



Future Youth Services

Community engagement summary report
September 2025



1 Contents

Background	2
2.1 Key findings	2
2.2 Next steps	3
Consultation overview	3
3.1 Consultation purpose	3
3.2 Consultation process	3
Who we heard from	5
Consultation findings	9
5.1 Item-specific feedback	10
Consultation evaluation	14

Background

This document provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback on the Future Youth Services engagement project.

The City of Casey launched the Future Youth Services engagement to better understand and respond to the needs of young people aged 10–25 across the municipality. This project aims to inform the future design and delivery of youth programs, services, and events, while also supporting partnership development and potentially contributing to advocacy initiatives.

Casey is home to one of Melbourne's largest youth populations, with more than 35,000 young people engaging annually through Council's three Youth Information Centres and various events and programs. Council has sought feedback to ensure these services continue to meet the evolving needs of young people.

The community is invited to participate in a survey and activities, which asks for input on current services, preferred formats and locations, and ideas for future offerings.

This engagement process ran from 11 August until 21 September 2025, and all feedback will help shape the future of youth services in Casey. Ensuring they are inclusive, accessible, and reflective of what matters most to young people.

2.1 Key findings

The engagement process highlighted several consistent themes across the feedback from young people in Casey. Sporting programs and events were a clear favourite, with young people expressing a strong preference for ongoing activities rather than one-off events. These programs were popular across all demographics, with no specific sport dominating, and many participants showing interest in trying new or less common sports. Accessibility was a key factor, with young people preferring programs delivered close to where they already spend time, particularly within or near school grounds and scheduled during or immediately after school hours.

Safety concerns were a recurring issue, especially around crime, gang activity, and family violence. These concerns were often linked to broader social pressures, including the rising cost of living and the challenge of finding employment. Through deeper conversations, young people shared that these pressures could lead to risky behaviours such as theft and involvement in gang-related activities. Mental health and wellbeing also emerged as important areas of concern, with online engagement revealing higher levels of openness around these topics compared to in-person sessions.

Young people expressed a desire for programs that are inclusive, supportive, and reflective of their lived experiences. They want spaces where they can connect with others, attend for a purpose, learn practical life skills and explore creative outlets like music, art, and performance. The feedback paints a picture of a youth community that is eager for opportunities to grow, connect, and feel safe in their local environment.

Further breakdown profiling Casey's youth preferences by municipal regions included:

- Youth in established communities expressed a desire for ongoing sporting activities showing interest in trying new or less common sports. However, basketball was mentioned as a preferred option. Young people were seeking study support, employment readiness programs and job-seeking assistance.
- Youth in growth communities expressed safety concerns especially around crime, gang activity, and family violence. Similarly, young people further expressed a preference for ongoing sporting activities, however travel accessibility was an important issue of concern and is likely to influence participation. Young people were also seeking employment readiness programs and job-seeking assistance.
- Youth in coastal communities highlighted strong preferences for sports and recreation and art and creative programs. Musical theatre was popular; however an engagement pop up held during the Schools on Stage (musical theatre event) was likely to influence engagement responses.

2.2 Next steps

Council officers will incorporate community feedback into the future planning and service delivery of City of Casey Youth Services. Feedback will also be used to develop and strengthen partnerships and inform advocacy campaigns, where appropriate.

Consultation overview

3.1 Consultation purpose

The consultation was designed to gather feedback from young people aged between 10 to 25 years, their parents/carers and the wider City of Casey community.

3.2 Consultation process

The tools and techniques selected for this project were informed by the project content, stakeholders, and the type of feedback sought. A variety of engagement methods were used to reach a broad age cohort, including those who may not already be aware of or engaged with Council's Youth Services. We were aware that some groups—particularly young people aged 18–25—can be more difficult to engage, and deliberately tailored our approach to try and reach them.

Key tools for communicating the project

- Emails to key stakeholders
- Social media
- The Casey Catch up
- Signage and displays
- City of Casey News article
- Seven community pop ups to discuss the project in detail with Council officers
- Six community drop in sessions

Key methods for gathering feedback

- Online engagement through Casey Conversations, including opportunity to provide feedback via survey
- Seven community pop ups
- Six community drop in sessions
- Four static displays, featuring project information and ballot boxes
- Contact email address and phone number of Council Officer provided for interested community members to ask for further information or provide feedback
- Printed information available, as required.

Details

Activity

**11 August – 21 September
2025**
276 contributions

Casey Conversations Website and survey postcards
Project information and online survey hosted on the engagement platform Casey Conversations.

**11 August – 21 September
2025**
880 visitors estimated

Community Pop Ups and Conversations

Council project officers were onsite at multiple pop-ups and drop-in locations to answer questions, gather feedback and promote the project.

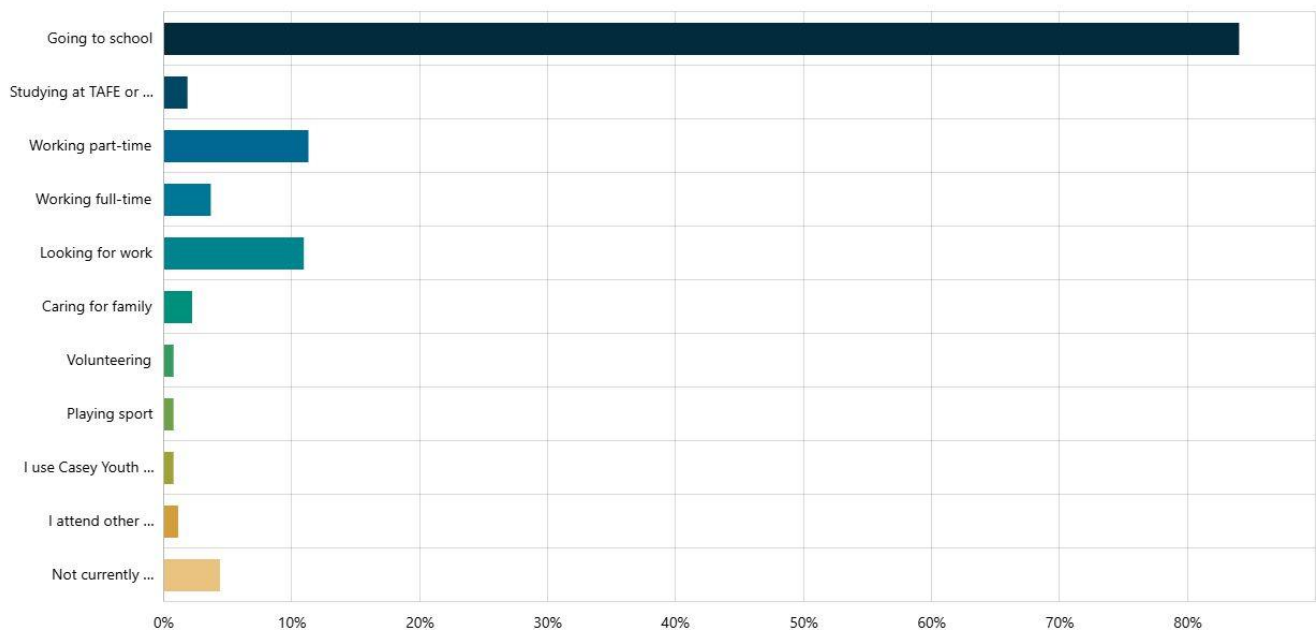
- Casey Stadium
- Alternative education providers
- Narre Warren and Cranbourne bus terminal
- Berwick train station
- City of Casey Libraries
- Aboriginal Gathering Place
- Hampton Park, Narre Warren, Cranbourne Youth Information Centre
- Casey 360 Mobile Information Centre
- Schools on Stage Youth Event
- Casey Fields

Who we heard from

Engagement of Respondents

Survey respondents were asked what they were currently engaged in? Below graph shows their responses.

Multiple selections were available.



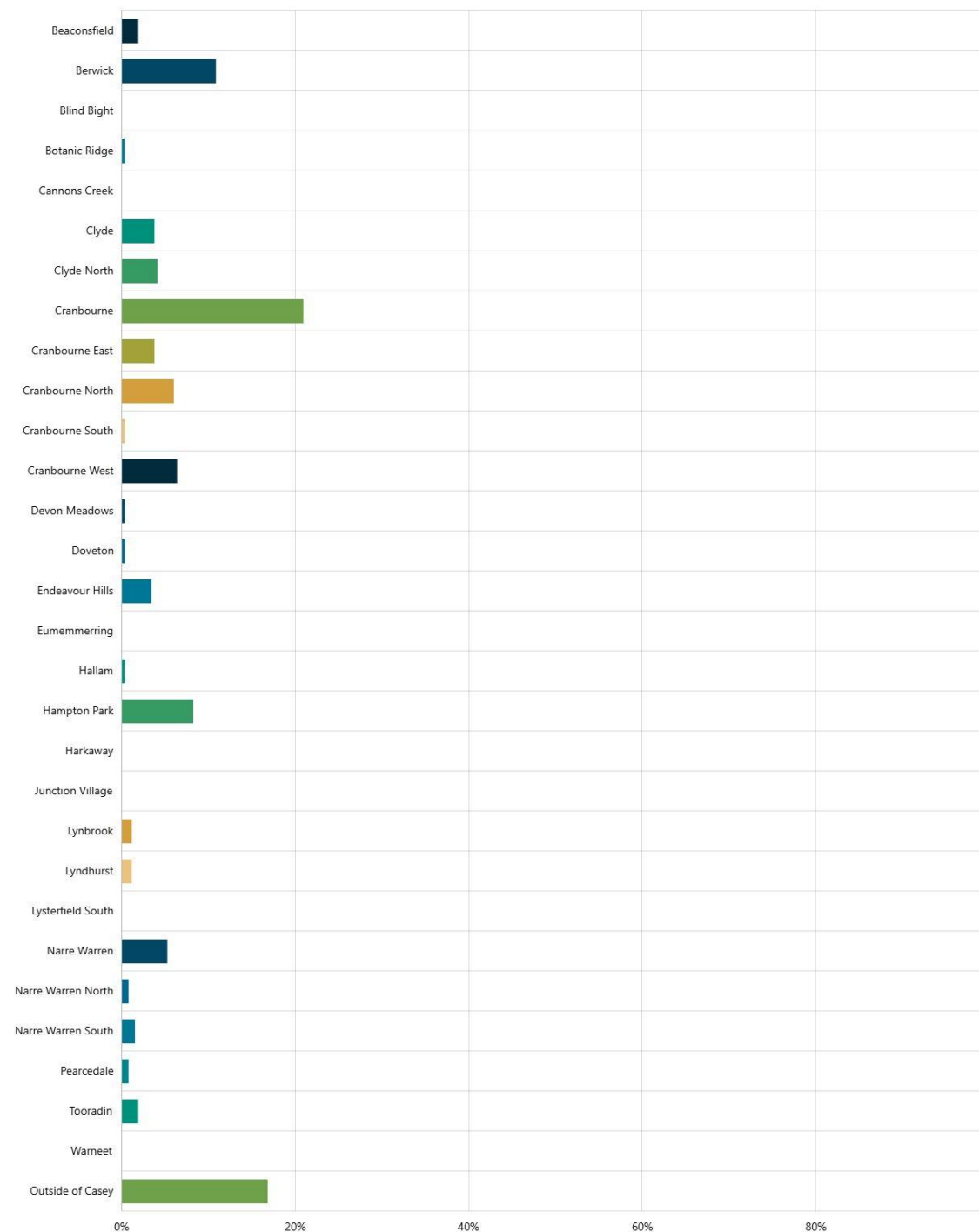
Age selection

Amount

Going to school	231
Studying at TAFE or University	5
Working part time	31
Working full time	10
Looking for work	30
Caring for family	6
Playing sport	2
Use Casey Youth Services	2
I attend other support or recreational services	3
Not currently engaged in any of the above	12

Note: These responses were from online and postcard surveys.

Number of survey responses by Suburb



Suburb selection	Amount
Beaconsfield	5
Berwick	29
Blind Bight	0
Botanic Ridge	1
Cannons Creek	0
Clyde	10

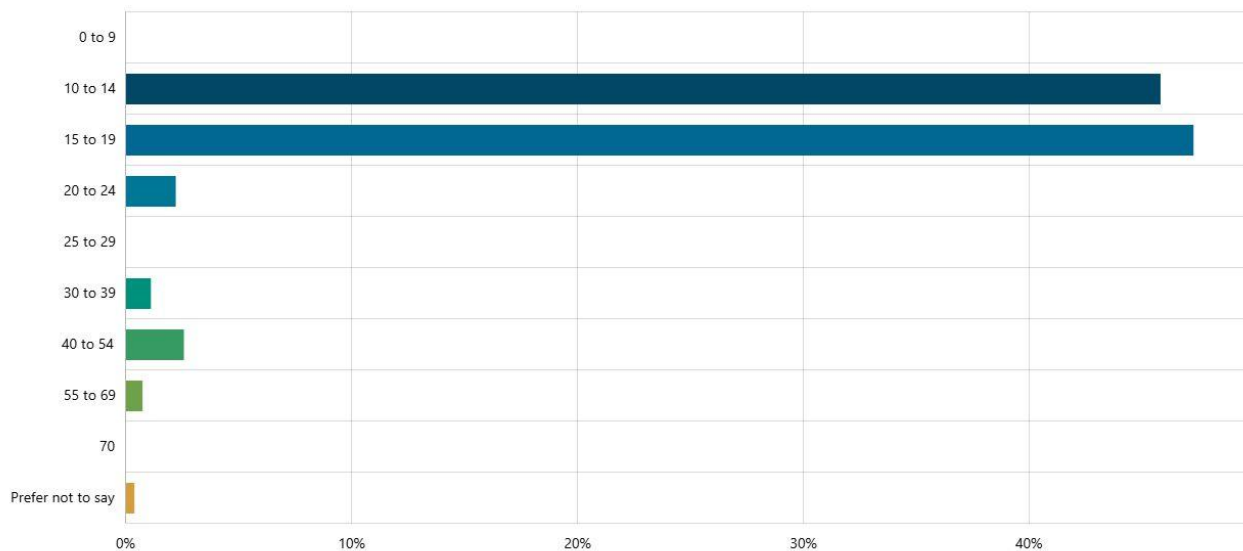
PUBLIC

Clyde North	11
Cranbourne	56
Cranbourne East	10
Cranbourne North	16
Cranbourne South	1
Cranbourne West	17
Devon Meadows	1
Doveton	1
Endeavour Hills	9
Eumemmerring	0
Hallam	1
Hampton Park	22
Harkaway	0
Junction Village	0
Lynbrook	3
Lyndhurst	3
Lysterfield South	0
Narre Warren	14
Narre North	2
Narre Warren South	4
Pearcedale	2
Tooradin	5
Warneet	0
Outside of Casey (neighbouring suburbs)	45

Note: These responses were from online and postcard surveys.

Age of survey Respondents

Survey respondents were asked to provide their age. While 18–25-year-olds were underrepresented in the survey overall, they were slightly more engaged at the pop-up sessions, particularly around the Cranbourne region."



Age selection

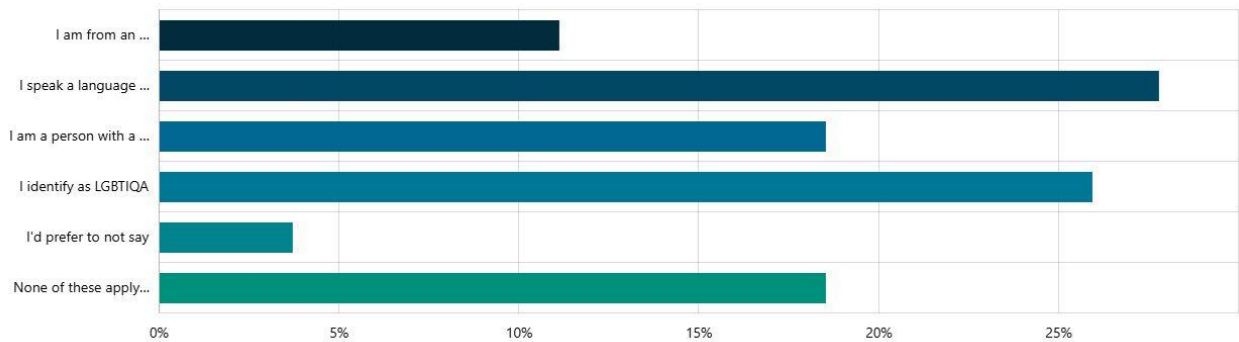
Amount

0 to 9	0
10 to 14	125
15 to 19	129
20 to 24	6
25 to 29	0
30 to 39	3
40 to 54	7
55 to 69	2
70+	0
Prefer not to say	1

Note: These responses were from online and postcard surveys.

Further Demographics of Survey Respondents

Survey respondents were asked to tick as many statements as possible that apply to them. Below graph shows their responses.



Demographic selection

Amount

I am from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background	6
I speak a language other than English at home	15
I am a person with a disability	10
I identify as LGBTIQA	14
Prefer to not say	2
None of these apply to me	10

Note: These responses were from online survey only.

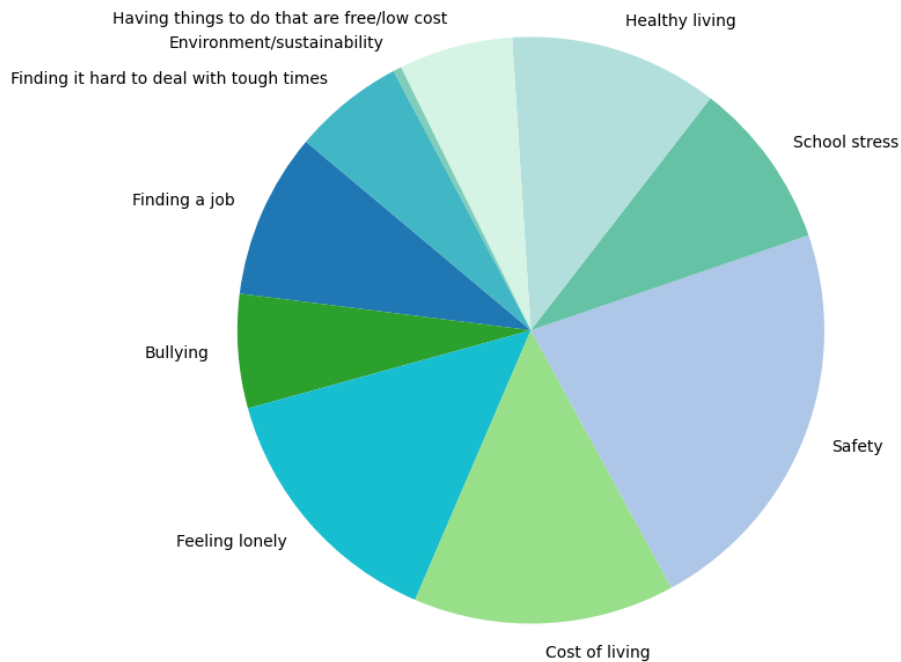
Consultation findings

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on the project. In the interest of stakeholder and community privacy, individual quotes have not been included within this public document. Where there was more than one mention of a topic or item, the number of mentions has been specified in brackets. Conversations with community are included in the item specific feedback table.

5.1 Item-specific feedback

Survey respondents and in person engagement attendees were asked 'What are the biggest challenges young people face in your area?'

Multiple selections were available.

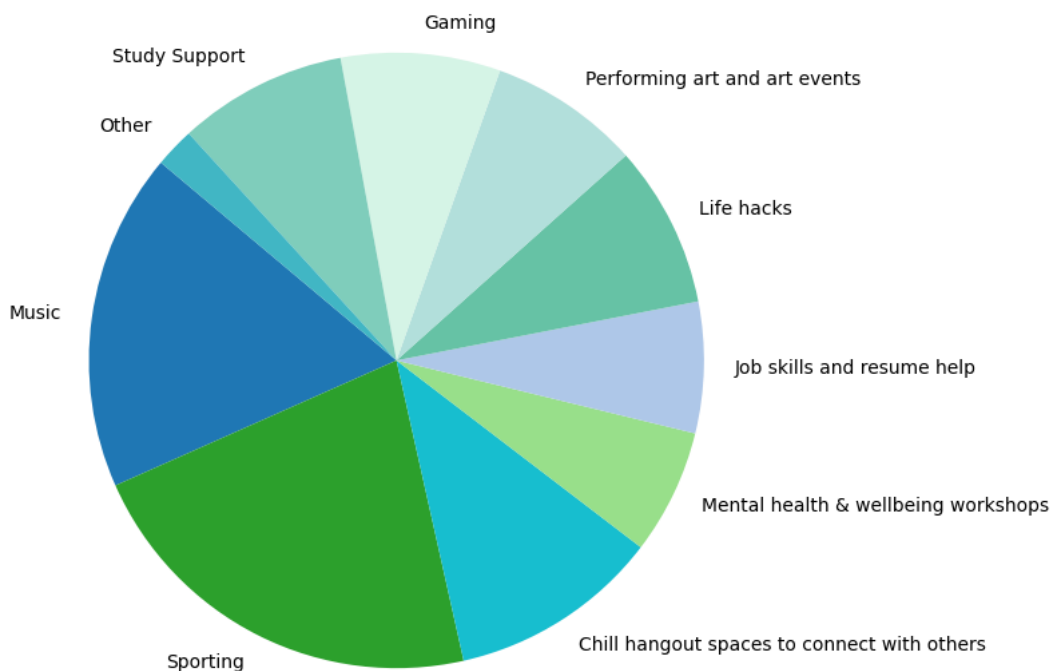


Selection	Amount
Safety (crime, gangs, family violence)	291
Cost of living	188
Feeling lonely, struggling to make friends	186
Healthy living (drugs, alcohol and vaping challenges)	150
School stress	121
Finding a job	119
Bullying	82
Having things to do that are free/low cost	82
Having things to do that are free/low cost	80
Environment/sustainability	6
Other (mental health, knowing what to do as a career)	1

When asked about the biggest challenges facing young people in their area, safety concerns including crime, gangs, and family violence, emerged as the most frequently mentioned issue, with 291 responses. This was followed by cost-of-living pressures (188), feelings of loneliness and social isolation (186), and challenges around healthy living such as drug, alcohol, and vaping use (150). School stress (121), difficulty finding employment (119), and bullying (82) were also commonly cited. Through deeper conversations with young people, it became clear that cost of living pressures and peer influence are contributing to risky behaviours such as theft (referred to as “racking”) and gang involvement. The need to earn money and the pressure to find work were consistent themes across the City of Casey, highlighting the financial stress many young people face as they transition into adulthood, trying to support themselves and their families. This reinforces the importance of providing targeted support, such as career guidance, job-readiness programs, and pathways to employment that are both accessible and tailored to the diverse needs of youth. It also underscores the value of creating inclusive opportunities that consider barriers such as transport, education, and mental health, ensuring that all young people regardless of their background can access meaningful work and financial stability.

Survey respondents and in person engagement attendees were asked ‘What types of events or programs would you want to go to?’

Multiple selections were available.

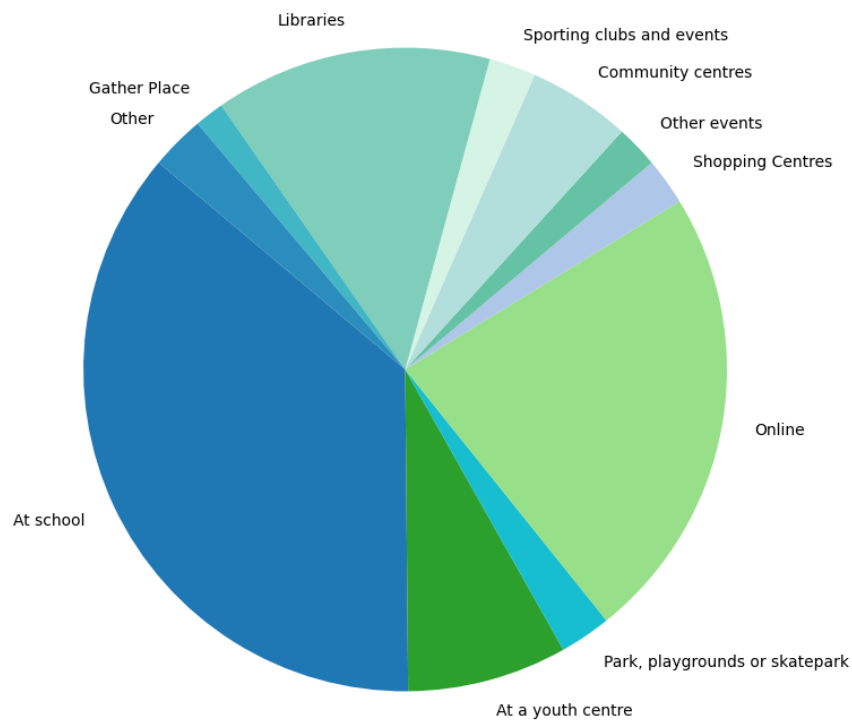


Selection	Amount
Sporting	482
Music	392
Chill hangout spaces to connect with others	245
Study support	196
Life hacks (cooking, budgeting, etc)	188
Gaming	185
Performing art and art events	175
Job skills and resume help	152
Mental health & wellbeing workshops	145
Other (cultural and faith celebrations/groups)	46

Survey respondents and in-person engagement attendees were asked what types of events or programs they would be interested in attending, with multiple selections allowed. Sporting activities were the most popular choice, selected by 482 participants, and were consistently favoured across all age, gender, and cultural groups. While no specific sport was identified, many young people expressed interest in trying new sports such as squash and pickleball. A strong preference was also shown for these activities to be delivered after school and within school grounds. Music events (392), chill hangout spaces (245), and study support (196) were also highly rated. Young people described chill spaces as places to relax, cook or enjoy an afterschool snack, read, and connect with friends. Life skills programs like cooking and budgeting (188), gaming (185), and creative arts (175) also featured prominently. While cultural and faith-based events were selected by fewer respondents (46), deeper conversations revealed a strong desire for spaces where young people could connect with their cultural identity and connect with similar peers, suggesting this is an important area for future program development and partner with other external services and Councils

Survey respondents and in person engagement attendees were asked ‘Where would you prefer these events or programs to happen?’

Multiple selections were available.



Survey Selection	Amount
At school	492
Online	312
Libraries	189
At a Youth Centre	109
Community Centres	70
Other (church)	37
Parks, playgrounds or skateparks	35
Sporting clubs and events	32
Shopping centres	32
Other events	29
Gathering Place	20

Survey respondents and in person engagement attendees were asked ‘When is the best time for you to attend events or programs?’.

When asked about the most suitable times to attend events or programs, 348 respondents indicated a preference for sessions held after school, during school hours, or at lunchtime. Late nights and weekends were favoured by 82 respondents each, while only 34 respondents preferred school holiday periods. These preferences align closely with the strong interest in having programs delivered at or near school locations, particularly during or immediately after school hours, highlighting the importance of transport accessibility and convenience in program scheduling for young people.

Consultation evaluation

This report presents the findings from the analysis of the community feedback gathered during the community engagement from 11 August to 21 September 2025.

The engagement was conducted over six weeks and made available through Casey Conversations. It was promoted across the City of Casey using a targeted, localised approach, with project officers engaging in face-to-face conversations at pop-up events and Council-run services. The format of the engagement was designed to gather feedback from young people aged 10 to 25 years, their parents/carers, and the wider community. It also specifically targeted individuals who may not be currently engaged with or aware of City of Casey youth services, through pop-up sessions held at high-traffic locations.

Survey respondents were asked ‘How did you hear about the consultation on this project?’.

Selection	Amount
In person (pops and events)	880
Council staff member	168
Other (Casey Councillor Facebook, Youth Centre, newspaper, political email)	17
Word of mouth	10
Council website	9
Direct email	9
Social media	8
Signage	8
Letter	2
Casey Catch up	2

Note: These responses were from online and postcard surveys.