



A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan

2017 – 2021



**Our Community:
A Snapshot**

Introduction

A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021 has two companion documents. These are:

- **Action Plan Year One 2017-2018** which identifies directions to guides our work over the next year; and
- **Our Community: A Snapshot** which highlights the key community evidence which has assisted us to shape our priorities and actions.

Our Community: A Snapshot has ten sections. The first is the Monash Community Profile, which contains overall population information. The remaining nine sections are divided between the three priorities within **A Healthy and Resilient Monash Framework**, as follows:

PRIORITY	COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS
	1. Monash Community Profile
ACTIVE & HEALTHY	2. Healthy Lifestyles 3. Healthy Minds 4. Healthy Environments
ENGAGED, CONFIDENT & CONNECTED	5. Participation 6. Belonging 7. Supported
SAFE & RESPECTFUL	8. Life Journey 9. Fair for All 10. Feeling Safe

Monash Population Profile provides a snapshot of population characteristics which include the first release of information from Census 2016

This will be progressively updated as more information is released.

Suburbs

The City of Monash includes the suburbs of Ashwood, Burwood (part), Chadstone, Clayton, Glen Waverley, Hughesdale, Huntingdale, Mount Waverley, Pinewood, Mulgrave, Notting Hill, Oakleigh, Oakleigh East, Oakleigh South (part) and Wheelers Hill.

Population

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Estimated Resident Population (ERS) for 2016 was 190,234. The Census usual resident population of the City of Monash in 2016 was 182,617 residents living in 70,624 dwellings with an average household size of 2.7.¹ This is an increase of 12,899 people from 2011, when the ERS was recorded as 177,345.²

Age Profile

The median age of Monash residents is 37 years, which is slightly older than the median age of the Metropolitan Melbourne population which is 36 years.³

The major differences between the age structure of the City of Monash and Greater Melbourne are:

- Monash has a larger percentage (17.1%) of 'seniors' (65+ years) compared to Metropolitan Melbourne (13.5%);
- Monash has a larger percentage (13.3%) of young people categorised as 'tertiary education and independence' (18 - 24 years) compared to Greater Melbourne (10.0%);
- A smaller percentage (19.5%) of 'parents and homebuilders' (35 - 49 years) compared to Greater Melbourne (21.1%).⁴

Cultural Diversity in Monash

Monash has a high level of cultural diversity, with at least 51.6% of residents born in another country.⁵ 52.6% speak a language other than English at home; the most frequently spoken languages are Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese and Sinhalese.⁶ The rate of people arriving from overseas to live in the City of Monash is almost twice the Victorian average although the percentage of humanitarian arrivals is low.⁷

Countries of Birth (born overseas)

The percentage of the Monash population that was born overseas is 51.6% which is in contrast to Metropolitan Melbourne with 36.2% born overseas.⁸

The top three overseas countries of birth are China (12.5%), India (5.3%), and Sri Lanka (3.6%).⁹

Top 4 non-English Languages Spoken at Home

The top four non-English languages spoken at home are Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese and Sinhalese.¹⁰

Refer to Our Community; A Snapshot Sheet 9 for more information on Cultural Diversity.

Fertility Rate

The City of Monash has a fertility rate of 1.57 which is lower than the Victorian average of 1.82.¹¹

Unemployment Rate

In the March 2017 quarter Monash recorded an unemployment rate of 3.34% which is significantly lower than the Victorian average of 6.10%.¹²

Disability

In 2016, 8,836 people or 4.8% of the population in the City of Monash reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to a disability. This figure is close to the Metropolitan Melbourne average of 4.7%.¹³

In the City of Monash there are 16,993 carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or who are ageing.¹⁴

Refer to Our Community; A Snapshot Sheet 9 for more information on Disability.

The Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (LGCSS) 2017

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

Results for Monash City Council for the past 3 years have shown that there is widespread community concern about population growth and the capacity of local government, infrastructure and services to cope with the pressures from a quickly growing population.

In the June 2017 LGCSS Report it was concluded that **“for the coming 12 months, Monash ... should pay particular attention to.... planning for population growth”** (pg. 14, LGCSS Survey 2017 – City of Monash. Research sample size of 400 residents).

June 2017

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ACTIVE & HEALTHY

A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan



2017 – 2021

2. Healthy Lifestyles

3. Healthy Minds

4. Healthy Environments

A city dedicated to optimal health and wellbeing for its community

Under the banner of Healthy Lifestyles consideration is given to an overview of the physical health of Monash residents and the lifestyle factors that the evidence tells us have significant impacts on physical health and wellbeing.

A. PHYSICAL HEALTH

The following table summarises data provided by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)¹

HEALTH CONDITIONS	Monash Measure	LGA Rank	State Measure
People reporting asthma	9.8%	58	10.9%
People reporting type 2 diabetes	5.4%	26	5.0%
People reporting high blood pressure	27.1%	35	25.9%
People reporting heart disease	5.8%	65	6.9%
People reporting osteoporosis	4.6%	59	5.3%
People reporting arthritis	18.3%	63	19.8%
People with dementia (estimated) per 1,000 population	20.4	31	16.8
People reporting being obese	14.4%	68	18.8%
Females reporting being obese	16.5%	57	17.2%
Males reporting being obese	11.5%	71	20.4%
People reporting being pre-obese	31.6%	38	31.2%
Females reporting being pre-obese	19.9%	63	24.3%
Males reporting being pre-obese	43.5%	24	38.4%
Cancer incidence per 1,000 population	5.3	55	5.2
Cancer incidence per 1,000 females	5.1	48	4.8
Cancer incidence per 1,000 males	5.6	58	5.6
People reporting poor dental health	5.4%	46	5.6%
Notifications of pertussis per 100,000 population	71.3	44	80.9
Notifications of influenza per 100,000 population	268.1	34	293.8
Notifications of Chlamydia per 100,000 population	228.5	64	330.7

LIFE EXPECTANCY, WELLBEING, INJURY & MORTALITY	Monash Measure	LGA Rank	State Measure
Female life expectancy	85.8	3	84.4
Male life expectancy	81.5	6	80.3
People reporting fair or poor health status	16.8%	28	15.9%
Females reporting fair or poor health status	17.0%	18	15.6%
Males reporting fair or poor health status	16.0%	35	16.2%
People reporting high/very high psychological distress	12.6%	35	12.6%
People reporting adequate work-life balance	57.1%	13	53.1%
Unintentional injuries treated in hospital per 1,000 population	40.7	70	61.0
Intentional injuries treated in hospital per 1,000 population	2.0	64	3.0
Unintentional injuries due to falls	45.8%	4	38.7%
Indirect standardised death rate per 1,000 population	4.4	75	5.3
Avoidable deaths among people aged less than 75 years, all causes, per 100,000 population	70.0	77	109.0
Avoidable deaths among people aged less than 75 years, cancer, per 100,000 population	17.8	72	23.8
Avoidable deaths among people aged less than 75 years, cardiovascular diseases, per 100,000 population	12.8	76	23.0
Avoidable deaths among people aged less than 75 years, respiratory diseases, per 100,000 population	3.4	67	8.1

Cancer

The five leading cancers in Victoria are prostate, bowel, breast, lung and melanoma.²

In 2014, the Monash cancer incidence per 100,000 population was 544.1 comparable to the Victorian measure which was 522. The percentage of avoidable deaths per 100,000 population in Monash was 48.9% comparable to the Victorian measure of 61.4%.³

Dementia

Dementia is the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians (aged 65 years or older) and the third leading cause of disability burden overall.⁴ There are more than 353,800 Australians living with dementia.⁵ This number is expected to increase to 400,000 in less than five years. Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected to be almost 900,000 by 2050.⁶

The number of people in the City of Monash with dementia in 2015 was estimated to be 3,084 and the number of Monash residents estimated to have dementia by 2050 is 8,491, an increase of 175%.⁷

Diabetes

Around 1.7 million Australians have diabetes. This includes all types of diagnosed diabetes (1.2 million known and registered) as well as silent, undiagnosed type 2 diabetes (up to 500,000 estimated).⁸

Diabetes is the fastest growing chronic condition in Australia; increasing at a faster rate than other chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer. All types of diabetes are increasing in prevalence:

- Type 1 diabetes accounts for 10% of all diabetes and is increasing;
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for 85% of all diabetes and is increasing; and
- Gestational diabetes in pregnancy is increasing.⁹

More than 100,000 Australians have developed diabetes in the past year.

Monash currently has 10,013 residents (5.2% of the population) registered as having diabetes, which is comparable to the Victorian average of 5.1%.¹⁰

Babies and Children

6.8% of Monash babies are recorded as having low birth weights, compared to 6.6% state wide.¹¹

Monash infants that are fully breast fed at 3 months is 54.8%, which is favourable to the state wide figure which is 51.8%.¹²

Children fully immunised between 24 and 27 months is 89.3% in Monash and 90.5% for the state of Victoria.¹³

Mental Health

Mental Health represents a significant issue for this community. Mental illnesses are very common in Australia and about 1 in 4 people between the ages of 14-25 will experience mental illness at some point.¹⁴

For more detailed analysis of mental health please refer to Sheet 3 Healthy Minds.

B. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The many benefits of regular physical activity can include:

- Reduce the risk of, or help manage, type 2 diabetes;
- Reduce the risk of, or help manage, cardiovascular disease (CVD);
- Maintain and/or improve blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels;
- Reduce the risk of, and assist with rehabilitation from some cancers;
- Prevent unhealthy weight gain and assist with weight loss;
- Build strong muscles and bones;
- Create opportunities for socialising and meeting new people;
- Help to prevent and manage mental health problems; and
- Help to develop and maintain overall physical and mental well-being.¹⁵

Physical Activity Guidelines

Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines outline the minimum levels of physical activity required for health benefits. The Guidelines also include ways to incorporate physical activity and minimise sedentary behaviour in everyday life.

New physical activity guidelines suggest at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Walking can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and fitness.¹⁶

The World Health Organisation confirms that regular physical activity of moderate intensity – such as walking, cycling, or doing sports – has significant benefits for health. At all ages, the benefits of being physically active outweigh potential harm, for example through accidents. Some physical activity is better than doing none. By becoming more active throughout the day in relatively simple ways, people can quite easily achieve the recommended activity levels.¹⁷

Consequently, in 2004, the World Health Assembly adopted the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. This Strategy describes the actions needed to increase physical activity worldwide. The Strategy urges stakeholders to take action at global, regional and local levels to increase physical activity.¹⁸

Obesity and Overweight

Overweight and obesity is measured at the population level for adults using the Body Mass Index (BMI) which is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared.¹⁹

Overweight is measured at a BMI of 25 or more with obesity determined at a BMI of 30 or more. These cut-off points are based on associations between and chronic disease and mortality and have been adopted for use internationally by the World Health Organisation.²⁰

Being overweight or obese can have serious negative health consequences, and the effects of overweight and obesity are a leading health concern in Australia. Carrying extra weight can lead to cardiovascular disease (mainly heart disease and stroke), type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthritis, and some cancers. These conditions cause premature death and substantial disability.²¹

Overweight and obesity rates in Australia are some of the highest in the world. In 2014/15, 11.2 million Australian adults were overweight or obese, equivalent to a national rate of 63.4%. National rates of overweight and obesity have increased in recent decades, up from 56.3% in 1995.²²

Overall, a higher percentage of men (70.8%) were overweight or obese than women (56.3%). The percentage of adults who were overweight or obese generally increased with age.²³

Alarming, this means that two (2) in three (3) Australian adults are overweight or obese, and 1 in 4 Australian children are overweight or obese.²⁴

Obesity & Overweight in Monash

The LGA measure of people within the City of Monash who are obese is 14.4% which is slightly less than the Victorian measure of 18.8%.²⁵ The percentage of people within the City of Monash who are overweight is 31.6% comparable to the Vic measure of 31.2%.²⁶

In a recent study from Victoria University's Australian Health Policy Collaboration, it was established that Clayton had the highest rates of children with weight problems with 42.4% considered overweight or obese.²⁷

Physical Inactivity

Physical inactivity is now identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality. Physical inactivity levels are increasing in many countries with major implications for the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and the general health of the population worldwide.²⁸

The significance of physical activity on public health is clear and the WHO and governments worldwide promote and encourage physical activity as critical factor in the prevention of NCDs.²⁹

The evidence is conclusive - regular physical activity has many health benefits and plays an important role in promoting healthy weight and preventing disease.

The most commonly reported barriers to physical activity among physically inactive Australians are a lack of time (40%) and injury or disability (20%). Cost however is also a significant barrier. Regardless of how socioeconomic status is measured, studies repeatedly find that men and women from low socioeconomic groups have a higher incidence of sedentary behaviour or insufficient physical activity to benefit health. Within this group, women in particular report lower levels of physical activity.³⁰

More than two thirds of adult Australian females are classified as being sedentary or having low levels of exercise. Barriers to participation include: (i) Confidence, knowledge and belief in their own ability, (ii) lack of motivation, (iii) time and (iv) cost.³¹

Physical Activity in Monash

Table 1: Snapshot of Physical Activity in Monash provides some insight into the nature and level of physical activity in Monash compared with both metropolitan Melbourne and more broadly across Victoria. Some points to note include:

- Monash is on par with metropolitan Melbourne and Victoria with 17.4% of the population participating in no physical activity in the week prior to the survey. While Monash is performing marginally better than the rest of the state, 17.4% is too high a percentage of non-activity;
- Monash is lagging well behind on the measure of 4 or more days of physical activity per week; and
- Monash residents prefer non-organised physical activity over organised physical activity - this is consistent with both the metropolitan and Victorian average.³²

Table 1: Snapshot of Physical Activity in Monash ³³

MEASURE	Monash	Metro Average	Vic Average
Physical Activity 0 days per week	17.4%	18.1%	18.9%
Physical Activity 4 or more days per week	37.5%	41.4%	41.3%
Participation in an organised (e.g. club) physical activity, weekly	7.7%	8.7%	9.8%
Participation in non-organised activity, weekly: usual activity—jogging/running	17.6%	15.1%	14.0%
Participation in non-organised activity, weekly: usual activity - gym or fitness	8.2%	12.4%	11.8%

C. NUTRITION

A balanced diet, including eating sufficient fruit and vegetables, reduces a person's risk of developing long-term health conditions including cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Monash residents had an average of 2.2 serves of vegetables per day, which is the same as the Victorian average.³⁴ Monash residents reported eating an average of 1.7 serves of fruit each day, which is similar to the Victorian average of 1.6.³⁵ On average, Monash residents drank 5.5 cups of water per day. This is similar to the Victorian average of 5.4%.³⁶

Almost half of the Monash population do not meet fruit and vegetable intake guidelines (48.1%), comparable with the Victorian measure of 48.6%.³⁷ However this is an improvement on previous results for Monash in 2013 (52.4%). The percentage of people consuming sugar sweetened soft-drink everyday is 10.2% comparable with the Victorian measure of 11.2%.³⁸

Food Security

The percentage of Monash residents that ran out of food in the past 12 months and could not afford to buy more was 2.7%. The Victorian figure was 4.6%.³⁹

D. LIFESTYLE FACTORS

The following table summarises lifestyle and behaviour data provided by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)⁴⁰

HEALTH CONDITIONS	LGA Measure	LGA Rank	State Measure
People aged over 18 who are current smokers	10.8%	61	13.1%
People at increased risk of alcohol-related harm on a single occasion of drinking	36.7%	70	42.5%
People who do not meet dietary guidelines for either fruit or vegetable consumption	48.1%	52	48.6%
Females who do not meet dietary guidelines for either fruit or vegetable consumption	44.0%	39	43.4%
Males who do not meet dietary guidelines for either fruit or vegetable consumption	54.4%	51	54.0%
People who drink sugar-sweetened soft drink every day	10.2%	57	11.2%
People who do not meet physical activity guidelines	55.1%	32	54.0%
Females who do not meet physical activity guidelines	59.4%	20	56.1%
Males who do not meet physical activity guidelines	50.5%	47	52.0%
Breast cancer screening participation	50.4%	60	52.0%
Cervical cancer screening participation	58.1%	55	61.5%
Bowel cancer screening participation	38.0%	52	37.6%

Alcohol

Alcohol is one of the top ten avoidable causes of disease and death in Victoria. Whilst the majority of Victorians drink responsibly, drinking has a collective cost borne by all of us. Through its links to injury, accidents, violence and physical and mental illnesses, it has been estimated to cost \$4.3 billion every year to the health and justice systems, workplaces, families and individual Victorians.⁴¹

13.3% of Monash residents were identified as being at risk of short-term harm from alcohol in a given month, which is significantly lower than the Victorian estimate (29.4%).⁴² Compared to all Victorians, a significantly lower proportion of Monash residents identified as being at very high risk of short-term harm each month (Monash 3.6% compared with Victoria 9.2%). 15.5% of residents living in Monash agreed that getting inebriated every now and then is okay. This is significantly lower than the proportion of Victorians who agreed (27.9%).⁴³

Monash Victorian Accident & Emergency Data – Alcohol-related diagnosis

Over the past 3 years, the annual amount of emergency department presentations from an alcohol related diagnosis decreased from 205 cases to 157 cases within the City of Monash.⁴⁴ Data shows that 4 out of 5 of Monash's neighbouring Council's also show an overall decrease in presentations.⁴⁵

Drugs

Drug crime has surged in Victoria during the past five years.⁴⁶ Demand for illegal narcotics such as ice is growing. Use and possession offences for all drugs have skyrocketed 68% in the five-year period, while cultivation, trafficking and manufacturing offences have jumped 25%.⁴⁷ In a cluster of postcodes in the Monash region including Clayton, Oakleigh and Mount Waverley, drug trafficking offences tripled from 45 in 2012-13 to 148 in 2015/2016.⁴⁸

Crystal methamphetamine ('ice') is a stimulant drug, which means it speeds up the messages travelling between the brain and the body. It's stronger, more addictive and therefore has more harmful side effects than the powder form of methamphetamine known as speed.⁴⁹ Ice usually comes as small chunky clear crystals that look like ice. It can also come as white or brownish crystal-like powder with a strong smell and bitter taste.⁵⁰

The National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) 2013 identified that the use of ice (or crystal methamphetamine) more than doubled, from 22% in 2010 to 50% in 2013.⁵¹

Crime statistics of family violence have been linked with the drug 'ice'. Connections have been made with the use of ice and its impact on families, including disruption to relationships and aggressive, hostile, violent behaviour is a physiological effect of its use.⁵²

Smoking

Tobacco smoking is one of the largest causes of preventable illness and death in Australia.⁵³ Second hand smoke can cause disease in people who do not smoke. There is no level of exposure to second hand smoke that is free of risk.⁵⁴

10.8% of Monash residents aged over age 18 years are current smokers. This compares favourably to the state measure which is 13.1%.⁵⁵

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

The most highly ranked community health and wellbeing issue was “encouraging people to be physically active” (equal to preventing violence against women and encouraging respectful relationships) was ranked at a score of 2.7 out of six.

There were a total of 224 separate responses received from respondents as to ways to encourage people to be more physically active. The most common suggestions for encouraging people to be physically active were around reasonable prices / or cheaper access fees for sports and recreation facilities, the provision of parks, gardens, walking tracks, and in some cases outdoor exercise equipment, arranging free community sporting activities and options, and improving the maintenance and appearance of public facilities. It is noteworthy that of those citing reasons for not participating in physical activity, 24.6% of females nominated cost as an issue, while only 8.2% of males nominated cost.

“There are too many people suffering with mental health issues. This in turn affects the whole community.” (Anonymous respondent)

“Chronic health problems impact not only me, but my family. Pain and disease management helps me to be more independent, reduces pressure on the rest of my family, and enables me to feel better about myself (no depression).” (Anonymous respondent)

“We’re a sporty family and with growing boy twins, we want to teach them the healthy way to eat and stay active. To give them the tools to live a healthy life as they grow up.” (Anonymous respondent)

May 2017

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Positive experiences at key life transition points impact mental health and set the scene for adjusting well to the next phase of life

Council traditionally plays a significant role in supporting people through life transitions, and in particular:

- For children from the time of their birth and through early childhood;
- For families of young children and as their children grow;
- For young people during adolescence; and
- For older residents as they age.

Mental health is a significant issue for community. Mental illnesses are very common in Australia, with 1 in 4 people between the ages of 15-24 being likely to experience a mental illness at some point.¹ Some of the things that may contribute to mental health issues are:

- Biological factors: mental illnesses can be passed on genetically from parents to their children;
- Early life events: traumatic events that happen during early childhood, such as neglect or abuse, can have a strong influence on mental health later in life;

- Recent life events: there are many events that can impact mental health, such as resettlement in a new community, persistent stress from study or work, or a traumatic event such as the loss of a loved one;
- Internal factors: mental illnesses can also arise from private thoughts and feelings and can seriously impact self-esteem; and
- Misuse of drugs: drugs, including alcohol, have all sorts of different effects on the brain and the results are very unpredictable. One of the common effects of consuming too many drugs is a negative impact on mental health.²

Mental Health Statistics

- One in four people are likely to develop a mental illness between the ages of 15 – 24 years;
- One in five employees are likely to be experiencing a mental health condition, including anxiety, brain diseases such as Alzheimer's and psychosis such as schizophrenia;
- Depression is the leading disease-burden in countries such as Australia;
- Many people with mental illness are untreated: some self medicate with alcohol or non prescribed drugs;
- Depression typically first appears in people aged 20-25 years;
- Depression symptoms result in more than six million working days lost each year in Australia;
- Severe depression is rated in the same disability category as terminal stage cancer;
- Up to a third of people experience an anxiety disorder at least once;

- Mental health disorders cost Australian workplaces over \$11 billion every year in absenteeism, reduced productivity and compensation claims; and
- The cost of mental illness substance abuse to the community is even greater.³

Mental Health in Monash

Consultations undertaken prior to developing ***A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021*** utilised mental wellbeing indicators. These were level of resilience, indicators of neighbourhood connection and trust, and attitudes to gender equality in relationships. Monash residents reported an average resilience score of 6.2 out of 8. This is similar to Victorian residents, who reported an average resilience score of 6.4. The proportion of Monash residents who agreed that people in their neighbourhood are willing to help each other out was 69.0%, by comparison the Victorian estimate was 74.1%.⁴

The number of registered mental health clients within the City of Monash per 1000 population is 7.4 comparable to the Victorian measure of 11.9⁵

Parents and Families

Families form a significant part of the Monash community, with almost half of all households being homes where there are children or young people. Children and young people in Monash are growing up in a place where they are highly valued, with strong communities and networks to support them to grow, learn and thrive.⁶

Monash parents articulate the importance of support and advice received through the maternal and child health service.⁷

Anxiety and depression following child birth and during early parenthood affects around 1-7 women and 1-10 men.⁸

Post natal psychosis is a form of acute mental illness that affects 1-2 in every thousand women after birth and is potentially life threatening.⁹

Monash parents articulate the importance of support and advice as their children grow up and as they become adolescence.¹⁰

Young People

Adolescence is a time of rapid physical, emotional, cognitive and social development. Intensive brain remodelling is underway and this continues through to the mid 20's. Peer influences become an important driver and this can be challenging for family relationships. Culture, ethnicity, gender and sexuality become strong influences on the developing young person. Adolescence is marked by heightened emotional sensitivity and impulsive actions.

Care must be taken to guide and support young people to remain safe and engaged. Vulnerabilities can emerge which include social disengagement, mental health issues and extreme risk taking behaviours.¹¹ This highlights the importance of early risk identification and intervention and the provision of school and community supports for personal growth through learning and skills development.¹²

In 2016 Mission Australia conducted its 15th annual survey of young people aged 15-19 years. The survey was distributed nationally and aimed to identify the values and issues of concern to young people.¹³ In 2016 young people of both genders nominated stress, school or study problems and body image as the three leading issues of personal concern.¹⁴ These three nominated areas have remained the top three since the surveys inception in 2012.

In 2016 Mission Australia consulted young people for the first time on whether they felt they had been discriminated against. 39.1% of young women felt they had been discriminated against because of their gender. Whilst 30.8% of young people surveyed felt they had been discriminated because of culture or race, 22.1% of young people felt they had been discriminated against because of their age.¹⁵

The three leading issues of concern for Australian young people were alcohol and drugs (28.7%), equity and discrimination (27%) and mental health (20.6%). The area of concern that differed between males and females was not discrimination but rather mental health. Australian females who were surveyed were significantly more concerned about mental health compared to their male counterparts. 26.2% of females felt that mental health was one of the most important issues in Australia today compared to 14.1% surveyed males.¹⁶

Youth and the Victorian Government

In 2016 the Victorian Government consulted more than 2000 young Victorians to obtain a better understanding of the issues young people identify as important and what areas require possible reform.¹⁷

Young people identified the importance of a having an equitable education system where there are supportive, flexible options to assist young people. It is very important to ensure young people remain engaged in learning and reaching their full potential and this can only be achieved with a system that meets a broad range of needs.¹⁸ Young people need to be provided with quality job training opportunities, thus reducing barriers to employment for young people entering the workforce. Greater investment is required in youth mental health so that young people receive timely and appropriate support.¹⁹

LGBTIQ Youth

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer/Questioning (LGBTIQ) youth frequently report facing discriminatory barriers that may prevent them from expressing who they are and impact their ability in reaching their full potential. LGBTIQ young people:

- frequently do not access health services due to fear of discrimination;
- experience higher rates of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, homelessness, experience of violence, disengagement from schooling, and poor physical health outcomes;
- have poor mental health in comparison to their heterosexual peers; and
- have higher rates of suicidality - suicide rates are 6 times higher for same-sex attracted young people (20-42% compared with 7-13%).²⁰

The Victorian Government addresses the above mentioned issues through The Safe Schools Coalition who provide training and resources to Victorian Schools to increase teacher's capacity to support LGBTIQ students and to address issues such as bullying. The Victorian Government also offers Health Equal Youth Grants to promote the rights, health and wellbeing of young LGBTIQ Victorians.²¹

Young People in Monash

There are approximately 46,000 Monash young people aged 10-25 years accounting for one quarter of all Monash residents. Monash ranks second highest out of all 79 Victorian local government areas for the number of 19 year olds completing year 12 (97.1%) - this compares with a Victorian measure of 84.2%.²²

Through consultations associated with the development of the City of Monash Youth Plan 2016-2017, Monash young people identified five key focus areas: public safety, libraries, mental health, public transport and young people's constructed environment.²³

One of the strategic directions/broad areas for action identified in Monash's Children, Young People and Family Strategy 2016-17 is Safety and Health - children and young people should feel safe and confident and have a strong sense of self. Their physical, developmental, social and mental health needs should be supported and developed so that they can adapt to new challenges and changes in their lives.²⁴

The strategy recognises that parents and family have the most significant influence on a child and young person's learning, development and wellbeing. Monash Council is ideally placed to have a profound impact on the quality of life experienced by Monash children, young people and families and strongly believe that communities really matter. The strategy has been developed utilising a strong research and policy base that underpins positive child health and development outcomes across the life course.²⁵

Some of the services and facilities within Monash to support young people include:

- Generalist youth support available to young people aged 10-25 years with a significant connection with the City of Monash;
- School Focussed Youth Service program that supports students in the 60 primary and secondary schools across Monash who are deemed to be at risk of disengagement;
- Programs including Activate, Monash Youth Film Festival, Quiksound and Monash Young Woman's Leadership Program;
- Coordination of the Monash Youth Workers Network for youth workers in schools and community agencies;
- Coordination of the Monash Young Persons Reference Group and Youth Ambassadors Program;

- Power Neighbourhood House in Chadstone delivers a 'Connecting Teens' program for young people seeking to build confidence and social networks; and
- Provision of civic facilities that support children, families and young people to be healthy and active.

Young people account for a significant proportion of our community and each level of government is committed to providing better outcomes for our future leaders. In recent years each level of government has significantly improved how they engage and consult young people and this has greatly assisted in creating more inclusive, stronger communities.

Older People

Ageing in Australia

Over the next several decades, population ageing is projected to have implications for Australia, including: health, size of the working-age population, housing and demand for skilled labour.²⁶ Like most developed countries, Australia's population is ageing as a result of sustained low birth rates and increasing life expectancy.²⁷ This has resulted in proportionally fewer children (under 15 years of age) in the population and a proportionally larger increase in those aged 65 and over.²⁸

Ageing in Monash

Monash continues to have an ageing population, with 22.5% of the Monash population being over 60 years of age.²⁹ This is higher than the greater Melbourne average of 18.2%.³⁰ Monash has a large percentage of seniors aged 70 - 84 (10.3%) compared to greater Melbourne (7.4%).³¹ Monash residents have higher life expectancy than the state average: females (85.8 years) males (81.5 years) compared to 80.3 years and 84.4 years respectively.³²

In 2013, the City of Monash had one of the highest projected growths in absolute dementia numbers, ranking 3 out of 79 Local Government Areas in Victoria for dementia prevalence from 2013 - 2050.³³ Today, providing adequate and cost-effective care for the growing number of older persons, their families and community involves and requires multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary integration and cooperation.³⁴

The World Health Organisation defines active ageing as the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.³⁵ Council has developed the Age Friendly Monash, a Positive Ageing Plan 2015 - 2019 based on the World Health Organisation's (WHO), 'Age Friendly Cities' framework.³⁶ The WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities seek to improve the living experience of its senior residents and the Age Friendly Cities supports their older adults in the following eight domains:

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Services.³⁷

Monash Council values the importance of maximising opportunities for older residents to participate in healthy activities and develop and maintain healthy lifestyles and the development of Council's Age Friendly Monash, A Positive Ageing Plan 2015 - 2019 outlines a wide range of social, cultural, health promotion and intergenerational actions and initiatives that Council will undertake over the five years from 2015-2019. This plan aims to strengthen our community where older people's skills and experiences are valued and opportunities to participate in all aspects of social, community and public life is available and enhanced.³⁸

Extensive consultation was undertaken with older residents to inform the development of the Age Friendly Monash, A Positive Ageing Plan 2015 - 2019 to identify issues, barriers and potential opportunities and solutions to creating an age friendly city. The process included 36 focus groups held across Monash, with existing community groups and an on line and paper based survey which was sent to older adults who receive services in Monash, and was completed by 738 older adults. Findings from this consultation identified that respondents defined age friendly as:

- Happiness, security and good neighbours;
- Being treated with respect and offered help when needed; and
- A community where the older population, regardless of ability, race or religious belief, is able to connect to whatever services, social activities or communities they choose.³⁹

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey and Monash Children, Young People and Family Strategy

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

“I love my family and I want them to be happy and to work less”

“There are increased pressures on families due to high housing and living costs”

“If you’re in a good headspace, you’re more likely to make better life choices”

“Life is complex for kids today, it’s no wonder many face mental health issues”

By far the most important health and wellbeing issues for Monash residents over 65 were:

- **Feeling safe and being treated with care and respect;**
- **Getting the right health care and support services;**
- **Participating in community activities; and**
- **Accessing the library.**

May 2017

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A community where everyone has the right to enjoy and access healthy environments

In this snapshot we explore how we foster, develop and build healthy environments that promote health and wellbeing by:

- **Creating spaces** that ensure community needs, both now and into the future, are central to the physical design of our buildings.
- Providing accessible public **open spaces** for sport, play, recreation and active transport.
- Enhancing **liveability** by regularly considering how the community measures liveability and refining our approaches based on what the community tells us.

The Public Health Division of the Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, local governments and other stakeholders, has developed “Environments for Health”.

This framework for municipal public health planning incorporates an awareness of the social, economic, natural and built environments and their impact on health and wellbeing. This framework encourages municipal public health planning of a high standard and consistency in scope and approach across the State, while still valuing diversity. Importantly, it also aims to

improve community health and wellbeing by promoting the integration of Municipal Public Health Plans as an essential component of municipal corporate planning.¹

Social Environment

Monash General Wellbeing

Monash residents reported similar wellbeing to all Victorians. Residents gave their wellbeing an average score of 77.2 out of 100, compared to the Victorian average of 77.3.² There has been no significant change in subjective wellbeing for Monash between the 2007, 2011 and 2015 surveys.^{3**}

Life satisfaction measures how people evaluate their life as a whole. When asked to rate their general satisfaction with life on a scale from zero to 10, residents of Monash reported an average score of 7.7. This is similar to the Victorian life satisfaction average score of 7.8.⁴

Respondents of the Monash City Council 2016 Community Satisfaction Survey were asked to rate their agreement with six statements regarding the local community and sense of community.

Survey respondents rated the following six statements relatively high out of ten:

- Monash community is accepting of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds – 8.34 ;
- Monash community has access to adequate community services – 7.71;
- It’s easy to find out what services are available – 7.62;
- I/we feel part of the local community – 7.60;
- It’s easy to find out about local activities and events – 7.58; and
- There are adequate opportunities to socialise and meet people – 7.56.⁵

Community Safety

Most (93.3%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone during the day, which is similar to the Victorian estimate (92.5%).⁶ Just under six out of 10 (58.2%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone in their local area after dark, compared to the Victorian estimate (55.1%), indicating that residents in Monash feel slightly safer.⁷ There has been no significant change in perceptions of safety for Monash between the 2007, 2011 and 2015 surveys.⁸

Refer to Sheet 10: Feeling Safe for supplementary information.

Mental/Emotional Wellbeing (resilience)

The mental wellbeing indicators were level of resilience, indicators of neighbourhood connection and trust, and attitudes to gender equality in relationships.

Monash residents reported an average resilience score of 6.2 out of 8. This is similar to Victorian residents, who reported an average resilience score of 6.4.⁹ The proportion of Monash residents who agreed that people in their neighbourhood are willing to help each other out was 69.0%, which is slightly higher than the Victorian estimate (61.0%).¹⁰ A similar proportion of Monash residents agreed that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted (69.9%), compared to the proportion of Victorians who agreed (71.9%).¹¹

Economic Environment

Employment

In the City of Monash, manufacturing is the largest employer, generating 15,278 local jobs in 2014/15.¹²

In 2014/15, the City of Monash contributed 4.1% of Victoria's employment and 4.0% of its value add.¹³

Income

The City of Monash local labour force has a higher proportion of people with high incomes (\$1,500 or more per week) than Victoria.¹⁴

Education levels

Compared to Greater Melbourne, a larger percentage of persons in the City of Monash hold Bachelor or Higher degrees (37% compared to 29.1%).¹⁵

Car Ownership

Analysis of car ownership in 2011, indicates 54% of households in the City of Monash had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 51% in Greater Melbourne.¹⁶

Food Security

Food security occurs when people are able to access safe, affordable and nutritious food.¹⁷ Some people in Australia are less likely to be food secure.¹⁸ In the City of Monash, about 6% of people are food insecure, compared to only about 3% in our closest Council areas.¹⁹ There are many activities in Monash that make it easier to obtain healthy food. Farmers' markets are a place for people to buy local and seasonal produce. Community gardens provide space for people to grow fruit and vegetable, as well as to socialise with people from their local area. Gardening classes teach people how to grow fruit and vegetables at home. Community cooking classes give people skills in preparing healthy food.²⁰

Built Environment

The latest findings of The Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Ranking – which provides scores for lifestyle challenges in 140 cities worldwide – show that Melbourne has retained its crown as the world's most liveable city.²¹

The Economist Intelligence Unit’s liveability rating, part of the Worldwide Cost of Living Survey, quantifies the challenges that might be presented to an individual’s lifestyle across five broad categories of Stability, Healthcare, Culture and environment, Education and Infrastructure.

Housing Valuation in Monash

At June 2016, the City of Monash had a median house valuation of \$1,051,903, which was \$529,046 higher than the median house valuation for Victoria.²²

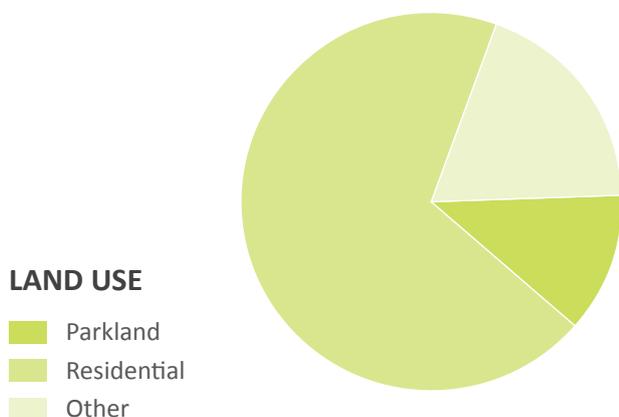
Transport Access and Use

Analysis of the method of travel to work of the residents in the City of Monash in 2011 compared to Greater Melbourne, shows that 15.6% used public transport, while 66.1% used a private vehicle, compared with 13.8% and 66.1% respectively in Greater Melbourne.²³

Natural Environment

Land Usage

The City of Monash is a predominantly residential area (76%), with a substantial industrial area (7%), a technology precinct (7%), 6% is zoned for other industry, 1% is zoned for business and recreational and open space comprises of 10%. The City encompasses a total land area of 81 square kilometres.²⁴



Water Use and Recycling

Household Water Conservations was measured in the 2011 Community Indicators Survey.²⁵ Forty-nine point three percent (49.3%) of persons living in Monash were in households that collect waste water, compared to 39.9% in the Eastern Metro Region and the Victorian State average of 41.3%.²⁶ Fifty-nine (59%) of household waste collected in Monash was recycled in 2009-10, compared to the Victorian State average kerbside recycling rate of 44%.²⁷

Open Space and Recreational Precincts

The City of Monash has 125 parks and reserves, which contain important strands of indigenous vegetation and provide important revegetation corridors and habitat for native wildlife.²⁸ There are numerous bike paths including: Scotchman’s Creek Linear Trail, Waverley Rail Trail, Gardiner’s Creek Linear Trail and Dandenong Creek Linear Trail.²⁹

Walking Trails

Walking is one the most important things you can do for your mental and physical well being.³⁰ New physical activity guidelines suggest we should aim for at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Walking can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and fitness.³¹

Monash offers local parks, bushland areas and reserves for residents to enjoy the sights, physical and psychological benefits of walking. The City of Monash also has a range of walking trails including: Damper Creek Path, Freeway Reserve – Fitness by the Freeway, Gardiners Creek Trail, Glen Waverley Historical Walk, Mulgrave Reserve and surrounds, Oakleigh Historical Walk, Scotchman’s Creek Trail, Valley Reserve Path and other walks in Monash.³²

Global Warming

The human population on earth is trapping more greenhouse gases in our atmosphere by burning fossil fuels for energy which is causing the earth's temperature to rise. This is known as Global Warming. Climate scientists all over the world agree that this change in our climate will cause more intense and frequent weather events.³³ This is expected to have impacts on Australian climate such as:

- 1 degree C increase in temperatures;
- Up to 20% more months of drought;
- Up to 25% increase in very high or extreme fire danger; and
- Increase in storm surges and weather events.³⁴

For Australia, one of the most important concerns is the health of its people.³⁵ Five main impacts need to be considered:

- Extreme weather events: Directly impacts on lives, homes and communities, and will also place stress on the mental wellbeing of members of the community during prolonged events such as intense heatwaves.³⁶
- Disease: Many diseases are likely to spread and increase in incidence as the climate warms.³⁷
- Food & Water: Disrupted supplies of water and high temperatures will stress crops and promote algal blooms in reservoirs while rising ocean acidification will affect fisheries.³⁸
- Jobs: Livelihoods – including farming fishing and tourism – will be badly affected from soaring temperatures, droughts and storms. Employment patterns will be changed and disruptions to supply chains will threaten business.³⁹
- Security: Threatened food supply chains, changing patterns of infectious diseases and forced migration from land uninhabitable will trigger tension, unrest and violent conflict.⁴⁰

Global Warming & People Movement – City of Monash

Most recently a statutory link between the Climate Change Act and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act has been made that requires council's municipal public health planning to have regard to the Climate Change Act when considering the impact of the environment on the health and wellbeing of the community.⁴¹

Environmental sustainability is planning and providing for the needs of individuals and communities now and for future generations, creating resilient and prosperous communities and protecting the environment and ecosystem services.⁴² Monash Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026, explores the current and emerging sustainability issues facing the City of Monash and its residents. It sets Council's environmental goals for the future and proposes actions that will help to reach these goals. The ten-year Strategy provides realistic but bold direction and actions required to integrate sustainability practices into Council operations, as well as its community programs and services. Priority Area 2 (Engaged Confident & Connected: A city which actively listens, engages and values community wisdom in shaping its own future) of this Plan focuses specifically on Climate Change.

Aims:

- Reduce Council's corporate energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
- Build Council's capacity to understand and manage climate change risks and how best to respond
- Increase community understanding and preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change⁴³

Objectives:

- Best practice climate change thinking is integrated into Council’s corporate and operational functions;
- A strategic approach to reducing Council’s corporate greenhouse gas emissions is established; and
- Increased community preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change.⁴⁴

Monash health and wellbeing priorities

The top two most important health & wellbeing issues for Monash community members identified in the Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey are:

1. **Getting outdoors** to use parklands, reserves or playgrounds 67% respondents selected this (or 554 votes)
2. **Feeling safe** and being treated with care and respect 58% respondents selected this (or 482 votes) Significantly more females (60%) than males (53%) selected this as a personal priority.⁴⁵

Other health and wellbeing priorities for Monash community members, are the following - listed in order of votes given:

1. **Healthy eating** 48% respondents selected this (or 399 votes)
2. **Staying active** or participating in sport or recreation activities 48% respondents (or 397 votes) Significantly more males (57%) than females (43%) selected this as a personal priority
3. **Getting the right health care or support services** 47% respondents selected this (or 391 votes) Significantly more females (51%) than males (42%) selected this as a personal priority

4. **Participating in community activities or accessing the local library** 36% respondents selected (or 301 votes) Significantly more females (39%) than males (31%) selected this as a personal priority
5. **Achieving work/life balance** 34% respondents selected (or 281 votes).⁴⁵

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

Our community considered healthy environments as very important. The most commonly selected important health and wellbeing issue or concern identified by respondents was getting outdoors to use parklands, playgrounds, or reserves, with two-thirds (66.5%) of respondents identifying this issue.

“Spending time walking in Valley Reserve is really important to me. Being in native bushland restores my soul--makes me relaxed, able to concentrate on the important and good things in life, and be refreshed to cope with a busy life.”
(Anonymous respondent)

May 2017

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ENGAGED, CONFIDENT & CONNECTED

A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan



2017 – 2021

5. Participation

6. Belonging

7. Supported

A community where everyone has opportunities to lead socially engaged and fulfilling lives

In this snapshot we explore how Monash residents participate in their community. We are interested to understand the different ways our community is engaged, the types of programs and activities they participate in, including creative expression.

Participation is important to us because we know that when people are participating in their local community, there are connected to their local community. "By providing opportunities for people to connect with others, join a group and be engaged in local activities, councils can improve the mental health and wellbeing of their residents. Communities with high levels of social cohesion, including participation by individuals in community organisations and activities, typically have better health than those with low levels".¹

Monash Community Engagement Framework

The City of Monash has an Engagement Framework.² The purpose of this framework is to outline Monash City Council's approach to stakeholder and community engagement. Monash City Council supports the use of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as a useful resource for Council staff in planning and implementing stakeholder and community engagement. The aim is to make better decisions through building stronger communities and active democracies.

Council's "Have Your Say" website page³ provides a snapshot of the range of consultation and community engagement activities at any one time including those consultations that have recently closed.

Additionally, the City of Monash has programs to specifically engage and consult with young people and seniors. Council's Youth Ambassadors (numbering 14) and Age Friendly Ambassadors (numbering 16) are volunteers that are trained and supported to specifically seek the views of young people and seniors respectively. Council's Children's Services unit also aims to support children and young people to have an active voice in the Monash community by formalising and implementing a participation and communication strategy.

Community Participation

Our residents however participate in the community in a range of ways that do not necessarily involve a contribution to Council's decision making but are just as important.

The Monash Community Profile⁴ provides a number of measures that provide an understanding of the level of engagement in our community. They include:

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	LGA Measure	LGA Rank	State Measure
People who help as a volunteer	18.2%	64	19.3%
People who attended a local community event	44.2%	74	55.7%
People who are members of a sports group	23.4%	69	26.5%
People who are members of a religious group	22.5%	13	17.9%

Library visitation, Neighbourhood House activities, seniors clubs and attendance at cultural events can often provide an indication of participation in the community. The City of Monash Annual Report 2016/17⁵ additionally provides some insight into the quantum of Monash residents participating in these types of activities:

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	No. People
Active Library members (1,022,609 visitations)	35,046
Library events/Programs (2,688)	73,297
Arts and Cultural Development Events & Festivals (124)	64,638
Seniors Clubs (103)	14,652
Monash Youth Service Events	3,514

In particular, Neighbourhood houses have a key role in providing inclusive programs and activities in their local community. In 2016, there were 188,700 visits to Neighbourhood Houses across the state in an average week. Our ten Monash Neighbourhood Houses, currently provide more than 250 different courses, activities and events each term for residents to participate in.⁶

The statistics demonstrate that while participation in Monash is high, there are still opportunities to facilitate greater participation in our community.

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

“Volunteering my time gives me a sense of purpose and the opportunity to give to others.”

“The library is a fabulous facility. It has helped me learn a lot since my retirement. It should be supported to expand offerings to all ethnicities in our area.”

Anonymous Feedback, May 2017

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Lives have more meaning when social experiences provide a sense of belonging

In this snapshot we explore how a sense of belonging can increase participation, strengthen a community and thereby reduce social isolation. By fostering cohesive neighbourhoods and communities, we offer a place for all residents to feel valued and connected to others.

Neighbourhoods and Place

Council recognises that one of the most important factors to influence a person's well-being, is whether they feel that they belong in a place, and this also relates to the neighbourhood where they live.

It is important to Council that members of the community feel accepted and connected with the people and places where they live. When people feel that they belong, they are more willing to participate and inspired to show leadership within their neighbourhoods and local communities. Monash Council delivers a range of programs and services which encourage residents to engage with their community and support those around them.

In past years Council has developed Community Action Plans for Oakleigh¹ and Ashwood Chadstone². These are all place-based plans, developed in consultation with the community, for implementation through Council and community

partnerships. By facilitating direct participation and local leadership from members of these neighbourhoods, Council brings people together and fosters greater pride in the places where people live, work and play.

Neighbourhood Houses

Neighbourhood houses play a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging amongst local residents,³ particularly for those who are socially isolated. Neighbourhood houses bring people together to connect, learn and contribute in their local community, using a community development approach.

Monash has 10 neighbourhood houses⁴ offering a broad range of affordable educational, social, recreational and support programs and activities.

Monash's neighbourhood houses are all not for profit, community managed organisations and their programs are developed in consultation with and in response to the local needs and interests of the community around them.

Monash Community Grants Program

Monash provides more than \$2.5m annually in cash and in-kind grants to a broad range of local community groups and organisations. These funds enable groups to provide projects, services and regular activities to reduce social isolation and strengthen community to foster a sense of belonging.

The overall Monash Community Grants Program⁵ objectives are focused on bringing people together and creating opportunities for positive outcomes which reduce social isolation, encourage cohesion and local participation.

Despite its overall quantum, the Monash Community Grants Program (MCGP) is very competitive and there is a very high demand for community funding each round. In 2017/18 the MCGP received a total of 280 eligible applications across seven categories.

In addition to the annual community grants program, Council also provides funding through the Neighbourhood Matching Grants Program.⁶ Council allocates \$20,000 per annum for ‘quick-response’ grants which support projects which make a positive impact on the local people within their own neighbourhood. Residents are encouraged to address a shared problem or concern in their neighbourhood, by encouraging participation, community connection and local leadership.

Community Participation

Our residents participate in the community in a range of ways that do not necessarily involve a contribution to Council’s decision making. The Monash Community Profile⁷ provides a number of measures that provide an understanding of the level of engagement in our community. They include:

Table 1: *Participation in local activities*

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT	Monash Participation
People who help as a volunteer	18.2%
People who attended a local community event	44.2%
People who are members of a sports group	23.4%
People who are members of a religious group	22.5%

For more information about community participation in Monash refer to Our Community Snapshot: Participation

Social Connection

Being connected to others socially is widely considered a fundamental human need and is a crucial factor for well-being. Many of our residents are at risk of feeling socially and culturally isolated for a range of reasons. There are many factors which may contribute to social isolation and disconnection in a community, but some of the strongest factors include living alone, age, language skills and access to opportunities to connect with others.

Currently 18.9% of Monash residents live alone.⁸ Monash has an ageing population and, according to the 2016 Census data, 17.2% of Monash residents were aged 65 years and over.⁹ Monash also has very culturally and linguistically diverse community, with 44% of people coming from countries where English was not their first

language,¹⁰ and the 2016 Census reported an increase in people who spoke another language other than English, with 8.4% (up from 5.7% in 2011) who reported that they did not speak English well, or at all.

For these residents in particular, it is important that we offer opportunities to connect with others and support them to feel that they belong within the community.

Homelessness

Since 2001 a “cultural definition” of homelessness has been used to describe the nature and extent of homelessness in Australia. This definition defines homelessness as not having access to “the minimum accommodation that people have the right to expect in order to live according to the conventions of contemporary life”.¹¹

This “cultural definition” of homelessness led to the identification of three categories within the homeless population:

- a) **primary homelessness** – people without conventional accommodation living on the streets, in deserted buildings, railway carriages, under bridges and in parks (“rough sleepers”);
- b) **secondary homelessness** – people moving between various forms of temporary shelter including friends’ homes, emergency accommodation, refuges and hostels; and
- c) **tertiary homelessness** – people living permanently in single rooms private boarding houses without their own bathroom or kitchen and without security of tenure. They are homeless because their accommodation does not satisfy the requisite conditions of the minimum community standard. The accepted minimum Australian community standard is “a small rented flat”, with the minimum required amenities, such as a bedroom, living room, bathroom and kitchen.

In 2012 the ABS provided a new definition¹² of homelessness;

When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

- ◆ is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or
- ◆ has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or
- ◆ does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.

According to the 2011 Census data, it is estimated that there are 793 people sleeping rough in Monash¹³ and the issue of homelessness and rough sleeping in Monash is a growing concern for Monash Council and its residents. Homelessness is not a crime and people who are sleeping

rough have as much of right to feel as though they belong to the community as anyone else. It is important to Council that these most vulnerable individuals in our community are offered an opportunity to belong and feel valued by their community, even if they are facing highly challenging and isolating circumstances.

As homelessness is a growing concern for Council, it has invested in an officer to provide a local response and a coordinated approach to supporting rough sleepers in the municipality. Council has introduced an internal protocol Our Approach to Homelessness which is a reference for staff, outlining the support we are able to offer rough sleepers through outreach.

Emergency relief

There are currently 13 organisations that provide financial and material aid within the Eastern Region, which services the Monash community with emergency relief. In addition, community organisations such as neighbourhood houses provide outreach, information and referrals to community members who are in need of emergency relief and associated support services.

These organisations are independent of Council and do not necessarily apply a coordinated outreach or response effort with Council services. However Council is strongly advocating for a more measured and coordinated approach to the provision of emergency relief (with particular focus on support for those who find themselves homelessness, or at risk of homelessness) to ensure that people’s emergency circumstances are effectively addressed.

International students

There are approximately 20,000 students enrolled in post-secondary education in Monash. Monash University is located within the municipality, as well as other tertiary and vocational education institutions, meaning that a large proportion of our residents can be defined as part-time or full-time students.

Around 37% of all post-secondary students in Monash were identified as International students.¹⁴ While significant support is provided by Monash University for its international students (including residential accommodation) these students can often experience social isolation and loneliness.

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A city which actively listens, engages and values community wisdom in shaping its own future

In this snapshot we explore the nature and quantum of how Monash residents are supported by Council and its partners. At different key stages in our life, we sometimes need support. Whether as a new parent, a young person dealing with adolescence, or an older resident requiring some assistance to remain at home, a local support service can often mean the difference between thriving in the community and struggling with even the most fundamental daily tasks.

Monash delivers a range of support services to the community to assist them during these key life stages:

Service Delivery

The following table is a snapshot of the annual quantum of support Council provides to various groups of service users throughout Monash in 2016/17:¹

Supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents through direct service provision, through a community grants program and by working in partnership with community based services is a key element of our approach.

SERVICE AREA	Number of people /families/children
Home and Community Care support	3,880
Families Supported (Family Day Care)	332
Children Supported at Brine Street Child Care	100
Families Supported (Counselling)	45
Families Supported (Maternal & Child Health)	6,677
Inclusion Support for children (Kindergartens)	128
Children supported in playgroups	161
Young People (Individual Support)	77
Young People (School based programs)	863
Children Immunised (between 6 weeks & 19 years)	11,796

One group of people who might require more support than others in accessing services in their community are “New Settler Arrivals” to Monash. For Monash, there are 1,164.6 new settler arrivals per 1,000 population compared to 682.6 for the state. This makes Monash the 4th highest in the state for this group.² This additionally has implications for how we ensure that this group of residents get the support services they require.

Community Grants

One way Council supports its community is through the Monash Community Grants Program. It is through this program that we fund local community groups to deliver services and activities to the community. In doing so, we enter into a partnership to benefit all our community. This program extends Council’s reach further into the community so that more people are supported. For the 2016/17, the Monash Community Grants Evaluation Panel allocated grants totalling \$2,587,218.18 for the delivery of community and arts projects and events to over 180 community organisations/groups.

Partnerships

Partnerships are crucial to supporting our community. Local government cannot support the community on its own. By sharing our resources and pooling our skills, our community will get high quality services and responses to issues of concern. Some of our major partners include:

- ◆ Link Health and Community
- ◆ Victoria Police
- ◆ Department of Health & Human Services
- ◆ South East Volunteers
- ◆ Women’s Health East
- ◆ Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network
- ◆ VicHealth
- ◆ Monash Multicultural & Settlement Services Network
- ◆ Monash University
- ◆ 10 Neighbourhood Houses
- ◆ MiCare
- ◆ Wavecare
- ◆ Inner East Primary Care Partnerships
- ◆ Bestchance Child and Family Care
- ◆ Eastern Metropolitan Region Councils

It is through our direct services, our community grants and with our partners that we support our community.

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SAFE & RESPECTFUL

A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan



2017 – 2021

8. Life Journey

9. Fair For All

10. Feeling Safe

Every stage of life brings its own unique opportunities and challenges

As a community, we need to ensure that every person in their early years is given the very best start to life, as this is the foundation for who they will become. Young people have opportunities to feel valued and included. Families in all of their many forms require a range of supports in a busy world to assist them in being as strong as they can be. Adults may require a new type of assistance to support them into retirement and older age so that they can remain independent, healthy and active contributors to the community. Included amongst all these stages are every variation of individuality. People experience different opportunities and challenges at different stages throughout their lives, and in Monash our goal is to support them all.

In this snapshot we explore how Monash residents experience the life journey. We are interested to understand the different ways our community is supported, the types of programs and activities they participate in, and the contributions they make.

Monash Children, Young People and Family Strategy and Action Plan

Families form a significant part of the Monash community, with almost half of all households being homes where there are children or young people. Children and young people in Monash

are growing up in a place where they are highly valued, with strong communities and networks to support them to grow, learn and thrive from the time that they are born until early adulthood.

This strategy recognises that parents and family have the most significant influence on a child and young person's learning, development and wellbeing. Council is ideally placed to have a profound impact on the quality of life experienced by Monash children, young people and their families.

In Monash, around 2000 new babies are born each year, 15,521 children enrolled in primary school, 570 children enrolled in special schools, 16,863 students enrolled in secondary schools and over 20,000 students in tertiary education settings.¹

The evidence based principles which underpin the work with children, young people and families are:

- ▲ Childhood, adolescence and early adulthood are honoured
- ▲ Active citizenship
- ▲ Keeping safe from harm
- ▲ Support at life transition points
- ▲ Life experiences shape futures
- ▲ The importance of family and good guardianship
- ▲ Strong inclusive communities
- ▲ There is an impact from vulnerabilities
- ▲ Integrated and informed partnership approaches produce the best outcomes for the whole community.

Extensive consultation occurred in the development of this strategy beginning with children from 4 years to young adults of up to 25 years being asked to provide their views.

The key directions and areas for action in the strategy are:

- ▲ Connected and valued
- ▲ Learning and development
- ▲ Safe and healthy
- ▲ Planning, Leading and Partnering

Monash Age Friendly Plan and Aged Services

Monash continues to have an ageing population, with 22.5% of the Monash population being over 60 years of age. This is higher than the greater Melbourne average of 18.2%.² Monash has a large percentage of seniors aged 70 - 84 (10.3%) compared to greater Melbourne (7.4%).³ Monash residents have higher life expectancy than the state average: females (85.8 years) males (81.5 years) compared to 80.3 years and 84.4 years respectively.⁴

In 2013, the City of Monash one of the highest projected growths in absolute dementia numbers, ranking 3 out of 79 Local Government Areas in Victoria for dementia prevalence from 2013 - 2050.⁵ Today, providing adequate and cost-effective care for the growing number of older persons, their families and community involves and requires multisectoral and interdisciplinary integration and cooperation.⁶

In the 2016/17 financial, Monash Council delivered over 163,000 hours of community based aged care services to almost 4,000 residents. The largest service in terms of funding and demand was for domestic assistance.

Monash Council values the importance of maximising opportunities for older residents to participate in healthy activities and develop and maintain healthy lifestyles and the development of Council's Age Friendly Monash, A Positive Ageing Plan 2015 - 2019 outlines a wide range of social, cultural, health promotion and intergenerational actions and initiatives that Council will undertake over the five years from 2015-2019. This plan aims to strengthen our community where older people's skills and experiences are valued and opportunities to participate in all aspects of social, community and public life is available and enhanced.⁷

Extensive consultation was undertaken with older residents to inform the development of the Age Friendly Monash, A Positive Ageing Plan 2015 - 2019 to identify issues, barriers and potential opportunities and solutions to creating an aged friendly city. The process included 36 focus groups held across Monash, with existing community groups and an on line and paper based survey which was sent to older adults who receive services in Monash, and was completed by 738 older adults. Findings from this consultation identified that respondents define age friendly as:

- ▲ Happiness, security and good neighbours
- ▲ Being treated with respect and offered help when needed
- ▲ A community where the older population, regardless of ability, race or creed, is able to connect to whatever services, social activities or communities they choose.⁸

Respondents also ranked Community and Health Services as the most important of the eight domains, followed by Transportation and Respect and Social Participation

Lifelong Learning

The City of Monash is host to a vast array of learning opportunities for all ages. There are 32 Kindergartens within the municipality and 27 primary and 9 secondary state based schools. In addition to these are a further 8 private schools catering to the primary and secondary years. Monash University, its students and its staff play a pivotal role within the community, with the student body alone comprising a population of over 20,000. Holmesglen TAFE also provide a significant presence within the City of Monash, along with a broad range of private training institutions. The Monash Public Library Service offer a broad range of learning and development opportunities free to the public for all ages, including English and other language learning resources. (<https://monlib.vic.gov.au/Home>)

The City of Monash is well supported by 10 Neighbourhood houses that provide a range of formal and informal learning opportunities.

(<https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Leisure/Neighbourhood-Houses>)

3 separate U3A groups provide additional learning and development opportunities for retirees and seniors across Monash. Information and resources relating to U3A can be found at: <https://www.u3aonline.org.au/home>

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A city where every single member of the community is important

This fact sheet highlights how Council engages, communicates with and provides services and programs to the diverse community in Monash. Council has a strong commitment to access and equity and particularly as this relates to cultural diversity, gender equity and library services and programs.

Gender Equity

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. Gender equity recognises that within all communities, women and men have different benefits, access to power, resources and responsibilities. Achieving gender equity is critical to improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and is a core principle of a fair, safe and inclusive community.

Despite achieving significant gains in gender equity in Australia in recent decades, inequalities for women remain across many areas of life, restricting their ability to fully and equally participate in community life including:

- ▲ The full-time gender pay gap in Australia is 16% with the full-time average earning difference of \$261.30 per week;¹
- ▲ Fifty percent of women report experiencing discrimination due to pregnancy, parental leave, or return to work;²
- ▲ Low levels of female representation in elected positions and executive leadership;
- ▲ Women retire with just over half the superannuation savings of men. The most recent assessment completed in 2011-2012 showed that the average balance at the time of retirement was \$105,000 for women and \$197,000 for men;³

Gender inequality in Monash

In 2015, 45.4% of Monash residents expressed low support for gender equality in relationships.⁴

This compares poorly against the State level where 35.7% of Victorians held low levels of support for equal relationships between men and women.⁵

Monash City Council

Monash City Council has a strong and long-term commitment to the promotion of gender equity.

In November 2015, Monash Council endorsed Monash's Gender Equity Strategy (2015-2020). The Gender Equity Strategy (2015-2020) is accompanied by an action plan and the establishment of a Gender Equity Advisory Committee.

Cultural Diversity

The City of Monash is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse municipalities in Victoria.

Some key characteristics include:

- ▲ **0.3%** of the population is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- ▲ **51.6%** of residents have been born in another country⁶
- ▲ **52.6%** speak a language other than English at home with most frequently spoken languages being Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese and Sinhalese⁷
- ▲ **The top five** overseas countries of birth⁸ are China (12.5%), India (5.3%), and Sri Lanka (3.6%), Malaysia (3.4%), United Kingdom 3.1%)⁹
- ▲ **The top five** languages other than English spoken at home are Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese, Italian and Sinhalese¹⁰
- ▲ **7.1%** of population have low English proficiency
- ▲ **The top ten** ancestries are English (19.8%), Chinese (17.8%), Australian (13.3%), Greek (6.9) and Indian (5.0)
- ▲ **0.5%** of population are humanitarian new settler arrivals
- ▲ **58.2%** of the population believe multiculturalism makes life better

Disability

Definition of disability

The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 defines disability as:

- ▲ Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions;
- ▲ Total or partial loss of a part of the body;
- ▲ The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness;
- ▲ The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body;
- ▲ A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; and
- ▲ A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or results in disturbed behaviour.¹¹

This includes a disability that:

- ▲ Presently exists;
- ▲ Previously existed but no longer exists;
- ▲ May exist in the future; and
- ▲ Is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has a disability but does not).¹²

Types of disability

The majority of people with disability have a physical disability (83.9%), 11.3% have a mental or behavioural disability and 4.8% have an intellectual or development disability.¹³ The breadth of impairments and medical conditions covered by the Disability Discrimination Act comprise of:

- ▲ **Physical** – affects a person’s mobility or dexterity;
- ▲ **Intellectual** – affects a person’s abilities to learn;
- ▲ **Mental illness** – affects a person’s thinking process;
- ▲ **Sensory** – affects a person’s ability to hear or see;
- ▲ **Neurological** – affects a person’s brain and central nervous system;
- ▲ **Physical disfigurement**; or
- ▲ **Immunological** – the presence of organisms causing disease in the body¹⁴

Demographics

Key characteristics in Monash¹⁵

- ▲ **4.8%** of people need assistance with core activity
- ▲ **3.6%** of people of all ages have a severe and profound disability
- ▲ **13.2%** of people living in the community aged over 65 years have a severe and profound disability
- ▲ **8.7%** of people are receiving disability services support per 1,000 population
- ▲ **30.7%** are recipients of disability support pension per 1,000 eligible population

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a national program that provides a new way to deliver services and support for people with permanent and significant disability in Australia.

With the NDIS, people with a disability can choose supports and services to meet their individual needs, rather than using a non-size-fits-all system. The NDIS is being rolled out progressively in Victoria over a three-year period from 1 July 2016. By July 2019, it is estimated that 105,000 Victorian will have transitioned to the scheme.¹⁶

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A safe community is one which everyone works together in a coordinated and collaborative way to increase safety and reduce the fear of harm

In this snapshot we explore both the actual and perceived safety of Monash residents. This encompasses the specific safety concerns for (i) women and their children where they may be victims of violence, (ii) protecting children and young people from harm, and (iii) feeling and being safe as we go about our day to day business in our local community.

Feeling and being safe is important because feelings of safety, real or perceived, influence how people go about their daily lives and how they engage with their community. Neighbourhoods which are perceived as safe inspire community activity and participation, physical activity and community connectedness. They pave the way for positive community health and wellbeing outcomes.

The safer people feel, the more likely they are to participate in, and enjoy community life; all of which leads to greater health and prosperity of local communities and environments.

Keeping Women Safe

Violence against women

Violence against women is any act of gender based violence that causes or could cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to

women, including threats of harm or coercion, in public or in private life.¹ Violence against women is not only or always physical. It includes psychological, economic, emotional and sexual violence and abuse, and a wide range of controlling, coercive and intimidating behaviours e.g. stalking.²

Violence against women occurs across the whole community; however certain groups of women experience much higher rates of male violence than others. These vulnerable groups include women with disabilities, Aboriginal women, women in rural and remote areas, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women.³

Family Violence encompasses all forms of domestic and intimate partner violence and is the preferred term used in Victoria by services and government.

Impacts of violence against women

Violence against women and their children takes a profound and long-term toll on women and children's health and wellbeing, on families and communities, and on society a whole.⁴ Exposure by children to violence against women is a recognised form of child abuse that causes significant harm on them, with potential impacts on attitudes to relationships and violence, as well as behavioural, cognitive and emotional functioning, social development, and – through a process of 'negative chain effects' – education and later employment prospects.⁵

Intimate partner violence contributes to more premature death, disability and illness in women aged 15 to 44 than any other preventable risk factor.⁶ Intimate partner violence has wide-ranging and persistent effects on women's physical and mental health.⁷ The greatest of these is mental illness – anxiety and depression – which make up 58% of the disease burden resulting from violence.⁸

Family violence against women is the single largest driver of homelessness for women,⁹ a common factor in child protection notifications,¹⁰ and results in a police call-out on average once every two minutes across the country.¹¹ One-third (34%) of the clients seeking support from homeless services reported they had experienced family violence.¹²

Above all, violence against women is a fundamental violation of human rights, and one that Australia has an obligation to prevent under international law.¹³

Economic costs of violence against women

The combined health, administration and social welfare costs of violence against women have been estimated to be \$21.7 billion per year, with projections suggesting that if no further action is taken to prevent violence against women, costs will accumulate to \$323.4 billion over a thirty year period from 2014 - 15 to 2044 - 45.¹⁴

Causes of violence against women

Although violence against women has no single cause, there is substantial evidence that higher levels of violence against women are consistently associated with lower levels of gender equality in both public life and personal relationships.

Within this broader context, Our Watch's national evidence based primary prevention framework titled - Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia - identifies four specific, gendered drivers of violence against women including:

1. **condoning violence**, particularly by excusing or trivialising it, or 'blaming the victim';
2. **men's control of decision-making**, and limits to women's independence in public life and relationships;

3. **rigid gender roles** and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity; and
4. **male peer relations** that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.¹⁵

Given the evidence, Victorian councils are increasingly acknowledging their role in the prevention of violence against women, particularly given their involvement in creating healthy and safe communities. Our Watch advocates for addressing the deep seated drivers of inequality, including rigid stereotypes and the unequal value afforded to women and men, as key to preventing men's violence against women.

Other factors such as harmful use of alcohol or condoning of violence in general interact with or reinforce gender inequality to make violence against women worse, but do not drive violence against women in and of themselves.¹⁶

Violence against men

All violence is wrong, regardless of the gender of the victim or perpetrator. But there are distinct gendered patterns in the perpetration and impact of violence. For example, both women and men are more likely to experience violence at the hands of men, with around 95% of all victims of violence in Australia reporting a male perpetrator.¹⁷ While men are more likely to experience violence by other men in public places, women are more likely to experience violence from men they know, often in the home.¹⁸

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey estimates that 5.3 per cent of men (that is, one in 19) have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a current or previous partner since the age of 15.¹⁹

The overwhelming majority of acts of family violence and sexual assault are perpetrated by men against women, and this violence is likely to have more severe impacts on female than male victims.²⁰

Prevalence of violence against women

Violence against women is now recognised to be a serious and widespread problem in Australia, with enormous individual and community impacts and social costs.

This significant social problem is preventable. To prevent violence against women we first need to understand it.

National Context

The following basic statistics help demonstrate the prevalence and severity of violence against women:

- ▲ On average, at least one woman a week is killed by a partner or former partner in Australia and the majority of homicides (58%) are classified as intimate partner.²¹
- ▲ One in three Australian women has experienced physical violence, since the age of 15.²²
- ▲ One in four Australian women has experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner.²³
- ▲ One in four Australian women has experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner.²⁴ One in five Australian women has experienced sexual violence.²⁵
- ▲ Women are at least three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner.²⁶
- ▲ Women are five times more likely than men to require medical attention or hospitalisation as a result of intimate partner violence, and five times more likely to report fearing for their lives.²⁷
- ▲ Of those women who experience violence, more than half have children in their care.²⁸
- ▲ Violence against women is not limited to the home or intimate relationships. Every year in Australia, over 300,000 women experience violence – often sexual violence – from someone other than a partner.²⁹
- ▲ Eight out of ten women aged 18 to 24 were harassed on the street in the past year.³⁰
- ▲ Young women (18 – 24 years) experience significantly higher rates of physical and sexual violence than women in older age groups.³¹
- ▲ There is growing evidence that women with disabilities are more likely to experience violence.³²
- ▲ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience both far higher rates and more severe forms of violence compared to other women.³³

State Context

In Victoria in 2015-16, police responded to 78,012 family violence incidents with children present in 25,754 of these cases. Charges were laid in 30,960 incidences. Almost 80% of reported family violence victims in Victoria are women.³⁴

In 2015, the Victorian Government recognised the impacts that family violence has on the Victorian community and instigated a Royal Commission into Family Violence, the first in Australia (and worldwide). The Royal Commission into Family Violence found that gender inequality is one of the key drivers behind family violence.³⁵ It identified that the large majority of victims are women and that to effectively address and end violence against women, then we must begin by addressing gender inequality.³⁶

Action on gender inequality is urgent. Family violence costs the Victorian economy more than \$3.4 billion per year. Closing Australia's gender employment gap – including the pay gap and number of women in the paid workforce – would boost the GDP by 11 per cent.³⁷

Local Context

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey: What the community said:

- ▲ Respondents were asked to rank their six most important health and wellbeing issues/concerns from a list. One of the most highly ranked issues was “preventing violence against women and encouraging respectful relationships” with a score of 2.7 out of 6;
- ▲ An overwhelming majority (83.8%) of respondents reported that they were very (57.2%) or somewhat (26.6%) likely to intervene in some way if they became aware that a family member or close friend had become a victim of family violence;
- ▲ 282 respondents (33.9%) suggested at least one thing that Council could do to foster gender equity and more respectful relationships within our community. The most common actions identified by respondents related to education and awareness such as forums and workshops (6.8%) and communication, promotions and advertisements (5.3%); and
- ▲ “Feeling Safe & Being treated with care and respect is the basis of any true civilised community”. (Anonymous respondent)

Sexual Assaults

Sexual assault is both a consequence and a reinforcer of the power disparity existing between men and women and children. One in five women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 years.³⁸ The impact of sexual assault and family violence on the lives of victim/survivors is multi-faceted and complex. It includes emotional, social, psychological, legal, health, spiritual, economic and political consequences.

Refer to Table 1: Monash Sexual Offences Reported Incidences for a summary of the number of victim reports received in 2014.

Table 1: Monash Sexual Offences Reported Incidences

SEXUAL OFFENCES REPORTED INCIDENCES					
The number of victim reports received in the year period 2014					
Monash		Metro East Average		State Average	
F	78	F	81.9	F	61.4
M	24	M	24.3%	M	15.1
				ALL	38.3

Monash City Council

Monash City Council has a strong and long-term commitment to the prevention of violence against women and the promotion of gender equity.

Monash Council was the lead partner in the Generating Equality and Respect Program, an innovative three year prevention of violence against women partnership program. The program was implemented from 2012 - 2015 with a partnership between Council, Link Health and Community and Vic Health. This program aimed to prevent violence against women before it occurs by building communities, cultures and organisations that are gender equitable and promote equal and respectful relationships between men and women through addressing the underlying drivers of violence against women.⁴⁰

Further information about the Generating Equality and Respect program can be found at: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/search/generating-equality-and-respect-resources>

In November 2015, Monash Council endorsed Monash's Gender Equity Strategy (2015-2020). This Strategy builds upon and formalises Council's longstanding commitment to promoting gender equity and preventing violence against women. Achieving gender equity is critical to improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and is a core principle of a fair, safe and inclusive community.

Safeguarding Children

The Monash Children, Young People and Family Strategy⁴¹ articulates Council's strong commitment to keeping children and young people safe and having practices in place to protect their wellbeing. Likewise, the Victorian Government is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the

Betrayal of Trust report which found that more must be done to prevent and respond to child abuse in the community, there is a new regulatory landscape surrounding child safety, underpinned by the Child Safe Standards.⁴²

The Child Safe Standards⁴³ are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian early childhood services and schools, to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect. They apply to all organizations (including Monash Council) with a duty of care to children and young people whilst delivering a service or activity to them and/or their families. The Child Safe Standards are designed to systematically build the capacity of organisations to keep children and young people safe from abuse and exploitation by staff, volunteers or other relevant related individuals.

Monash Council is well advanced in the process of attaining accreditation through the Australian Children's Foundation (ACF) Safeguarding Children Program.⁴⁴ ACF provides the resources to support organisations including Monash Council to meet evidence based standards that ultimately reduce the risk of abuse of children and young people by employees and volunteers. It achieves this through facilitating organisations to:

- ▲ recognise the factors that increase a child's vulnerability to maltreatment;
- ▲ be aware of the vulnerabilities which may indicate a need to assess, monitor or curtail the behaviour of individuals in relation to children and young people within organisations;
- ▲ create an environment which limits the opportunity for children to be maltreated;
- ▲ develop and maintain a culture that is child-focused, transparent and respectful; and,
- ▲ implement a comprehensive framework that ensures appropriate policies and guidelines for all individuals associated with an organisation.

In complying with the child safe standards an applicable entity to which the standards apply must include the following principles as part of their response to each standard:⁴⁵

- ▲ promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- ▲ promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ▲ promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an applicable entity to which the standards apply must have:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

General Community Safety

A safe community is one in which all sectors of the community work together in a coordinated and collaborative way, forming partnerships to promote safety, manage risk, increase the overall safety of all its members and reduce the fear of harm.⁴⁶

Perceptions of Safety

More recent data detailed in VicHealth's Health Indicators Survey 2015 confirmed that most (93.3%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone during the day, which was higher than the Victorian estimate (92.5%).⁴⁷ Just under six out of 10 (58.2%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone in their local area after dark, which was higher than the Victorian estimate (55.1%), also indicating that Monash residents feel slightly safer.⁴⁸ There were no significant changes in perceptions of safety for Monash between the 2007, 2011 and 2015 surveys.⁴⁹

Police and Crime in Monash

Crime rates in Monash are below average.⁵⁰

Monash local government area is a safer community with lower crime incidents compared to many other LGA areas:

- ▲ **Monash ranked 68th** out of the 79 LGA for reported violent offences (per 100,000 population).⁵¹
- ▲ **Monash ranked 67th** out of the 79 LGA for reported drug offences (per 100,000 population).⁵²
- ▲ **Monash ranked 25th** out of the 79 LGA for reported property offences (per 100,000 population).⁵³

Monash is generally a safe place to live and recent crime data ranks the City of Monash 54th out of a total of 79 Local Government Areas (LGA) in Victoria for total offences rate (per 100,000 population) for this reporting period (Attachment G).⁵⁴ Note: the higher the ranking the better.

The total number of crime offences at year ending June 2016 including drug offences, property and deception offences and crimes against the person for the City of Monash was 10,748, comparable to 49,550 for the Inner Eastern Metropolitan Region and 426,526 for total Victoria.

Table 2: Monash Crime Statistics Snapshot compared with Eastern Region LGA's⁵⁵

	Crimes Against the Person	Property and Deception Offences	Drug Offences	Public Order and Security Offences	Justice Procedures Offences and Other	TOTAL OFFENCES	POPULATION	Total per capita rate
MONASH	1399	9170	493	986	19	12067	187286	6443
KNOX	1635	6928	821	1083	33	10500	155681	6745
WHITEHORSE	1118	5161	262	143	16	6700	165557	4047
BOROONDARA	810	6451	349	134	11	7755	174787	4437
MANNINGHAM	746	3346	195	335	8	4630	119442	3876
YARRA RANGES	1482	4725	686	1259	26	8178	150661	5428
MAROONDAH	1172	4548	625	1595	29	7969	112310	7096

A recent Monash Community Satisfaction Survey Report (2016) identified that safety, policing and crime were noted as top issues for Monash Council to address in the coming twelve months within the Ashwood, Chadstone, Clayton and Notting Hill areas.⁵⁷

State Government Community Safety Statement

On 7 December 2016, The State Government launched Victoria's first ever Community Safety Statement—a plan to keep Victorians safe, prevent harm in our communities and hold criminals to account. The Community Safety Statement recognises that all Victorians have the right to feel safe and be safe – in their homes, workplaces and businesses, on transport, in public and in their neighbourhoods.⁵⁸

The measures outlined in the plan are being backed by an additional \$2 billion in investment, and increased Police powers to fight crime.⁵⁹

Council and Community Safety

Monash Council is committed to working with our community, Victoria Police and agency partners to continue to create safe neighbourhoods and places and spaces where people feel happy and empowered to lead fulfilling lives. Safety is a fundamental human right and is essential to health and wellbeing and enjoyment of community life.⁶⁰

Monash residents have identified that feeling safe is a top priority for the community.⁶¹

In a municipal-wide planning survey Monash in Four (2013), the Monash community ranked community safety as the third most important health and wellbeing priority for the community out of seven priority areas. These health and wellbeing priorities are listed below according to community ranking:

1. Parks, Open Spaces & Tracks (53%)
2. Medical, Hospital & Dental Services (37%)
3. Feeling Safe (35%)
4. Transport (29%)
5. Having support of family and friends (27%)
6. Community Services & Facilities (23%)
7. Leisure & Recreation (23%).⁶²

Community safety is given high priority by the community as it is considered to be fundamental to health and wellbeing and the enjoyment of community life in Monash.⁶³ The Monash community identified the top three most important aspects of community safety below:

- ▲ Feeling safe is critical for enjoying the community;
- ▲ Wanting to feel safe while out walking in one's own neighbourhood; and
- ▲ Preventing violence against women and children.⁶⁴

Through community consultation, research and partnership collaboration, Monash Council has developed a community safety framework with three single strategic community safety priorities to guide the implementation of community safety activity in Monash over the next five years. These priorities are:

- ▲ Community Strength and Resilience;
- ▲ Leadership; and
- ▲ Prevention and Positive Solutions.⁶⁵

It is the intent of this Framework that Council will strive towards an integrated, whole-of-Council approach to community safety. Through the application of this Framework it is the expectation that community safety is prioritised in all current and future planning, strategies and activity.⁶⁶

Environmental Design

Monash Council has committed to leading the way in creating safe physical, urban and natural environments through adherence to Safer Design principles including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), where residents feel inspired to actively participate in community life and to go about their daily activities.⁶⁷

Council is committed to and has been highly successful in securing funding opportunities through the State and Federal governments to implement community safety, public safety infrastructure and crime prevention programs in partnership with Victoria Police and other leading partner agencies.⁶⁸

Monash City Council 2021 And Beyond Survey

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID:

Respondents were asked to rank their six most important health and wellbeing issues/concerns from a list. One of the most highly ranked issues was “preventing violence against women and encouraging respectful relationships” with a score of 2.7 out of 6.

An overwhelming majority (83.8%) of respondents reported that they were very (57.2%) or somewhat (26.6%) likely to intervene in some way if they became aware that a family member or close friend had become a victim of family violence.

282 respondents (33.9%) suggested at least one thing that Council could do to foster gender equity and more respectful relationships within our community. The most common actions identified by respondents related to education and awareness such as forums and workshops (6.8%) and communication, promotions and advertisements (5.3%).

In relation to general community safety, an overwhelming majority of respondents felt safe or very safe in their homes during the daytime (88.3%) or in the local area during the day (85.0%). A significantly different picture emerges regarding perception of safety while walking in the local area at night. Less than one third (31.7%) felt safe or very safe with one third (32.3%) feeling neither safe nor unsafe, and more than one third (35.9%) feeling unsafe or very unsafe.

The two most commonly identified actions that respondents felt would make them feel safer in public places in the City of Monash was (i) better lighting of streets, car parks and public areas and (ii) increased Police/Council Officer presence

“Feeling Safe & Being treated with care and respect is the basis of any true civilised community” (Anonymous respondent)

May 2017

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