



## Media Release

10 December 2015

### VicHealth-CSIRO report identifies five key megatrends influencing the mental wellbeing of young people over next 20 years

Five megatrends will impact the mental wellbeing of young people over the next 20 years according to a major new report released today.

*The Bright Futures: Megatrends impacting the mental wellbeing of young Victorians over the coming 20 years report*, commissioned by VicHealth and undertaken by CSIRO, paints a picture of the challenges facing young people into the future and provides a unique opportunity to build young people's resilience, social connection and mental wellbeing to withstand and bounce back from the stresses of these rapid changes.

The report's findings underpin [VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2019](#), also released today.

Megatrends identified as impacting the mental wellbeing of young Victorians during the next two decades include:

- **The rising bar:** Rising skills and education levels in emerging economies (India and China), increased connectivity and automation, are leading to a more competitive global jobs market
- **Global reach:** Globalisation and digital technology are changing the way workplaces and individuals operate. The future will see a new breed of portfolio workers who have no fixed abode and sell their skills and knowledge to multiple employers.
- **Life's richer tapestry:** A more diverse culture, society and consumer market where identification of mainstream is increasingly difficult. This includes the aging population staying at work longer, increased growth in the Indigenous youth population and increase in number of non-traditional family structures such as single parent families.
- **Overexposure online:** increasing exposure to wide-ranging online content, privacy breaches and virtual relationships. Young people will have virtual resumes which are beyond their control to edit as there will be an increase in the amount of discoverable personal information.
- **Out of the shadows:** improved and widespread understanding of the causes of mental illness and building blocks for mental wellbeing, coupled with advances in medical technology and a change in service delivery models will help some. However, poor mental health in Indigenous and remote communities, and issues such as PTSD and family violence remain a major concern.

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VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the report's findings had contributed [to VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy](#) and provides an opportunity to get on the front foot on a range of key issues facing young Victorians' mental wellbeing now and into the future.

"The Megatrends Report allows us to develop more relevant approaches and to scrutinise what's not working, make adjustments and prepare our young people for their exciting futures," Ms Rechter said.

CSIRO's strategy and foresight principal scientist, Dr Stefan Hajkowitz, said the report provided the foresight to proactively create better outcomes for young people.

"Young people's state of mind and mental wellbeing are increasingly important in economic, social and personal terms and the risks of disengagement and isolation are apparent," Dr Hajkowitz said.

"New stressors are emerging which as a society we need to understand and manage to ensure young people are able to maintain positive social connections and find positive life pathways that contribute to the community."

Minister for Mental Health, Martin Foley said, "The Megatrends report reinforces the need for the kinds of strategies that are recommended both by VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy and the Government's recently announced 10 Year Mental Health Plan. "

"The Government welcomes VicHealth's report, and we look forward to working together to achieve better outcomes for young people with mental health issues."

Ms Rechter said VicHealth wants to get 200,000 more Victorians to have a greater level of resilience and social supports by 2023, and VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy identifies opportunities to work with young people to have input into interventions that work to build this.

"VicHealth will focus on building resilience and social supports for young Victorians aged 12-25 years using key findings from important research like the Megatrends report, to proactively look after the wellbeing of the next generation. Creating opportunities for all young people to participate in this process will be a particular focus."

"Building resilience during adolescence and young adulthood is important to instil confidence and the capacity to cope with the challenges and opportunities we all face over the course of our lives.

To view a copy of the VicHealth-CSIRO Megatrends Report visit <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/megatrends>

To view VicHealth's Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2019 visit <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/mental-wellbeing-plan>

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