

Get Engaged

(Empowering Newcastle Young People)

Call for young people to be considered as an election issue

Newcastle City Youth Council urged candidates for the federal seat of Newcastle to engage with their young constituents by announcing their responses to the many issues important to local young people.

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Newcastle Youth Mayor, Mitchell Wall highlighted the fact that, young people aged 12-24 make up 13.6% of the population of Newcastle but are often characterised as being disengaged and uninformed. In response to this, a dedicated web site “Get Engaged” (www.GetEngaged07.com) has been created to address this apparent need. This project brought together the youth policies of each of the federal candidates for the seat of Newcastle so that young people and those interested in the rights of young people, are now able to make a better informed choice come Election Day. This initiative asked each candidate to respond to the question: *How will you implement your policies in the interests of Newcastle Young People?*

Mitchell Wall said, “I urge all young people to access this site and consider the ramifications of each candidate’s policies in relation to local young people so that they can be well informed before Election Day on the 24th November”. Mr Wall further stated, “It is not surprising that young people might become disengaged, if their concerns are rarely on the agenda. With the abolition of the federal portfolio for young people in 2004 and the lack of funding for a national youth peak body since 1999, it has become almost impossible for young people to get their issues across.”

“This election has seen young people increasingly becoming an election issue as parties begin to understand their potential voting power and how uncommitted they are as new voters.”

The Newcastle Youth Council Provides Leadership and Representation to Newcastle City Council and Large Organisations in the interest of local Young People

For further information or comment, please contact:

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Australian Labor Party:

Sharon Greison



Kevin Rudd and Labor have a range of positive policies specifically for young people.

Labor will establish the Australian Youth Forum, a formal communication channel between youth representatives, youth policy specialists and the Federal Government.

We will appoint a Minister for Youth, and establish an Office for Children and Young People to develop youth-specific policies and analyse how government initiatives affect young people.

And a Rudd Labor Government will repeal John Howard's unfair electoral laws that close the rolls early, denying many younger Australians a vote.

In addition, a Rudd Labor Government will act on the issues that young people in Newcastle tell me are most important for their future, including climate change, industrial relations and education.

Labor's fight against climate change includes a \$105 million investment in solar and clean coal right here in Newcastle and the Hunter. We will set a national renewable energy target of 20% by 2020 and introduce a carbon trading scheme, and ratify Kyoto.

Kevin Rudd's education revolution includes access to a school computer for every student in years 9 to 12, creating 450,000 additional skilled training places, and doubling the number of undergraduate university scholarships to 88,000.

And we will abolish John Howard's extreme WorkChoices laws that hurt young people by stripping away penalty rates and leave loadings and forcing people onto 'take it or leave it' AWAs and unpredictable rosters.

As a strong voice in a Rudd Labor Government, I'll make sure our positive plans are delivered for young people in Newcastle.

Sharon Grierson MP

Federal Member for Newcastle

www.sharongrierson.com

www.myspace.com/sharongriersonmp

The above statement was provided to the Newcastle Youth Council by the Australian Labor Party

The Greens:

Charmian Eckersley



Policy Implementation Focusing on Good Outcomes for Young People.

Charmian Eckersley, The Greens candidate for Newcastle in the House of Representatives.

Too often young people are spoken about by the media and politicians in a negative way, as if they are a problem that needs solving.

Instead our leaders should be more concerned with what kind of society they are leaving to the next generation and generations to come. The Greens recognise the enormously varied contribution youth culture is making to society.

Many young people – unsurprisingly - have a healthy cynicism of politics and the major parties and are increasingly turning to the Greens.

The Green Party is committed to abolishing HECS and providing free tertiary education. Independent research shows this would cost around \$2.5 billion dollars – a pittance given the potential benefits, and compared to the enormous election largesse that the major parties have offered in the form of tax cuts. We will stand fast against moves to privatise education. The Greens also oppose the introduction of voluntary student unionism as the impact on rural and regional students is profound with student services being withdrawn from campuses.

We support a system of regionally based, appropriately resourced and independent youth advisory committees, greater coordination in youth policy formulation and a decent income for young people.

The Greens will improve education and employment opportunities, including in remote, rural and regional areas. We will make affordable, accessible and secure housing options for young people a priority. For young people, access to affordable and reliable public transport can help with training and employment. The Greens are committed to providing great public transport in all areas in of Newcastle.

Most importantly we will implement environmental policies on clean water, air, and climate change which mean that young people and their children will have a planet worth living on.

The above statement was provided to the Newcastle Youth Council by The Greens

The Liberal Party of Australia:

Kryisia Walker



Kryisia Walker committed to respond but was did not make a formal response. If Kryisia responds it will be posted here.

THE NATIONALS

Christian Democratic Party:

Milton Caine



Firstly I wish to thank you for your email and I am happy to respond to your question concerning young people in the Newcastle electorate and beyond. It is my strong desire to restore greater hope to our young people so they can be well prepared for the transition to adulthood and to have a world that is worth living in.

The legacy of the 'free love' era and the rise of the 'drug culture' has caused many problems that need to be corrected by:

Restoring laws that inculcate respect for parents and teachers and others in authority and which support their decision-making. Balance the teaching of rights with responsibilities. Examine the prohibitive cost while expanding youth training and education programmes including TAFEC and universities. Establish programmes that promote desirable qualities in our youth. Examine decisions to prevent harm to our youth with reference to suicide, mental illness and homelessness. Encourage a chaste and responsible lifestyle as being a desirable thing including entertainment free of alcohol, tobacco and all illegal drugs.

Mandatory court-ordered detoxification and drug rehabilitation programs. The legal system should not only be about punishing wrong doers but about rehabilitating offenders so that a new beginning is always available as a real possibility. Work Choices needs to be changed to permit the employee to have representation in all agreements so that their rights can not be taken away by surprise. The youth need assistance as they develop and understand how this society works.

Housing affordability reforms are needed since most graduates from university already have an education debt that is greater than the housing loans of the 70's. Good clean, fast, safe and affordable public transport with good quality and safe roads.


Harvesting of stormwater, developing of more environmental friendly power generation and stopping the lie of clean coal technology which will pollute all our ground water at the very least.

For information you can go to my web page: www.miltoncaine.com or call me on 0410027593

Thank you once again
Yours in Good Faith
Milton Caine
Christian Democratic Candidate for Newcastle

The above statement was provided to the Newcastle Youth Council by the Christian Democratic Party

Australian Democrats: Aaron Johnson

 There is no other Australian political party that can come close to matching the Australian Democrats when it comes to youth issues. No other party has a track record that can match ours when it comes to directly engaging young Australians in our political process.

Take for example Natasha Stott-Despoja, at 26 years old, the youngest woman ever elected to the Senate and Roslyn Dundas, at 23, was the youngest woman elected to an Australian parliament ever.

This is a 30 year old tradition that the Australian Democrats continue to this day. With around 25% of our candidates contesting this federal election being 18 to 30 years old, we are the only party that has a true proportional representation of young people. We even have a handful of candidates who are contesting House of Representative seats, yet have never voted in a federal election before because this is the first time they are eligible to vote. Even myself at 26, I am much younger than my counterparts contesting the seat of Newcastle.

We are the only party that conducts an annual youth poll on a range of diverse issues and not as just some token act to try and impress like the other parties do. Our youth poll is distributed to schools, TAFE's, youth groups, universities, welfare and community organisations where our research is transformed into results at a grass roots level.

To see more of what the Young Australian Democrats are doing, why not check us out at: www.yads.org.au

Cheers mate,

Aaron Johnson
Australian Democrats candidate for Newcastle.

The above statement was provided to the Newcastle Youth Council by the Australian Democrats