

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL EARLY YEARS PLAN 2014- 2017



LODDON
SHIRE

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Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy
Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2015
Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2008
Loddon Shire Council Recreation Strategy

RELATED LEGISLATION:

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This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Loddon Shire Council would like to express its appreciation by acknowledging the wide range of community organisations, schools, kindergartens, community groups, parents/caregivers and interested community members who contributed to the development of the Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP):

Health & Community Services	Schools & Kindergartens	Community Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northern District Community Health Service• Inglewood and District Health Service• St. Luke's Anglicare• Centacare Family Services• Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership• Boort District Health• Dingee Bush Nursing Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boort Preschool• Dingee Preschool• Pyramid Hill Preschool• Wedderburn Kindergarten• St. Mary's Primary School Inglewood• Wedderburn College• East Loddon P-12 College• Boort District P-12 School]• Bridgewater Primary School• Pyramid Hill College• Inglewood Primary School• Tarnagulla Primary School• St Patrick's School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BRIC• Boort Baptist Church• Tarnagulla Community Centre• Eddington Community Centre• East Loddon Community Centre• Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House• Inglewood Community Resource Centre

The contributions of these organisations and groups, as well as the input from individual parents/caregivers, have been vital in shaping a whole of community MEYP focussed on improving outcomes for children from birth to eight years of age and their families.

2 INTRODUCTION

A Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP) is a local area strategic plan for the development and coordination of early education, care, health services and activities for children aged 0-8 years and their families.

The MEYP explicitly identifies the role of Council in the planning and delivery of early years services and defines Council's role in service provision, partnership development, advocacy and community capacity building.

Loddon Shire Council has developed the 2014-2017 MEYP in line with an agreement between the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). The MEYP enables Council to:

- make more informed decisions
- develop and better evaluate early years services, activities and facilities delivered by Council
- maximise resources and undertake long-term planning for children aged 0-8 years.

The MEYP requires that Council work in partnership with the community to improve outcomes for young children and their families, particularly vulnerable families. Robust partnerships and high levels of co-operation between local government, key stakeholders and the community are vital to the successful implementation of Loddon's MEYP. MAV's Municipal Early Years Planning Framework also highlights the importance of partnerships relating to early years planning:

There is an increased emphasis on encouraging a partnership approach where all community partners can work towards an agreed vision and common outcomes for young children and their families across the municipality.

The Loddon Shire MEYP responds to the needs and aspirations of the community and is underpinned by evidence related to the health and development of children aged 0-8 years. Loddon Shire Council will work in partnership with key stakeholders to implement the MEYP strategies and the corresponding action plan over the next four years.

2.1 Related Council plans

Other plans and strategies covering the full range of Council services, operations and responsibilities that relate to the needs and aspirations of children aged 0-8 years and their families are:

- Loddon Shire Council Plan 2013-2017
- Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy
- Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2015
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Loddon Shire Economic Development Strategy 2008
- Loddon Shire Council Recreation Strategy

These related plans are available for viewing on the Loddon Shire Council website: www.loddon.vic.gov.au.

3 BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Loddon Shire Council's MEYP has four overarching strategy areas supported by fourteen guiding objectives and forty one corresponding actions (see Loddon Shire Council MEYP Action Plan – Attachment 2).

Thirty three of the actions captured in the plan will be completed using existing resources so will not require any added funding. The remaining eight actions may require additional funding. Costs could be offset by the following actions.

- **Seeking internal and external grants to contribute towards relevant projects-** a key activity in the plan involves setting up a community treasure chest that will support actions within the MEYP. It is envisaged that once this community fund is established it could support activities and events within the plan that require minor injections of funding. In addition, state and federal funding options could be explored to support a number of activities within the plan.
- **Council allocating an amount against a key identified activity-** e.g. funding to support the Early Years' Service Mapping activity.
- **Community partnerships-** through the ongoing work of Loddon's Early Years Coordinator identified partner agencies may make joint contributions towards activity costs.

4 RISK ANALYSIS

Partnership engagement and the ability to source external funding are the two key risks that could affect the implementation of the MEYP. These risks have been mitigated by:

- extending the Early Years Network to further develop and support partnerships
- tasking the Early Years Network with overseeing the implementation of the MEYP, including the regular review and management of risks; and
- determining that the majority of the actions within the MEYP can be undertaken within the existing funding of key partners.

5 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLY YEARS

It is well recognised that what happens prenatally and in the first five years of a child's life is influential in defining the quality of their life in later years. Experiences in early childhood are critical to the development of the child's brain, dictating the development of the brain's neural pathways, shaping language capability, cognitive ability, emotional responses and temperament, as well as setting the foundations for physical and mental health in adulthood (Mustard, 2008).

Brain research also shows that the early years of development from conception to age six, particularly the first three years, provide the basis for the development of competence, coping and emotional skills that affect learning, behaviour and health throughout life (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000).

Best Start Australia early childhood literature also agrees and highlights that:

- the early years are crucial in setting the stage for later life
- young children develop through their relationships with others
- children's development is shaped by the balance between risk and protective factors
- supporting families effectively requires a comprehensive, coordinated family-centred service system.

In addition, Victoria's Plan to Improve Outcomes in Early Childhood specifies that:

- addressing disadvantage in the early years can end generations of disengagement for families and whole communities, and provide children with the opportunity of breaking the cycle of disadvantage
- children's health, social and emotional wellbeing and their intellectual development are the business of all early years service providers
- the integration of services makes life easier and less stressful for children and families through more consistent forms of delivery.

Increasing evidence of child outcomes in Victoria demonstrate that particular population groups are at risk of poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than children generally. Children are acknowledged as being in a population group 'at risk' if they:

- have a language background other than English
- are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- are in a family with one parent
- live in an area of most socio-economic disadvantage (DEECD, 2011).

An Australian report by Access Economics on the benefits of early intervention to prevent youth disengagement found that interventions that reduce youth disengagement could potentially return 23.6 times the initial government investment to society and 7.6 times directly to the government through increased taxation revenues (under a scenario assuming a 50% potential return) (ASIB, 2010). The same report also demonstrated that:

- early childhood education programs (such as kindergarten) improved outcomes in primary and secondary school, with a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of around 2.36 from meta-analysis (due largely to higher earnings and lower crime rates)
- infant and toddler programs, such as the United States Nurse-Family Partnership program, returned a BCR of between 1.26 for low risk to 5.68 for high risk groups (Access Economics, 2008, iii).

Loddon Shire Council recognises the importance of using evidence to guide best practice and therefore will be guided by the available research and evidence throughout the implementation of the MEYP.

6 RELEVANT POLICY

6.1 National

6.1.1 The National Quality Framework for Early Education and Care

Most funded kindergarten programs in Victoria are now offered in approved education and care services operated by approved providers under the National Quality Framework, and assessed by the Regulatory Authority (DEECD) against the National Quality Standard to receive a quality rating.

6.1.2 Belonging, Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework

Describes the principles, practices and outcomes that support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. It is expected that each early childhood service will develop their own strategy to implement the Framework.

The Framework is part of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care. It is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. It underpins universal access to early childhood education.

6.1.3 National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education

In 2008, COAG endorsed the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education, to achieve the following aims.

- By 2013, every child will have access to a quality early childhood education program in the year prior to formal schooling.
- The kindergarten program will be delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year (or 600 hours per year), in accordance with the National Quality Framework.
- The program will be accessible across a diversity of settings in a form that meets the needs of parents and in a manner that ensures cost does not present a barrier to access.
- The Commonwealth Government provides funding to the Victorian Government to assist in implementing the National Partnership Agreement.

6.1.4 National Partnership Agreement for Indigenous Early Childhood Development

In 2009, COAG agreed to the revised National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, with the following targets:

- halve the gap in mortality rates within a decade for indigenous children under five
- ensure all indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years
- ensure every child has access to a preschool program in the 12 months prior to full-time schooling by 2013
- halve the gap for indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade.

As part of this agreement, a key strategy for improved services and outcomes for indigenous children and their families is to integrate early childhood services through the development of Children and Family Centres. These will deliver integrated services, including early learning, child care and family support programs.

6.2 Victorian

6.2.1 Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

The VEYLDF advances all children's learning and development from birth to eight years. It does this by supporting all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to achieve positive outcomes for all children.

The VEYLD is an overarching framework, which works in conjunction with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and the Australian Curriculum (AusVELS) for schools, the Maternal and Child Health Service Key Ages and Stages Framework, and Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) resources.

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework:

- identifies five early years learning and development outcomes for all children aged from birth to eight, which provides a shared language for all early childhood professionals and families to use when planning for children's learning and development
- describes the most effective ways for early childhood professionals to work together and with children and families by identifying eight practice principles for learning and development, categorised as collaborative, effective and reflective
- emphasises the importance of supporting children and families as they transition within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

6.2.2 Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework

The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013–2018, released in November 2012, guides and coordinates the efforts of the Victorian Government in partnership with Victoria's Aboriginal communities. The framework focuses long term, strategic and progressive effort to improve the health and quality of life of Aboriginal Victorians, and aligns closely with the targets of COAG.

6.2.3 Victorian Wannik education strategy

Wannik Learning Together — Journey to Our Future is an education strategy which aims to reduce disparity in educational outcomes between Koorie and non-Koorie students in Victoria.

6.2.4 Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children

In 2012, the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry found that universal early education and care services were not as inclusive of vulnerable children and families as they should be. The Victorian Government's response in the discussion paper *Victoria's Vulnerable Children — Our Shared Responsibility* identified a responsibility shared by government and other services to work together "to prevent child abuse and neglect, reduce the impact when it does occur, and improve the outcomes for children and young people in the statutory child protection system." The discussion paper emphasises the key role of the education system in achieving these goals and notes that:

Some vulnerable children and families need more help to engage with these services. Better access to services would enable [the Victorian Government] to intervene earlier to help families more effectively engage with the services they need to address their problems. Better engagement will lead to better outcomes.

Service providers receiving funding from DEECD are required to operate in accordance with the Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People protocol, and must have policies in place that enable eligible children to access a kindergarten program, including those who face barriers to participation. DEECD provides funding, such as the Early Start kindergarten grant and kindergarten fee subsidy, to promote participation of vulnerable children in funded kindergarten programs.

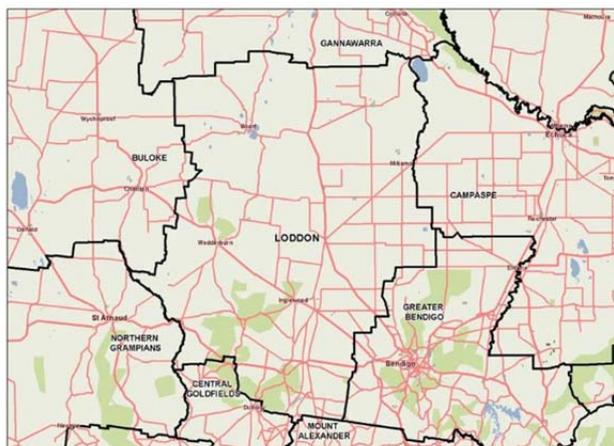
7 DATA PROFILE

7.1 Population

Loddon Shire Council is located approximately 175 kilometres northwest of the Melbourne CBD.

According to the 2011 ABS Census there are 7459 people living in Loddon Shire. 51.1% were male and 48.9% were female. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 1.4% of the population.

Of the total population there were 369 children aged 0-8 years living in Loddon Shire.



Families

<u>Family Composition</u>	Loddon	Victoria	Australia
Couple families with children	35%	46%	37.8%
Couple families without Children	51.5%	36.7%	44.6%
One parent families	12.1%	15.5%	15.9%

Loddon had a lower than Victorian average of couple families with children and lower than Victorian and Australian average of one parent families and a higher than Victorian and national average of couple families without children.

<u>Single (or lone) Parents</u>	Loddon	Victoria	Australia
Male	25%	17.2%	17.6%
Female	75%	82.8%	82.4%

According to the 2011 census data Loddon has a higher percentage of single fathers than in Victoria and Australia.

Income

<u>Median Weekly Incomes</u>	Loddon	Victoria	Australia
Personal	\$377	\$561	\$577
Family	\$880	\$1460	\$1481
Household	\$686	\$1216	\$1234

According to the 2011 census data Loddon residents are on a lesser median weekly income than their state and national counterparts. Loddon's median household income was almost less than half of what Victoria and Australia are reporting.

Unemployment

<u>Unemployment</u>	Loddon	Victoria	Australia
	5.7%	5.4%	5.6%

According to the 2011 Census, Loddon has a slightly higher unemployment rate when compared to state and national rates.

7.2 Socio-Economic and Development Indices

According to the Department Planning and Community Development’s Report on Change and Disadvantage in the Loddon Mallee (2011), disadvantage occurs when an individual, family or community is deprived of resources or opportunities – enjoyed by other Victorians – that underpin social and economic wellbeing. Disadvantaged people and communities lack material resources (income, housing, services, and transport), skills/knowledge resources (education, health) or “social capital” resources (social participation, inclusion, and strong governance).

7.2.1 Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

SEIFA provides summary measures derived from the census to gauge different aspects of socio-economic conditions by geographic area. Within SEIFA the ABS has developed four indices to allow ranking of regions and areas, the indices are:

- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD)
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD)
- Index of Economic Resources (IER)
- Index of Education and Occupation (IEO).

The first of these, the IRSD, is one of the most commonly used SEIFA measures. The IRSD focuses primarily on disadvantage, and is derived from Census variables, including low income, low educational attainment, unemployment and dwellings without motor vehicles. Each Victorian local government area (LGA) is scored comparative to all 79 Victorian LGAs. A lower score indicates that an area is relatively disadvantaged compared to an area with a higher score (scores should only be used in distributive analysis, for example a Victorian LGA score cannot be compared to a NSW LGA score).

Of the 79 LGAs in Victoria, Loddon ranks as the 4th most disadvantaged in Victoria.

2011 Local Government Area Name (code)	Score	Ranking within Australia			Ranking within Victoria				Minimum score for SA1s in area	Maximum score for SA1s in area	(pop.) & % of usual resident pop. without an SA1 score
		Rank	Decile	Percentile	State	Rank	Decile	Percentile			
Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD)											
Loddon (23940)	934	123	3	22	Victoria	4	1	5	796	1074	(7,460) 0%

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012011?OpenDocument>

7.2.2 The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)

The AEDI is a population measure of children’s development in communities across Australia. The index provides an indication of children’s health and development at a local, regional and national level and enables comparisons to be made between local areas, municipalities and states.

The index covers five developmental domains, with higher index scores indicative of poorer results:

1. Physical health and wellbeing, assessing a child’s health, independence and ‘readiness for the day’, exhibiting gross and fine motor skills and independence in looking after their needs
2. Social competence, assessing how a child plays, gets along with others and shares and is self-confident and includes eagerness to try new experiences, knowledge of acceptable behaviour in public places and the abilities to control behaviour and play with other children, etc.
3. Emotional maturity, assessing whether a child is able to concentrate, help others, is patient and not aggressive and includes abilities to reflect before acting, empathetically respond to other people’s feelings and deal with feelings at an age-appropriate level
4. Language and cognitive skills, assessing a child’s interest in reading and writing, can count and recognise numbers and shapes with age appropriate numeracy and literacy skills and

5. Communication skills and general knowledge, assessing whether a child can tell a story, communicate with adults and children and be articulate and includes communicating in socially appropriate ways, being able to tell stories and age appropriate knowledge about life and the world around the child.

Loddon community	Number of children surveyed	Proportion of children developmentally vulnerable (%)							SEIFA Index (Score) ^
		Physical health and wellbeing †	Social competence	Emotional maturity	Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	Communication skills and general knowledge	Vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDI	Vulnerable on two or more domains of the AEDI	
Australia	289,973	9.3	9.3	7.6	6.8	9.0	22.0	10.8	N/A
Victoria	67,931	7.8	8.1	7.2	6.1	8.0	19.5	9.5	N/A
Loddon Community	85	7.7	6.4	10.3	7.7	3.8	19.2	10.3	N/A
Local Community									
Loddon Rural North	30	3.4	6.9	17.2	6.9	3.4	17.2	13.8	961.6
Loddon Rural South	55	10.2	6.1	6.1	8.2	4.1	20.4	8.2	919.5

Legend values	
Highest proportion	
	
	
Lowest proportion	
0.0 = There are no children developmentally vulnerable	

Loddon Rural North: Boort, Calivil, Mincha, Mitiamo, Pyramid Hill, Yarrawalla

Loddon Rural South: Bridgewater, Bridgewater On Loddon, Inglewood, Laanecoorie, Newbridge, Rheola, Tarnagulla, Dingee, Raywood, Serpentine, Fentons Creek, Korong Vale, Mysia, Salisbury West, Wedderburn, Wychitella.

Loddon Rural South fared slightly worse than its state and national counterparts with 10.2% of children assessed rating as developmentally vulnerable in the physical health and well-being domain and 8.2% in the language and cognitive skills domain.

In Loddon North, children rated over two times worse (17.2%) than their state and national counterparts in the emotional maturity domain and also rated slightly higher (13.8%) for having children vulnerable on two or more domains.

8 CONSULTATION OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

Children, parents/caregivers, health and community service organisations, schools, kindergartens and community groups were invited to provide input into the development of Loddon Shire Council's MEYP through:

- completing a parent/caregiver survey
- taking part in a parent/caregiver small discussion group
- completing a children's drawing activity
- completing a service provider survey
- taking part in a service provider small discussion group; and
- attending the action planning workshop.

Overall, a total of 189 people contributed to the development of Loddon Shire Council's 2014-2017 Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP).

Full detailed consultation results are available for viewing in Appendix 1 of this plan. A summary of community strengths, key challenges and aspirations for families and service providers follows below:

What do you think helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 and their families?

When children were asked to draw what they loved about where they lived, preschool aged children shared that what they loved the most was family (21%), pets (21%), nature/outdoors (19%), their house (19%) and playing (8%).

Parents/caregivers agreed with children that people/community (30%) helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children and their families along with education (44%) and sport (40%). Service providers agreed with parents/caregivers that community (73%), education (60%) and sports (47%) helps to make the Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 years and their families.

What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing children aged 0-8 years and their families living in Loddon Shire?

Parents/ Caregivers	Service Providers
1. Availability of childcare	1. Availability of childcare
2. Access to activities/ recreation	2. Availability of services for children with additional needs
3. Population decline	3. Unemployment
4. Geographic isolation	4. Access to services
5. Availability of services	5. Social isolation
6. Access to services	6. Financial issues
7. Social isolation	7. Access to services and supports
8. Parks & play spaces	8. Access to activities/recreation
9. Affordability of activities/ recreation	9. Family conflict
10. Unemployment	10. Geographic isolation

When comparing what parents/caregivers identified as key issues and challenges to the top ten issues shared by service providers, 60% of their top ten answers were the same (see red text).

Availability of childcare was the overwhelming issue/challenge identified by both parents/caregivers and service providers. 85% of service providers and 72% of parents/caregivers rated availability of childcare as the number one issue/challenge that faces children aged 0-8 and their families living in Loddon Shire. Increasing the availability of childcare was the key priority for both families and service providers alike. Also identified by parents as their top three issues/challenges was access to activities/recreation (47%) and population decline (37%). Service providers were concerned about availability of services and supports for children with additional needs (70%) and then equally rated as their number three concern: unemployment (65%), access to services (65%) and social isolation (65%).

Service providers were asked to reveal any gaps or deficits in the services and supports available for children aged 0-8 and their families. The key gaps/deficits highlighted were: childcare, supports for children with additional needs, speech/language development and access to specialist supports.

51% of parents/caregivers shared that there were services that their family needed in the past twelve months but they couldn't access. The top three things they couldn't access were: childcare (76%), after-school care (9%) and year round swimming lessons (9%).

What do you think is needed to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 and their families?

Both service providers and parent/caregivers were asked to share their thoughts on what they thought was needed to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 and their families living in Loddon Shire. Respondents indicated the following key suggestions.

- **Childcare:** Childcare availability was the number one thing that both service providers and parents/caregivers thought could support better outcomes for children and their families. The parent/caregiver survey indicated that the need was for part-time, occasional and after-school care rather than full time care, which only 3% of respondents indicated a need for.
- **Activities:** Activities for children in the 0-4 age range and a broader range of arts/culture activities were desired by parents and service providers alike. Low cost or no cost activities were also seen as crucial in ensuring the inclusion of families from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Support for vulnerable children:** Well-coordinated and accessible supports for vulnerable children including children with additional needs were seen to be a key area of need. Adding to this, gaining an understanding of what services and supports are already available in Loddon Shire through service mapping was suggested.
- **Parent support and education:** The need for parent education and support via parent groups and parent sessions relating to the health, welfare, literacy and language and developmental stages of childhood were highlighted. Also mentioned was the need to support parents in easily understanding the range of services, supports and activities that are available across Loddon Shire for children aged 0-8 years and their families.
- **Enhanced service collaboration:** Service providers and parents/caregivers indicated that enhanced service collaboration and partnerships (especially for vulnerable children and families) would support improved outcomes for children. Information sharing across agencies and with parents/caregivers and joint planning and delivery of services and initiatives were suggested as areas of focus.

9 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

As a result of community consultation, four key strategies have been identified and corresponding objectives have been developed. A detailed action plan located at the end of the MEYP has also been created to accompany this strategic plan.

1. Early Learning & Play

Ensuring that children have a diverse range of learning and play opportunities

- Increase parent understanding of the importance of education and early literacy.
- Provide a range of arts and culture programs, activities and events for children and their families.
- Identify opportunities for greater use of schools, kindergartens and key community buildings as venues for early years learning and play activities.
- Increase early learning and play opportunities for children aged birth to four years of age.
- Improve speech/ language development in children.

2. Parenting Support

Providing opportunities for parents to learn, connect with others and access relevant supports and resources

- Provide a range of parent education sessions.
- Improve the provision of information about recreation, education and health and community services available for families.
- Understand what playgroups and parent groups currently exist in the Loddon Shire (including supported playgroups) and identify areas of need.

3. Effective Service Delivery

Enhancing service delivery to respond collaboratively to the needs of children and families

- Improve access to services for families, especially those that are vulnerable.
- Improve the provision of information about recreation, education and health and community services available for children to service providers.
- Understand current service provision in Loddon Shire relevant to children aged 0-8 years and their families.
- Support, encourage and enhance service connections and collaboration in the Early Years sector.

4. Advocacy & Capacity Building

Working with the community to respond to the needs, hopes and aspirations of children and families

- Investigate and advocate for feasible childcare models and options that could address current childcare gaps across Loddon Shire.
- Create a community 'treasure chest' of resources targeted at supporting actions within the municipal early years plan.

10 ACTIONS REQUIRING COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION

Loddon Shire Council's MEYP has forty one actions (see Loddon Shire Council MEYP Action Plan – Attachment 2). Thirty three of the actions captured in the plan will be completed using existing resources of partner agencies so will not require any added funding. The remaining eight actions may require additional funding which will be offset by:

- Seeking internal and external grants to contribute towards relevant projects
- Community partnerships
- Council contribution to support a key identified activity – detailed below.

Action	Cost of project	Total expected funding	Net cost to Council	Proposed funding source	Completion timeframe
Objective: Understand current service provision in Loddon Shire relevant to children aged 0-8 years and their families. Action: Undertake service mapping to build a current picture of service delivery and gaps relevant to children 0-8 years and their families.	\$10,000.00		\$10,000.00	Council	2015

11 REFERENCES

Australian Bureau of Statistics: Census data, 2011

Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), 2012

Access Economics (2008) Staying Connected: A Cost Benefit Analysis of Early Intervention: Report by Access Economics Pty Ltd for Interface Councils Group

Best Start: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/beststart/what.htm>; Centre for Community Child Health: <http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/>

Victoria's Plan to Improve Outcomes in Early Childhood

Loddon Shire Council Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP) 2010-2013

Municipal Early Years Planning Framework and Practical Resource Guide Municipal Association of Victoria and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development May 2011

Mustard, F. 2008, Investing in the Early Years: Closing the Gap Between What We Know and What We Do, Report for the Thinker in Residence Program, Department of Premier and Cabinet, SAMAV framework

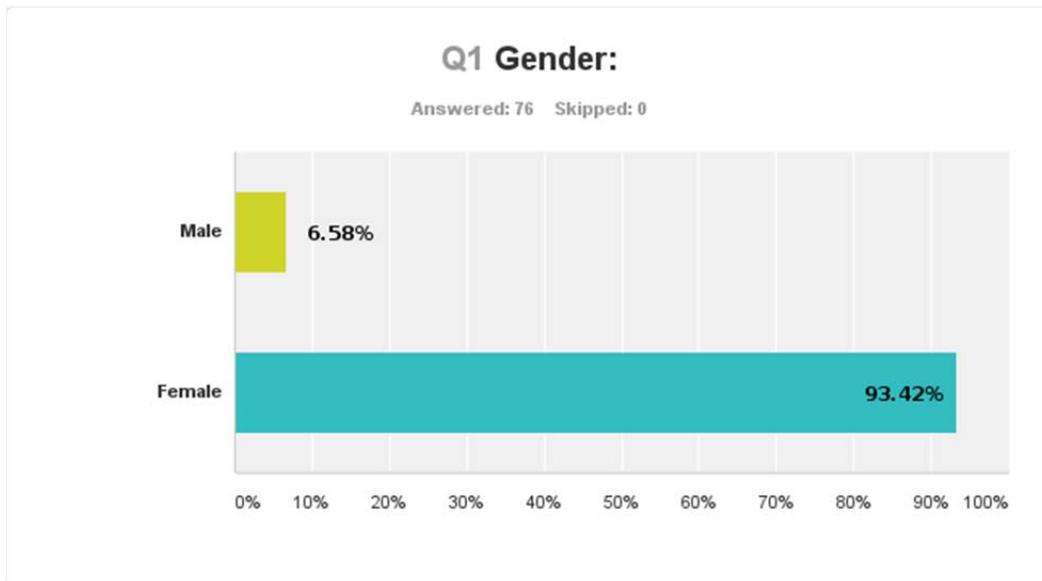
Shonkoff, J.P. and Phillips, D.A. (Eds.) (2000). From Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Federal Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: Federal Academy Press.

Department Planning and Community Development's Report on Change and Disadvantage in the Loddon Mallee (2011),

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION RESULTS

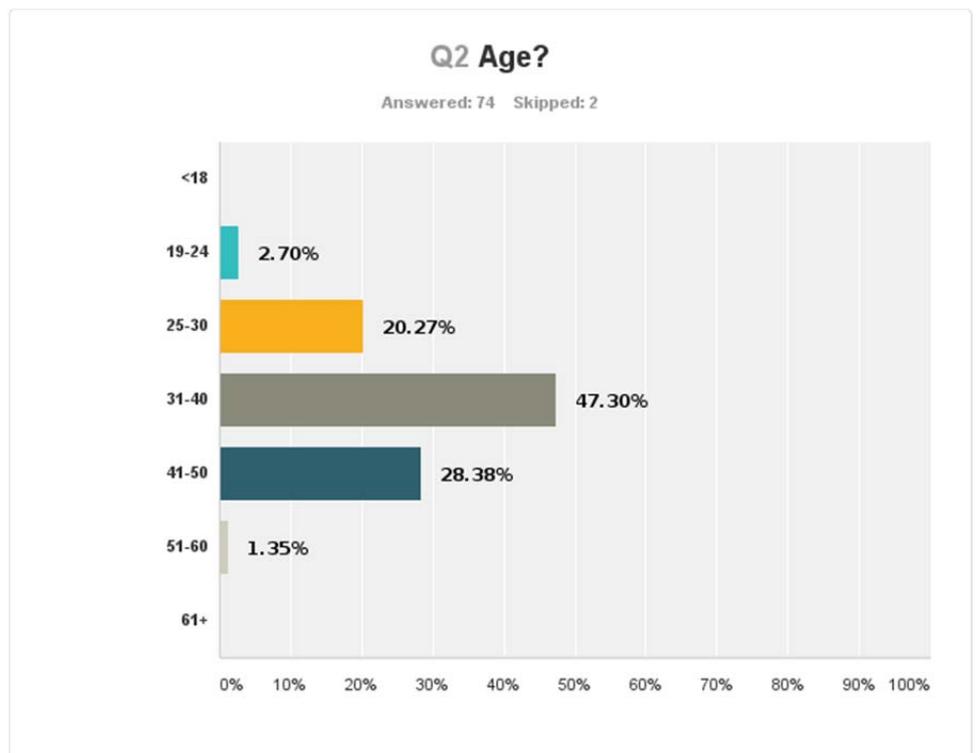
Loddon Shire Council MEYP Parent Caregiver Survey Results

Surveys were distributed in hardcopy to parents/caregivers of children aged 0-8 years living across Loddon Shire Council and the survey was also accessible online. Overall, a total of 76 surveys were completed.



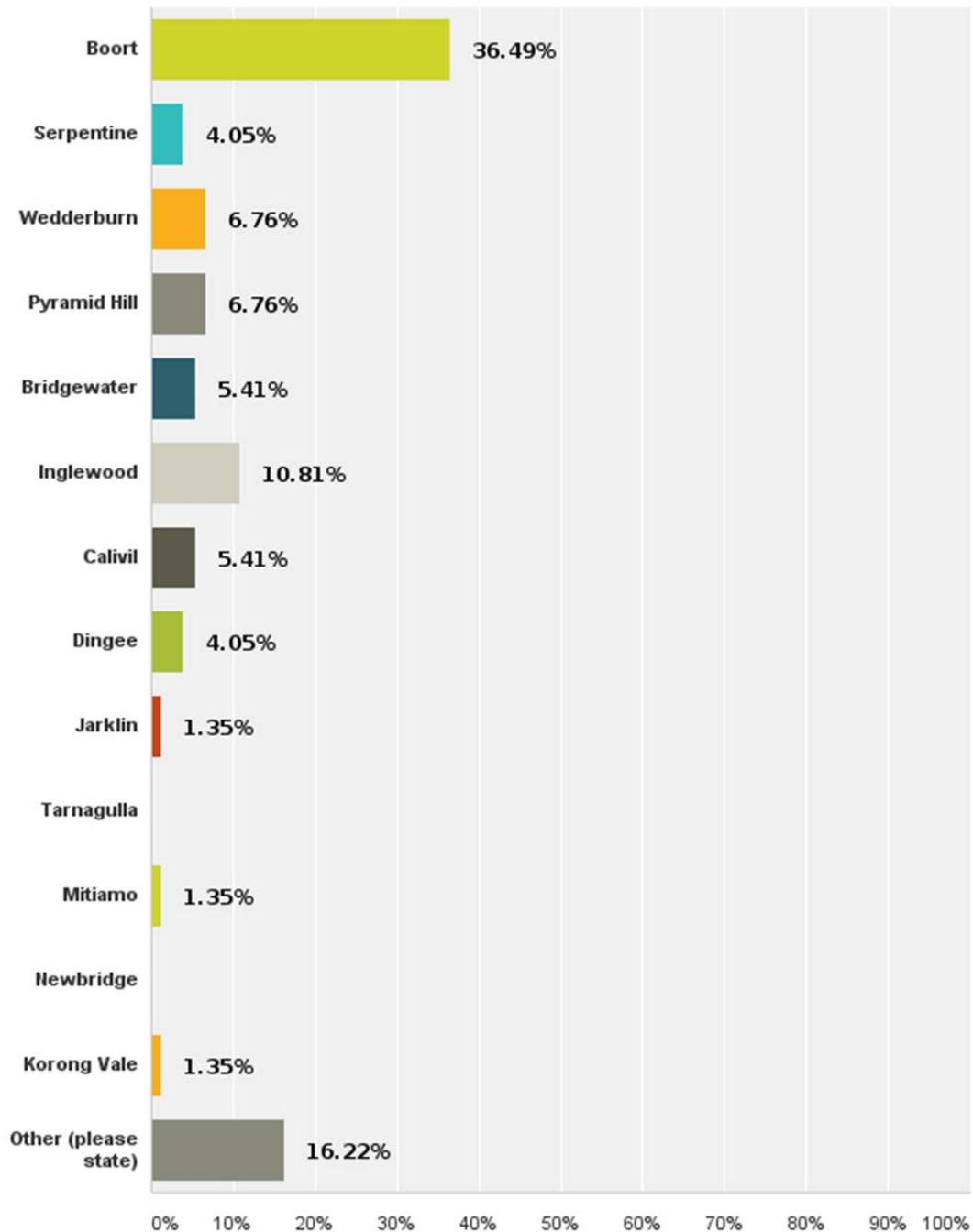
The strongest response rate came from women (93%). Only 7% of men completed a survey.

Almost half of survey respondents (47%) were aged 31-40 years, followed by the 41-50 year old age group (28%) and the 25-30 age groups (20%). Almost three percent of respondents were aged 19-24 and only 1% identified as being in the 51-60 year old age group



Q3 Where do you live?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 2

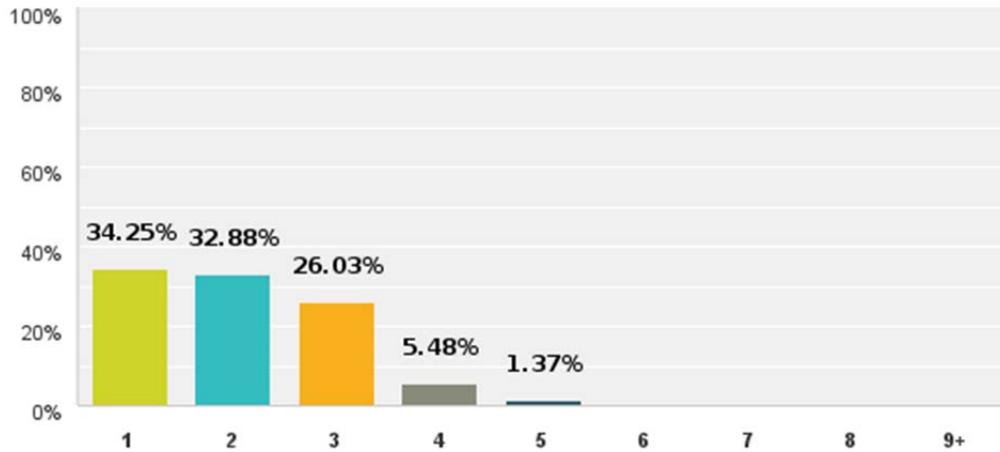


The survey captured the voices of parents/caregivers across the broad geographic areas within Loddon Shire. Tarnagulla and Newbridge were the only localities that didn't submit a survey. The community that submitted the highest number of surveys was Boort (36%), followed by Inglewood (11%) and Pyramid Hill (7%) and Wedderburn (7%).

The 'Other' category consisted of sole respondents from: Durham Ox, Laanecoorie, Loddon Vale, Murphy's Creek, Mysia, Fiery Flat, Lake Marmal, Kurting, Yando, Powlett Plains, Fentons Creek and Wychitella.

Q4 How many children aged 0-8 are you currently caring for?

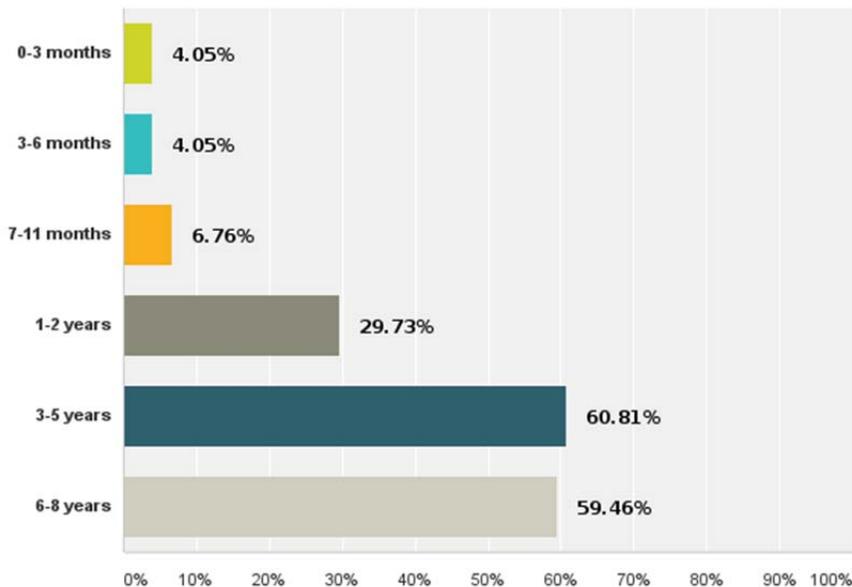
Answered: 73 Skipped: 3



The majority of survey respondents were caring for one child (34%), two children (33%) or three children (26%). A lesser amount were caring for four children (5%) and five children (1%). Five children was the highest number of children that survey respondents indicated that they were caring for.

Q5 What are the ages of the children you care for (tick all that apply)?

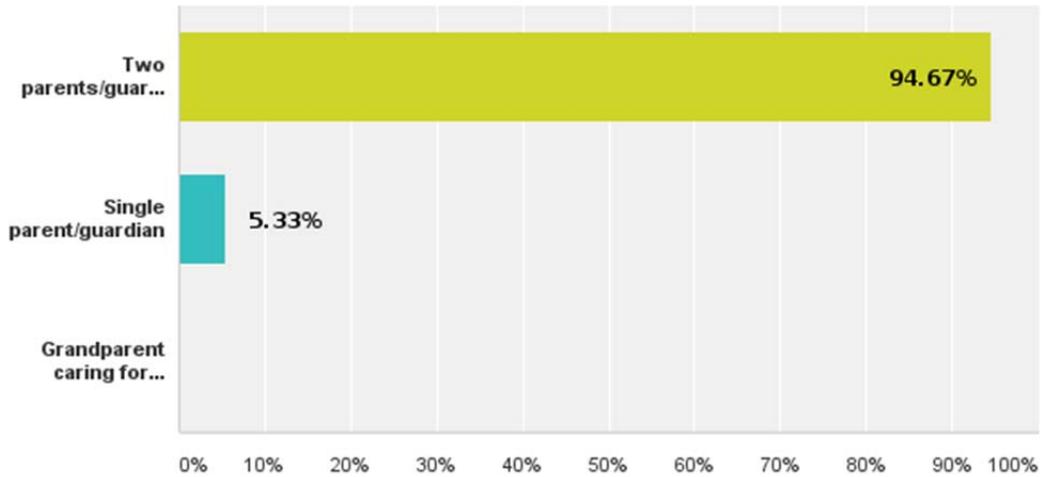
Answered: 74 Skipped: 2



60% of respondents were caring for children aged 3-5 years, 59% were caring for children 6-8 years and 30% were caring for children 1-2 years old. A lesser 7% were caring for children aged 7-11 months and an equal amount (4%) shared that the children they were caring for were either 0-3 months or 3-6 months of age.

Q6 Which of the following best describes your family type?

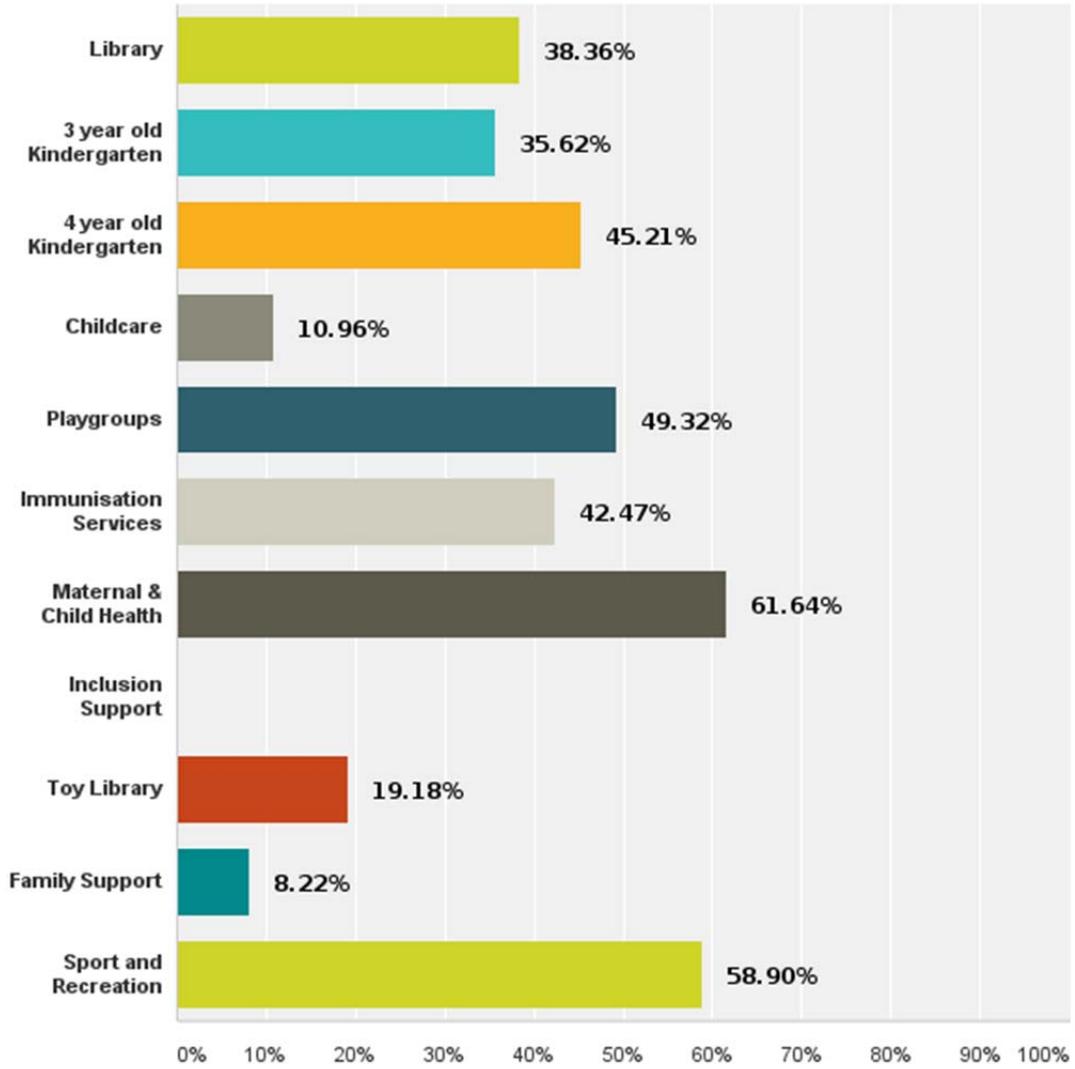
Answered: 75 Skipped: 1



95% of survey respondents indicated that their family type was two parents/guardians caring for children. The remaining 5% identified as being a single parent/guardian. There were no grandparents caring for grandchildren that completed a survey.

**Q7 Which of the following services has your family accessed in the past 12 months?
(tick all that apply)**

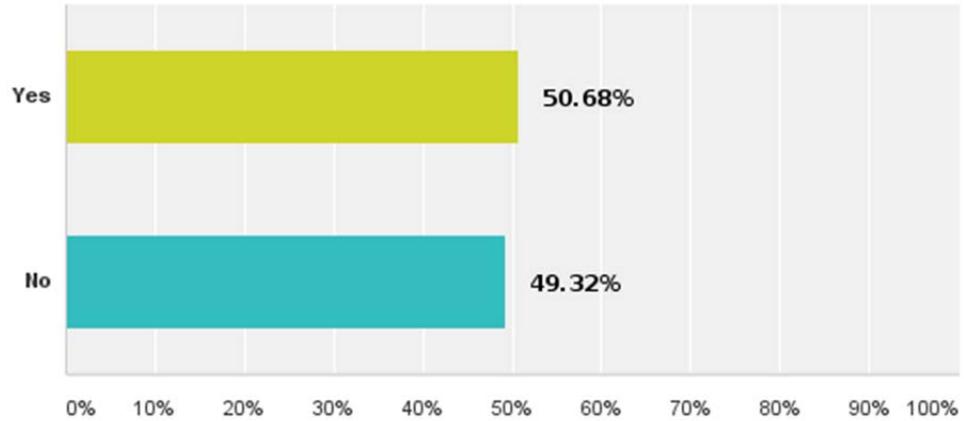
Answered: 73 Skipped: 3



The top five services that survey respondents accessed in the past twelve months were: Maternal & Child Health (62%), sport and recreation (59%), playgroups (49%), 4 year old Kinder (45%) and Immunisation Services (43%).

Q8 In the past 12 months have there been any services/ supports that you have needed but not been able to access?

Answered: 73 Skipped: 3



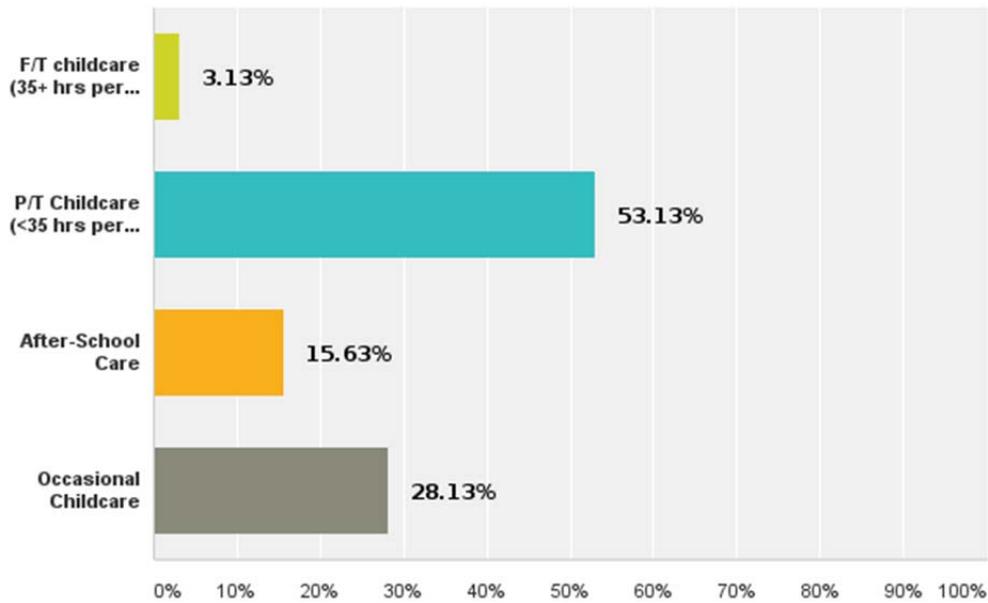
49% of respondents shared that in the past 12 months there were no services that they required that they were not able to access. A slightly higher 51% of parents/caregivers who completed a survey indicated that they did need a service that they could not access in the past 12 months.

The services that parents/caregivers needed but couldn't access were:

- Childcare- (76%)
- After-School Care- (9%)
- Year Round Swimming lessons - (9%)
- Library- (6%)
- Support for child with a disability (6%)
- Speech Services (6%)
- Parent Group- (3%)
- Medical Services- (3%)
- Maternal and Child Health Services- (3%)

Q9 If you answered childcare for Q8, please describe what your need was:

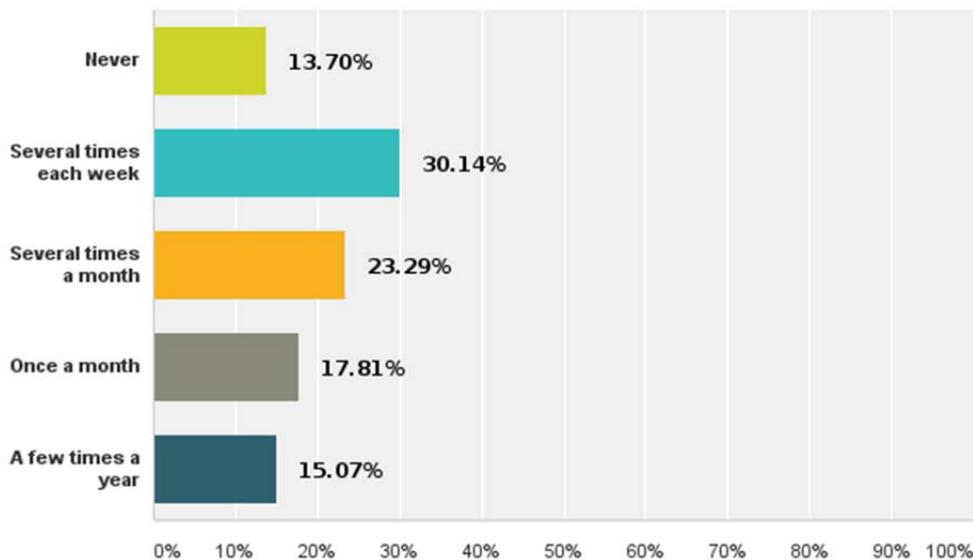
Answered: 32 Skipped: 44



Of the respondents that indicated in Q8 that they had an unmet need for childcare, 53% said their need was for P/T childcare (<35 hrs per week), Occasional Childcare (28%), After-School Care (16%). Only 3% of respondents indicated that their need was for F/T childcare (more than 35 hours a week).

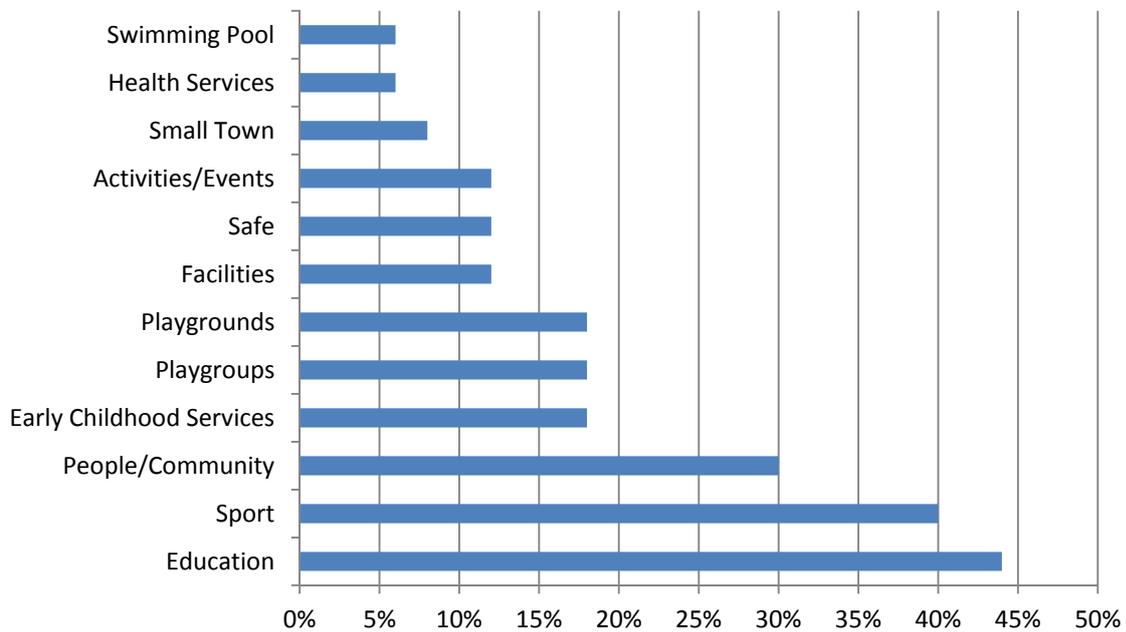
Q10 How often in the past 12 months have your children been cared for informally by unpaid carers, grandparents, relatives, neighbours or friends?

Answered: 73 Skipped: 3



30% of survey respondents indicated that their children had been cared for informally by unpaid carers several times each week, 23% used unpaid carers several times a month, followed by- once a month (18%), a few times a year (15%) and never (14%).

Q11: What do you think helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 and their families? E.g. places, events, activities, services, people, opportunities, facilities, location, education, sport etc.



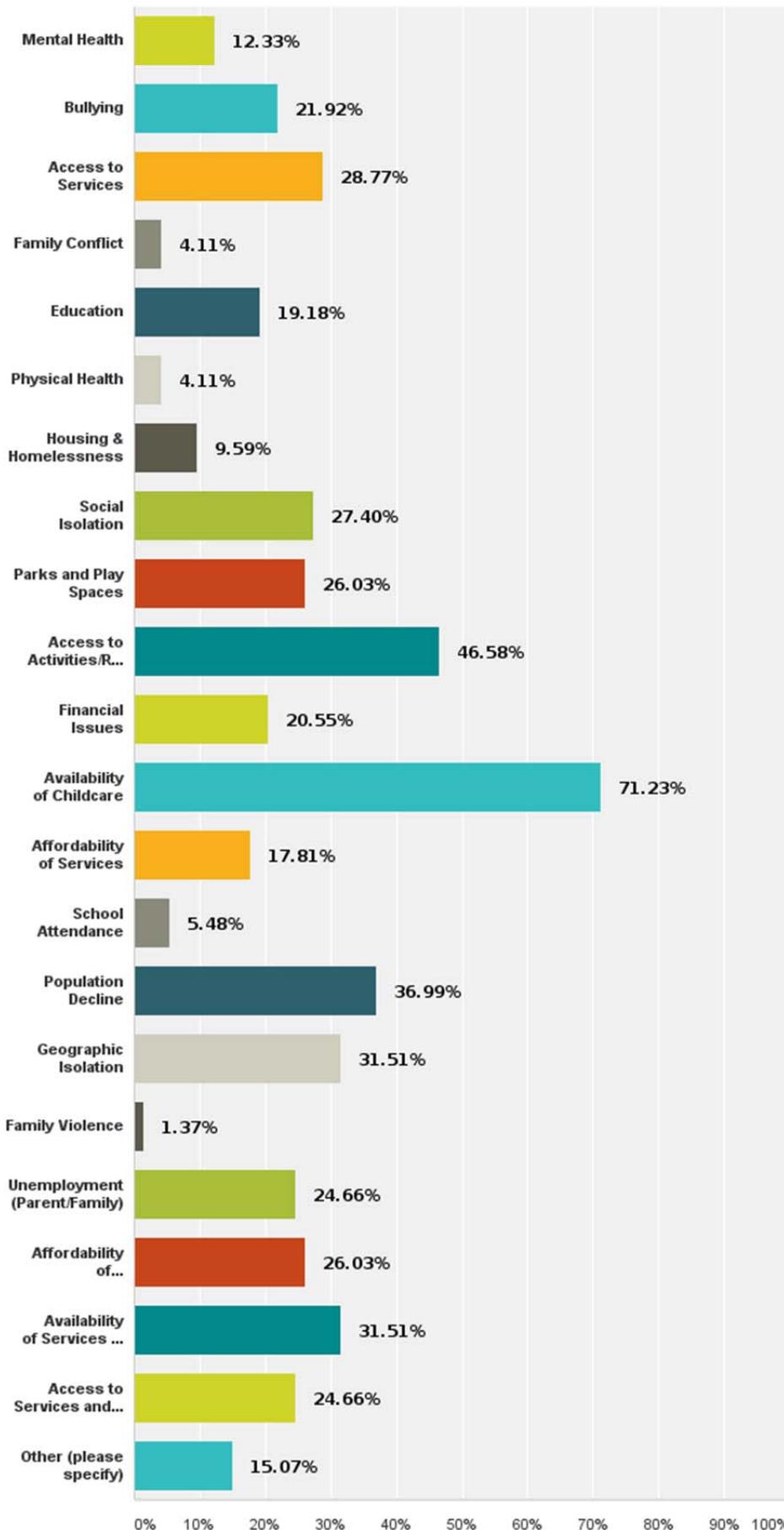
*“Safety, closeness and connectedness amongst the community, access to sport/recreation, facilities, etc. For a small town we have excellent facilities, services, etc. - except for **CHILDCARE!!**”*

“Great schools and great health services”.

“Access to early years services (MCHN, Mums group/playgroups, kinder) Facilities that host services are well located and appropriate”.

**Q12 What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing children aged 0-8 years and their families living in Loddon Shire?
(tick all that apply)**

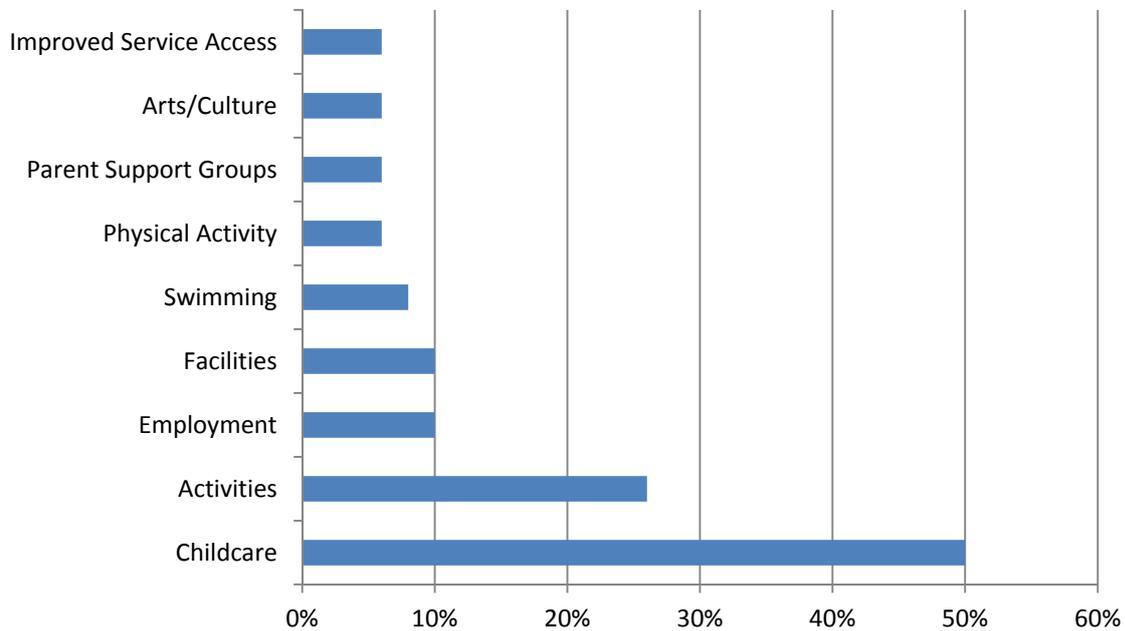
Answered: 73 Skipped: 3



The top ten key issues/challenges that survey respondents saw facing children aged 0-8 and their families were:

1. Availability of child care
2. Access to Activities/ Recreation
3. Population Decline
4. Geographic Isolation
5. Availability of Services
6. Access to Services
7. Social Isolation
8. Parks & Play Spaces
9. Affordability of Activities/ Recreation
10. Unemployment-parent/family

Q13. What do you think is needed in your community (and across Loddon Shire) to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 and their families?



Other:

- Activities for younger children
- Affordable activities
- Services for children with additional needs
- Information sharing
- More parent/child groups
- Sport
- Better equipment
- Parenting Workshops
- Stronger community connections
- Walking tracks
- Medical/Dental services
- BMX track
- Integrated education services
- Better mobile phone coverage
- Improved access to fresh fruit/vegetables

“Childcare / afterschool care is a huge factor within our community - it makes it hard for families wanting to work, having to rely on friends / family to babysit”.

“Activities /organisations etc. that allow those that feel isolated a chance to get out and meet others in the district”.

“Access to theatre show / live performances access to films - the playgrounds at the Boort Lake would be enhanced by secure fences, and more varied equipment as in Kerang Little Athletics programs to encourage exercise more music programs/teachers”.

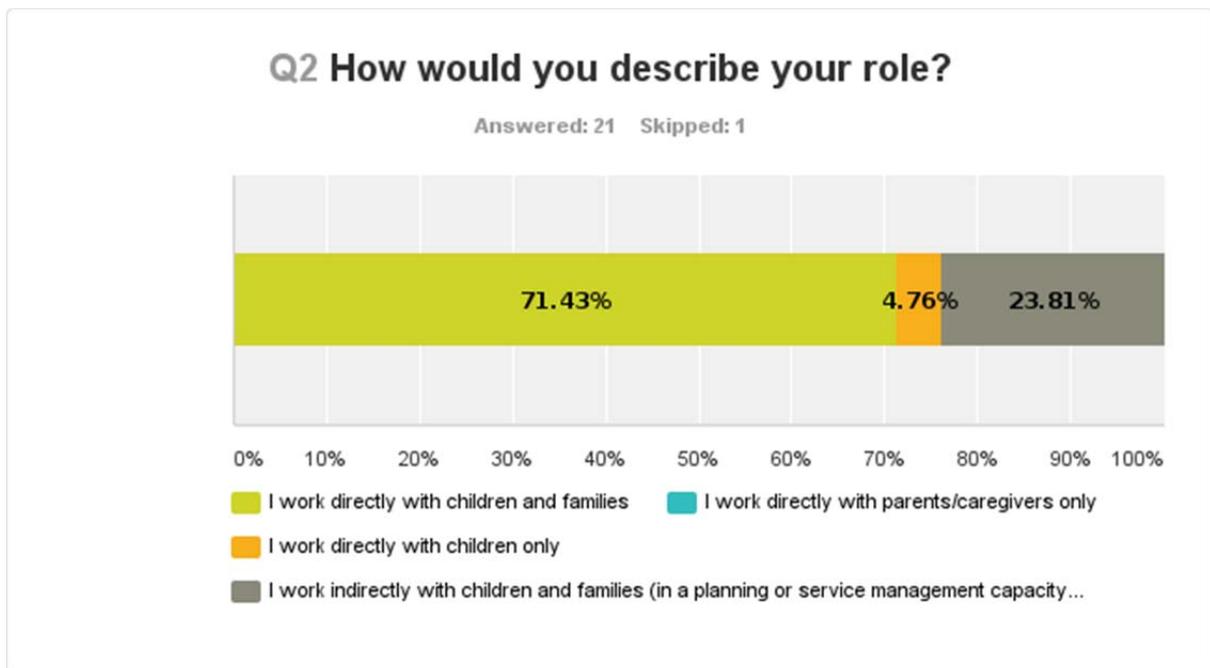
Loddon Shire Council MEYP Service Provider Survey Results

Service providers working with or planning for children aged 0-8 years were invited to share their experiences, thoughts and ideas via an online survey. A total of 22 service providers completed a survey.

Q1. Service Name /Organisation

The following organisations shared feedback via the survey:

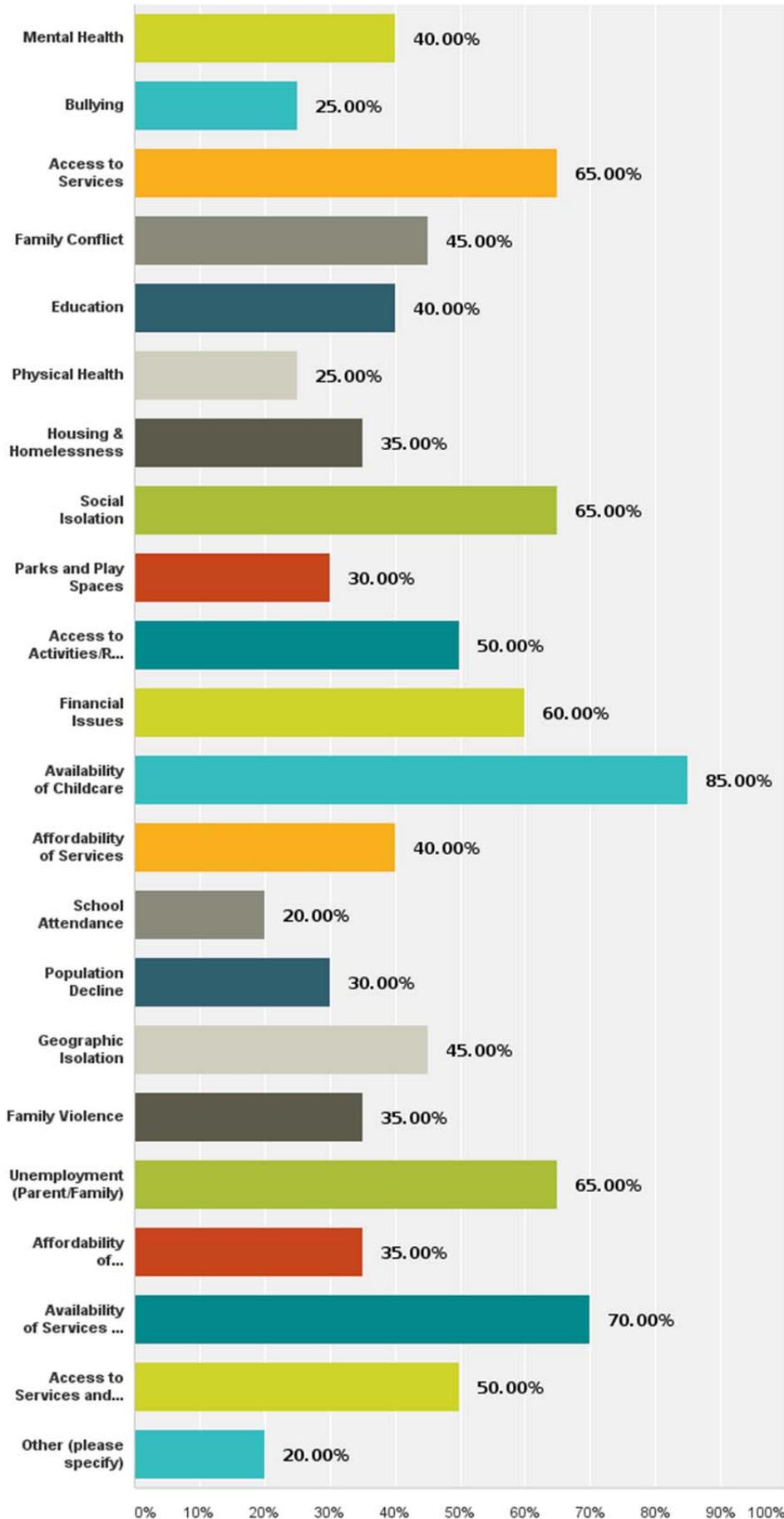
- Northern District Community Health Service
- Inglewood and District Health Service
- BRIC
- St. Mary's Primary School
- Loddon Shire Kindergarten Relief Cluster Bank
- Loddon Shire Council
- Centacare Family Services
- St. Luke's Anglicare
- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership
- Boort Pre-School
- Boort Baptist Church
- Wedderburn College



The overwhelming majority of survey respondents (71%) indicated that they worked directly with children and families, 24% shared that they had an indirect planning role with children and families and 5% worked directly with children only.

Q3 What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing children aged 0-8 years and their families living in Loddon Shire? (tick all that apply)

Answered: 20 Skipped: 2

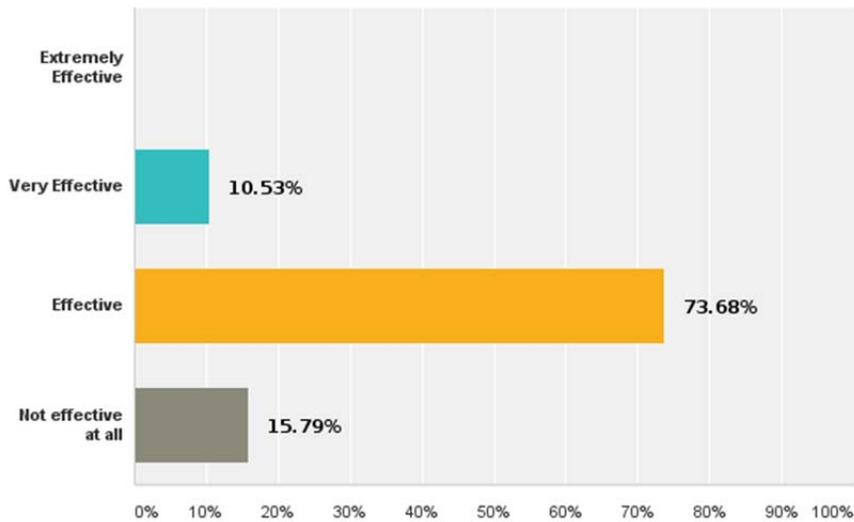


The top ten issues/challenges that service providers noted were:

1. Availability of childcare
2. Availability of services for children with additional needs
3. Unemployment
4. Access to services
5. Social isolation
6. Financial issues
7. Access to services and supports
8. Access to activities/recreation
9. Family conflict
10. Geographic isolation

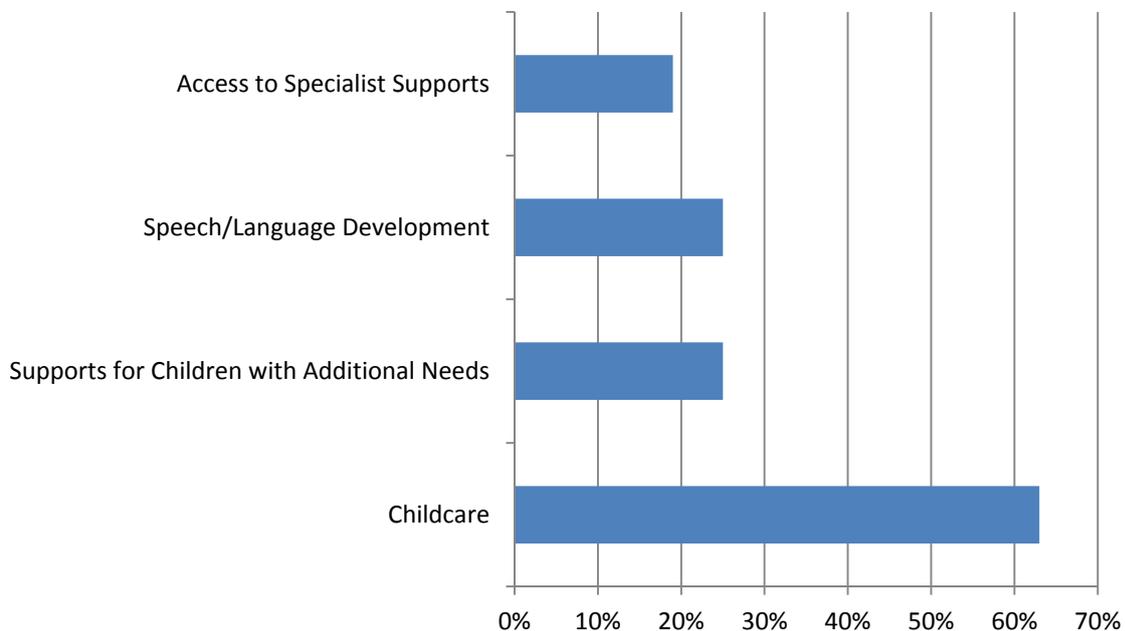
Q4 How would you rate the effectiveness of how the service sector supports children aged 0-8 years and their families across the Loddon Shire?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 3



Almost 74% of service providers who completed a survey rated the effectiveness of the service sector as effective, 16% rated the sector as not effective at all and the remaining 11% rated the service sector as very effective.

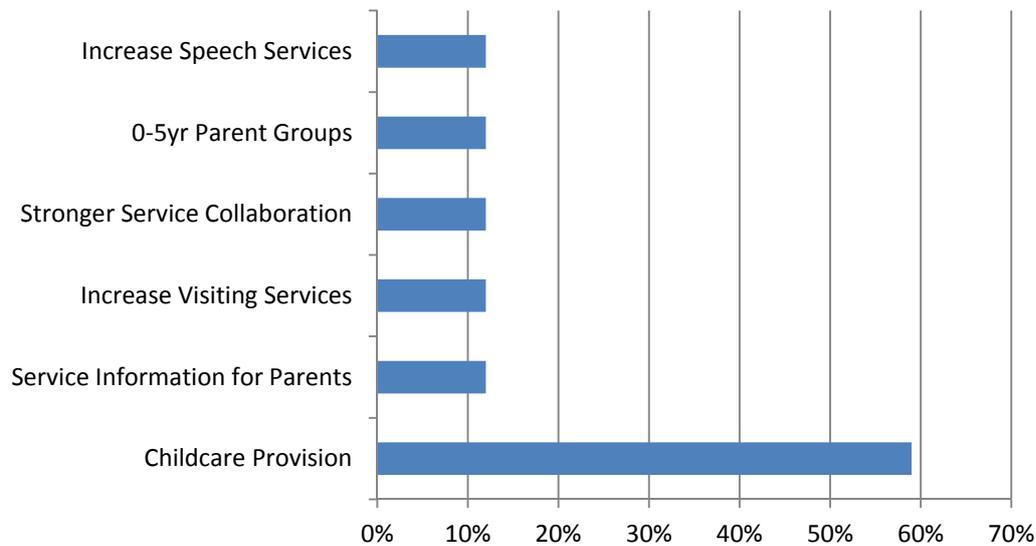
Q5. What gaps or deficits are you aware of in the services and supports available for children aged 0-8 years and their families across Loddon Shire?



65% of survey respondents indicated that childcare was a gap/deficit followed by a lack of supports for children with additional needs (25%), speech language development (25%) and access to specialist supports (18%).

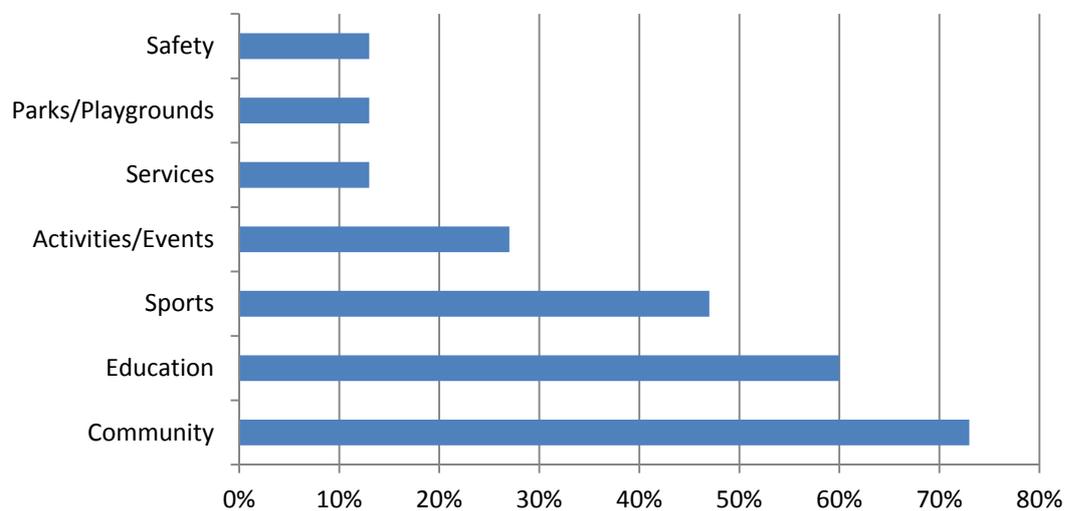
Other gaps/deficits: housing, employment, school holiday programs, isolation, access to early years services/supports, understanding importance of reading, family support.

Q6. If you could improve the way that services support children aged 0-8 years and their families what would you do?



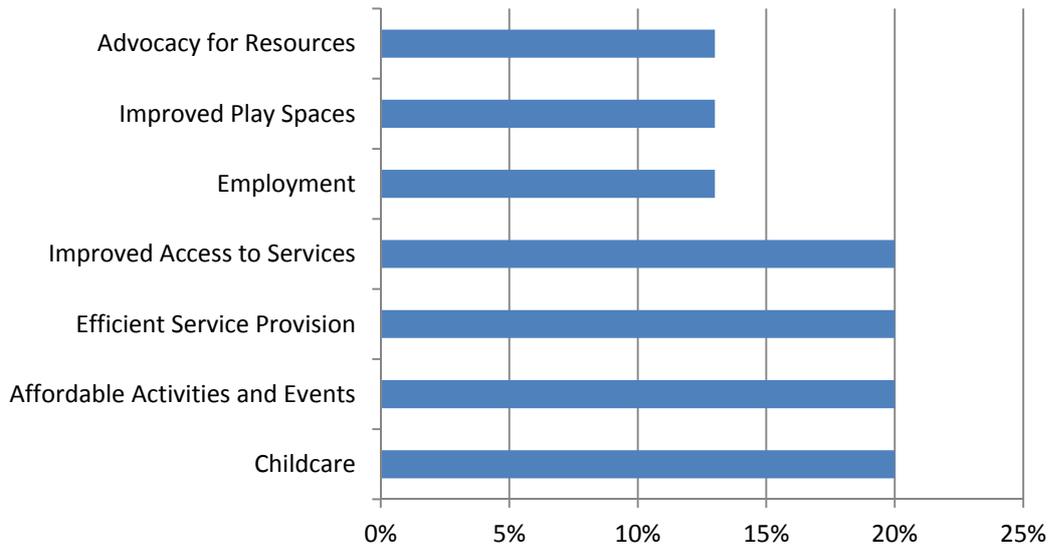
59% of survey respondents indicated that they would provide childcare to improve the way that services support children aged 0-8 and their families. An equal 12% said they would: provide service information for parents, increase visiting services, strengthen service collaboration, create parents groups focussed on 0-5 age groups and increase speech services.

Q7. What do you think helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 years and their families?



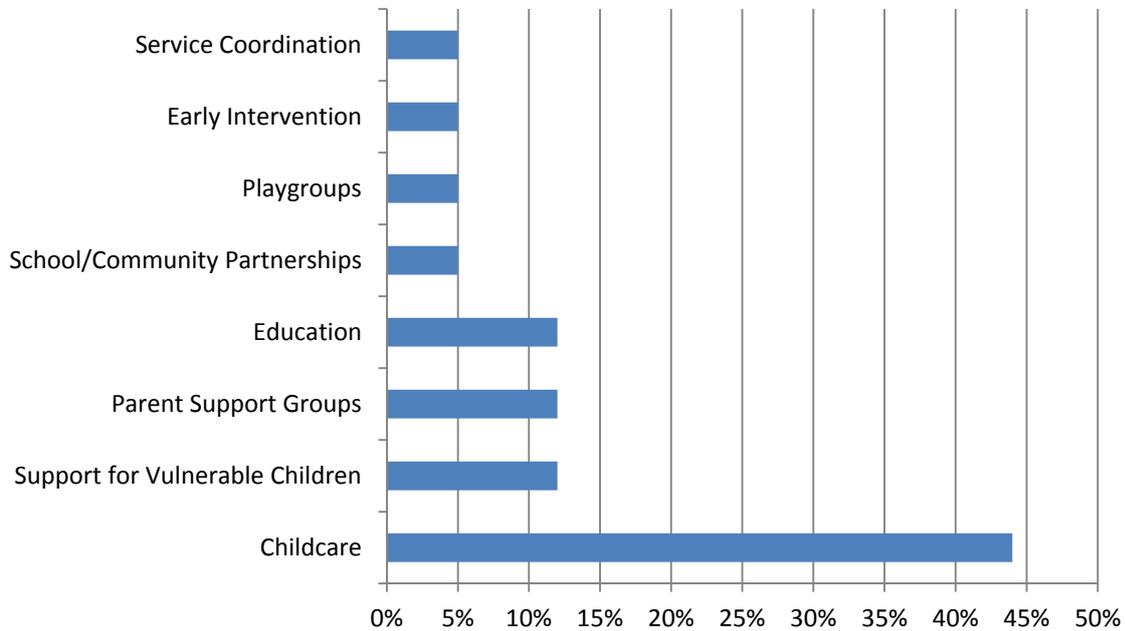
73% of service providers who completed a survey shared that they thought that the community helps to make the Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 years and their families. Followed by: education (60%), sports (47%), activities and events (27%), and an equal number (13%) said services, parks/playgrounds and a feeling of safety made for a positive place for children and their families.

Q8. What do you think is needed in Loddon Shire to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 years and their families?



An equal 20% of respondents shared that they thought childcare, affordable activities and events and improved access to services would support better outcomes for children 0-8 and their families. Employment (13%), improved play spaces (13%) and advocacy for resources (13%) were also noted as areas of need.

Q9. If you could do one thing to improve outcomes for children aged 0-8 years and their families over the next four years what would you do?

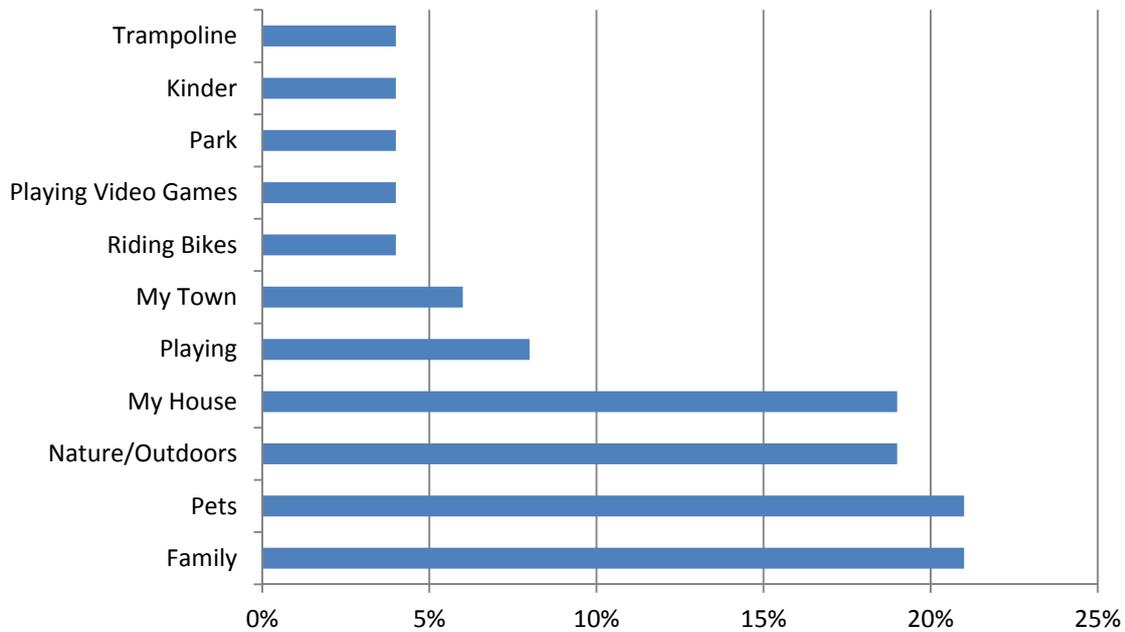


Service providers who completed the survey shared that if they could do one thing to improve outcomes for children aged 0-8 years old and their families they would focus on: childcare (44%), support for vulnerable children (12%), parent support groups (12%), education (12%), school/community partnerships (5%), playgroups (5%), early intervention (5%) and service coordination (5%).

Loddon Shire Council MEYP Children’s Drawing Activity Results

A children’s drawing activity was developed to capture and incorporate the voice of children aged 4-8 years into Loddon Shire Council’s MEYP. A total of 53 preschool aged children completed a drawing activity.

What do you love about where you live?



Family (21%), pets (21%), nature/outdoors (19%), my house (19%) playing (8%) were the top five things that pre-school aged children who completed the drawing activity loved about where they live.



Loddon Shire Council MEYP Parent Focus Group Summary

Q1. What do you think helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 and their families? E.g. places, events, activities, services, people, opportunities, facilities, location, education, sport etc.

- Playgroups
- People watching out for the safety of children
- In-reach speech service and model through NDCHS
- Committed volunteers
- Sporting activities on offer
- Safe community
- Kids can walk to school

Q2. What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing children aged 0-8 years and their families living in Loddon Shire?

- Childcare is a major issue, families and friends are the only available option- childcare models need to be examined
- There is a need for occasional care
- There are not a lot of arts/culture opportunities for children, a broader range of activities are needed
- It can be hard to access early intervention services
- Accessing specialist medical services
- Transport- availability and costs

Q3. What do you think is needed in your community (and across Loddon Shire) to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 and their families?

- Explore music groups
- Story time and arts activities
- A focus on early literacy
- An audit of venues that community groups/services can utilise in each locality
- An early years newsletter
- One good indoor heated swimming pool
- Improved library services
- Childcare- examine models of centre based childcare- this could link with preschool

Loddon Shire Council MEYP Service Provider Focus Group Summary

A total of 20 service providers (including Council staff) attended the focus group to give input into the Municipal Early Years Plan.

Q1. What do you think helps to make Loddon Shire a positive place for children aged 0-8 and their families? E.g. places, events, activities, services, people, opportunities, facilities, location, education, sport etc.

- Caring communities
- Safety
- Freedom to explore
- Positive role models
- Sense of community
- Lifestyle
- Networks for children
- Intergenerational activities
- Playgroups
- New parents groups
- Parent support
- Visiting services are available
- Good schools with good classroom sizes and teacher involvement
- Two hospitals & Bush Nurse Centre
- Community Health Services
- Parks/playgrounds
- Pools and other infrastructure
- Kindergartens
- Advocates for children
- Fresh air and space
- Sports fields- footy/netball/hockey
- Toy library
- Good offering of sports activities
- Families help each other
- Everyone knows each other
- Strong relationships between kindergartens and schools-no competition/open communication
- Easy transition to school
- Community has shared facilities e.g. gym, community hall etc
- NDCHS outreach service
- BRIC
- Speech pathology visits and screen children
- NDCHS provides good visiting speech service

Q2. What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing children aged 0-8 years and their families living in Loddon Shire?

- Lack of numbers
- A quality childcare service- school holiday program, after school care, long day care and occasional care
- Non-sports activities e.g. arts/culture
- No internet/phone coverage in some areas
- Long waiting lists for specialist services e.g. dental, speech
- Availability of public transport
- Transport- distance and affordability for families
- Issues are magnified for vulnerable families, can be a long wait for support
- Population decline
- Increased legal requirements for committee involvement
- Lack of specialist services
- Stretched volunteer committees
- Fathers don't know each other
- Isolation- can be hard to break into a new community
- Lack of swimming programs
- MCH struggles to meet with and connect

- Lack of choice/options e.g. employment
- Mental health for children
- Nothing is private everyone knows your business
- MCH service is stretched
- Lack of activities for young children (under 4 years)
- with Kindergartens
- Limited Early Intervention-long waiting lists
- Hard to engage vulnerable families
- Lack of counselling for whole family and privacy for it

Q3. What gaps or deficits are you aware of in the services and supports available for children aged 0-8 years and their families across Loddon Shire?

- Childcare- long day care, after school care, family day care, school holiday programs
- Speech therapy
- Hospital/Emergency services and after hours care in some towns
- Can't give birth in Loddon Shire
- Planned activities and groups
- Midwife services
- Supports for children with additional needs- care, transport, accessibility and trained professionals
- Transport/links
- Employment opportunities
- Cultural diversity-music and arts \$\$
- Knowing what's available- lack of information
- Health services
- Parenting workshops e.g. asthma management, challenging behaviours
- Internet connectivity
- Healthy eating programs
- Music programs
- Gaps in experiences for children due to distance
- Walking and bike tracks
- Dental services
- Cert numbers
- Lack of out of school development programs
- Lack of quick response services for health
- Well watered playgrounds
- Play equipment needs upgrading

Q5. What do you think is needed across the Loddon Shire to support better outcomes for children aged 0-8 and their families?

- Forums to discuss issues
- Accessible and affordable childcare
- A lobby group to attract funding
- Equity between services across state/shire
- Mobile services
- Shire based early childhood newsletter
- Share information on services e.g. through internet, new residents pack
- Public transport within the shire and regional centres
- Use technology to link up e.g. e-health and e-learning
- A community treasure chest for the early years- target philanthropic and grants
- Roadshow style activities
- Flexible models of service delivery
- Mapping of existing services
- Connect families and children
- A register/stocktake of available services/resources/models
- Tap into social media

APPENDIX 2: LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL MUNICIPAL EARLY YEARS ACTION PLAN

Strategy Area 1: Early Learning & Play					
Objective	Action	Council Role	Key Partners	Resourcing (Existing/New?)	Timeframe
Increase parent understanding of the importance of education and early literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include early literacy information and tips in every Early Years Parent Newsletter. • Encourage schools to open their libraries to the wider community. • Promote activities being offered by the Regional Library e.g. holiday programs or special celebrations • Source funding for children's books to be distributed at key MCH visits. • Identify and seek funding for programs that engage parents in learning about early literacy e.g. NDCHS Building Blocks to Literacy Success, HIPPY program etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Facilitation • Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community & Health Services • Schools • Kindergartens • Maternal & Child Health 	<p>Existing partner resources</p> <p>Source funding from 'Community Treasure Chest'</p>	2014-2017
Provide a range of arts and culture programs, activities and events for children and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore what arts and cultural activities other rural communities are offering e.g. Kerang library and identify their funding sources. • Search for community members who may have a passion/interest in the arts and invite their involvement (e.g. CWA, retired teachers/musicians etc.). • Work with schools and kindergartens to deliver arts and culture /programs for the early year's group at two venues in the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergartens • Parents/ Caregivers • Schools • Playgroups • Library • Community & Health Services 	<p>Existing partner resources</p> <p>Source funding from 'Community Treasure Chest'</p>	2015-2017

<p>Identify opportunities for greater use of schools, kindergartens and key community buildings as venues for early years learning and play activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage schools and kindergartens to work collaboratively with community groups and services to deliver early learning and play activities. • Review and promote current information on suitable community venues (including outdoor venues) for early year's activities capturing availability, key contacts and costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Kindergartens • Community Groups/ Organisations 	<p>Existing partner resources</p>	<p>2014-2015</p>
<p>Increase early learning and play opportunities for children aged birth to four years of age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage parents to assist with choosing and planning activities. • Invite key community stakeholders (including schools) and service providers to partner with parents. • Offer a range of early learning and play activities for children aged birth- four years of age. • Source funding to develop a resource/toy library for children aged 0-4 years old in two locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/ Caregivers • Centacare • Community & Health Services • Playgroups • Maternal and Child Health • Schools • Kindergartens 	<p>Existing partner resources</p> <p>Source funding from 'Community Treasure Chest'</p>	<p>2015-2017</p>
<p>Improve speech/ language development in children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine service models that provide more creative, intensive and localised speech services. • Educate parents about ways to support language and literacy development with their children at home. • Investigate the possibility of integrating speech screening back into kindergartens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Partner • Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community & Health Services • DEECD • Schools • Kindergartens • Maternal & Child Health 	<p>Existing partner resources</p> <p>Possible new funding sourced by partner agencies for trialling delivery of localised speech services.</p>	<p>2015-2017</p>

Strategy Area 2: Parenting Support

Objective	Action	Council Role	Key Partners	Resourcing (Existing/New?)	Timeframe
Provide a range of parent education sessions at several locations throughout the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the needs and interests of parents. Invite relevant service providers/ speakers to deliver sessions. Evaluate sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services Maternal & Child Health Kindergartens 	Existing partner resources	2015-2017
Improve the provision of information about recreation, education and health and community services available for families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Early Year's Parent/Caregiver Newsletter for Loddon Shire. Investigate the use of technology e.g. text messaging, videos, websites, social media and app's to circulate key early years information to parents/ caregivers. Provide information on early years' programs, services, recreation and supports to new parents. Promote parent/carer networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services Churches Schools Kindergartens Library Maternal & Child Health Community Groups 	Existing partner resources External funding sourced to support any new technology requirements.	2014-2017
Understand what playgroups and parent groups currently exist in the Loddon Shire (including supported playgroups) and identify areas of gap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an audit of playgroups and parent groups that already exist across Loddon Shire. Promote parent/ carer networks to parents/caregivers. Determine areas of need and work collaboratively with early year's providers to address service gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services Churches Playgroup Victoria 	Existing partner resources Seek new funding as required to address service gaps	2015

Strategy Area 3: Effective Service Delivery

Objective	Action	Council Role	Key Partners	Resourcing (Existing/New?)	Timeframe
Improve access to services for families, especially those that are vulnerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage relevant services to explore ways to improve servicing for children and families, especially those that are vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services DEECD DHS 	Existing partner resources	2016-2017
Improve the provision of information about recreation, education and health and community services available for children to service providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the use of technology e.g. text messaging, websites, social media and app's to circulate key early years information to service providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services Community Groups 	Existing partner resources would cover research. External funding sourced to support any new technology requirements.	2015
Understand current service provision in Loddon Shire relevant to children aged 0-8 years and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake service mapping to build a current picture of service delivery and gaps relevant to children 0-8 years and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community & Health Services DEECD DHS PCP 	New funding required, approximately \$8,000-\$10,000.	2015
Support, encourage and enhance regular service connections and collaboration in the early year's sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden early year's network membership to include visiting services and key community champions. Utilise the early year's network to advise and drive the implementation of the MEYP action plan. Review opportunities for collaborative work in the early year's sector. Actively encourage service collaboration through the actions of the MEYP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergartens Schools Community & Health Services Churches 	Existing partner resources	2014

Strategy Area 4: Advocacy & Capacity Building

Objective	Action	Council Role	Key Partners	Resourcing (Existing/New?)	Timeframe
<p>Investigate and advocate for feasible childcare models and options that could address current childcare gaps across Loddon Shire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a working group to guide the investigation of childcare models and options for Loddon Shire. Capture information and advocate to key state and federal departments for support to trial and evaluate a feasible childcare model in one community. Work with the Family Day Care program to identify ways of attracting and supporting more family day care providers across the Loddon Shire. Investigate the Active After School Program which may assist with after school care requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/ Caregivers Centacare BRIC DEECD Key Health and Community Service Providers Kindergartens Childcare providers 	<p>Existing partner resources for the planning phase.</p> <p>Trialling a child care model would be dependent on securing state/federal funding.</p>	2014-2016
<p>Create a community 'treasure chest' of resources targeted at supporting actions within the municipal early years plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a committee to explore philanthropic grants and other possible funding sources. Explore other community models of flexible funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents/ Caregivers Key Health and Community Service Providers Schools Kindergartens 	Existing partner resources	2014-2017