

MEDIA RELEASE

16 August 2012

How Young People Rate Canberra: Findings from the Survey of Young People aged 12 – 25 in the ACT

The Youth Coalition of the ACT, the peak body for youth affairs, launched a report on the findings from their inaugural survey of young people aged 12-25 in the ACT this morning.

1,376 young people participated in the survey, implemented in April 2012, which aimed to obtain an inaugural snapshot of the key issues, experiences and views of young people aged 12 – 25 years in the ACT and surrounding region.

"We wanted to find out more about what it's like for young people to live in Canberra, and in each of its main regions. Our survey asked young people what is important to them, what they are concerned about, and what their experiences of accessing services in the ACT have been." said Emma Robertson, Director of the Youth Coalition.

"The top five personal concerns for young people were: school work or study, stress, body image, feeling sad or anxious, and finding things to do in Canberra"

"Young people thought the following general issues were the most important: family relationships, human rights, mental health and wellbeing, access to health services, and poverty."

"We also asked survey participants about whether they thought young people were valued by the ACT community, and found most were unsure, or did not think they were", said Ms Robertson, "many felt that the ACT community held negative stereotypes of young people and did not consider them to be important enough to listen to."

"Interestingly, overall 62% of participants supported lowering the voting age to 16, with most believing it should be optional rather than compulsory for 16 and 17 year olds to vote."

"Of the young people surveyed who were under the age of 18, over half indicated they would vote if it were optional."

The full report on the survey will be available later today on the Youth Coalition's website www.youthcoalition.net

**For further comment please contact Emma Robertson on 0422 665 469
Please note Emma will not be available for comment until 11am.**