



# Southwest PCP

YOUR PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIP

## Health and Wellbeing Trends for Great South Coast

October 2020

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This document provides an overview of health and wellbeing trends to support member agencies wellbeing planning across the Local Government Areas of Warrnambool, Moyne, Glenelg, Southern Grampians and Corangamite.

### Executive summary

#### Mental wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is in decline across our region with increasing proportions of our population having high or very high psychological distress. Lifetime prevalence increases indicate that this is a problem that can persist through life and is a problem that is getting worse.

#### Alcohol use

Adults across all three local government areas show well above average risk behaviours in relation to alcohol; both occasional incidents of drinking that lead to injury and consuming at a volume consistently that increases lifetime risk of harm. We also have well below state average proportion of abstainers from alcohol consumption.

#### Obesity

Population obesity rates continue to climb for adults while the combined rates of overweight and obesity remains stable but very high with two thirds of the population fitting this category. The proportion of children who are overweight or obese has also been stable over the last four years but is still higher than the metropolitan and state average.

#### Physical activity

Employed people in our regional LGAs are more likely to have work that involves heavy labour and less likely to be predominantly sitting than the State average. When viewing weekend sitting hours, the region tracks closely with the state average, whereas weekdays sitting hours shows Corangamite and Moyne Shires having lower rates than Warrnambool and the State average. Overall, the reduction in sedentary behaviour across LGA's is encouraging.

The volume of children not meeting state physical activity guidelines is high at ~80%, but interestingly, children meeting screen time guidelines is also high, but declining, as is active transport although it is coming from a high base level compared to metropolitan communities. Moyne is particularly low in the number of people registered for organised sports participation. Age data suggests parents are registering children for sports but not setting an example by participating themselves.

## Diet

Fruit consumption for adults is in decline as is vegetable consumption which was already at very low levels. Children's rates of fruit consumption are high and stable but vegetable consumption, like the adult population, is very low but remains stable. Take-away consumption is below state averages however there was a strong increase in Corangamite's rates which is of concern. Across the board reductions in consumption of Sugar Sweetened Beverages is commendable. It may be worth exploring whether rising costs are a significant contributing factor to low rates of consumption and appropriate strategies to address this factor.

## Early childhood development

There have been sharp increases in Corangamite for vulnerable and at-risk children in the areas of Physical Health and Wellbeing, Social and Emotional Competence. These jumps are far above state averages and are of concern. Progress in Language and Cognitive skills in Corangamite are to be commended. Amongst other indicators, AEDC indicators across South West Victoria are mostly in line with state averages.

The proportion of children in the SWPCP area on track with language and cognitive skills is not statistically different from the Victorian average.

Children who are vulnerable on two or more domains are steady or declining in South West LGAs except Corangamite, where rates are increasing. Glenelg children feature at high rates in many domains and therefore also are reflected in the combined figures.

## Risk and protective factors – Years 6, 8 and 10

The risk and protective factors shown from the **Communities That Care** research are based on high schools in Warrnambool. A large proportion of attendees at these schools come from all three LGAs in the South West PCP catchment. Additionally, data points for Southern Grampians Glenelg PCP originate from Portland, Heywood and Casterton schools only and are focused on drug and alcohol indicators. The data shown is for Year 8 children, however, the overall data for Year 6 and Year 10 survey participants show similar patterns. Overwhelmingly, the data is positive, where protective factors are increasing and risk factors are decreasing in the observed data. The only risk factors moving in the wrong direction were "Sensation Seeking" and "Rewards for anti-social behaviour" individually and amongst peers.

Alcohol supply in Warrnambool showed some worrying trends, although this was on a very small sample size and thus considered not statistically robust enough to report. For this reason, those results were not displayed.

## Children's health-related quality of life

The quality of life of a proportion of children in Corangamite and Glenelg, in comparison to other LGAs are impacted by social/emotional problems and/or are not coping at school.

## Education

The number of young people leaving school before Year 11 completion is low which is an encouraging sign, however, life after finishing school is proving troublesome as young people struggle to find opportunities to remain engaged with work and/or study

## Crime and Family Violence

Levels of crime remain stubbornly high across some areas of our region, particularly urbanised centres to a large degree. The proportion of family violence unsurprisingly is skewed towards women as affected family members in a ratio approaching 3:1.

## Notes on the Data

Data referenced as *GLOBE* have been verified by the authors and kept on a 0-100 scale at their request for consistency of visualisation. Data points may vary from those previously released, as the data in this report is same school equalised and ICSEA adjusted (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage)

Data referenced as AEDC have been taken directly from source data and displayed on a 0-30% scale for clarity as the target subset of population is small.

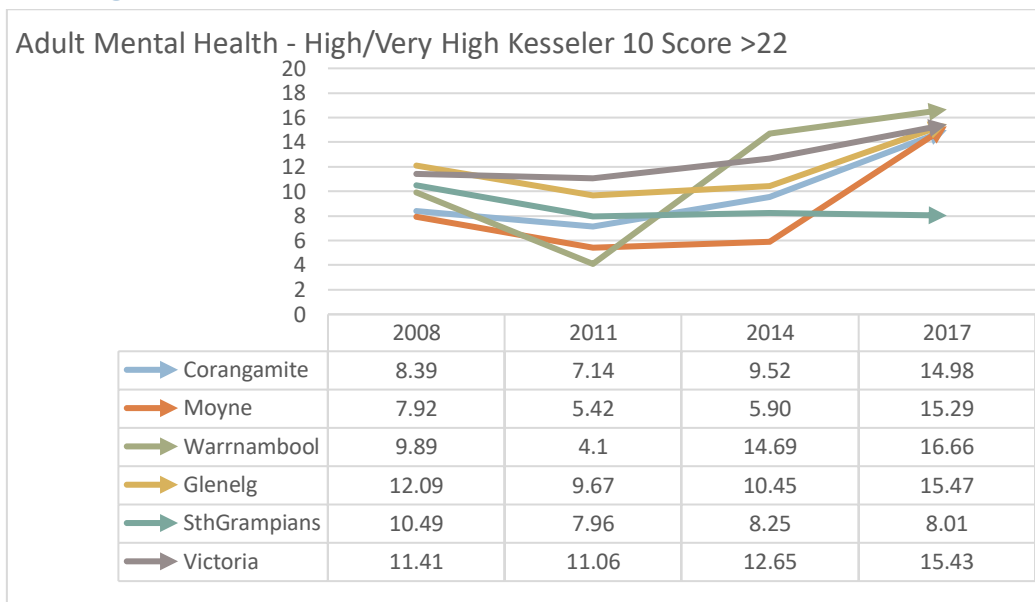
Data referenced as VPHS have been taken from the survey series 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017 and scales are usually 0-40% but can vary based on the indicator selected.

Unfortunately, updated reports of the VicHealth Indicators Survey of 2015 are unavailable but is due to be repeated in 2020-21 by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Data points in the previous version of this report for Risk and Protective Factors at 2006 from the work of Communities That Care have been discarded. The research team advised that changing cut points and definitions in the 9 years between 2006 and 2015 make them incomparable without significant re-analysis of the data. Only 2015 and 2017 data are shown. For Southern Grampians/Glenelg PCP area schools, alcohol and drug statistics are observed as 2014 and the 2020 data point is a target only.

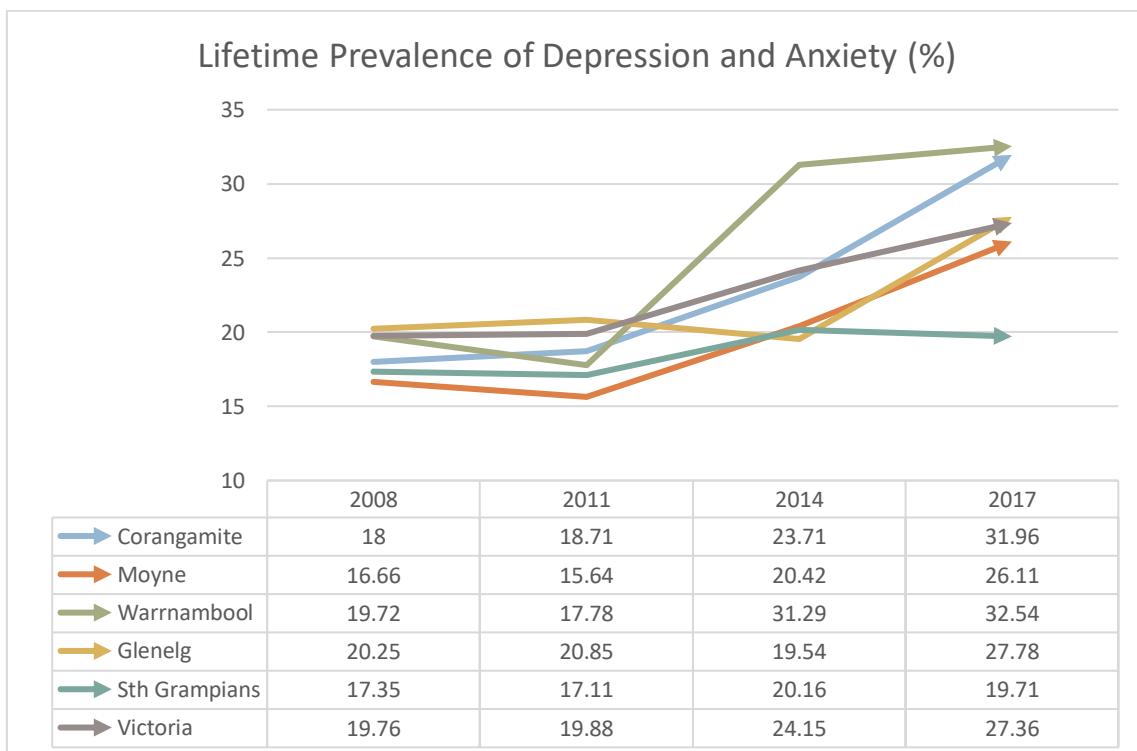
Alcohol and Harm - Note that changes to guidelines at a national level in 2012, have resulted in a break in longitudinal data for a number of alcohol related indicators, therefore, 2008 and 2011 data points cannot be included.

## Mental wellbeing



All adults were previously below the state average for high and very high distress except for Glenelg. Warrnambool jumped above the average in 2014 and has remained above state average. Both Moyne and Corangamite were far below until a sharp increase into 2017. Glenelg has followed the same trajectory as Moyne by trending up since 2014, while Southern Grampians is the LGA to remain flat or declining. From a low in 2011, regional issues such as the dairy crisis and bushfire events may have added significantly to adverse mental health outcomes. A rising state average also suggests over-arching societal factors contribute.

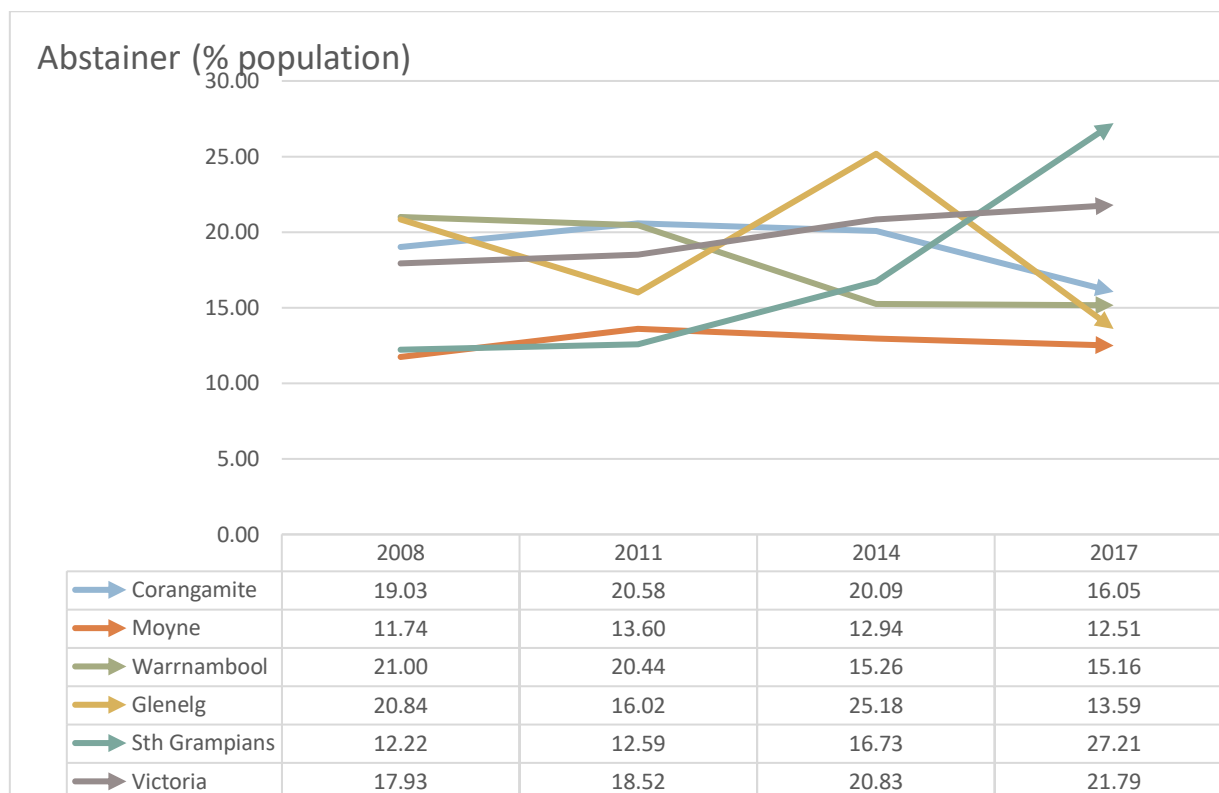
Source - VPHS



Rates of Lifetime Prevalence of Depression and Anxiety have risen with, and have now surpassed, similar rises in the state average. Corangamite has jumped significantly between 2014 and 2017. This is likely a combined effect of the ongoing dairy crisis and recent bushfire events that severely impacted that specific region. Southern Grampians is the only LGA to display a deviation from this upward trend.

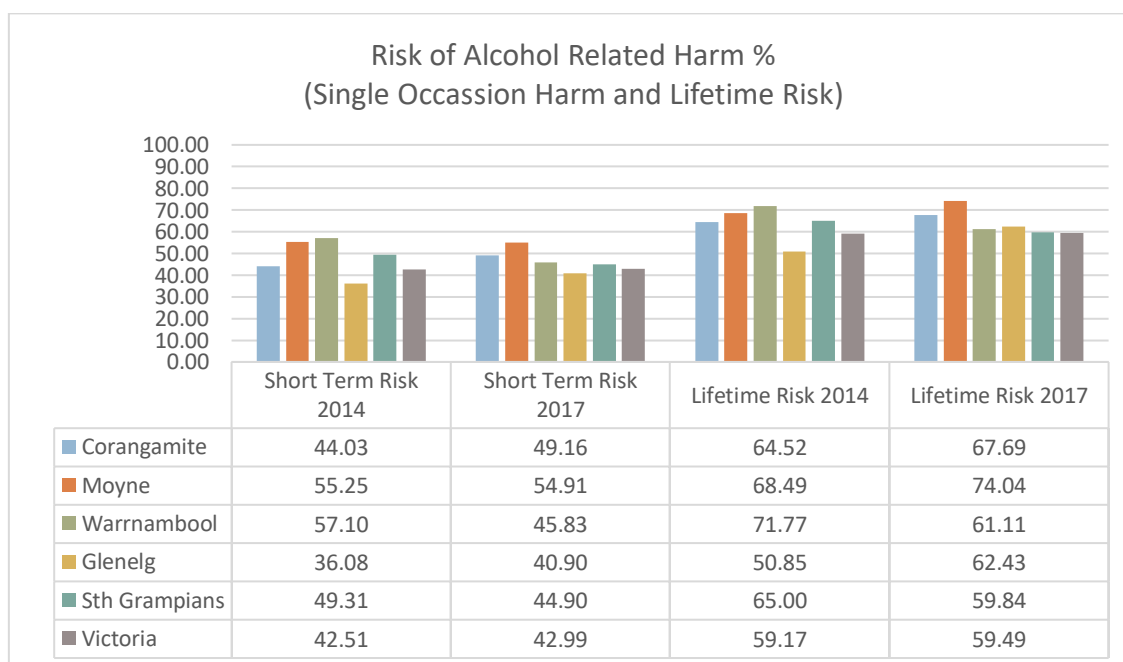
Source - VPHS

## Alcohol related harm



While the volume of abstainers across the state increases, the numbers across our region continue to fall. Sharp falls in Corangamite and Warrnambool across the time span are of concern. Of particular concern is Moyne, which remains significantly below the state average over the long term. All three LGA's are against the state average trend suggesting a cultural or societal driver in this region. Glenelg has had a dramatic decrease in abstainers while Southern Grampians has an increasing and accelerating rate of abstinence.

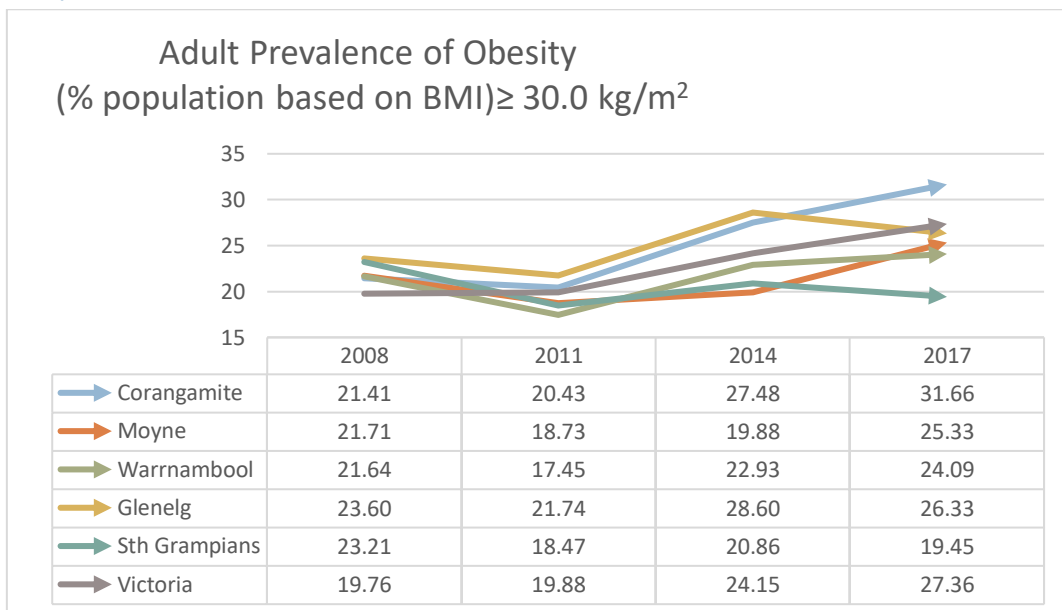
Source - VPHS



Alcohol related harm on both long-term and short-term indicators remain significantly above state averages. Significant declines towards the average in Warrnambool from 2014 to 2017 are particularly positive. Problems persist in our regional and rural LGAs which may suggest a cultural issue in consumption pattern and locality (ie: consumption at work "knock off drinks", rural sports clubs etc as opposed to town-based pubs and clubs)

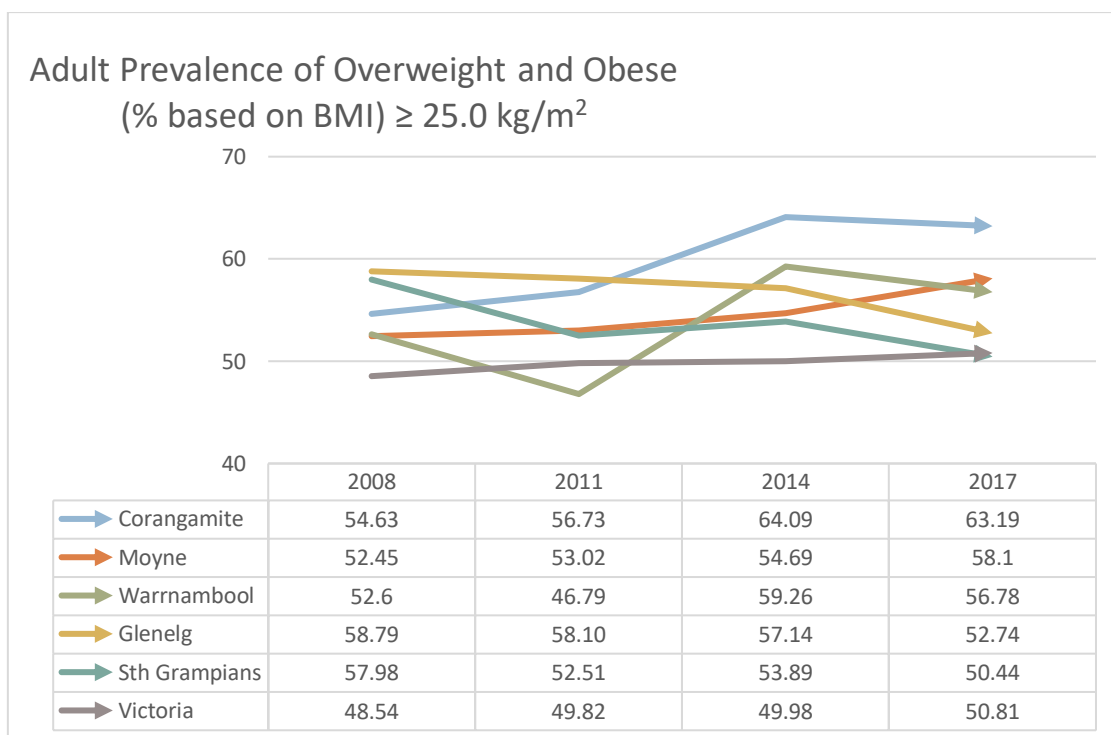
Source VPHS

## Adult Obesity



Corangamite are now above the state average but increasing at a similar rate as Moyne. Warrnambool has shown some arrest in the rate of increase to be below state average but still following the upward trend. Persistence of the trends over 6 years from 2011 represent an unfortunate strength in cultural and societal poor relationship with food. Southern Grampians and Glenelg have made positive gains since 2014, Southern Grampians leading the way being 8% below state average and trending away from it over the long term

Source - VPHS

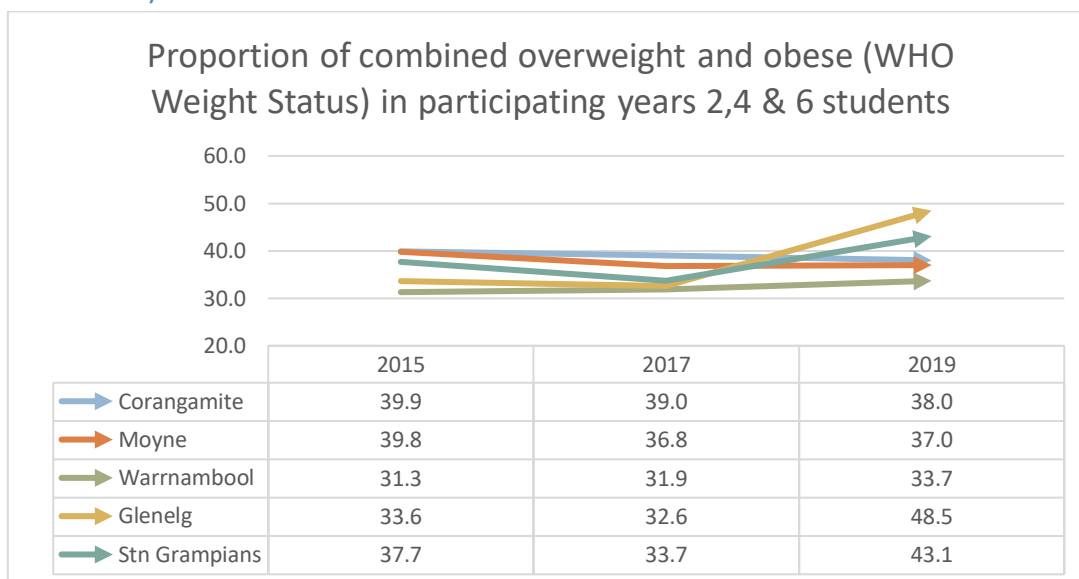


When combining Overweight and Obese data sets, we see a divergence from a state average which has stayed flat, while our region has continued its increase. Moyne has jumped up in this reporting period, against the trend of other local LGA's and the state average. Glenelg, Warrnambool and Southern Grampians have made gains since 2014 in this wider population group.

Source - VPHS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> VPHS indicates the data came from the Victorian Health Information Surveillance System (VHISS) extracted from Victorian Population Health Surveys 2008,2011,2014 & 2017

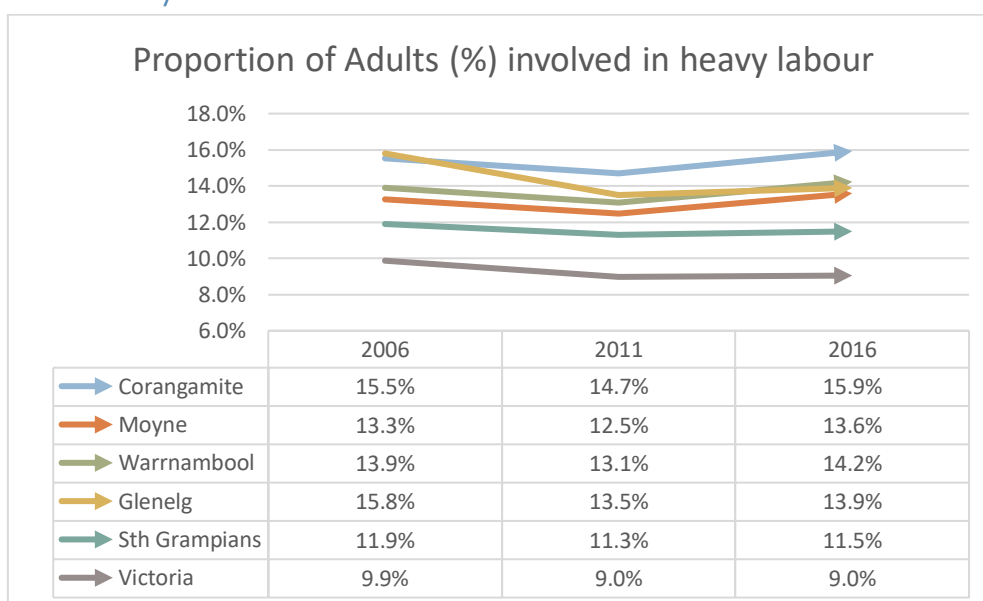
## Childhood obesity



The steady rise in Warrnambool children and recent sharp increases in Southern Grampians and Glenelg who are overweight and obese, in contrast to Moyne and Corangamite, is concerning. Where 1 in 3 primary school children fall into this category in addition to 1 in 2 of the adult population, a cultural and societal rethink on our relationship with food should be considered. Unfortunately, there is no Victorian data against which to compare for children.

Source: GLOBE<sup>2</sup>

## Adult physical activity

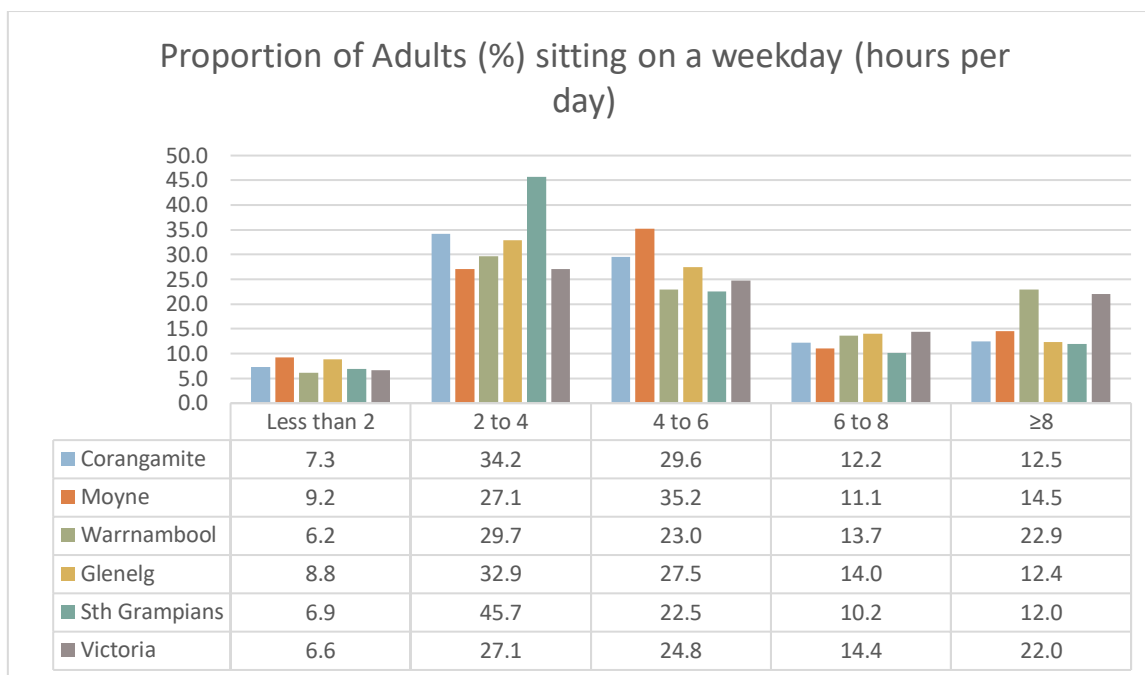


Employed people across our region are more likely to have heavy labour or physically demanding work than the State average and the difference is increasing in most cases. The definition used are those who classify themselves as “Labourers” on the Australian Census, rural LGA’s are likely lower due to higher number of “physical” workers falling into other categories such as those incorporating primary production activity.

Source - ABS<sup>3</sup>

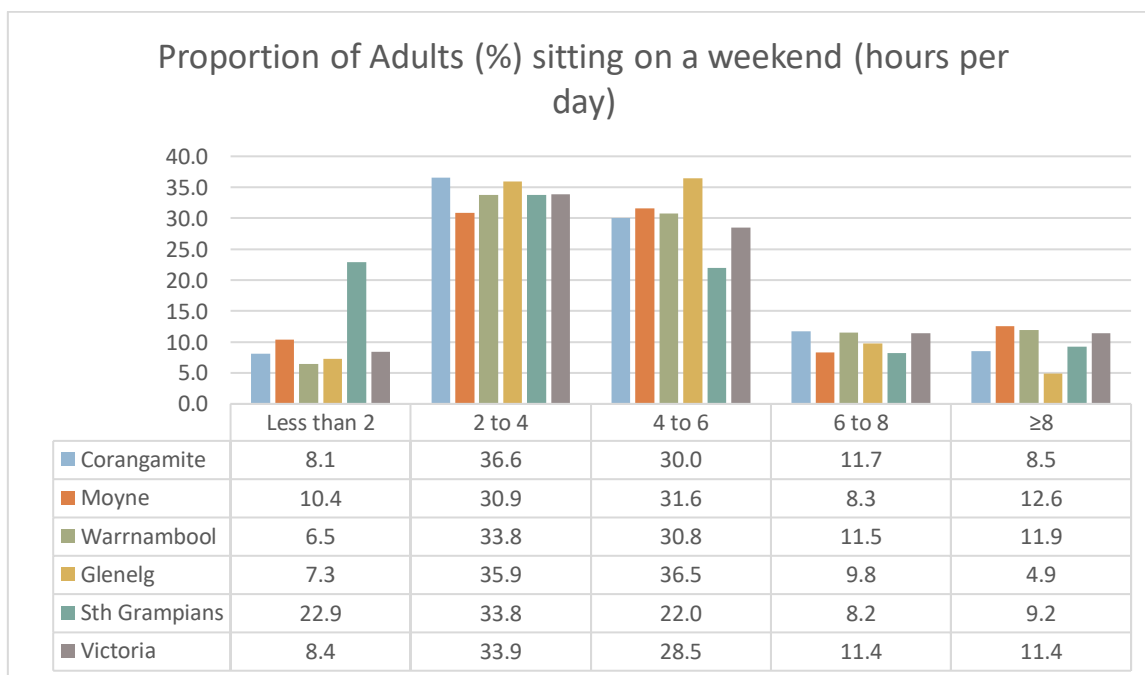
<sup>2</sup> GLOBE indicates the data was provided courtesy of the Global Obesity Centre at Deakin University. It represents the same schools participating across the entire survey time range and adjusted for ICSEA score. Full attribution in References

<sup>3</sup> ABS Census Data from <https://www.abs.gov.au>



People in Moyne and Corangamite are less likely than the State average to sit eight or more hours on a weekday, which correlates with the Heavy Labour job prevalence in those LGAs. People in Glenelg and Southern Grampians seem to avoid long hours sitting on weekdays, likely indicating their work is more physically demanding in general.

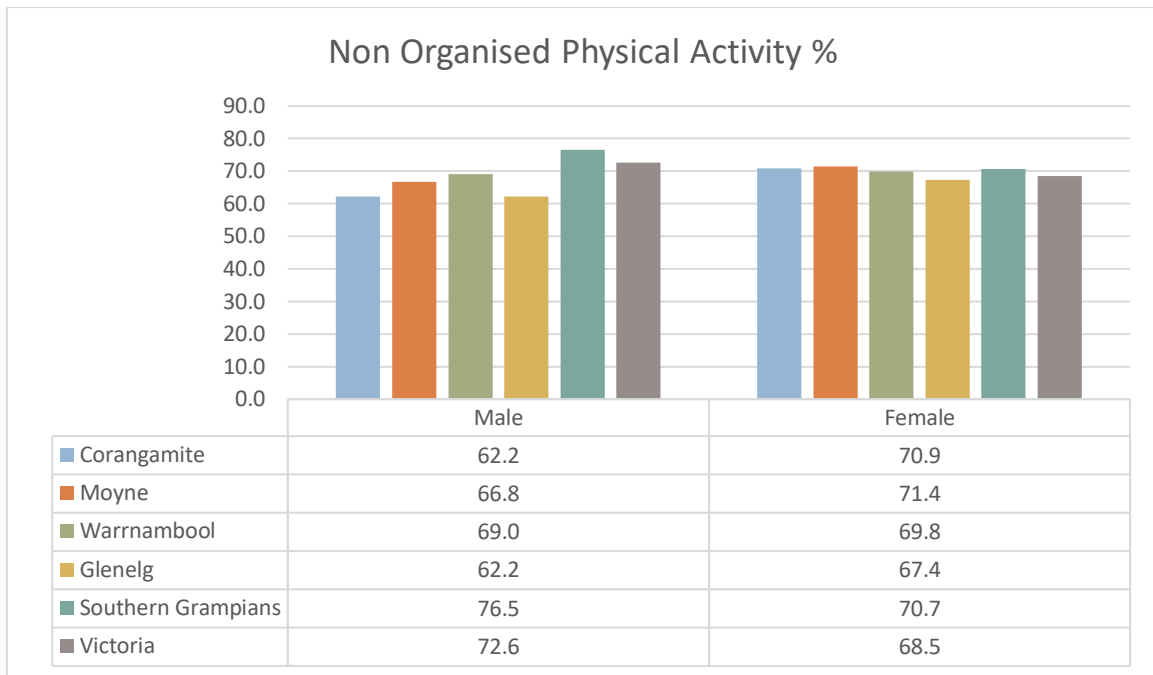
Source – VPHS



In contrast to weekday figures, the sitting habits of people in our region on a weekend are similar to state average patterns. People in Glenelg are much less likely than all other areas to sit for long hours on a weekend

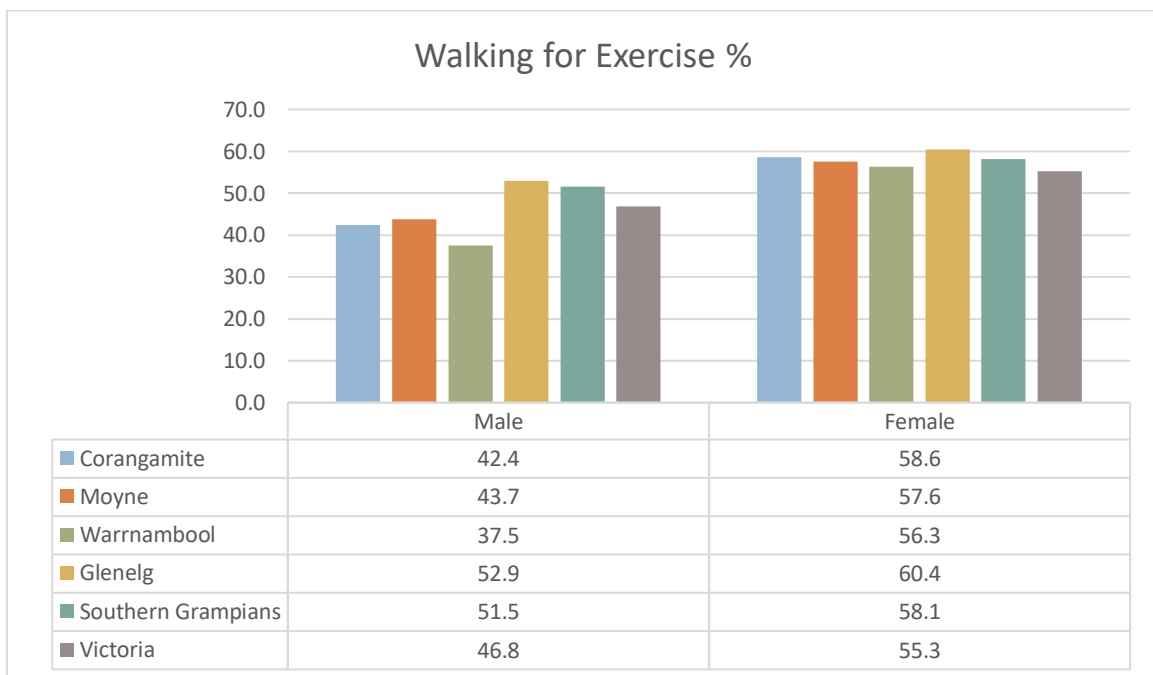
Source VPHS





Non-organised physical activity includes walking, swimming and going for a bike ride.

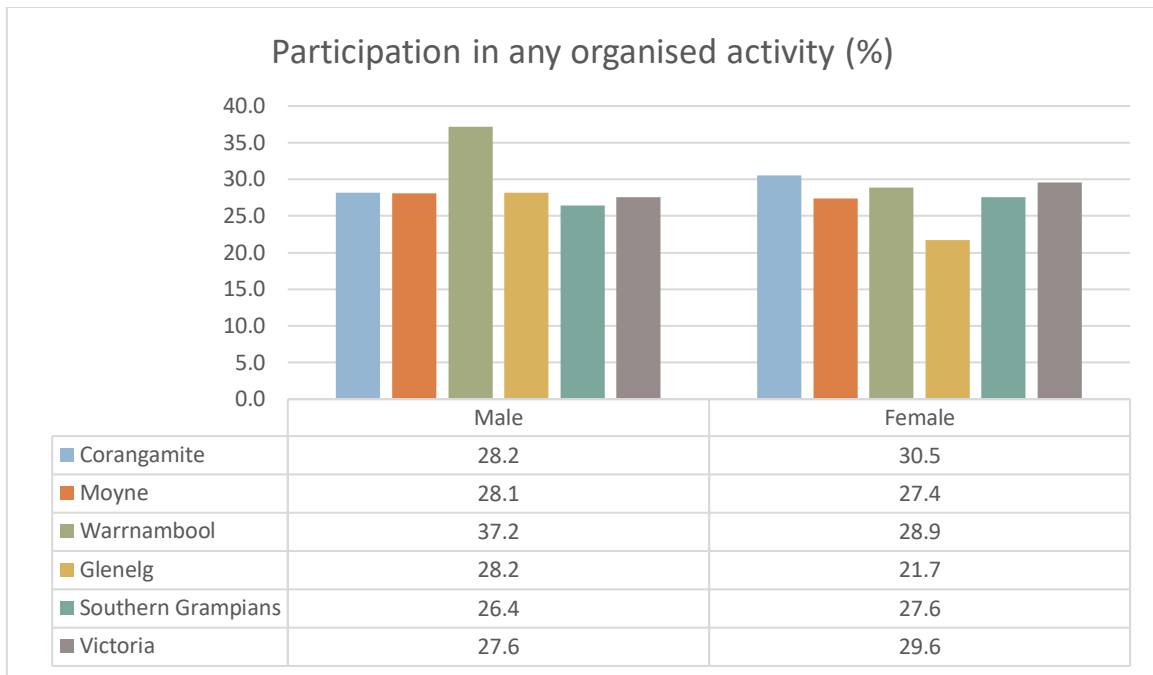
Source - VicHealth<sup>4</sup>



Males are less likely to walk for exercise, particularly in Warrnambool.

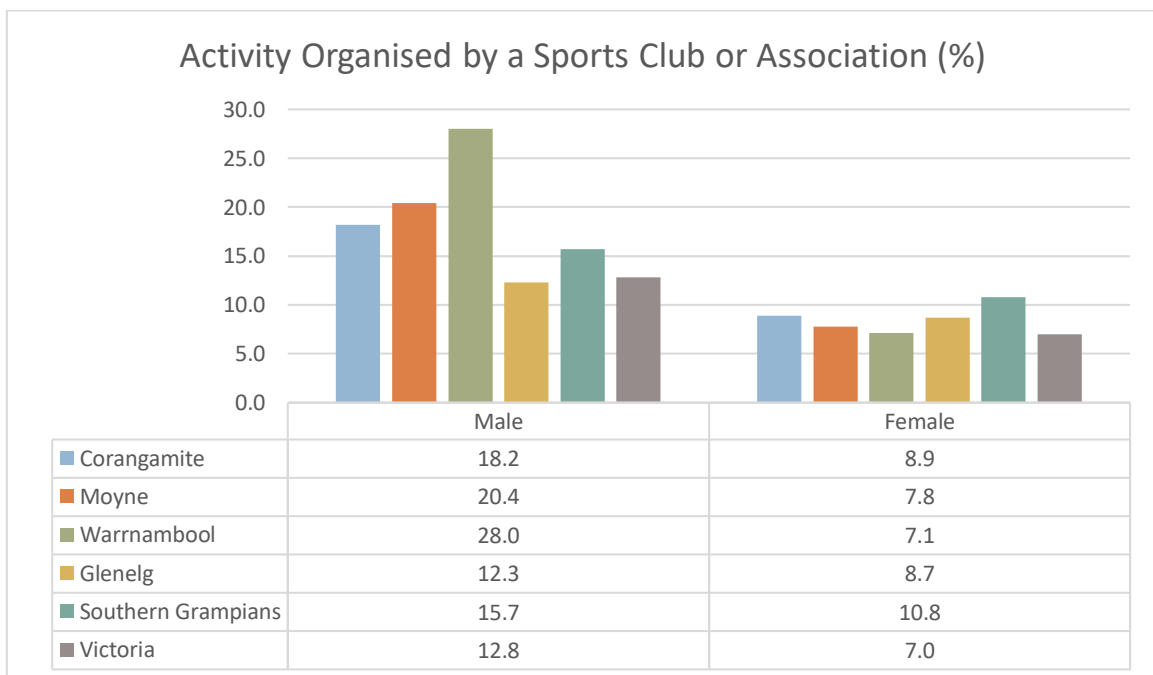
Source - VicHealth

<sup>4</sup> VicHealth indicates the data came from the VicHealth Indicators Survey 2015.



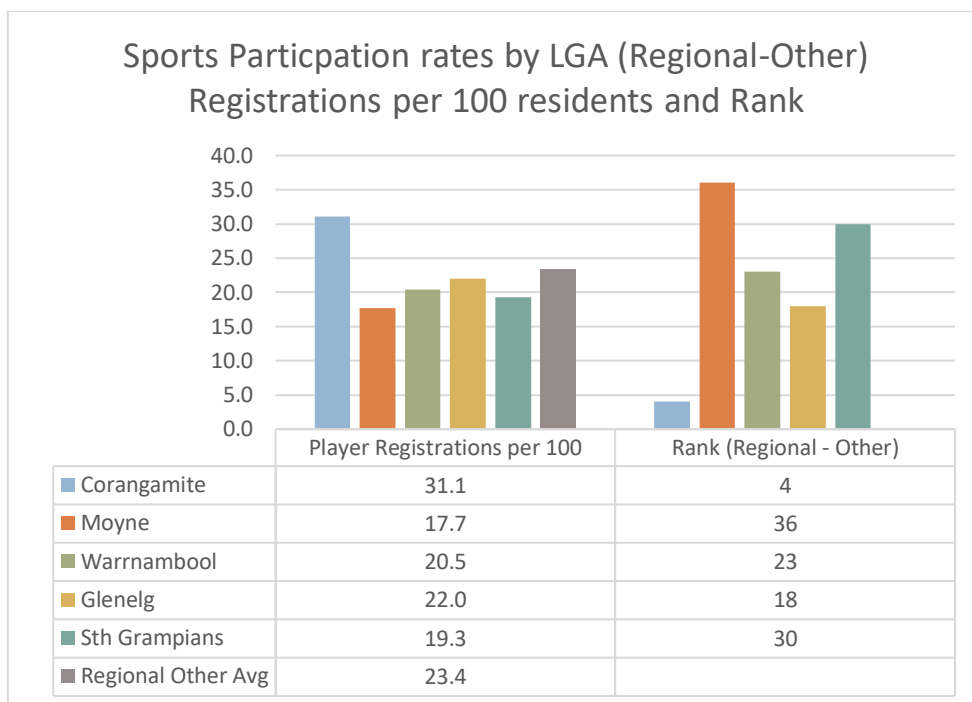
Males in Warrnambool are more likely to be involved in organised activity.

Source – VicHealth



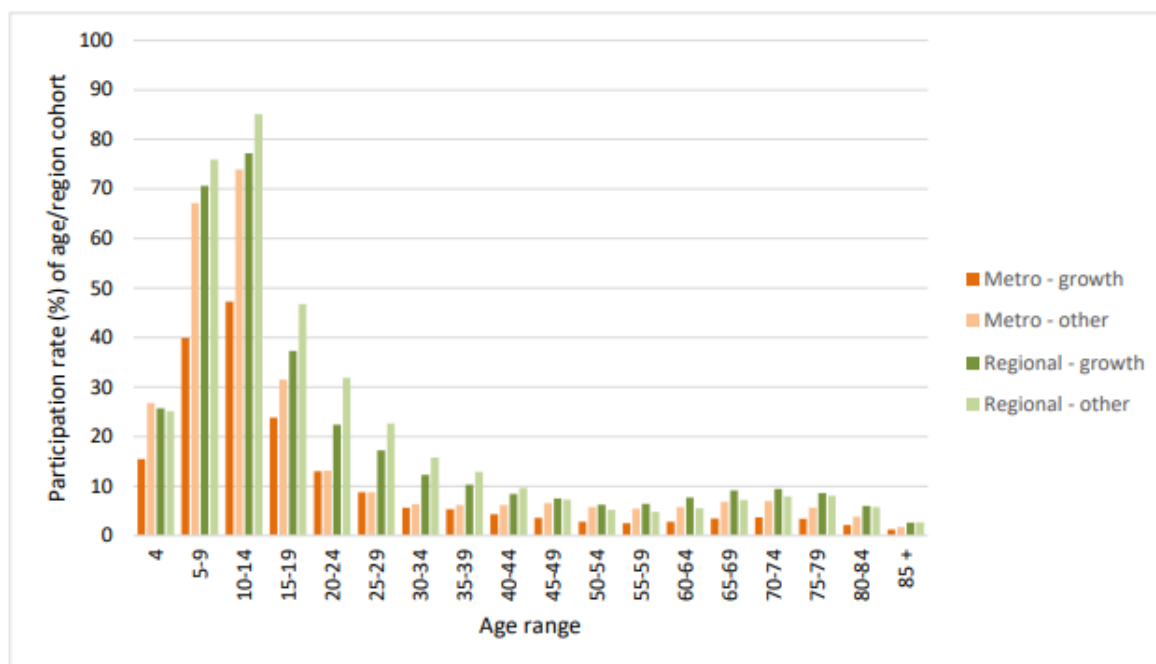
Sport is an important feature of exercise for males, particularly in Warrnambool.

Source - VicHealth



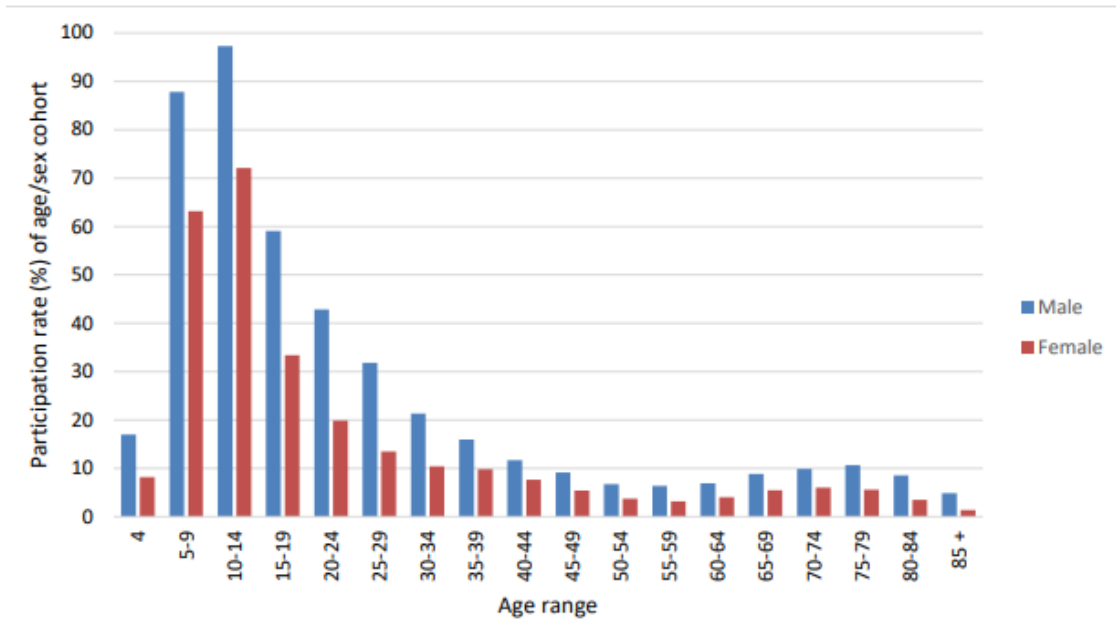
Moyne is significantly below other state LGAs of a similar profile in player registrations in sport. Corangamite is one of the top ranked LGAs amongst the group. Regional-Other group excludes Metro and Regional Growth Centres such as Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and outer Eastern Melbourne

Source - Sport and Recreation Victoria<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 5. Age-specific participation rates, 2016, Victoria: by region**

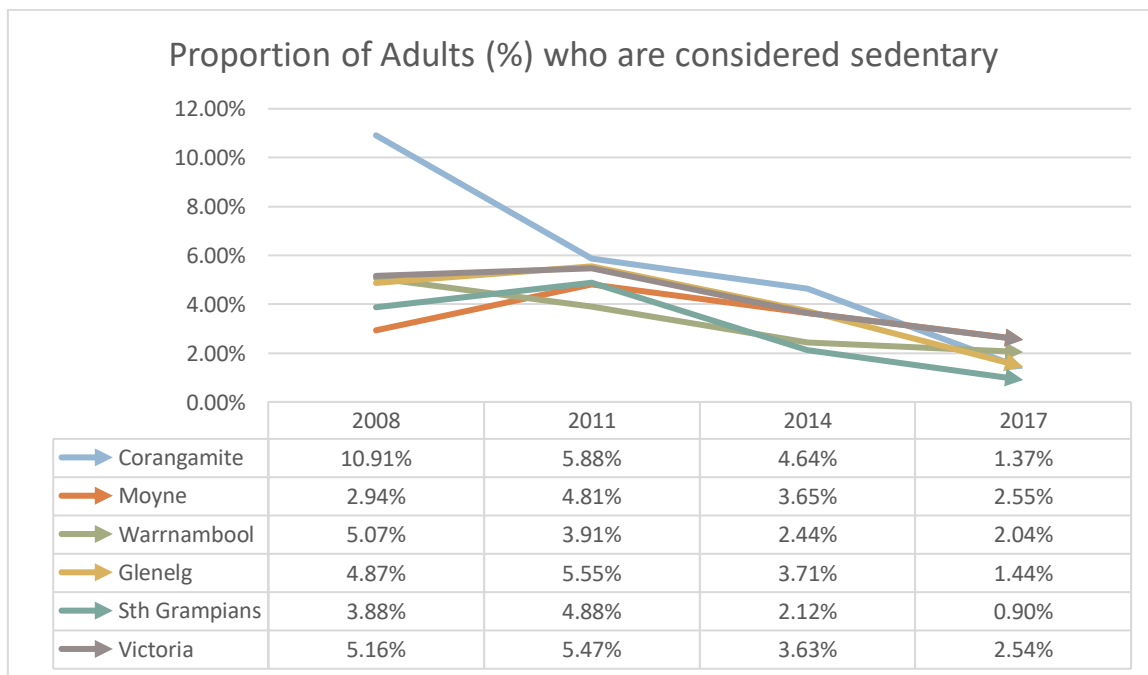
<sup>5</sup> Sport and Recreation Victoria, 2016



**Figure 6d. Age-specific participation rates, 2016, Regional – Other: by sex**

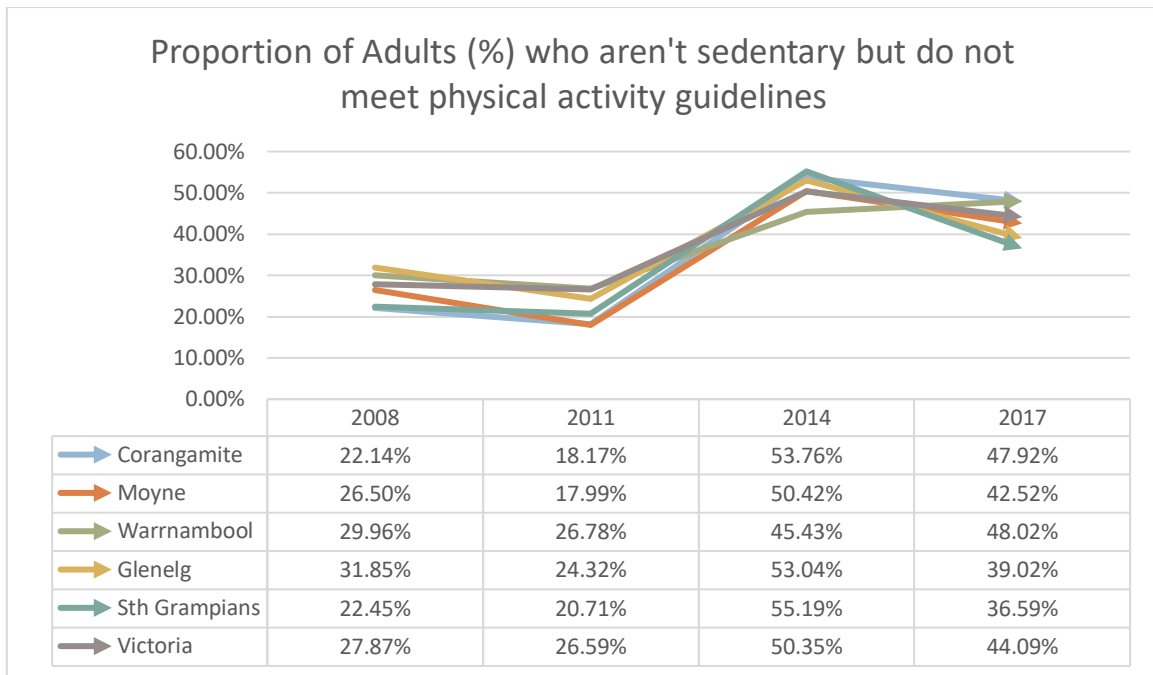
Both by region and gender, the data shows a willingness by adults to register children into sports, the majority of which drift away as they age. If this is valued for their children, perhaps adults should lead by example and stay engaged with sport as a participant through their adult life.

Source - Sport and Recreation Victoria



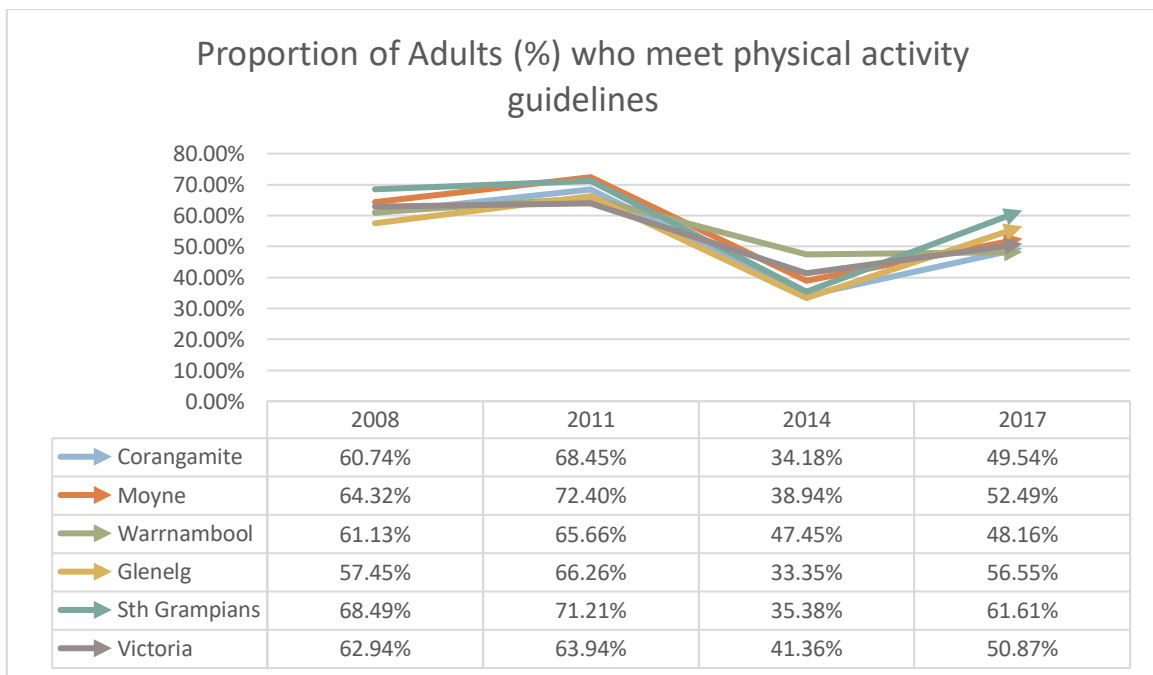
The overall downward trend in sedentary population is very encouraging however the changing definition of the measure over the 2008-2017 timeframe may have contributed to this.

Source - VPHS



The increase in population in this segment both represents largest proportion and the largest change. Again, part of this is likely explained by changing definitions in the guidelines, given the uniformity of the pattern displayed.

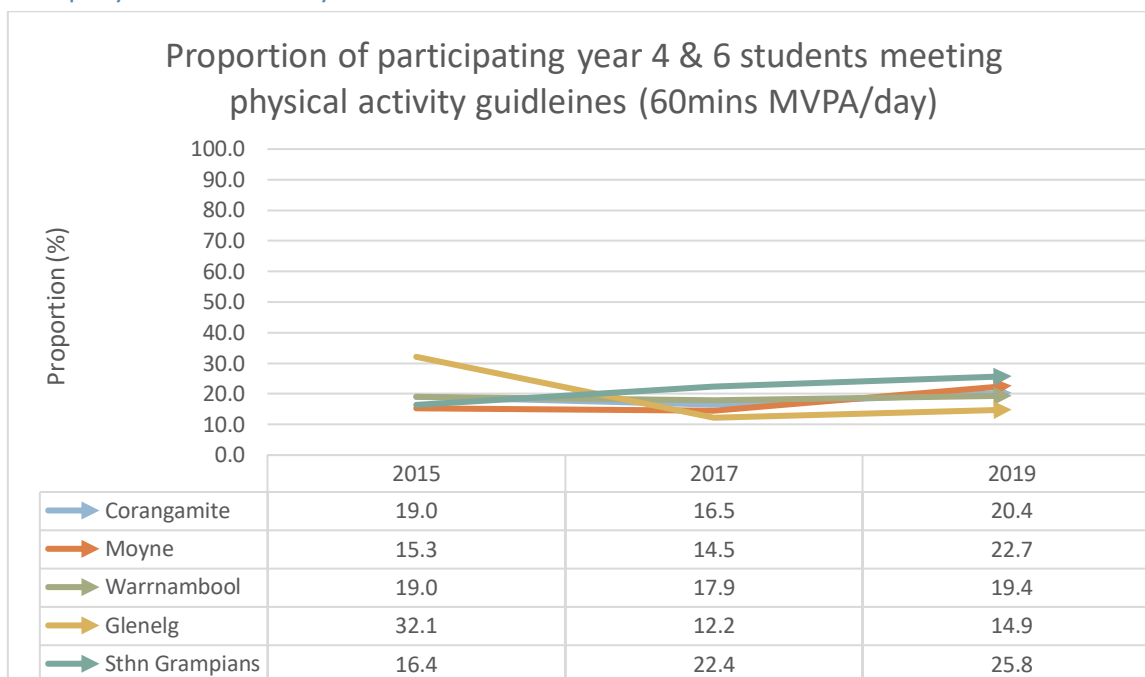
Source - VPHS



The increase back towards the state average is encouraging and has occurred almost uniformly across our region. Most commendable are Southern Grampians and Glenelg who have made significant improvements between 2014 and 2017.

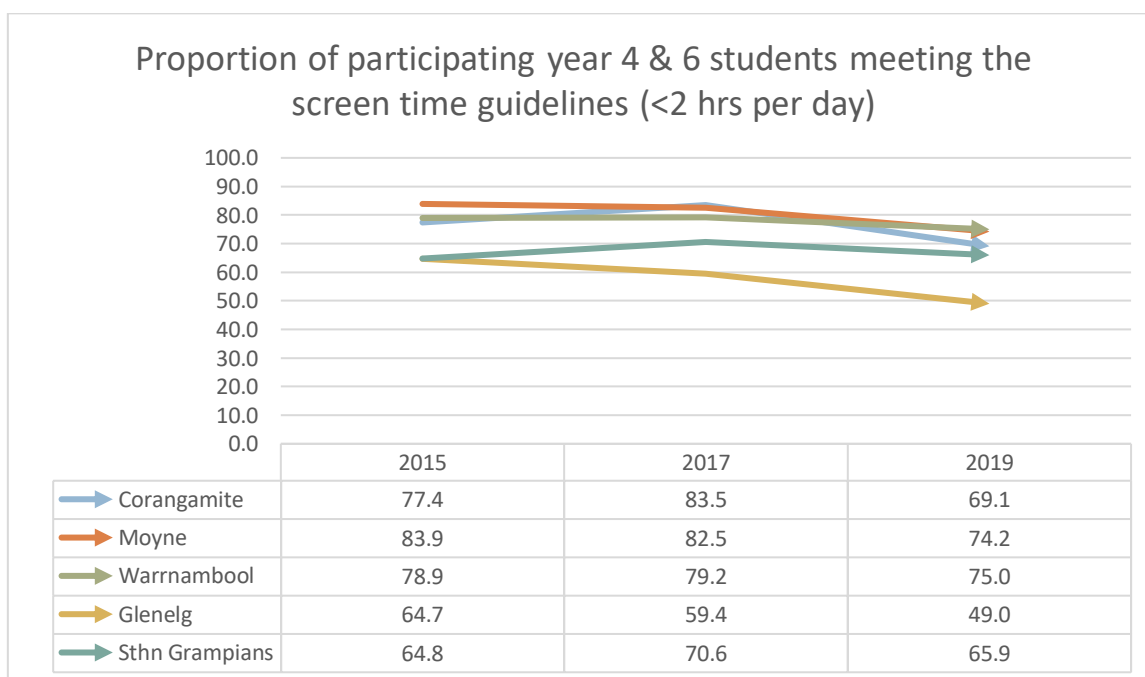
Source - VPHS

## Children's physical activity



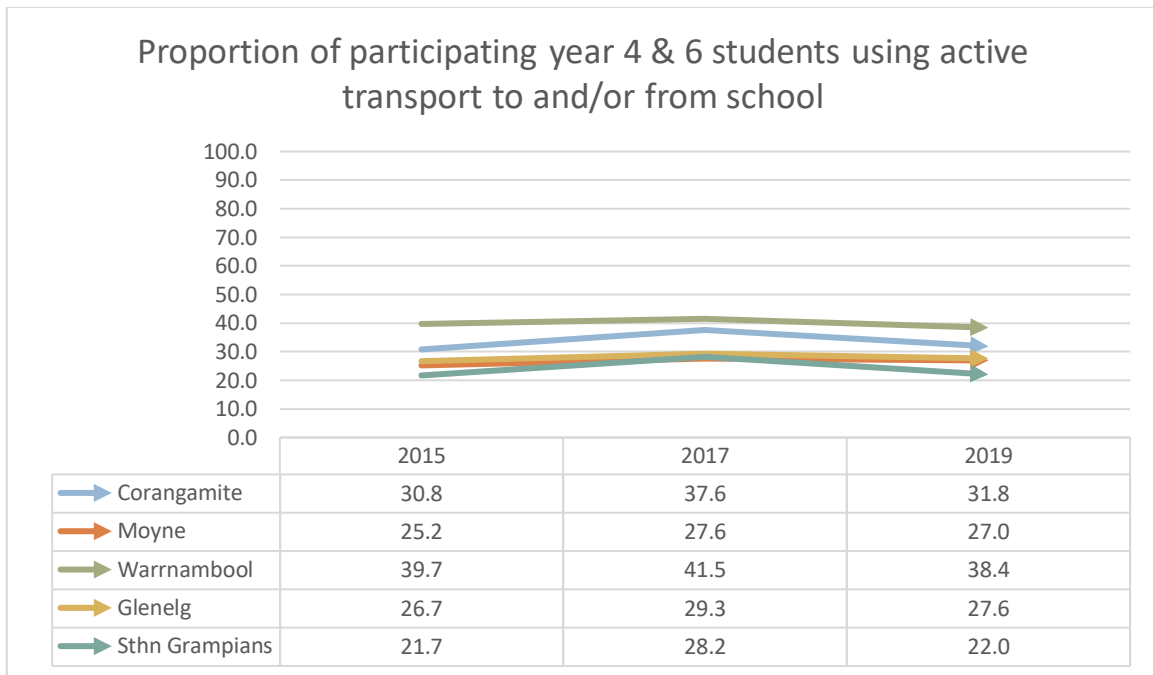
The number of children meeting physical activity guidelines is increasing and encouraging, when combined. Deeper in the figures is a gender disparity, with differences between boys (more active) and girls (less active).

Source: GLOBE



A decline in the number of children meeting screen time guidelines across the region is concerning.

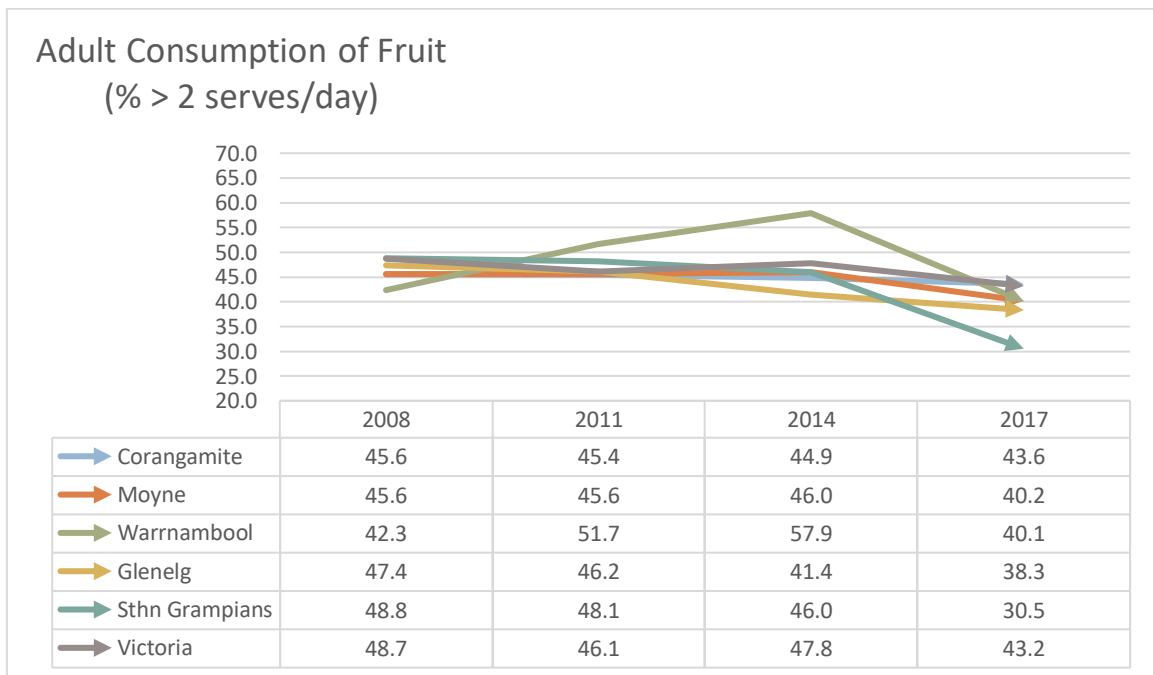
Source: GLOBE



The use of active transport in Warrnambool is encouraging as a proportion of population and where there is infrastructure to support it. The levels in Moyne and Corangamite are lower and volume across our region are in slight decline.

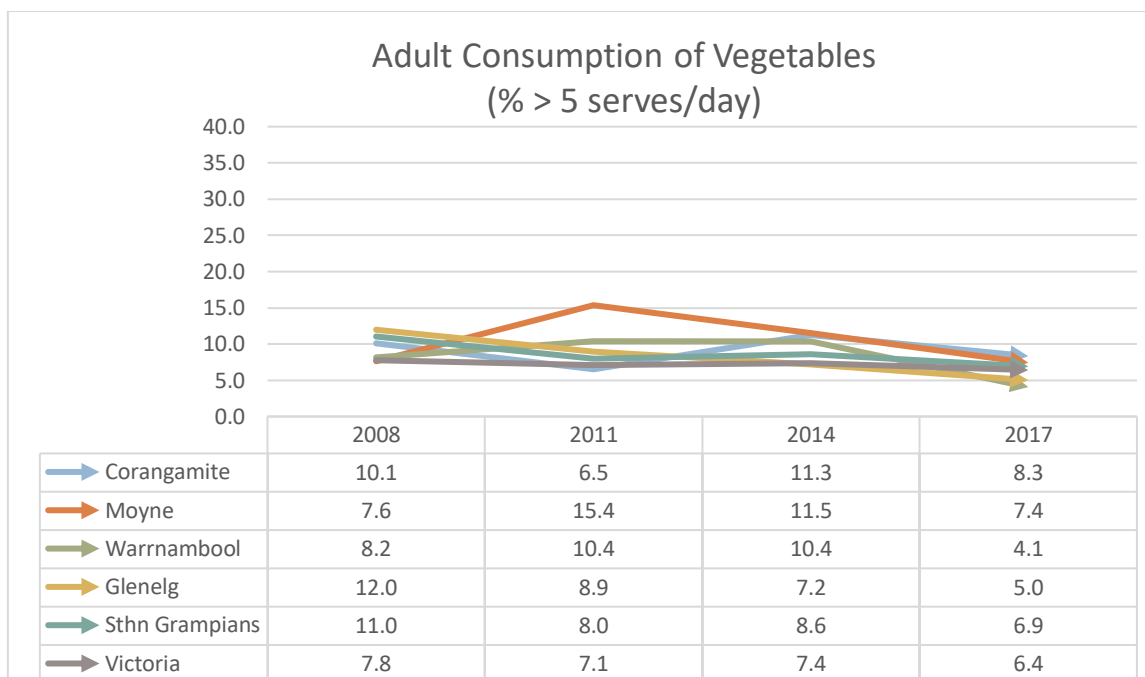
Source: GLOBE

## Adult diet



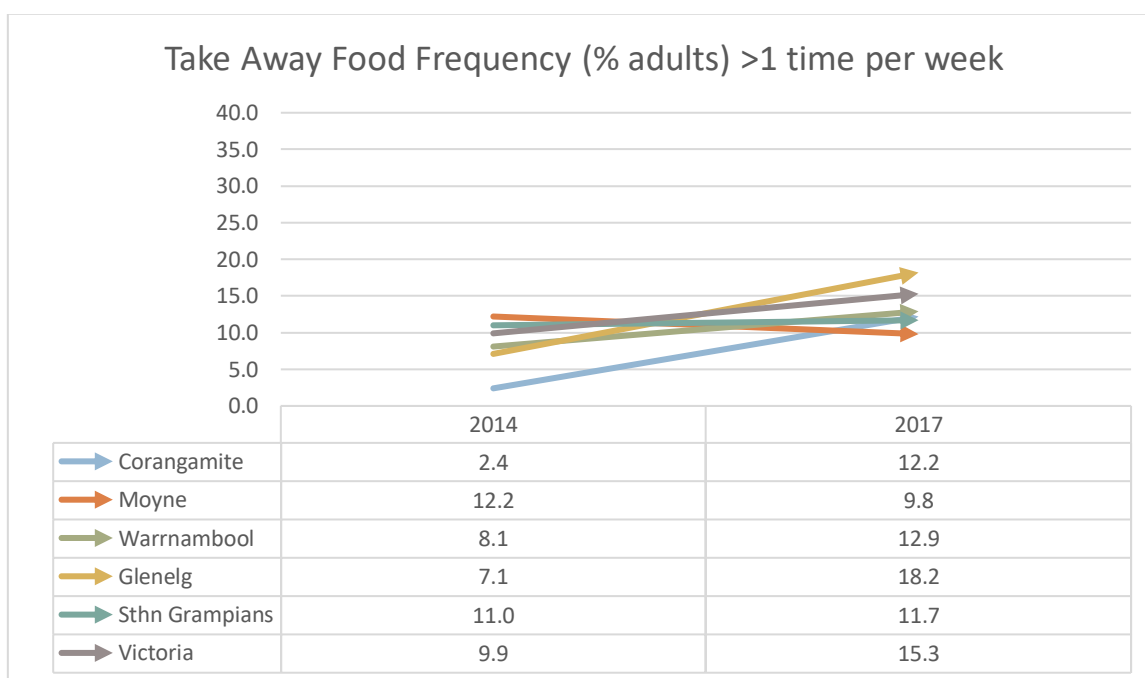
The sharp downtrend in fruit consumption in Glenelg and Warrnambool, and to a lesser extent in Moyne, to below state averages is a concern.

Source – VPHS



Recent sharp declines in all three LGAs from strong positions are of significant concern. Warrnambool's 2017 result, whose already lower comparison level and sharp decline since 2014 are of particular concern, as the outcome is a long way below an already low and slowly declining state average.

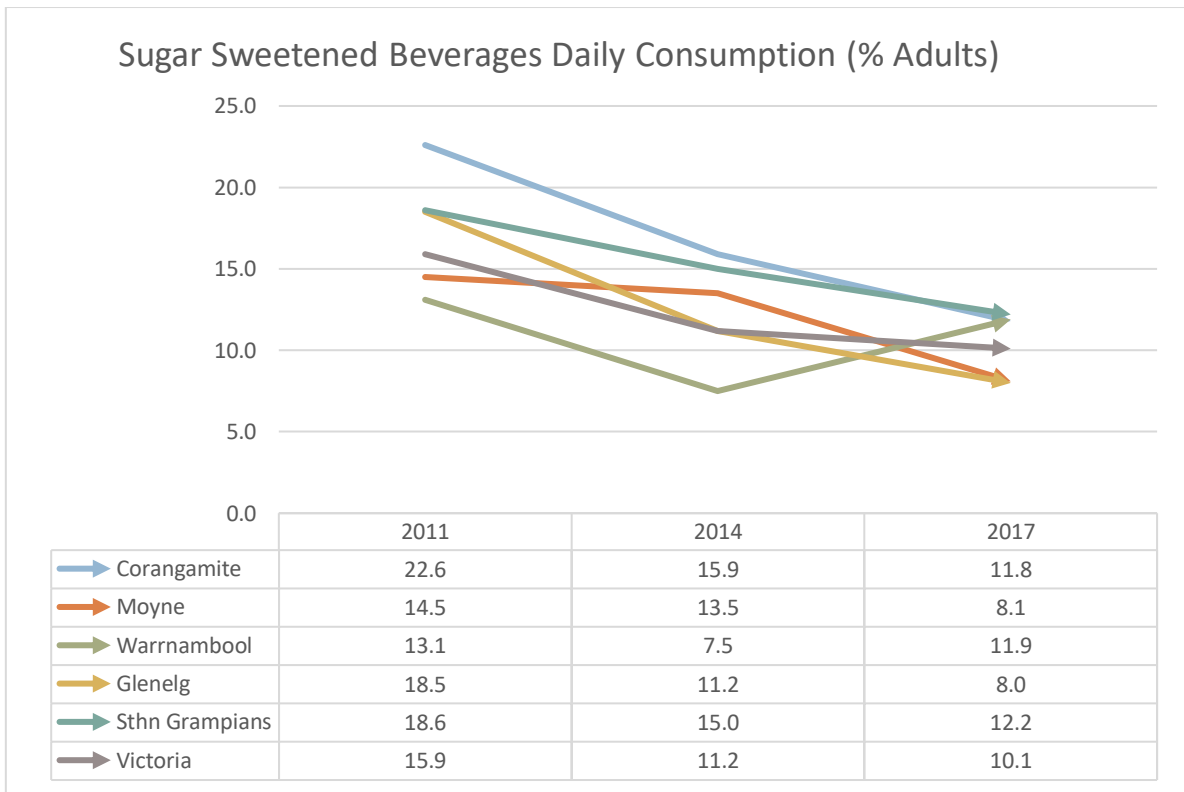
Source - VPHS



All Local Government areas adults in our region eat Take Away Food > 1 per week at a rate less than the state average. Warrnambool and Corangamite are increasing, while Moyne bucks the state-wide trend. The high rate of increase in Corangamite and Glenelg is of particular concern.

Source - VPHS

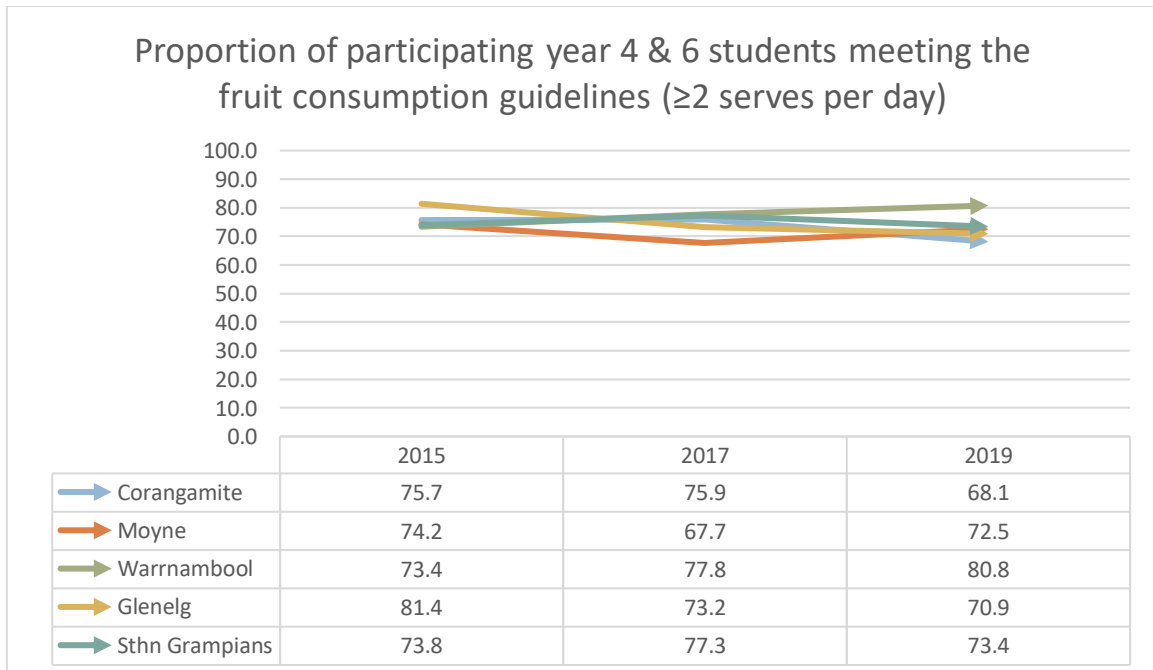




The number of adults who have sugar-sweetened drinks daily is generally trending down with the state average except for Warrnambool, whose increase opposite state-wide trends and the rate of change is of concern.

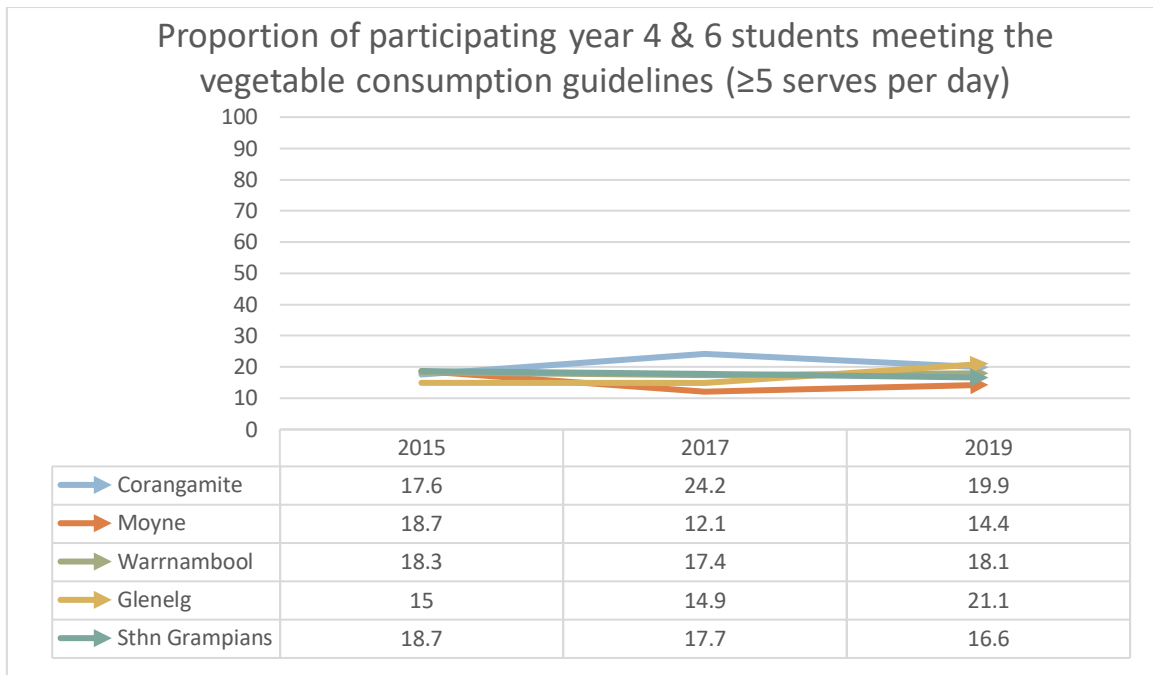
Source - VPHS

## Children's diet



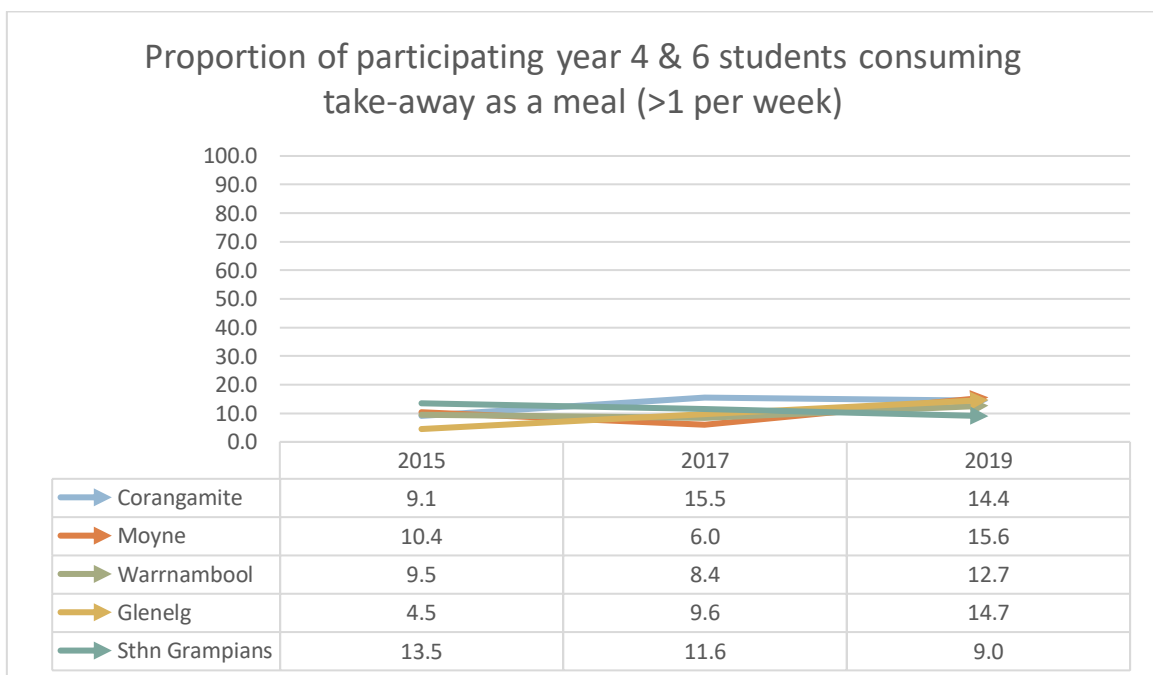
About three in four children consume enough fruit although there has been a decline in Corangamite. While these levels are high and in line with adults, it suggests far too much emphasis is placed on fruit as healthy over vegetables.

Source: GLOBE



While the proportion of children consuming enough vegetables is low, however, the trend in all three LGAs is encouraging because its steady across the timeframe. This is, again, in line with adult consumption and should be of huge concern to health authorities, when you consider over 80% of the entire population do not eat enough vegetables on a daily basis.

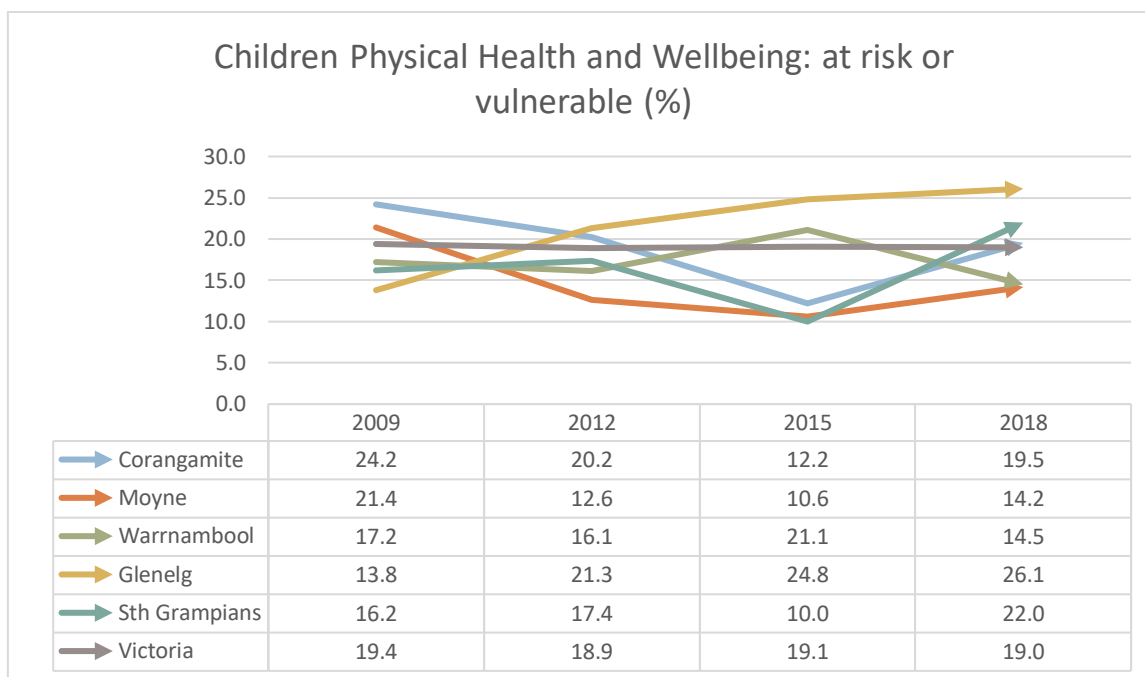
Source: GLOBE



The proportion of children that have take-away food greater than once per week is low but increasing in two LGAs in line with adult increases.

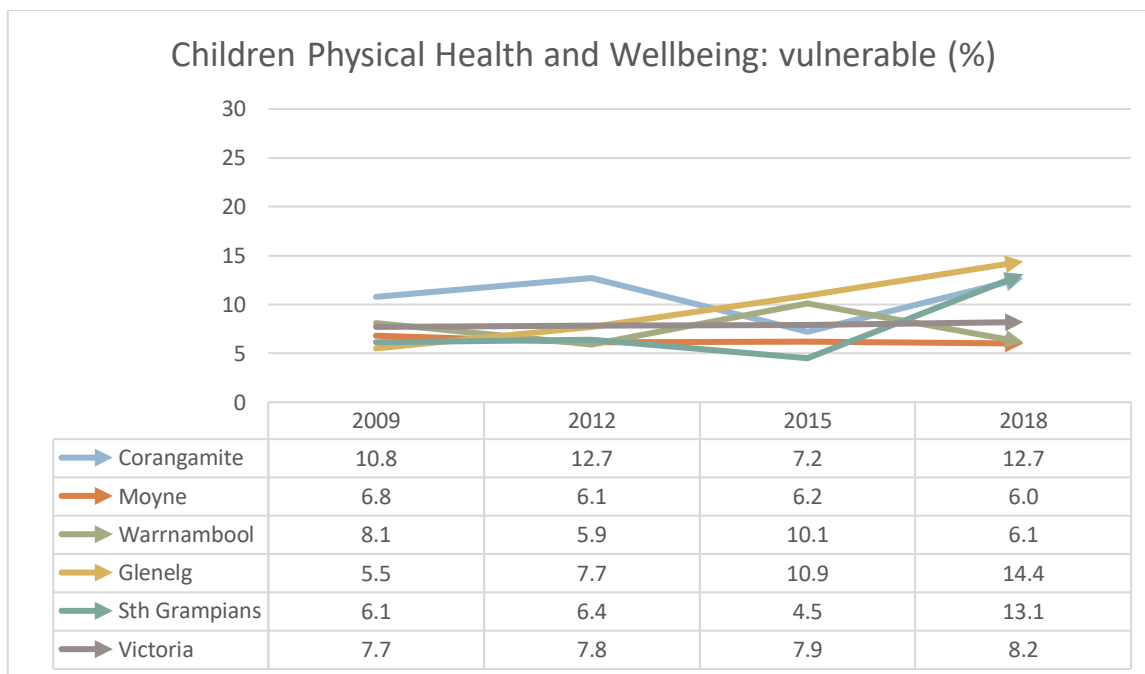
Source: GLOBE

## Early childhood development



There has been a significant reduction in the proportion of children in Warrnambool who experience challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. These children are generally independent, have excellent motor skills and have energy levels that can get them through the school day. In Corangamite, there has been a significant increase in this area back towards the state average, which has remained steady through the observed periods.

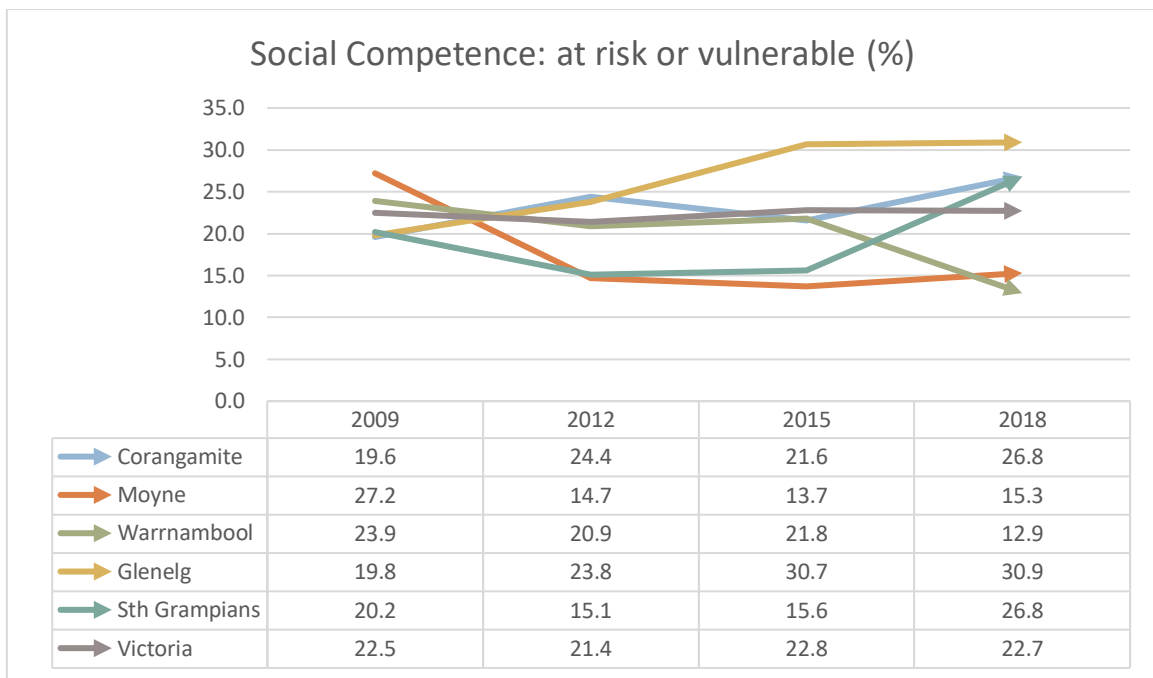
Source - AEDC<sup>6</sup>



There has been a decrease in the proportion of children in Warrnambool who are vulnerable in the physical health and wellbeing domain. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. In Corangamite, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of children who are vulnerable in this domain.

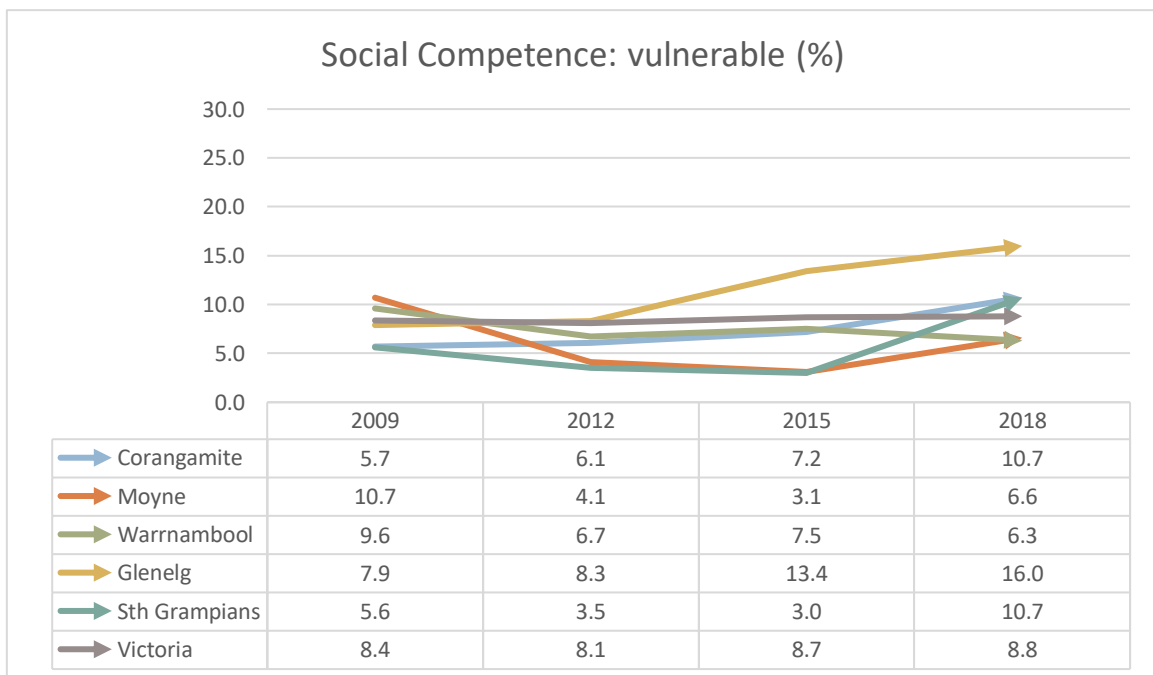
Source - AEDC

<sup>6</sup> AEDC indicates the data came from the Australian Early Development Census 2018.



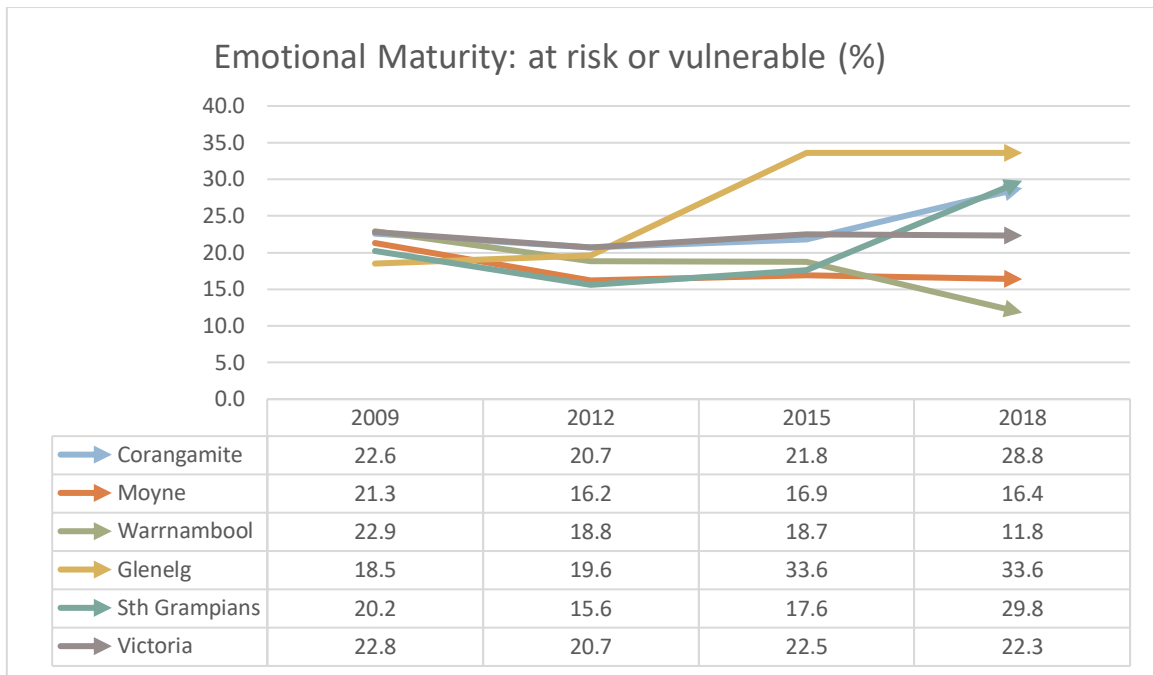
The proportion of children who are on track with social competence in Moyne and Warrnambool are not worse than the State average. Corangamite has come above the state average in the latest survey round.

Source - AEDC



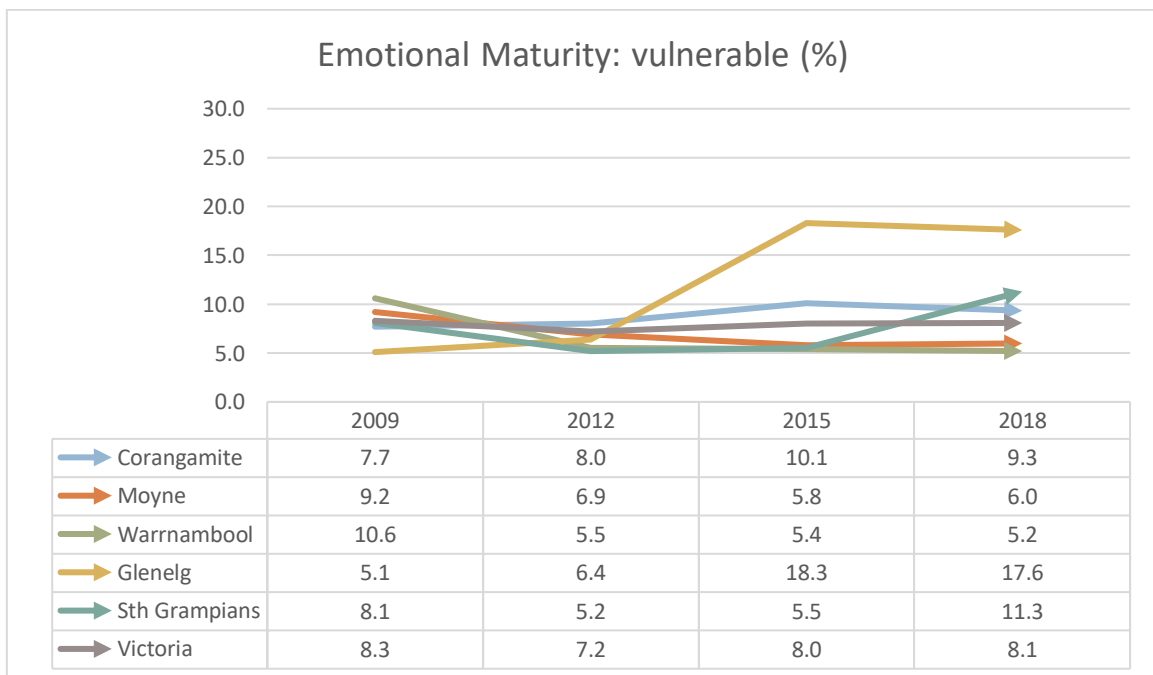
Increasing proportions in Moyne and Corangamite for the most vulnerable children is of concern, particularly in Corangamite where more children are also falling into the at-risk category in the previous graph.

Source - AEDC



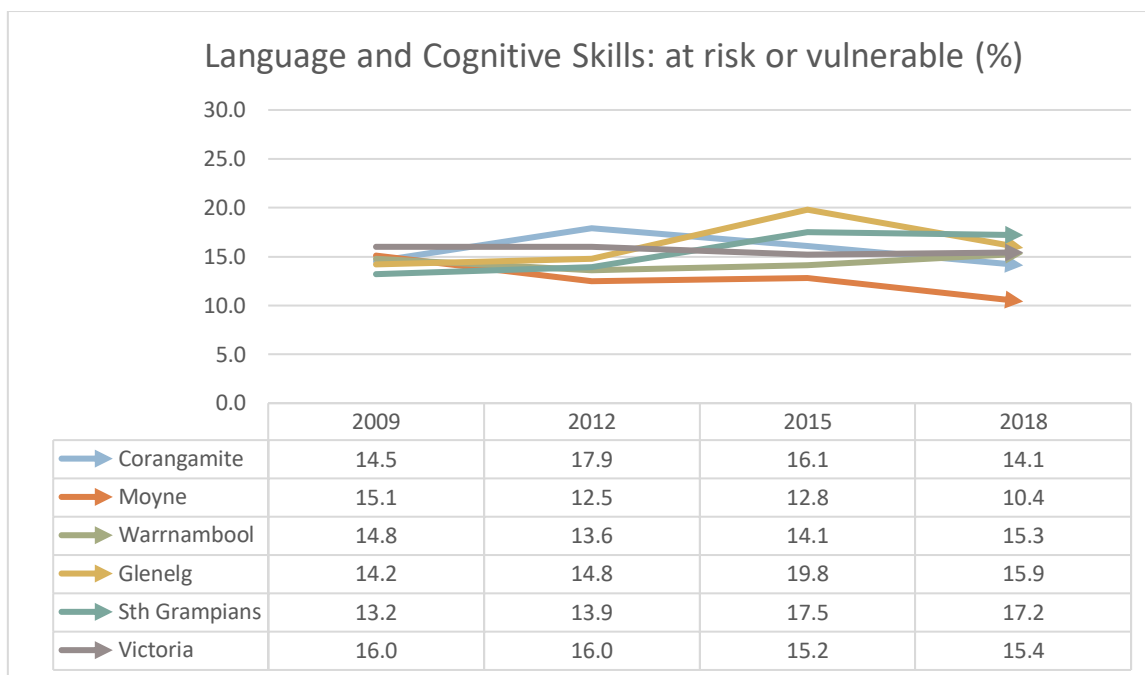
A commendable fall in the volume of the most vulnerable (below) in Corangamite could contribute to the overall rise shown above. Continuing work to remove some children from both categories would constitute a fantastic result. Warrnambool and Moyne remain below state averages.

Source - AEDC



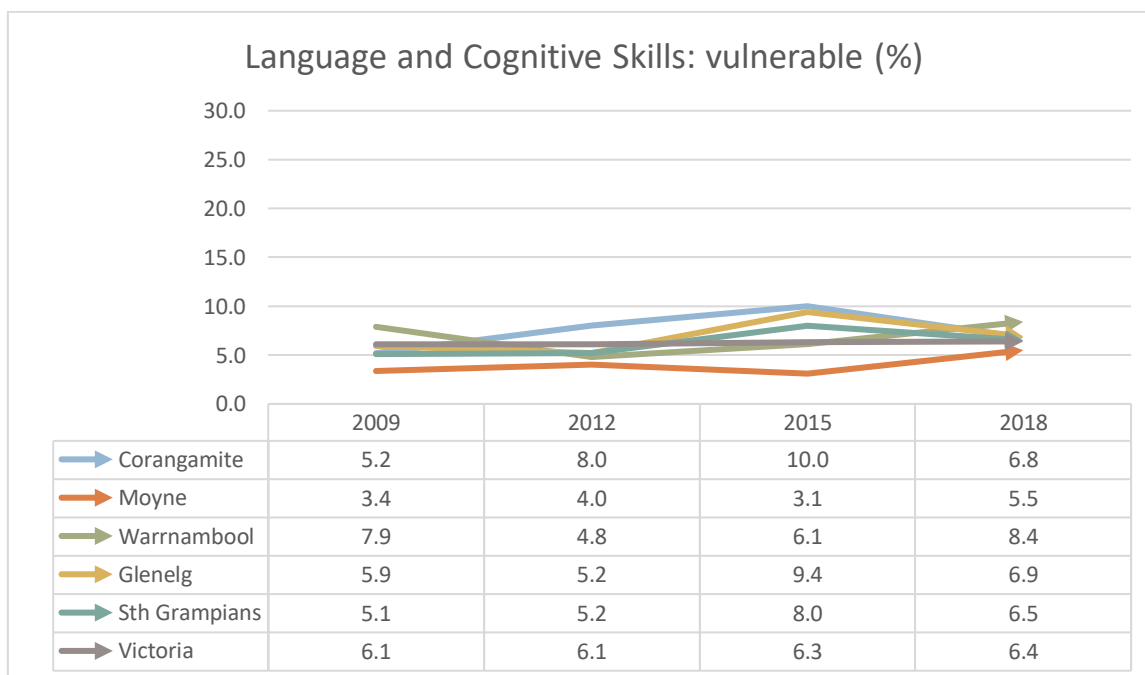
Warrnambool and Moyne's most vulnerable to challenges related to emotional regulation remain below the state average. Corangamite have made inroads to reducing the proportion, however, remain slightly above the state average.

Source - AEDC



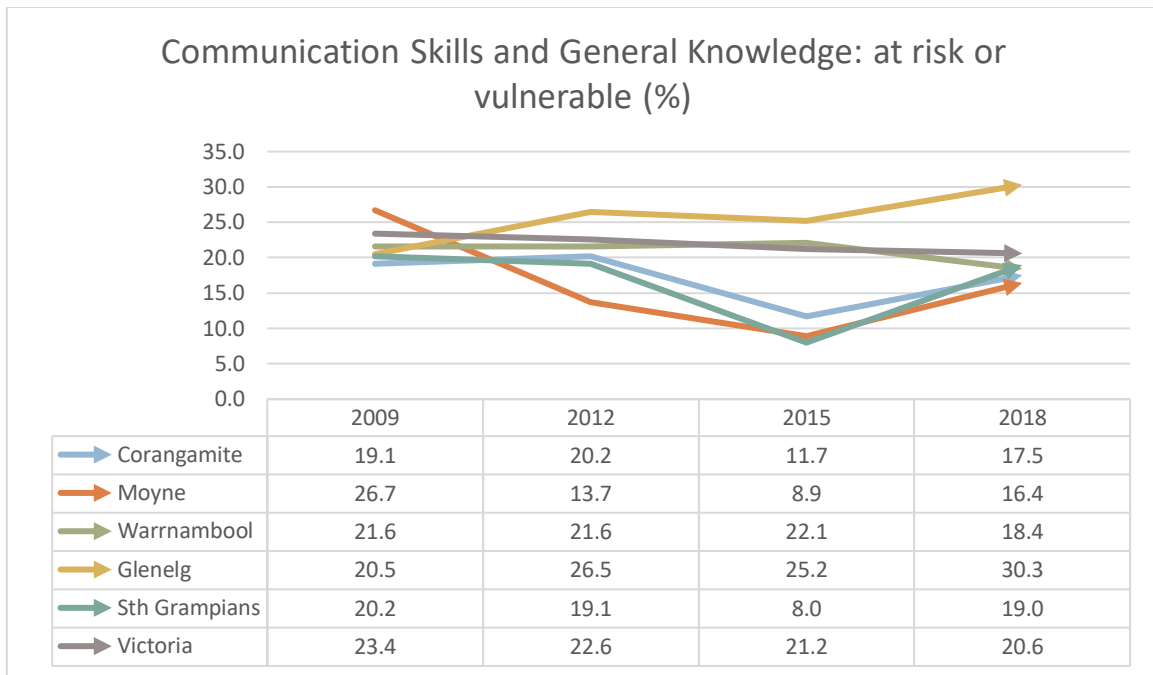
The proportion of children on track with language and cognitive skills in Corangamite and Warrnambool is not statistically significantly different from the Victorian average. Moyne is significantly lower than the state average of at-risk or vulnerable children in this domain.

Source - AEDC



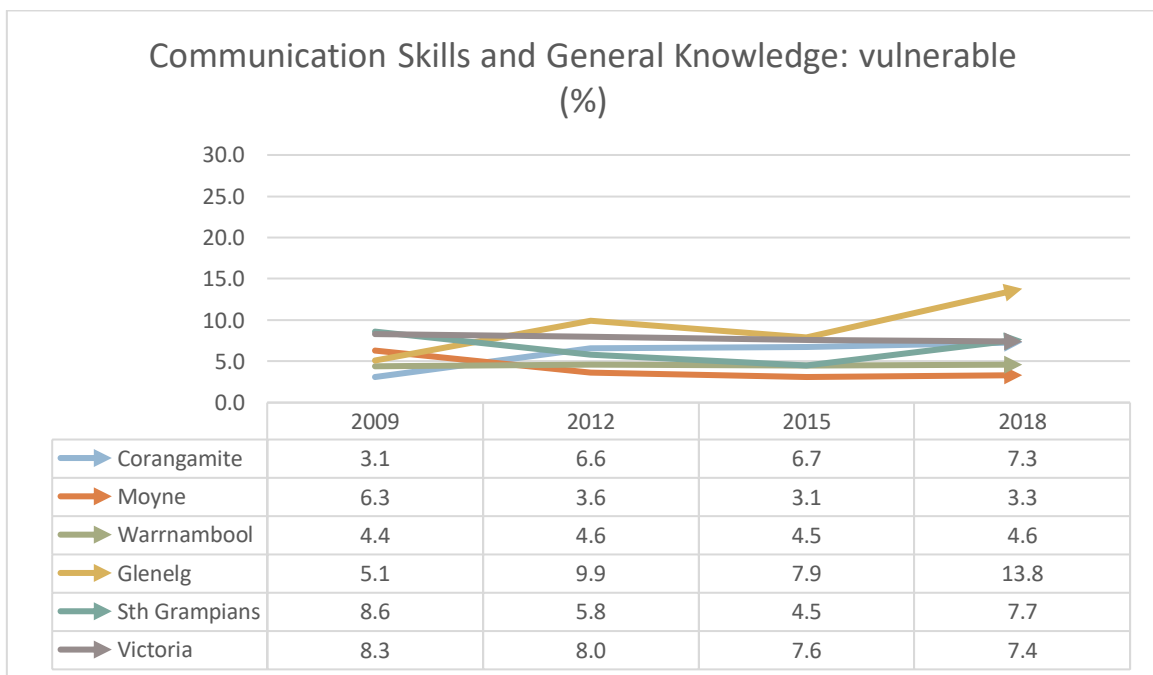
Corangamite have significantly reduced the proportion of most vulnerable children in this domain while increasing proportions in Warrnambool are of concern. Significant increase in Moyne back toward the state average after a history of being significantly below, is also of concern.

Source - AEDC



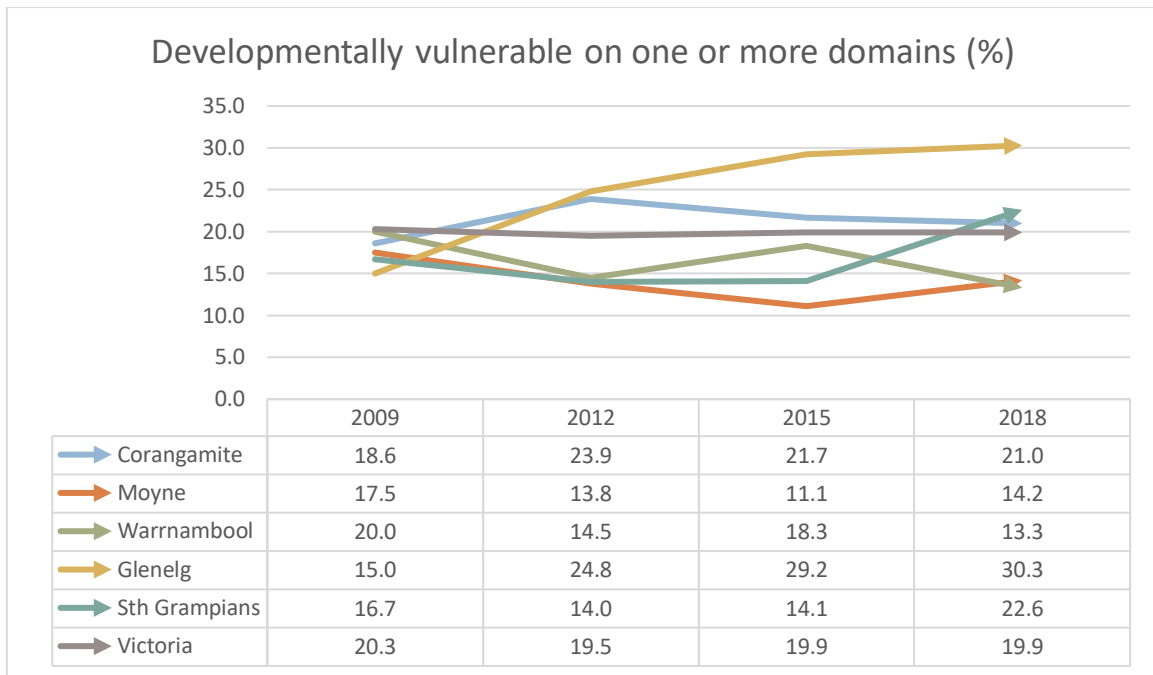
In all three Local Government Areas, we remain below the state average of at-risk and vulnerable children who have problems with listening, understanding and speaking in English. Significant increases in Corangamite and Moyne since 2015 are concerning.

Source - AEDC



One in fifteen children in Corangamite have poor communication skills and articulation; have limited command of English, have difficulties talking to others, understanding, and being understood; and have poor general knowledge and this is in line with state averages. Moyne and Warrnambool remain statistically significantly below the state average of vulnerable children in this domain.

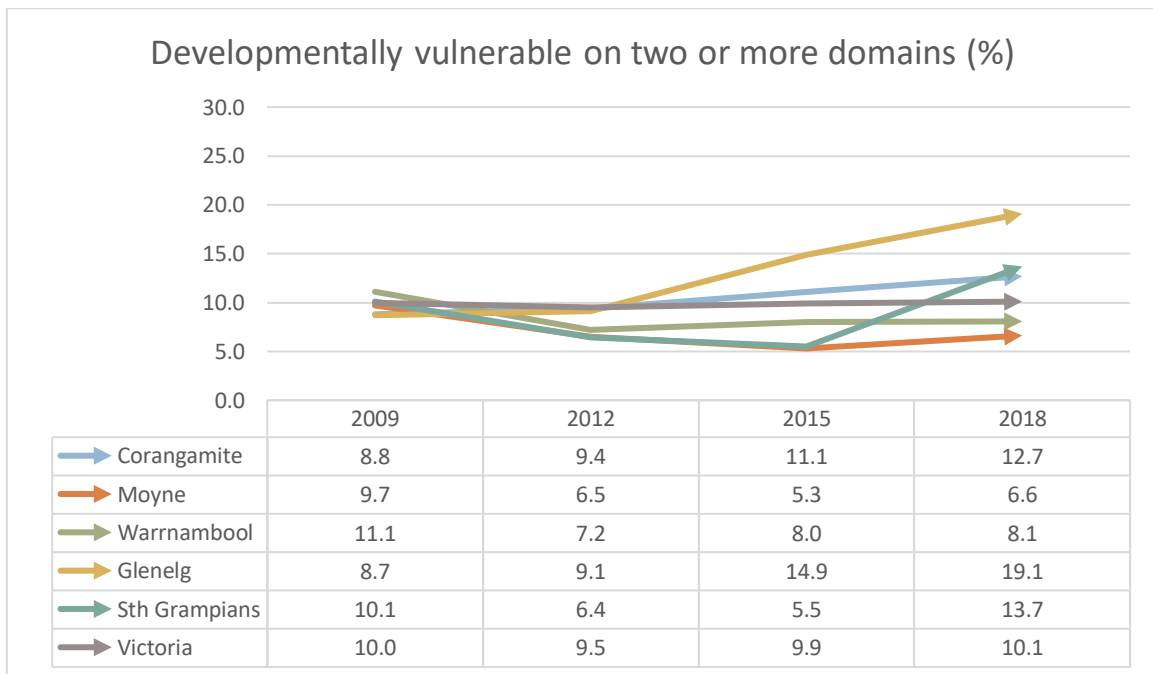
Source - AEDC



In a class of 23 Corangamite children, on average five will be vulnerable on at least one domain.

There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of children in Warrnambool who are vulnerable on at least one domain.

Source - AEDC

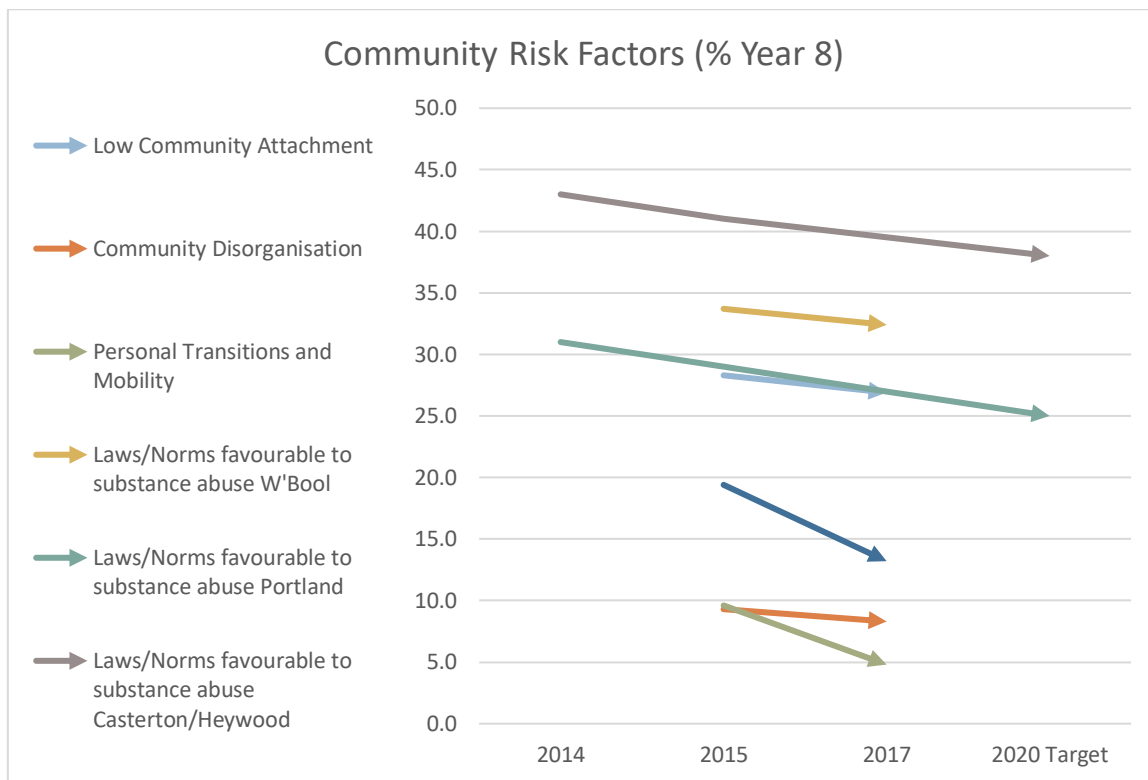


A consistent rise over the entire reporting period in Corangamite is concerning where children remain most vulnerable on two or more domains and above the state average.

Source - AEDC

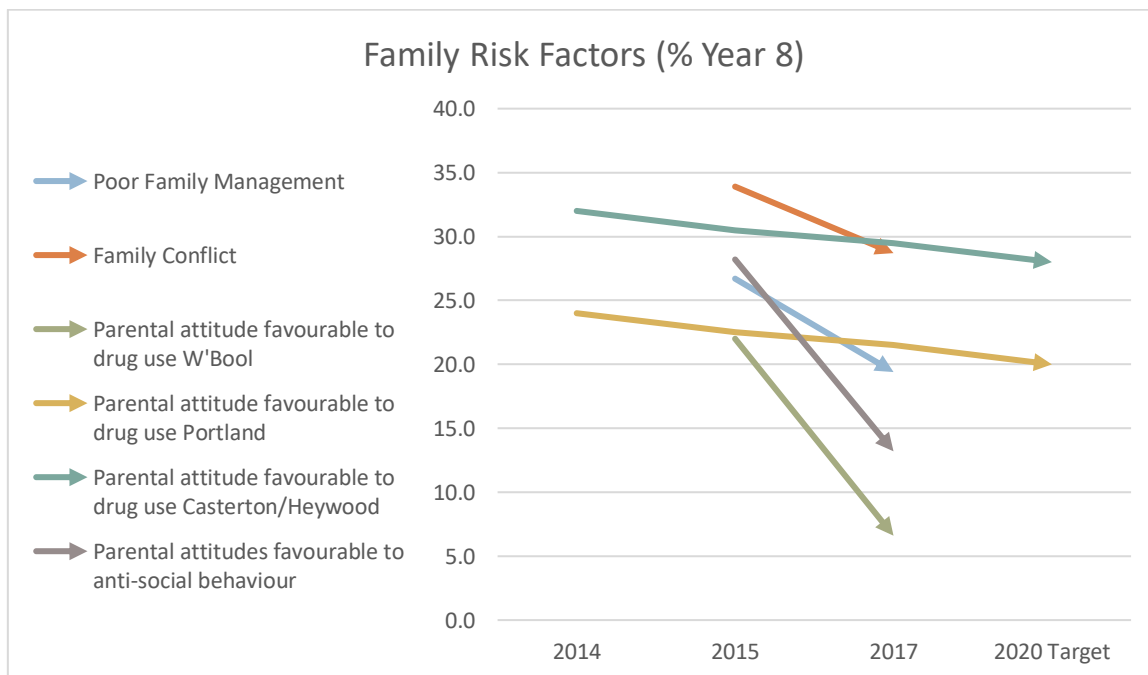


## Youth Risk Factors



It is encouraging to see all five risk areas decreasing, although Low Community Attachment and Favourable Substance Abuse Norms are declining slowly from a relatively high starting point. The risk factors “personal transitions & mobility” and “Community Disorganisation” being low is an important community strength for young people.

Source - CTC<sup>7</sup>

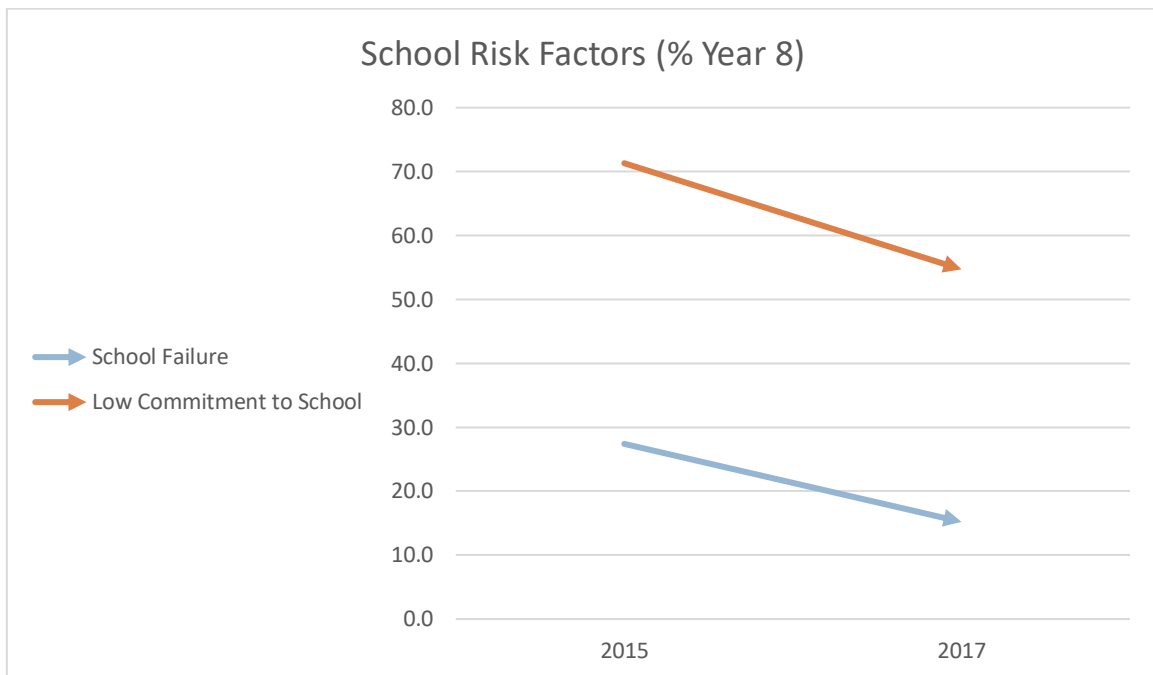


In the period 2015 to 2017, risk factors in the family domain are improving. Sharp declines in parental attitudes favourable to alcohol and other drug use is very encouraging and marked as “statistically significant” by the research

<sup>7</sup> CTC indicates data are from Communities That Care, Warrnambool.

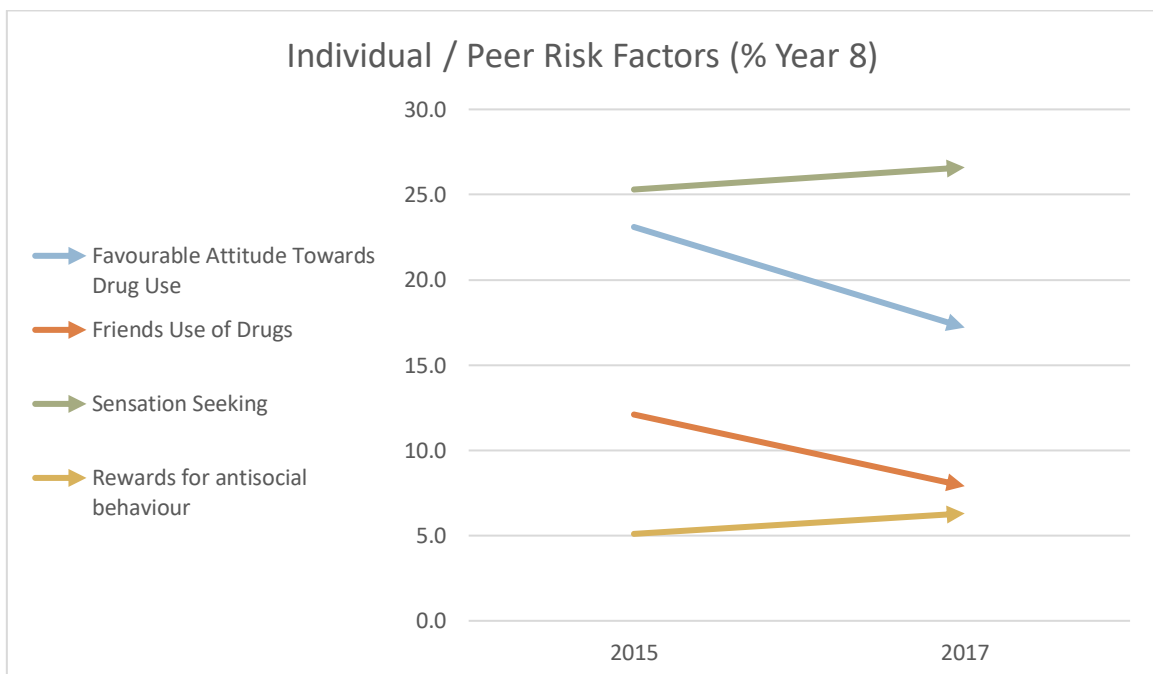
team. Family conflict, although decreasing, is still quite high where approximately 1 in 3, year 8 young adults experience this.

Source - CTC



There is a high proportion of year 8 students in Warrnambool with the risk factor “low commitment to school”, however, it appears to be in sharp decline. This is an important driver of education attainment rates. Both declining indicators of school risk factors are marked as “statistically significant” by the research team.

Source - CTC

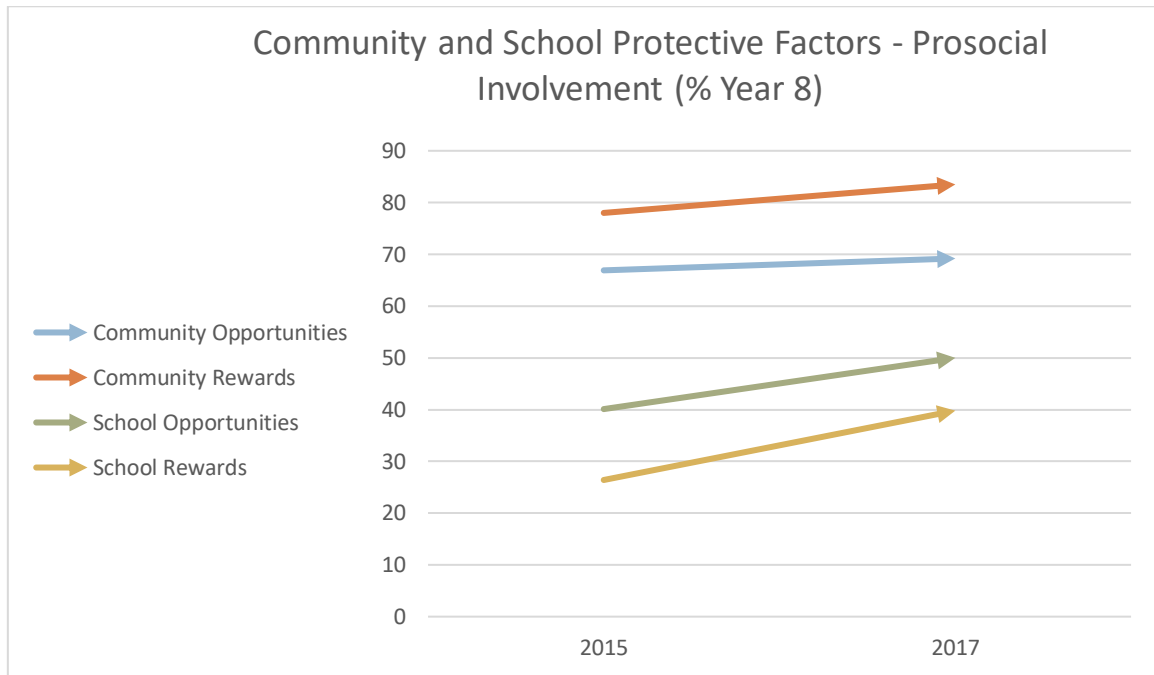


The indicators of year 8 students in Warrnambool regarding both attitude towards drugs and their use are in decline.

The indicators regarding sensation seeking and anti-social behaviours among peers are the **only** risk factors observed to be increasing in Warrnambool.

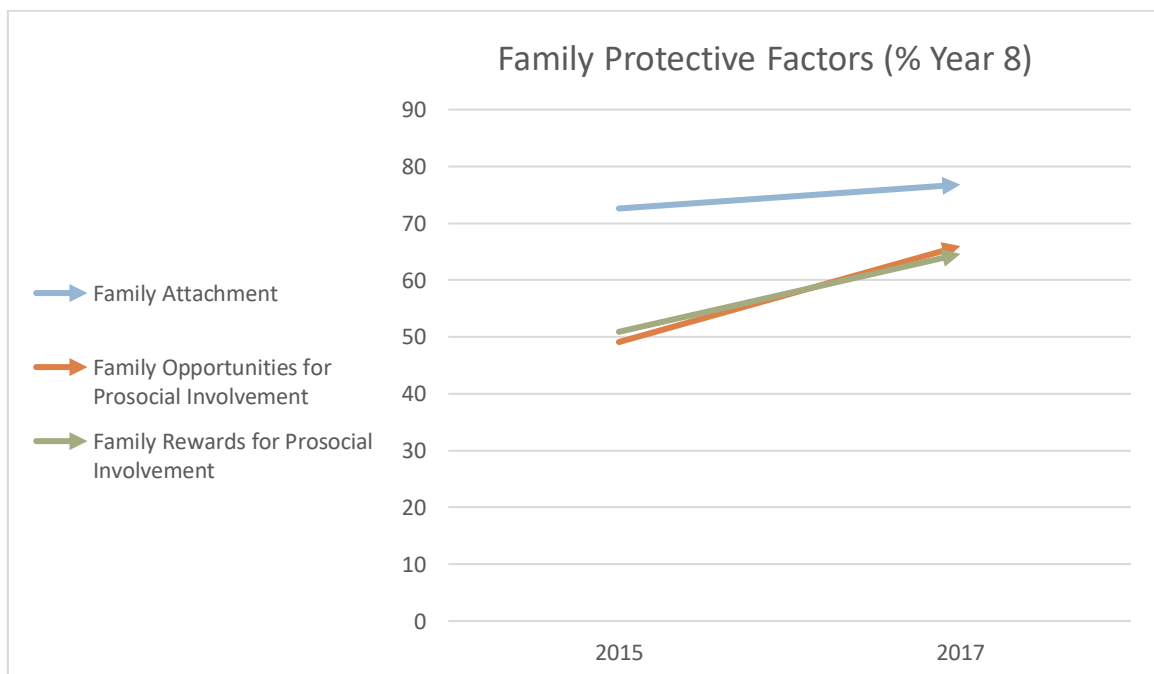
Source – CTC

## Youth Protective Factors



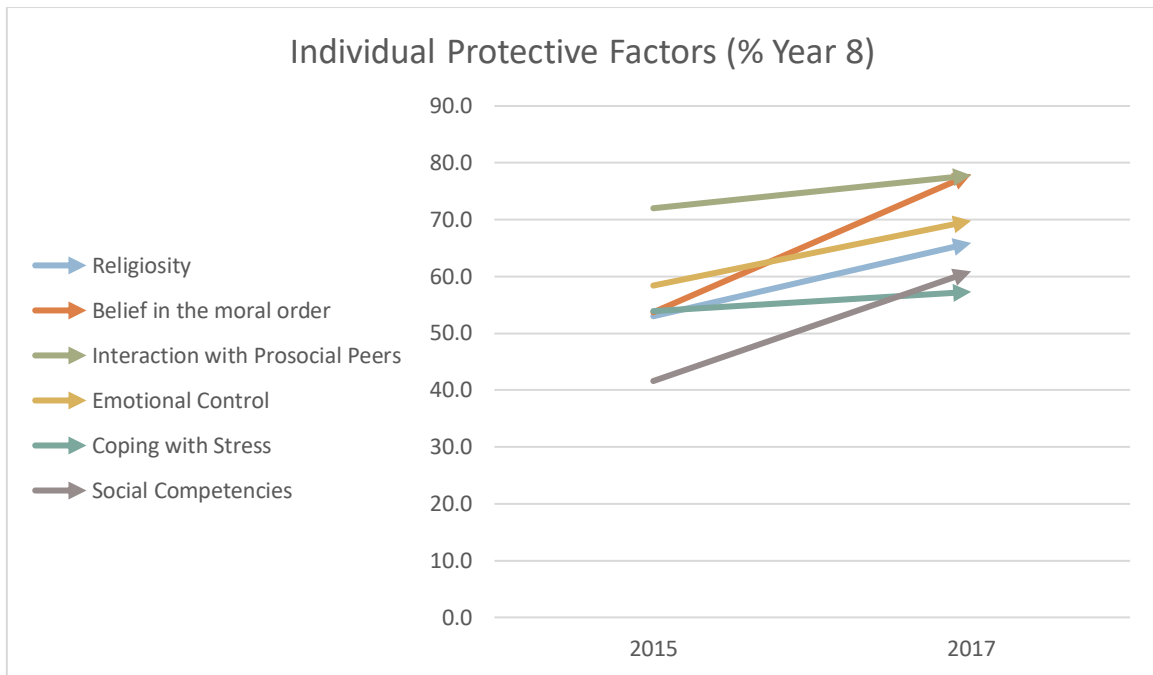
All protective factors for year 8s in Warrnambool have increased, with schools rising more rapidly than community. This correlates well with the School Risk Factors in decline reported in the previous section. There are perhaps programmes and structures in place in schools that might well be translated to community settings, noting that perceived rewards are rising faster than opportunities for prosocial involvement.

Source - CTC



There has been an increase in the proportion of year 8 students in Warrnambool with the protective factor “family attachment”. While high on the scale, it still represents that only 4 out of 5 young adults have this attachment, Family attachment during childhood is important for life-long social and emotional functioning. Opportunities and Rewards are increasing at a similar and faster pace.

Source – CTC

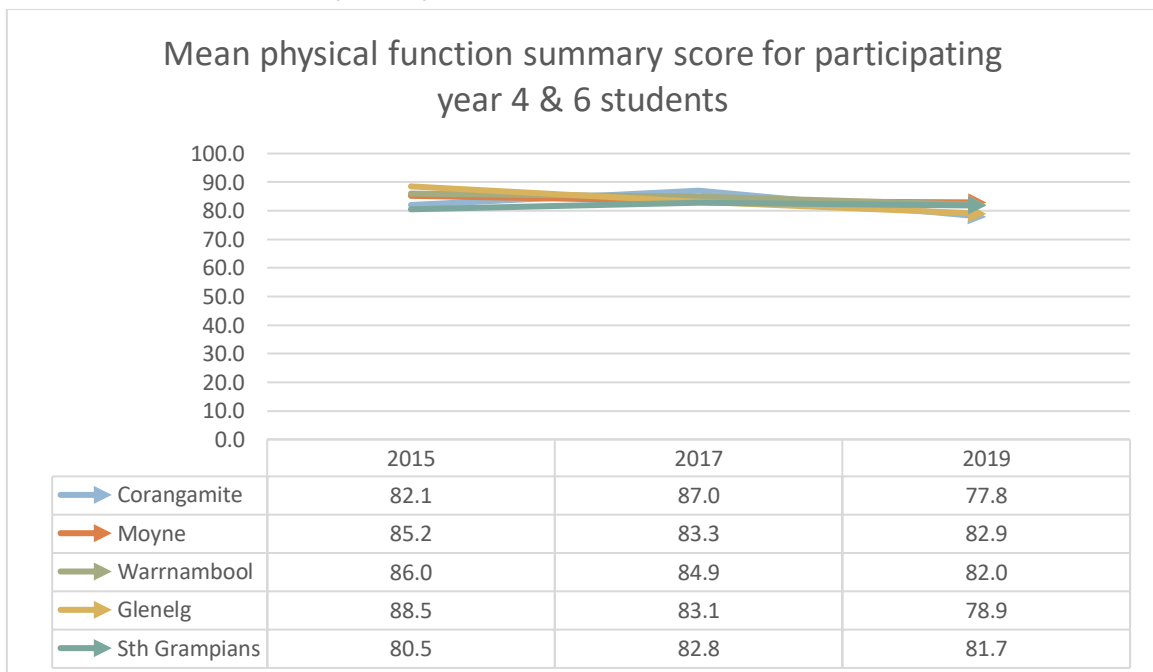


It is encouraging to see all individual protective factors on the increase across domains. The smallest increase has been the proportion of year 8 students in Warrnambool with the protective factor “coping with stress” which appears to be a problem across age groups, genders, city and country.

The proportion of year 8 students in Warrnambool with the protective factor “belief in the moral order” has increased markedly which is very positive. A lack of trust in, or respect of, the social contract is predictive of the volume of anti-social behaviour in a community.

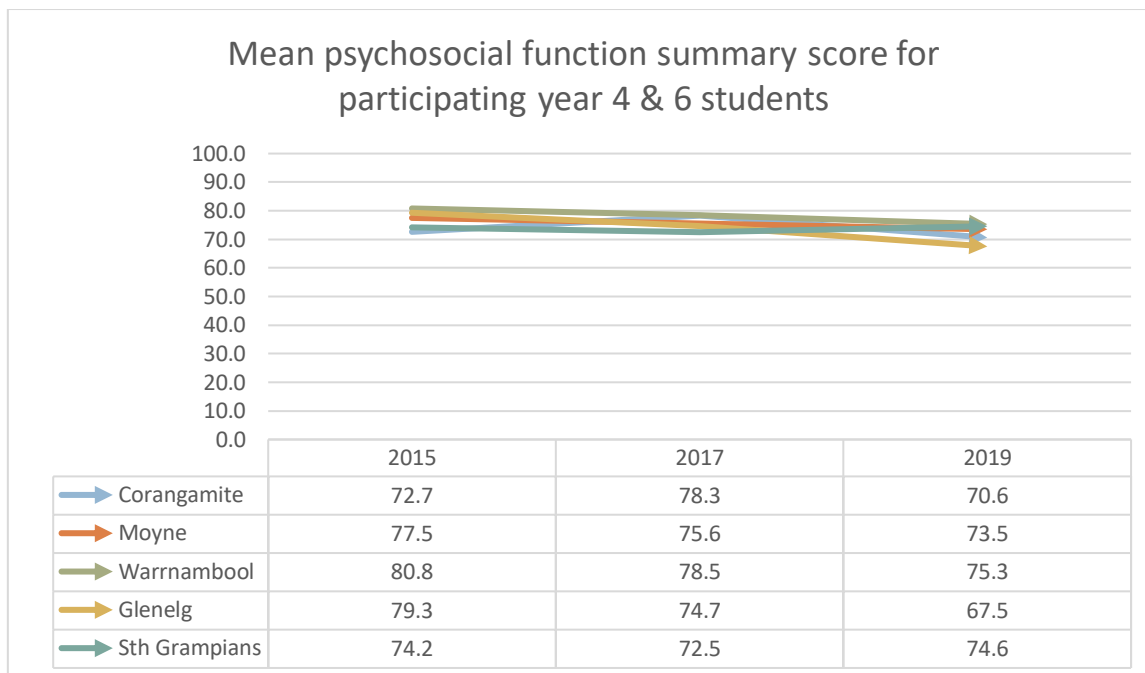
Source - CTC

## Children’s health-related quality of life



The decline in mean physical function score across the region is of concern, particularly Corangamite and Glenelg. Poor physical function could be a lead indicator for decreased exercise, sedentarism and a variety of poor health outcomes later in life as a result.

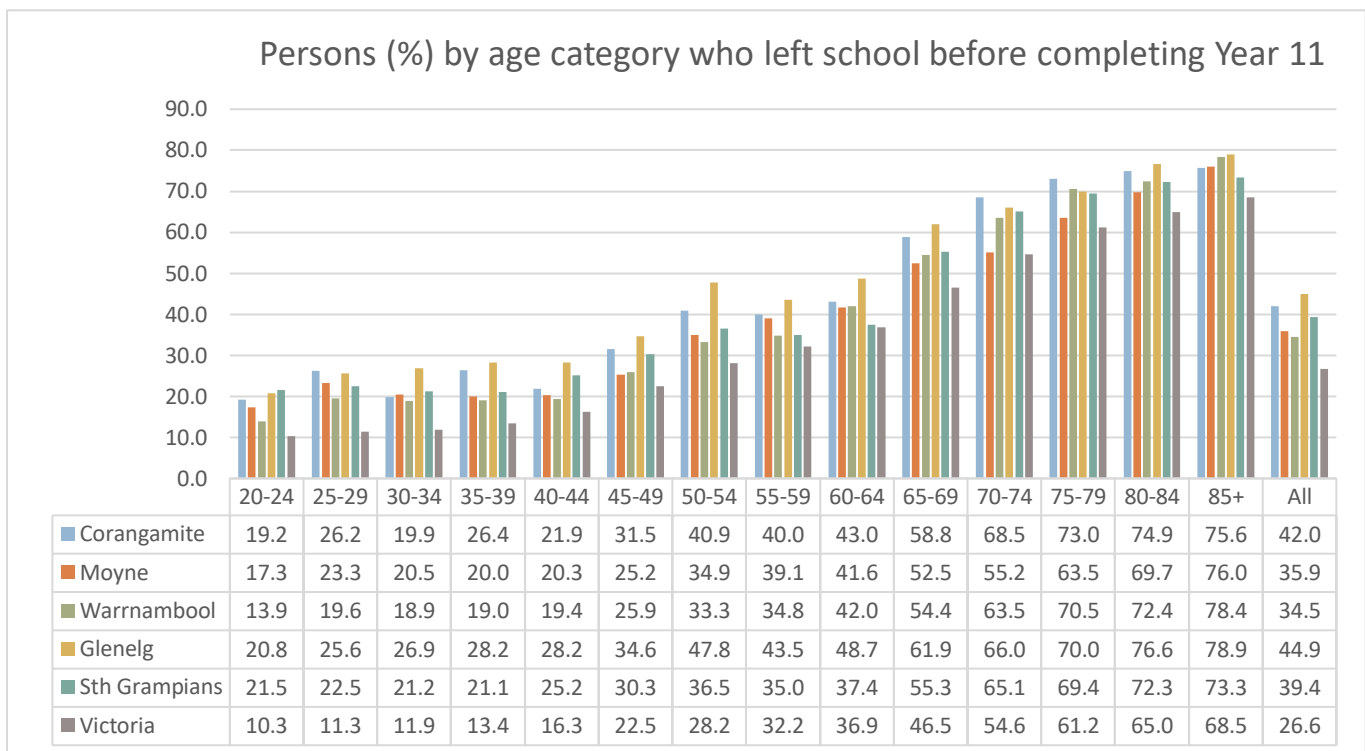
Source: GLOBE



Psychosocial health is a composite indicator of social competence, emotional regulation and functioning at school. The quality of life of a proportion of children in Corangamite, and to a lesser extent in Moyne and Warrnambool, are impacted by social/emotional problems and/or are not coping at school. The decline across the region is of concern. As a broad measure of psychological functioning, this is an early indicator of difficulty in coping and exposure to risks as they progress into youth. It is also a long-term lead indicator into the type of functioning and behaviours they may display as adults later in life.

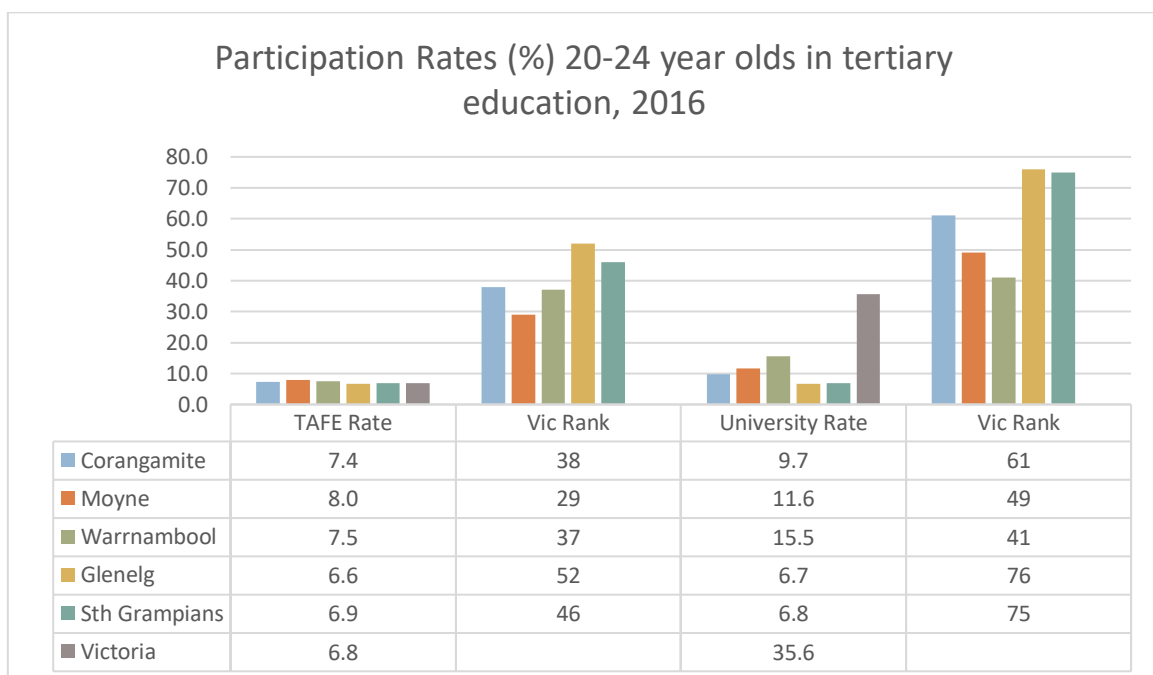
Source: GLOBE

## Education



The proportion of young people staying in high school education is increasing but remains stubbornly low compared to state averages across the generations.

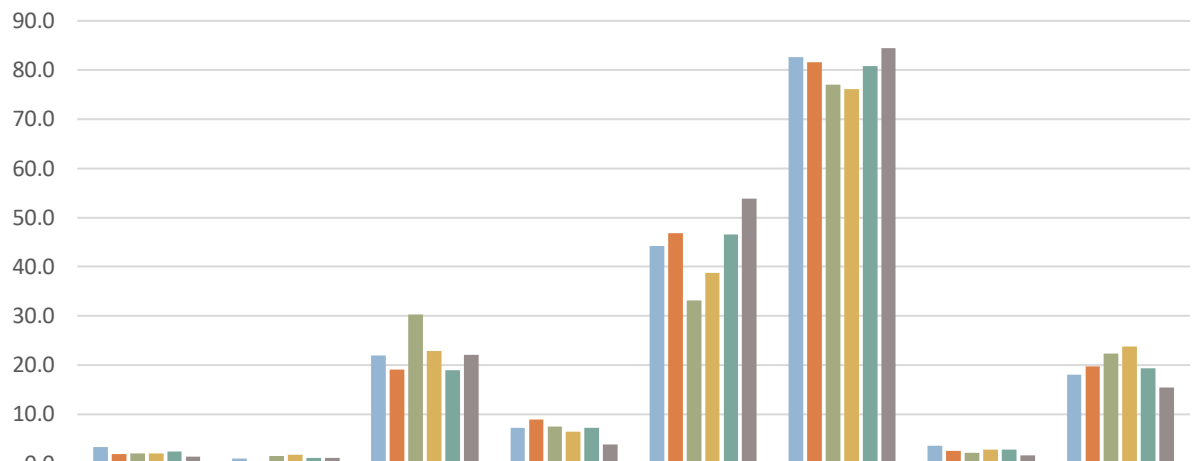
Source – ABS



In 2016, the proportion of 20-24 year-old adults engaged in tertiary education was low. While just beating state averages for TAFE participation, we still ranked low among Victorian LGAs with Warrnambool just getting into the top 30. This is likely a combination of a strong institute, local transport links, its physical location, post completion employment opportunity (eg: trades, hospitality etc.) and diverse course offerings. Our region is significantly worse performing in University participation despite a local campus that is poorly attended likely due to cost, low course diversity, unclear or immediately relevant employment outcomes and physical location/transport issues.

Source – ABS

### Youth 15-19yrs Engagement (%), 2016 (FT=Full Time, PT=Part Time)

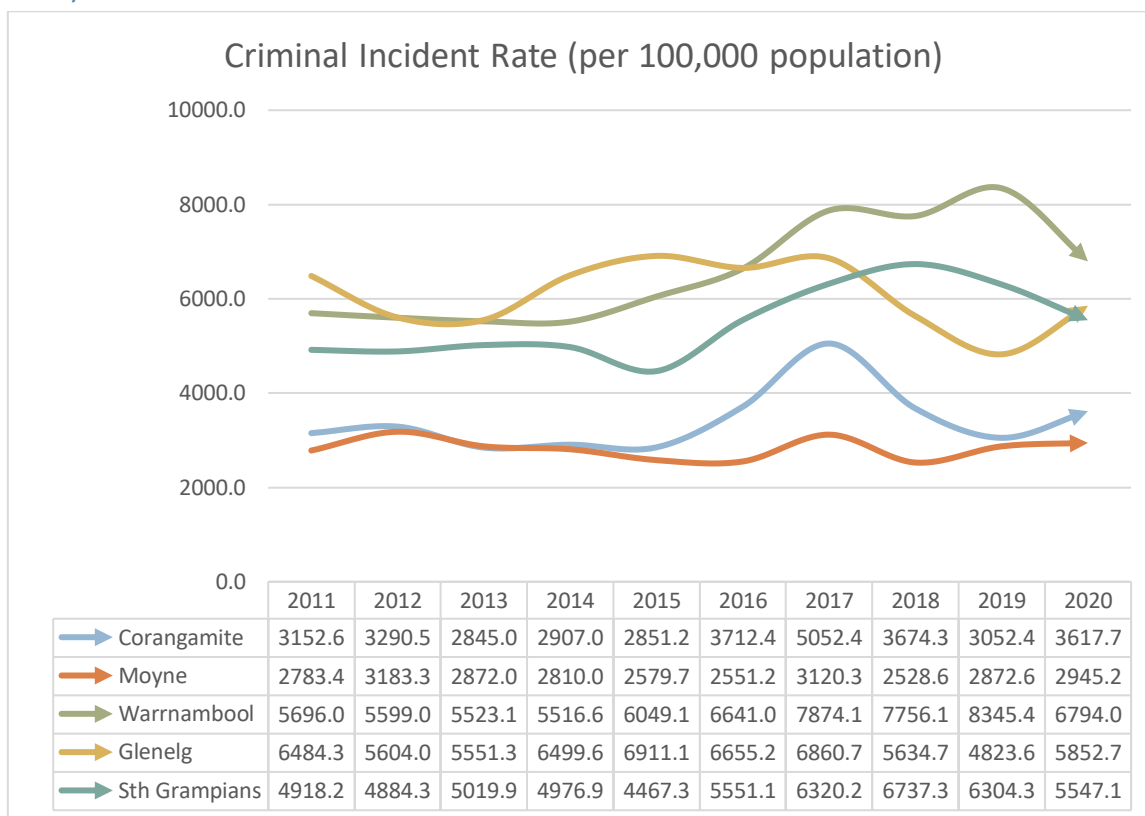


	Work FT - Study PT	Work and Study PT	Work PT - Study FT	Work FT - No Study	Study FT - No Work	Fully Engaged	Work (away from work) and Study FT	Disengaged
■ Corangamite	3.3	1.0	22.0	7.2	44.2	82.6	3.6	18.1
■ Moyne	1.9	0.4	19.1	8.9	46.8	81.6	2.5	19.7
■ Warrnambool	2.0	1.5	30.3	7.5	33.2	77.1	2.2	22.4
■ Glenelg	2.0	1.8	22.8	6.4	38.7	76.1	2.8	23.8
■ Sth Grampians	2.4	1.1	18.9	7.2	46.6	80.8	2.8	19.4
■ Victoria	1.4	1.1	22.1	3.8	53.8	84.4	1.7	15.5

The proportion of disengaged youth across our region is above state averages. The tendency to work as opposed to study is prevalent and may be a cultural issue or perhaps reflects lack of pathways or opportunities outside the regions “traditional” industries.

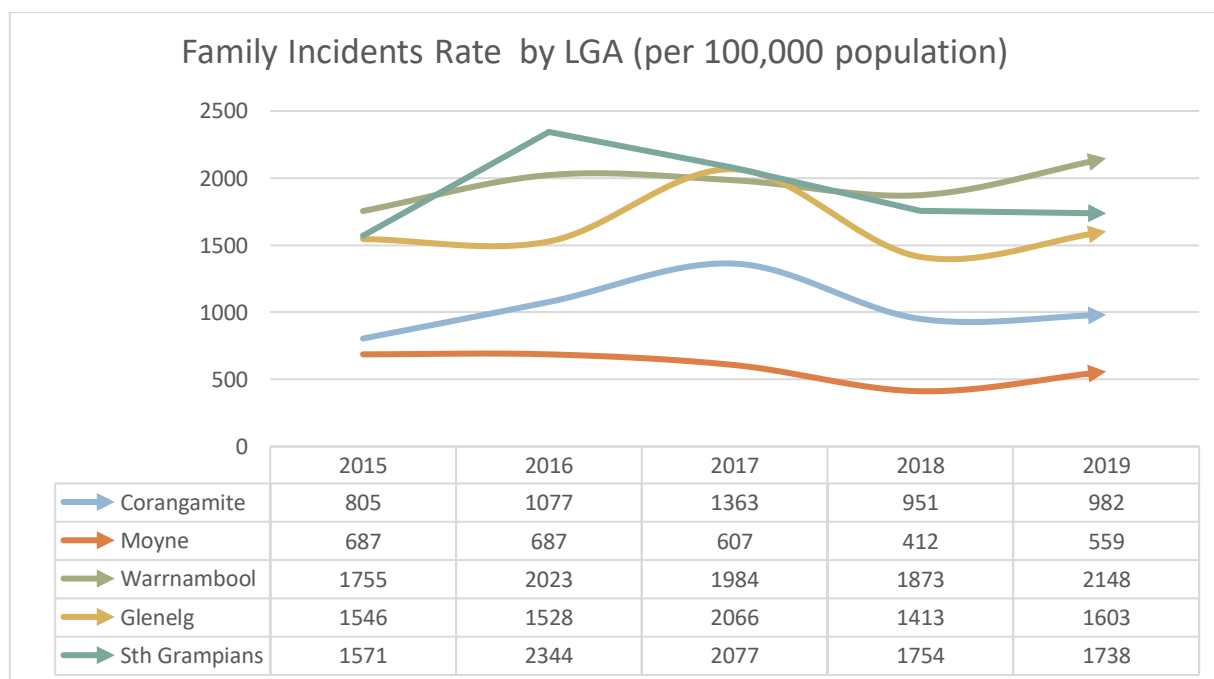
Source – ABS

## Community and Domestic Violence



The rate of criminal incidents is high in Warrnambool but has improved in 2020. Sharp upward moves across the board in 2017 suggest a regional cause, possibly dairy crisis, drought or bushfire related or perhaps a combination of factors.

Source – Victoria Police/Victorian Crime Statistics Agency



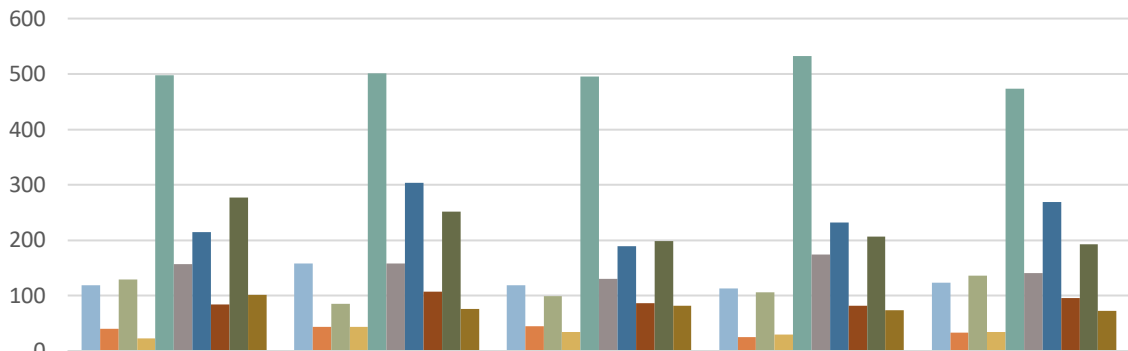
Encouragingly, Rates of Crime against individuals out in society has stayed steady over a long period although recent surge above state averages in Warrnambool is concerning.

Source – Victoria Police/Victorian Crime Statistics Agency<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Victorian Crime Statistics Agency is a statutory body that uses filtered Victoria Police data to protect individual identities of victims and accused



### Family Incident-Related Offences by Sex of Affected Family Member (Number of Incidents)



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Corangamite F	119	158	119	113	123
Corangamite M	40	44	45	25	33
Moyne F	129	85	99	106	136
Moyne M	23	44	34	30	34
Warrnambool F	498	501	495	532	473
Warrnambool M	157	158	130	174	141
Glenelg F	215	304	189	232	269
Glenelg M	84	107	86	82	96
Sth Grampians F	277	252	198	207	193
Sth Grampians M	101	76	82	74	72

The impact of domestic violence is overwhelmingly experienced by female victims particularly in times of crisis, however, return to “norms” when crises subside.

Source – Victoria Police/Victorian Crime Statistics Agency

## In Summary

A long-term slow rise in mental health distress across generations paints a bleak picture if it were to continue over the long term. There are wide ranging causes of poor mental health; cultural, societal, economic. Specific work on some of these factors have the potential to bring relief. A diverse economy can widen choices, open up space for emerging business and make available different paths for individuals beyond the traditional industries of our region. With optimism and hope, it also changes an individuals state of mind in reference to control of other influences that may lead to better food, exercise, alcohol and behavioural choices.

There is a conundrum in the data when we consider the interplay between physical activity, obesity and food choices. While we don't consume large amounts of takeaway food, have reduced our sweetened beverage intake and eat lots of fruit, the vast majority of us do not eat vegetables. This combination has seen a rise in obesity. The traditional answer is to move more. Even though our region has high levels of active work and declining sedentary behaviour, the population still choose to sit for significant periods every day. How these patterns interact with alcohol intake and other indicators are not well understood, but the range of strategies employed in these areas seem not to be achieving the behaviour change required for genuine healthy lifestyles. If there are barriers to exercise (attitudinal, cost, availability, work patterns, time etc.) then our consumption patterns of food and beverages need to be better informed or the long-term health impacts are likely to be dire.

Overall, younger children are following the parental example set for them. As they emerge into high school years, the structure and programs seem to have a minimising effect on risk factors and enhance protective factors. On leaving school and as we progress through adult life, there seems to be a tendency to revert to the patterns of our parents observed during childhood as the stressors and harsh reality of life after school take hold. Based on this, a concerted effort in Parental and Young Child education (formal, societal and cultural) while diversifying and enhancing economic opportunity, should enable young children start their life on a better footing. It would then enhance all aspects of their behaviours through their period of youth and enable young adults to become resilient, healthy and responsible adults as time goes by. For society as a whole, this pattern would significantly enhance regional and rural liveability on a range of measures into the future.

With both the Victorian Population Health Survey and the Australian National Census due to be conducted in 2020, the data coming out of those activities will provide excellent insight into whether the policy settings put in place since 2016-17 have made an impact and should be very informative on how policy makers should proceed.

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