

Gladstone Region Wellbeing

# 2021 Baseline Report

April 2021





# Together

Gladstone Region engaging in action Together (GRT) is a collective group of voices from community, government, service providers and businesses, working together to create a thriving future for our community.

## Our vision is opportunity, equity and quality of life for everyone.

We will achieve this by listening to the voices of our community, and ensuring all voices are heard.

With your help, we will map our own path to change and develop an Action Plan that builds on our community's strengths and acknowledges the needs of our diverse community.

We will use data and stories to understand our priority areas, work collectively on agreed actions, and measure our progress to journey together to sustainable community wellbeing.

We all share the same goal and through community-led action and genuine collaboration we can create a brighter, positive and thriving future for our region's community together!

**“ Our goal in providing this information is to inspire others to join these efforts, intentional action and collective momentum towards improved community wellbeing. ”**

## Your Voice

This draft report is being shared to 'test' the data and validate its reliability as reflective of the lived experience of our community. The data will guide our collective identification of priority areas of focus.

## Purpose

The Gladstone Region Wellbeing 2021 Baseline Report provides data identified as significant for the communities of the Gladstone Region Local Government Area due to:

- its disparity to Queensland as a comparative and
- its relevance in the cycle of disadvantage.

It forms the baseline for our community to measure and track our progress over time to improved community wellbeing.

**By measuring our progress over time, we can ensure that our efforts are invested in the right places and that our collective energy is returning the outcomes we want to see.**

# Parameters

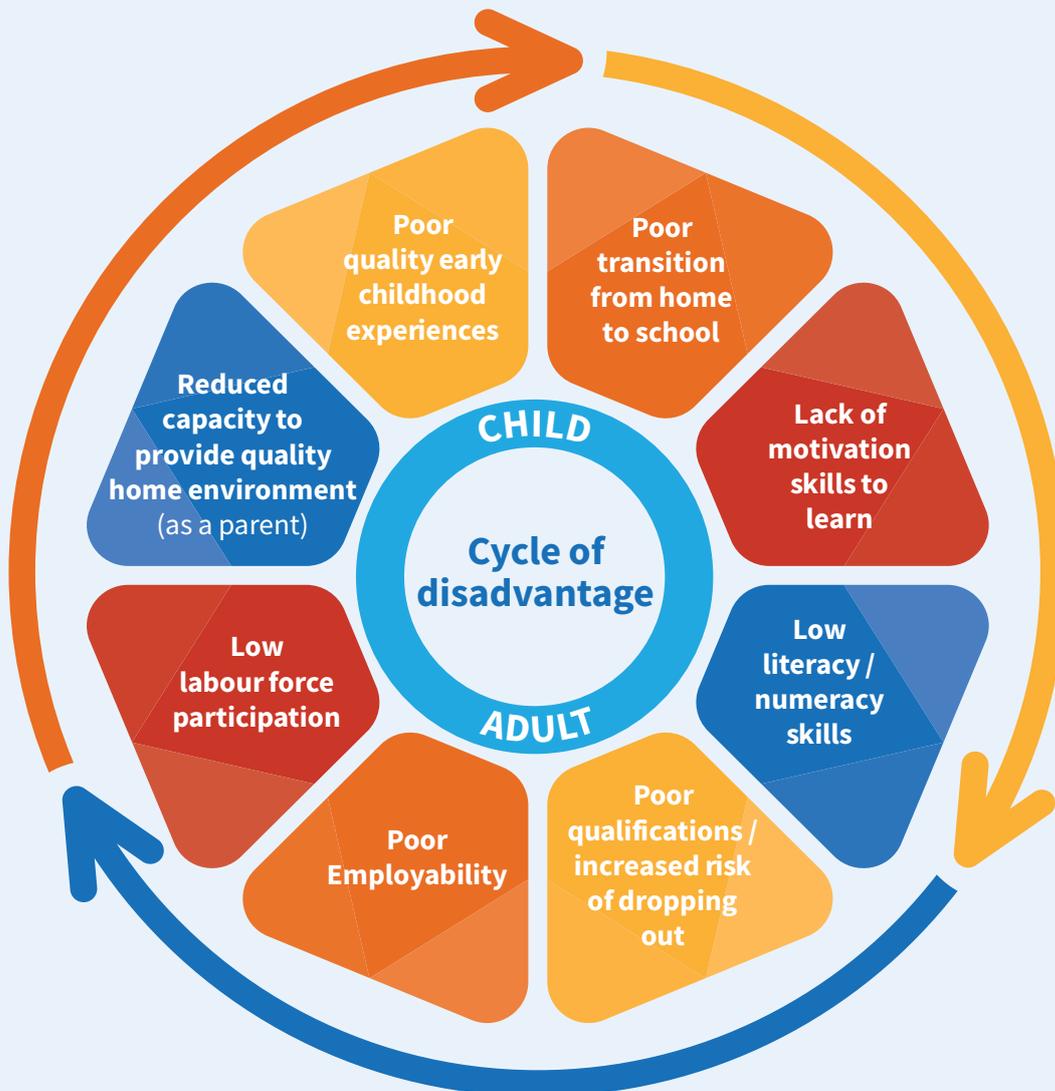
Data is provided for the whole of the Gladstone LGA however statistics within each individual location, suburb or community can vary and will form an important source of information at later stages of the work to focus support where it is most needed.

The data presented in this report aligns to factors recognised as significant in the cycle of disadvantage and in improving wellbeing. The data reflects where the Gladstone LGA shows a statistical variance to Queensland as a whole.

## Values & Assumptions

Discussing data related to populations is not about judgement. It is an essential part of understanding what is happening for specific demographics of our community so that we can target solutions that work, to help us 'do better' in our efforts to improve community wellbeing. The statements made in this report are drawn from research & statistical evidence.

Giving our children the best start in life will help break the cycle of disadvantage.





“ Children born into safe homes with happy, healthy parents are statistically more likely to have a happy healthy life and access to employment and education opportunities. ”

# OUR POPULATION



“ 22.7% of Gladstone’s population is under the age of 15 compared to 19.4% for Queensland ”

# Gladstone has a Young Population

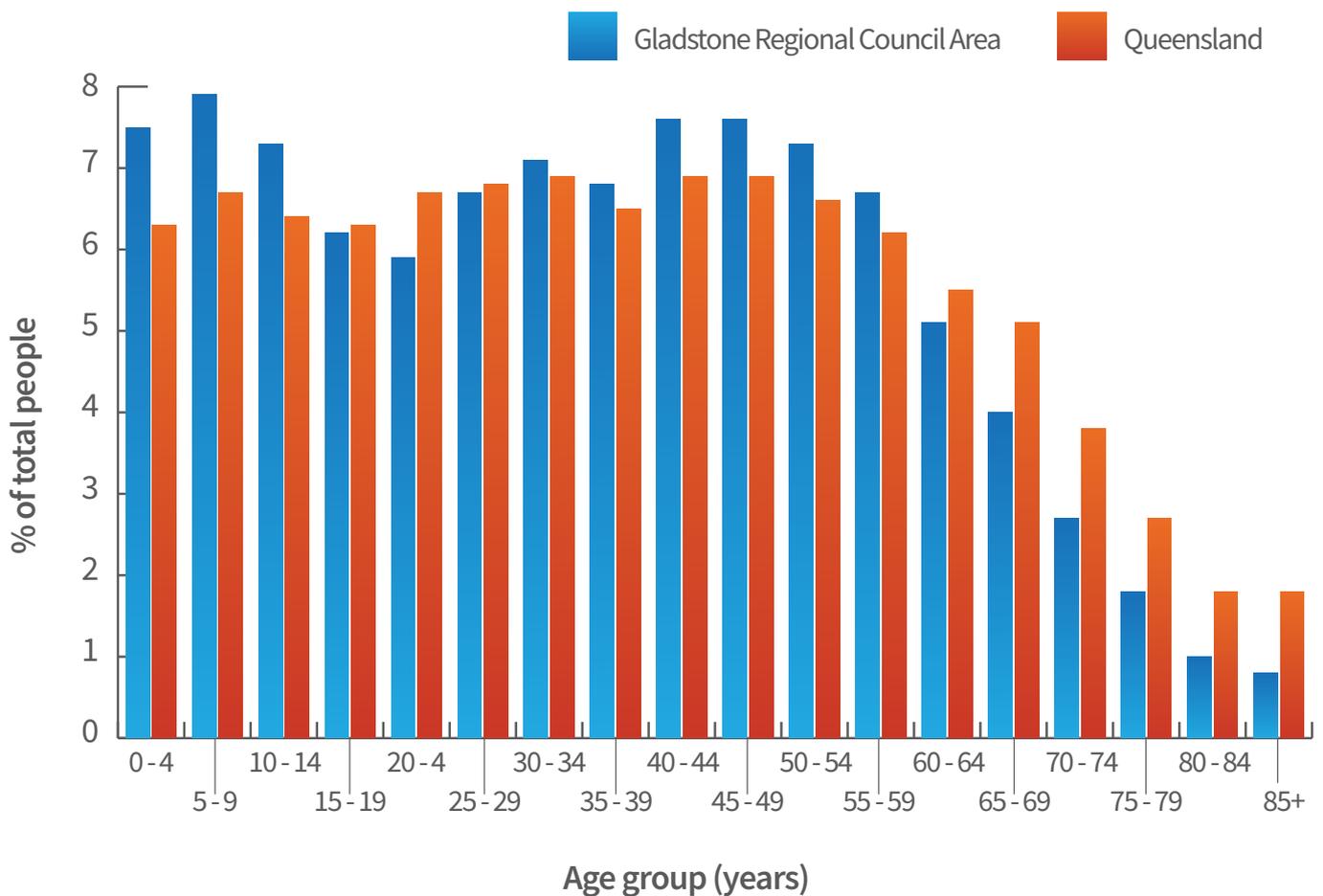
We have high birth rates and low death rates compared to Queensland

2016	Gladstone (rate/1000)	Queensland (rate/1000)
Birth Rate	14.4	12.4
Death Rate	4.8	6.2
Median Age	35	37

22.7% of Gladstone's population is under the age of 15 compared to 19.4% for Queensland

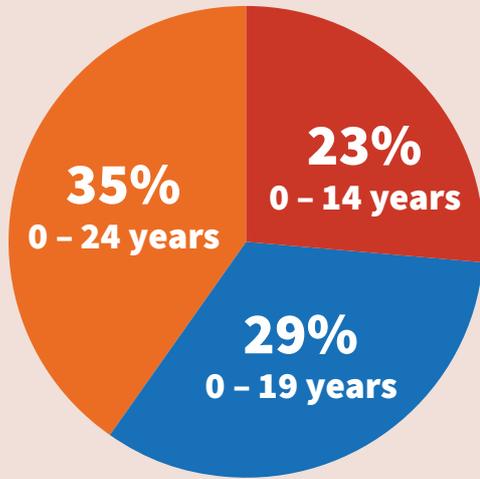
## Population by Age

The 0-19 age group represents more than a quarter of the population 61,640 (2016)



# Gladstone has a Young Population *continued*

Ages ranges as representation of whole population (2016)

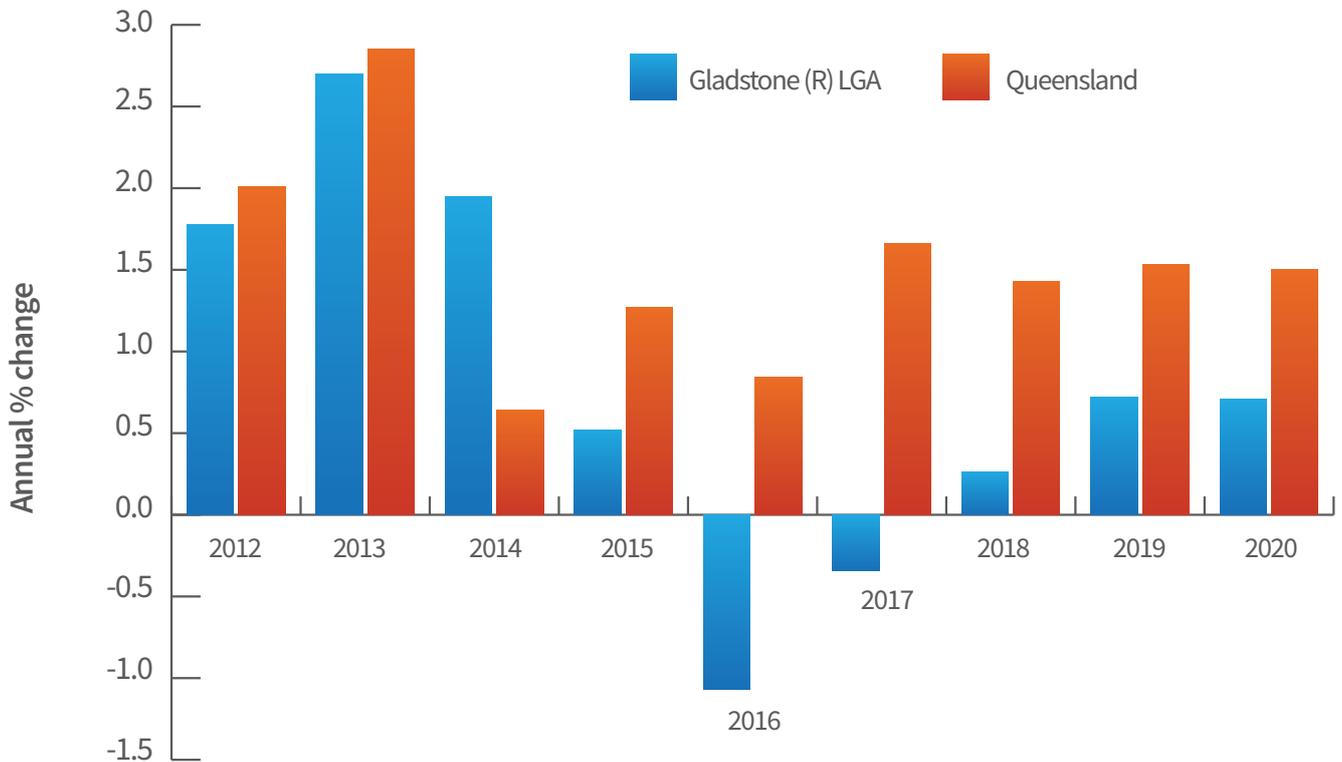


Age	Gladstone	%	Queensland	%
0-4 years	4,606	7.5	296,466	6.3
5-9 years	4,860	7.9	317,138	6.7
10-14 years	4,477	7.3	299,097	6.4
0 - 14 years as total % of population		22.7		19.4



## Population Growth

Gladstone's population grew throughout the last industry project construction boom. Population growth declined following the peak of construction workforce in 2013 and continued to decline seeing population size decrease between 2016 and 2017 following commencement of operations in 2014.



Population growth in 2013 coincided with peak construction workforce of 11,000 across the three LNG projects on Curtis Island.

A significant factor influencing our population size and demographic is the movement of people, with migration into and out of the region.

Gladstone is an industrial growth town with a tendency to experience periods of migration aligned to economic periods of changes termed 'Boom and Bust' and migration trends are commonly linked to the relocation of workforce and resulting rental prices.

Construction projects see an influx of temporary workforce on the boom side of the curve that consume rental availability, pushing up house sale and rental prices and triggering the acceleration of new housing stock.

As rental prices go up, affordability and availability go down and the region experiences migration out to other areas that offer more affordable housing.

As construction projects are completed and related workforce leave town, an oversupply of housing results in falling rental prices, attracting in-migration for those seeking a more affordable cost of living.

These in and out migration patterns show correlations in other social indicators with some predictability in lag times.

# Pregnant Mothers

# HEALTH

A child's health is influenced by Mum's health from pre-conception throughout pregnancy and to birth. Mum's health and wellbeing is a key factor in some of the earliest indicators of health in a babies life.

Early antenatal care supports the best possible pregnancy outcome for women and their babies.

Antenatal care includes routine screening for pregnancy problems, assessment of pregnancy risk, and provision of information for a positive pregnancy and birth experience.

Early preventive care aids in the development and delivery of a healthy child and improved pregnancy outcomes such as full term delivery and healthy birth weight.

Early antenatal care and a healthy lifestyle for pregnant mothers provides the best start for children.

## Antenatal Visits

2016-2018

Less mothers in the Gladstone Region access early antenatal care compared to Queensland mothers



Number of women who gave birth and who had their first antenatal care visit before 14 weeks gestation

**62.1%**  
Gladstone

**77.3%**  
Queensland (2018)

## Mothers Smoking During Pregnancy

2016-2018

More mothers in the Gladstone Region smoked during pregnancy compared to Queensland mothers



Number of women who gave birth and reported smoking tobacco in the first 20 weeks of pregnancy

**15.4%**  
Gladstone

**11.7%**  
Queensland

# Baby Health

Infant mortality (deaths under one year of age) can be an indicator of the general health and wellbeing of a population and has a large influence on life expectancy at birth. A high infant mortality rate lowers life expectancy, while a low infant mortality rate contributes to increased life expectancy.

Our infant mortality rates are lower than for Queensland births.

## Infant Mortality

2013-2017

Lower Infant mortality rates



Mortality rate for under 1 years/1,000 live births

**4.1**  
Gladstone

**4.3**  
Queensland

## Apgar Scores

2016-2018

The Apgar score is a measure of a baby's health condition 1 minute and 5 minutes after their birth. It helps indicate whether a baby needs immediate treatment or monitoring.

A newborn with an Apgar score of seven or higher is often healthy. This means that the newborn has a healthy appearance, is crying, moving their arms and legs, and has a regular heartbeat.



Apgar Score of less than 7 at 5 mins for birth at or after term

**1.4%**  
Gladstone

**1.45%**  
Queensland

## Babies Born with Healthy Weight

2020

Our babies are more frequently being born above, what is considered to be, low birth weight of 2,500grams compared to Queensland babies.



Baby Weight <2500g

**5.4%**  
Gladstone

**6.5%**  
Queensland

**AUSTRALIA WIDE - 3 times the rate of low birthweight babies were born to mothers in the lowest socio-economic areas compared with the highest socio-economic areas in 2014 (AIHW)**

Increasing the number of babies born within the optimal healthy weight can help improve the long-term health of our growing children. Babies born with a healthy birth weight are more likely to have a healthy start to life.

## Child Safety and

# WELLBEING

**Our children's safety and wellbeing is the starting place to grow happy, healthy, resilient adults.**

By providing our children with strong foundations we can help them to overcome any challenges they may encounter on their life journey and to harness opportunities that come their way.

Over the last five years the number of children subject to child protection orders has risen.

By focusing on our families, and enabling parents to provide a happy, healthy and nurturing home environment, we can provide a great start for our children.

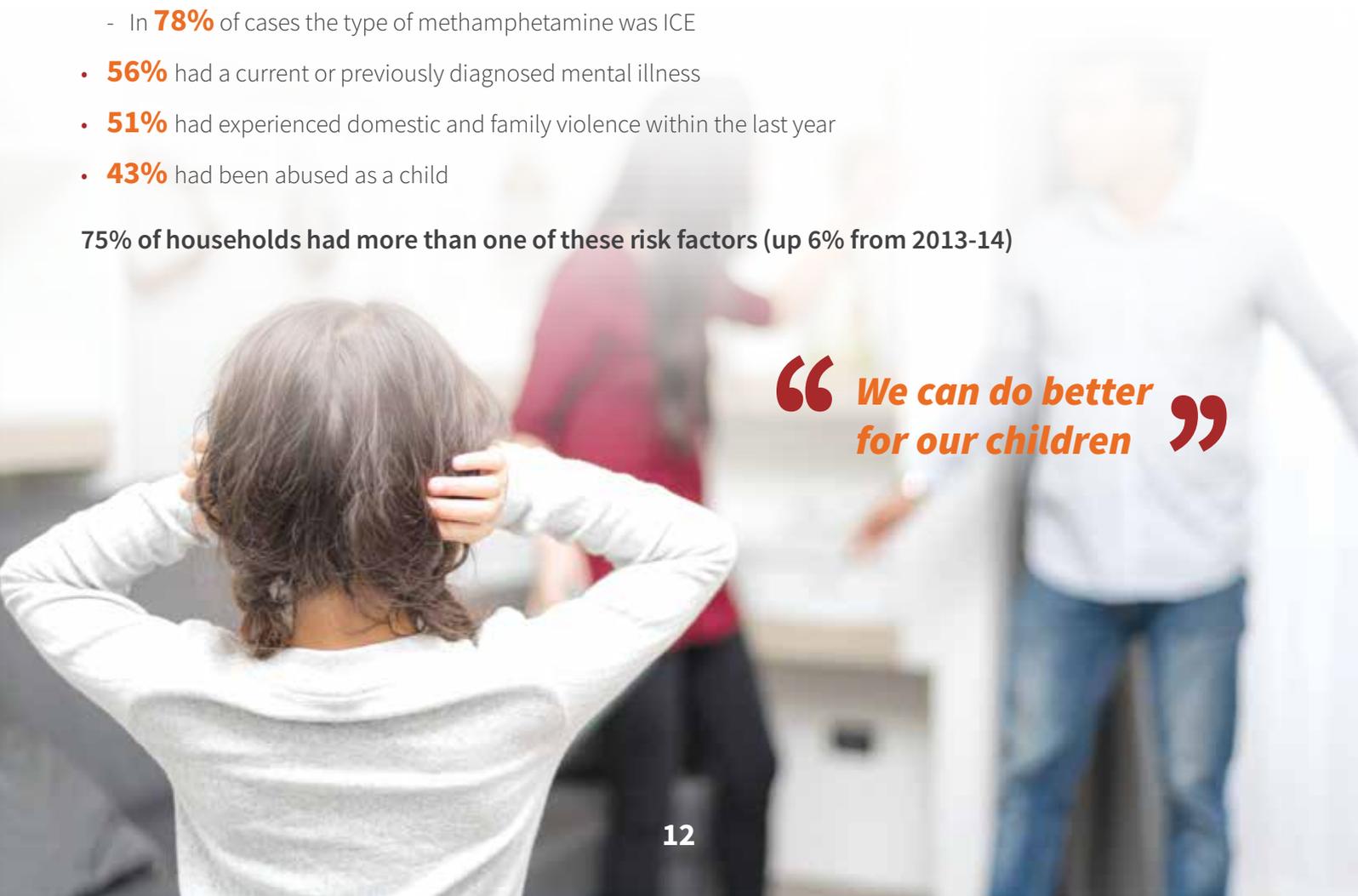
This can start as early as from pre-conception as we assist our young people and adults to make positive and healthy choices even before they become parents.

### **Issues related to Child Safety in Queensland:**

Child Safety is increasingly working with more complex cases. Over the seven years to 30 June 2020, there has been an increase in the prevalence of risk factors within households where a child experienced or was at risk of significant harm.

- In **67%** of households, a parent had a current/past AODs problem
- **39%** of children who came into care of the department during the year ending 30 June 2020 had a parent with current or previous methamphetamine use recorded
  - In **78%** of cases the type of methamphetamine was ICE
- **56%** had a current or previously diagnosed mental illness
- **51%** had experienced domestic and family violence within the last year
- **43%** had been abused as a child

**75% of households had more than one of these risk factors (up 6% from 2013-14)**



**“ We can do better for our children ”**



# Child Health

## Immunisations

We are behind Queensland for child immunisations at the one year and five-year intervals and behind Queensland’s target of 95% of children fully immunised at all milestones to the age of 5.

2018

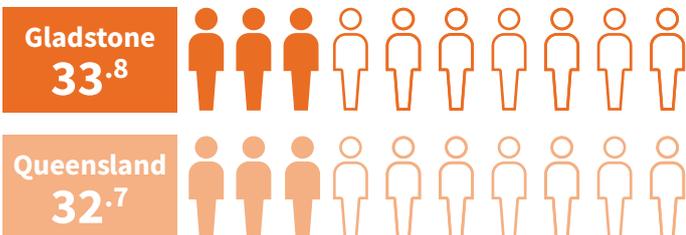


Unhealthy weight increases risks of other avoidable health complications. Being in a healthy weight range lowers the risk of chronic disease and increases quality of life. People in a healthy weight range are more likely to report being satisfied with their health.

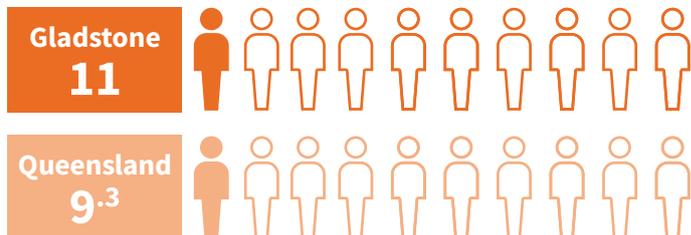
We are seeing a high frequency of obesity in our children aged 2 to 17 compared to Queensland children.

2017-18 (modelled estimate)

### Obese persons over 18



### Obese persons 2-17



# We can do better in Child Readiness for School

## Pre-School Enrolments

The early years of a child's life are a crucial time for brain development and laying foundations for learning and preventing other problems in later life.

High quality early childhood education provides our children with a great start and increases their chances of doing well at school.

Less of our children are enrolled in pre-school than Queensland children.

2016	Gladstone %	Queensland %
4 year olds	82.9	89.4
5 year olds	11.3	11.6
4 & 5 year olds	45.1	50.2

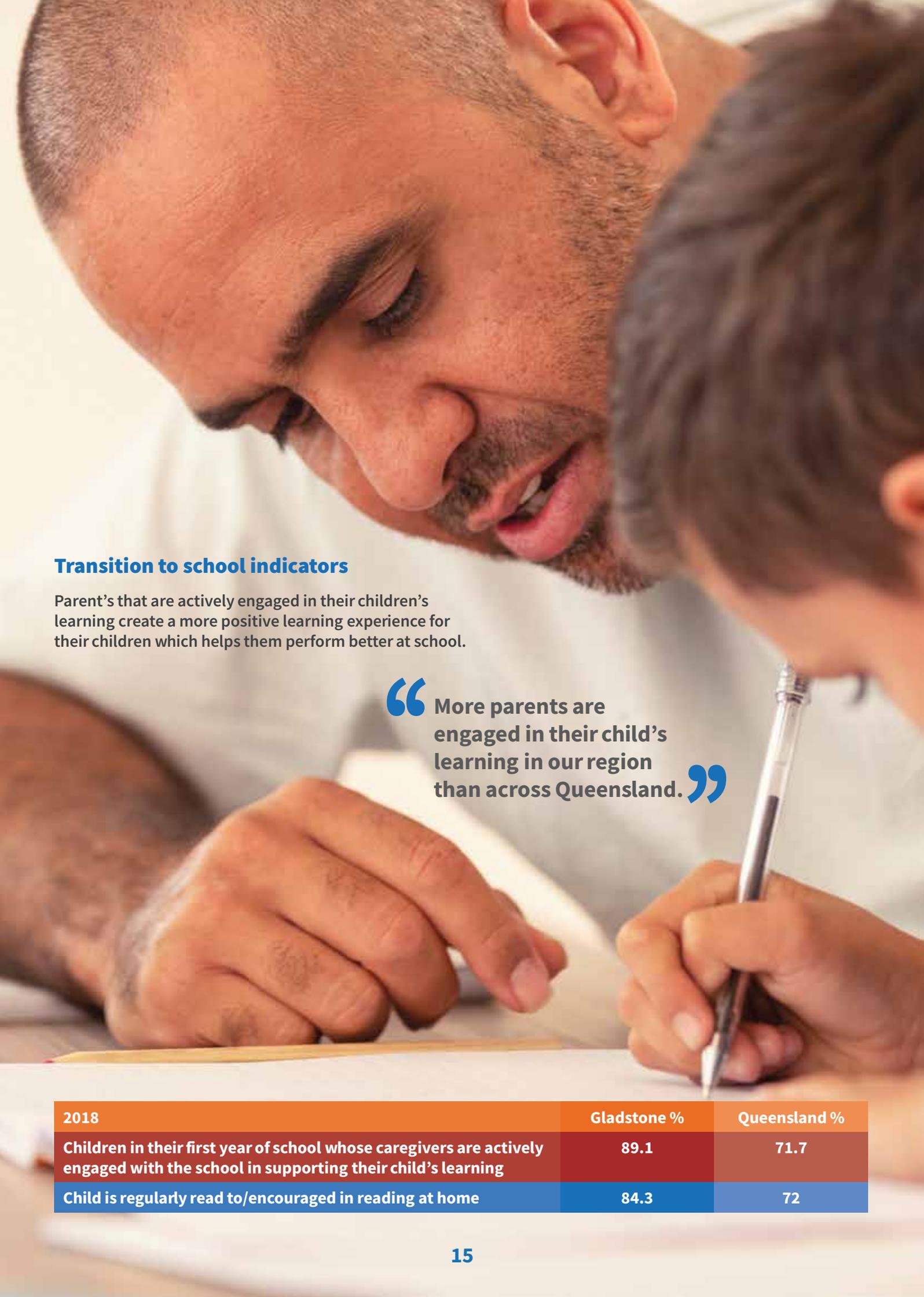
## Developmental Vulnerability in Children (AEDC)

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) measures how well children are developing. It looks at five domains that are important for a child's development.

- physical health and wellbeing
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive skills
- communication skills and general knowledge

Of the five domains – Gladstone Region children are more vulnerable than Queensland children in two. More of our children are vulnerable in emotional maturity and language and cognitive domains than Queensland children.

2018	Gladstone %	Queensland %
Physical health and wellbeing	11.1	12.3
Social competence	10.5	11.9
Emotional Maturity	11.1	10.5
Language & Cognitive	10.2	8.0
Communication skills and general knowledge	9.0	10.1

A close-up photograph of a man and a young child looking down at a book together. The man is on the left, leaning over the child on the right. The child is holding a pen and appears to be writing or reading. The background is softly blurred, focusing attention on their interaction.

### Transition to school indicators

Parents that are actively engaged in their children's learning create a more positive learning experience for their children which helps them perform better at school.

“ More parents are engaged in their child's learning in our region than across Queensland. ”

2018	Gladstone %	Queensland %
Children in their first year of school whose caregivers are actively engaged with the school in supporting their child's learning	89.1	71.7
Child is regularly read to/encouraged in reading at home	84.3	72

# YOUTH

## School Attendance

Participation of our young people during their school years can be a precursor for their engagement in community life and mental wellbeing post school.

Students who maintain positive attendance and involvement in school life are more likely to stay engaged in learning or find employment after school.

Average state school attendance rates saw a downwards trend over the five years from 2015 to 2019 with some larger high schools seeing a drop in attendance of up to 3%.



**PRIMARY -  
Attendance drop**

**1.15%**

**from 2015-2019**  
*(aggregated 18 State  
Primary Schools)*



**SECONDARY -  
Attendance drop**

**2.18%**

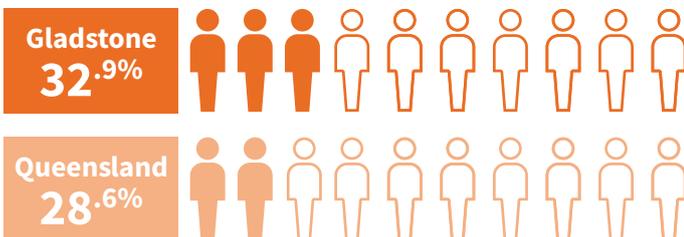
**from 2015-2019**  
*(aggregated data for  
3 State High Schools)*

## Highest Schooling Level

More of our students leave school before Grade 12 completion than students across Queensland.

**2018**

**Years 9-10**



**Years 11-12**



“ Gaining and maintaining a meaningful career is improved if an individual completes Year 12 or equivalent and does post-school education or training. ”

*Our Future State, Advancing Queensland's Priorities 2018*

## Qualifications

**Our region experiences lower outcomes in higher education than Queensland but has a higher rate of completion in vocational certificates.**

General trends indicate that completion of year 12 improves post school opportunity, and higher education is generally an indicator of economic and social wellbeing. However, Gladstone's industry base and the rich variety of employment opportunities offered through local business and industry trainee and apprenticeship pathways places offer alternatives to education outcomes that can also provide positive lifelong career options. These opportunities sometimes see students leave school prior to year 12 completion to take up full time employment and on the job training.

	Gladstone %	Queensland %
<b>Bachelor Degree (BA) and above</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>18.3</b>
<b>Advanced Diploma and Diploma level</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>8.7</b>
<b>Certificate level IV</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Certificate level III</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>15.2</b>
<b>Year 12</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>Year 11</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>

**Unfortunately, despite local opportunities, youth engagement through earning and learning post school, continues to be lower than Queensland's rates of engagement.**



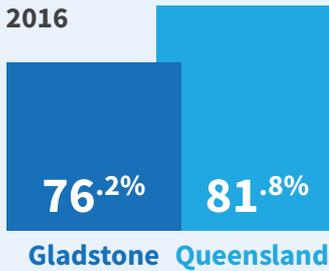
# We can do better in Youth Participation

The dignity of work brings social and economic benefits. For individuals it creates purpose and maximises the use of their capabilities, skills and talents, while allowing families across Queensland to fully participate in society.

*Our Future State, Advancing Queensland's Priorities 2018*

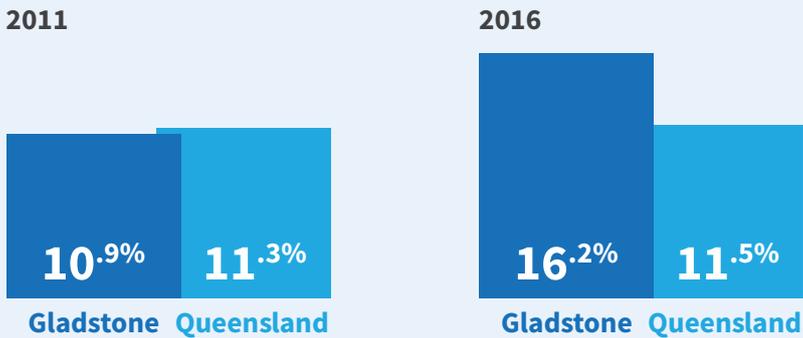
## Earning or Learning (15-24)

Less of our region's youth are engaged in earning or learning activities than youth across Queensland.



## Youth disengagement (15-24)

Our region has seen growth in youth disengagement.



Over the 5 year period 2011-2016 our region experienced significant growth in youth disengagement which increased by over 50%.

Increased family incomes may have reduced the pressure on school leavers to find work. This 5 year period saw more families with both parents working, as high paying employment opportunities became available to more people.

# HEALTH

Good health improves life satisfaction and allows people to enjoy a productive and active lifestyle

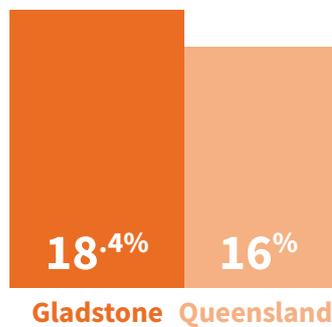
## Healthy body, healthy mind.

Investment in prevention strategies to achieve healthier lifestyles generate benefits to individuals, their families, the health system and the economy.

### Tobacco

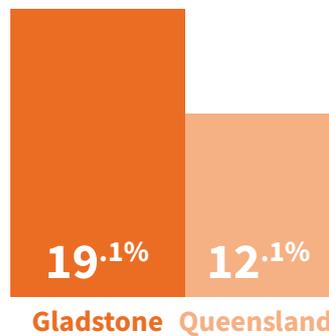
2017-2018

Current smokers (18 and over)



2019-2022

Tobacco-related illnesses



#### AUSTRALIA WIDE –

Dependent children from the lowest socio areas are **3.6 times** as likely to be exposed to tobacco smoke in the home as those from the highest socioeconomic areas (AIHW)

# We can do better in Personal Health & Safety

## DFV Data

Children exposed to violence in their home environment are more likely to experience long-term mental health conditions and may be at greater risk of experiencing violence in their adult relationships later in life.

Domestic and family violence can impact a child's behaviour, schooling, cognitive development, mental and physical wellbeing and is the leading cause of homelessness for children.

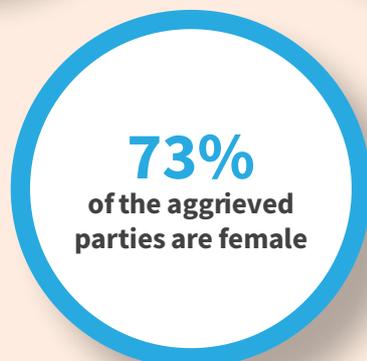
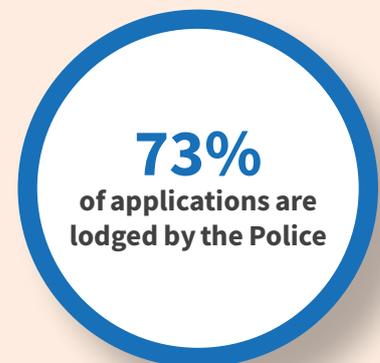
Over 500 Domestic Violence Order (DVO) initiating applications are made each year in the Gladstone Court.

Gladstone (Court) saw a rise in Domestic Violence Orders during the years 2017-19

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
560	558	627	622	536

## Across Queensland

Family, domestic and sexual violence is a major issue. It is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children, and places an enormous burden on services, hospitals and the criminal justice system.



## Alcohol and Other Drugs - Emergency Department Presentations

In 2017-2018 Central Queensland experienced a rate of 417 (ASR per 100.000) Emergency Department presentations related to alcohol and other drugs. Higher than rates of neighbouring regions.

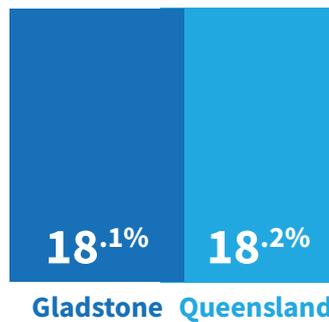


**AUSTRALIA WIDE** – Unemployment is a **major risk** factor for substance use and the subsequent development of substance use disorders (AIHW)

### Alcohol

2017-18 (modelled estimate)

Alcohol consumption at levels considered to be high risk to health over their lifetime - more than two standard drinks per day on average (18 and over)

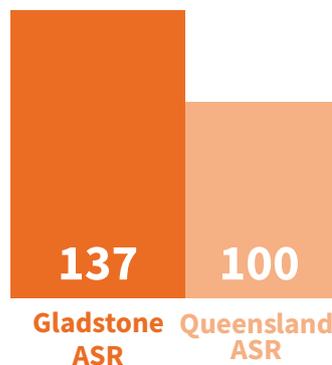


A person's health is influenced by lifestyle behaviours and risks. Behavioural risk factors have a detrimental effect on health and can be prevented by reducing the exposure to the risk factor. Modifiable risk factors include tobacco smoking, being overweight or obese, high alcohol use, physical inactivity and high blood pressure.

### Mental Health

2017-18 (modelled estimate)

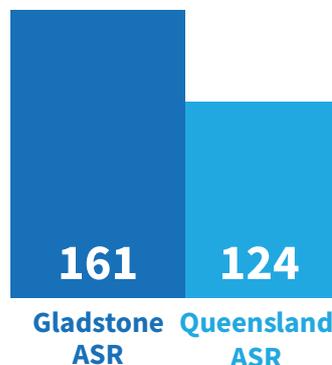
Emergency Department Presentations – Total by principal diagnosis – Mental and Behavioural Disorders



### Avoidable Death

2017-18 (modelled estimate)

Suicide & Self-inflicted Injury 0-74



**AUSTRALIA WIDE** – The lowest socioeconomic group had mortality rates that were **1.3 times** as high as the highest socioeconomic group (AIHW)

# FAMILIES

## Household Income

Our region is often pigeonholed as wealthy due to industry employment and related high incomes. We have more households with an income over \$3,000 a week than Queensland households

However, we also have more households in our region than across Queensland with less than \$650 a week, including our families-with-children.

We also have more families-with-children that are unemployed and receiving welfare than across Queensland.

2016	Gladstone %	Queensland %
Less than \$650 gross weekly income	19.8	19.5
More than \$3,000 gross weekly income	18.5	14.4

## Family Income

2016	Gladstone %	Queensland %
Families with Children where no parent is employed	14.7	13.8
Couples & Single Parent Families with children with income less than \$650/week	34 (an increase of 4% from 2011)	25 (a decrease of 5% from 2011)
Single parent under 25 receiving welfare	1.2	0.5
Children in low-income welfare dependant families	23.6	22.8





# EMPLOYMENT

## Government Payments

Our region has experienced a significant increase in individuals receiving government payments over the last five years.

We have significantly more individuals receiving government payments in particular Newstart. At the end of 2019 the rate of individuals receiving Newstart payments in our region was higher than the Queensland rate.

### Quarter to Dec 2019

#### Newstart (rate/100)



From 2013 to 2018, individuals receiving Newstart payments increased by 130%. The number of individuals receiving all payment types increased for Gladstone with Youth Allowance and Low Income Card numbers also increasing by over 100% while Queensland experienced much smaller increases and decreases in some payment types.

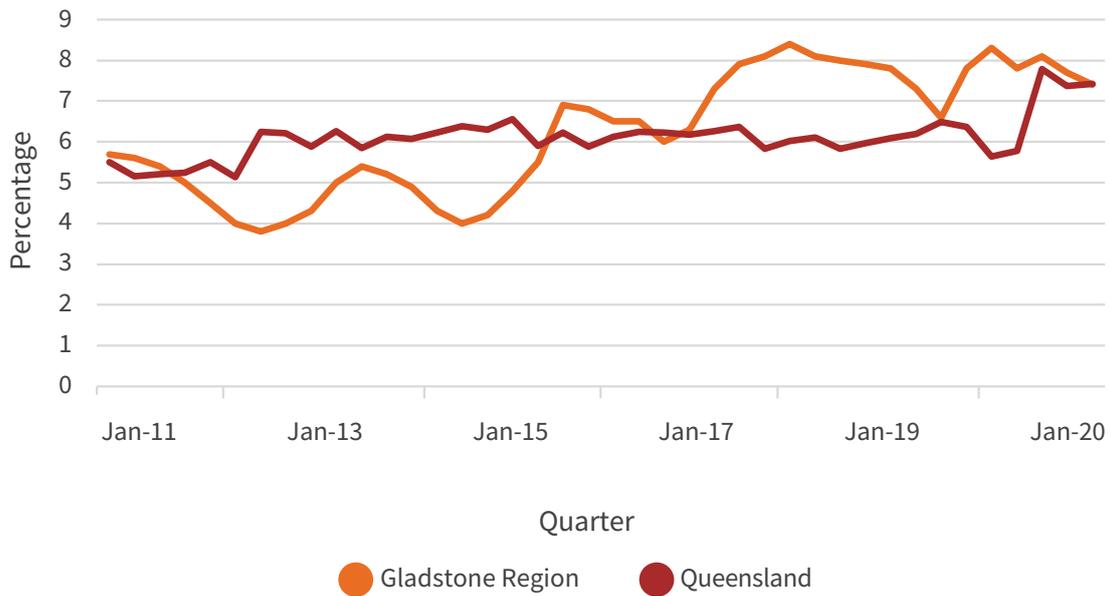
Our region also experienced more individuals receiving an unemployment benefit long-term

### June 2017

#### Individuals receiving an unemployment benefit longer than 26 weeks



## Unemployment



**In June 2020 2,860 people were unemployed in our region with an unemployment rate of 8.2% compared to a rate of 6.4% for Queensland and 5.6% for Australia**

June 2020 was the second highest unemployment rate recorded in the last ten years, with a high in December 2017 of 8.4.

Unemployment fell in our region during 2012 and then again in 2014 at the peak of construction in Gladstone, when unemployment fell below 5%.

“ Our community enjoys great strengths and opportunities. Understanding where to focus our efforts, to do even better in improving community wellbeing, will help make these opportunities available to everyone. ”





*Gladstone Ports Corporation's East Shores Parklands, Feast on East Markets*



**CONTACT**

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