

City of Ipswich

A city for children, young people and families

Policy Background Paper – October 2019



What's possible when we dream
together for a city for all children,
young people and families?



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OPENING THE DISCUSSION

Ipswich City Council is developing a new policy for children, young people and families. We want it to be shaped by a diversity of voices from across Ipswich.

Our Corporate Plan 2017-2022 commits to incorporating the needs of the city's growing child and youth population with a new policy that aligns to the UNICEF principles of a Child Friendly City.

This document provides further information about the principles and elements that help to make a child, youth and family friendly city. These are principles of an inclusive city, that promote safe and healthy development and that place the best interests of children, young people and families at the heart of matters that affect them¹.

Over the coming months, council will be seeking input from the city's children and young people, families and carers, community members, educators and service providers. We want to hear what things you think help to make Ipswich a child, youth and family friendly city.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN IPSWICH?

Ipswich is Queensland's oldest provincial city and home to a young and fast growing population. The city has more 50,000 family households (representing 72% of the total household mix in Ipswich, higher than the Queensland average of 65%)².

More than one third of Ipswich households were made up of couples with children in 2016 (33% above 29% for Queensland), while 15% were single parent family households (above 11% for Queensland)³.

Ipswich continues to defy state and national trends with its notably younger population: a median age of 32 years (compared to Queensland's median of 37 and Australia's of 38).

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'CHILDREN' AND 'YOUNG PEOPLE' AND 'FAMILIES'*?

Children aged under 12 years, including:

- 0-4 years: babies and pre-schoolers
- 5-11 years: young children, primary schoolers

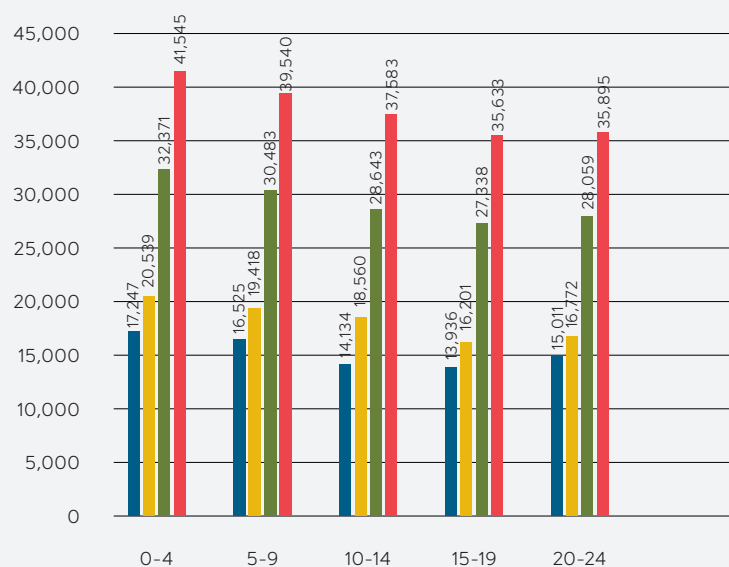
Young people aged 12-24 years, including:

- 12-17 years: teenagers, secondary schoolers
- 18-24 years: young adults who may live independently and who may work, take part in study or training, or be unemployed

Families:

When we refer to families, we're talking about people that are related, whether biologically, or through marriage, adoption, step, foster or informal care arrangements.

When families also include children, a number of adults can play a role in the child's life and care. This could include parents, carers, grandparents, step-parents, aunts and uncles, foster parents, adoptive parents, or any other person a child identifies as their family.



* definitions adapted from ABS 2016, Ipswich .id Community Profile and Relationships Australia (2019).

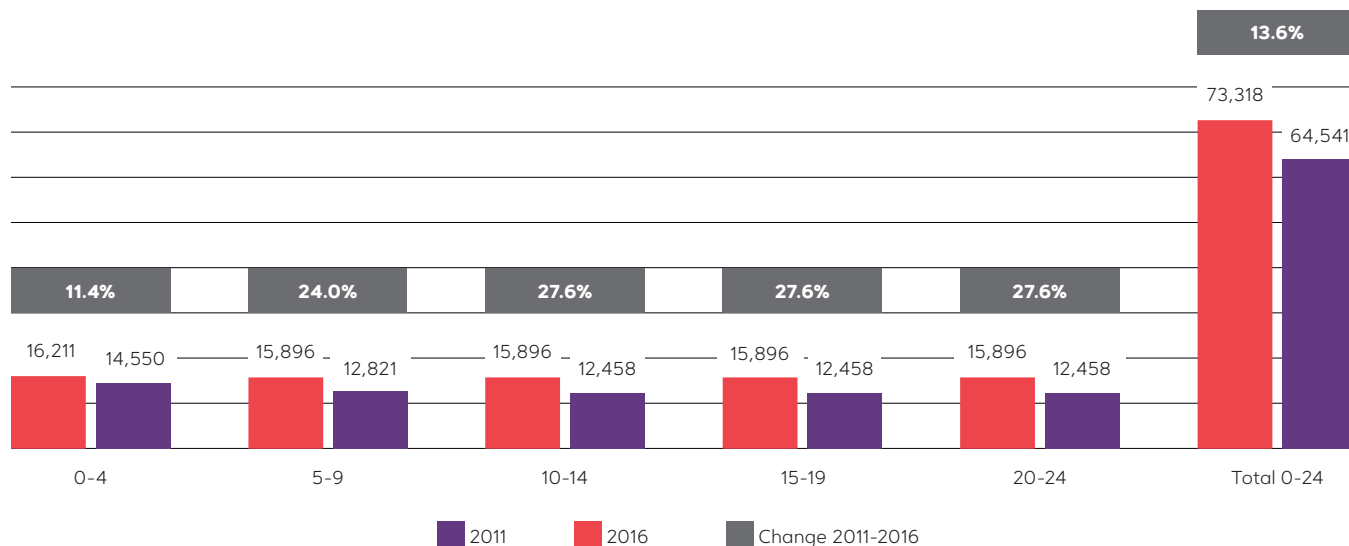
¹ UNICEF 2019, Guiding principles

² .id profile. Ipswich Community Profile

³ Ipswich City Council, Our Community: Demographic Profile of Ipswich (2016)

In 2016, almost two in every five Ipswich residents were aged under 25 years (38%)⁴. The city's population under 25 has increased at more than three times Queensland's rate since 2011 (rising 14% compared to 4%).

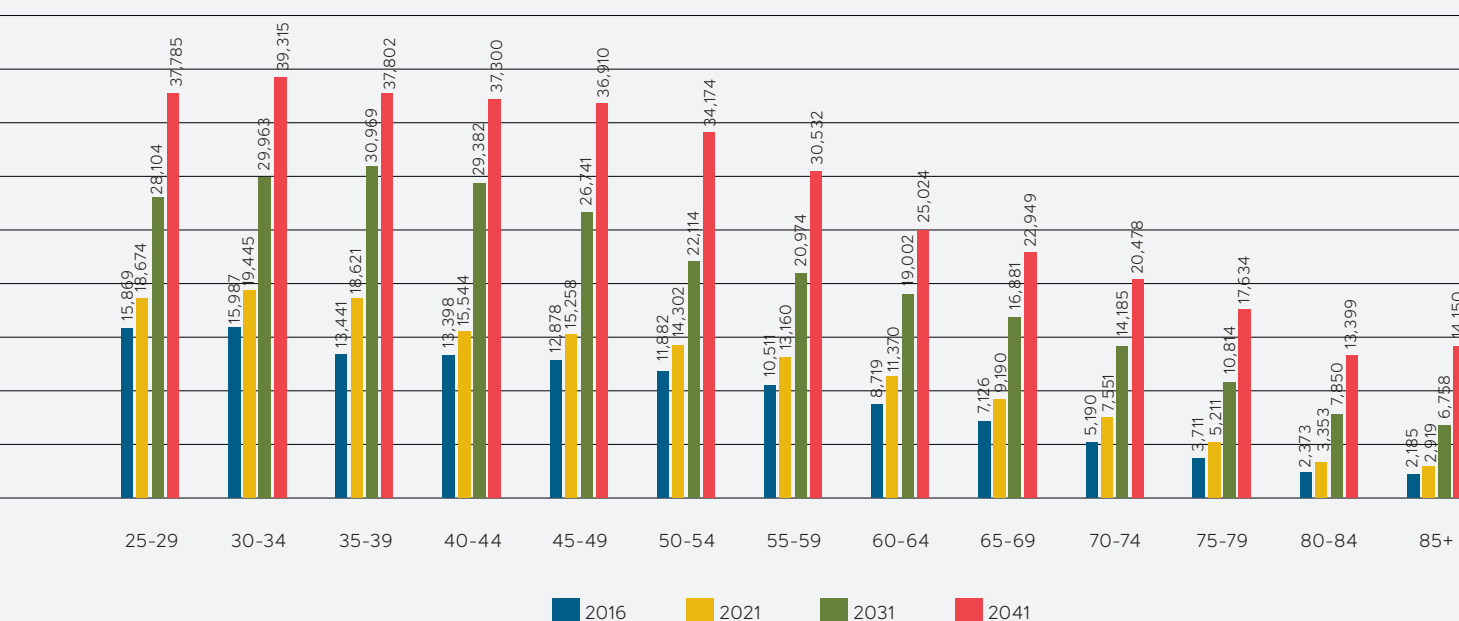
Children and young people (under 25 years) 2011-16 population change (%)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 and 2016 Census of Population and Housing, Table Builder, Ipswich LGA

Over the twenty-five year period from 2016 to 2041, the city's young population is projected to more than double (increasing by 149%, compared to a total city growth rate of 179% over the same period).

2016-2041 Population projections, Ipswich LGA

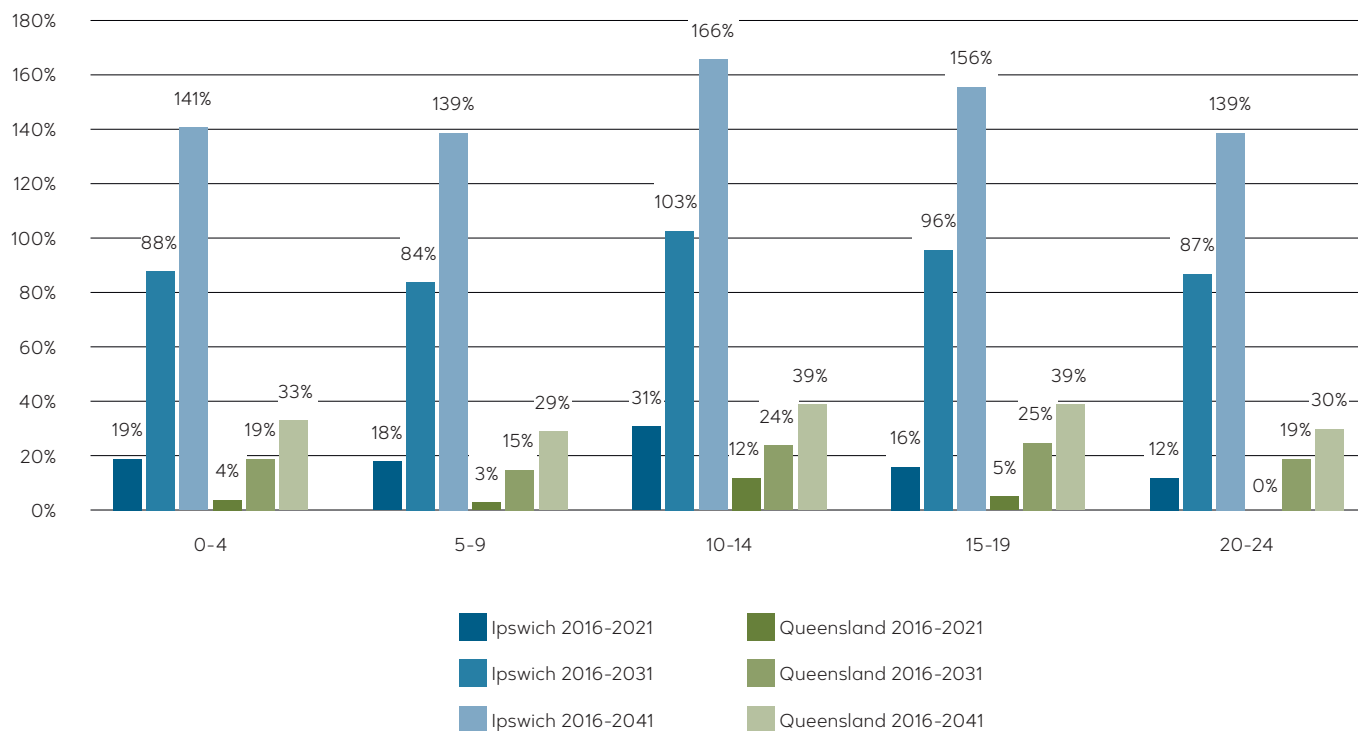


Source: Queensland Government population projections, 2018 edition; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2016 (Cat no. 3235.0), Ipswich LGA

⁴ Ipswich City Council, Our Community: Demographic Profile of Ipswich (2016)

The strongest projected growth within the population under 25 years will occur in the age groups 10-14 years (increasing 166% by 2041) and 15-19 years (increasing 156% over the same period).

Under 25s population growth rate Ipswich LGA and QLD (2016-2041)



Source: Queensland Government population projections, 2018 edition; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by age and sex, regions of Australia, 2016 (Cat no. 3235.0), Ipswich LGA

WHAT THINGS HELP TO MAKE A CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY FRIENDLY CITY?

Ipswich City Council's policy and next steps will reflect the UNICEF principles for a Child Friendly City (CFC), and build on the good work already happening in Ipswich.

UNICEF's CFC is a global initiative created in response to the rapid development of cities, and a growing emphasis on enhancing community quality of life at a local level⁵. There is growing research to show that the physical, economic, social and cultural dimensions of a city all strongly impact the development, happiness and long-term outcomes of its residents, and particularly children and young people as they grow up⁶.

Recent literature commends the UNICEF initiative for promoting healthy, active lifestyles and independent mobility (e.g. walking or cycling the neighbourhood without need for adult accompaniment), which are important to all aspects of their development.

A recent report from Arup identifies a number of challenges for children and young people as they grow up in cities and urban areas, which would need to be explored in the local context of Ipswich.⁷ These challenges include traffic, urban sprawl, crime, social fears and risk aversion, isolation and intolerance, and inadequate or unequal access to the city⁸. The report notes that where cities don't adequately consider the needs of children and young people, they run the risk of families and households being less engaged or invested in their neighbourhoods and city⁹.

UNICEF describes a CFC as one where children (and young people):¹⁰

- have a good start in life and grow up healthy and cared for
- are protected from violence and abuse
- have access to quality social services
- experience quality, inclusive and participatory education and skills development
- express their opinions and influence decisions that affect them
- participate in family, cultural, city/community and social life
- live in a safe secure and clean environment with access to green spaces
- meet friends and have places to play and enjoy themselves
- have a fair chance in life, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or ability.

Families are better able to take advantage of services when they are supported by well-designed policies and programs that help to reduce stress.¹²

These factors are helping to shape Ipswich City Council's conversations with local families, community members and services about strengths and opportunities in Ipswich.

⁵ UNICEF, 2004. Building a Child Friendly City: A Framework for Action

⁶ Gleeson and Woolcock, 2007; Lenzen and Cummins, 2013; PIA 2007; Badland et al 2014

⁷ Arup, 2017

⁸ Arup, 2017; Laker, L. The Guardian, 2018

⁹ Arup, 2017, Cities Alive: Designing for urban childhoods

¹⁰ UNICEF 2019, What is a Child Friendly City?

¹¹ Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2010; Zubrick et al, 2008; AEDI, 2018

¹² Queensland Family and Child Commission, 2019; Harvard University, Centre on the Developing Child, 2019

NEXT STEPS AND QUESTIONS

Creating a child, youth and family friendly city of Ipswich is a shared, community-wide responsibility.

Ipswich City Council also plays an important role. As we develop this policy we want to reflect the aspirations of our city's children and young people, families and carers, services, educators and community members.

You can join this important discussion a number of ways:

COME TO A WORKSHOP!

We invite you to bring your experience and ideas to one of two free workshops during National Children's Week in October 2019. We're seeking active participation from everyone this policy will impact – children and young people, families and carers, local educators and service providers.

Thursday 24 October 2019

Queens Park Environmental Education Centre

Register at:

<https://cyff-queenspark.eventbrite.com.au>

Saturday 26 October 2019

Springfield Library

Register at:

<https://cyff-springfield.eventbrite.com.au>

JOIN THE CONVERSATION ONLINE!

Ipswich City Council will be hosting this consultation online through Shape Your Ipswich (www.shapeyouripswich.com.au).

HOST AN ACTIVITY DURING NATIONAL CHILDREN'S WEEK 19-27 OCTOBER 2019

If you're local educator, service provider or community group planning an event during Children's Week, we would love to hear about it.

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APPENDIX A: THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A CHILD FRIENDLY CITY

The guiding principles for a child-friendly city mirror the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and include:

Non-discrimination	The rights of all children are respected, without discrimination of any kind.
Best interests of the child	The best interests of children are a primary consideration in decisions that affect them, with the government assuring the care and protection necessary for their wellbeing.
Survival, development and protection	Children have the right to life, with the government committed to ensuring the maximum extent possible, their right to survival and healthy development.
Participation	Children have the right to voice their opinions and have these be taken into account in decisions that affect them.
Equity and inclusion	A child-friendly-city aims to create equal opportunities for all children which means identifying the most marginalised and vulnerable children, the barriers to inclusion that they face, and removing these barriers.
Accountability and transparency	Clearly identifying who is responsible for each aspect of implementation and holding them accountable. Transparency calls for clarity and openness in the decision-making process.
Public participation	Building a child-friendly city requires having a system in place to facilitate public participation in decision-making to promote local accountability for children's rights.
Effectiveness and responsiveness	Building a child-friendly city requires that governments undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures to implement child rights to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation. The process is responsive to the needs of the children and families affected.
Adaptability and sustainability	Building a child-friendly city requires a flexible management approach in order to be able to anticipate and respond to changing circumstances and be sustainable over time.

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