

Media Release

Youth Wellbeing Survey results highlight areas of need

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Understanding young people's recovery needs is key to ensuring the right decisions are made for the future, says Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority Chief Executive Roger Sutton.

These needs are outlined in the results of the 2013 Youth Wellbeing Survey which was released today. The survey was commissioned to help guide the ongoing work of CERA and its partners, including local councils, the Ministry of Youth Development, the Ministry of Education, the Canterbury District Health Board, the Natural Hazards Research Platform, the Collaborative for Research and Training in Youth Health and Development and youth sector organisations.

"Young people will be living in this city long after the rebuild is complete and we need to know how best to cater for their wellbeing. The survey also gives young people a chance to have their voices heard by those leading the recovery," says Mr Sutton.

"Those voices are telling us in particular that the loss of places to go and hang out with friends or play sport has really affected young people. Seventy per cent of those surveyed tell us they have lost access to these places since the earthquake and the loss of spaces and recreational facilities remain the top two stressors for young people."

"It is exciting to see that in response to this, the Ministry of Youth Development has established the Canterbury Youth Initiative Fund, to help our young people as the city continues its recovery."

"This funding will be used to, among other things, run a great series of youth events and initiatives this year."

"These are events we want to not only see young people at, but young people organising. We're calling on young people and youth organisations to step forward and apply to put something on."

Mr Sutton says that despite the loss of spaces and places, the Youth Wellbeing Survey shows that young people are doing well in post-earthquake greater Christchurch and reveals positive wellbeing trends in the recovery.

"Four out of five young people told us they have someone to turn to when they need help and over half feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood. The majority of young people also agreed that Christchurch provides good opportunities for future study, employment and careers."

Two thirds of respondents have emotional wellbeing scores that indicated good mental wellbeing.

"We are aware that some young people are struggling with their emotional wellbeing and the organisations we have worked with on the survey are looking at ways to address this."

CERA uses the findings from the CERA Wellbeing Survey, which is open to all age groups 18 years and over, in its daily decision-making and intends to use the Youth Wellbeing Survey, aimed at 12-24 year olds, in the same way. The survey asked questions about young people's wellbeing, the impacts of the earthquakes on them, what is important to them in the recovery and their future plans.

"All of the groups involved in creating this survey will continue working together on improving youth wellbeing."

The Youth Wellbeing Survey was led by CERA in consultation with youth and health organisations, as well as young people from the Christchurch, Waimakariri and Selwyn youth councils. It was carried out from 23 September until 13 December 2013.

For more details on the CERA Youth Wellbeing Survey please visit www.cera.govt.nz/youth-wellbeing-survey and the Canterbury Youth Initiative Fund, please visit www.myd.govt.nz/funding

Video of the announcement of the Youth Initiative Fund and Wellbeing Survey.

https://youtu.be/simgZ8U_IPw