



The Hon. G Berejiklian, MP.
Premier of NSW
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

March 19, 2020

Re: Request for financial support of the youth sector amid Covid-19 pandemic

Dear Premier,

I am writing on behalf of Youth Action – the peak body for young people and youth services in NSW. We represent 1.4 million young people and the services that support them.

The Covid-19 pandemic is affecting everyone. The way we work, live and play is going to look very different for the foreseeable future. However, it is important to remember young people are particularly vulnerable to the knock-on effects of the changing economic & social environment. Social distancing, working from home and the cancellation of programs and events are required to protect the health and wellbeing of sector workers and young people. While necessary, these measures will also bring a change to the way those in need are supported.

As a result, we are calling on the NSW Government to inject a significant financial stimulus into the youth sector to ensure services can meet the increasing demand Covid-19 is causing.

The youth sector provides a wide range of services to hundreds of thousands of young people throughout the state, often with minimal resources and an already stretched workforce. It provides young people with everything from social support through arts and recreation to specialised homelessness and housing services while also heavily relying on volunteers for delivery. Each and every service will be affected by Covid-19 and the ability to maintain current support levels is going to be stretched even further.

Young people are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed and in casual work (particularly in industries most damaged by an economic downturn); face housing stress and/or have a mental health condition. Young people are in danger of falling through the cracks if the services that provide support are not supported themselves. Demand will be unmet, and results will lead to tragic outcomes.

The sector has a history of adapting to changing and challenging times – this period will be no different. However, without additional financial support, young people are at risk of a wide range of negative outcomes.

We understand how busy this time is for the Government but invite you to meet with us to discuss this request at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Acheson".

Katie Acheson
Chief Executive Officer
Youth Action