

PRINCIPLES

The Australian Greens Victoria believe that:

1. Government policy has a critical role to play in shaping the choices many young people make and providing them with the resources they need to improve their lives.
2. Policies that emphasise prevention and early intervention have an important role to play in helping at-risk youth to lead more successful and fulfilling lives. Investment in such policies today will greatly reduce the future costs of dealing with the consequences of crime, unemployment and drug abuse.
3. The needs and views of young people must be taken into account by all those involved in developing and implementing policies that impact on young people.
4. All young people must have the right to access the quantity and quality of services they need regardless of where they live or the socio-economic status of their parents.

AIMS

The Australian Greens Victoria will work towards:

1. Greater coordination and cooperation between national, state and local governments in relation to policies that impact on young people.
2. Improved programs and services that redress the inequities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.
3. Policies and institutions that encourage young people to participate in all aspects of political life and policymaking, helping them to develop decision-making and leadership skills. This should be promoted by allowing optional voting at state level for those aged 16 and 17 years, and requiring that all schools implement initiatives to encourage pupils to take part in decision-making.
4. Greater promotion and public recognition of the diverse and positive contributions that young people make to their communities and to the political and cultural life of Victoria.
5. Additional resources to enable state and local governments to employ and involve more youth workers in providing vital services such as housing, training, youth justice and drug prevention.

6. Legislation to make The Commission for Children and Young People fully independent and expand its role to perform research and advocacy on a wider range of youth-related issues such as employment, poverty and access to public services.
7. Implement measures to help end the unemployment and under-employment of young people across urban, rural and regional Victoria by increasing investment in local training and employment schemes, and particularly those schemes that seek to support prospective school leavers.
8. Improve the quality of working life for young people by such means as promoting union membership and requiring employers to provide opportunities for accredited training to young employees.
9. Additional training and resources for police, legal and care professionals with the priority aim of keeping young people out of the criminal justice system while providing them with forms of support that will significantly reduce the risk of reoffending.
10. Increased provision of government, social and private rental housing for young people that is secure, affordable and appropriate for those in transition from at-risk situations. Access should be supported by appropriate forms of public rental support.
11. Greater provision of health services that are designed to respond to the specific problems and needs that young people have when dealing with issues such as drugs, sexual health and mental illness.