

The Tasmanian Youth Story



TASMANIAN



The Story's Themes

We're proud.

Where previous generations were uneasy about their Tasmanian identity, we're proud to be Tasmanian, and to embrace all the things that make this place so special. When something is Tasmanian, we know it will be good, so we make sure everyone knows about it. We know Tasmania used to be looked down upon by the rest of the country, but we are happy that the world now sees just how special our little island is — even if we sometimes are left off maps.

We have a sense of place.

We love Tasmania's natural beauty and small towns. We know that this place is special, from our buildings and architecture, local art installations, events and produce, arts and culture, to our environment and wildlife. It feels like a place just for us. There aren't many places where you can drive for an hour in any direction and be in an entirely new world — from a beach to a mountain, in a farm or city, and rainforest or scrub. We feel connected to this place and find comfort when we see familiar landmarks that signal our home.

We're connected.

Tasmania is a place where we look each other in the eye and everyone knows everyone. Our communities unite and support us, and connect us to opportunities and help when we need it. We have an unspoken connection to each other because we know we've had similar experiences. But our communities can also inhibit us. When everyone knows everyone's business, it can be really hard to seek help or move past tough times.

We're often worried and frustrated.

We can feel frustrated with Tasmania as it currently stands. We worry about big issues impacting our lives and ability to thrive — whether we'll ever be able to afford a house, what kind of a world we'll face with climate change — and we struggle with daily challenges around transport, employment, healthcare and education. But we feel our voice is valued less than that of people who used to be young. We know that problems aren't always easy to solve, but we want to be heard and have our concerns and ideas taken seriously.

We want to see more acceptance of differences.

While Tasmanians love the fact that our island is different from the mainland, and lean into those qualities, people's attitudes towards difference within Tasmania can feel like a different story. Us young Tasmanians are more likely to be comfortable with new ideas and identities, but it can be hard to fit in if you are a bit outside the mould. We want to feel like we belong here, safe to express who we are, and welcomed into our communities, not rejected for being ourselves.

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People used to be embarrassed to say they were Tasmanian. But things have changed. Today's young Tasmanians may be the first to grow up proud of this place.

While previous generations of Tasmanians felt looked down upon and mocked by mainlanders as behind the times and backward, our State's many wonderful qualities are now being recognised and appreciated on a national and global scale. It makes us proud to see Tasmania's accomplishments recognised, even if we didn't personally achieve them.

But it's not just what others find special about this place. It's the personal things, even the secrets, that connect us to these islands and to each other. Our spots in the wilderness, our local hangouts, our laid-back way of life and, most of all, our distinctly Tasmanian experiences — we all know the first thing we do when we get our P's.

Our feeling of connection isn't just about the places and our experiences. It's also about the people and our communities. Tasmania is a place where it feels like everyone knows everyone, where we look each other in the eye and greet each other on the street. It's a place where an entire community will rally around and offer support during hard times.

But that doesn't mean being a young Tasmanian is easy. There is a lot working against us, hindering our chances at becoming independent and thriving. The issues with housing, employment, mental health and the cost of living aren't unique to us, but they're made more challenging here by Tasmania's geographic location, sparse population, and transport challenges.

Frustrated Tasmanians in previous generations would simply leave for good. Our generation doesn't feel that way. We're curious about the opportunities beyond our shores, but we feel connected to this place and want to know that we can also have a future here.

People think we want everything handed to us. But that's not true. We can work hard, be creative and inventive. We are an untapped asset, and not just because we're young. It's because we care deeply for this place and our shared future.

We want to help solve Tasmania's problems. We understand what our communities are facing, feel the impact of missteps, and yearn to be part of the future opportunity.

In the Tasmania we want, we welcome change, we are accepted for who we are and our differences are our strengths. Welcome us into the conversation and let us help build the best version of Tasmania.