



Palmerston Youth Action Plan 2019-2020

Foreword

Palmerston is one of the fastest growing communities in the Northern Territory characterised by the opportunities it can offer for young people and families.

The Palmerston Youth – Local Action Group recognises the importance of developing local solutions to local challenges and values working together with young people, families and their communities to improve outcomes for young people and ensure communities are inclusive and safe for everyone to grow.

It is our great pleasure to introduce the Palmerston Youth Action Plan developed by the Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group who have worked with young people to identify ways to support positive changes in the region. This group, made up of key stakeholders from the local community, non-government organisations and government agencies, coordinated a comprehensive

consultation with young people that identified strengths of the Palmerston community and actions for improvement.

The Palmerston Youth Action Plan will guide the work to be undertaken over the next two years and will strengthen collaboration and partnerships to deliver the actions outlined in this plan. This work is facilitated through the Regional Youth Services Program that supports coordinated events, services and planning across government and community stakeholders to engage with young people aged 8-17 years.

Community support of, and contribution towards, the key action areas of this plan will ensure its success and the continued collaborative partnerships within the Palmerston community.

Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group

“We want to be involved. Talk to us, we have ideas. We want to help run things in Palmerston.”

(Youth consultation
Palmerston July/August 2018)

Vision

All young people in Palmerston are safe, engaged, healthy, educated, valued and contributing members of the community.

(Palmerston Youth – Local Action Group 2018)



Introduction

Palmerston is the fastest growing region in the Northern Territory, with families being the key foundation of the community and a large population of young people.

It is an exciting time in the growth of the Palmerston community with services working together to improve outcomes and opportunities for the community to lead this work and be involved in directing the actions that need to be delivered.

The Palmerston Youth Action Plan has been created to strengthen our commitment to young people and to value their contribution to the region. The plan has involved young people and key stakeholders through the Palmerston Youth – Local Action Group.

The purpose of the Palmerston Youth Action Plan is to guide local decision making, local responses and actions and to build partnerships to improve the wellbeing of young people in Palmerston. The Palmerston Youth Action Plan outlines goals and actions that have been identified by young people, the community and key stakeholders through the Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group.

The Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group recognises and values the contribution Palmerston young people make to the community and is committed to listening to young people's views and supporting their participation.

Scope

The Palmerston Youth Action Plan is for children and young people aged 8 -17 living, working studying or playing in the Palmerston region.

Palmerston Youth Action Plan

This Youth Action Plan complements the Palmerston Youth Action Plan – Community Version and provides more detail and information about the community of Palmerston and the goals and actions that will be delivered.

The Youth Action Plan is led by the Northern Territory Government through a partnership on a regional level with Territory Families and the Department of the Chief Minister.

Developed through consultation with young people, feedback from the Youth Reference Group and the Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group, this plan has been led by the voices of young people. The plan identifies the key priorities, areas for improvement and gaps in services for young people in Palmerston and outlines how key stakeholders can work together to improve outcomes. It will guide the work of government and the Local Action Group over the next two years.

Governance and Reporting

The Palmerston Youth Action Plan will be monitored and governed through the Palmerston Youth - Local Action Group. Current members are listed below

- Northern Territory Government (Department of Territory Families, Department of Education, Department of the Chief Minister, Regional Programs)
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Commonwealth Government)
- City Of Palmerston Council (Mayor and Director of Community Services)
- Grassroots Action Palmerston (Community Action group)
- Larrakia Nation
- Grow Well Live Well (Palmerston Collective Impact group)

These key stakeholders will contribute to reaching the goals outlined in the plan and will monitor progress against the timeframes. The timeframe for the plan is for 2019 – 2020.

Outcomes will be reported on an annual basis and will be available on the Office of Youth Affairs Website. (www.youth.nt.gov.au)

Palmerston...did you know?

Palmerston is a young city both in terms of its longevity and its people.

The total population of Palmerston is 36,483 people with about 42% of Palmerston's population aged under 25. Half of Palmerston's population is aged 29 or under, compared to Australia as a whole where half the population is under 37.

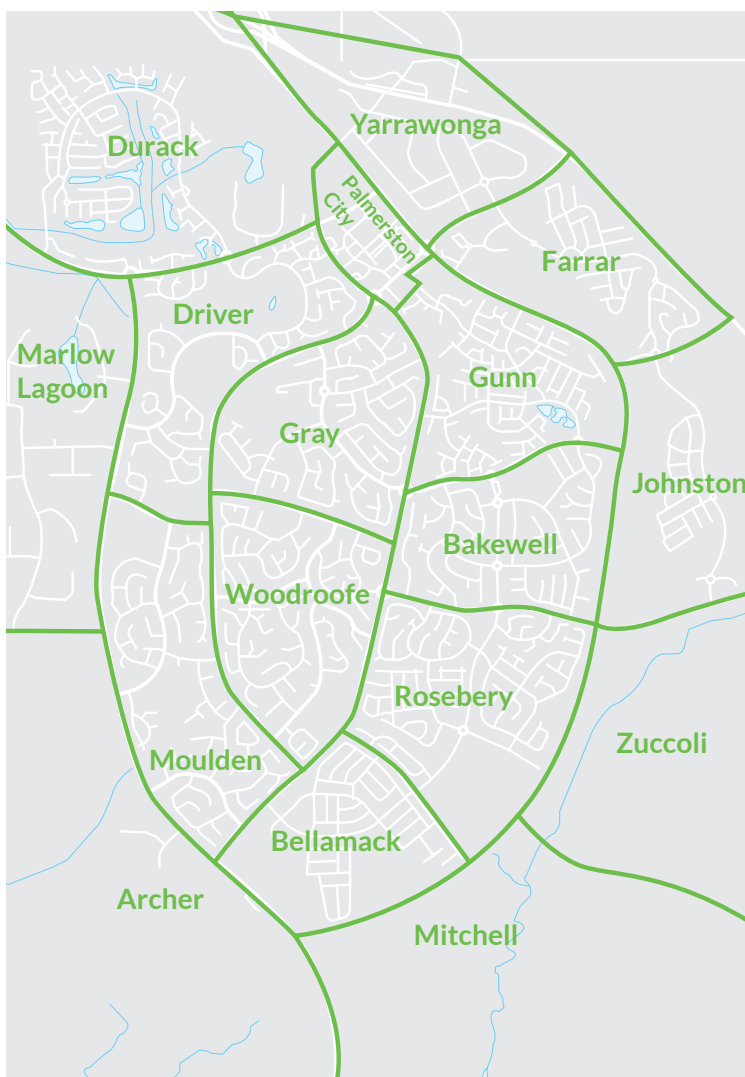
Palmerston is a growing city with 22% population growth over 5 years. This is 3 times Darwin's growth. Families make up 79% of all households.

Enrolment and attendance rates in government schools across Palmerston are high. As at Term 3 2018, the average

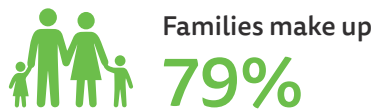
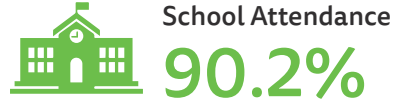
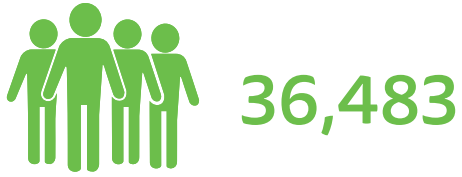
attendance rate was 87% across Palmerston schools, compared to 87.6% for the same time last year.

As at 2016, the unemployment rate was 4.0% compared to the national average of 6.1% with 47% of young people aged 15-19 employed.

Palmerston is comprised of people from diverse backgrounds, ethnicity and cultures. One in eight identify as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, almost one in 10 speak a language other than English at home and one in 11 were born in a non-English speaking country.



Total population:



Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016); City of Palmerston Community Plan (2018); Grow Well Live Well State of the Children Report (2016); Department of Education (2018); Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture (2018)



Key stakeholder groups and services in Palmerston – working together

A key strength of the Palmerston community is a commitment to working together and building partnerships with others to improve outcomes for the community as a whole.

This is evident in the number of services and community groups that are working to support and strengthen opportunities for young people in the region.

The *Grow Well Live Well: State of the Children* report, published in 2016, indicated that the foundations for quality services were in place.

“Palmerston is well supported with a range of services and programs. The foundations are there: family support, education and organisations focused on meeting the needs of children and young people.”

(Grow Well Live Well: State of the Children Report 2016)

However, coordination has been identified as an area to strengthen in Palmerston to support partnerships and improve outcomes for young people. The Palmerston Youth – Local Action Group will work to ensure members are not operating in isolation and are developing actions that are integrated and coordinated across relevant stakeholders.

Building on the work of others, the Youth Action Plan is working in an integrated way with other key stakeholder groups in Palmerston including:

Palmerston and Regional Youth Services Network (PARYS)

It is a well-attended meeting where service providers working with young people share knowledge about their services and identify opportunities to partner to support service delivery and increase the capacity of the youth sector to better respond to young people.

Palmerston Indigenous Network (PIN)

This network brings together a range of stakeholders that work with Aboriginal people in the Palmerston region. Participants represent family and youth services and community members. The PIN shares information about services and discusses priorities for action to improve outcomes for Indigenous people in the Palmerston region.

Grow Well Live Well (GWLW)

Grow Well Live Well (GWLW) is a project funded to facilitate community led placed-based local decision making about future service design and delivery, to coordinate and integrate services to improve wellbeing of children and young people and enhance the evidence base for early intervention and prevention services specifically for child and family safety and wellbeing in Palmerston through a Collective Impact approach.

Student Voice Positive Choice (SVPC)

‘Student Voice, Positive Choice’ (SVPC) is an initiative to respond proactively to social issues including bullying, isolation and antisocial behaviour by encouraging a different view. The aim is to encourage students to work together, have a strong voice, and to make positive choices in the community. SVPC was officially launched at Bakewell Primary School in March 2018 and is comprised of representatives from 9 different Palmerston City Schools. SVPC Hubs have been established in each Palmerston school and will be a platform to encourage students to work together, have a strong voice, and to make positive choices in the community.

City of Palmerston

Whilst not a stakeholder group, the City of Palmerston is leading the strategic planning for the community and has recently completed the City of Palmerston Community Plan. Developed through community consultation, the plan facilitates the inclusion of young people’s voices in all aspects of council’s work (planning, program design and delivery). In particular, The City of Palmerston council identified the importance of ensuring young people have a role in decision-making in the provision of services to other young people.



What the community told us

The Palmerston Youth – Local Action Group employed a consultant to undertake a three-stage consultation targeting young people in Palmerston aged 10 – 17.

The consultation spanned across six months from June to November 2018 and informed the processes for ongoing youth participation.

Stage 1: We asked 150 young people about different youth activities around Palmerston, their ideas and input into how Palmerston could be improved. These included the Young Mullligas and Cudgeries program, Strong Mums Group, 'Student Voice Positive Choice', Anglicare Youth Programs, Palmerston Re-engagement Centre, YMCA school holiday program, and Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association.

This information was shared with the community through a poster. It represented a collective voice of young people and was multifaceted and full of ideas. It was, however a lot of information to take in. We wanted to refine the messages and get some help around how to prioritise all of these ideas.

Stage 2: We held a forum and invited young people from across the community to attend and help us workshop the ideas collected in Stage 1. Twenty-three young people between the ages 12 and 19 attended. These forum results were shared with the community through a poster. This time the poster had key messages that were easy to understand and easy to share.

Stage 3 (ongoing): Young people will be asked to brainstorm innovative solutions to the major problems identified in the two earlier consultations. They will be offered a range of avenues to support their innovations to become actions. These include working with the LAG Youth Representative Group, linking with a service provider or direct support from the Youth Programs Coordinator.

This is an 'entry rich' consultation process, so at every step we invite young people to bring issues to the table that have not been previously discussed. In this way, as we meet diverse audiences and young people with diverse experiences, we invite them to broaden the conversation and increase the community's understanding of young people's perspectives.

This Youth Action Plan discusses the results of the first and second stages of the consultation. There were a number of areas that were emphasised across numerous groups within the consultation.

Palmerston young people want:

- A safe community
- To be treated and given opportunity equally, regardless of their circumstances
- More involvement in decision-making and the organisation of events and activities
- Youth activities promoted in more effective ways
- Economic and vocational opportunities for young people
- A bigger range of activities to cater for more interests (including art and sport)
- Opportunities for families to come together and learn skills
- Safe places to relax staffed by adults who care about young people
- Recognition of the vulnerability of younger children, young people with unsafe home environments, and women
- Better service delivery for the above groups as well as families and themselves.

These themes are representative of a broader aspiration to create equal access to opportunities and belonging, across the community, within networks that affect young people.



GOAL 1:

Young people are supported to be leaders in the community and to have a voice in issues that affect them.

Key actions

Create and implement a model of youth participation that:

- supports the continuation of the Youth Representative Group and includes this group and a range of youth representative groups in key forums and consultation opportunities.
- works with the Youth Representative Group to broaden its membership
- support young people to attend Forums and participate in project working groups in areas that they are interested in and wanting to make a change.
- meetings and events where they can contribute to decisions affecting them
- creates networking events for young people to discuss their ideas with non-government organisations and local businesses to create partnerships
- is developed with young people.

Provide more opportunities for young people to be involved in key forums and decisions that are affecting them, including through the use of technology.

Develop and deliver a “Youth Participation - Skills and Strategies Forum” for organisations, service providers and businesses to give

young people the skills to confidently contribute to discussions about the future of Palmerston.

Support local organisations and the Palmerston City Council to involve young people and recognise organisations that have implemented youth participation strategies.

Develop an outreach program to engage with young people at a broad range of youth programs, events and forums across the community.

Support the NT Government Youth Round Table representatives from Palmerston to be engaged in the discussions held by local network groups and involved in the key priority areas for action.

Expected outcomes

Young people are provided with opportunities and supported to participate in decisions that affect them.

Service providers and the City of Palmerston find innovative ways to encourage and support young people to participate.

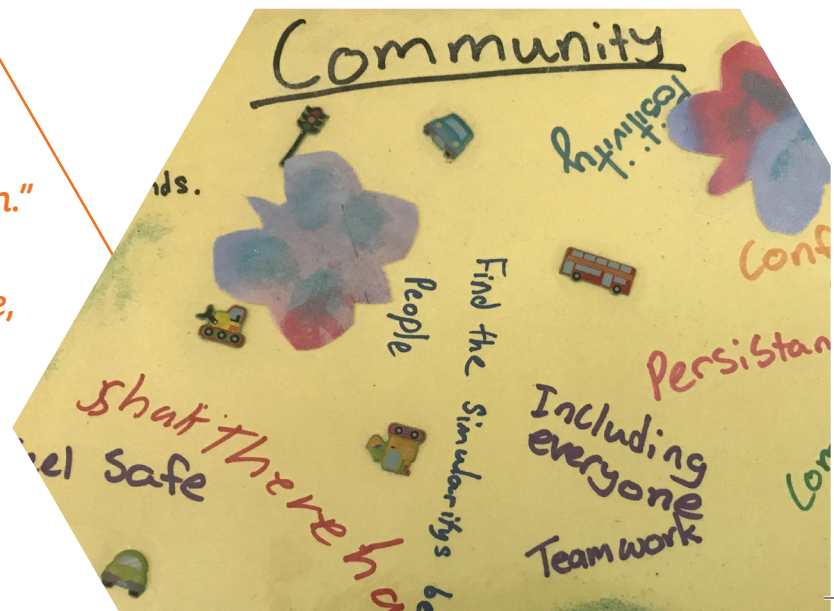
Youth representative processes are developed and supported in Palmerston.

“A place people want to come; a better reputation.”

“Change adults’ perspectives on youth.”

“Clean public spaces; no bad suburbs; all suburbs safe and strong; less crime, less violence”

(Youth consultation Palmerston July/August 2018)



GOAL 2:

Create a safe, inclusive youth space for young people in Palmerston and a range of opportunities for young people to participate in activities that are fun and engaging.

Key actions

Work with Territory Families in the establishment of a new youth drop in space that delivers activities after school hours and on weekends. This space will also provide overnight emergency accommodation for young people if needed with help to access a range of youth and family support.

Engage with a broad range of young people to develop the design and scope of the facility.

Facilitate opportunities for partnerships and services to be delivered on-site by existing government and non-government services.

Assist youth activity providers to ensure that young people with diverse experiences feel comfortable and have a sense of belonging in their programs.

Provide activities during school holidays that are coordinated and funded to engage a diverse range of young people in the Palmerston community.

Work with the Palmerston Youth Programs Co-ordinator to ensure young people with barriers to accessing activities are included and supported to attend.

Work with the City of Palmerston to deliver the Palmerston Youth Festival which will focus on music, art, culture and performance.

Support young people to contribute to the design, development and delivery of this event.

Engage with the Youth Reference Group and participants of current activities to consider ideas for youth activities in the Palmerston community.

Continue to work with Larrakia Nation to provide transport home from activities for young people.

Strengthen links with activities and education through the 'Student Voice Positive Choice' program to provide opportunity for students to be engaged in activities and to develop and support community events.

Expected outcomes

A safe, inclusive, creative space is created for young people to feel welcome and heard.

Safe and engaging activities are available for young people in Palmerston

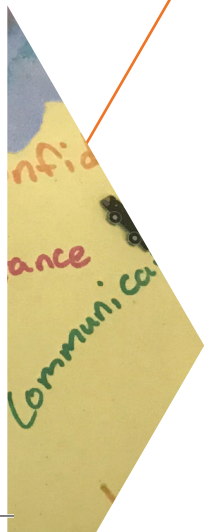
Employment and training opportunities are increased for young people.

More young people are able to access existing services.

Safe places and services for young people to go to get help."

Make a range of events and activities available to Palmerston Youth that are fun, engaging and enjoyable!

(Youth consultation Palmerston July/August 2018)



GOAL 3:

Develop a resource map for young people and service providers so young people can know where to get help and support.

Key actions

Create a comprehensive service map for the Palmerston area that identifies services available for young people including vocation support.

Work with key youth representative groups to ensure a range of young people have access to this information in a youth-friendly format.

Support young people to promote and share this information with their peers.

Ensure the service map is created in a co-ordinated way with other key stakeholders and is an accurate and accessible document for the whole community. Distribute at local community events.

Work with key stakeholders and funding bodies to provide services that bridge identified gaps in existing services.

Explore partnerships that could be developed with Darwin organisations to provide outreach services in Palmerston.

Work with Palmerston youth representatives to create a central information platform (online) that will provide information on available services and how to access these.

Expected outcomes

Service map completed and available for young people and key stakeholders.

Services know where to refer young people needing help and support.

Young people report that the service map is a useful tool that has enabled them to increase access to services in a timely way.

“Safe places and services for young people to go to get help.”

(Youth consultation Palmerston July/August 2018)



GOAL 4:

Improve community awareness of trauma and its impact on young people.

Key actions

Increase community awareness about understanding, identifying and responding to young people and families that have been impacted by trauma.

Provide training that is easy to understand and accessible to a range of participants including family, community members, businesses, volunteers and frontline workers. Begin with a pilot of making resources available to services providing activities through the Territory Families Palmerston Youth Activities Grant round.

Develop a shared framework for working with young people impacted by trauma and provide as a resource to people new to the Palmerston youth space.

Partner with the culturally-informed Community Of Practice that has recently been established through the Sanderson Alliance and Grow Well Live Well, to support improving responses to young people in Palmerston.

Create a community of practice between families, schools, youth service providers, local businesses and young people to share and learn about ways to respond to young people impacted by trauma.

Create opportunities for businesses of Palmerston to increase their knowledge and capacity to respond to young people impacted by trauma.

Expected outcomes

The community has a deeper understanding of trauma and its impact and how to work with and respond to young people impacted by trauma within Palmerston.

Skills and support are provided to families, volunteers and workers that support young people in Palmerston.

More young people access therapeutic services.

"Educate adults about what some young people have to go through"

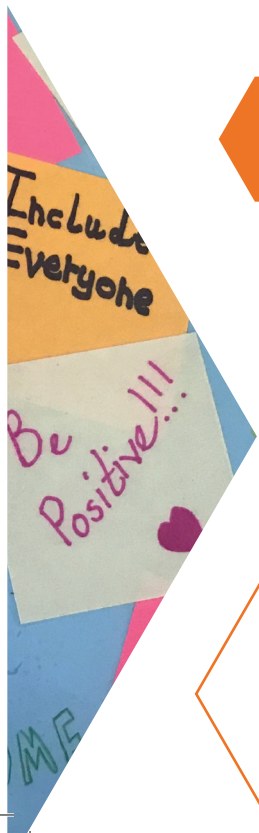
"Safety for women and girls."

"Adults we can trust."

"Safety at the bus interchange."

"More housing options away from violence."

(Youth consultation Palmerston July/August 2018)



GOAL 5:

Improve cultural connectedness throughout the community

Key actions

Consult with young people, local elders, and multicultural groups working in the community and in schools in Palmerston to co-design strategies to improve cultural connectedness.

Provide opportunities for young people to be creative through a range of platforms ie street art, music, sport and art to share their culture with the community.

Work with the City of Palmerston to promote cultural art and connection through the Palmerston Youth Festival.

Identify ways for Harmony Day celebrations to benefit the community beyond the one day.

Develop mentoring programs linking locals and new residents.

Explore ways to increase mentor programs and combine with cultural art/music programs building cultural pride and understanding within young people and older members of the community who have become disconnected.

Expected outcomes

Improved interconnectedness is seen within and across cultures in the community.

Public spaces are enhanced through art, music and performance, bringing pride and visibility to all cultures.

Young people are given the opportunity to develop leadership capabilities.



“Palmerston is more like family than other places. It’s not like that when I go to Cas.”

GOAL 6:

Support young people to remain in school and stay engaged in education and training.

Key actions

Increase support services at the Palmerston Re-Engagement Centre.

Contribute to the development of the Palmerston Youth Skills Centre to provide practical life skills and work-ready training.

Identify and advocate for the removal of potential barriers to young people staying engaged in education and training.

Actively promote the importance young people to stay in positive educational and vocational pathways.

Engage young people who are not currently in schools to understand the reasons for disengagement and processes that would support re-engagement. In partnership with young people, develop a set of recommendations to promote within the NT Government and education sector.

Develop an action card to support parents, community members and young people to advocate for educational and vocational support. Seek assistance from families who have successfully advocated on behalf of their children.

Strengthen the relationship between schools and local NGOs to find ways to reach young people who are at risk of disengaging from school.

Strengthen connections with NGOs who have funding for educational guidance/vocational programs such as YouthWorX and headspace. Consider hosting network meetings for this specialist area and promoting within the service map.

Explore ways to strengthen partnerships between schools, NGOs and local businesses to provide more pathways for young people from school into training and employment.

Support initiatives that are working with students to keep them engaged in education, including Clontarf, Girls Academy, Student Voice Positive Choice, and Connect, Dream with the Bakewell Mob.

Expected outcomes

The community has an improved understanding of the reasons why young people disengage from the education system.

There is an increased awareness, or development of, services that can be accessed for young people and families to support engagement in education and training.

Empowered young people and families making informed decisions about education.

"If you drop out it's hard to get back in...."

We want to have more job opportunities and VET programs"



GOAL 7:

Change the narrative about young people in Palmerston by promoting the positive contributions being made.

Key actions

Provide and support opportunities for young people to share and express their own stories through creative and cultural pursuits such as music/art/dance, facilitated through dedicated youth facilities.

Develop resources educating adults on the lives of young people in Palmerston and how they contribute to the community.

Create avenues for sharing good news stories in the media and through social media platforms. Partner with the Office of the Children's Commissioner to develop local stories to promote young people in Palmerston.

Support Youth Representative Groups and 'Student Voice Positive Choice' to promote young people and the positive contributions they are making to the Palmerston community.

Skill up young people in interviewing techniques and technology, and create a Palmerston podcast from stories they have gathered from each other.

Consult with young people and the community about their ideas to make Palmerston a safer community.

Provide incentives for young people to showcase their skills and talents within local community events.

Support regular community dinners and events providing safe spaces for families to enjoy.

Carry out a literature review on what strategies and actions increase safety within communities and make recommendations about actions to support this in Palmerston.

Expected outcomes

Stories are told by young people about themselves.

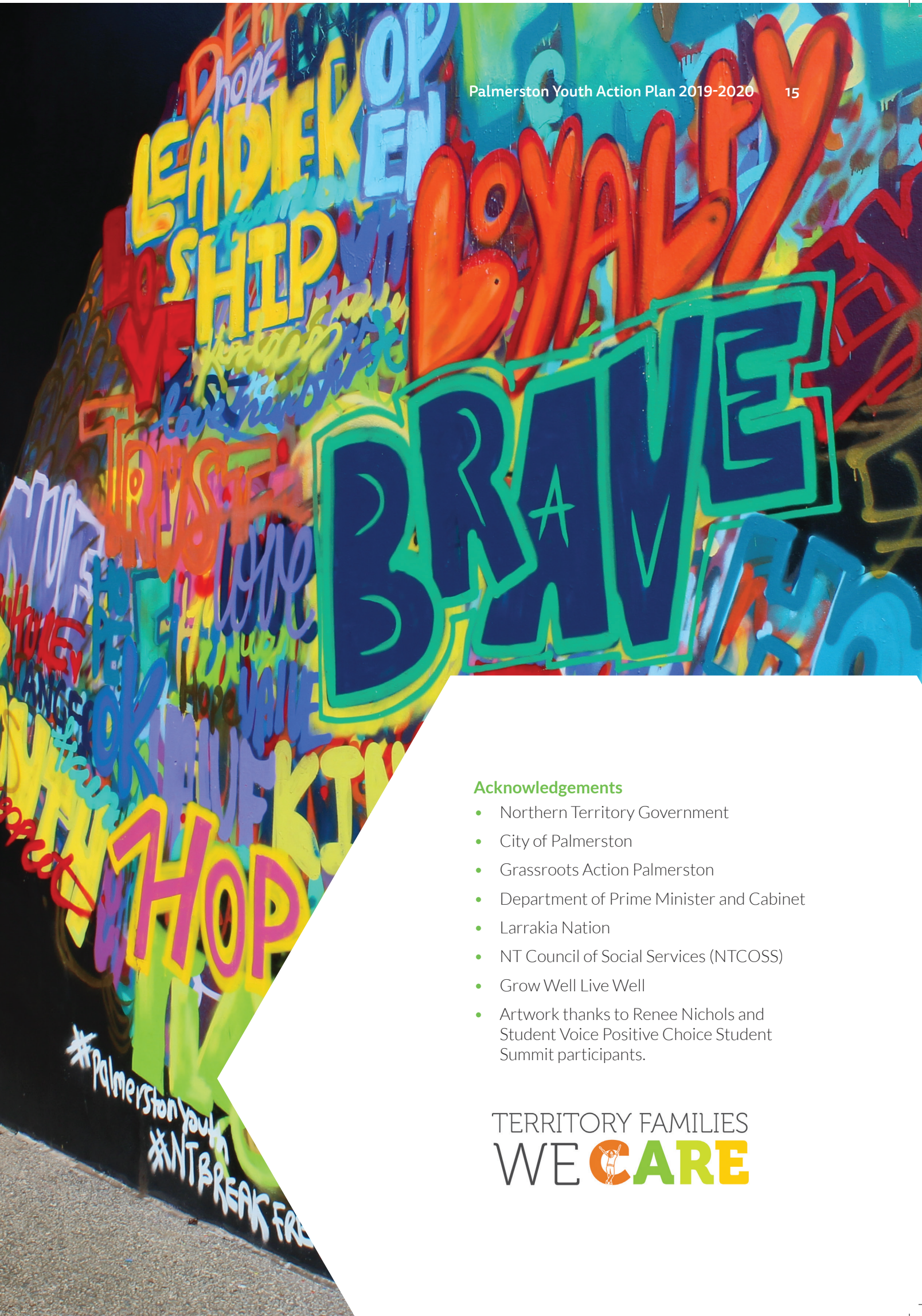
Media stories are delivered that show Palmerston young people achieving and living happy, safe, healthy lives.

Young people are valued members by the community.

More care and less judgement towards young people.

Positive pathways are created for all young people regardless of their circumstances.

"We want to change the story about Palmerston and tell people the good things that we are doing"



Acknowledgements

- Northern Territory Government
- City of Palmerston
- Grassroots Action Palmerston
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Larrakia Nation
- NT Council of Social Services (NTCOSS)
- Grow Well Live Well
- Artwork thanks to Renee Nichols and Student Voice Positive Choice Student Summit participants.

TERRITORY FAMILIES
WE  CARE



Get Involved

If you work with young people and can support them in contributing to their community and implementing parts of this plan, contact the Office of Youth Affairs by emailing TF.OYA@nt.gov.au

TERRITORY FAMILIES
territoryfamilies.nt.gov.au