

## Key messages from rural young people

Over 400 young people (12-26 years) living in Victoria's North East and Goulburn Valley told WHGNE and partners about barriers affecting their sexual health and wellbeing and what's needed most for young people in their rural area (WHGNE 2014).

*Sexual health encompasses sexual development and reproductive health, as well as such characteristics as the ability to develop and maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships; appreciate one's own body; interact with both genders in respectful and appropriate ways; and express affection, love, and intimacy in ways consistent with one's own values.*

SIECUS, 2002. Consensus Statement on Adolescent Sexual Health, Sexuality Information Education Council of the United States.

### Key barriers to sexual health and wellbeing

#### Community and professional's attitudes 72%

Embarrassment, fear of, or shame from family and community, refusal of doctor or pharmacist to supply contraception

#### Availability 58%

Access to condoms, doctors for contraception, counselling and support with privacy and respect

#### Lack of Privacy 49%

Receptionists, supermarket staff and workers known to young people

#### Information 42%

Lack of current information and education in schools about sexual health and relationships

#### Cost 42%

Doctors' appointments, contraception, pregnancy testing, scripts

#### Travel 23%

Lack of regular, reliable and affordable transport to access services

### What young people need most in their rural area

#### Contraception and health services 40%

Affordable more private access to GPs and nurses...contraception, STI testing...unplanned pregnancy choices counselling, support and termination services

#### Respectful relationships, confidentiality and support 35%

From Doctors... professionals... families...peers... to make informed choices ...to be safe ...to receive help and support

#### More information & education 24%

About sexual health... sex...healthy sex ... and services

#### Condoms & Lubricant 10%

Free ... good quality... anonymous or private access