



HANDBOOK 2007

women's
Health

young women's health

demographic and health status information
about women 15-24
women's health goulburn north east



WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST

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Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) was established in July 2000. Previously known as NEWomen, Women's Health Goulburn North East is the government funded, specialist women's health service for the Goulburn Valley and north-east Victoria.

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This report was compiled by Sarah Weston and Alana Pund, students from Latrobe University, in 2007 with the support of the team at Women's Health Goulburn North East. It is based on information provided by a broad range of regional services, the Department of Human Services and Victorian Peak Bodies; and on key data sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Burden of Disease data. Our sincere thanks to all.

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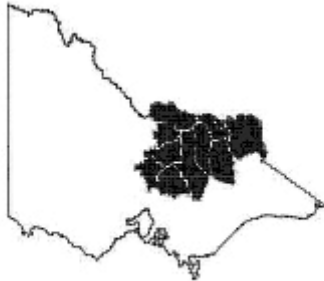


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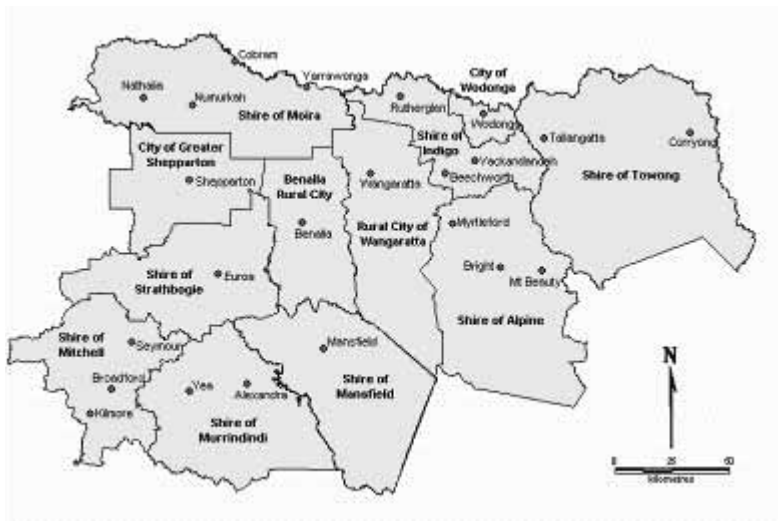
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Geographical boundaries



Hume Region





Introduction

The aim of this handbook is to bring together the key indicators of health status and health outcomes for women aged 15-24 in the Goulburn Valley and north east Victoria (the Hume region). The information and statistics have been sourced using the most recent available data. It is a resource for people working to improve the planning, delivery and evaluation of health services to young women in our region.

The handbook contains both demographic and health status information, and focuses on health issues affecting young women. The data is generally Hume region wide. In many cases additional data is provided at LGA (Local Government Area) level within the region. However, for many health issues, we have had to draw on statistics for the whole of Victoria or Australia as local data was unavailable.

Where figures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander¹ young people are given, they are presented in a shaded box in each section.

The handbook highlights inequality across gender, age and geographical location. It has '**myth busted**' some popular assumptions that exist within society regarding young women within the 15-24 year age group. Such stereotypes and myths serve only to reinforce the difficulties facing young woman in rural areas.

The information in this handbook will inform agencies, service providers and individuals within the Hume region of about the health status of young women, creating a starting point for change. Support for positive change is essential in a young woman's life, because after all, '**she is our future**'.

¹ Throughout this report, we will refer to 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' women and men as 'Aboriginal' women and men. The Victorian Department of Human Services 2006 publication, *Building Better Partnerships* states the definition of 'an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is: a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives'. It goes on to state that, 'not all Aboriginal people are dark skinned; "Being Aboriginal has nothing to do with the colour of your skin or the shape of your nose. It is a spiritual feeling, an identity you know in your heart. It is a unique feeling that may be difficult for non-Aboriginal people to understand" (Burney 1994).'



Key Points

- 14.5% of Hume region women 15-24 are attending tertiary education - 6% full time and 8.5% part time.
- 21% are in full time employment.
- 30% are in part time employment.
- 6% are unemployed and looking for full time or part time work.
- The Year 12 completion rate for women in the Hume region aged 20-24 is 66%. The equivalent rate for all of Victoria is 77%.² This means that one third of young women in our region have not completed Year 12, compared to one quarter for the state of Victoria.
- Young women earn less than young men. More women than men in the age group 15-24 earn less than \$400 per week. More men than women 15-24 are in the higher income bracket, over \$400 per week.
- Aboriginal women have a life expectancy of 63 years of age - 20 years younger than that of all Australian women.
- One in three women are sexually assaulted by the age of 18.
- Hume region has the highest rate of homelessness in Victoria, with 61 homeless people per 10,000 population, compared to a state average of 44 per 10,000.³ Young people make up a third of the total homeless population. Aboriginal people living in Victoria have five times the rate of homelessness of the non-Aboriginal population.
- Young women living alone with children comprise 4%. Young men living alone with children comprise only 0.2%. This means that twenty times more women than men aged 15-24 live alone with children.
- There appears to be an assumption amongst the general population that an increase of babies born within the 15-24 year age group has occurred due to the introduction of the baby bonus on 1st July 2001. However, there has in fact been a decrease in number of babies born to young women in 2006 compared to 1996.
- More young women than men do unpaid domestic work. A total of 44% of young women do more than five hours unpaid domestic work per week, compared to 26% of young men. A total of 60% Aboriginal young women do more than five hours unpaid domestic work per week, compared with 40% of Aboriginal young men.
- Young women are twice as likely as young men to care for their own or other people's children. This is the same for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal young women. The caring that women do leads to lower pay when they do return to work and lower superannuation payouts. In 2006, payouts were expected to be \$130,000 for women and \$455,000 for men, according to the *Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia*

² ABS Census 2006.

³ 2001 figures cited in McKenzie, D. & Desmond, K. (2006) A needs analysis of the Hume region homelessness service system. Melbourne: Department of Human Services, p. 44.



Female population

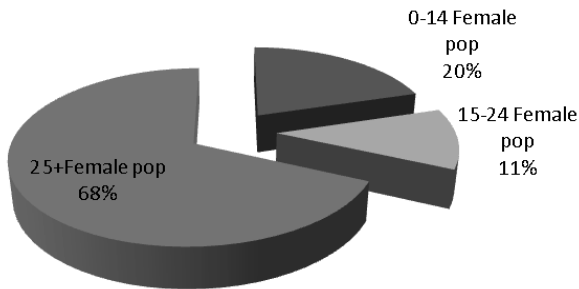
Women aged 15-24 represent 11% of the total population of females in the Hume region. Table 1 and the accompanying graph show the proportion of young women in relation to the total female population in the Hume region.

■ Table 1: Population of Females in the Hume region

	n	%
0-14 Female pop	29454	20%
15-24 Female pop	16483	11%
25+ Female pop	98990	68%
Total Female pop	144927	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/07)

Female population in Hume region



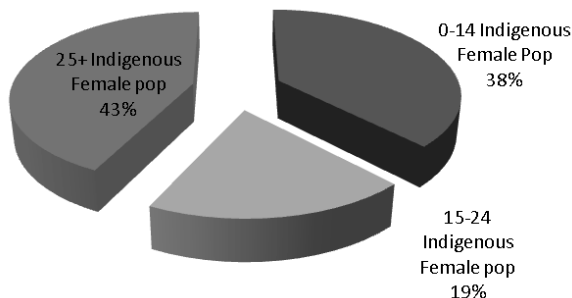
Aboriginal women aged 15-24 comprise 3% of the total population of women 15-24 in the Hume region. Table 2 shows that the age group of 15-24 comprises 19% of the total Aboriginal female population.

■ Table 2: Population of Aboriginal females in the Hume Region

Age group	n	%
0-14	856	38%
15-24	440	19%
25+	971	43%
Total	2267	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/07)

Population of Aboriginal women in Hume region



Total female population for each LGA in the Hume region

Table 3 shows the total female population for each LGA within the Hume Region and indicates which LGAs have larger numbers of women aged 15-24. The table indicates that Shepparton has the highest population of women aged 15-24 (25% of young women in the Hume region), followed by Wodonga (16%), then Mitchell (13%). The LGA with the lowest 15-24 female population in the Hume region is Towong (2%), then Mansfield and Strathbogie at 3%. These proportions relate directly to the size of the whole population in each area.

■ Table 3: Female population and females aged 15-24 by LGA in the Hume region 1997-2001*

	Total Female Population		15-24 Female Population	
	n	%	n	%
Alpine	6628	5	687	1
Benalla	7267	6	849	1
Indigo	7675	6	818	1
Mansfield	3590	3	436	0.33
Mitchell	15798	12	2064	2
Moira	13849	11	1298	1
Murrindindi	6903	5	698	1
Shepparton	31228	24	4086	3
Strathbogie	5001	4	422	0.32
Towong	3055	2	265	0.2
Wangaratta	13805	10	1528	1
Wodonga	16898	13	2615	2
Total in Hume	131697	100	15766	12

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development - Department of Sustainability and Environment Victoria in Future (VIF) 2004 Projections estimated resident population by 5 year age group and sex Statistical Local areas June 30th 2006 <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/victoriainfuture/> (Accessed 2/11/2007) .

*Total 15-24 female population as estimates only as statistics were sourced from *Department of Sustainability & Environment Victoria 5 year population growth estimates from 2001 in each LGA.*



Life expectancy

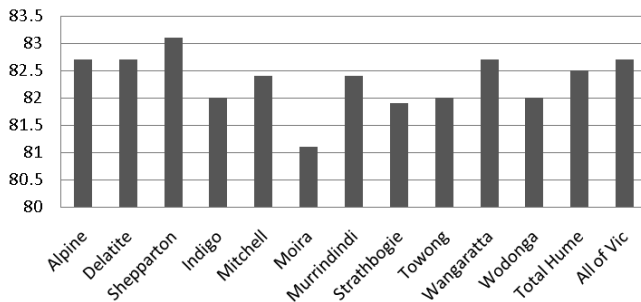
Table 4 shows that women in the Hume region have a predicted life expectancy of 82.7 years. The life expectancy of women was highest in Shepparton at 83.1 and lowest in Moira and Strathbogie 81.9 years of age.

■ Table 4: Life expectancy for all females by LGA in the Hume region, 1997-2001

Life Expectancy	
Alpine	82.7
Delatite	82.7
Shepparton	83.1
Indigo	82
Mitchell	82.4
Moira	81.9
Murrindindi	82.4
Strathbogie	81.9
Towong	82
Wangaratta	82.7
Wodonga	82
Total Hume	82.5
All of Vic	82.7

Source: Burden of Disease estimates 2001 <http://hns.dhs.vic.gov.au/bodw/bodw/HomProcess.asp> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

Life expectancy for women in Hume region by Local Government area 1997-2001



Life expectancy for the Aboriginal population is between 20 and 25 years lower than the total population⁴. Aboriginal women have a life expectancy of 63 years of age - 20 years younger than that of all Australian women⁵.

In 1997-1999 Aboriginal women aged 15-24 had a death rate of 110 per 100,000, almost three times the rate of all Australian deaths for women aged 15-24 (38 per 100,000) ⁶.

⁴ Oxfam Australia: Closing the gap. Solutions to the Aboriginal Health Crisis facing Australia www.oxfam.org.au (Accessed 19/11/2007)

⁵ Oxfam Australia: Closing the gap. Solutions to the Aboriginal Health Crisis facing Australia www.oxfam.org.au (Accessed 19/11/2007)

⁶ ABS: The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples -4704.0,2001. www.abs.gov.au (Accessed 19/11/2007)



Education

The Year 12 completion rate for women in the Hume region aged 20-24 is 66%. The equivalent rate for all of Victoria is 77 %.⁷ This means that one third of young women in our region have not completed Year 12, compared to one quarter for the state of Victoria .⁸

■ Table 5: Highest year of school completion for women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	Females 20-24	
	n	%
Year 12 or Equiv	4522	66%
Year 11 or Equiv	755	11%
Year 10 or Equiv	866	13%
Year 9 or Equiv	276	4%
Year 8 or below	111	2%
Did not go to school	15	0%
Not stated	322	5%
Total	6867	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 15/10/2007)

There are no-age specific statistics on education completion for Aboriginal women aged 15-24 from the 2006 Census. Of all Aboriginal women in the Hume region 13% have completed Year 12 or equivalent. The percentage of all Aboriginal women who have completed Year 8 and under is high at 7%.



Type of educational institution

Please note that this section refers to women aged between 12 and 24.

In 2006, of the women aged 12-24 still at school, most (82%) were attending secondary school, with a further 14% attending technical and further education (TAFE).

Table 6 shows that of the 12-24 year old women 'still at school' in the Hume region, 56% attend government Secondary Colleges, 19% attend Catholic Secondary College and 7% attend other non government Secondary College. A total of 14% attend technical or further education either full-time or part-time.

⁷ ABS Census 2006.

⁸ ABS Census 2006.

While the table shows that only 5% attend university full or part-time within Hume region, this is a misleading figure given that university entrance age is normally 17 or 18, and the statistics refer to women aged from 12 years to 24. The other contributing factor to this low figure is that young people often leave rural towns to attend university in the city. These people would generally not be counted on the census forms for households within this region. It is self-evident, however, that young people face barriers in accessing tertiary education in the city (and even in provincial centres) through having to move away from family, out of home and pay for accommodation, meals and travel.

■ Table 6: Education institution attended by females aged 12-24 in the Hume region

	Educational Institution Attending n	Young Females 12-24 %
Government Sec College	7425	56%
Catholic Sec College	2505	19%
Other non government Sec College	922	7%
Tech/Further edu PT	1261	10%
Tech/Further edu FT	493	4%
Uni/Tertiary FT	521	4%
Uni/Tertiary PT	127	1%
Total	13254	100%

Source: AB S Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 15/10/2007)

Table 7 shows that 10% of Aboriginal women aged 15-24 in the Hume region go on to post secondary education, mostly through TAFE and other further educational institutions (compared to 19% of women 15-24 generally as shown above in Table 6).

There are difficulties in comparing data as some education statistics are for the age group 12 - 24, and some are for the age group 15-24. Information is often not available for the age group to 15-19, which equates more with school leaving age. Furthermore, statistics presented for all women and not necessarily presented in the same way for Aboriginal women.

From the data we do have, it appears that just under half (45%) of Aboriginal women aged 12-24 are attending secondary school (compared to 82% for all) and a further 8% are attending technical or further education (compared to 14%). Only 2% are attending university (compared to 5%).

■ Table 7: Education institution attended by Aboriginal young women in the Hume region (Please note age group is 12-24.)

	Educational Institution Attending n	Aboriginal young women %
Government Sec College	165	35%
Catholic Sec College	37	8%
Other non government Sec College	9	2%
Tech/Further education FT	20	4%
Tech/ Further education PT	20	4%
Tech/Further FT/PT/not stated	0	0%
UNI/Tertiary FT	11	2%
UNI/Tertiary PT	0	0%
UNI/Tertiary FT/PT not stated	0	0%
Type not stated	183	39%
Total	470	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 15/10/2007)



Tertiary education qualifications

Table 8 shows the types of tertiary qualifications held by young women in Hume region. It compares the age group of 15-24 with the next age bracket of 25-34. The data shows that many more young women complete tertiary qualifications in the later age bracket. This may suggest that young women in the Hume region are more likely to commence further education as a mature age student, rather than directly from secondary schooling, perhaps because of early motherhood. Another explanation could be that women, who completed their studies in the city, return to the Hume region once qualified and established in a profession. A total of 14% of women aged 15-24 have completed a bachelor degree compared to 52% of women aged 25-34; and 10% have completed diplomas and advanced diplomas by the age of 24, compared to 26% in the 25-34 age group.

■ Table 8: Level of education for women aged 15-24 and 25-34 in the Hume region*

	Females 15-24		Female 25-34	
	n	%	n	%
Postgraduate Degree	9	0%	173	3%
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	41	1%	387	8%
Bachelor Degree	696	14%	2671	52%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	488	10%	1340	26%
Certificate Not fully described	222	4%	481	9%
Certificate 3 & 4	1462	29%	2296	45%
Certificate 1 & 2	620	12%	482	9%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed at 28.5.2008)

- Percentages add to more than 100% because one person may hold more than one qualification.

More women than men in the age group 15-24 earn less than \$400 per week. More men than women 15-24 are in the higher income bracket, earning over \$400 per week.

Table 9 shows an even spread in the first income bracket of \$1-\$149 with 20% of young women and 21% of young men earning this amount per week. More young women than men are found in each of the next low income ranges of \$150-\$249; and \$250 to \$399 per week. However, once the bracket of \$400-\$599 is reached, there are more males in each high income bracket than females. This is the case for women's income generally, but it is perhaps surprising that unequal pay begins at the age of 15.

Individual gross weekly incomes for Aboriginal women and men aged 15-24 are similar. Many more women than men earn between \$250-\$399 per week, and many more men than women earn \$600-\$799. This echoes the general trend for men to earn more than women. One exception is that more Aboriginal women earn between \$400-599 than Aboriginal men.

■ Table 9: Gross individual weekly income for young people aged 15-24 in the Hume region

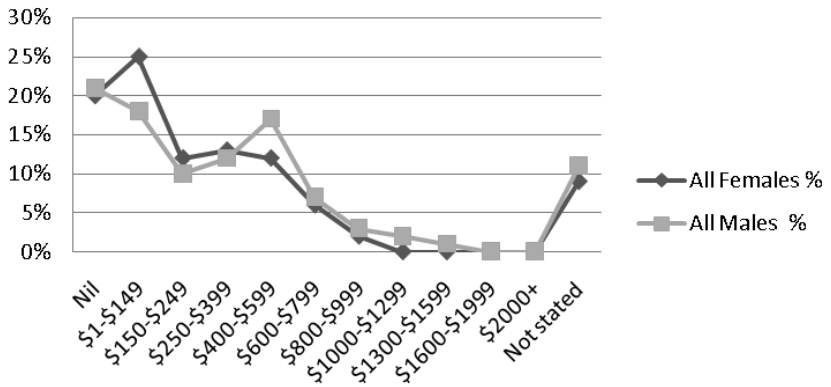
	All Females		All Males		Aboriginal Females		Aboriginal Males	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Nil	3232	20%	3648	21%	76	17%	66	18%
\$1-\$149	4127	25%	3137	18%	74	17%	62	17%
\$150-\$249	2013	12%	1689	10%	82	19%	68	18%
\$250-\$399	2063	13%	2074	12%	90	20%	46	13%
\$400-\$599	1989	12%	2961	17%	53	12%	40	11%
\$600-\$799	975	6%	1218	7%	13	3%	28	8%
\$800-\$999	378	2%	553	3%	6	1%	8	2%
\$1000-\$1299	76	0%	295	2%	0	0%	3	1%
\$1300-\$1599	20	0%	92	1%	0	0%	0	0%
\$1600-\$1999	9	0%	21	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$2000+	6	0%	37	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not stated	1442	9%	1850	11%	46	10%	47	13%
Total	16330	100%	17575	100%	440	100%	368	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

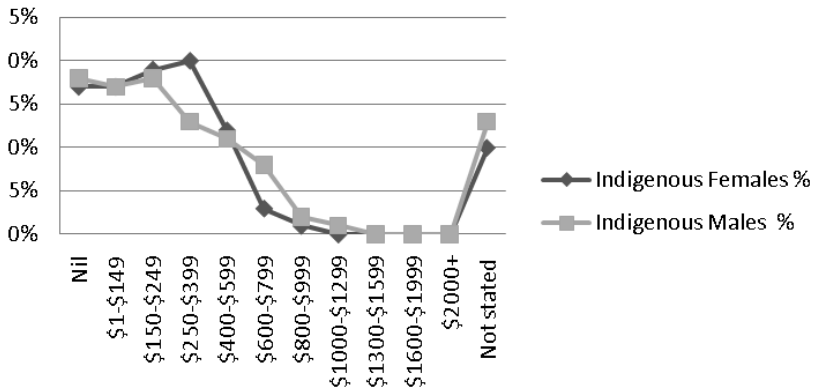
*Income percentage from the total of persons receiving an income.

*Gross weekly income includes pensions and allowances and is indicated into a range in which the income falls.

Income for males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region



Income for Aboriginal males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region





Labour force

Table 10 shows that one fifth (21%) of Hume region women aged 15-24 were in fulltime employment, and a third (30%) had part time employment. A total of 6% were looking for employment in the four weeks leading up to the 2006 Census. More than a third (35%) was not in the labour force, reflecting that many young women were attending school and other educational institutions. Some may have been parenting.

■ Table 10: Labour force status for young people 15-24 in the Hume region

Young people's employment	Males		Females	
	n	%	n	%
F/T Employed	6697	37%	3398	21%
P/T Employed	3153	17%	5013	30%
Employed- away from work	336	2%	353	2%
Hours worked not stated	494	3%	337	2%
Unemployed -Looking for F/T	842	5%	550	3%
Unemployed -Looking for P/T	303	2%	471	3%
Not in Labour Force	5442	30%	5722	35%
Labour Force not stated	823	5%	645	4%
Total	18090	100%	16489	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 29/10/2007)

Labour force status for males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region

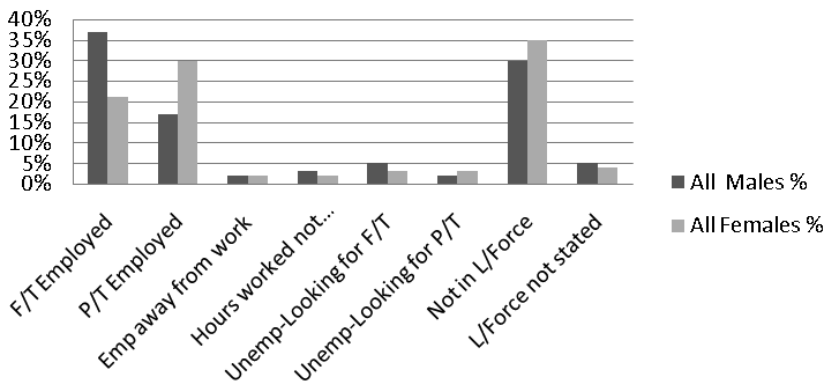


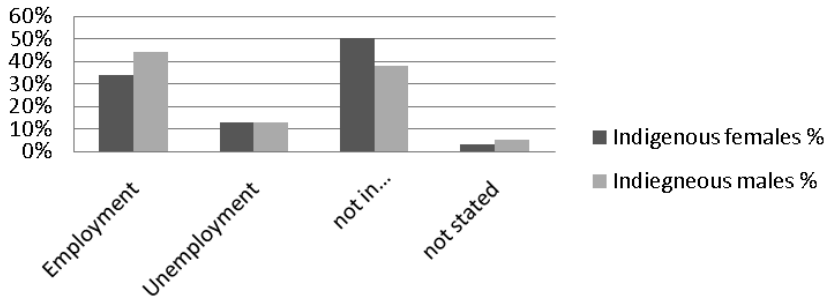
Table 11 shows that a third (34%) of Aboriginal women aged 15-24 were in employment compared to 44% of Aboriginal males 15-24 years. Half (50%) were not in employment, compared to 38% of males not in employment. This may be due to some young women being mothers and caring for children.

■ Table 11: Labour force status for young Aboriginal people 15-24 in the Hume region

	Aboriginal Females		Aboriginal Males	
	n	%	n	%
Employment	150	34%	169	44%
Unemployment	55	13%	49	13%
Not in employment	220	50%	149	38%
Not stated	12	3%	21	5%
Total	437	100%	388	100%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 29/10/2007)

Labour force status for Indigenous males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region





Type of work done by young Hume region women

The four main industries that young women in the Hume region are most likely to be working in are Retail; Food and Accommodation Services; Manufacturing; and Health care and Social Assistance. In the younger (15-19) age group, young women are working predominantly in Retail (20%) and Food and Accommodation services (12%), whereas those in the 20-24 age group are working predominantly in Retail (14%) and Health Care and Social Assistance (10.5%).

Table 12 demonstrates that gender roles within the workforce still exist. For example, in the industry of Construction males dominate the labour force whereas in Health Care and Social Assistance, females dominate. This is due to gender segregation within the workforce, with women tending to work in caring and nurturing roles, and men predominantly working in fields identified with masculinity such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture, fishery and forestry.

■ Table 12: Industry of employment comparison for young people aged 15-24 in the Hume region*

Industry of Employment	M 15-19		M 20-24		F 15-19		F 20-24	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agricultural/Fishing/Forestry	284	6%	476	8%	88	2%	142	3%
Mining	0	0%	18	0%	3	0%	3	0%
Manufacturing	673	14%	1142	20%	283	6%	297	6%
Elec/Gas/Water & Services	13	0%	68	1%	7	0%	26	1%
Construction	697	14%	1117	19%	13	0%	65	1%
Wholesale Trade	146	3%	253	4%	49	1%	115	2%
Retail Trade	1412	29%	643	11%	1947	43%	952	21%
Accomm and Food Services	633	13%	327	6%	1165	26%	669	15%
Trans/Post/Warehousing	86	2%	171	3%	32	1%	69	1%
Info Media/Telecomm	30	1%	51	1%	50	1%	60	1%
Finance and Insur Services	4	0%	47	1%	35	1%	131	3%
Rent/Hire/Real Estate Services	47	1%	34	1%	46	1%	87	2%
Profess/Scien/Tech Services	43	1%	160	3%	87	2%	235	5%
Admin and Support Services	64	1%	120	2%	54	1%	137	3%
Public Admin and Safety	195	4%	400	7%	44	1%	209	5%
Education and Training	67	1%	105	2%	98	2%	281	6%
Healthcare and Social Assist	26	1%	90	2%	165	4%	738	16%
Arts and Rec Services	91	2%	59	1%	66	1%	75	2%
Other Services	223	5%	272	5%	146	3%	245	5%
Not Stated	203	4%	186	3%	136	3%	68	1%
Total	4937	100%	5739	100%	4514	100%	4604	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 29/10/2007)

*Percentage is of the total of persons employed in each industry.



Voluntary work for an organisation or group

Table 13 shows that young women in the Hume region are volunteering at a rate of one in five (19%). It is slightly lower for young men at 16%. This is a similar pattern to the general population with women (26%) doing slightly more volunteering than men (22%)⁹.

Aboriginal young people volunteer at a rate of 12% for both females and males.

■ Table 13: *Voluntary work for an organisation or group - comparison and females and males and Aboriginal females and males aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	Females		Male		Aboriginal Females		Aboriginal Males	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Volunteer	3193	19%	2886	16%	55	12%	49	12%
Non Volunteer	11687	71%	13161	73%	334	76%	300	74%
Not Stated	1610	10%	2045	11%	52	12%	55	14%
Total	16490	100%	18092	100%	441	100%	404	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

*Volunteer percentage calculated from ABS figures.

'Voluntary work', according to the ABS Census, is for an organisation or group. Unpaid domestic work is in Table 14 and unpaid childcare is in Table 23.



Unpaid domestic work

From the total female population aged 15-24, 70% of young women are participating in unpaid domestic work¹⁰.

Table 14 shows that about three-quarters (74%) of all Hume region young men spend less than five hours in unpaid domestic work compared to just over half (56%) of young women. As the hours increase, more young women than men do unpaid domestic work. A total of 44% of young women do more than five hours unpaid domestic work per week, compared to 26% of young men.

A total of 60% Aboriginal young women do more than five hours unpaid domestic work per week, compared with 40% of Aboriginal young men.

⁹ ABS Census 2006. www.abs.gov.au (Accessed 20/9/2007)

¹⁰ ABS Census 2006. www.abs.gov.au (Accessed 9/10/2007)

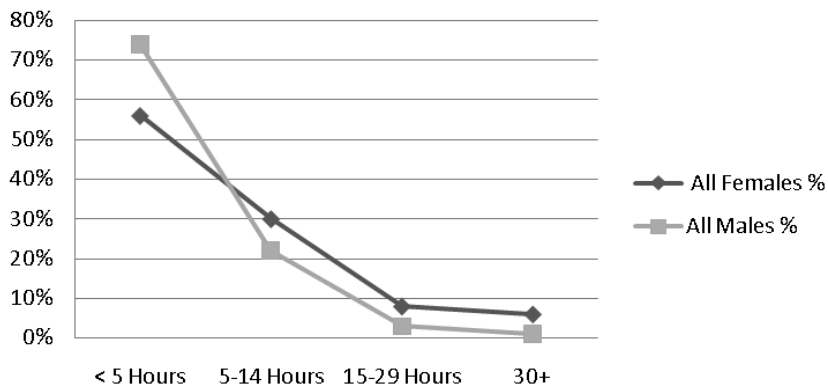
■ Table 14: *Comparison of unpaid domestic work done by people aged 15-24 in Hume region

	All Females		All Males		Aboriginal Females		Aboriginal Males	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
< 5 Hours	6437	56%	7218	74%	108	40%	108	60%
5-14 Hours	3443	30%	2104	22%	93	34%	53	30%
15-29 Hours	872	8%	313	3%	41	15%	4	2%
30+	727	6%	131	1%	30	11%	14	8%
Total	11479	100%	9766	100%	272	100%	179	100%

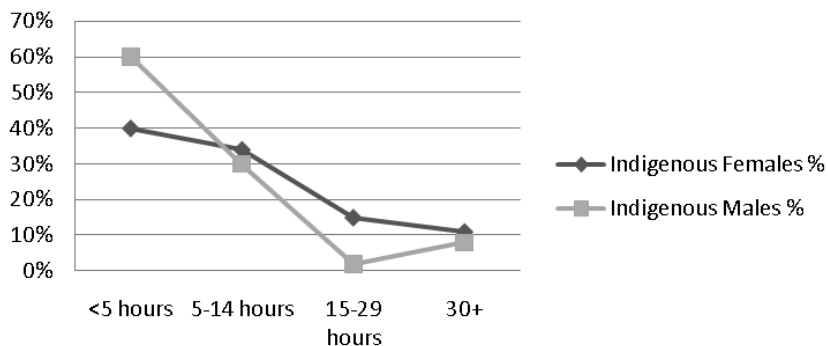
Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

*Unpaid domestic work percentages calculated from ABS figures.

Unpaid domestic work by males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region



Unpaid domestic work by Aboriginal males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region





Striking the balance with work and family

A total of 43% of Australian women aged 30-40 do *paid* work compared with 64% of Americans and 81% of Swedes. The lower workforce participation is probably related to their share of unpaid work. Australian women do more unpaid work than men and less paid work. Time use statistics show that 70% of unpaid household work is done by women.

The primary source of female economic disadvantage is child rearing. And there is no national maternity leave scheme.

With baby boomers moving into old age, and with governments keen to keep the pressure on the public purse to a minimum, the children of baby boomers will be expected to care more, not less, for their parents.

The increased need of ageing parents ironically occurs at the same time that these women will be looking to contribute to superannuation and build a nest egg. This occurs after a working life marked by years either out of the workforce or in part time work while caring for their children. Their superannuation contributions have been reduced as a result of their caring role.

The Spanish have passed a law requiring men to do more housework as part of the marriage contract to bring about change.

Summarised from Striking the balance with work and family in rural Australia a speech by Pru Goward, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, at WHGNE, Wangaratta, 14.10.2005



Religious affiliation

Table 15 shows that a total of 29% of young women in the Hume region state their religion is Catholic. An almost equal proportion (28%) has no religion. A further 15% state their religion is Anglican, and 7% state it is the Uniting Church. Seventeen other religions each have less than 3%.

■ Table 15: Religious affiliation of women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	n	%
Buddhism	68	0%
Anglican	2404	15%
Baptist	173	1%
Brethren	26	0%
Catholic	4702	29%
Churches of Christ	30	0%
Eastern Orthodox	106	1%
Jehovah's Witness's	60	0%
Latter Day Saints	25	0%
Lutheran	139	1%
Pentecostal	209	1%
Presbyterian Reformed	358	2%
Salvation Army	48	0%
Seventh- day Adventist	31	0%
Uniting Church	1108	7%
*Christian NFD	278	2%
Hinduism	10	0%
Islam	208	1%
Judaism	7	0%
Australian Aboriginal Traditional Religions	4	0%
No Religion	4448	27%
Other Religious Affiliation	158	1%
Religious Affiliation not stated	1839	11%
Total	16439	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

*NFD- Not Further Defined.



Housing

The housing market is competitive and women aged 15-24 are at a disadvantage as they earn less money than males in this age group (see Table 9). This reduces their ability to afford rental housing or obtain a housing loan.

Although there was no accessible data on private rental or home ownership for women, 6% of Hume region women aged 15-24 are living in Office of Housing properties¹¹.



Homelessness

Hume region has the highest rate of homelessness in Victoria, with 61 homeless people per 10,000 population, compared to a state average of 44 per 10,000.¹² Young people make up a third of the total homeless population.¹³

The *North East Support and Action for Youth: Youth and family reconciliation report*¹⁴ states that the majority of clients serviced by their Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) are mainly females within the age group 15-24. The main reasons identified for seeking support is: relationship and family breakdown; previous accommodation ended; time out from family and other situations; interpersonal conflict; physical/emotional abuse; domestic/family violence; budgeting problems; and overcrowding issues.

Income source for homeless people before and after support periods was mostly from government allowances with very little from labour force participation¹⁵.

Aboriginal people living in Victoria have five times the rate of homelessness of the non-Aboriginal population.¹⁶

¹¹ *figure provided by the Office of Housing Victoria on 10/10/2007.

¹² 2001 figures cited in McKenzie, D. & Desmond, K. (2006) A needs analysis of the Hume region homelessness service system. Melbourne: Department of Human Services, p. 44.

¹³ Ibid, p. 8.

¹⁴ North East Support and Action for Youth (2006). *Youth and Family Reconciliation Agency Report 2005/06*. Client population was from Wangaratta, Benalla, Myrtleford, Rutherglen, Yarrawonga and Gooramant.

¹⁵ Source: Homeless People in SAAP: National Data Collection. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10419> accessed at 21/11/2007

¹⁶ McKenzie, D. & Desmond, K. (2006) A needs analysis of the Hume region homelessness service system. Melbourne: Department of Human Services, p. 51.



Relationships in households

Table 16 shows that more than a third (38%) of women aged 15-24 are dependant students, and 20% are non-dependent children in the family home. There are 11% of young women living in defacto relationships and 4% in a registered marriage. Young women living on their own comprise 3% and alone with children, 4%. Men living alone with children in this age group comprise only 0.2%. Twenty times more women than men aged 15-24 live alone with children. This again reflects the gendered nature of the caring role.

■ Table 16: Relationships in household of women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	n	%
Registered Marriage	643	4%
Defacto Marriage	1859	11%
Lone Parent Family- Female Head	614	4%
Lone Parent Family- Male Head	34	0%
Dependent Student(15-24)	6267	38%
Non Dependent Child	2970	18%
Other Related Individual	438	3%
Unrelated Individual	336	2%
Group Household Member	938	6%
Lone Person	523	3%
Visitor (from within Aust)	469	3%
Total	15091	92%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

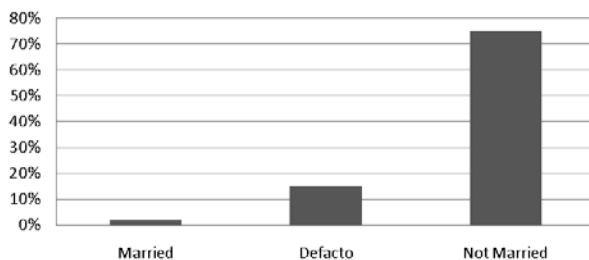
Table 17 shows that three quarters of young Aboriginal women were single, 15% living in defacto relationships and 2% were married. No further information about household relationships was available for young Aboriginal women.

■ Table 17: Relationships in household of Aboriginal women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	n	%
Married	7	2%
Defacto	66	15%
Not Married	330	75%
Total	403	92%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

Marital status of Aboriginal women aged 15-24 in Hume region





Number of children ever born

There appears to be an assumption amongst the general population that an increase of babies born within the 15-24 year age group has occurred due to the introduction of the baby bonus on 1st July 2001. However, there has in fact been a decrease in number of babies born to young women in 2006 compared to 1996.

Table 18 shows that in 1996, 3% of babies born were to 15-19 year old women, whereas in 2006, the figure was 2%. Numbers have decreased in this decade to 2006 for both 15-19 year old women and 20-24 year old women. Females aged 20-24 have a rate of birth six times higher than those aged 15-19.

■ Table 18: Number of children born for all women aged 15-24 in the Hume region 1996 & 2006.

	1996		2006	
	n	%	n	%
Young women 15-19	253	3	195	2
Young women 20-24	1695	24	1369	20
Total	1948	27	1564	22

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 18/10/2007)

Number of children born to all Hume region women aged 15-24 in 1996 and 2006

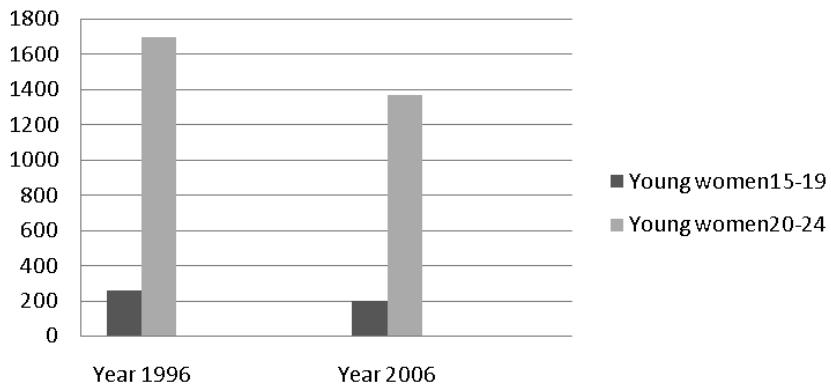


Table 19 shows that in 2006, 9% of the female population aged 15-24 had given birth to one or more children. Most (6%) had one child.

■ Table 19: Number of children ever born for females aged 15-24 in the Hume region in 2006.

	n	%
1 child	1021	6%
2 children	409	2%
3 children	106	1%
4 children	12	0%
5 children	4	0%
6+ children	12	0%
Not stated	1254	8%
Total	2818	17%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007 and 29/10/20)

Table 20 shows that 24% of Aboriginal women aged 15-24 had given birth to one or more children. The great majority (17%) have given birth to one child.

■ Table 20: Number of children ever born in Hume region for Aboriginal women aged 15-24, 2006

	n	%
1 Child	73	17%
2 Children	18	4%
3 Children	13	3%
4 Children	0	0%
5 Children	0	0%
6 or more	3	1%
Not stated	38	9%
Total	145	33%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)



Teenage births

Hume region statistics over the ten years to 2004 show that the percentage of births to women under 20 years ranges from approximately 3 to 5% with an average of 4.7%. The highest metropolitan percentage is 2.6% in Northern Metro making country teen birth rates roughly double city rates¹⁷.

Table 21 shows that in the Hume region in 1996, 149 females under the age of 20 gave birth. This represented 4.6% of all births in that year. In 2006, the number of young women giving birth dropped to 83 (3.4% of all births). However in the intervening years, there was not a strong and steady trend downwards - instead the rate fluctuates from year to year between a low of 3.2% and a high of 5.2%.

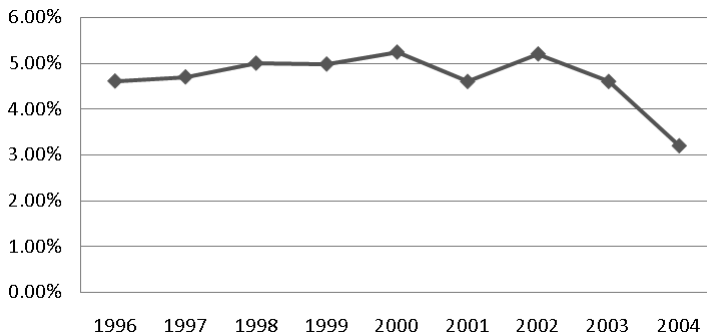
■ Table 21: Confinement rates in the Hume region 1996-2006

	Total *Confinements	Mums < 20 years	
	n	n	%
1996	3231	149	4.6%
1997	3151	148	4.7%
1998	3160	158	5.0%
1999	3315	165	4.9%
2000	3187	167	5.2%
2001	3037	141	4.6%
2002	3151	164	5.2%
2003	3080	143	4.6%
2004	3096	98	3.2%
2005	2347	78	3.3%
2006	2475	83	3.4%

Source: Statistics from the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit provided by DHS (Hume region). 2005 and 2006 statistics from <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/perinatal/stats/index.htm> (Accessed 27.5.2008).

*Confinements - all registered births.

Pregnancy rates for mothers under 20 in Hume region 1996-2004



¹⁷ Statistics from the Victorian Perinatal Data Collection Unit provided by DHS (Hume region)



Abortion

There are no available statistics on termination in the Hume region. Table 22, reprinted from a newspaper article, shows the Abortion rate for 15-19 year olds in Victoria over the decade from 1993-2003. It shows that there has been a slight increase over this time. In 2003 there were 16.7 abortions per 1,000 (both public and private patients).

It is difficult to access accurate and comprehensive statistics on abortion. Currently, only South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory do this, with South Australia being the only state to publish the results.

■ Table 22: Abortions per 1,000 15-19 year olds in Victoria

Public	n
1992-93	4.75
1993-94	5.3
1994-95	5.48
1995-96	6.05
1996-07	5.9
1997-98	6.24
1998-99	6.2
1999-2000	6.28
2000-01	6.13
2001-02	6.41
2002-03	6.6
Private	Unstated
2003-03	10.07

Source: Moncrief, M., Dunn, A., & Alcorn, G. *Minister denies soaring abortion rate*. The Age: 10.11.04



Unpaid childcare

Table 23 shows that young women are twice as likely as young men to care for their own or other people's children. The caring that women do leads to lower pay when they do return to work and lower superannuation payouts. In 2006, payouts were expected to be \$130,000 for women and \$455,000 for men, according to the *Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia*¹⁸.

The huge disparity shown in Table 23, where 71% of the care of 'own children' is done by young women, compared to 29% by young men may be due to continuing gendered roles where women are seen as the nurturer and men as the breadwinner. However we know 57% of women return to work by the time the child is in their second year and 68% by the third year.¹⁹ Most women combine parenthood and paid work.

¹⁸ Corboy, A., 'System not super as women still lag on savings' September 29th 2007, The Age, <http://www.theage.com.au/news/business> (Accessed 21/11/2007)

¹⁹ www.democrats.org.au/campaigns/womens_rights_watch (Accessed 27.5.2008)

■ Table 23: *Unpaid childcare for women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	Own Child/ren n	%	Other Child/ren n	%	Both n	%
Young Males	515	29%	737	32%	13	15%
Young Females	1270	71%	1533	68%	71	85%
Total	1785	100%	2270	100%	84	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

Unpaid childcare provided by males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region

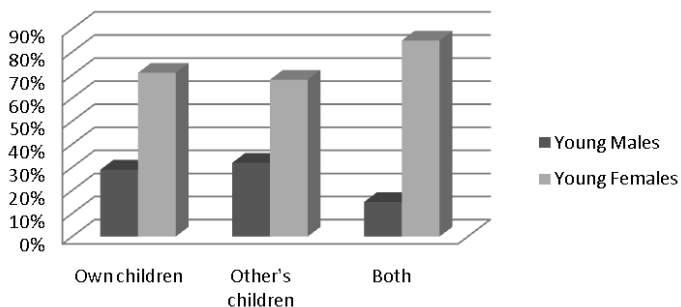


Table 24 shows that unpaid childcare is undertaken by Aboriginal women aged 15-24 at twice the rate of young men. This echoes the findings for all women aged 15-24 reported earlier. An interesting difference is that Aboriginal young men and women are equally likely to care both for their own and other people's children. This is in stark contrast to the broader population of 15-24 year olds which shows women are six times more likely to provide this care than young men.

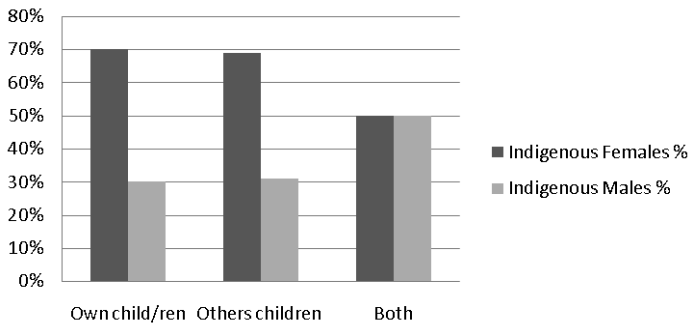
■ Table 24: *Unpaid childcare for Aboriginal young people aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	Own Child/ren n	%	Other Child/ren n	%	Both n	%
Aboriginal Males	33	30%	19	31%	3	50%
Aboriginal Females	77	70%	43	69%	3	50%
Total	110	100%	62	100%	6	100%

Source: ABS Census 2006. <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2007)

*Percentage from the total unpaid child care for own children, other peoples and both.

Unpaid childcare provided by Aboriginal males and females aged 15-24 in Hume region



Disability

There are 210 women aged 15-24 in the Hume region who are eligible for disability assistance, eight of whom are Aboriginal. Table 25 gives the proportion of young women who need assistance with core activities such as self care, mobility and communication. The table indicates that 1% of the general population of women aged 15-24 need assistance, and 2% of young Aboriginal women.

■ Table 25: Core activity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women aged 15-24 in the Hume region

	Non-Aboriginal young women		Aboriginal women	
	n	%	n	%
Need For Assistance	210	1%	8	2%
No Need For Assistance	15567	94%	413	93%
Not Stated	708	4%	16	4%
Total	15777	99%	421	99%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 20/09/2000)



Mental health

Mental health is critical to the general health and wellbeing of young women. Table 26 shows that depression and anxiety is the biggest mental health problem for 15-24 year olds in the Hume region, affecting 3.5% of this group (565 young women). This compares to 2% of the Australian population of 15-24 year old women experiencing depression and anxiety, and 3% experiencing social phobia.

■ Table 26: *Comparison of Mental Health incidents for females aged 15-24 in the Hume region and Australia wide

	Depress/Anxiety		Social Phobia		Bi-Polar Disorder	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Hume Region	528	3%	31	0%	17	0%
Aust Wide	29946	2%	42600	3%	2622	0%

Sources: ABS Census 2006, <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Accessed 9/11/2007); and Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing - Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

*Hume region percentages calculated from the total 15-24 female population in the Hume region and the Australian wide percentages are calculated from the total Australian population.



Suicide

According to the *Young Australians: Health and Wellbeing Report 2007*, 272 young people in Australia aged 12-24 committed suicide in 2004. This is a rate of 8 per 100,000 people aged 12-24. It accounts for 14% of all suicide deaths and 19% of all deaths for this age group in Australia in 2004. Suicide is the second highest cause of death for this age group (12-24) in Australia. These statistics do not include death by misadventure or when there is no evidence of suicide, although it is perhaps the most likely cause.

Suicide is associated with a range of factors, including mental illness and drug use, access to firearms and previous childhood abuse. In 2004, hanging, strangulation and suffocation were identified as the most used methods of suicide among young people (149 deaths or 55%); followed by poisoning (38 death or 18%); jumping from heights (26 deaths or 10%); and firearms (15 deaths or 6%)²⁰.

In 2004 the rate of suicide for males (12-24) was 11 per 100,000 and 4 per 100,000 for females.



Alcohol and other drugs²¹

There were no accurate and reliable statistics available for either alcohol use by young women in Hume region or 'other drug' use.

²⁰ : Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing- Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf> (Accessed: 10/09/2007)

²¹ No data on Other Drug use was available at Hume region level.



Violence and sexual assault

One in three women is sexually assaulted by the age of 18.²²

In the twelve months of 2006-7, 46 women aged 15-24 accessed the services of Upper Murray CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault) and 80 accessed Goulburn Valley CASA²³. According to Table 27 the rates of rape, sex (non rape)²⁴ and assault in this region²⁵ have decreased from 2005 to 2007. Rape has the lowest rate of recorded offences, followed by sex (non rape) with assault having the highest number of recorded offences²⁶. A possible explanation for this pattern is that many rapes are not reported and of those that are reported, many do not result in a recordable offence.

Over the years 2005-7 the number of recorded offences for rape have decreased from 88 to 75; sex (non-rape) crimes decreased from 337 to 272 and assault crimes reduced from 1685 to 1634.

While rates of crime between 2005-6 and 2006-7 are generally similar or have decreased for the three regions around Shepparton, Benalla, and Mitchell, the recorded offences of assault in Wangaratta have increased slightly from 285 to 298, and in Wodonga the recorded offences for sex (non rape) have almost doubled from 48 to 94.

■ Table 27a: *Summary of offences recorded for persons of all ages within the Hume region, 2005-2006, 2006-2007

	Rape		Sex (non rape)		Assault	
	2005-06	2006-07	2005-06	2006-07	2005-06	2006-07
	n	n	n	n	n	n
Great Shepparton	27	27	80	52	456	453
Benalla	13	15	62	30	240	177
Mitchell	15	8	73	66	337	341
Wangaratta	15	9	74	30	285	298
Wodonga	18	16	48	94	367	365
Total	88	75	337	272	1685	1634

Source: Victorian Police 2006/2007 Crime Statistics, Summary of offences recorded. Produced by Corporate Statistics, Victorian Police. Summary of offences recorded are sourced from Region 3 Division 4, Region 4 Division 4, Region 4 Division 5 within the Hume Region.

*Rates were calculated using estimate resident population figures as at 30.6.05 and 2006, obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS Cat. No. 3218.0). The percent change column is the % change in the rate per 100,000 population from 2005-06.

²² Fergusson, D. M., & Mullen, P. E. (1999). 'The prevalence of sexual abuse during childhood'. In D. M. Fergusson & P. E. Mullen (Eds), *Childhood sexual abuse: An evidence based perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp. 13-34.

²³ Data provided over the phone by Upper Murray Center Against Sexual Assault 22/11/2007 and Goulburn Valley Center Against Sexual Assault 27/11/2007.

²⁴ The definition of 'Sex (non-rape)' is all crimes of a sexual nature where there is no charge of rape. (Advised by Victoria Police 27.11.07)

²⁵ Police districts include all shires within Hume region except Moira which is connected to another shire.

²⁶ Victorian Police 2006/2007 Crime Statistics, Summary of offences recorded. Produced by Corporate Statistics, Victorian Police.

■ Table 27b: *Summary of offences recorded for males and females of all ages within the Hume region 2006-2007

	Males n	Females n
Homicide	5	4
Rape	8	70
Sex (non-rape)	40	225
Robbery	27	7
Assault	1043	735
Abduction	2	4

Source: Victorian Police 2006/2007 Crime Statistics, Offences Against the Person Recorded by Sex. Produced by Corporate Statistics, Victorian Police. For Region 3 Division 4, Region 4 Division 4, Region 4 Division 5 within the Hume Region.

Young women aged 12-20 in Australia experience violence in everyday activities, which may lead to further patterns of violence throughout their lives. Table 28 summarises national research conducted in 1999 by *Partnerships Against Domestic Violence*. It shows that 80% of women aged 12-20 have experienced bitching; 59% have engaged in physical fights with siblings; and 46% have experienced bullying. Experiences of bullying for young women in this age group was similar to that of young males.

A total of 18% of young women have experienced punch ups at school and/or college, while 10% have engaged in drunken fights in pubs and/or clubs.

It is of great concern that 16% of women 12-20 have experienced domestic violence; 14% have experienced rape or sexual assault; and 10% have experienced racial violence.

■ Table 28: The experience of violence of young people aged 12-20 - Australia wide

	Total sample %	Females %	Males %
*Bitching			
I've experienced this	61	80*	42
Someone I know has experienced this	33	30	36*
No, not experienced	15	6	24*
Physical fights between siblings			
I've experienced this	59	59	59
Someone I know has experienced this	27	30*	23
No, not experienced	21	20	22
Bullying			
I've experienced this	51	46	56*
Someone I know has experienced this	41	47*	36
No, not experienced	14	14	14
Punch ups between people at school/college			
I've experienced this	35	18	51*
Someone I know has experienced this	49	59*	40
No, not experienced	18	24*	13
Drunken fights in pubs/clubs			
I've experienced this	16	10	22*
Someone I know has experienced this	38	43*	33
No, not experienced	44	46*	43
Domestic Violence			
I've experienced this	15	16	15
Someone I know has experienced this	32	36*	29
No, not experienced	51	49	53*
Racial Violence			
I've experienced this	14	10	17*
Someone I know has experienced this	34	30*	23
No, not experienced	51	20	22
Rape/Sexual Assault			
I've experienced this	9	14*	3
Someone I know has experienced this	26	33*	20
No, not experienced	63	54	72*

Source: Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (1999) Young people and domestic violence: National research on young people's attitudes and experiences of domestic violence. Fact Sheet. [http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/\(1E76C1D5D1A37992F0B0C1C4DB87942E\)~Young+people+and+domestic+violence.pdf/\\$file/Young+people+and+domestic+violence.pdf](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/(1E76C1D5D1A37992F0B0C1C4DB87942E)~Young+people+and+domestic+violence.pdf/$file/Young+people+and+domestic+violence.pdf) (Accessed 27.5.2008)

*Significantly different to results for other gender at 95% confidence level.

'Bitching' is a term in common use among young people and refers to malicious gossip.



Injuries

Within the Hume region there appears to be a considerable number of unintentional injuries compared to intentional injuries. A reason for this may be that people choose **not** to report intentional injuries because there is an element of shame attached to violence or self-harm injuries. Instead, people may attribute their injuries to falls or other unintentional causes.

Table 29 shows that Unintentional Injury incidents occur far more frequently, at 5.5%, than both Falls at 1% and Intentional Injuries at 0.7%. The estimated incidence of all injuries for the total Hume region is 7%, with 2% occurring in Shepparton and 1.3% in Wodonga, followed by Mitchell at 1% and Wangaratta at .9%, reflecting higher population in these LGAs.

■ Table 29: Incident of Injuries to women aged 15-24 in LGAs within the Hume region

	Unintentional		Intentional		Falls		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alpine	42	0.25%	6	0.03%	8	0.04%	56	0.32%
Shepparton	247	1.5%	37	0.2%	49	0.3%	333	2%
Indigo	45	0.3%	7	0.05%	9	0.05%	61	0.4%
Mitchell	112	0.7%	17	0.1%	23	0.15%	152	1%
Moira	86	0.5%	12	0.07%	18	0.1%	106	0.7%
Murrindindi	38	0.2%	6	0.03%	8	0.04%	52	0.3%
Strathbogie	29	0.15%	0	0.00%	6	0.03%	35	0.2%
Towong	15	0.1%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	15	0.1%
Wangaratta	106	0.65%	16	0.1%	21	0.12%	143	0.9%
Wodonga	170	1%	25	0.15%	23	0.14%	218	1.3%
Total Hume	890	5.5%	126	0.7%	165	1%	1171	7%

Source: Burden of Disease estimates 2001. <http://hns.dhs.vic.gov.au/bodw/bodw/HomProcess.asp> (Accessed: 12/10/2007)



Injury among young Australians

A 2008 report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, states that:²⁷

- Transport accidents and suicide are the two leading causes of injury death among young people.
- Injury as a whole was responsible for two-thirds of all deaths of young people aged 12 to 24 years in 2005, and for one in six hospitalisations.
- Transport accidents were responsible for 44% of injury deaths and 20% of injury hospitalisations in this age group. Suicides accounted for 32% of injury deaths.
- Injury remained the major cause of death despite a halving of injury death rates over the two decades to 2005 due mostly to a 70% decrease in transport accident deaths and to a modest fall in suicide deaths over the same period.
- Hospitalisation rates for intentional self-harm among young people increased by 43% between 1996 and 2006. The increase was much greater for young women (a 51% increase) than for young men (a 27% increase).
- Hospitalisation rates for intentional self-harm were more than twice as high for young women than for young men, however young men have a suicide rate almost four times that of young women.
- Assault hospitalisation rates for young people have also risen, by more than 25% between 1996 and 2006.
- Young people accounted for one third of all hospitalisations and one in seven deaths from assault.

Hospitalisation and death rates from injury increase with remoteness and socioeconomic disadvantage.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people had considerably higher rates of death and hospitalisation due to injury than other young Australians. The hospitalisation rate for assault was six times as high.



Health

The health and wellbeing of women aged 15-24 is dependent on many social factors. Important among these are: access to affordable housing; enough income to maintain a healthy sustainable life; and access to education.

²⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2008). Injury Among Young Australians. <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2008/mr20080604.cfm> (Accessed June 4, 2008)

Two major contributors to the health and wellbeing of young women are geography and culture. Young women in the Hume region predominantly live in rural areas and this affects the opportunities they have to access appropriate housing, well paid jobs and tertiary education.

Further limitations can be experienced by specific cultural populations.²⁸ For example, life expectancy rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is around 20 years lower than for non-Aboriginal people.

As statistical data available on 15-24 year old women in the Hume region is limited, we have drawn on statistics from the *Young Australian: health and wellbeing survey 2007*, to allow for a stronger understanding of the issues for young women in Australia generally.

Sexual health

Sexual health statistics for women 15-24 in the Hume region were not able to be sourced. The *Young Australians: health and wellbeing survey 2007* has provided statistics for young women in this age group for the whole of Australia²⁹.

Chlamydia is the most common Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) among young people 12-24 years; and in particular among young women. The figure of chlamydia notifications in 2005 was more than four times higher in females than males. The notification rate has been steadily increasing over time, particularly between 2001 and 2005 when it almost doubled from 470 to 980 estimated notifications per 100,000.

In 2005 there were 2,791 notifications among young Aboriginal people, a rate of 2,067 per 100,000. This accounted for 13% of all chlamydia notifications for young people for that year.

The increase in chlamydia notifications overall could be due to increased awareness and diagnosis, but also may be due to increased sexual activity in the 12-24 age group; engaging in unprotected sex; or changing sexual partners³⁰.

There were 2,212 **syphilis** notifications in Australia, 14% of which were for young people aged 12-24 (315 notifications). The notifications for this age group are low and decreasing. The rate of notification of syphilis for young people in 1995 was 18 per 100,000 and by 2005 this had declined to 8 per 100,000.

²⁸ Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing- Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007.

²⁹ Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing- Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007, <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

³⁰ Op. cit..

There were 177 notifications of Syphilis among the young Aboriginal population, accounting for 56% of the total rate for young people 2005. This has decreased between 2002 and 2005 from 187 to 131 per 100,000 respectively³¹.

Gonococcal infection notifications among young Australians in 2005 totalled 3,564 - rate of 93 per 100,000. Gonococcal infection among young people accounted for 43% of the total notifications in Australia in 2005. The infection is evenly distributed amongst males and females. The notification rates for gonococcal infection have been steadily increasing, with a two-fold increase for young people between 1995 and 2005.

Gonococcal infection notifications among young Aboriginal people occurred at a rate of 1,699 per 100,000³². Table 30 shows the rates of sexually transmitted illness among young Aboriginal people.

■ Table 30: *Notification rate (per 100,000) of STIs for young Aboriginal people 12-24 years 2002-2005

	2002		2003		2004		2005	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Chlamydia	2210	54%	2708	56%	2879	56%	2791	53%
Syphilis	347	8%	290	6%	227	4%	177	3%
Gonococcal	1530	37%	1853	38%	2029	40%	2294	44%
Total	4087	100%	4851	100%	5135	100%	5262	100%

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing- Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007 <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf> (Accessed 10/10/2007)

*Percentage calculated from *Young Australians : their health and wellbeing figures 2007*.



In 2005 there were 93 HIV notifications for people aged 12-24 - a rate of 2.5 per 100,000. Only 15 of the 93 notifications were for females. The notification rate of young women fluctuated for the decade of 1995-2005, with a top of 1.6 per 100,000 in 2004³³.

³¹ Op. cit.

³² Op. cit.

³³ Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing: *Young Australians - their health and wellbeing, 2007* [Http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf) (Accessed: 10/10/2007)

Australia-wide, there were 3,948 hospitalisations for asthma among those aged 12-24 years - a rate of 109 incidents per 100,000. Overall, females were 1.5 times more likely to be admitted than males of the same age between 1996-97 to 2004-05³⁴.

Among young people in 2004, there were 14 deaths due to asthma, accounting for less than 1% of all deaths. Since 1995, deaths from asthma has almost halved for the age group according to the *Young Australians: Health and Wellbeing survey 2007*³⁵.

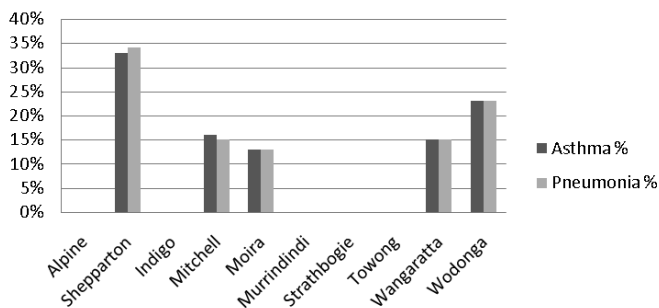
Table 31 shows that within the Hume region in 2001 the estimated incidents of respiratory problems for women aged 15-24 appear to be quite low. The higher proportions in Shepparton and Wodonga reflect the higher populations in those parts of the region.

■ Table 31: Respiratory hospitalisation of women aged 15-24 in the Hume region by LGA's

	Asthma		Pneumonia	
	n	%	n	%
Alpine	0	0%	0	0%
Shepparton	20	33%	16	34%
Mitchell	10	16%	7	15%
Moira	8	13%	6	13%
Murrindindi	0	0%	0	0%
Strathbogie	0	0%	0	0%
Towong	0	0%	0	0%
Wangaratta	9	15%	7	15%
Wodonga	14	23%	11	23%
Indigo	0	0%	0	0%
Total	61	100%	47	100%

Source: Burden of Disease Estimates 2001. <http://hns.dhs.vic.gov.au/bodw/bodw/HomProcess.aso> (Accessed 10.10.2007)

Respiratory hospitalisations for 15-24 year old women in Hume region



³⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing- Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2007 [Http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aus/yathaw07/yathaw07-co2.pdf) (Accessed: 10/10/2007)

³⁵ Op. cit.

According to the *Young Australians Health and Wellbeing survey 2007*, 58% of people aged 18-24 in Australia reported annual dental consultations. When asked the last time they had seen a dentist, 53% stated within the last 12 months, 14% stated within 2-5 years and 11% reported 5 years ago or more³⁶.

Table 32 shows a decrease in the percentage of **reported** incidents of dental caries over a 10 year period and this has occurred across all LGAs. This decrease is especially so in Shepparton (by 17%), followed by Wodonga (by 12%) then Wangaratta by (9%).

The decrease in reported incidence of dental caries ostensibly suggests that oral health for women aged 15-24 in the Hume region has improved. However, it seems unlikely that this is due to improved dental health. A possible explanation for this could be the minimal access to dental care by young people in rural areas, and long waiting lists for public dental clinics. Wangaratta has a four year waiting list and Wodonga has a three year waiting list.

■ Table 32: Incidents of dental caries for women aged 18-24 in the Hume region by LGA's

	Dental Caries 1996		Dental Caries 2001	
	n	%	n	%
Alpine	659	4%	167	1%
Delatite	1091	7%	271	2%
Shepparton	3867	23%	912	6%
Indigo	699	4%	179	1%
Mitchell	1697	10%	433	3%
Moira	1495	9%	328	2%
Murrindindi	613	4%	151	1%
Strathbogie	415	3%	110	1%
Wangaratta	1763	11%	401	2%
Wodonga	2586	16%	618	4%
Total	14885	90%	3570	22%

Source: Burden of Disease estimates 2001. <http://hns.dhs.vic.gov.au/bodw/bodw/HomProcess.asp> (Accessed: 12/10/2007)

³⁶ Op. cit..



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