

# TYF

# LEARNING AND EDUCATION FORUM

# WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAY

**A REPORT ON  
TASMANIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT  
LEARNING AND EDUCATION COLLECTED BY  
THE TASMANIAN YOUTH FORUM**

**APRIL 2016**



Tasmanian youth forum



youth network of Tasmania

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## About TYF

The Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) is Tasmania's peak youth consultative body. TYF is an initiative of the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), the peak organisation for the broader youth sector in Tasmania, with funding from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, through Communities, Sport and Recreation.

## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

The Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) runs Forums for young people aged 12 to 25 in Tasmania. The Forums are a chance for you to have your say on topics that are important to you. The TYF Learning and Education Forum was about the learning you do inside school and outside of school.

The TYF Learning and Education Forum was on Friday 4 November 2015. Everyone met at the Door of Hope in Launceston. There were over 100 people who came to the Forum. We had 29 people from North-West Tasmania, 42 people from Southern Tasmania and 29 people from Northern Tasmania.

We created a survey for people who couldn't go to the Forum but still wanted to have a say. There were 130 people who filled out the survey.

TYF collected the ideas you shared at the Forum and in the Survey to put into this report and a report for adults. The report for adults will be given to key decision makers in government and the community to let them know what you think about learning and education. This Report is for you to read about the ideas that were shared and created at the event.

## What happened at the Forum

Everyone was welcomed to the Forum by Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, Guy Barnett MP. Mo (our Forum leader) started the day by talking about learning and education. He explained what was going to happen during the day. The first thing everyone did was meeting each other in an activity and completing a survey.

Everyone then had time to talk about what helps you to learn in small groups. After morning tea, everyone got to choose a topic they wanted to talk more about. There were 11 topics to choose from. Each of these groups had a worker to help everyone share their ideas. Everyone was asked about what they would keep, what they would change and what they would create that related to their topic.



Picture 1: Forum facilitator, Mo (left) James Riggall (right) speaking at the Forum



to choose what you learn and being able to have breaks when you need them. Others said they liked following a routine and having a quiet space to learn.

People said it helps their learning if they know how it can help you in the future. This is something lots of people wanted so they could learn things about what they will need for life after school.

Some of you said that it can be difficult to go to school if you live far away, are sick or don't enjoy school. Getting more help for these things is something that people said could make it easier for them and others to go to school to learn.

People also shared some of these thoughts on the Ideas Wall. Ideas that were put on the Ideas Wall were about making learning fun so that it is easier to learn. Some ideas said it helps to have your friends and family to help you learn. Lots of you said that if you could do anything, you would want to make the world a better place. People also shared what jobs they wanted to do.

## **What you want to keep, change and create**

People picked two topic groups to be in at the Forum. These groups shared ideas about what you think is good, what you think needs to change, and what you want to create.

Each group was asked to focus on one idea to present at the end of the day. People from each group got up and talked about their idea. These ideas were put on the wall and then everyone voted on the ideas they wanted to see happen. We have put them in order in this report starting from the topics that had the most votes.

### **1. Stress Creators: who, what, when, where, why and how do you approach the things that creates stress**

These groups talked about friends and family helping you when you are stressed. They said it is good to be around people who can help you and it is important to look after yourself, such as taking breaks and having fun to reduce stress. They also talked about wanting to learn about how to look after your mental health at school. People in these groups said school can be stressful when there is a lot of work on. Learning ways to cope when you feel stressed and knowing where to go to get help outside of school can be helpful to reduce stress at school.

These groups wanted to create places you could go to learn that aren't stressful. These places would have areas for you to do school work and a social worker to talk to. Making decisions about learning and education can be stressful. This group said getting help to plan what you want to do in the future would make these decisions less stressful.

### **2. Life Skills: the skills to get you through life and where or how these are learnt**

Getting skills that will help you later in life is something that people in these groups said is important to learn at school. They wanted to get work placements and choose topics to learn about at school so you can get skills for what you want to do in the future.

Getting a qualification is important too but people in these groups said they needed to be updated. People in these groups suggested creating a new life skills class. The class could teach you about budgeting, cleaning, driving, first aid, cooking and mental health. You would also get the chance to do work experience as part of the class.

### 3. Beyond Year 12: what young people want to keep and what they want to change

People said getting ready for the workplace after you finish school is important. These group talked about getting work experience at school so you could learn what it is like to have a job. These groups said extra information could be on a website and schools could put on a camp where you could go to spend more time learning about different jobs.

They talked about how it is hard to work out what you want to do in the future. Having someone you could talk to about different jobs and what they are like would help to find out more information. These groups talked about 'Perfect Pathway Planners' (PPP). A PPP would be there to talk about your pathway. They would be open to changes, creative, honest and ready to talk when you were.



Picture 3: People in discussion groups at the Forum

### 4. Hobbies and Interests: Combining your interests with learning and education

People said having hobbies is important for making sure there is time for study and having fun. People in these groups said that having sport, music and cooking classes at school helps you find out other hobbies you might like. Sometimes this might also help get you a job in these areas. They also suggested getting guest speakers at school to talk about their hobbies and interests.

These groups knew schools can't run all these classes or have every sport available. Schools could share what they have so you could have more hobbies you could try.

## 5. Choosing Direction: decisions about what to learn, where to go and when

This idea was about getting information can help you make decisions about learning and education. These groups said it is important to get information from expos, guest speakers and online. Sometimes it is tricky to find information online. Having one website that has information in one place is what these groups said would help them find it online. They also said there needs to be a specific person at school that you can go to for information about courses and jobs.

The groups said that it is important to have a go at different jobs by doing work placement at school. This can help you decide what you want to do as a job in the future and work out what you need to get the job. The groups said it is important to develop your own skills and this is easier if you have help from friends.

## 6. Getting Advice and Information: what to ask, where to go and how to find out

These groups talk about lots of places people can go for help. This includes people like friends, family, adults you trust, chaplains, counsellors and teachers. There also services like help lines that people can use and the internet can be a good place to find out where to go.

People in these groups said sometimes it is hard to know what help you want. They wanted people to feel okay when asking for help so they could get help as soon as they need it. They said it is important to have counsellors at school and services outside of school available for people.

These groups suggested creating a group called the 'Youth Business Association'. This group would have older students leading talks about different pathways for learning and opportunities for work experience. This would create a way for people to find out about different jobs and get advice from older students.

## 7. Lifelong Learning: different places and ways of learning after study or training

This idea was about having a good environment to work in because people said it is important for learning. People in these groups said having the best computers, modern classrooms and more support staff in classrooms would help people learn at school.

There are lots of subjects that people can learn at school. Sometimes you might want to do a subject that isn't available so these groups wanted there to be more subjects to choose from. This would let people choose subjects they are interested in or will help them get a job or reach their goals in the future.

People in these groups talked about how it can be hard to fit in at school if you are from a different culture. It makes it hard to learn if you are still learning English at school. These groups wanted more time to finish their work and more adults at school who can help with your learning if you are finding things difficult.





## 10. Practical Skills and Experience: getting experience by volunteering, on the job or training

People in these groups said it was good to get work experience at school because you could learn new skills. They liked having the learning options such as the Big Picture Program and school farms. They also liked being able to get on the job training by starting an apprenticeship or traineeships. People said it is important to have time at school to go and do work placements so you can learn new skills.

This group said that sometimes the community thinks that young people aren't trying because they aren't working. It can be hard for young people to get work and this group wanted the community to have more understanding about this. They also wanted the volunteer work that they do to be appreciated.

## 11. Support and Learning: support to get you through learning and education

These groups talked about the different places you can go to get help with your learning or other education issues. This included teachers, counsellors, student mentors, services and social workers. The groups talked about how more help is needed for people to plan what they want to do at school and after school. They said a person who knows about different courses and jobs, and can talk to people about their interests, would be a good person to go to for help with planning your future.

People also talked about different ways you can learn at school. These groups liked having different choices for learning that worked for them. This included having visual, audio and hands-on learning activities at school. They also said that it is good to get practical experience in vocational classes but sometimes people in these classes are seen as people who misbehave.



Picture 5: Participants presenting ideas to everyone at the end of the Forum

## What you said about the Forum

We asked you what you thought about your experiences at the Forum at the end of the day. Many of you said you had learnt new ideas about learning and education at the Forum. Some of you said it helped you to find out about a new pathway you could research or different ways you can learn new information.

Most of you also said you had learnt new tips for creating your own learning pathway. People said they had more ideas about how you could plan for your future and achieve your goals. Some of you said it was good to have your say on learning and education issues and be listened to.

Lots of you said that the best bit about the Forum was getting to meet new people. People liked getting to share their ideas with other people and learn from them. Another highlight of the Forum was having James as the guest speaker and the food that was at the Forum.

Many of you said the Forum was good how it is and didn't think it needed to be changed. Some of you wanted more activities to do and others wanted more time for breaks and to share ideas. Other things you told us were that you liked coming to the Forum and you liked getting the chance to have your say and think about the future.



Picture 6: Wrapping up at the end of the Forum

## What the survey was about

The *TYF Learning and Education Survey* was about giving more young people the chance to have their say because not everyone could go the Forum. There were 130 people who filled out the survey online or at the Forum. These people were from across Tasmania and aged between 12 and 25. The survey asked people about what they thought about learning and education, and what they wanted to do in the future.

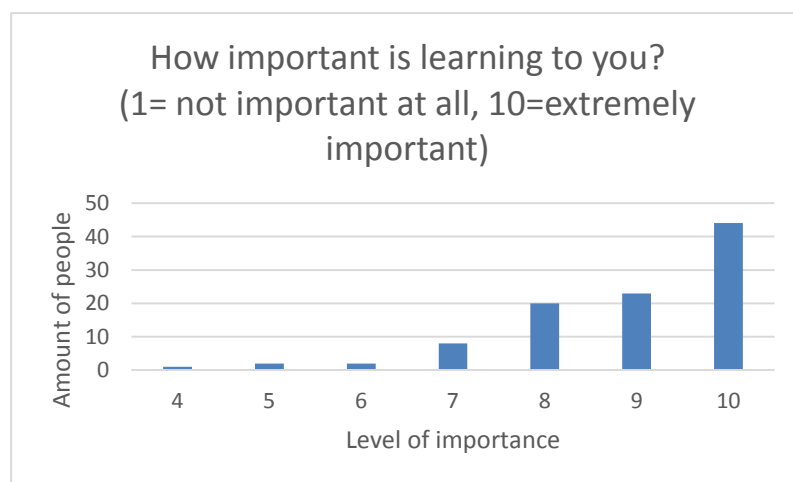
## What you think about learning and education

We asked you what you think learning and education are about. People said that learning is about getting more knowledge, information or skills. This can help you do new things such as cooking or riding a bike. People said learning new things like this will help you through life. Many of you said that learning can be fun and interesting and learning happens at school.

People said education is something that gives you the chance to gain new skills. Education is about other people recognising what you have learnt. Some of you said education is a formal way of learning.

Lots of people said learning and education are important to them because it can help you do more things in life. This is about being able to work with other people, and learning new information and skills. Some people said learning helps them to grow and change.

People said education is important for helping them to get a job and to help their families. Some people said that we are lucky to have an education because not everyone in the world can go to school to learn.



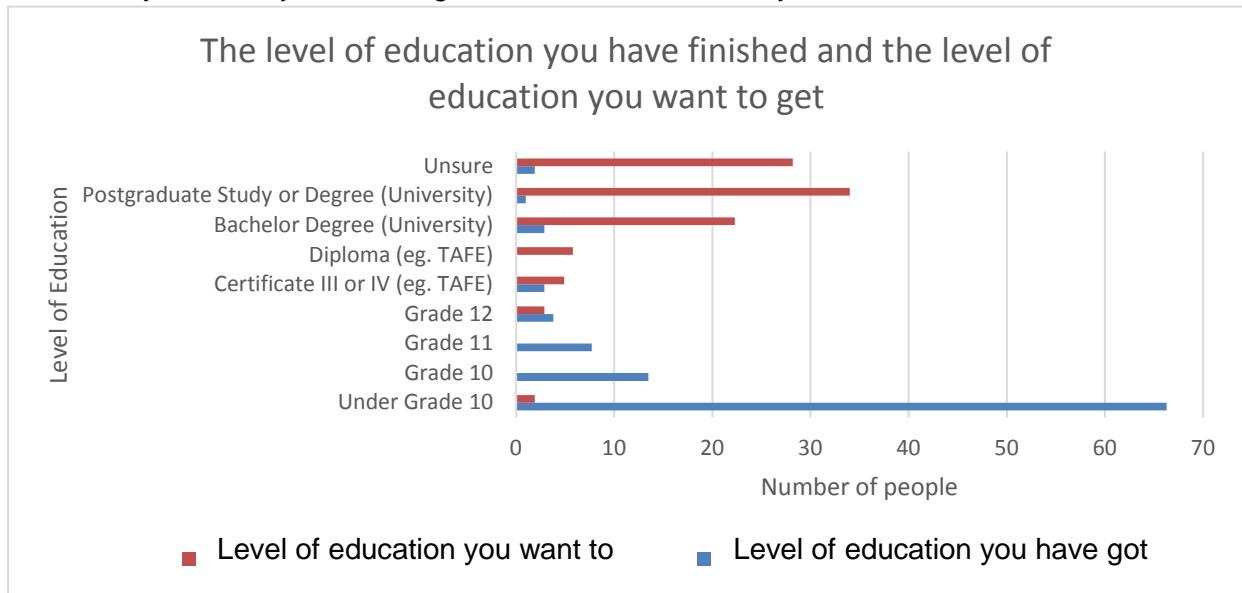
Lots of people said learning is extremely important to them and rated learning 10 out of 10. Most people rated learning an 8 or more out of 10, which means learning is very important to these people.

People said that useful things they use to help them learn included a mixture of visual, audio and hands-on learning styles. Some things that people said they do to learn were to watch someone else show how to do something, take notes, listen to someone explaining a topic, reading and trying something out for them.

Lots of you said it was good to have help from other people when you are trying to learn something new. Sometimes this needs to be a person who can be patient and spend time with you going through the work. Having a good environment at school to learn in is something you said helps you to learn such as being able to work in quiet spaces and access learning resources. People also said learning should be fun and useful.

## What you said about your learning and education

We asked you about your learning and education and what you want to do in the future.



The blue lines show how many people are in different types of education now. Lots of people who filled out the survey are in high school or college. The red lines show what level of education people want to get. Lots of people said they wanted to go to university or weren't sure what they wanted to do.

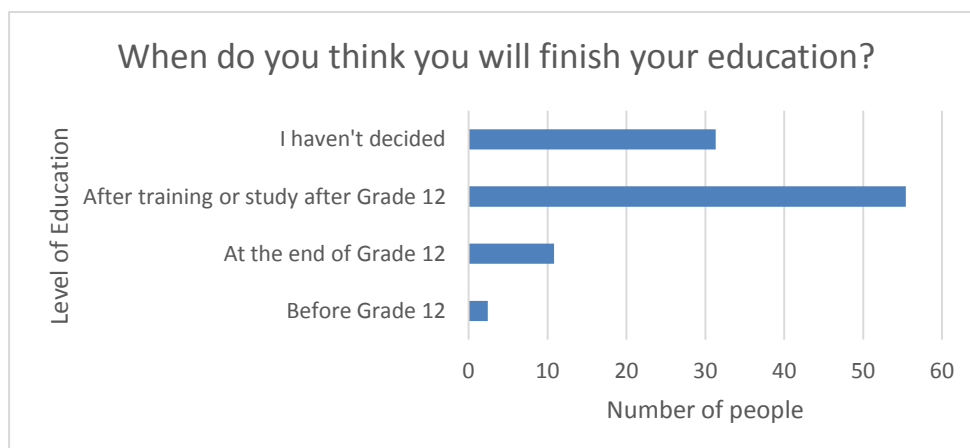
### People who said they are in high school or college

We asked people who are in high school or college now if they had been able to choose a topic, subject or course to study at school. Most of you had already picked something to learn at school. Most of you were happy with what you picked but some people said they were unsure and a few said they were not happy with their decision.



Picture 7: Word cloud of your experiences of learning and education

People said they thought about what they wanted to do in the future and what they enjoyed learning when choosing a topic, subject or course. People said they wanted to learn things that would help them get a job. A few people said their teachers, friends and family helped them to make decisions about what to learn at school.



We asked people in high school or college when they thought they would finish their education. The biggest blue line on the graph shows that most people said they would finish their education after doing study or training after Year 12. These people said they wanted to do a course or get a qualification to help them get the job that they wanted.

A lot of people said they didn't know when they would finish their education. These people said they need more information about different pathways and what they could do. They said it takes time to make this decision.

Some people said they thought they would finish their education at the end of Year 12. Half of these people said they wanted to start work after Year 12. Other people said they weren't sure what they would do afterwards. Lots of these people said they had thought they about doing training or study after Year 12 but didn't know what to do next.

A few people said they thought they would finish their education before Year 12. These people said they were going to get an apprenticeship or said they faced challenges that would make it hard to finish Year 12. This included health problems and living far away from school. These people said they need more help to finish Year 12.

People in high school or college also said it would be easier for them to finish Year 12 if they have support from their friends and family. Some of you were concerned about the costs of going to school and help to pay these costs would also help you to stay in school.

### **People who said they are at TAFE, University or other course after Year 12**

We asked people who are doing study or training after school about why they had decided to do this. Lots of these people said they had gone to TAFE so they could learn English because it is their second language. People also said they were doing study or training to get a job they wanted that they are interested in.

These people said that getting help from friends, family and services would help them finish their study or training. They also said being able to access transport is important.

### People who said they are not studying or in training

There were only a few people who said they weren't currently involved in either education or training. These people said they had finished the level of study that they wanted or were working instead. A couple of people said they had found school difficult and did not want to do more study, or said it was too expensive for them to do more study.

These people said they thought about their work, family, employment, money, where they live, health and travel when thinking about making the decision to stop studying.

### Ideas to help young people and their learning and education

Lots of you said that young people value learning and education. You said this is because it can help them have more opportunities in their life and be able to do more things. People also said that it can help young people get a job and meet new people. A few people said that they didn't think young people valued learning and education.

People said that young people will go to their friends, family or teacher for help with their learning. Some of you said young people might also get help from mentors, tutors, social workers or counsellors.



Picture 8: Word cloud of your ideas to help your learning and education

We asked you about what could be created to help young people with their learning and education.

Lots of you said that a website with information about what to study, courses you can access and training opportunities would be useful. Having one place to go for all of this information would make it easier to find. You also said the website should tell you about what a course

involves, where you can go for support and who you can talk to so you can get help planning your education. You said it is important for the website to use language that is easy to understand and connect to things you can do from where you live. This includes work experience and courses to study.

Apps that can help people study is also something you wanted to create. One app would help people reduce distractions on computers such as games or social media. The other app would let you ask questions and give you answers to help people with their homework when they couldn't get help from other people.

People said having learning spaces and programs that let them learn in a way that suits their needs helps their learning. These people said more courses like this will help them learn what they are interested in by making learning more interesting and easier to understand. Creating different learning areas at school would help people find a space that they like to learn in.

Many of you said getting help with learning when you need it is important. People said having more people that you can go to for help with your learning would make it easier to do your work at school. This would involve having peer mentors at school from older grades, more teachers in the class room to help you and working with your friends on work.



**Picture 9: Sharing ideas and doing the survey at the Forum**

## Key Findings

These are the key findings that are in a second report has been created for adults to share your thoughts and ideas with key decision makers These are short sentences about some of the big issues or ideas that you told us about. We have put the key findings into groups so that similar ideas are together instead of putting them in number order.

### Young people, education and barriers to reaching learning goals

*Finding 20: A significant barrier for young people who want to continue study or training after Year 12 is not understanding what study or training opportunities after involve or how to plan for these.*

*Finding 21: A critical reason why young people may not want to continue studying or training after Year 12 is because they may not be able to identify what they want to do.*

*Finding 23: Young people see financial costs of training or studying as a significant potential barrier to their learning and education completion or attainment.*

### Young people, education and learning needs

*Finding 2: Young people know that there are certain skills and attributes that will assist them to reach their learning goals, but many need help to identify and develop these skills.*

*Finding 8: Young people believe that learning that is linked to their interests would lead to better outcomes for their future.*

*Finding 13: Young people want opportunities to gain practical experience through work placements or volunteering but need support to identify opportunities to do this.*

*Finding 25: Young people know how they learn best and are the best people to ask about their learning needs.*

### Young people, education and planning for the future

*Finding 18: Young people are making decisions about their learning education from a young age.*

*Finding 19: Young people are making their own decisions about their learning and education based on their interests and what they might need in the future, even though they may need additional information to inform these decisions.*

*Finding 24: Young people feel confident they can achieve their plans if they can identify what they want to do and understand the pathway of how they will get there.*



## **Young people's values and aspirations towards learning and education**

*Finding 15: Young people value learning and education highly.*

*Finding 16: Young people value learning because they recognise it will prepare them for the future.*

*Finding 17: Young people have aspirations of completing at least a Year 12 education and continuing on to further training or education.*

## **Young people and their learning and education environment**

*Finding 3: Young people learn best when they can identify a practical application for their learning.*

*Finding 7: Young people consider it important to have a positive learning environment because they understand the impact that this has on their learning.*

*Finding 9: Young people understood that while technology is important for their learning it can also be a distraction and they needed support to manage this at times.*

*Finding 12: Young people want detailed information and feedback on a regular basis on their learning at school that they could share with their family.*

## **Young people, education and employment**

*Finding 6: Young people want a specific, skilled support person to assist them to identify potential learning and employment pathways and apply this to their context.*

*Finding 11: Young people see the purpose of their education and learning is to gain employment.*

*Finding 14: Young people understood that learning could encompass many situations, but they focused on learning as a pathway that incorporates education to achieve their goals.*

## **Young people, education and support**

*Finding 1: Young people want and need support from their personal networks, as well as the broader community, to encourage their learning and help them to learn.*

*Finding 4: Young people want their family and support networks to have involvement in their learning in a strategic way in order to support their learning.*

*Finding 22: Young people rely on their peers most for support although their peer network may not be very diverse and limited in terms of the opportunities they perceive are available to them.*

### **Young people, education and community**

*Finding 5: Young people believe negative perceptions of them in the broader community can impact on their education opportunities and wanted to take steps to address this.*

*Finding 10: Young people want to interact with people from different industries and with the broader community to support their learning and open opportunities for their future.*

### **What happens next?**

This report was launched in April 2016. The ideas that you shared and the key findings will be given to key decision makers in government and community organisations. They will also get a report called *TYF Learning and Education Report: What young people said* that goes into more detail about the ideas you shared. You, and anyone else, can read both of these reports on YNOT's website. We will be working to make sure the issues and ideas you have identified are shared as much as possible.

If you want to find out more about how you can get involved with future TYF Forums and events, contact the TYF Policy and Project Officer.

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