Young people feel that people in power i.e. our schools, teachers, principals and governments are not listening to them. Governments don’t seem to listen to our concern for climate change. Many young people I converse with feel helpless on the issue. That also reduces our mental health because our future seems so bleak.”

F, 18, VIC

Mission Australia conducted its 18th annual survey of young people aged 15-19 in 2019. The survey aims to identify young people’s values, aspirations and concerns. This year’s survey had a special focus on young people’s voice, experiences of bullying, and disability.

56% | 41%
---|---
Female | Male
identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

6%
18%
spoke a language other than English at home

Top 3 most important issues in Australia today:

Mental health
36%
The environment
34%
Equity and discrimination
25%

The % of young people identifying the ENVIRONMENT as an issue of national importance has NEARLY QUADRUPLED since 2018 9% to 34%

Top 3 barriers to achieving post-school goals:
1. Academic ability 20%
2. Mental health 17%
3. Financial difficulty 12%

Top 3 personal concerns:
1. Coping with stress 45%
2. School or study problems 34%
3. Mental health 33%

More than double the proportion of females were extremely/very concerned about coping with stress (58% compared with 26% of males)

For the first time in 2019, young people were asked if they have enough of a say about important issues. Less than one in ten (7%) felt they have a say all of the time in public affairs.

25,126 respondents aged 15-19 years

Nearly half (49%) felt there were barriers that would impact upon them achieving their study/work goals after finishing school. A much greater proportion of females (55%) than males (41%) reported the presence of barriers.

The % of young people identifying the ENVIRONMENT as an issue of national importance has NEARLY QUADRUPLED since 2018 9% to 34%

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F, 18, VIC
For the first time in 2019, young people were asked about their experiences of bullying. In the past year:

- Experienced bullying: 21%
- Witnessed bullying take place: 48%

30% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people experienced bullying compared with 20% of non-Indigenous respondents.

Of those who experienced bullying in the past year:

- 80% said it happened at school/TAFE/university
- 34% experienced it online/on social media

Kinds of bullying experienced:

- 71% were verbally bullied
- 61% were socially bullied
- 37% were cyberbullied
- 22% were physically bullied

“Bullying in schools and outside of schools. It is making young children take their own lives!”

M, 16, VIC

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

To download the report: missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurveyreport

“Politicians need to take action and young people need to be reminded their voice is powerful and therefore needs to be listened to.” F, 17, NSW