

**MISSION  
AUSTRALIA**



**YOUTH  
SURVEY  
2023  
WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**



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# About this report

This is the **Western Australia (WA)** 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 **WA** 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. **WA** 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.

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 **1,649** **WA** RESPONSES

## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA TODAY FOR WA RESPONDENTS

**1** 

### The environment

**44%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 58% in 2022 and 35% in 2021.

20% of young people were personally extremely or very concerned about climate change.

**2** 

### Equity and discrimination

**39%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 38% in 2022 and 36% in 2021.

32% of young people were treated unfairly or discriminated against in the last year, most commonly due to:  
Physical appearance, Race/cultural background, Gender.

**3** 

### Mental health

**29%** identified it as one of the most important issues in Australia compared with 33% in 2022 and 32% in 2021.

32% of young people were personally extremely or very concerned about mental health.

I had a friend who was struggling with his mental health. It was hard because he found it incredibly difficult to speak about his own problems and there was no real outlet for him to get his feelings heard. He didn't have any adult figure that he could confide in and he certainly didn't want his parents to know about his problems.

**Male, 16, WA**



## 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.

**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



#### 52% 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
- Having more balanced and manageable workloads at school



#### 24% MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

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

28%

had high psychological distress

24%

felt lonely all or most of the time

37%

were extremely or very concerned about coping with stress

- Asking healthcare professionals for help
- Being comfortable asking for support or advice
- Greater understanding from teachers and parents about stress levels
- Being properly diagnosed and given treatment



#### 20% RELATIONSHIP CHALLENGES

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

30%

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

#### TOP SOURCE OF SUPPORT:

69% 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, 15	"Struggling with mental health problems while having to uphold and maintain personal relationships and academic grades."	"Writing my thoughts down and takes breaks from social media when possible. Trying to distract myself by studying and doing other activities."	"Having safe spaces where you can talk to someone about issues you're facing. I think having very private and confidential counselling at schools would be helpful but making sure that no one finds out about the sessions (as in that you attended the counselling and what happened during the session), including parents and family especially, teachers and peers."
Male, 17	"Overload - balancing school, leadership, mental health, family & friendships. Rise of social media - increasing distractions from my focuses. World & schools are pushing for us to do more and more, neglecting family & social lives."	"Talking to a trusted friend/adult. Listening to music, reading, exercise, focusing on sleep."	"School having assessments more spread out/not a constant stream of assessments - which don't allow for mental restoration or breaks. Having breaks from school throughout the day to chill. A healthy separation between work and home lives."

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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**Mental Health Challenges**

Male, 15	"Biggest personal challenge has been dealing with stress and mental health, especially with the workload surrounding high school and what I would like to do as a career."	"Having fortnightly sessions with a psychologist has helped with my mental health as it has quantified some of my problems and shown that they can be overcome."	"The education system in Australia at the moment is not structured well to prevent extreme stress and problems associated with workload. We do have programs in place for students who are having difficulty, but it is much easier to solve the problem by attacking it at its roots, which is the structure of high school itself. I am not sure what could specifically change, but something has to."
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Female, 15	"Dealing with really bad anxiety."	"Surprisingly, dating someone, spending time with my friends, and doing non-academic things I enjoyed helped my anxiety a lot, and definitely prevented me from spiraling (sic) at times. Some of my friends knowing about my anxiety definitely helped too, and they stop me from doing anything stupid. Telling my parents did ease some of the weight too, but they weren't as believing as my friends, and now I try to hide my anxiety scratches from them."	"Having free, easily accessible psychologists that won't contact your parents would be great, because I'd love to talk to an adult who would listen without judgement, rather than dumping all my issues and worries on my friends. I also wouldn't want my parents to know because they'd want to know everything I said and some things are secrets that are not mine to tell."
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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?
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**Relationship Challenges**

Gender diverse, 16	"My biggest personal challenge has definitely been acceptance and/or grief. Both getting acceptance around me and accepting myself as someone worthy of respect. I've lost a few people and animals in my life, so grieving is something that's hit my life like a brick wall."	"My friends. My friends have helped me through everything, they've been a safety net when I haven't been able to reach out to anyone else. I support them and they support me, that's how our friend group works."	"Probably trying to reach out for help. I've not really been able to ask for help since I was probably 8 or 9, so building the habit of reaching out is going to be hard and it's going to take time to be able to accept the idea of doing it. I am getting better, but I don't know if I'll fully be able to accept that reaching out is refusing to give up."
Female, 17	"Loneliness, being alone physically and mentally in platonic relationships, especially since leaving high school."	"Books, Movies, Family, Boyfriend."	"More community activities for youth, to meet other youth your age and with the same interests."

# WA Data Tables

## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

**Table 1: Gender**

	WA n	WA %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1564</b>	<b>1564</b>	<b>18790</b>
Female	796	50.9	54.9
Male	688	44.0	40.2
Gender diverse <sup>^</sup>	59	3.8	3.7
Prefer not to say	21	1.3	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**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1587</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18857</b>
Major city	77.1	75.7	78.8	71.4	62.7
Regional area	19.5	21.3	17.6	21.4	24.7
Major city/regional area <sup>^</sup>	3.3	3.0	3.6	7.1	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).

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>57*</b>	<b>18824</b>
Non-Indigenous	93.8	96.3	92.8	77.2	95.6
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	6.2	3.7	7.2	22.8	4.4
Aboriginal	5.2	3.2	6.5	15.8	3.5
Torres Strait Islander	0.6	0.4	0.3	3.5	0.4
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.4	0.1	0.5	3.5	0.5

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1595</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>55*</b>	<b>18750</b>
Yes	18.7	19.3	17.9	23.6	21.6
No	81.3	80.7	82.1	76.4	78.4

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1586</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18698</b>
Yes	19.4	22.3	16.2	16.1	22.1
No, English only	80.6	77.7	83.8	83.9	77.9

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1570</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>54*</b>	<b>18545</b>
Yes, I have disability	8.7	6.6	8.9	31.5	7.3
No	87.3	90.0	87.6	51.9	88.6
Prefer not to say	4.0	3.4	3.5	16.7	4.1

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1575</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>54*</b>	<b>18533</b>
Yes, I have a mental health condition	18.4	23.9	9.6	55.6	17.4
No	68.6	60.9	80.8	27.8	70.8
Prefer not to say	13.0	15.2	9.6	16.7	11.7

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

## PERSONAL CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1257</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>53*</b>	<b>16447</b>
School challenges	52.3	58.7	45.2	37.7	49.0
Mental health challenges	24.4	33.7	12.2	28.3	24.2
Interpersonal relationship challenges	20.4	26.2	13.4	24.5	21.3
Financial and Housing challenges	4.4	4.4	3.8	3.8	4.2
Other challenges	14.2	15.1	10.9	24.5	17.1
Not sure/no challenge identified	3.7	2.9	4.0	5.7	5.9

Note: Items ranked high to low according to the WA 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.

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
School or study problems	38.0	47.8	27.2	44.1	37.1
Coping with stress	36.9	49.2	21.3	61.0	38.4
Mental health	31.7	40.8	18.8	67.8	31.9
Body image	30.1	41.7	14.9	57.6	29.0
Climate change	20.4	26.4	11.3	40.7	20.8
Physical health	19.5	21.8	16.0	34.5	19.1
Family conflict	17.7	22.8	9.9	41.4	15.6
Financial security	16.3	17.2	13.8	35.6	14.7
Suicide	15.6	18.4	9.9	49.2	14.0
Personal safety	13.1	15.4	9.2	37.3	10.6
Bullying/emotional abuse	12.8	14.8	8.4	37.3	11.1
Discrimination	11.8	12.4	8.2	50.0	11.6
LGBTIQA+^ issues	11.0	7.9	9.5	67.8	11.8
Social media	10.7	12.9	7.4	22.0	11.2
Domestic/family violence	9.6	10.8	6.4	30.5	7.1
Alcohol and other drugs	7.5	7.5	6.4	15.5	7.1
COVID-19	3.9	4.0	2.8	10.2	5.0

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

## NATIONAL CONCERNS

Table 10: Most important issues in Australia today

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1189</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>50*</b>	<b>15556</b>
The environment	43.7	52.4	33.6	32.0	44.0
Equity and discrimination	38.8	41.8	33.2	56.0	31.4
Mental health	29.3	35.7	22.0	20.0	30.3
The economy and financial matters	27.5	24.3	32.3	32.0	31.2
Homelessness/housing	19.8	18.8	20.4	16.0	18.5
Crime, safety and violence	14.6	15.9	14.6	10.0	17.7
Alcohol & drugs	11.9	12.7	11.2	6.0	12.1
Education	8.5	8.4	8.7	16.0	7.4
Bullying	7.1	8.5	5.8	6.0	5.7
Employment	6.1	5.5	7.0	6.0	4.0

Note: Items are listed in order of WA frequency.

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

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

**Table 11: Participation in education**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>58*</b>	<b>19414</b>
Studying full-time	82.8	87.0	78.3	84.5	86.2
Studying part-time	7.2	4.7	9.9	3.4	7.4
Not studying	10.1	8.3	11.8	12.1	6.4

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

**Table 12: Satisfaction with studies**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1466</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>50*</b>	<b>17766</b>
Very satisfied or satisfied	59.7	63.0	58.2	42.0	62.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	30.6	28.9	30.8	36.0	28.1
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	9.8	8.0	11.0	22.0	9.0

Base: Respondents currently studying

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1473</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>51*</b>	<b>17864</b>
School or equivalent	96.8	97.9	95.9	92.2	97.9
TAFE or equivalent	2.5	1.8	3.3	5.9	1.2
University	0.7	0.3	0.8	2.0	0.9

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1417</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>47*</b>	<b>17343</b>
Yes	96.6	98.4	95.3	91.5	97.2
No	3.4	1.6	4.7	8.5	2.8

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1425</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>46*</b>	<b>17440</b>
Yes	7.6	5.1	10.4	6.5	5.5
No	92.4	94.9	89.6	93.5	94.5

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

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

**Table 16: Plans after leaving school**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1426</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>47*</b>	<b>17492</b>
Go to university	64.9	72.8	57.5	57.4	70.0
Get a job	46.8	46.0	47.5	57.4	46.2
Travel/gap year	32.5	39.2	24.7	36.2	32.5
Go to TAFE or college	16.1	13.8	16.9	34.0	10.2
Start a business	12.9	8.6	18.0	12.8	11.3
Get an apprenticeship	10.6	4.1	17.3	8.5	8.7
Become a professional athlete	8.4	4.7	13.0	8.5	7.6
Join the defence force or emergency services	6.3	5.1	6.7	14.9	7.1
Other	1.8	0.6	2.9	6.4	2.0
Not sure	7.9	7.1	8.8	8.5	7.0
No choices are available to me	0.2	0.1	0.3	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 WA frequency. \*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1383</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>43*</b>	<b>17052</b>
Extremely or very confident	45.8	43.4	48.9	39.5	47.4
Somewhat or slightly confident	52.0	54.2	49.5	53.5	50.0
Not at all confident	2.2	2.3	1.6	7.0	2.6

Base: Respondents who reported having a plan or were *not sure* of their plan after leaving school. \*Sample is less than 100, please use caution when interpreting results.

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1307</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>42*</b>	<b>16215</b>
Yes	40.4	44.4	32.2	78.6	37.0
No	59.6	55.6	67.8	21.4	63.0

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %*	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>33*</b>	<b>5994</b>
Mental health	43.0	43.3	34.3	75.8	42.4
Academic ability	36.7	37.8	36.1	24.2	36.5
Financial difficulty	29.2	30.6	26.6	36.4	28.9
Where you live	17.0	18.6	12.4	27.3	16.2
Admission/job requirements	16.1	15.8	16.0	21.2	16.9
Lack of information	16.5	16.2	16.0	21.2	15.6
Family responsibilities	15.3	15.5	13.6	24.2	13.0
Lack of jobs	13.8	11.7	15.4	24.2	12.6
Transport	12.7	10.3	13.6	18.2	11.5
Lack of family support	11.7	11.3	8.3	24.2	9.1
Physical health	11.2	8.6	11.2	24.2	9.5
Lack of school support	7.8	7.2	4.1	21.2	9.8
Discrimination	7.2	4.8	6.5	33.3	7.0
Caring responsibilities	6.3	5.5	4.7	18.2	5.1
COVID-19	2.7	1.4	3.6	6.1	3.2
Cultural responsibilities	1.7	0.7	1.8	6.1	2.6
Other	7.8	5.5	12.4	6.1	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 WA frequency.

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

**Table 20: Participation in paid employment**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1640</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>59*</b>	<b>19390</b>
Permanent employee	3.4	3.8	2.3	5.1	4.6
Casual employee	41.9	45.1	40.2	32.2	48.2
Not in paid employment, looking for work	30.9	28.8	32.3	25.4	26.6
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	23.8	22.3	25.1	37.3	20.6

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

**Table 21: Employment type**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>10031</b>
Working full-time	1.9	1.6	1.0	1.4
Working part-time	98.1	98.4	99.0	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.

Gender diverse data is not included as sample size was less than 30.

**Table 22: Satisfaction with job**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>10024</b>
Very satisfied or satisfied	67.4	70.7	67.0	66.7
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.2	22.0	21.9	22.1
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	9.4	7.3	11.1	11.1

Base: Respondents who reported they are in paid employment.

Gender diverse data is not included as sample size was less than 30.

## WELLBEING

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1621</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>57*</b>	<b>19110</b>
Excellent	9.3	4.3	15.0	5.3	10.4
Very good	19.9	16.0	26.0	7.0	22.0
Good	29.4	28.8	30.1	21.1	29.9
Fair	27.8	34.4	20.9	19.3	25.4
Poor	13.7	16.4	8.0	47.4	12.3

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

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

	WA 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	63.9	61.8	67.9	47.8	65.7	75.5 – 79.3	77.4
<b>Personal Wellbeing Index</b>	<b>66.5</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>69.9</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>68.2</b>	<b>74.2 – 76.8</b>	<b>75.5</b>
About the things they have e.g., money	70.0	69.5	71.6	58.5	73.1	75.8 – 80.6	78.2
With their health	64.4	60.9	69.5	48.3	65.9	72.5 – 76.0	74.2
With things they want to be good at	61.3	57.6	65.9	54.6	62.4	69.9 – 74.5	72.1
With getting on with the people they know	68.6	65.7	72.8	58.3	70.4	75.7 – 80.9	78.2
About how safe they feel	75.2	74.0	78.6	56.9	77.4	75.4 – 83.1	79.2
Doing things away from home	71.9	69.3	75.4	70.7	73.0	68.2 – 72.1	70.1
About what may happen to them later in their life	57.1	53.3	62.1	45.6	59.7	65.5 – 72.0	68.7
With their connection to culture <sup>**</sup>	67.0	65.4	68.2	*	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).

\*Gender diverse data is not included as sample size was less than 30. Sample is less than 100 for gender diverse, please use caution when interpreting results.

\*\*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**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1608</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18982</b>
Complete control	9.2	5.3	13.0	7.1	9.6
Mostly in control	44.1	41.9	49.3	16.1	46.3
Some control	34.5	40.3	27.9	42.9	34.1
Almost no control	9.5	10.4	7.4	23.2	7.7
No control	2.7	2.2	2.4	10.7	2.3

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1567</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>55*</b>	<b>18554</b>
Low psychological distress	42.2	31.0	56.8	16.4	46.0
Moderate psychological distress	29.9	32.9	27.3	29.1	29.1
High psychological distress	28.0	36.1	15.9	54.5	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).

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1611</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18991</b>
None of the time	15.3	9.3	23.0	10.7	17.2
A little of the time	29.1	28.1	30.7	19.6	31.1
Some of the time	32.1	36.9	28.2	17.9	30.8
Most of the time	18.6	21.4	13.9	35.7	16.6
All of the time	4.9	4.3	4.2	16.1	4.2

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1604</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18926</b>
Excellent	19.0	16.1	23.5	7.1	20.7
Very good	26.7	25.1	29.8	19.6	29.4
Good	24.4	25.5	24.4	16.1	25.3
Fair	19.0	21.3	14.5	23.2	16.2
Poor	10.8	12.0	7.8	33.9	8.4

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

**Table 29: Feelings about the future**

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1595</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18953</b>
Very positive or positive	45.5	49.7	41.8	37.5	50.0
Neither positive nor negative	35.8	33.2	38.4	28.6	33.5
Negative or very negative	18.7	17.1	19.8	33.9	16.5

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

## SUPPORT AND CONNECTEDNESS

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1623</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>59*</b>	<b>19162</b>
Friend(s)	69.4	74.7	64.3	64.4	72.8
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	63.6	64.6	64.6	40.7	66.3
Relative/family friend	41.3	42.9	41.3	30.5	41.9
Brother/sister	38.7	40.1	39.7	16.9	39.4
Partner or significant other	24.1	24.2	24.4	28.8	23.5
Teacher	22.7	26.1	19.1	16.9	22.7
Internet	22.6	25.1	19.7	37.3	24.6
GP or health professional	21.5	27.5	15.1	22.0	23.0
School counsellor	13.1	16.1	10.5	13.6	16.1
Social media	12.8	15.4	9.9	18.6	13.6
Mobile apps	9.9	12.2	6.8	16.9	9.6
Community service	4.6	4.8	4.3	5.1	2.8
Spiritual/religious mentor	4.0	3.0	4.1	6.8	5.8
Other	2.8	2.9	2.2	5.1	3.3
None of the above	8.1	5.2	11.1	16.9	6.4

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1614</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>59*</b>	<b>19065</b>
Sports (as a participant)	65.8	62.3	72.2	37.3	67.0
Sports (as a spectator)	51.3	47.4	59.6	23.7	49.7
Volunteer work (e.g. through a sports club, charity, religious organisation, school)	47.3	48.2	47.2	40.7	40.7
Arts/cultural/music groups/activities	31.4	37.1	24.3	45.8	29.4
Student leadership groups/activities	29.1	33.9	22.8	30.5	28.6
Youth groups/activities	19.5	18.6	18.1	37.3	18.2
Religious groups/activities	13.7	11.7	15.0	13.6	15.4
Environmental groups/activities	8.7	8.5	7.8	15.3	7.5
Political groups/activities	3.0	2.7	2.7	8.5	3.4
None of the above	14.0	14.4	12.9	20.3	12.4

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1598</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>59*</b>	<b>18762</b>
Yes – both spiritual and cultural beliefs	16.6	15.7	16.6	22.0	18.5
Yes – spiritual beliefs	19.1	20.0	17.8	22.0	20.0
Yes – cultural beliefs	11.2	11.4	11.6	6.8	11.2
No beliefs	53.1	52.9	54.1	49.2	50.2

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1568</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>18452</b>
Turn to friends and family if you need help	31.3	35.3	24.3	57.1	29.3
Fit in and socialise with everyone else ( <i>at school, work or socially</i> )	29.5	34.6	20.6	60.7	28.5
Turn to services / organisations if you need help	23.9	28.9	14.5	60.7	21.1
Make choices and feel independent	23.8	28.9	16.5	41.1	21.6
Do everyday activities as young people your age usually do	21.9	25.7	15.6	46.4	19.2
Do things in public places with friends ( <i>e.g. go to shopping centres</i> )	17.1	19.5	12.5	35.7	16.0
Travel around the community ( <i>e.g. using footpaths</i> )	11.7	13.4	9.0	12.5	9.1
None of the above	42.4	34.2	54.4	14.3	45.5

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

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>I am proud to be part of my community (Base)</b>	<b>1554</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>54*</b>	<b>18404</b>
Strongly agree/agree	57.7	59.4	57.4	35.2	60.1
Mixed feelings	33.4	32.4	34.5	42.6	31.8
Disagree/strongly disagree	8.9	8.1	8.1	22.2	8.1
<b>My community has the things that I need to have a positive and thriving future (Base)</b>	<b>1550</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>53*</b>	<b>18408</b>
Strongly agree/agree	58.3	57.3	60.9	45.3	62.5
Mixed feelings	32.6	33.8	30.3	39.6	29.7
Disagree/strongly disagree	9.1	8.9	8.8	15.1	7.8
<b>Young people in my community have a say on issues that matter to them (Base)</b>	<b>1549</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>54*</b>	<b>18390</b>
Strongly agree/agree	42.9	43.2	41.9	48.1	44.4
Mixed feelings	38.7	39.2	38.7	27.8	38.9
Disagree/strongly disagree	18.4	17.6	19.4	24.1	16.7

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

## UNFAIR TREATMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>1617</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>57*</b>	<b>19050</b>
Yes	32.0	34.6	25.1	77.2	26.6
No	68.0	65.4	74.9	22.8	73.4

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

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

	WA %	Female %	Male %	Gender diverse %	National %
<b>Base</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>44*</b>	<b>5060</b>
Gender	31.9	36.3	15.5	70.5	30.0
Race/cultural background	36.8	35.9	39.9	34.1	34.6
Mental health	25.5	31.1	14.9	38.6	23.6
Sexuality	23.8	19.8	19.0	65.9	20.2
Age	18.2	19.8	14.9	18.2	15.3
Religion	10.3	9.5	10.7	13.6	10.9
Disability	9.9	6.6	8.9	34.1	8.9
Physical appearance	41.2	42.1	38.7	52.3	36.4
Personal views	28.6	27.5	25.0	40.9	26.6
Financial background	8.1	8.8	7.1	9.1	6.3
Other	10.4	10.3	11.9	4.5	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 WA 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](http://kidshelpline.com.au)**

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