

Tuesday, 18 June 2019

## **\$50 MILLION FOR REGIONAL YOUTH PROGRAMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

The NSW Government is delivering on its commitment to prioritise the welfare and needs of young people living in regional NSW with \$50 million dedicated to youth programs and infrastructure in the 2019-20 NSW Budget.

Minister for Regional Youth Bronnie Taylor said the funding allocated through the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund will enhance regional youth programs and build or upgrade infrastructure.

"We know regional NSW is a fantastic place to grow up but there's more we can do. We want to improve the overall wellbeing of young people and make sure they are connected, job ready and have things to do," Mrs Taylor said.

"Whether it be supporting sports programs, social inclusion programs, youth centre upgrades, technology training or job skills mentoring, having a proportion of the Stronger Country Communities fund solely for regional youth will allow local areas to address local issues."

Mrs Taylor said the NSW Government has already delivered on its promise to establish an Office of Regional Youth, which is now working alongside a vast regional network of representatives to develop the Regional Youth Strategy and Regional Youth Taskforce.

"We're building the NSW Government's first ever Regional Youth Strategy, which will focus on youth unemployment, skills and education, transport, access to services, recreation and mental health, to ensure our young people's wellbeing remains a top priority," Mrs Taylor said.

"The Regional Youth Taskforce will provide us with ongoing advice about the issues affecting young people across regional NSW and ensure their voices are central to the actions of this Government."

These initiatives will strengthen the NSW Government's existing youth programs, which include 100,000 fee free apprenticeships and Regional Industry Education Partnership officers that work with local schools and industries to provide employment opportunities for young people in the regions.

"The NSW Government will continue to put country and coastal communities at the top of our agenda so that everyone has the opportunity to live, work, play and thrive in regional NSW," Mrs Taylor said.

"Whether they ask for more recreational spaces, better job pathways or greater access to mental health services, this Government has proved it will listen."

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