

**MISSION  
AUSTRALIA**



**YOUTH  
SURVEY  
2023  
NEW SOUTH  
WALES**



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# About this report

This is the **New South Wales (NSW)** sub-report of the Mission Australia *Youth Survey Report 2023*.

The Mission Australia *Youth Survey Report 2023* presents key findings based on national level data and can be found [here](#). It contains the methodology, national executive summary, national key findings, and findings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The report also includes commentary on the national findings that may assist in the interpretation of the data found within this sub-report.

This **NSW** sub-report is a state-based overview of the key findings from the *Youth Survey 2023*. The report includes detailed data tables comparing state-level findings against the national data. Care needs to be taken when interpreting and generalising some results due to variations in sample sizes for different survey items. When sample sizes are under 100 and need to be read with caution, notes are included under the data tables. Care also needs to be taken when interpreting and generalising state-based gender breakdowns due to small sample sizes. **NSW** gender breakdowns are included where sample size allows. Results have been excluded where sample sizes are under 30 respondents.

# Acknowledgment

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of lands throughout Australia, and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continual relationship with the land and we recognise the importance of the young people who are the future leaders.

This report may be cited as: McHale, R., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Rossetto, A., Richardson, E., Boon, B., & Christie, R. (2023). *Youth Survey Report 2023: New South Wales sub-report*. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia



**NSW**

 **4,584** NSW **RESPONSES**

## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA TODAY FOR NSW RESPONDENTS

**1** 

### The environment

**42%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 52% in 2022 and 37% in 2021.

21% of young people were personally extremely or very concerned about climate change.

**2** 

### Mental health

**37%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 36% in 2022 and 35% in 2021.

35% of young people were personally extremely or very concerned about mental health.

**3** 

### Equity and discrimination

**33%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 37% in 2022 and 33% in 2021.

29% of young people were treated unfairly or discriminated against in the last year, most commonly due to:  
Physical appearance, Race/cultural background, Gender.

...Issues like climate change and global inequities are not being addressed enough by governments and institutions as [sic] the impacts of such things will be placed on the younger generation...

**Female, 17, NSW**



## CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

In young peoples' own words

Young people told us in their own words and unprompted, what their **biggest personal challenge** has been in the past year, what they found helpful in dealing with that challenge and what more could be done to help them address their challenge. The key themes of young people's responses are shown below.

**Over 3 in 10** young people said nothing more could help, or they were unsure what could help with their challenges, indicating there is an opportunity to improve awareness of supports available to them.

### THE BIGGEST PERSONAL CHALLENGES

### WHAT MORE WOULD HELP?

Solutions suggested by young people



#### 54% SCHOOL CHALLENGES

Academic pressure, high workload, challenges with teachers, learning difficulties, general school challenges

60% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their studies

40% of students said there are barriers to achieving study or work goals

#### TOP 3 BARRIERS:

- 1 Mental health
- 2 Academic ability
- 3 Financial difficulty

- Study harder and more effectively
- Greater understanding from teachers and parents about stress levels
- Being comfortable asking for support or advice
- Being more organised and get help managing my time



#### 28% MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Low mental health, stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem or self-harm

27% had high psychological distress

22% felt lonely all or most of the time

43% were extremely or very concerned about coping with stress

- Being comfortable asking for support or advice
- Asking healthcare professionals for help
- Greater understanding from teachers and parents about stress levels
- Better access to and availability of mental healthcare services



#### 25% RELATIONSHIP CHALLENGES

Death, abuse, challenging relationships with family, friends or significant others

26% said their family's ability to get along was fair to poor

72% TOP SOURCE OF SUPPORT: friends

- Being comfortable asking for support or advice
- Asking healthcare professionals for help
- Asking those closest to me for advice and understanding

# Examples of personal challenges and solutions

Young person's profile	What was the biggest personal challenge you experienced in 2022-2023?	How did you handle the challenge?	What more could be done to help in the future?
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## School Challenges

Female, 16	<p>"My biggest personal challenge would be going through a big toxic break up and the effects it had on every area of my life. It not only effected my mental health majorly, but it also affected my motivation for school and work, where I started calling into work sick and I even didn't come to school a couple of times due to the lack of motivation. The biggest challenge from this was how badly it effects my mental health, I was really struggling mentally but had to put it aside for school, and still continue to."</p>	<p>"I am still dealing with my challenge but being able to have people that were there for me and supported me through my hard times definitely makes it a lot easier to deal with how difficult it is. being out of the house and not having to stress about school really helped me a lot. When I'm not worrying about school and just being a kid that is when I'm the best mentally."</p>	<p>"Have mental health days from school, not make school our whole lives, we're at school 6 hours a day 5 days a week, I don't need to be going home and continuing to have that stress of school when I'm not even there. I need to be able to be a kid and not be so drained. Let us breathe and maybe our mental health won't be so bad. I know personal my personal challenge improved a lot more when I wasn't at school or worrying about school during the break."</p>
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Male, 15	<p>"Balancing everything like work, school, homework, sports, taking time for myself and family."</p>	<p>"Setting up a plan as best as I could and make a schedule on when to do something."</p>	<p>"Try not to go off track with my plan. Sometimes things come up but I try to stick to the plan as much as possible. Other times I just forget about it and procrastinate. I just need to stick with the plan."</p>
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**Young person's profile**

**What was the biggest personal challenge you experienced in 2022-2023?**

**How did you handle the challenge?**

**What more could be done to help in the future?**

**Mental Health Challenges**

Gender diverse, 17

"My mental health, struggles with my gender identity, and difficulties as a neurodivergent individual. Stress and anxiety have come from school and looming deadlines. Depression is kinda just there - it has gotten better though. Struggles with my gender identity have caused me to have a number of breakdowns and have been causing me strife. And struggles with being a diagnosed ADHDer and a suspected Autistic person mean that life is just that little bit harder in a society that doesn't quite understand - these also connect to the previous issues."

"My close friends and my girlfriend - generally having a support system. Having a good cry helps just to get it all out. Dance has helped - both my classes and freestyle which work as a distraction, but as well, mindful dancing in which I just move and stretch in nature or in the dark to music. Freedom of expression has also helped, whether that be through makeup, or how I dress or style my hair. Music is a major help as well. And reading - it distracts me and takes me to different realities. D&D is another major help as it allows me to escape into another person and another situation. And it's fun."

"Having a more accepting society would make me feel more comfortable, but not much can be done about that! The older generations especially make me feel quite alienated because my struggles are dismissed or ridiculed. A lot of people think that they had it worse in their time, and act as if that makes what I'm going through any easier. Honestly, cheaper therapy and medication would help - my family is in a comfortable position and can afford these things, but if they were cheaper, it would take away some of the guilt attached - no doubt helping others as well. Being more mindful to sensory issues is another thing that could change. Sensory hour at the shops is helpful for sure, but having quiet spaces at venues and schools would very much help when things get a bit much."

Male, 15

"Mental health, I'm extremely anxious most of the time, about everything, intrusive thoughts are common, I'm afraid of failing or not reaching my full potential and letting down everyone I care about. I just want to make everyone happy, but I can't do that without sacrificing my own wellbeing."

"Coping strategies: distracting myself with video games, movies and shows, spending time with friends and family, working and doing studying subjects I enjoy. Looking up people online going through the same thing to see how they got through it for inspiration."

"Professional help would be extremely helpful but I don't want anyone to know what I'm going through and I find talking about feelings uncomfortable."

Young person's profile	What was the biggest personal challenge you experienced in 2022-2023?	How did you handle the challenge?	What more could be done to help in the future?
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**Relationship Challenges**

Female, 15	<p>"Financial difficulties. As a child of a single mother, I've seen my mum struggle financially while trying to provide us what we need. School academics. Keeping up with studies seemed to always be a challenge for me, I'm often not entirely sure how or why my grades are the way they are. I try to improve but nothing really happens."</p>	<p>"I began working part-time since the beginning of 2023, in attempt to help my mum. Although it's not much more of a family income, I am able to purchase most of my own products, I also try to use my own money when spending with my mum."</p>	<p>"Governments funding for single parents and jobs of low income. There are families where two parents are with high income and providing for the family, and there are also lower income parents providing for the same amount of spending for their families. I think that the government should support more of these lower income families, in order to provide both the children and adults a more enjoyable life as no one chooses the kind of income their family gets."</p>
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Female, 17	<p>"The biggest challenge I have faced was social exclusion bordering on bullying at times. This had a major impact on my self-esteem and mental health."</p>	<p>"I changed friendship groups from the group that were excluding me and found a group that treated me with respect and kindness. I also got a psychologist to help with the mental health ramifications of my challenges."</p>	<p>"Teachers and peers at my school did nothing to help me when they observed me having a hard time. When nobody would sit with me in class every day, the teachers did not think to ask about it or direct me to support. These teachers or peers could have reached out to me to break my isolation and directed me to support."</p>
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# NSW Data Tables

## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

**Table 1: Gender**

	NSW n	NSW %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4389</b>	<b>4389</b>	<b>18790</b>
Female	2945	67.1	54.9
Male	1245	28.4	40.2
Gender diverse <sup>^</sup>	149	3.4	3.7
Prefer not to say	50	1.1	1.3

<sup>^</sup>A-gender/non-gendered, non-binary gender, transgender and not listed are combined under the gender diverse reporting category.

**Table 2: Locality**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4456</b>	<b>2878</b>	<b>1208</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>18857</b>
Major city	55.9	63.4	38.8	57.0	62.7
Regional area	23.7	20.9	29.1	24.6	24.7
Major city/regional area <sup>^</sup>	20.4	15.7	32.1	18.3	12.7

<sup>^</sup>Postcodes classified as both a major city and regional area in the *Australian Statistical Geography Standard* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

**Table 3: Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4415</b>	<b>2863</b>	<b>1189</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>18824</b>
Non-Indigenous	95.1	96.6	92.2	89.8	95.6
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	4.9	3.4	7.8	10.2	4.4
Aboriginal	4.5	3.2	6.9	8.8	3.5
Torres Strait Islander	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.4
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.2	0.1	0.4	1.5	0.5

**Table 4: Identify with a cultural or ethnic identity**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4403</b>	<b>2852</b>	<b>1188</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>18750</b>
Yes	27.5	28.9	23.6	30.9	21.6
No	72.5	71.1	76.4	69.1	78.4

**Table 5: Spoke a language other than English**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4382</b>	<b>2845</b>	<b>1178</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>18698</b>
Yes	23.7	25.2	18.3	36.3	22.1
No, English only	76.3	74.8	81.7	63.7	77.9

**Table 6: Identify as a person with disability**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4346</b>	<b>2828</b>	<b>1164</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>18545</b>
Yes, I have disability	7.7	6.4	8.0	36.6	7.3
No	88.7	90.9	87.6	55.2	88.6
Prefer not to say	3.6	2.8	4.4	8.2	4.1

**Table 7: Identify as a person with a mental health condition**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4346</b>	<b>2825</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>18533</b>
Yes, I have a mental health condition	19.6	22.4	10.0	46.3	17.4
No	67.5	64.3	80.9	29.1	70.8
Prefer not to say	12.9	13.3	9.1	24.6	11.7

## PERSONAL CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

**Table 8: Biggest personal challenge experienced by young people**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>3861</b>	<b>2508</b>	<b>1024</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>16447</b>
School challenges	54.3	59.5	45.2	40.5	49.0
Mental health challenges	27.8	33.5	13.4	39.7	24.2
Interpersonal relationship challenges	25.4	28.5	16.6	26.2	21.3
Financial and Housing challenges	4.9	5.0	4.7	7.9	4.2
Other challenges	18.3	18.0	18.8	25.4	17.1
Not sure/no challenge identified	5.7	3.6	10.3	3.2	5.9

Note: Items ranked high to low according to the NSW responses with only the top-level themes being reported due to sample size. Examples in *Other challenges* included top-level themes like motivation, general health, moving to a new environment, etc. that stood out on their own. Items based on content analysis of 84% of responses to this question. The percentage figure for the top-level themes represents its proportion amongst the total responses for this question.

**Table 9: Issues of personal concern to young people (extremely or very concerned)**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
Coping with stress	43.4	52.9	19.7	59.4	38.4
School or study problems	42.2	50.4	20.6	62.9	37.1
Mental health	35.2	41.3	16.6	66.7	31.9
Body image	31.6	38.5	13.7	49.7	29.0
Physical health	20.9	21.9	17.0	35.2	19.1
Climate change	20.5	23.2	11.2	42.8	20.8
Family conflict	17.4	20.0	8.6	32.6	15.6
Suicide	14.6	15.4	8.9	40.7	14.0
Financial security	14.4	15.2	10.9	28.3	14.7
LGBTIQA+^ issues	13.2	10.7	11.5	69.2	11.8
Discrimination	12.8	13.1	8.7	40.3	11.6
Social media	12.5	14.5	6.6	19.6	11.2
Bullying/emotional abuse	12.4	13.1	8.2	34.5	11.1
Personal safety	10.6	11.3	7.1	22.4	10.6
Domestic/family violence	7.5	7.7	4.8	20.8	7.1
Alcohol and other drugs	7.3	7.2	5.5	21.7	7.1
COVID-19	5.7	6.4	3.0	16.0	5.0

^Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, Asexual issues. Bases vary across each aspect.  
 Note: Items ranked high to low according to NSW responses.

## NATIONAL CONCERNS

Table 10: Most important issues in Australia today

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>3605</b>	<b>2353</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>15556</b>
The environment	42.0	46.2	32.5	39.4	44.0
Mental health	36.7	42.6	23.8	28.3	30.3
Equity and discrimination	32.6	36.1	23.2	39.4	31.4
The economy and financial matters	31.6	31.0	34.1	27.6	31.2
Homelessness/housing	17.5	18.4	14.6	18.1	18.5
Crime, safety and violence	16.8	18.4	14.3	7.9	17.7
Alcohol & drugs	10.5	9.4	13.2	11.0	12.1
Education	9.3	10.3	6.7	5.5	7.4
Politics	7.2	6.1	9.8	9.4	7.2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues	6.9	7.9	4.4	10.2	7.3
Family conflict	6.9	8.4	3.3	3.9	5.5

Note: Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

**Table 11: Participation in education**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4565</b>	<b>2938</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>19414</b>
Studying full-time	86.2	90.4	78.2	79.6	86.2
Studying part-time	7.1	5.0	11.1	9.5	7.4
Not studying	6.6	4.6	10.7	10.9	6.4

**Table 12: Satisfaction with studies**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4222</b>	<b>2775</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>17766</b>
Very satisfied or satisfied	59.7	63.6	54.1	38.8	62.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	30.2	27.6	34.9	33.3	28.1
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	10.2	8.8	11.0	27.9	9.0

Base: Respondents currently studying.

**Table 13: Where they are currently studying**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4251</b>	<b>2799</b>	<b>1104</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>17864</b>
School or equivalent	98.3	99.0	97.1	99.2	97.9
TAFE or equivalent	1.0	0.4	2.1	0.0	1.2
University	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.9

Base: Respondents currently studying. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

**Table 14: Plan to complete Year 12**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4139</b>	<b>2747</b>	<b>1057</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>17343</b>
Yes	95.2	97.9	88.6	89.9	97.2
No	4.8	2.1	11.4	10.1	2.8

Base: Respondents who reported they were studying at a school or equivalent.

**Table 15: Currently doing a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4163</b>	<b>2759</b>	<b>1069</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>17440</b>
Yes	4.1	2.9	6.7	7.7	5.5
No	95.9	97.1	93.3	92.3	94.5

Base: Respondents who reported they were studying at a school or equivalent.

**Table 16: Plans after leaving school**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4180</b>	<b>2771</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>17492</b>
Go to university	70.4	79.6	49.2	56.9	70.0
Get a job	49.3	52.3	41.7	47.7	46.2
Travel/gap year	32.5	36.4	23.8	32.3	32.5
Go to TAFE or college	11.7	10.5	13.2	23.1	10.2
Start a business	10.4	8.8	14.1	10.0	11.3
Get an apprenticeship	9.7	4.2	24.2	11.5	8.7
Join the defence force or emergency services	7.3	5.4	11.2	10.0	7.1
Become a professional athlete	6.1	3.6	12.5	4.6	7.6
Other	2.0	1.3	2.5	9.2	2.0
Not sure	6.6	5.3	9.1	13.1	7.0
No choices are available to me	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1

Base: Respondents who reported they were studying at a school or equivalent.

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

**Table 17: Confidence in achieving study or work goals**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4068</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>1041</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>17052</b>
Extremely or very confident	44.4	43.5	48.0	37.9	47.4
Somewhat or slightly confident	52.5	53.6	48.9	52.4	50.0
Not at all confident	3.1	2.9	3.1	9.7	2.6

Base: Respondents who reported having a plan or were *not sure* of their plan after leaving school.

**Table 18: Are there any barriers to young people achieving their study/work goals**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>3885</b>	<b>2614</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>16215</b>
Yes	39.8	40.9	32.9	69.6	37.0
No	60.2	59.1	67.1	30.4	63.0

Base: Respondents who reported having a plan or were *not sure* of their plan after leaving school.

**Table 19: Barriers to people achieving study/work goals**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1546</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>80*</b>	<b>5994</b>
Mental health	46.9	49.5	32.4	71.3	42.4
Academic ability	40.9	43.8	31.4	42.5	36.5
Financial difficulty	26.9	27.3	23.6	31.3	28.9
Admission/job requirements	19.5	20.1	16.7	25.0	16.9
Lack of information	16.0	15.4	18.9	16.3	15.6
Where you live	15.9	13.5	23.0	18.8	16.2
Family responsibilities	12.5	12.3	11.3	22.5	13.0
Lack of jobs	12.2	11.3	14.2	17.5	12.6
Transport	11.1	10.1	11.9	17.5	11.5
Lack of school support	10.1	9.1	11.0	15.0	9.8
Lack of family support	8.9	9.3	6.0	12.5	9.1
Physical health	8.7	7.7	9.7	16.3	9.5
Discrimination	7.7	5.9	7.9	31.3	7.0
Caring responsibilities	5.8	5.5	6.0	8.8	5.1
COVID-19	2.9	2.6	3.8	1.3	3.2
Cultural responsibilities	2.5	2.1	2.8	6.3	2.6
Other	7.4	6.0	11.3	8.8	7.7

Base: Respondents who reported there were barriers to achieving their study/work goals.

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

\*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

**Table 20: Participation in paid employment**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4556</b>	<b>2936</b>	<b>1234</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>19390</b>
Permanent employee	4.3	4.0	5.3	4.8	4.6
Casual employee	45.4	46.9	42.5	40.7	48.2
Not in paid employment, looking for work	24.7	22.0	30.6	30.3	26.6
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	25.5	27.2	21.6	24.1	20.6

**Table 21: Employment type**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>2250</b>	<b>1484</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>66*</b>	<b>10031</b>
Working full-time	1.5	0.6	3.4	4.5	1.4
Working part-time	98.5	99.4	96.6	95.5	98.6

Base: Respondents who reported they are in paid employment.

Note: Part-time employment is considered to be less than 35 hours per week, while full-time employment is considered to be 35 hours or more.

\*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

**Table 22: Satisfaction with job**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>2240</b>	<b>1475</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>65*</b>	<b>10024</b>
Very satisfied or satisfied	66.6	68.5	63.4	60.0	66.7
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21.7	21.3	22.2	27.7	22.1
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	11.7	10.2	14.4	12.3	11.1

Base: Respondents who reported they are in paid employment.

\*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

## WELLBEING

**Table 23: Young people’s overall mental health and wellbeing**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4500</b>	<b>2896</b>	<b>1223</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>19110</b>
Excellent	9.1	5.3	18.3	4.8	10.4
Very good	20.7	19.1	26.4	10.3	22.0
Good	29.6	30.9	27.4	19.3	29.9
Fair	27.0	29.9	20.0	30.3	25.4
Poor	13.7	14.7	7.9	35.2	12.3

**Table 24: Mean Personal Wellbeing Index scores of respondents compared with Australian adults**

	NSW Mean	Female Mean	Male Mean	Gender diverse Mean	National Mean	Adult National normative range <sup>^</sup>	Adult National Mean <sup>^</sup>
With their life as a whole	64.8	63.8	69.1	51.4	65.7	75.5 – 79.3	77.4
<b>Personal Wellbeing Index</b>	<b>68.0</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>74.2 - 76.8</b>	<b>75.5</b>
About the things they have e.g., money	73.8	74.3	74.6	64.3	73.1	75.8 – 80.6	78.2
With their health	65.0	63.6	70.1	52.0	65.9	72.5 – 76.0	74.2
With things they want to be good at	61.0	59.0	67.1	49.5	62.4	69.9 – 74.5	72.1
With getting on with the people they know	69.9	69.1	73.7	58.2	70.4	75.7 – 80.9	78.2
About how safe they feel	78.0	78.1	80.1	61.1	77.4	75.4 – 83.1	79.2
Doing things away from home	72.5	71.0	77.2	61.7	73.0	68.2 – 72.1	70.1
About what may happen to them later in their life	58.4	56.5	64.8	42.9	59.7	65.5 – 72.0	68.7
With their connection to culture <sup>**</sup>	70.0	69.8	71.8	66.0	68.1	n/a	n/a

<sup>^</sup>National average index is based on aggregated survey mean scores from 2002 to 2021 of adults 18 years and over where mean age = 50.55 and SD= 17.47 (Khor, S., Capic, T., Cummins, R.A., Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, M., Olsson, C.A., Hutchinson, D., Lycett, K. (2021). *Australian Unity Wellbeing Index - Report 38*. Subjective wellbeing in Australia during the second year of the pandemic. Geelong, Victoria: Australian Centre on Quality of Life, School of Psychology, Deakin University). Sample is less than 100 for gender diverse, please use caution when interpreting results.<sup>\*\*</sup>This question is not officially part of the PWI but a supplementary question to *spiritual and/or cultural beliefs*. Respondents who answered *yes* to having *spiritual and/or cultural beliefs* were only able to respond to this question.

**Table 25: Young people’s level of control over their life**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4465</b>	<b>2872</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>18982</b>
Complete control	8.3	5.2	15.1	8.3	9.6
Mostly in control	45.5	45.8	48.9	24.3	46.3
Some control	35.1	38.0	28.7	36.1	34.1
Almost no control	8.5	8.9	5.0	20.8	7.7
No control	2.6	2.1	2.2	10.4	2.3

**Table 26: Level of psychological distress in young people (experienced in the past four weeks)**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4362</b>	<b>2812</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>18554</b>
Low psychological distress	42.8	37.1	58.7	20.9	46.0
Moderate psychological distress	30.2	32.4	26.4	23.7	29.1
High psychological distress	27.1	30.5	14.9	55.4	24.9

Note: Cut-off scores for categories of psychological distress are as follows: low = 0 to 7, moderate = 8 to 12 and high = 13 to 24 (Hilton, M. F., Whiteford, H. A., Sheridan, J. S., Cleary, C. M., Chant, D. C., Wang, P. S., & Kessler, R. C. (2008). The prevalence of psychological distress in employees and associated occupational risk factors. *Journal of occupational and environmental medicine*, 50(7), 746-757). These cut-off scores are used by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Rioseco, P., Warren, D., & Daraganova, G. (2020). *Children’s social-emotional wellbeing: The role of parenting, parents’ mental health and health behaviours*. Southbank, Victoria: Australian Institute of Family Studies).

**Table 27: Young people’s level of loneliness (experienced in the past four weeks)**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4468</b>	<b>2871</b>	<b>1218</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>18991</b>
None of the time	16.9	12.7	26.6	9.7	17.2
A little of the time	30.0	30.4	31.0	14.5	31.1
Some of the time	31.1	34.6	25.0	25.5	30.8
Most of the time	17.2	18.1	12.9	31.0	16.6
All of the time	4.8	4.2	4.5	19.3	4.2

**Table 28: Family’s ability to get along with one another**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4445</b>	<b>2860</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>18926</b>
Excellent	20.0	17.7	27.4	9.7	20.7
Very good	29.1	29.5	30.7	11.8	29.4
Good	24.7	24.4	24.7	27.1	25.3
Fair	17.5	19.2	11.9	30.6	16.2
Poor	8.7	9.3	5.4	20.8	8.4

**Table 29: Feelings about the future**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4457</b>	<b>2861</b>	<b>1217</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>18953</b>
Very positive or positive	47.9	46.9	53.6	25.7	50.0
Neither positive nor negative	34.4	35.2	33.2	31.9	33.5
Negative or very negative	17.6	17.9	13.2	42.4	16.5

## SUPPORT AND CONNECTEDNESS

**Table 30: Where young people go for help with important issues**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4512</b>	<b>2913</b>	<b>1217</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>19162</b>
Friend(s)	72.0	76.8	63.4	62.3	72.8
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	66.2	68.8	64.3	41.8	66.3
Relative/family friend	42.7	45.3	40.7	19.2	41.9
Brother/sister	40.3	43.0	36.4	24.0	39.4
Internet	25.4	26.5	21.3	37.0	24.6
GP or health professional	24.1	27.1	17.8	25.3	23.0
Teacher	23.3	25.1	20.0	20.5	22.7
Partner or significant other	21.4	20.7	22.8	28.1	23.5
School counsellor	17.1	18.0	15.3	15.8	16.1
Social media	15.0	16.6	9.6	20.5	13.6
Mobile apps	10.7	11.9	7.0	11.0	9.6
Spiritual/religious mentor	7.8	7.5	8.6	4.1	5.8
Community service	2.6	2.1	3.1	5.5	2.8
Other	3.3	2.4	4.8	8.9	3.3
None of the above	6.7	4.4	10.4	15.8	6.4

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

**Table 31: Activities young people were involved in during the past year**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4486</b>	<b>2895</b>	<b>1213</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>19065</b>
Sports (as a participant)	66.8	67.8	67.8	42.0	67.0
Sports (as a spectator)	45.1	43.0	52.5	28.7	49.7
Volunteer work (e.g. through a sports club, charity, religious organisation, school)	43.5	47.8	34.9	39.9	40.7
Student leadership groups/activities	32.4	38.1	21.4	23.8	28.6
Arts/cultural/music groups/activities	31.8	36.1	18.9	48.3	29.4
Youth groups/activities	22.1	21.8	21.9	29.4	18.2
Religious groups/activities	20.5	21.7	18.4	19.6	15.4
Environmental groups/activities	7.8	7.9	6.3	11.9	7.5
Political groups/activities	3.3	2.8	3.3	12.6	3.4
None of the above	11.4	9.4	14.3	19.6	12.4

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency. In 2023 this was asked as a multiple response question for the first time. In prior years it was asked as yes/no response per item which may impact historical comparisons.

**Table 32: Whether young people have cultural and/or spiritual beliefs**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4421</b>	<b>2873</b>	<b>1185</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>18762</b>
Yes – both spiritual and cultural beliefs	21.8	23.4	18.4	19.1	18.5
Yes – spiritual beliefs	23.5	25.0	20.7	21.3	20.0
Yes – cultural beliefs	13.0	12.7	13.3	12.5	11.2
No beliefs	41.7	38.9	47.6	47.1	50.2

**Table 33: Activities young people find hard to do**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4339</b>	<b>2817</b>	<b>1159</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>18452</b>
Turn to friends and family if you need help	31.9	34.9	23.1	45.7	29.3
Fit in and socialise with everyone else ( <i>at school, work or socially</i> )	30.2	33.3	20.7	50.7	28.5
Make choices and feel independent	23.7	26.1	16.4	37.1	21.6
Turn to services / organisations if you need help	22.5	23.7	18.1	38.6	21.1
Do everyday activities as young people your age usually do	20.5	21.6	15.0	42.9	19.2
Do things in public places with friends ( <i>e.g, go to shopping centres</i> )	16.5	17.2	12.9	37.1	16.0
Travel around the community ( <i>e.g., using footpaths</i> )	9.1	9.2	7.2	21.4	9.1
None of the above	43.0	38.3	57.0	20.0	45.5

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency.

**Table 34: Young people and the feelings they have about their community**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>I am proud to be part of my community (Base)</b>	<b>4316</b>	<b>2791</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>18404</b>
Strongly agree/agree	60.0	61.9	59.1	35.6	60.1
Mixed feelings	32.1	31.8	31.1	44.4	31.8
Disagree/strongly disagree	7.9	6.2	9.9	20.0	8.1
<b>My community has the things that I need to have a positive and thriving future (Base)</b>	<b>4319</b>	<b>2795</b>	<b>1174</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>18390</b>
Strongly agree/agree	62.3	64.3	61.6	38.5	44.4
Mixed feelings	29.7	29.0	29.5	43.7	38.9
Disagree/strongly disagree	8.0	6.8	8.9	17.8	16.7
<b>Young people in my community have a say on issues that matter to them (Base)</b>	<b>4313</b>	<b>2792</b>	<b>1170</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>18408</b>
Strongly agree/agree	43.9	44.9	43.6	26.7	62.5
Mixed feelings	39.7	40.0	39.1	38.5	29.7
Disagree/strongly disagree	16.4	15.0	17.3	34.8	7.8

## UNFAIR TREATMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

**Table 35: Unfair treatment or discrimination in the last year**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>4472</b>	<b>2883</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>19050</b>
Yes	29.0	29.6	22.3	64.8	26.6
No	71.0	70.4	77.7	35.2	73.4

**Table 36: Reason(s) for being treated unfairly in the last year**

	NSW %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1297</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>92*</b>	<b>5060</b>
Physical appearance	38.2	37.6	36.5	47.8	36.4
Race/cultural background	37.1	37.6	38.4	25.0	34.6
Gender	30.9	33.3	11.4	66.3	30.0
Personal views	27.0	25.4	27.3	33.7	26.6
Mental health	24.6	23.1	21.0	40.2	23.6
Sexuality	18.8	16.2	11.8	60.9	20.2
Age	14.5	14.4	11.1	20.7	15.3
Religion	13.2	11.8	18.1	9.8	10.9
Disability	7.7	5.0	10.7	25.0	8.9
Financial background	6.1	5.9	5.9	7.6	6.3
Other	10.9	9.8	13.3	12.0	10.5

Base: Respondents who reported they had been treated unfairly or faced discrimination in the past year.

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of NSW frequency. Examples in *other* included things like personality, family, hobbies, unsure etc.

\*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

## Who is Mission Australia?

**Mission Australia is a national Christian charity motivated by a shared vision of an Australia where everyone has a safe home and can thrive.**

Since 1859, we've been standing alongside people and communities in need across Australia, offering real hope that has lasting impact. Backed by our supporters, churches, partners and funders, we work together for the long-term wellbeing of anyone who needs us by collaborating with them to tackle the root causes of their challenges.

Every day we deliver homelessness crisis and prevention services, provide social and affordable housing, assist struggling families and children, address mental health issues, fight substance dependencies, support people with disability and much more.

We measure our impact, collecting evidence of what works to inform our service design and delivery, and to advocate for change.

Mission Australia believes a person's circumstances shouldn't define their future and that given the right support, everyone can reach their full potential.

That's why we stand together with Australians in need, for as long as they need us.

## Thank you


This publication would not have been possible without the 19,501 young people who completed Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2023. We extend special thanks to them, the staff of Mission Australia, and the many schools and organisations who supported their involvement.

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**If you are a young person and need someone to talk with, you can contact Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 (24/7) kidshelpline.com.au**

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