



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES STRATEGY

Engagement summary

1 July-12 August 2024

WE ASKED

Through an online survey, we asked our community how Council can better support children and families, and what's missing or could be improved for children and families in Lake Mac.

Survey respondents were also asked how much they agreed with the following statements:

- I can play sport and access play spaces (e.g. skate parks, playgrounds, swim centres)
- I love where I live and I feel safe where I live
- I know what's happening where I live
- I have a say in the things that matter to me
- I know what Council does and what they offer
- There are learning and development opportunities for children under five
- My family and I can get the help we need.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Your feedback will help inform our updated Children and Families Strategy, which is expected to be presented to Council for public exhibition in March 2025.

WE REACHED



667 visits to Council's online engagement platform, Shape Lake Mac



60 responses to our online survey



64,524 reached through Council's social media platforms



25,739 reached via Council's e-newsletters



Our survey was completed by children, parents, teachers, early childhood educators and residents from across Lake Macquarie City



I CAN PLAY SPORTS AND ACCESS PLAY SPACES (E.G. SKATE PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, SWIM CENTRES)

Most respondents agreed (66.67 per cent) or strongly agreed (22.22 per cent) with this statement.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"Playground could use a wheelchair swing."

"I would like to see more innovative play spaces for families including waterways and nature play in Lake Mac areas."

"Being able to access isn't the same thing as being able to utilise. Many play spaces are not inclusive of very small children (e.g. six months to two years)."



I LOVE WHERE I LIVE AND I FEEL SAFE WHERE I LIVE

Most respondents agreed (25 per cent) or strongly agreed (50 per cent) with this statement.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"Prefer my granddaughter not to walk to her friends place alone – too isolated and no footpaths."

"It's isolating [on the Morisset Peninsula]. We need a footpath around all of the lake so we can walk it without walking in boggy flooded sections."

"Don't have a police presence in our area."



I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING WHERE I LIVE

Most respondents were neutral (33.58 per cent) or agreed (33.58 per cent) with this statement.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"I usually find out about local events (e.g. what's on at Speers Point Park) from friends or social media not from any Council marketing or communications."

"In general, Council is very good at communicating. One thing that would be good is if we could 'opt in' for project updates."

"Generally through social media and community group pages."



I HAVE A SAY IN THE THINGS THAT MATTER TO ME

Most respondents were neutral (43.75 per cent) or agreed (25 per cent) with this statement.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"I try when I see an opportunity."

"Lake Mac does offer that the community has a say. It does appear [that] some areas are better listened to than others."

"I often see feedback requested but do not see it actually change what is implemented."



I KNOW WHAT COUNCIL DOES AND WHAT THEY OFFER

Responses to this statement were mixed – 21.05 per cent disagreed, 26.32 per cent were neutral and 31.58 per cent agreed.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"Not enough parent education."

"Mostly the information comes out when it's decided."

"I know that Council support sport more than they support the arts and they should be equal."



THERE ARE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Responses to this statement were mixed – 29.41 per cent disagreed, 27.45 per cent were neutral and 25.49 per cent agreed.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"We use our library for Read and Rhyme but it would be amazing to see more regular free activities for children."

"I have a child under five and am unsure of what is around our area for her."

"Looking for activities for my toddler granddaughter – I do find this very challenging."



MY FAMILY AND I CAN GET THE HELP WE NEED

Most respondents were neutral (35 per cent) or strongly disagreed (35 per cent) with this statement.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"Access to medical and health can be expensive along with long wait times for the public system."

"Extremely limited help for parents who have kids with mental health/neurodivergence and developmental problems."

"It would be great to have an urgent care facility like in Cessnock at Morisset."