

POLICY IN MIND

Orygen Institute strategic plan

ory
gen

→ Who we are

For more than two decades, Orygen has been at the forefront of youth mental health, producing ground breaking research that has shaped health policy and services in Australia and across the world.

The Orygen Institute is a policy think tank built on Orygen's track record for innovation and impact.

We push the boundaries and go beyond current thinking by proposing new policy ideas and approaches to advance the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

Through a convergence of diverse voices, perspectives and expertise from within and beyond the sector we capture evidence that shapes new narratives, drives innovation, and influences the national and international policy agenda.

Context

It's now well established that adolescence and young adulthood correspond with the period of life when mental ill-health is most likely to emerge. If left untreated early experiences of poor mental health can have a significant impact well into adulthood, heightening the risk of severe mental illness, poorer physical health, unemployment and family/relationship breakdown. Along with the personal toll, the World Economic Forum has estimated that between 2011 and 2030, mental illness will cost \$16 trillion in lost economic output worldwide.

During the past decade we've seen a rising tide of mental ill-health in young people. Along with longstanding bio-psycho-social risk factors, the risk of poor mental health for young people is compounded by uncertainty for their future, including climate anxiety, job and financial insecurity and experiences of social injustice and generational inequity. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted just how precarious young people's wellbeing has become, with global data indicating a 25 per cent increase in depression and anxiety, with young people and females most affected.

In this context, the Orygen Institute aims to elevate and expand the conversation about youth mental health. We will continue to translate evidence-based and innovative approaches to mental health care into policy change, as well as influence broader social, environmental and economic policies that are impacting on the wellbeing of young people in Australia and globally.

Vision

Our vision is for a world where the mental health and wellbeing of all young people is continually enriched through the implementation of impactful, evidence-based policy.

Mission

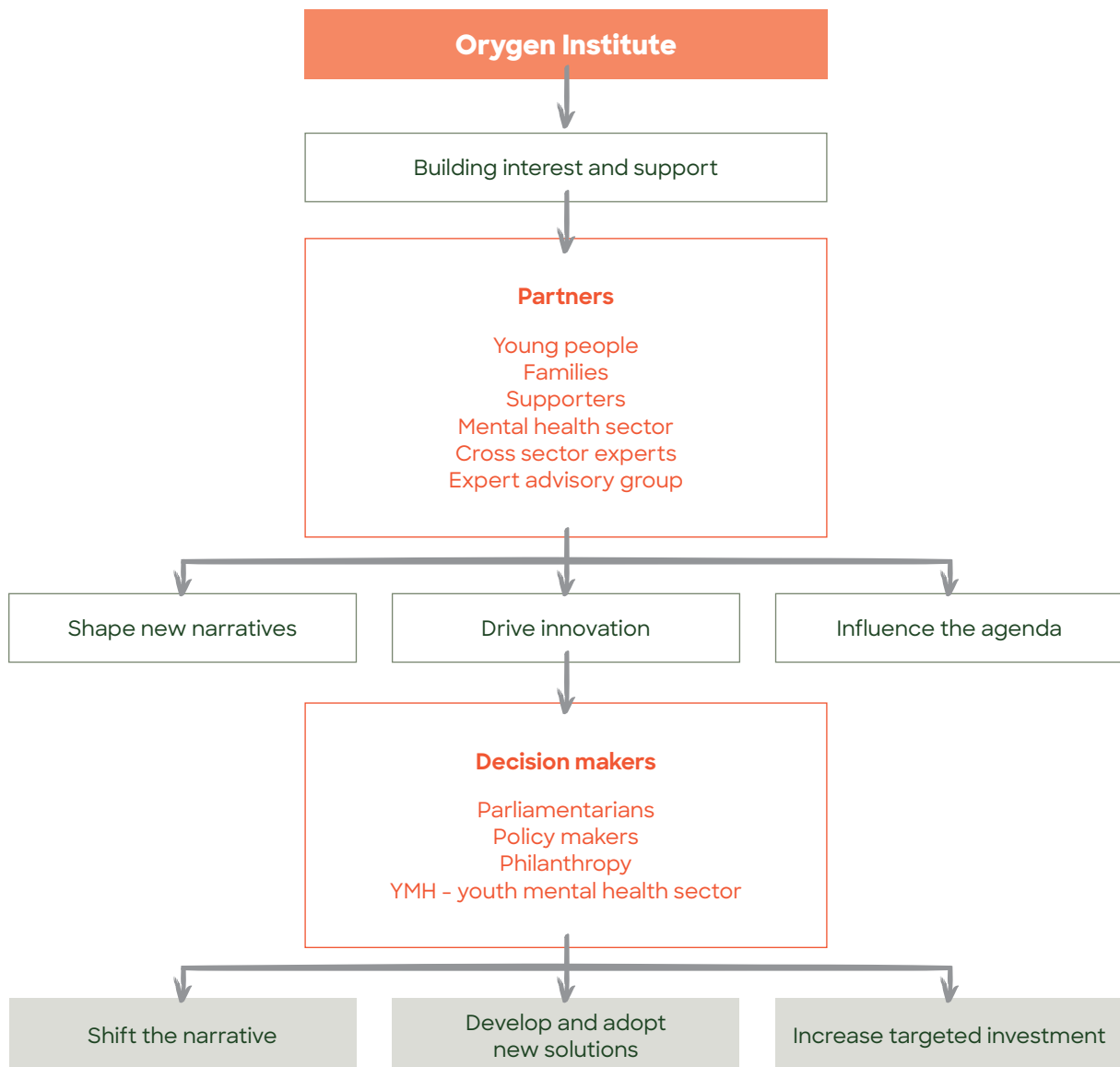
The Orygen Institute supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people by bringing together diverse voices and thought leaders from within and beyond the mental health and health sectors to explore the broad drivers of youth mental health in order to drive innovation, shape new narratives, and transform policy responses.



Theory of change

Through collaboration with communities and experts from within and beyond the mental health sector we can capture new evidence that broadens the thinking of decision makers in order to influence the development and adoption of new solutions, shift the narrative and increase targeted investment.

Figure 1. Theory of change



→ Strategic priorities

The Orygen Institute's strategic approach is designed to create a paradigm shift in our thinking and ideas. Young people's mental health and wellbeing is inextricably linked to the world around them. By expanding our evidence base to the social, cultural, economic, natural and built environment in which young people live, we can evolve our understanding of the drivers and impacts of mental health and wellbeing, enabling innovative and bold solutions.

The Orygen Institute's work is underpinned and guided by youth engagement, diversity, and collaboration.

Youth engagement: We believe the best solutions will be surfaced through centering on young people's experience, and this drives our approach to partnership and co-design with young people, their families, and other supporters.

Diversity: Looking beyond the youth mental health sector to bring in a diversity of ideas and perspectives across broader societal issues and different disciplines will ensure that our solutions are not confined to clinical health service responses.

Collaboration: We recognise the many organisations making significant contributions to the wellbeing and mental health of young Australians and will seek to work in collaboration and partnership.



Our three strategic priorities that collectively drive impact include:



Shape new narratives: so we have better understanding of mental ill-health.

We will foster diverse ways of thinking that challenge the status quo, continually shaping new narratives around youth mental health to reflect the contemporary context and experience of young people.

We will achieve this by:

- Discovering and developing thought leaders from within and outside the sector, and providing a platform for the expression of new ideas and perspectives.
- Partnering with young people, their families and supporters to identify the issues that most affect them and their wellbeing.
- Creating safe, creative spaces for diverse voices and thought leaders to discuss divergent ideas and perspectives on responding to youth mental health challenges.
- Developing external communications and events to provoke community conversations that build momentum for new ideas.



Drive innovation: so we have better research, better treatments.

By expanding the voices and ideas that shape youth mental health policy, we will build innovative approaches that effectively respond to mental ill-health among young people and support them to experience optimal mental health and wellbeing.

We will achieve this by:

- Engaging with young people, their families and supporters to understand their experience of the broader social, economic and environmental impacts in youth mental health.
- Collaborating with experts beyond the sector to produce policy research and communications that connects the mental health and wellbeing of young people to the issues that impact them.

Continued ▶

- Presenting available evidence that tests the suitability and effectiveness of existing youth mental health treatment and service approaches, and highlighting where new evidence or discovery is needed.
- Modelling social, economic, and environmental trends to better understand their future impacts on young people's mental health.

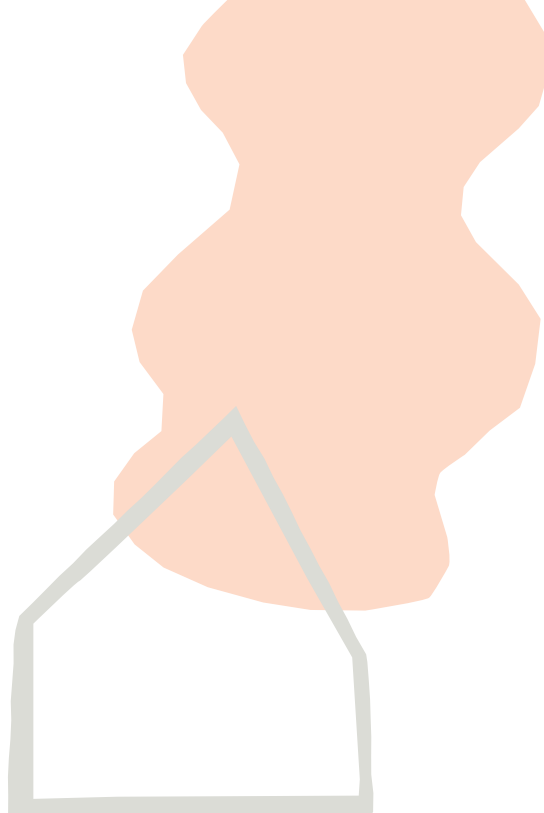
3

Influence the agenda: so policy makers make better policy and decision makers make better decisions.

We will build momentum for bold reform to improve the policy impact in areas relevant to young people and their mental health.

We will achieve this by:

- Providing a trusted and respected platform to present policy solutions in youth mental health to decision makers.
- Engaging with local, national, and international government bodies on policy solutions and research.
- Partnering with organisations and individuals with shared interests both within and beyond the mental health sector.
- Sharing knowledge and resources to increase our capacity for achieving policy impact.

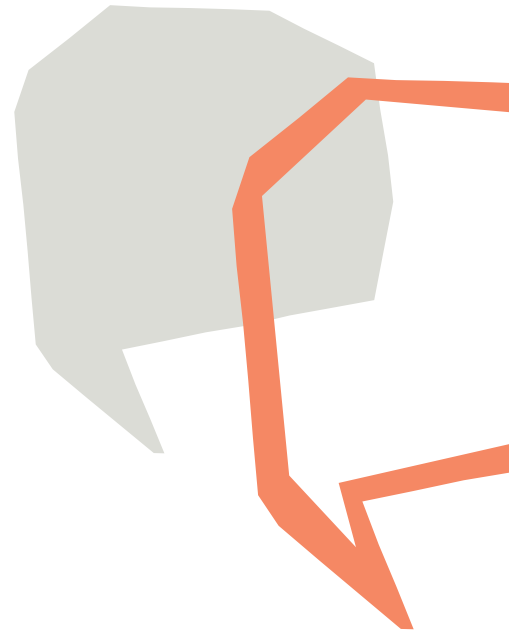




© 2022 Orygen

This publication is copyright. Apart from use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 and subsequent amendments, no part may be reproduced, stored or transmitted by any means without prior written permission of Orygen.

Orygen acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we are on and pays respect to their Elders past and present. Orygen recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationships to their Country, which continue to be important to First Nations people living today.



**REVOLUTION
IN MIND** *ory
gen*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
ORYGEN.ORG.AU/ORYGEN-INSTITUTE

SEND US AN EMAIL TO
POLICY@ORYGEN.ORG.AU

ORYGEN LTD

35 POPLAR ROAD PARKVILLE
VIC 3052 AUSTRALIA

FOLLOW US ON

