identify opportunities for training to be delivered in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Engage with local employers to identify necessary capabilities and skills that are in shortage or do not exist in the local workforce.</li> <li>• Engage with local employers by integrating with existing business forums like the East Kimberley Employment Roundtable.</li> </ul> <p><b>Deliver training in Wyndham, for Wyndham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide resources and financial support that enables training organisations to deliver programs in-person in Wyndham.</li> <li>• Establish partnerships with training organisations with a presence and capability in the East Kimberley, including North Regional TAFE and related parties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Build pathways from training to employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and training to employers directly that supports them to improve how they engage with local youths as apprentices, trainees, or inexperienced employees.</li> <li>• Organise employment forums and other engagement activities that provide opportunities for employers to directly connect with skilled and unskilled local youth.</li> </ul>

## INITIATIVE 3 | TARGETED TRAINING

### Community insight

- Young people in Wyndham have different aspirations. Some want to stay, work, and live in Wyndham, and others have aspirations to go elsewhere.
- For young people who want to stay in Wyndham, they said there are mixed opportunities outside of school to get training in their areas of interest and with skills that are relevant to life in Wyndham. Some young people and community members talked about opening up their own businesses (e.g., a salon, a mechanics) or opportunities to work on country like station work.
- Young people and service providers expressed frustration that often training wouldn't happen if there were fewer than eight people who would attend the training. Others said they had limited transport to get to Kununurra where some training happens more regularly.
- Some young people at the high school were already working and earning their own money but said that there were limited opportunities for most young people who wanted to do this.

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*"I want to stay in Wyndham but I'm not sure what I will do for a job".*

- Young person in Wyndham

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*"Sometimes training gets organised but it gets cancelled at the last minute. The TAFE always seems empty".*

- Young person in Wyndham

## INITIATIVE 3 | TARGETED TRAINING

- The State Coroner’s Inquest highlights how the poor health outcomes experienced by youth in the Kimberley are connected to social determinants of wellbeing, including those related to education and employment.
- The Wyndham Mechanics program has reported positive outcomes engaging young people with entry-level mechanic courses.
- The current strategic plan of the Kimberley Development Commission which aims to “Lift and Normalise Aboriginal Economic Development”.
- The WA Government’s Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing, which includes a commitment to improve youth engagement with education (Commitment 9).
- The WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy, which includes a commitment to expand economic opportunities by supporting the employment and business aspirations of Aboriginal people.
- The national agreement on Closing the Gap, which includes two outcomes related to increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engaged in education and employment (socioeconomic outcome areas 5 and 7).

**Figure 12 | Consultation with young people at WYAC – A need for more job and training opportunities in Wyndham**

Evidence base



Resourcing

The resources required to implement this initiative recognise the underlying constraints that influence the viability of training delivered in Wyndham. These constraints include the town’s relatively small population and the ongoing difficulties regional communities experience in engaging young people with their education. The resource requirements are expected to include:

- Financial resources to support the engagement of a formal training provider or alternate organisation to deliver training in Wyndham, including for circumstances where there are less than the minimum required students available to attend the training. Preference is given to organisations with an established presence and capability in the region, including North Regional TAFE.
- A classroom, workshop, or other training facilities to deliver programs in town. North Regional TAFE has existing facilities in Wyndham that may be suitable to deliver these programs and should be considered in further designing this initiative.
- Staff at a local organisation or service provider to organise and facilitate the engagement with local businesses. Leveraging existing business forums may reduce the requirement for additional staff and resources.

## INITIATIVE 3 | TARGETED TRAINING

### Partnerships

- **Local businesses:** employers in Wyndham would be required to assist in identifying and supporting delivery of these training programs. Employers would also be offered support to better engage with young people in offering training and employment pathways. The existing East Kimberley Employment Roundtable provides a mechanism through which this initiative could engage with businesses in Wyndham and nearby communities.
- **Local service providers:** involvement of local organisations like WYAC, NAAC and Wyndham District High School will be a key avenue through which to attract young people to training. The existing community development supports offered by East Kimberley Job Pathways also presents a program that this initiative will integrate with.
- **Training providers and related organisations:** key partners are likely to also include North Regional TAFE, who currently deliver training in Kununurra but hold facilities in Wyndham that are also occasionally used to deliver courses. The Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley and members of Empowered Communities East Kimberley will also be important partners, as will related government services like the Department of Training and Workforce Development, and Apprenticeships WA.

## INITIATIVE 4 | COMMUNITY-LED ACTIVITY

*Skill development and event coordination support to empower community to organise and run events, with a focus on events that support access to positive role models for young people*



<b>Objective</b>	<p>The Community-led Activity is a program or grant process designed to provide structural support for people in Wyndham to organise and run events for youth and families. The primary objective is to provide access to the necessary capabilities that can enable new events to be organised, and/or past events to return (e.g., Stars on the Bastion). The focus will be on coordinating and organising engaging activities with a preference for those that provide young people with visibility of potential role models, including artists, sportspeople, and community leaders (i.e., Empowered Young Leaders). This initiative aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Build local capability and provide access to necessary event skills.</b> This may include capabilities like event management, coordination, and partnership development, provided to a blend of community members and local service provider staff.</li><li>• <b>Support community to organise and operate events of varying size and focus.</b> Part of the role of this initiative will be to facilitate events in areas like dance, music, and culture, that provide an alternative engagement to existing activities in sport.</li><li>• <b>Improve young people’s connection to community and increase their access to potential role models.</b></li></ul>
<b>Delivery</b>	<p>The Community-led Activity will focus on enhanced community engagement through events and activities. The initiative will provide support and capability development in areas like event coordination, event management and partnership development. This initiative aims to support events that broaden young people’s views and experiences, while also providing a platform for them to learn from professionals and community leaders. Events may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts and cultural events that align to young people’s passions and build on community strengths.</li><li>• Sports competitions and other exhibitions with attendance of professional sportspeople, including those born in regional WA.</li><li>• Educational events and opportunities to connect with community leaders through forums including Empowered Young Leaders. Existing discussion forums and community engagement conducted through these mechanisms will ideally be occasionally held in Wyndham where relevant.</li></ul> <p>This initiative is committed to planning and delivering events in collaboration with young people and their families. The involvement of local youth in the design and coordination of these events will ensure that the activities delivered are relevant and aligned to their interests and passions.</p>

## INITIATIVE 4 | COMMUNITY-LED ACTIVITY

<p><b>Community insight</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people in Wyndham expressed a strong desire for more structured events to be made available.</li> <li>• Young people and their families spoke particularly fondly of past events like Stars on the Bastion, which was an annual music festival that took place atop the Kimberley’s iconic Five Rivers Lookout. Events like these are positive ways for community to connect with peers and provide an additional boost to the tourism and economic development of Wyndham.</li> <li>• Stakeholders noted that events which bring people to Wyndham from across the Kimberley also help broaden the perspectives of young people and increase their appreciation of their community. They also noted there are opportunities to better connect and integrate this initiative with other programs, organisations, and events in Kununurra.</li> </ul> <p><i>“We used to have lots of cool events when I was growing up. I wish we could have those again.”</i></p> <p>- Wyndham community member</p> <hr/> <p><i>“Sport like the Crocs brings people together for home games. But there aren’t that many other things on that aren’t sport.”</i></p> <p>- Young person</p>
<p><b>Evidence base</b></p>	<p>This initiative is directly aligned to government priority and other evidence that emphasises the importance of place-based, locally-led solutions to community wellbeing. This evidence has been noted in support of other initiatives, and further reinforces the objective of the Community-led Activity. Past programs have also proven the ability for positive outcomes to be achieved when engaging Aboriginal youth through music and dance<sup>34</sup>, and cultural role models.<sup>35</sup></p>
<p><b>Resourcing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to support the organisation and coordination of events, including through a mentoring and support function for members of the community. This staff member(s) will require existing capability in event skills and may only be required for the initial implementation of this program, while local skills are developed.</li> <li>• Resources (including the staff noted above) to deliver training in event coordination and related skills to members of the community.</li> <li>• Financial resources to help cover fees to engage visiting performers and professionals, as well as leasing hire equipment and facilities. The Multipurpose Facility will also be considered for hosting of these events once developed.</li> <li>• Access to relevant tools and software (e.g., payment acceptance, ticket booking) will be required as part of the event coordination support. These tools and capabilities may exist in local organisations currently and could be accessed through these means where relevant.</li> </ul>

<sup>34</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2013). Strategies and practices for promoting social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>35</sup> Youth Central, Marram Nganyin Aboriginal Youth Mentoring Program. Accessed from: [here](#).



## INITIATIVE 4 | COMMUNITY-LED ACTIVITY

### Partnerships

- Community leadership organisations and mechanisms like Empowered Young Leaders and Empowered Communities East Kimberley. These organisations may be engaged as participants at events and to facilitate engagement with other organisations across the regions.
- ACCOs and other organisations in Wyndham and nearby East Kimberley towns to promote and support local events. Staff with experience in event planning and coordination will be asked to support members of the local community through this initiative.
- Government and non-government organisations that can facilitate engagement with relevant youth role models like sportspeople. This may include organisations such as Shooting Stars Netball, the Western Australian Football League, and other related partners. Organisations with an existing presence in Kununurra and other parts of the East Kimberley will be asked to expand their regional engagement to include Wyndham.

## INITIATIVE 5 | MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY

A safe space for young people and their families to connect with culture, community, and other support services.



### Objective

All levels of government recognise the need to improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes through community-based initiatives and programs. Growing evidence suggests the importance of safe spaces as a core concept in supporting the safety and integration of young people in regional and remote communities. The concept of safe spaces is broad and includes physical facilities that provide tailored and targeted clinical support. It also includes other, non-clinical locations where youth can connect with peers and community-based support mechanisms in a safe environment.

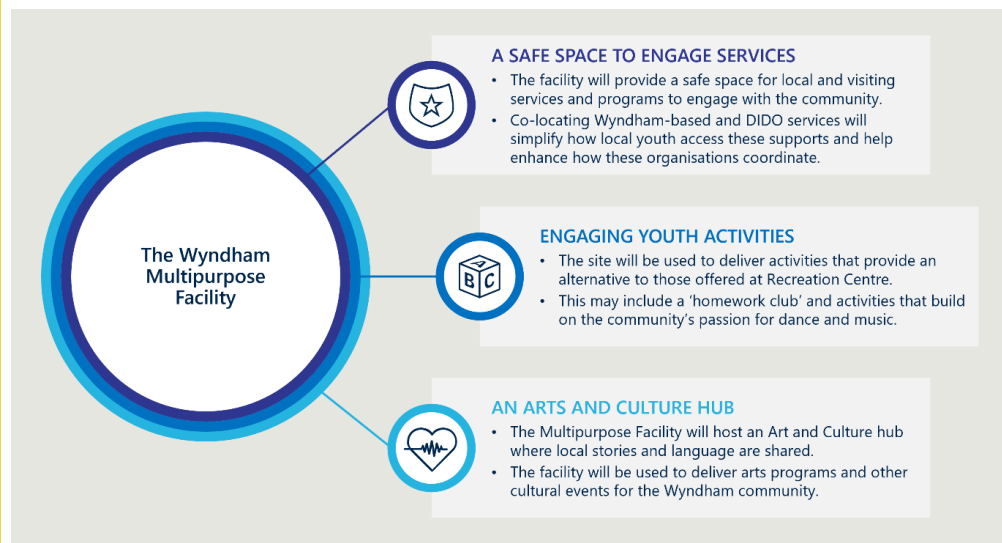
The goal in developing or refurbishing a Multipurpose Facility for Wyndham is to provide a one-stop location for youth and families to engage with formal and informal support services. This includes accessing clinical support and case management, as well as opportunities to connect with cultural practices and language development. The objectives of this initiative are:

- To provide a safe cultural space for young people and their families to access support.
- Offer a safe space with a 'no wrong door' approach that allows the local community to access services in multiple ways.
- Provide facilities that can host alternative ways of engaging and inspiring young people.

### Delivery

The Multipurpose Facility will provide a single location where young people and families can access services and cultural activities. The centre's usage will vary based on community need and may serve different purposes based on a daily or weekly basis, set out below.

Figure 13 | Summary of activities for the Multipurpose Facility



## INITIATIVE 5 | MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY

### Community insight

- Young people and other stakeholders noted that many public spaces in Wyndham had fallen into disrepair or were no longer used, leaving young people with limited places to spend time.
- All stakeholder groups described a current reliance on the Ted Birch Memorial Youth & Recreation Centre and noted a lack of other adequate facilities for older youths particularly.
- Young people and their families expressed particularly strong aspirations for an alternative space where the community could engage in activities that build connection to culture, dance and music – and that most structured activity was focused around sport.
- Service providers discussed that during the day, the facility could also be a helpful drop-in space for people seeking connection to supports, as well as a location for drive in drive out services.

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*"There's not a lot for older kids, so we get bored. My friends like music and dance and there's nowhere else for us to go and do that."*

- Young person

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*"I don't really like hanging out at the rec centre. It's loud and there are lots of insects".*

- Young person

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*"It would be good to have a space in town that can be used by different service providers so that the community knows what is available for them".*

- Wyndham service provider

## INITIATIVE 5 | MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY

<p><b>Evidence base</b></p>	<p>Wyndham Youth Spaces project emerged as a community-led response to recommendation 30 from the State Coroner's Inquest, "That the development or refurbishment of facilities for young persons to meet and engage in activities be undertaken in the Kimberley Region".<sup>36</sup> This led to the prioritisation of a "multipurpose resources centre" and exploration of a youth safehouse in Wyndham's sub-regional plan.<sup>37</sup></p> <p>Further supporting this initiative is the growing prevalence of drop-in centres and designated safe spaces as support mechanisms for young people. Relevant examples and supporting evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Broome Youth and Families Hub drop-in centre, where youth and community members can participate in casual activities and engage with case managers or other support workers.<sup>38</sup></li> <li>• The Newman Youth Centre where young people aged 10-17 drop-in for games and engage in homework clubs.<sup>39</sup></li> <li>• The frequently replicated Safe Haven Cafe model that centres on providing a space for casual conversation and peer-based support to people in crisis.<sup>40</sup> Safe Haven Cafes have become popular in WA, with a service opened at Kununurra District Hospital in 2022<sup>41</sup>, and an ongoing project to design a similar facility in the Peel region.<sup>42</sup></li> <li>• Initiatives underway in New South Wales to provide non-clinical services to people coping with mental health crises. These spaces are designed to offer a safer and more approachable alternative to the emergency department, with the option for clients to engage family and friends.<sup>43</sup></li> <li>• The Australian National Safe Spaces Network Scoping Study, which identifies the benefit to mental wellbeing of safe spaces that provide non-clinical support and foster connections with peers and community.<sup>44</sup></li> <li>• Recent co-design consultation conducted in New South Wales and Queensland that concluded a trauma-informed, 'no wrong door' approach as a key principle to effective safe spaces.<sup>45</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Resourcing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and financial resources to identify and evaluate possible sites. This process will balance the cost of acquiring and developing new infrastructure with opportunities to refurbish or upgrade existing facilities. The consultation of local community in identifying an appropriate site will be important to ensuring the facility delivers the expected value.</li> <li>• Once identified, funding will be required to acquire and develop the site. This may include purchasing the land or facility from its current owner, and developing infrastructure aligned to the objectives of this initiative.</li> <li>• Local staff would then be required to operate the Multipurpose Facility. A minimum of one full-time equivalent (FTE) worker would be needed to manage day-to-day operations and help coordinate the attendance of service providers and other programs. Management of the facility could be awarded to a local organisation which may have existing capacity to fulfil this requirement.</li> </ul>

<sup>36</sup> Government of Western Australia, Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley region, Western Australia. Perth: Coroner's Court of Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>37</sup> Empowered Communities East Kimberley (2021), Regional Development Agenda. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>38</sup> Broome Youth and Families Hub, Drop In. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>39</sup> Shire of East Pilbara, Newman Youth Centre. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>40</sup> NHS England, Safe Haven Café in Aldershot. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>41</sup> Mental Health Commission, Safe Haven Cafes. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>42</sup> Government of Western Australia (2022), Innovation investment to build resilient children and confident young people. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>43</sup> NSW Ministry of Health, Towards Zero Suicides – Alternatives to Emergency Department Presentations. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>44</sup> Commonwealth Department of Health (2020), National Safe Spaces Network Scoping Study. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>45</sup> Roses in the Ocean, Report: A Safe Spaces Narrative – emerging outcomes of Safe Spaces co-design. Accessed from: [here](#).

## INITIATIVE 5 | MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY

### Partnerships

The involvement of the local community in the design, development, and operation of the Multipurpose Facility will be critical to its success. Gathering and integrating the community's perspective throughout this process will ensure the site's location and features remain aligned with culturally safe and trauma-informed practices, as well as meeting the desired need. In implementing and operating the facility, the key partnerships will be:

- **Service providers:** both visiting and locally based services who can be co-located at the site to provide ease of access for youth and families. These organisations may also be involved in operating and managing the facility on an ongoing basis.
- **Community leaders and elders:** to ensure the facility is respectful of cultural practices and to support the delivery of the Arts and Culture Hub.
- **Related organisations like the Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley:** the Shire may offer capability support in operating the facility, The Shire may also support the identification and evaluation of possible locations for the facility, as well as being involved in the coordination of the site's development.

In implementing this facility, it will also be important to establish clear connection and communication with existing programs offered by organisations at the Ted Birch Memorial Youth and Recreation Centre. The objective of this facility will be to support existing youth engagement programs, rather than creating duplication or drawing youth away from current services. This coordination would take place during the design, development, and ongoing operations of the facility.

## INITIATIVE 6 | ON-COUNTRY CONNECTION

Delivery of on-country trips and facilitated engagement between young people and community elders.



The On-country Connection initiative reflects the strength of Wyndham's connection to culture and history. This program would seek to increase opportunities for youth and their families to connect with local cultural practices that help develop their cultural identity and relationship with the community. The primary goals of this work are:

- **To support the development of cultural identity among Wyndham youth and families.** By providing additional opportunities for young people to learn and engage with their culture, this initiative will help develop a deeper connection between youth and their town.
- **Identify and develop future cultural leaders of the local community.** Uplifting young leaders will help to ensure the continuity of Wyndham's rich Aboriginal identity through facilitated transfer of cultural knowledge and practice between generations.
- **Increase the engagement of parents and families in the development of youth identity.** Family and kinship are a key component in Aboriginal cultural traditions and individual wellbeing.<sup>46</sup> Child-rearing is often considered a shared responsibility, with elderly family members key to young people developing an understanding of life and society.<sup>47</sup> A key feature of programs delivered under the On-country Connection initiative will be the deep and consistent engagement with families.

Figure 14 | Consultation with students at St. Joseph's Primary School – A student drawing country in response to being asked "What is deadly about Wyndham?"

Objective



<sup>46</sup> Australian Government. The National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>47</sup> Lohar, S., et al. (2014), Strengths of Australian Aboriginal cultural practices in family life and child rearing. Accessed from: [here](#).

## INITIATIVE 6 | ON-COUNTRY CONNECTION

### Delivery

This initiative will provide opportunities for Wyndham residents to connect with community elders and cultural traditions, with an explicit focus on achieving a frequency that ensures all young people have opportunities to attend. The primary features of this program will include:

- On-country day trips and overnight camps facilitated with involvement from local community elders.
- Coordination of events and activities held in town to encourage more regular connection between youth and community elders.
- Structured cultural activities like storytelling, language sharing, fishing, bush cooking, and other care and connection activities.
- Mentorship and skills building activities conducted on-country.
- Separation of the program into a men's and women's component where appropriate, to recognise and align with safe cultural practices of 'men's business' and 'women's business'.
- An explicit focus on the attendance of young people with opportunities for families and other community members to also be involved.

### Community insight

- Young people across Wyndham expressed being out on-country – camping, fishing, going to the Bastion, the jetty and the spillway are favourite places to go and things to do.
- Young people know a lot about the history of Wyndham and want to know more – they are proud of their country and where they are from.
- Schools and service providers have organised trips for young people and their families including camping and fishing. Transport is often the biggest barrier to organising these trips.
- Cooking classes, including learning how to cook food bush style were popular with some of the high school students.
- Some young people spoke of their close connection to their families, and particularly grandparents – and how they love to hear their stories.
- Young people expressed their interest in being involved in Ranger programs as they get older.

*"I love going camping and fishing and being out on country."*

- Young person

*"I love learning from nan and hearing her stories."*

- Young person

## INITIATIVE 6 | ON-COUNTRY CONNECTION

### Evidence base

A wealth of government-supported frameworks, private research and exemplar programs support this initiative and the broader benefit of cultural connection to health and wellbeing. The nationally recognised Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) model considers a holistic view of Aboriginal health and wellbeing in relation to domains that include connection to culture, country, and family.<sup>48</sup> This initiative also aligns with outcome 2.1 of this framework, which prioritises developing the culture of Aboriginal communities as a mechanism to improved SEWB.

The On-country Connection initiative also follows priorities within the WA Government's Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing (i.e., Commitment 10 – Help young people connect to culture), and the national Closing the Gap agreement (i.e., Target 16 – a sustained increased in the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken). Its relevance to ongoing state government priorities is further reinforced by the recent administration of the Connecting to Country grant program by the Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries.<sup>49</sup>

Several existing programs locally and across Australia provide further evidence of positive outcomes, as well as guiding principles from which to design this initiative. These examples include:

- Existing on-country trips occurring in Wyndham: community consultation highlighted that local organisations including Wyndham District High School are currently organising on-country trips that include a yarning circle, fishing and other activities. This initiative is intended to buttress and extend these existing programs.
- The Empowering Youth program: a program run by Kununurra-Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation that includes the delivery of 'Back to Country' healing trips.<sup>50</sup>
- The Yiriman Project: an intergenerational on-country program that aimed to improve health outcomes for at-risk youths in the Kimberley through on-country connection.<sup>51</sup>
- The National Indigenous Australians Agency's Youth Connection to Culture program: an initiative currently in evaluation that invested \$5 million in 12 communities to co-design activities that support cultural strength in local youth.<sup>52</sup>
- Camping on Country programs: camps that cover activities on identity and belonging, cultural connection, health, wellbeing, and history.<sup>53</sup> Camping on Country also facilitates a men's group in Kununurra and other towns in the Northern Territory and Queensland.

<sup>48</sup> Australian Government. The National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>49</sup> Government of Western Australia (2022), Grant program supports connection to country, community, culture. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>50</sup> Kununurra-Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation, Empowering Youth. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>51</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Law & Cultural Centre, The Yiriman Project – Key Commonwealth & State Policy Alignments. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>52</sup> National Indigenous Australians Agency, Indigenous Youth Connection to Culture. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>53</sup> Camping on Country, Our Program. Accessed from: [here](#).



## INITIATIVE 6 | ON-COUNTRY CONNECTION

<p><b>Resourcing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources to develop a Wyndham-specific on-country program. This likely involves reviewing and evaluating example programs (including those referenced above) to design activities that reflect the town's unique culture and context. Engagement with local community elders through the design and implementation is critical to its ongoing success.</li> <li>• Access to relevant transport that can support on-country travel. This may include access to hire vehicles and/or purchasing of dedicated transport, noting that four-wheel drive capabilities are often required to travel around Wyndham and on-country.</li> <li>• Additional driver training to ensure partnering organisations have sufficient staff to operate transport vehicles.</li> <li>• Additional funding support for staff to acquire complementary Working with Children Checks (WWCC) that are mandatory to conduct child-related work.</li> <li>• Event coordination support that aligns with local capabilities developed as part of Strengthening Services and Community-led Activity initiatives.</li> <li>• Facilities to host activities with community elders in Wyndham. Existing facilities include those operated by the Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley, such as the recreation centre and Peter Reid Memorial Hall. These events would form a core component to the Arts and Culture Hub at the Multipurpose Facility once the site is developed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elders and leaders in the community to provide input and facilitation of culturally safe activities.</li> <li>• The Wyndham District High School and St Joseph's Primary School as avenues to engaging with youth and to ensure alignment with existing on-country programs.</li> <li>• The Balanggarra people and the Balanggarra Aboriginal Corporation as the traditional owners of the region. Community consultation also noted opportunities for on-country activities to engage with the Balanggarra Rangers to facilitate the sharing of cultural practices related to the environment and land conservation.</li> <li>• Other local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations that can provide resources to assist in organising and delivering the on-country trips and other activities.</li> </ul>

## 5.1 Implementation and prioritisation

The six proposed initiatives are designed as concepts that can provide benefit to the local community independently, and significant benefit collectively. The proposed concepts minimise interdependencies and allow for implementation in any order or priority. A staged implementation approach is therefore proposed where initiatives are delivered over time based on an assessment of their impact and feasibility. This approach allows for resources to be appropriately dedicated to each implementation effort, and initiatives to then be individually monitored and improved.

### Prioritisation of the six initiatives supports the phased implementation approach

The prioritisation of the six initiatives must reflect differences in the expected investment and intended outcomes of each of the programs. To facilitate this understanding, a high-level framework was developed that assesses each initiative based on its feasibility, impact, and other metrics. The prioritisation framework is shown in Table 1, and includes:

- **Evidence:** the initiative is assessed based on the strength of supporting evidence, with preference given to initiatives where similar models are available in Wyndham and the East Kimberley.
- **Cost:** the expected cost associated with implementing the initiative considering primary resourcing requirements (staffing, training, infrastructure). Priority is awarded to initiatives deemed to be less costly and therefore more feasible given funding constraints.
- **Expertise:** the availability of relevant capabilities in Wyndham, with a preference given where local organisations have the capabilities required to support the initiative.
- **Impact:** an assessment of the expected impact of the initiative against the overall objectives of the Wyndham Youth Spaces project. Priority is given to more impactful initiatives that align to the community's most urgent needs.
- **Alignment:** the level of alignment between the initiative's intended outcomes and the priorities of government and non-government funding sources. Initiatives that more closely align with funding priorities are more likely to receive sufficient resources to support implementation and are therefore prioritised.

Table 1 | Prioritisation framework

Prioritisation Metric	Score: 1/3	Score: 2/3	Score: 3/3
Evidence	New model	Model exists elsewhere	Extension of existing model in Wyndham
Cost	High	Medium	Low
Expertise	All new capabilities	Blend of existing and new capabilities	All existing capabilities
Impact	Low	Medium	High
Alignment	No clear link to funding priorities	Some links	Clear alignment to funding priorities

The assessment of the six initiatives against the prioritisation framework is set out in Table 2 and presented in Figure 15. This prioritisation suggests implementation over three stages or horizons, described below.

- **Stage 1 - Deliver the Supporting Families and Strengthening Services initiatives:** these initiatives are most closely aligned to funding priorities and build on existing support mechanisms in Wyndham.
- **Stage 2 - Implement the On-country Connection, Community-led Activity, and Targeted Training initiatives:** these initiatives are also well-aligned to funding priorities, but each require new capabilities and/or engagement with organisations outside of Wyndham.
- **Stage 3 - Develop and deliver the Multipurpose Facility:** planning for this initiative can occur in parallel to the implementation of initiatives in Stage 1 and Stage 2. Significant investment is required to identify, evaluate, and develop a site in Wyndham, with resources also required to support ongoing operations.

Figure 15 | Outcomes of initiative prioritisation

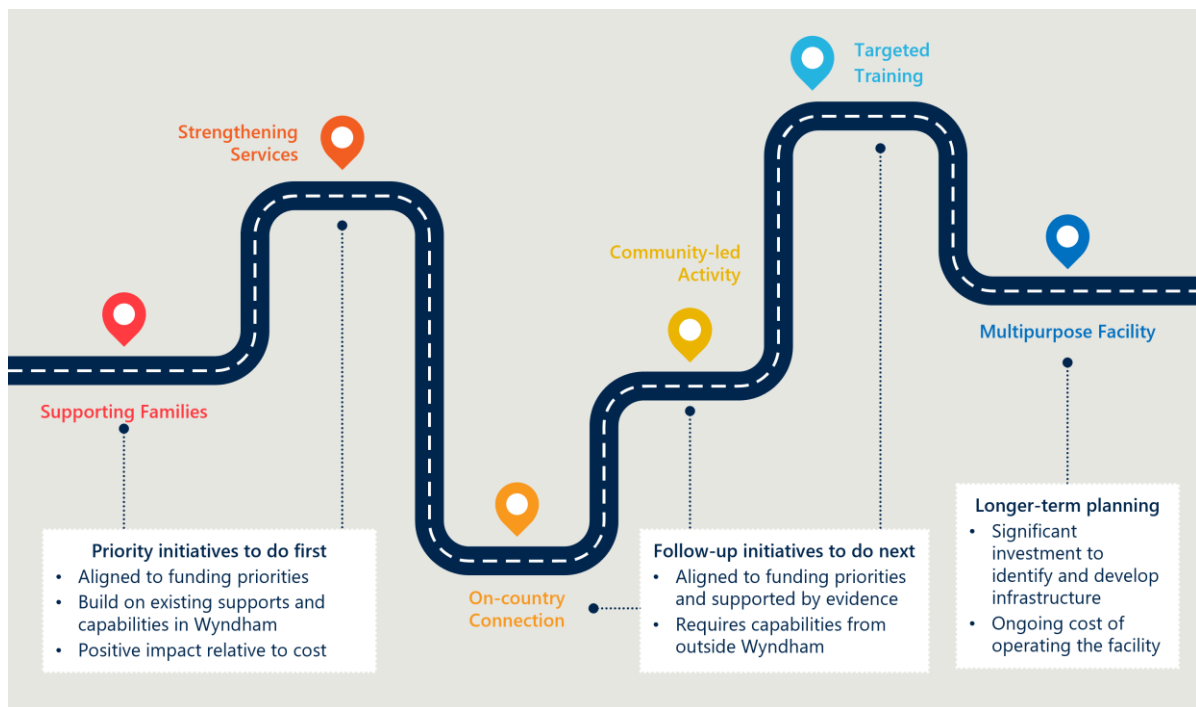


Table 2 | Outcomes of initiative prioritisation

	Evidence	Cost	Expertise	Impact	Alignment	Total	Rationale
<b>Supporting Families</b>	3	3	3	2	3	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong evidence base that includes existing mechanisms in Wyndham and elsewhere, which suggests expertise is available locally.</li> <li>• Clearly aligned to government priorities and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthening Services</b>	2	2	2	3	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relies upon capability building from parties outside of Wyndham.</li> <li>• Expected high impact given influence of service providers in Wyndham, and well aligned to ACCO Strategy and other policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Targeted Training</b>	2	1	1	2	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires further consultation and expertise to identify priorities and organise delivery.</li> <li>• Aligned to government emphasis on enabling economic development.</li> </ul>
<b>Community-led Activity</b>	2	2	2	2	1	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some existing capabilities exist based on previously held events.</li> <li>• Less clearly aligned to policy and strategy but fits within broad theme of community empowerment and place-based solutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Multipurpose Facility</b>	2	1	1	2	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires infrastructure as well as staff to operate the facility.</li> <li>• Directly relates to recommendations from State Coroner's Inquest.</li> </ul>
<b>On-country Connection</b>	3	2	2	2	2	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear evidence and strategy supporting positive outcomes from stronger connection to country.</li> </ul>

## 6 Service system considerations and improvements

### Community consultation identified possible improvements to the Wyndham service system beyond the six initiatives

Consultation with the Wyndham community-led directly to the development of the six initiatives proposed throughout this report. In these engagements, stakeholders also provided perspectives that suggested additional considerations in improving the service system in Wyndham and the East Kimberley. These actionable recommendations are provided as tangible considerations that can be achieved with limited investment and independently of the six initiatives. The key recommendations are:

1. **Review and focus key performance indicators (KPIs) for existing services:** facilitate discussions between funders and service providers to re-align target outcomes and KPIs within existing contracts.
2. **Explore methods of enhancing communication between local and visiting services:** review current processes and design new methods of coordinating and communicating between Wyndham and DIDO services.
3. **Increase the focus and alignment of local providers:** facilitate discussions between Wyndham-based organisations to mitigate duplication in services and empower organisations to prioritise delivering services that align with their strengths and capabilities.

### 6.1 Review and focus KPIs for existing services

A key theme in consultation with local service providers was the ongoing challenge of measuring and reporting outcomes aligned to the KPIs agreed under their funding agreements. The insights collected from these conversations informed the development of the Strengthening Services initiative, which proposes to build these capabilities among local staff. However, there also exists a more immediate opportunity to review and re-align existing performance outcomes to ensure they are applicable and relevant to delivery in Wyndham.

When discussing current challenges for young people in Wyndham, service provider staff described feeling as though Wyndham-based services were required to align with a standard set of national outcomes. These stakeholders observed a need for “Stronger advocacy for place based KPIs”. While opportunities may exist for services to re-negotiate performance metrics, local staff may not have the capability or awareness to enact this change. Any potential misalignment can have significant impact on service delivery in Wyndham, leading to situations in which positive programs cannot be appropriately recognised for the outcomes they achieve. To help facilitate a re-alignment of performance measures, it is recommended that conversations be facilitated between services and funders to develop new KPIs for existing programs.

#### Recommendation 1:

To organise and facilitate discussions between funders and service providers to review and re-focus KPIs in ways that are relevant to the needs of Wyndham. These engagements will be best facilitated by an organisation with appropriate understanding of the context, suggesting a role for BBY or other members in ECEK.

## 6.2 Explore methods of enhancing communication between services

Many of the services that relocated from Wyndham to Kununurra in recent years have continued to provide programs and supports to the Wyndham community on a DIDO basis. Consultation in Wyndham highlighted that although these services help fill gaps in local delivery, their presence and coordination with local organisations can be improved.

Stakeholders described that some DIDO services travel to Wyndham once a fortnight or once a month and may occasionally cancel completely due to intervening circumstances. This creates situations where local staff and families are unaware when and if visiting providers are travelling to Wyndham. Furthermore, this leads to uncertainty and creates inconsistencies in individuals' access to services. Staff at Wyndham-based ACCOs spoke of occasions in which they invest time in locating and hosting families for their engagement with DIDO providers, only to later find out these services are no longer attending.

The current level of communication between local and visiting services presents an opportunity to improve the Wyndham service system. Better coordination between these organisations is required to enable efficient connection between young people and support services, as outlined in the Supporting Families initiative. Current methods of coordination appear ineffective and should therefore be reviewed and replaced with new processes.

### Recommendation 2:

To review the current processes through which visiting services communicate with Wyndham-based organisations. Following this review, organisations will collectively establish improved processes that that may include guidance on tools such as shared calendars and new modes of communication. This process will again occur through the mechanism of ECEK, noting that many local and DIDO organisations are existing members.

## 6.3 Increase the focus and alignment of local providers

While visiting services are an important component to Wyndham's service system, there is also a volume of positive work being led by a small number of local organisations. In consultation with these organisations and with the wider community, stakeholders described how the limited available resources are stretched to their limit in delivering programs and hiring local staff. These organisations and the services they provide have a significant influence on the wellbeing of the local community, as highlighted in the Strengthening Services initiative. However, stakeholders also noted that opportunities may exist for these organisations to work together in more efficient and collaborative ways.

Across several community engagements, community members noted the possibility of better aligning the work of Wyndham-based organisations. This theme emerged in the context of similar programs being provided to overlapping demographics of the local community. Stakeholders also noted these organisations and their staff have different but complimentary capabilities, which further suggests opportunities for greater efficiency.

### Recommendation 3:

To facilitate discussions between Wyndham-based service providers to review how each can better focus service delivery on internal capabilities. This may include mapping existing programs and services to identify areas of overlap and opportunities for consolidation.

## Appendix A Detailed engagement overview

### Stakeholders engaged through this project

Nous and BBY collaboratively developed a stakeholder engagement plan in the initial stages of this project. This plan outlined a list of stakeholder groups and particular organisations to be consulted, as well as the various engagement approaches that would be utilised for each group. A list of the key organisations and estimated number of stakeholders that were engaged through this work is set out in Table 3.

Table 3 | Stakeholders Engaged\*

Stakeholder Group	Organisation	Engagement Approach	Estimated Number of Participants
Schools and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St Joseph's Primary School</li> <li>Wyndham District High School</li> <li>Community members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops</li> <li>Casual conversations</li> <li>Interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students: 35</li> <li>Staff: 7</li> <li>Family/community members: 10</li> </ul>
Government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WA Police</li> <li>Department of Justice</li> <li>Department of Communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff: 6</li> </ul>
Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wyndham Youth Aboriginal Corporation (WYAC)</li> <li>Ngnowar Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation (NAAC)</li> <li>Wyndham Early Learning Centre</li> <li>Balanggarra Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)</li> <li>The Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley (SWEK)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Casual conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff: 12</li> </ul>

\*Does not include stakeholders engaged as part of Project Reference Group meetings.

Figure 16 | Consultation with the Wyndham community at Wyndham Early Learning Activity Centre



### Guiding principles of community engagements

To help ensure a culturally safe and trauma informed approach to community consultation, Nous and BBY developed a set of key principles that would guide the engagement approach. These principles were important in ensuring that community members felt safe, respected, and empowered to provide their perspective through these conversations. They were developed based on best-practice and supplemented with the experience of the BBY and Nous teams in engaging with remote communities. These key principles are presented in Table 4 |.

Table 4 | Guiding principles of our engagement

Principle	Explanation
Providing context	The Nous and/or BBY team began engagements by clearly defining the context for this work and establishing an upfront understanding of why it is important that we speak to a particular person or stakeholder group. This helped to ensure individuals felt empowered and that their voice would be valued through this process.
Setting expectations early	The team also begun conversations by clearly communicating how information will be used, covering sensitive considerations like whether the individual's name would be attached to information provided. Nous was particularly transparent about its role in this work, and the role of each team member in both informal discussions and structured sessions (i.e., as facilitators, note-takers, etc.).



Principle	Explanation
Using appropriate language and reading cues	Nous and BBY consistently used safe and accessible language during engagements and in the material provided to stakeholders. This included avoiding potentially triggering phrases and limiting the use of jargon or technical language that may not have been as easily understood. Body language and other physical cues signalling sensitivity or discomfort were also considered as part of in-person engagements.
Providing flexibility in how engagements are conducted	To ensure stakeholders felt safe when providing their perspective, Nous and BBY allowed individuals to have input into where and when we spoke with them, and who else was present at that time. Stakeholders were made aware that they did not need to engage with the Nous/BBY team if they did not want to or had any concerns about doing so.
Engaging through existing relationships and structures	Where possible Nous and BBY utilised existing relationships and organisations to facilitate engagement with community. This included attending community events like sports training where young people were more likely to feel safe and familiar with the environment. Engaging through existing community structures also helped to ensure stakeholders had someone to support them and reflect with after speaking with Nous and BBY.
Summarising and 'playing back' what we've heard	Ensuring stakeholders felt respected and empowered often included summarising and 'playing back' what had been shared with us. This helped to ensure individuals had the opportunity to correct misinterpretations and allowed them to feel assured that their perspective was heard.

### Questions that guided engagements conducted in Wyndham

Nous and BBY developed a set of guiding questions that informed the consultations conducted in Wyndham. These helped to ensure the project was framed correctly and engagements were aligned to the team's guiding principles. These questions are set out in Table 5 |.

Table 5 | Guiding questions for engaging with community in Wyndham

Stakeholder Group	Question
Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through your service, how are you empowering and supporting young people in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What do you think is working well regarding existing services for young people, and how those services are working together?</li> <li>• What do you think could be improved in how services collaborate to support young people in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What is your vision for the Youth Space(s) in Wyndham? What do you see as the best opportunity for this initiative?</li> </ul>
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does a day in the life of a young person in Wyndham look like?</li> <li>• What do you love about living in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What do you like to do when you are in town?</li> <li>• What do you wish was different about living in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What worries you when you think about other young people growing up in Wyndham - like your younger brothers and sisters, or your schoolmates?</li> <li>• What do you think might help other young people who are struggling and need some support?</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Question
Families in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you love about living in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What does a day in the life of a young person in Wyndham look like?</li> <li>• What do you wish was different about living in Wyndham for young people and their families?</li> <li>• What worries you when you think about young people growing up in Wyndham?</li> <li>• What do you think might help young people in Wyndham who are struggling and need some support?</li> </ul>

### Wyndham Youth Spaces Project Reference Group

Nous and BBY established and facilitated workshops with a Project Reference Group (PRG) for the Wyndham Youth Spaces project. The objective of the PRG was to help ensure any concepts developed through this work remained true to the needs of the local community and aligned to existing support mechanisms.

The PRG held representation from key stakeholder groups in Wyndham, including relevant government agencies and local service providers. Table 6 | presents the organisations that participated in the PRG, noting that additional stakeholders were invited but unable to participate in the meetings held.

Four meetings were held with the PRG across the various stages of this project to develop and refine the concepts that have been presented in this report. The objective of each of these meetings is set out below:

- **Meeting 1:** initial engagement with the PRG to define collective ways of working and discuss engagement approach for travel to Wyndham.
- **Meeting 2:** present key themes from community consultations and refine into initial concepts for potential initiatives.
- **Meeting 3:** further development of the six key initiatives with focus on potential target outcomes and relevant partnerships.
- **Meeting 4:** final PRG engagement to present the draft report.

Table 6 | Project Reference Group\*

Stakeholder Group	Organisation
Schools and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Joseph’s Primary School</li> <li>• Wyndham District High School</li> </ul>
Government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WA Police</li> <li>• Department of Justice</li> <li>• Department of Communities</li> <li>• East Kimberley Job Pathways</li> <li>• National Indigenous Australians Agency</li> </ul>
Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wyndham Youth Aboriginal Corporation (WYAC)</li> <li>• Ngnowar Aerwah Aboriginal Corporation (NAAC)</li> <li>• Wyndham Early Learning Centre</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group

Organisation

- Balangarra Aboriginal Corporation (BAC)
- Empowered Young Leaders (EYL)

\*Specified organisations include only those that had attended at least one of the Project Reference Group meetings at time of writing.

Figure 17 | Consultation with the Project Reference Group in Wyndham



## Appendix B Relevant government reports

The state and federal government have committed to supporting young Aboriginal people through key strategies and priorities, providing opportunity for partnership. The initiatives identified as part of this work are intended to expand the availability of place-based supports for young people that align with best practice and existing mechanisms. The intended outcomes of this work therefore align with existing government policies that outline the priority attributed to increasing community and youth wellbeing through locally-led solutions. The alignment of this work with policies and strategies of government are set out in Table 7 |.

Table 7 | Key government policies and strategies

Strategy	Relevance
<b>WA Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing<sup>54</sup></b>	The WA Government made 12 commitments to improve Aboriginal youth wellbeing in response to the State Coroner’s Inquest and the Learnings from the Message Stick report. <sup>55</sup> These include building youth and local capacity, helping young people connect to culture, supporting community wellbeing and improving prevention, intervention and postvention services.
<b>National Agreement on Closing the Gap<sup>56</sup></b>	The National Agreement on Closing the Gap identifies “formal partnerships and shared decision making” and “building the Community-Controlled Sector” as priority reforms. Socioeconomic targets include increasing youth engagement with education and employment and achieving a significant reduction in suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
<b>Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy<sup>57</sup></b>	The Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy provides grant-based support for community organisations to provide culturally safe, community-led solutions like engagement and prevention programs. The strategy is the Department of Justice’s mechanism to achieving Closing the Gap outcomes, by prioritising culturally safe activities that aim to address the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system. <sup>58</sup> Supported programs include night patrols, the bail support program, and a TAFE alternative learning program. <sup>59</sup>
<b>Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Regional Plan 2021 to 2025<sup>60</sup></b>	This strategy defines a vision for strong, resilient, and empowered individuals, families, and communities. It includes 13 recommendations to reduce self-harm and suicidal behaviours among Aboriginal people in the Kimberley, including “Natural Helpers and Safe Spaces”.
<b>WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021-2029<sup>61</sup></b>	The WA Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy emphasises the importance of Aboriginal-led, strength-based solutions. Key elements of the strategy also include investing in expanded economic opportunities and supporting shared decision-making.

<sup>54</sup> Government of Western Australia. Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>55</sup> Parliament of Western Australia, Learnings from the Message Stick. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>56</sup> Australian Government. Closing the Gap. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>57</sup> Government of Western Australia. Roll out begins for \$6.2m Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>58</sup> Government of Western Australia, 2023-24 Budget Papers | Western Australia State Budget. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>59</sup> WAMN News (2023), WA Budget 2023-24: What it means for young people in Western Australia. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>60</sup> Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Regional Plan 2021 to 2025. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>61</sup> Government of Western Australia. Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy -Western Australia 2021-2029. Accessed from: [here](#).

Strategy	Relevance
<p><b>National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing<sup>62</sup></b></p>	<p>This framework contains guiding principles that clearly articulate the relationship between health outcomes and cultural connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Action areas within the framework include building capacity and promoting wellness by supporting families and communities.</p>
<p><b>WA At Risk Youth Strategy 2022-2027<sup>63</sup></b></p>	<p>The WA At Risk Youth Strategy is a multi-agency, partnership approach to early intervention with at-risk youth. Priority outcomes include supporting timely and targeted interventions and providing trauma-informed and culturally responsive support services.</p>
<p><b>WA Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy 2022 to 2032<sup>64</sup></b></p>	<p>The ACCO Strategy recognises the influence and critical role played by ACCOs in providing culturally safe services to their communities. The three key pillars of the strategy are cultural safety and governance, genuine partnerships, and economic opportunities that support ACCOs to deliver services.</p>

<sup>62</sup> Australian Government. National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>63</sup> Government of Western Australia, At Risk Youth Strategy 2022-2027. Accessed from: [here](#).

<sup>64</sup> Government of Western Australia, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy 2022-2032. Accessed from: [here](#).