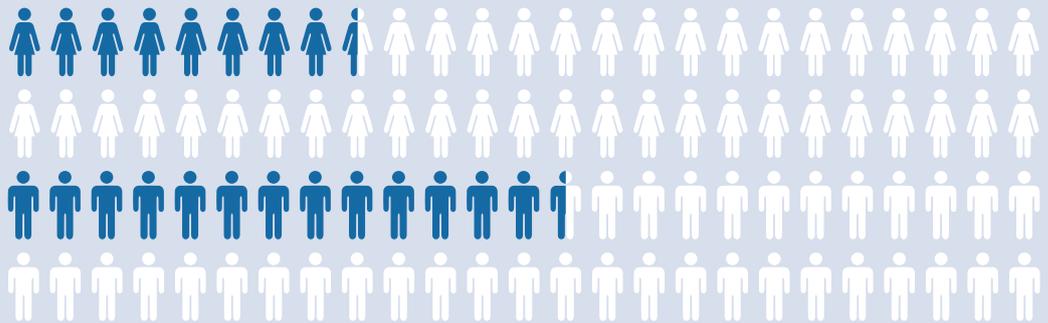


## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT

# Disengaged Youth and ACE



Approximately 13% of young women and 20% of young men fail to complete school or a vocational equivalent.



Of those who don't complete, significant proportions are:

- 1) **Indigenous young people and/or**
- 2) **from rural and remote areas and / or**
- 3) **from low socio-economic status areas.**

Early school leavers often face multiple layers of need including homelessness, disconnection from families and community, learning or behavioural difficulties and illnesses such as mental illness and addiction.

### TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

Australia, like other western developed countries, is grappling with the implications of widespread economic and social changes.

There are fewer work opportunities for low-skilled manual workers and more pressure on young people to attain the skills required in the 'new economy'. These include high level literacy, numeracy and digital communication skills.

Young Australians have good literacy levels relative to older Australians and their skills are comparable to those in other OECD countries. However, there are significant disparities between young people from high and low socio-economic backgrounds and between those from rural and regional areas and their urban contemporaries and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people. Young Australians' numeracy levels show signs of falling below the level of other OECD countries.

### ACE AS A PATHWAY TO REENGAGEMENT

Adult community education (ACE) provides an avenue through which disengaged young people can re-engage in education. The young people who enrol in ACE programs generally have no or few qualifications and, in many cases, have not completed school. They may be unemployed, under-employed, or in low-paid or insecure jobs.

Young people who take part in ACE programs say they are attracted by the quality of relationships between staff and students, flexibility in the mode of delivery and opportunities for personal autonomy.

The physical environment of ACE is also a factor in its success with this cohort. A level of anxiety may continue to be felt once the learner has made the decision to take on some study. The physical setting can help to ease this anxiety if it is easy to access, warm and welcoming, relaxed and non-threatening – in other words, unlike the schools that many students remember.

### READ THE FULL REPORT

[https://ala.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Disengaged-youth-paper\\_WEB.pdf](https://ala.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Disengaged-youth-paper_WEB.pdf)



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