

9 August 2023

Mayoral Message

Dear Residents



Tomorrow's leaders will come from today's youth!

It's paramount we invest in our youth and give them the skills they need to tackle the many challenges they will be confronted with. And with an ageing population, the opportunities are there for young and old to come together and share experiences.

This weekend, we celebrate International Day of Youth (Saturday 12 August), a day when we focus on the difficulties some young people are experiencing and the issues they are concerned about.

Over the past years, the day has highlighted a lack of basic reading and math skills, childhood poverty and providing safe spaces for youth to come together.

This year, the focus will be on *Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World*.

In Canterbury-Bankstown, we have more than **65,000** young people between the age of 12 and 25 – one of the largest populations of young people in the state.

I have a deep affinity with the youth in our City through my volunteering work in the community and with the Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC).

We have achieved so much, but there is still much to do, especially when it comes to youth poverty, illiteracy and homelessness.

It saddens me to read that one in six children still lives in poverty in Australia, a country abounding in wealth and resources.

Our Council encourages youth by investing in programs to help them thrive. We also have an awesome youth team, that coordinates a wide range of programs to support young people at Belmore Youth Resource Centre (BYRC) and beyond.

So this Saturday, take some time and connect with some of our youth and see the world through their eyes.



Clr Bilal El-Hayek
MAYOR

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