

THE STATE OF BULOKE'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE REPORT 2020

The North Central Local Learning and Employment Network (NCLLEN) and the Buloke Shire Council commissioned the development of the **State of Buloke's Children and Young People Report 2020** to gain a better community understanding of how Buloke's children and young people (and their families) are faring.

This one page summary highlights areas where Buloke is doing well and areas for improvement when compared to Victorian data. The full report with all results (including data sources and time trends) can be found at: www.ncllen.org.au

"Children are important. They bring their own value and influence to the world, as well as being shaped by the world around them ...Children are also important for their future contribution to society, as the next generation of leaders, workers, parents, consumers and members of communities ... in a global society".

COAG, National Early Childhood Development Strategy, 2009, p. 7



The early, middle and youth years are a critical time. There is clear and enduring evidence from both Australia and worldwide that the early years of a child's life have a profound impact on their future health, development, learning and wellbeing.

The research also shows that investing in resources to support children in their early years of life brings long-term benefits to both them and the whole community.

HOW ARE WE FARING?

WHERE WE ARE DOING WELL

Compared to the Victorian average, FEWER children/young people in the Buloke Shire are:

- living in single parent families
- experiencing high levels of family stress in the month before entering school
- living in families with child protection substantiations
- involved in crime as a victim or perpetrator
- being bullied in years 5-9
- living in homes with no motor vehicle
- lower weight babies
- concerned about their child's oral health on school entry
- absent from school in years 3,6,7,9,11 & 12

MORE children/young people in the Buloke Shire compared to Victoria are:

- learning or earning
- attending the 3.5 year maternal and child health ages and stages visit
- fully immunised at one and five years of age
- fully breastfed at 3 months and 6 months of age
- reported to be in excellent or very good health at school entry
- attending kindergarten
- achieving national standards in literacy in years 3 and year 7
- achieving national standards in numeracy in years 7 and 9
- engaged in secondary school at age 16
- attaining year 12 or equivalent education
- participating in volunteer work (age 15 years and over)

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Compared to the Victorian average, MORE children/young people in the Buloke Shire are:

- being placed in Out of Home Care
- living in families where the mother has low educational attainment
- living in jobless families
- living in low income, welfare dependant families (children under 16 yrs)
- living in homes without internet access
- receiving an unemployment benefit (youth aged 16-24)
- developmentally vulnerable on one or more AEDC domains
- developmentally vulnerable on two or more AEDC domains
- reported to have difficulties with speech and/or language on school entry
- experiencing their mother smoking during pregnancy
- attracting a kindergarten fee subsidy

LESS Buloke Shire children are developmentally on track (AEDC) in:

- physical health and wellbeing domain
- social competence domain
- emotional maturity domain
- communication skills and general knowledge domain

Fewer children in Buloke (compared to Victorian average):

- are regularly read to/encouraged in their reading at home
- have parents/caregivers who are actively engaged with their school to support their learning
- are achieving national literacy standards in year 5 and 9

"Perhaps the greatest opportunity to get ahead of disadvantage right now is using integrated data sets and data analytics to identify those most at risk of experiencing deep disadvantage and to alter their life course by building capacity and resilience early through the provision of integrated programs and support for the child and household".
(CEDA 2019)

It is hoped that the **State of Buloke's Children and Young People Report 2020** will widely inform resourcing, planning, data gaps and advocacy efforts to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families living in the Buloke Shire.