

(Via email: RRSDC@parliament.vic.gov.au
Subject: Why young people leave the country!)

Yolanda McKindlay

Perricoota Road

Moama NSW 2731

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Dear Parliament

As a young person myself and living in a country town I have a real battle to be heard and positive towards my future here. There is not much going for us and if we want a better life style we look for it elsewhere, such as the bigger towns and cities. It isn't just the job that's under paid and has no future all study that's not what we are after but the social scene too.

Youth need to be accounted for in our community and if you want to know how to keep young people in the community you need to cater for all their needs just like everybody else. Echuca and Moama have a huge number of families, kids and the older generation including the elders. However there aren't enough young people and therefore those who do stay and live in the area are greatly disadvantaged from those who live closer to the cities. In the last 10 years my area has improved but it isn't enough and what I would like to see is a community with more even numbers of all persons including the young, a wider selection of social events and activities, better paid jobs with a future and a variety of interests and studies catered for the young.

Our community does not cater for the young correctly and so we loose a lot of the young. Some might return years later to settle down into family life but above all we have a larger percentage of the young looking elsewhere for a positive future in their life. So communities like Echuca and Moama need a reason to bring them back or/and to encourage them to stay. An on going of art and music events and festivals, galleries, cafes, restaurants and bars that are recognised in bigger towns and cities are just some reason for the young to stay. Music is important to the young and if there is limited music to hear and to see performed they will go elsewhere. For many years I have wanted to bring a bit of Melbourne to town but it can be difficult if money and council is an issue. Like our bridge our people have been looking forward to (whenever it will be replaced with a new one) and our art and cultural public gallery that have not been provided for the community anything to keep young people here is hopeful.

The council and the community need to recognise that the young are just as important as everyone else. Encourage positively by providing their needs, their talents and their interests. Offer dance and music events and classes. Support their interests by holding seminars on how to start your dream business or future investment. Let them speak out and encourage them to do

so to improve their future positively in the town. Organise young people's groups or clubs, african drum lessons, and new and wonderful job opportunities. There are lots of ways to go about it and all we need to do is to act on them.

Yours sincerely
Yolanda McKindlay