

Listening to the voices of young people: Implications for supporting young Australians

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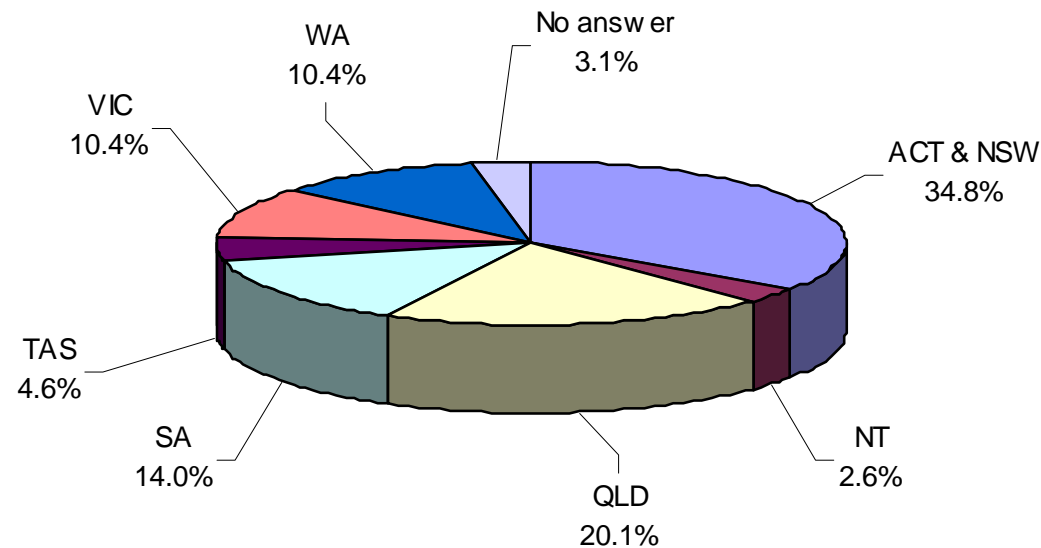


Mission Australia's National Youth Survey

- Conducted each year since 2002
- Voluntary, non-random responses from 11-24 year olds
- 'Simple' 1 page format – paper based & on-line
- Issues; who they turn to; access info; who they admire, level of community involvement etc
- Not 'final word' - useful part of the picture

Respondents in 2006

- 14,700 (2,500 in 02; 1,500 in 03; 8500 in 04; 11,300 in 05)
- 11-14 yrs (42.3%); 15-19 yrs (52.8%); 20-24 yrs (5.0%)
- 63% females; 35% males (2% no answer)
- State/Territory distribution



Respondents in 2006 cntd

- Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander: 5.5% or 778
- 60.6% live in capital city; 39.4% in non-metro areas
- Living arrangements nationally: 92.1 % family; 3.0% share; 1.0% alone; 1.1% homeless/insecure (154); 2.0% in boarding school
- Language spoken at home: 15% spoke LOTE nationally; over 70 languages; Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Greek, Tagalog, German, French, Spanish

1. What do young people value?

	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %
Family relationships	72.3	73.3	80.2
Friendships (other than family)	66.8	68.3	
Being independent	35.2	36.0	46.0
Feeling needed and valued	29.3	30.7	45.1
School or study satisfaction	24.9	22.1	31.5
Getting a job	20.3	17.6	33.0
Financial security	16.2	16.1	19.3
Spirituality / faith	13.9	15.3	N/A
Peer acceptance	12.2	12.5	38.3
Environmental issues	8.9	8.7	8.6

1. What do young people value? By gender

	Female %	Male %
Family relationships	76.9	64.9
Friendships (other than family)	71.8	58.5
Being independent	34.4	36.6
Feeling needed and valued	31.8	24.9
School or study satisfaction	25.5	24.0
Getting a job	14.5	30.4
Financial security	13.5	20.9
Spirituality / faith	13.7	13.8
Peer acceptance	10.7	14.6
Environmental issues	7.4	11.2

1. What do young people value? By age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Family relationships	73.3	71.6	72.0
Friendships (other than family)	67.1	67.6	55.7
Being independent	31.5	37.7	39.8
Feeling needed and valued	28.2	29.4	36.4
School or study satisfaction	27.5	24.5	8.7
Getting a job	22.3	18.5	22.6
Financial security	13.0	16.9	33.7
Spirituality / faith	13.2	14.0	17.9
Peer acceptance	14.4	11.2	4.4
Environmental issues	9.5	8.5	8.4

1. What do YP value? Indigenous & non Indigenous

	Indigenous %	Non Indigenous %
Family relationships	63.9	73.0
Friendships (other than family)	53.3	67.8
Being independent	41.5	34.9
Getting a job	33.1	19.4
Feeling needed and valued	26.1	29.5
School or study satisfaction	23.0	25.0
Financial security	17.1	16.1
Spirituality / faith	14.4	13.7
Environmental issues	14.1	8.5
Peer acceptance	12.9	12.2

1. What do young people value?

	Homeless 2006 %	Stable Housing 2006 %
Friendships	53.7	67.2
Family relationships	51.0	72.5
Being independent	38.3	35.0
Feeling needed and valued	29.1	29.3
Financial security	25.3	15.9
Getting a job	24.7	20.2
Environmental issues	20.8	8.7
Peer acceptance	20.7	12.1
School or study satisfaction	18.4	25.2
Spirituality	16.4	13.8

2. What issues are important/of concern to YP?

	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %
Family conflict	28.6	34.8	32.2
Alcohol & other drug issues	28.2	33.6	43.5
Body image	28.1	N/A	N/A
Suicide	28.0	41.3	33.7
Physical/ sexual abuse	27.9	37.5	29.7
Coping with stress	27.6	32.1	35.1
Bullying / emotional abuse	27.5	31.4	36.3
School or study problems	26.4	24.9	28.2
Depression	25.8	33.6	29.9
Self harm	21.5	N/A	N/A
Discrimination	18.4	19.9	15.9
Sexuality	13.3	12.0	19.2

2. What issues are important/concern to YP? By gender

	Female %	Male %
Family conflict	28.0	29.7
Alcohol & other drug issues	24.7	34.2
Body image	28.5	26.5
Suicide	28.4	27.3
Physical / sexual abuse	30.8	23.0
Coping with stress	28.0	27.0
Bullying / emotional abuse	27.9	26.7
School or study problems	26.0	27.3
Depression	27.5	23.0
Self harm	21.6	21.3
Discrimination	18.0	19.1
Sexuality	11.8	15.9

2. What issues are important/of concern to YP? By age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Family conflict	29.4	28.8	20.2
Alcohol & other drug issues	30.2	26.7	26.5
Body image	28.8	28.8	14.6
Suicide	29.7	27.8	16.4
Physical / sexual abuse	28.0	27.9	27.4
Coping with stress	25.6	29.7	21.7
Bullying / emotional abuse	29.4	25.6	31.7
School or study problems	25.7	27.1	24.2
Depression	22.0	27.1	43.4
Self harm	22.5	20.7	21.2
Discrimination	16.0	18.4	37.5
Sexuality	13.9	12.5	16.2

2. What issues are of concern to YP? Indigenous

	Indigenous %	Non Indigenous %
Alcohol & other drug issues	35.4	27.6
Body image	35.1	27.6
Family conflict	30.5	28.5
Bullying / emotional abuse	26.7	27.5
School or study problems	24.9	26.5
Suicide	23.8	28.0
Physical / sexual abuse	23.7	28.1
Self harm	23.4	21.5
Coping with stress	23.3	28.0
Depression	22.9	26.1
Discrimination	18.1	18.4
Sexuality	13.3	13.3

2. What issues are important/of concern to YP?

	Homeless 2006 %	Stable Housing 2006 %
Alcohol & other drug issues	43.8	28.0
Body image	38.6	28.2
Suicide	31.7	28.0
Bullying / emotional abuse	28.7	27.4
Self harm	23.6	21.4
Physical / sexual abuse	22.9	28.1
Depression	22.8	25.8
Family conflict	22.4	28.5
Coping with stress	20.8	27.8
Sexuality	20.3	13.2
Discrimination	14.7	18.3
School or study problems	12.8	26.5

3. Where do young people turn for advice/support?

	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %
Friend/s	86.4	87.3	86.1
Parent/s	74.2	75.7	71.1
Relative/ family friend	64.0	64.9	62.7
Internet	16.8	15.7	15.4
Magazines	13.5	12.7	15.3
School counsellor	11.6	10.8	13.7
Community agencies eg youth worker	9.3	9.9	10.5
Teacher	9.3	9.9	9.8
Someone else in your community eg doctor, minister etc	8.6	9.0	9.3
Telephone helpline	6.2	5.8	7.8

3. Where do YP turn for advice/support? By gender

	Female %	Male %
Friend/s	90.5	79.6
Parent/s	74.5	74.2
Relative / family friend	67.3	58.8
Internet	14.4	20.9
Magazines	14.8	10.9
School counsellor	11.1	12.5
Community agencies eg youth worker etc	7.1	12.7
Teacher	8.1	11.3
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister etc	7.0	11.2
Telephone helpline	5.3	7.4

3. Where do YP turn for advice/support? By age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Friend/s	84.0	90.4	94.7
Parent/s	77.6	73.8	76.3
Relative / family friend	65.4	66.4	67.1
Internet	13.1	19.4	26.3
Magazines	12.8	13.4	14.5
School counsellor	12.1	11.7	7.3
Community agencies eg youth worker etc	8.9	9.5	10.7
Teacher	10.4	9.0	3.8
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister etc	8.0	8.6	13.8
Telephone helpline	7.7	5.2	3.8

3. Where do YP turn for advice/support? ATSI

	Indigenous 2006 %	Non Indigenous 2006 %
Friend/s	78.8	86.9
Parent/s	63.9	74.9
Relative / family friend	56.9	64.5
Community agencies (eg youth worker etc)	21.7	9.3
Internet	20.2	16.6
Magazines	14.5	13.4
Someone else in your community (eg doctor, church minister etc)	13.1	8.3
School counsellor	12.7	11.6
Teacher	8.3	9.3
Telephone helpline	8.2	6.0

3. Where do YP turn for advice/support?

	Homeless 2006 %	Stable Housing 2006 %
Friend/s	71.2	86.6
Parent/s	43.1	74.7
Relative / family friend	39.2	64.4
Internet	36.6	16.5
Community agencies (eg youth worker etc)	33.3	9.7
Magazines	26.9	13.4
School counsellor	17.4	11.5
Telephone helpline	16.2	6.1
Someone else in your community (eg doctor, church minister etc)	11.1	8.5
Teacher	8.3	9.3

4. Is there enough information for YP?

- 85% had enough info on issues of concern to them
- Just over one in five young adults wanted more info
- Areas where more info requested:
 - depression; suicide; self harm; alcohol and drugs; sexuality and sex education; stress and anxiety; school and study; self esteem; discrimination; racism and family conflict.

5. What activities are YP involved in?

	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %
Sports	68.2	64.5	61.3
Arts / cultural eg drama, music, dance	43.0	40.7	32.7
Youth groups & clubs	27.1	30.8	28.0
Religious	23.6	20.6	18.5
Volunteer	21.4	21.3	16.4
Student Representative Council	13.6	11.2	12.5
Environmental	11.0	6.5	5.1

6. What 3 people or organisations do young people admire?

- Family members 29.1%
- Friends – including boy/girl friend 13.3%
- Sports figures 8.1%
- Entertainers – musicians, actors, authors 7.3%
- Agencies supporting disadvantaged 7.1%
- International aid agencies 6.2%
- Organisations supporting seriously ill 5.1%

Some policy & practice implications

- YP keen to voice their opinions – need to find ↑ & diverse ways to engage them – home, school, comm
- Confirms not homogeneous – age, gender, ATSI, location etc
- Sig consistency over time in many areas but volatility in issues of importance/concern – ask often
- What/who they value & admire is ‘people’ centred – counter to many ‘popular’ images

Some policy & practice implications

- YP dealing w/complex range of issues at an early age
- More complex picture emerged this year with large range of issues of concern to ¼+ young people
- Emergence of body image – for both genders & particularly 11-19 yrs → whole of community response
- Clarity about issues of concern for young adults – depression, discrimination – further work needed
- 75% of mental health problems begin 15-25 yrs
- Responses to reflect heterogeneity & dynamic of YP

Some policy & practice implications

- Strategies that support peer-peer; parent/carer-young person; relative/family-friend & young person
- We appear to be improving young people's access to info
- Access to information varies considerably with age, gender etc – eg role of internet
- Strategies to engage & continue to participate in activities such as sport & possibly arts/culture for males