national survey of young australians 2011

key and emerging issues

YOUNG PEOPLE

Mission Australia

Foreword

NATIONAL SURVEY OF YOUNG AUSTRALIANS 2011

Mission Australia is delighted to bring you the results of our 10th National Survey of Young Australians. This comprehensive report, produced by our Research and Social Policy team, captures the thoughts of thousands of young Australians.

Our vision as an organisation is very clear and every one of our more than 3000 staff align themselves and the work they do to this vision. In essence, we seek to assist people to a better quality of life by providing pathways to that end.

One of our declared pathways is "pathways through a successful youth". Navigating a successful youth experience means, among other things, naming the things that both help and hinder the journey. This survey provides an abundance of material in this regard.

Mission Australia will continue to work with the youth of our nation with passion and compassion. Clearly many young people need help during these vital years and we're confident the material contained in this report will assist those who have a heart to help.

I warmly commend this report for your careful consideration.

Bruce Eagles
National Chaplain

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

In 2011 Mission Australia conducted its tenth annual National Survey of Young Australians. The primary purpose of the survey, as in previous years, was to identify both the values and issues of concern to young people. This year we have adjusted one of our questions to link sources of advice and support to the main issues of concern for young people.

PARTICIPATION

45,916 young people aged 11 to 24 participated in the survey in 2011. 9,903 (21.6%) completed the survey online, with the remainder being completed in hard copy.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The survey was deliberately kept brief (19 questions) in order to encourage a large response from a diversity of young people. Seven questions sought respondent's views on a variety of issues, such as what they value, their issues of concern and who they turn to for advice and support on their main issue of concern, and what activities they are involved in. The remaining questions collected demographic information including age, gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification, language spoken at home, state/territory location, disability status, education and employment participation, living arrangements, and postcode.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was distributed to a range of organisations, including all secondary schools and public and tertiary libraries in Australia. It was also distributed to all Mission Australia services as well as to a large network of other service providers, Commonwealth, State/Territory and local government departments, youth organisations, peak bodies and corporate partners. An online version of the survey was also available on a variety of websites.

Each year Mission Australia provides breakdowns of key data by age and gender. The 11 to 14 age group data on study and work have been excluded because secondary education in Australia is compulsory at this age. In some states/territories we find there are very small numbers of respondents in the 20 to 24 age group and in these cases we have not provided a breakdown of the data for this age group.

Changes in 2011

The question regarding employment was adjusted in 2011 and became a two-part question. We first asked whether young people had paid work, and for those who responded 'yes', we asked how many hours they worked in an average week. Part time employment was defined as less than 35 hours/week while full time employment was defined as 35 hour/week or more.

An additional response category was added to the question about main source of income. In addition to the options 'employment', 'government allowance', 'parents/family' and 'other' included in previous years, a 'no income' response category was included in 2011.

The questions relating to what young people value, their personal concerns and their sources of advice and support presented respondents with a list of options. 2011 respondents were asked to provide rankings for their top 3 items only in order of importance, whereas respondents in previous years were asked to rank all items.

A new question was introduced in the 2011 National Survey which asked respondents to indicate whether they had somewhere they could go for advice and support about their number one issue of concern. Respondents who answered 'yes' to this question were then asked to complete a question regarding the sources they turn to for advice and support about their number one issue of concern. This 'advice and support' question contained identical items to the 'advice and support' question in previous years, but is now linked to respondents' main issue of concern.

These changes in the 2011 survey need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results and comparing responses across years.

THIS REPORT

This report contains an executive summary as well as summaries at the national level and for each state/territory. There is also a chapter comparing data between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal young people (within this document Aboriginal is the reference used to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people). Each of the chapters contains a breakdown of the key data by age and gender.

Executive summary

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Responses to the 2011 survey were received from 45,916 young people living in a range of communities across Australia. Around 58% were living in a capital city and the remainder in other areas of each state and territory. The largest proportion of responses came from New South Wales (32.5%), Queensland (22.8%) and Victoria (16.7%). Half of the participants (49.9%) were aged 15 to 19 years, 47.9% were aged 11 to 14, and 2.1% were aged 20 to 24 years. A little over half of respondents were female (54%). Compared to 2010, there was a slight increase in the number of responses from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (5.8% compared to last year's figure of 4.8%), young people who spoke a language other than English at home (19.4% compared to 15.9% last year), and young people with a disability (4.0% compared to 3.2% last year). The largest proportion of participants were studying full time (89.7%, up from 85.5% in 2010). Almost four in ten respondents (38.2%, a decrease from 45.9% last year) were in paid employment, the majority in part time work.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE VALUE

In 2011, as in previous years, *family relationships* and *friendships* were the top two items valued by young people (74.3% and 59.0% of respondents respectively). *School or study satisfaction* was the third top issue, highly valued by 36.9% of respondents, a considerable increase from last year's figure of 29.3%. A greater proportion of females and of respondents aged 11 to 14 years highly valued these top three items. *Physical and mental health* was also ranked highly by almost a third of respondents. There was a substantial increase in the proportion of young people valuing *getting a job* (22.7% compared with 16.0% in 2010). Respondents aged 20 to 24 highly valued *financial security* (39.0%).

ISSUES OF PERSONAL CONCERN

Young people were asked to rank their top three personal concerns from a list of 15 items. Nationally, the top three issues of concern were *school or study problems* (37.3% of respondents, up from last year's figure of 25.5%), *coping with stress* (35.4% compared with 27.3% in 2010), and *body image* (33.1% compared with 31.1% last year). Respondents aged 20 to 24 were more likely to be concerned about *coping with stress, body image* and *depression* than the younger respondents. Concerns about *family conflict, bullying/emotional abuse, personal safety, drugs, alcohol* and *suicide* decreased with age. Female participants were more likely than males to be concerned about *coping with stress* and *body image*, while males were more likely to be concerned about *drugs* and *alcohol* than females.

WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE TURN FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT ON THEIR MAIN ISSUE OF CONCERN

This year young people were asked whether or not they had somewhere to go for advice and support about their number one issue of concern. Over 20% of respondents stated that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support. The older age group (20 to 24 years), and male respondents, were more likely to report that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support. As in previous years of the survey, *friends, parents* and *relative/family friend* were the three main sources of advice and support, and these were so for all issues of concern, all age groups, and both genders. The *internet* was ranked highly as a source of advice and support for over one in five respondents concerned about *sexuality, the environment, discrimination, body image, depression*, and *self harm*.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA TODAY

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. In 2011, the top three issues identified by young people were *the environment* (44.7%, a slight decrease from 45.7% last year), *alcohol and drugs* (31.7%, down from last year's figure of 37.1%), and *the economy and financial matters* (20.3%, up from 18.6% in 2010). *Population issues* was identified by 19.1% of respondents in 2011, compared with 13.3% last year. Participants aged 11 to 14 were more likely to identify *the environment, alcohol and drugs,* and *crime and safety,* while the 20 to 24 age group were more likely to identify *the economy and financial matters* and *mental health*. Compared to males, female respondents were more likely to identify *the environment, equity and discrimination, bullying* and *mental health*, while males were more likely to identify *alcohol and drugs*, *the economy and financial matters, population issues, crime, safety* and *violence*, and *politics and societal values* than females.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Sports (as a participant), sports (as a spectator) and *arts/cultural activities* were the three most popular activities young people were involved in. Overall, there was a slight decrease in participation rates across all activities from 2010 levels. Participation in *sports (as a participant)* decreased with age while participation in *arts/cultural activities, volunteer work,* and *youth groups and clubs* increased with age. Males were more likely than females to participate in *sports* (both *as a participant* and *as a spectator*) while females were more likely to participate in *arts/cultural activities, volunteer work*, and *student leadership activities*.

THE FUTURE

Respondents were asked to describe how positive or negative they felt about the future. The results were very similar to those in 2010, with almost two thirds of respondents feeling either *positive* or *very positive* about the future and less than one in ten young people feeling *negative* or *very negative*. The proportion of young people who felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future increased with age.

SOME PRIORITY ISSUES

A number of priority issues emerged from this year's survey:

1. **Coping with stress:** This year's survey has shown a greater number of young people concerned about *coping with stress* (an 8% increase from 2010 and a 17% increase from 2009). The data indicate that young people are dealing with a range of competing demands and pressures. As more respondents were engaged in full time education (a 5% increase from last year), the value that young people place on *school or study satisfaction* increased (up 8% from 2010), as did young people's concern about *school or study problems* (a 12% increase from last year). This year's survey has also found fewer respondents in paid employment (down 8% from 2010) and a greater proportion of young people who highly value *getting a job* (a 7% increase from last year). For young people, *the economy and financial matters* remains as one of the most important issues in Australia today. In addition to the pressures of education, lack of job opportunities and financial difficulties, a substantial proportion of young people deal with *family conflict, bullying/emotional abuse, mental health* and *drug and alcohol* issues. Given the negative impact of long-term stress on both mental and physical health, there is clearly a need for not only providing young people with practical strategies to deal with everyday stress, but most importantly for a whole-of-community preventative approach to the issue.

2. **Body image:** As in previous years, young people's level of concern with *body image* remains high, particularly among females and the young adult group. We welcome the latest initiatives announced by the Australian Government such as the "Respect Every Body" learning resources for schools, and the "Positive Body Image Awards" for organisations and products that promote positive body image and self confidence. However, more efforts and resources are required to promote young people's media literacy, self esteem and healthy body image.

3. **Family issues:** Once again, the survey shows the crucial role that the family environment plays on young people's lives. *Family relationships* were highly valued by three in four respondents, *parents* and *relatives* were major sources of advice and support for all issues of concern, and *family conflict* was an issue of personal concern for a third of young people who participated in the survey. These findings support the need for evidence-based integrated programs and services that promote loving and nurturing home environments and support parents and carers, vulnerable families in particular, to develop high quality parenting and nurturing relationships with children[1].

[1] Western Australia Commissioner for Children and Young People (2010) Speaking out about wellbeing: Children and young people speak out about families. CCYP: Subiaco WA

4. **Advice and support on issues of concern:** The fact that one in five young people in the survey stated that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support on their number one issue of concern is worrying. Given the growing evidence of the positive association between social support and mental health this finding highlights the need to increase our efforts as a society to reach others in the community including our relatives, neighbours, classmates, and work colleagues. Young people who report they have no-one to talk to are at higher risk of depression[2]. Belonging to a social network has a powerful protective effect on health[3].

5. **The environment:** As in 2010, *the environment* was identified by respondents as the most important issue in Australia today. This demonstrates that young people are not disconnected from issues of national interest. As young people are likely to live longer with the consequences of current decisions about environmental issues, their concerns and opinions should inform public debate and policy-making. More effective strategies that encourage participation of young people in environmental protection are required.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The 2011 survey provides a unique insight into the values and concerns of almost 46,000 young people across Australia. The picture that emerges is of young people who are positive about the future, committed to improving their educational and employment opportunities, and aware of those issues that are important to the nation. These young people, however, are juggling a range of competing demands and pressures, including *coping with stress, school or study problems, body image* and *family issues*. These findings should continue to inform policy-making and service provision relevant to young people's wellbeing at both local and national levels.

[2] Glover, S. Burns, J. Butler, H. & Patton, G. (1998), "Social Environments and the Emotional Wellbeing of Young People" *Family Matters* No 49 Australian Institute of Family Studies.

[3] Mental Health & Wellbeing Unit (2005) Social inclusion as a determinant of mental health and wellbeing. Research Summary 2. VicHealth: Melbourne.

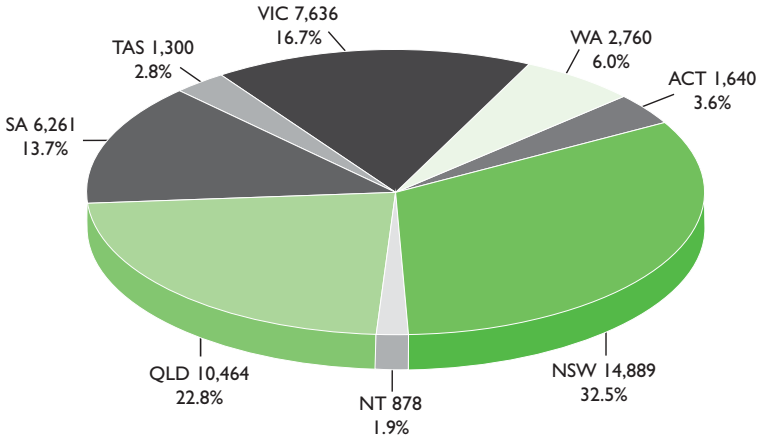
National summary

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

State and Territory Distribution

A total of 45,916 young people responded to Mission Australia's 2011 National Survey of Young Australians. Respondents came from across Australia and Figure 1 indicates the number and percentage of respondents received from each state/territory. There were 88 respondents who did not indicate which state/territory they lived in.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents by state/territory



Age breakdown

The survey was open to young people aged 11 to 24 years and the results have been collated into three age groups. As Table 1 shows, the largest group was aged 15 to 19 years (49.9%). As in previous years, the smallest group of responses came from young adults aged 20 to 24 years (2.1%)

Table 1: Age profile of respondents

Age in years	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
11-14 years	21,505	47.9
15-19 years	22,388	49.9
20-24 years	961	2.1
Total	44,854	100.0

Note: Percentages in all tables, figures and text are rounded to 1 decimal place and may not necessarily total 100%. Not all respondents answered all survey questions. The data is for those who responded.

Gender breakdown

A little over half (53%) of respondents were female and 47% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

2,634 (5.8%) respondents identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. As Table 2 shows, a slightly higher proportion (7.7%) of the young adult group identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Table 2: Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

	Total number	% of respondents	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Aboriginal respondents	2,634	5.8	6.1	5.1	7.7
Non Aboriginal respondents	42,537	94.2	93.9	94.9	92.3

Languages other than English spoken at home

Around 80% of respondents indicated that English was the only language they spoke at home. The 8,840 (19.4%) who indicated they spoke a language other than English at home spoke over 70 languages between them. The ten most frequently spoken languages were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Filipino/Tagalog, Cantonese, Italian, Greek, Mandarin, Korean, and Samoan.

Disability

1,806 (4.0%) respondents indicated they had a disability. The five most frequently cited disabilities were (in order of frequency): learning disability, Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD), autism, physical disability; and deafness or hearing impairment.

Where respondents were living

As in previous years, the vast majority of respondents (94.5%) lived *with family*. Table 3 shows that with increasing age a higher proportion of respondents lived independently in a *share house* or *alone*.

653 young people were living in a *boarding school,* 262 were in *foster care* and a further 272 were in a *juvenile justice centre* or *prison*. 209 young people who were *homeless* or in *insecure housing* also participated.

Table 3: Where respondents were living

	Total %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
With family	94.5	97.7	93.4	52.1
Boarding school	1.4	0.6	2.3	1.3
Share house	1.3	0.5	1.2	21.4
Foster care	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.1
Juvenile justice centre/prison	0.6	0.3	0.8	2.0
Alone	0.5	0.1	0.5	9.9
Homeless/insecure housing	0.5	0.2	0.6	2.8
With spouse/partner and/or own children	0.2	0.0	0.1	7.7
Other	0.4	0.2	0.5	2.7

Living in or outside a capital city

As Table 4 shows around 58% of respondents lived in a capital city. With the exception of young adults, about two in five young people lived outside a capital city.

Table 4: Geographic location of respondents

	Total number	Total %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Live in capital city	26,514	58.2	57.9	58.3	67.7
Not in capital city	19,023	41.8	42.1	41.7	32.3

Main source of income

Parents/family were the main source of income for the majority of respondents (61.9%). Table 5 shows that respondents became less financially dependent on *parents/family* as they become older and found *employment* or were eligible for a *government allowance*. The main sources of income were very similar for male and female respondents.

Table 5: Main source of income

	Total %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Parents/family	61.9	71.7	55.1	7.5	65.0	58.4
Employment	16.0	4.3	25.3	61.4	16.2	15.7
Government Allowance	4.4	0.5	7.1	24.6	4.1	4.7
Other	0.7	0.7	0.6	2.7	0.4	0.9
No income	17.1	22.8	11.9	3.7	14.2	20.3

Study and work

The survey included questions about the study and employment status of respondents. Results for 11 to 14 year olds have been excluded from this section, given secondary education in Australia is compulsory at this age.

As Table 6 shows, 89.7% of respondents aged 15 to 24 years were *studying full time*, slightly higher than the 85.5% of respondents in the 2010 National Survey. As might be expected, the 15 to 19 years age group were much more likely than the young adult group to be *studying full time* (91.8% compared to 40.1%). 2.7% of the younger group compared to 20.1% of the young adult group were *studying part time*, while 39.8% of 20 to 24 year olds compared with 5.5% of 15 to 19 year olds were *not studying*. Female respondents were slightly more likely that male respondents to be *studying full time* (almost 91% compared to 88.4%), while male respondents were slightly more likely than females to be *not studying* (8% compared with almost 6%).

Table 6: Participation in education

	Total %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Studying full time	89.7	91.8	40.1	90.9	88.4
Studying part time	3.4	2.7	20.1	3.3	3.6
Not studying	6.9	5.5	39.8	5.8	8.0

Note: All data in this table are for respondents aged 15 to 24 years.

The employment question was adjusted in the 2011 National Survey and asked respondents to indicate whether they had paid work. Respondents who answered 'yes' this question were then asked to state how many hours they worked in an average week.

Table 7 shows respondents' participation in paid employment. Almost two thirds (61.8%) of respondents were *not in paid employment,* while more than a third (36.4%) were *employed part-time* and 1.8% were *employed full-time*. As might be expected, the young adult group were more likely to be in paid employment than those aged 15 to 19 years (70.3% compared to 36.8%) and more likely to be *employed full-time* (31% compared to 0.5%). The employment status of females and males was quite similar, although slightly more males than females were *not in paid employment* (66.7% compared to 61.8%), and slightly more females than males were *employed part-time* (36.4% compared with 32.1%).

Table 7: Participation in paid employment

	Total %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Employed full time	1.8	0.5	31.0	1.8	1.2
Employed part time	36.4	36.3	39.3	36.4	32.1
Not in paid employment	61.8	63.2	29.7	61.8	66.7

Note: All data in this table are fpr respondents aged 15 to 24 years. Part time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full time is 35 hours or more.

What do young people value?

Young people were asked to rank the top three items they valued from the list of options set out in Table 8. The data from this question have been very consistent across the ten years of the survey. In 2011, as in previous years, *family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by a large proportion of respondents and were clearly the top two values. *School or study satisfaction* and *physical and mental health* were also considered by many young people to be very important.

- *Family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by 74.3% and 59.0% of respondents respectively.
- *School or study satisfaction* and *physical and mental health* were highly valued by around a third of respondents.
- Around 23% of respondents valued *getting a job*, up from 16.0% in 2010.

Table 8: What young people value

	2011 %	2010 %	2009 %	2008 %
Family relationships	**74.3**	**78.8**	**75.6**	**75.3**
Friendships (other than family)	**59.0**	**60.9**	**60.6**	**62.3**
School or study satisfaction	**36.9**	29.3	22.0	21.0
Physical and mental health	32.0	**33.9**	31.1	**31.8**
Getting a job	22.7	16.0	18.1	16.9
Being independent	21.6	27.0	**32.7**	31.7
Feeling needed and valued	13.8	21.8	26.1	26.2
Financial security	11.6	13.5	13.8	13.4
Spirituality/faith	9.6	13.6	12.8	14.0
Making a difference in the community	6.6	6.2	8.2	7.8

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Age differences

Table 9 shows what young people value across the three age groups. The top two items for those aged 11 to 19 were *family relationships* and *friendships*, while for the 20 to 24 year olds these were *family relationships*, and *financial security*. *School or study satisfaction* was also highly valued by young people aged 11 to 19 years. Young people across all age groups indicated that *physical and mental health* was highly valued.

- *Family relationships* was the top issue for all age groups, with more than 60% of respondents in each age group indicating it was highly valued.
- Around 60% of young people aged 11 to 19 highly valued *friendships* compared with 36.5% of 20 to 24 year olds.
- *Physical and mental health* was highly valued by close to a third of all age groups.
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by over a third of those aged 11 to 19 years, compared with 14.4% of those aged 20 to 24.
- *Financial security* was highly valued by almost 40% of young adults, more than five times the proportion of those aged 11 to 14 years who valued it.
- More than one fifth of young adults highly valued *making a difference in the community* compared with just 6.0% of 11 to 14 year olds.

Table 9: What young people value, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Family relationships	**77.9**	**71.5**	**63.1**
Friendships (other than family)	**62.3**	**57.3**	**36.5**
School or study satisfaction	**38.9**	**36.4**	14.4
Physical and mental health	31.2	32.9	35.0
Getting a job	24.2	20.9	15.0
Being independent	17.4	25.3	28.5
Feeling needed and valued	12.8	14.4	22.8
Financial security	6.8	15.3	**39.0**
Spirituality/faith	9.6	9.5	13.1
Making a difference in the community	6.0	6.5	22.3

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 10, the top two items valued by both genders were *family relationships* and *friendships*. There were some differences in the proportion of males and females who value each item, such as seen for *family relationships, friendships, school or study satisfaction* and *physical and mental health.*

- 78.6% of female respondents and 69.5% of male respondents highly valued *family relationships.*
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 61.8% of female respondents and just over half (55.9%) of male respondents.
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 40.8% of female respondents and 32.6% of male respondents.
- Close to one third of both genders highly valued *physical and mental health.*
- Male respondents were twice as likely as female respondents to highly value *getting a job* (31.0% of male respondents compared with 15.6% of female respondents).

Table 10: What young people value, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Family relationships	**78.6**	**69.5**
Friendships (other than family)	**61.8**	**55.9**
School or study satisfaction	**40.8**	32.6
Physical and mental health	30.0	**34.4**
Getting a job	15.6	30.8
Being independent	21.3	22.0
Feeling needed and valued	15.9	11.4
Financial security	10.6	12.8
Spirituality/faith	10.3	8.8
Making a difference in the community	7.5	5.5

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Young people were asked to rank their top three personal concerns from the list of options set out in Table 11. The top three issues of concern to young people in 2011 were *school or study problems, coping with stress* and *body image*, followed by *family conflict* and *bullying/emotional abuse*. The level of concern about *school or study problems* and *coping with stress* increased since 2010.

- *School or study problems* was the top issue of concern in 2011, with 37.3% of respondents indicating that it was of major concern, up from 25.5% in 2010.
- 35.4% of young people indicated that *coping with stress* was of major concern to them, up from 27.3% in 2010.
- *Body image* was the third ranked issue of concern (33.1% of respondents).
- Over a quarter of young people indicated that *family conflict* was of major concern.

There were a number of other issues that were of concern to at least one in five respondents, including *bullying and emotional abuse* and *personal safety*.

Table 11: Issues of personal concern to young people

	2011 %	2010 %	2009 %	2008 %
School or study problems	**37.3**	25.5	17.3	18.6
Coping with stress	**35.4**	**27.3**	18.7	20.4
Body image	**33.1**	**31.1**	**25.5**	**26.3**
Family conflict	28.1	**27.8**	24.1	**25.9**
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.8	23.0	23.4	22.6
Personal safety	20.3	23.5	22.2	22.9
Depression	18.1	19.1	18.7	17.8
The environment	17.7	16.6	16.7	18.4
Drugs	16.9	20.5	**26.8**	**26.0**
Alcohol	15.2	22.2	23.0	20.9
Suicide	9.9	19.6	**26.3**	24.6
Discrimination	8.8	10.0	11.7	12.6
Physical/sexual abuse	8.5	15.7	22.7	22.6
Self harm	6.4	11.3	13.3	13.7
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	6.4	10.9	11.4	12.2

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Age differences

Table 12 shows what young people were concerned about across the three age groups. The top three issues (not necessarily in order) for those aged 11 to 19 years were *school or study problems, coping with stress* and *body image*. The top issues for the young adult group differed slightly. While they shared concern about *coping with stress* and *body image* with the younger groups, their third issue of concern was *depression*. As in 2010, the proportion of young people who indicated *coping with stress, body image* and *depression* were of major concern increased with age. Conversely, concern about *family conflict, bullying/emotional abuse, personal safety, the environment, drugs, alcohol* and *suicide* decreased with age.

- *School or study problems* was a major concern for young people aged 11 to 19 years, with a third (33.5%) of 11 to 14 year olds and 41.8% of 15 to 19 year olds indicating it was of major concern, compared with just 19.8% of young adults.
- *Coping with stress* was a top three personal concern for all three age groups and concern about this increased with age, with 27.4% of 11 to 14 years olds, 42.6% of 15 to 19 year olds and 52.2% of the young adult group indicating it was of major concern.
- *Body image* was a major concern for all age groups and increased with age from 30.4% of 11 to 14 year olds to 41.1% of young adults.
- A top concern for young adults was *depression*, with 35.1% of this group indicating it was of major concern.
- Over one quarter of those aged 11 to 19 indicated *family conflict* was of major concern, compared to 18.7% of young adults.

Table 12: Issues of personal concern to young people, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
School or study problems	**33.5**	**41.8**	19.8
Coping with stress	**27.4**	**42.6**	**52.2**
Body image	**30.4**	**35.5**	**41.1**
Family conflict	28.5	28.0	18.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	28.3	18.1	12.7
Personal safety	24.3	17.1	14.0
Depression	14.6	20.9	**35.1**
The environment	20.1	15.4	18.5
Drugs	20.2	13.9	11.4
Alcohol	15.6	14.6	13.0
Suicide	11.0	8.8	7.2
Discrimination	7.2	10.1	13.0
Physical/sexual abuse	9.6	7.5	8.4
Self harm	6.7	6.1	5.4
Sexuality	5.6	7.0	8.0

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Gender differences

There were both differences and similarities in the issues of concern for females and males. For females, *body image* was the top issue of concern, followed by *coping with stress* and *school or study problems*. The top three issues for males were *school or study problems, coping with stress* and *family conflict*. As in 2010, males were more likely to be concerned about *drugs* and *alcohol* than females, while females were more likely to be concerned about *body image, coping with stress*, and *family conflict.*

- *School or study problems* was a top concern for over a third of both genders.
- *Coping with stress* was a top issue of concern for both males and females, although females were more likely than males to indicate this was of major concern (39.4% compared with 30.6%).
- *Body image* was the top concern of female respondents (42.5%).
- 26.6% of male respondents identified *family conflict* as a top three concern.
- More male respondents than female respondents indicated that *alcohol* was of major concern (19.8% compared to 11.4%).

A number of items were of concern to similar proportions of male and female respondents, including *school or study problems, bullying/emotional abuse, personal safety* and *the environment*.

Table 13: Issues of personal concern to young people, by gender

	Female %	Male %
School or study problems	**37.3**	**37.3**
Coping with stress	**39.4**	**30.6**
Body image	**42.5**	21.9
Family conflict	29.4	**26.6**
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.7	22.9
Personal safety	19.1	21.8
Depression	19.7	16.2
The environment	17.0	18.5
Drugs	12.2	22.5
Alcohol	11.4	19.8
Suicide	8.8	11.1
Discrimination	7.5	10.3
Physical/sexual abuse	9.8	6.9
Self harm	6.3	6.5
Sexuality	5.5	7.3

Note: Data are aggregated and include items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Where do young people turn for advice and support on their main issue of concern?

This year young people were asked whether or not they had somewhere to go for advice and support about their number one issue of concern. Over 20% or respondents stated that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support about their number one issue of concern. Table 14 shows the main sources of advice and support among those respondents who felt they had somewhere to go. As in previous years of the survey, *friends, parents* and *relative/family friend* were the three main sources of advice or support, and these were so for all issues of concern. Additionally, this year the survey shows that:

- *Friends* were the number one source of advice for almost all issues, for 87.2% of respondents concerned about *body image* at the highest, through to 76.2% of respondents concerned about drugs.
- The proportion of respondents who turned to *parents* for advice and support varied across the issues, from 83.9% of respondents concerned about *personal safety* at the highest, through to 57.1% of respondents concerned about *self harm*.
- *Relative/family friend* was a source of advice and support for around half of respondents across the different issues of concern.
- *The internet* was ranked highly as a source of advice and support for concerns about *sexuality* (28.4% of respondents), *the environment* (26.6%), *discrimination* (23.2%), *body image* (21.4%), *depression* (21.1%), and *self harm* (20.6%).
- *School counsellors* were relatively highly ranked for concerns about *bullying/emotional abuse* (24.1% of respondents), *depression* (23.4%), *suicide* (21.6%), *self harm* (20.1%), and *drugs* (19.9%).
- *Teachers* were a source of advice and support for concerns about *school or study problems* (33.9%), *bullying/emotional abuse* (24.4%), *coping with stress* (18.8%), *the environment* (18.5%), and *personal safety* (16.8%).
- About one in ten respondents used *magazines* for advice and support when concerned about *body image* and *self harm*.

Table 14: Where young people turn for advice and support on their main issue of concern

	Community Agencies %	**Friend/s %**	Internet %	Magazines %	**Parent/s %**	**Relative/Family Friend %**	School counsellor %	Someone else in your community %	Teacher %	Telephone Helpline %
School or study problems	3.2	81.2	16.4	3.0	79.3	47.3	13.1	4.5	33.9	1.5
Coping with stress	4.9	86.2	17.0	4.3	78.9	50.4	14.2	7.0	18.8	1.7
Body image	5.2	87.2	21.4	11.1	70.0	50.0	13.5	7.2	10.0	2.7
Family conflict	6.6	84.7	11.3	4.2	64.6	62.7	18.7	7.5	12.9	3.3
Bullying/ emotional abuse	6.4	77.0	10.3	4.4	76.7	49.9	24.1	5.2	24.4	3.6
Personal safety	4.8	81.8	13.7	3.7	83.9	57.3	14.3	6.9	16.8	2.6
Depression	14.3	77.8	21.1	4.8	58.4	44.0	23.4	12.6	11.5	5.9
The environment	8.2	77.6	26.6	7.2	73.7	46.3	10.7	6.5	18.5	2.8
Drugs	8.9	76.2	16.4	3.9	75.3	49.8	19.9	9.3	16.3	4.9
Alcohol	13.1	78.1	17.4	6.3	70.8	47.4	15.7	8.7	14.7	4.3
Suicide	10.8	78.6	17.1	4.5	67.9	48.3	21.6	10.0	13.3	9.0
Discrimination	9.0	80.7	23.2	5.9	74.1	48.3	14.4	10.2	14.6	4.0
Physical/ sexual abuse	9.1	84.1	14.2	5.6	71.8	51.9	18.7	8.2	13.0	6.5
Self harm	8.9	81.5	20.6	10.1	57.1	44.1	20.1	10.3	11.8	6.7
Sexuality	7.7	83.6	28.4	7.7	59.1	46.6	13.9	8.2	13.2	2.3

Note: The percentages given are based on all respondents who ranked that issue as being of greatest concern to them, and stated that they had somewhere they could go for advice about the issue. 'Advice and Support' data were aggregated to include items ranked one, two or three by these respondents.

Age differences

The older age group (20 to 24 years) were more likely to report that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support on their number one issue of concern (28.5% of respondents), followed by the 11 to 14 year olds (21.9%) and the 15 to 19 year olds (20.7%). Table 15 shows where young people turn for advice and support on the top six issues of concern, by age. The 20 to 24 year olds respondents are excluded due to low numbers.

- Overall, the main sources of advice and support for the two age groups were *friends, parents* and *relative/family friend*.
- While the 11 to 14 year old respondents ranked parents as the top source of advice and support for concerns about *school or study problems, bullying/emotional abuse*, and *personal safety,* the 15 to 19 year olds ranked *friends* as their top source of advice and support for these issues of concern.
- Both age groups ranked *internet* as the fourth source of advice and support when concerned about their *body image*.
- Compared to the 11 to 14 year olds, older respondents were more likely to seek advice and support from the *internet* when concerned about *personal safety* and *coping with stress*.

Table 15: Where young people turn for advice and support on their main issue of concern, by age

Issue of Concern	Age Group	Top Sources of Advice and Support (%)					
School or study problems	11-14	Parents 82.1	Friends 76.3	Relative/Family Friend 50.0	Teacher 13.3	Internet 13.3	School Counsellor 13.2
	15-19	Friends 84.5	Parents 77.7	Relative/Family Friend 45.6	Teacher 35.3	Internet 18.3	School Counsellor 13.0
Coping with stress	11-14	Friends 82.4	Parents 81.1	Relative/Family Friend 55.3	Teacher 16.8	School Counsellor 15.1	Internet 11.3
	15-19	Friends 88.3	Parents 78.6	Relative/Family Friend 48.3	Teacher 20.5	Internet 19.3	School Counsellor 14.0
Body image	11-14	Friends 84.0	Parents 73.1	Relative/Family Friend 54.0	Internet 16.1	School Counsellor 14.4	Magazine 11.8
	15-19	Friends 90.0	Parents 68.6	Relative/Family Friend 47.3	Internet 25.0	School Counsellor 13.1	Magazine 10.6
Family conflict	11-14	Friends 81.6	Parents 69.7	Relative/Family Friend 64.7	School Counsellor 18.0	Teacher 13.3	Internet 9.1
	15-19	Friends 88.5	Relative/Family Friend 60.8	Parents 60.1	School Counsellor 20.0	Teacher 13.2	Internet 13.0
Bullying/ emotional abuse	11-14	Parents 79.7	Friends 74.6	Relative/Family Friend 51.7	Teacher 26.8	School Counsellor 24.0	Internet 7.9
	15-19	Friends 81.1	Parents 72.6	Relative/Family Friend 47.1	School Counsellor 24.9	Teacher 20.7	Internet 13.9
Personal safety	11-14	Parents 86.2	Friends 81.0	Relative/Family Friend 59.4	Teacher 18.7	School Counsellor 14.5	Internet 10.9
	15-19	Friends 83.3	Parents 80.8	Relative/Family Friend 53.6	Internet 18.0	School Counsellor 14.4	Teacher 14.3

Note: The percentages given are based on all respondents who ranked that issue as being of greatest concern to them, and stated that they had somewhere they could go for advice about the issue. 'Advice and Support' data were aggregated to include items ranked one, two or three by these respondents.

Gender differences

Males were more likely than females to report that they did not have anywhere to go for advice and support on their number one issue of concern (26.2% compared to 17.5%). The main sources of advice and support on the top six issues of concern by gender are shown in Table 16.

- Overall, the major sources of advice and support for both genders were *friends, parents* and *relative/family friend.*
- Both genders ranked *the internet* as the fourth source of advice and support when concerned about their *body image*.
- Males were more likely than females to seek advice and support from the *internet* when concerned about *coping with stress, family conflict,* and *personal safety*.

Table 16: Where young people turn for advice and support on their main issue of concern, by gender

Issue of Concern	Gender	Top Sources of Advice and Support (%)					
School or or study problems	Female	Friends 85.0	Parent/s 80.5	Relative/Family Friend 50.4	Teacher 24.4	Internet 13.2	School Counsellor 12.3
	Male	Parent/s 78.0	Friends 77.4	Relative/Family Friend 44.2	Teacher 33.4	Internet 19.6	School Counsellor 14.0
Coping with stress	Female	Friends 88.3	Parent/s 79.6	Relative/Family Friend 51.2	Teacher 19.1	Internet 15.6	School Counsellor 13.8
	Male	Friends 82.6	Parent/s 77.6	Relative/Family Friend 49.1	Internet 20.3	Teacher 18.3	School Counsellor 15.2
Body image	Female	Friends 89.5	Parent/s 70.1	Relative/Family Friend 50.6	Internet 20.0	School Counsellor 13.8	Magazines 13.1
	Male	Friends 79.5	Parent/s 69.9	Relative/Family Friend 47.8	Internet 26.3	Teacher 12.9	School Counsellor 12.6
Family conflict	Female	Friends 88.2	Relative/Family Friend 63.2	Parent/s 62.5	School Counsellor 18.8	Teacher 13.4	Internet 10.1
	Male	Friends 79.8	Parent/s 67.4	Relative/Family Friend 62.0	School Counsellor 18.7	Internet 13.0	Teacher 12.4
Bullying/ emotional abuse	Female	Friends 81.5	Parent/s 77.3	Relative/Family Friend 52.9	School Counsellor 24.3	Teacher 21.3	Internet 7.7
	Male	Friends 71.5	Parent/s 2.8	Relative/Family Friend 46.2	Teacher 28.3	School Counsellor 23.9	Internet 13.6
Personal safety	Female	Parent/s 85.2	Friends 84.0	Relative/Family Friend 61.1	Teacher 15.2	School Counsellor 13.7	Internet 10.7
	Male	Parent/s 82.3	Friends 79.0	Relative/Family Friend 52.5	Teacher 18.8	Internet 17.4	School Counsellor 15.1

Note: The percentages given are based on all respondents who ranked that issue as being of greatest concern to them, and stated that they had somewhere they could go for advice about the issue. 'Advice and Support' data were aggregated to include items ranked one, two or three by these respondents.

What issues do young people think are the most important in Australia today?

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 17. In 2011 the top three issues identified by young people were *the environment, alcohol and drugs* (as in 2010), followed by *the economy and financial matters*.

- 44.7% of all respondents indicated that *the environment* was an important issue for Australia today.
- Almost a third (31.7%) of young people identified *alcohol and drugs* as a major issue.
- Around one in five young people indicated *the economy and financial matters*, *population issues* and *crime, safety and violence* were important issues.

Table 17: Most important issues in Australia today

	2011 %	2010 %
The environment	**44.7**	**45.7**
Alcohol and drugs	**31.7**	**37.1**
The economy and financial matters	**20.3**	18.6
Population issues	19.1	13.3
Crime, safety and violence	18.4	**21.0**
Equity and discrimination	16.9	20.6
Bullying	14.9	10.0
Politics and societal values	14.5	13.3
Health	14.3	15.8
Mental health	9.9	11.6
Abuse	7.7	10.0
Homelessness/housing	7.3	5.7
Education	6.7	7.3
International relations	5.0	3.3
Employment	4.9	5.2
Adolescence/youth	4.0	4.2
Poverty/disadvantage	3.0	3.0
Animal rights and welfare	2.3	2.0
Relationships	2.0	2.6

Note: Participants provided three open ended responses, which were coded and aggregated.

Age differences

There were both similarities and differences in the issues identified as the most important in Australia today by young people across the age groups. *The environment* was the top issue of concern across all age groups, although young people aged 11 to 14 were more likely to identify this as a concern than older groups. *Alcohol and drugs* was identified by those aged 11 to 19 as a top issue, while for 15 to 24 year olds *the economy and financial matters* was identified as a top issue.

- All three age groups identified *the environment* as the top issue facing Australia, with 52.8% of 11 to 14 year olds, 37.4% of those aged 15 to 19 years and 39.0% of those aged 20 to 24 years indicating it was an important issue.
- Close to one third of young people aged 11 to 19 years indicated *alcohol and drugs* was an important issue.
- 11 to 14 year olds were more likely to indicate *crime, safety and violence* as an important concern than older age groups (22.1% compared with 15.1% of the 15-19 year olds and 10.8% of the young adult group).
- Almost one in four respondents aged 20 to 24 years rated *mental health* as an important issue compared to about one in ten respondents in the younger age groups.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 18, results for both genders are quite similar. Both genders identified the most important issues facing Australia today as *the environment, alcohol and other drugs* and *the economy and financial matters*. However, more female than male respondents identified *the environment, bullying* and *health* while more males than females identified *alcohol and drugs, the economy and financial matters, population issues, crime, safety and violence* and *politics and societal values*.

- One half (50.1%) of female respondents and over one third (38.3%) of male respondents identified *the environment* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- Close to a third (34.5%) of male respondents and 29.3% of female respondents identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue.

Table 18: Most important issues in Australia today, by age and gender

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
The environment	**52.8**	**37.4**	**39.0**	**50.1**	**38.3**
Alcohol and drugs	**33.6**	**30.3**	20.1	**29.3**	**34.5**
The economy and financial matters	19.1	**21.3**	**24.8**	**18.5**	**22.5**
Population issues	16.7	**21.3**	21.9	17.0	21.6
Crime, safety and violence	**22.1**	15.1	10.8	16.8	20.2
Equity and discrimination	11.6	22.0	18.2	18.2	15.2
Bullying	18.1	12.1	5.7	17.1	12.2
Politics and societal values	13.9	15.2	14.0	11.5	18.1
Health	14.0	14.6	14.5	15.6	12.7
Mental health	8.5	10.7	**22.5**	12.0	7.3
Abuse	8.8	6.8	3.7	9.4	5.6
Homelessness/housing	6.8	7.5	13.4	8.8	5.5
Education	5.5	7.7	10.9	6.7	6.8
International relations	5.2	5.0	3.6	3.8	6.6
Employment	3.6	5.8	12.7	4.5	5.4
Adolescence/youth	2.9	4.9	6.5	5.0	2.8
Poverty/disadvantage	2.9	3.1	4.7	3.5	2.5
Animal rights and welfare	3.0	1.7	1.2	2.9	1.5
Relationships	2.2	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.2

Note: Participants provided three open ended responses, which were coded and aggregated.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities they are involved in from the list shown in Table 19. As in previous years, the top three activities for young people were *sports (as a participant), sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural activities*. Significant proportions also participated in *volunteer work, youth groups and clubs, student leadership activities* and *religious groups or activities*.

- *Sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural activities* were the three most popular activities for young people in 2011.
- More than two thirds (70.7%) of respondents participated in *sports (as a participant)*, while over half 51.9% indicated they were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*.
- Close to one third (30.2%) of respondents were participating in *arts/cultural activities*.
- At least one in five respondents participated in *volunteer work, youth groups* and *clubs, student leadership activities* and *religious groups or activities*.

Table 19: Activities young people were involved in

	2011 %	2010 %	2009 %	2008 %
Sports (as a participant)	**70.7**	**71.3**	**64.2**	**67.6**
Sports (as a spectator)	**51.9**	**57.2**	**39.3**	**46.5**
Arts/cultural activities	**30.2**	**31.2**	**23.4**	**44.1**
Volunteer work	27.9	28.3	18.5	22.2
Youth groups and clubs	25.0	27.0	20.3	26.8
Student leadership activities	24.4	25.7	9.5	12.4
Religious groups or activities	23.2	25.5	20.0	25.9
Environmental groups or activities	11.7	13.3	9.8	14.3
Political groups or organisations*	4.7	5.6	N/A	N/A

Note: Data are a tally of all activities listed; *New item in 2010.

Age differences

Table 20 shows that while *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)* remain the top two activities across all age groups in 2011, involvement in *sports (as a participant)* declines with age. Conversely, involvement in *volunteer work, environmental groups and activities* and *political groups or organisations* increased with age.

- Involvement in *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)* were the top two activities across all age groups.
- Participation in *sports (as a participant)* was highest for 11 to 14 year olds (76.6%), declining to 66.5% of 15 to 19 year olds and 40.7% of 20 to 24 year olds.
- Close to one half (47.4%) of young adults were involved in *volunteer work*, compared with one third (33.5%) of 15 to 19 year olds and 21.0 % of 11 to 14 year olds.
- Around a quarter or more of all age groups were involved in *youth groups and clubs*.

Table 20: Activities young people were involved in, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Sports (as a participant)	**76.6**	**66.5**	**40.7**
Sports (as a spectator)	**50.0**	**54.2**	**41.7**
Arts/cultural activities	**29.3**	30.8	34.8
Volunteer work	21.0	**33.5**	**47.4**
Youth groups and clubs	24.8	24.8	30.1
Student leadership activities	20.9	28.0	17.0
Religious groups or activities	23.3	23.2	22.1
Environmental groups or activities	10.7	12.4	16.4
Political groups or organisations	3.4	5.2	13.4

Note: Data are a tally of all activities listed.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 21, the top two activities for both genders were *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*, although a larger proportion of males than females were involved in both these activities. Participation in *arts/cultural activities* was the third most popular activity for females, while for males it was *youth groups and clubs*.

- 74.6% of male respondents and 67.3% of female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)*.
- Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to be involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (58.5% compared to 46.2%).
- More than one third (35.6%) of female respondents were involved in *arts/cultural activities*, compared to 23.6% of male respondents.
- More female than male respondents were involved in *volunteer work* (30.4% compared to 24.8%).

Table 21: Activities young people were involved in, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Sports (as a participant)	**67.3**	**74.6**
Sports (as a spectator)	**46.2**	**58.5**
Arts/cultural activities	**35.6**	23.6
Volunteer work	30.4	24.8
Youth groups and clubs	24.2	**25.9**
Student leadership activities	26.5	21.8
Religious groups or activities	23.1	23.3
Environmental groups or activities	11.8	11.7
Political groups or organisations	3.9	5.5

Note: Data are a tally of all activities listed.

How do young people feel about the future?

Respondents were asked to describe how positive or negative they felt about the future. Table 22 shows that results are very similar to those in 2010, and almost two thirds of respondents felt either *positive* or *very positive* when they thought about the future. Overall, less than one in 10 young people felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future.

- Almost two thirds of respondents felt either *positive* or *very positive* when they thought about the future.
- Over a quarter (28.1%) of respondents felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- Less than one in 10 young people felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future.

Table 22: Feelings about the future

	2011 %	2010 %
Very Positive	20.4	21.2
Positive	42.7	43.1
Neither	28.1	27.0
Negative	5.6	5.5
Very Negative	3.3	3.2

Age differences

Table 23 shows how young people feel about the future across the three age groups. There is a slight decrease in respondents who felt *very positive* as age increases, and at the same time, there is a slight increase in respondents who felt *positive*, *negative* or *very negative* about the future as age increases.

- More 11 to 19 year olds felt *very positive* about the future than 20 to 24 year olds (around 20% compared to 15%).
- The proportion of respondents who felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future increased from 7.9% of 11 to 14 year olds, to 9.4% of 15 to 19 year olds and 14.2% of 20 to 24 year olds.

Gender differences

Table 23 shows that males were slightly more likely to feel *very positive* about the future than females, while females were slightly more likely to express neutral feelings compared with males.

- 64.9% of males felt *positive* or *very positive* about the future, compared to 61.5% of female respondents.
- 30.2% of female respondents felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future, compared to 25.7% of males.

Table 23: Feelings about the future, by age and gender

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Very Positive	20.9	19.9	15.0	17.5	23.8
Positive	42.8	42.8	44.2	44.0	41.1
Neither positive nor negative	28.4	27.9	26.7	30.2	25.7
Negative	5.0	5.9	9.3	5.6	5.5
Very Negative	2.9	3.5	4.9	2.7	3.9

Acknowledgements

Mission Australia would like to thank the many educational institutions, libraries, youth and community organisations, government agencies, corporates, philanthropic organisations and others who helped with the 2011 National Survey of Young Australians.

These include;

- Australian Catholic University
- Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies
- Australian Council for Educational Leaders
- Australian Red Cross, NT
- Australian Youth Forum (AYF), Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
- Beyond Empathy
- Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Broken Bay
- Centacare Catholic Family Services - Wagga Wagga
- Christian Schools Australia
- Community Residential Care, Families SA
- Country Health SA, Mid North Cluster
- CREATE Foundation
- Darwin City Council
- Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government
- Flinders Campus Community Services Inc
- Foundation for Young Australians
- Girl Guides Australia
- Glenorchy City Council Youth and Community Safety team
- Macquarie Group Foundation
- Manly Local Area Command
- Maribyrnong City Council
- Middle Years of Schooling Association Inc.
- National Children's & Youth Law Centre
- Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies
- Office of Youth Affairs, NT Department of Children and Families, Northern Territory Government
- Tasmanian Government
- The Benevolent Society
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Australia
- The Frank Team
- The Rotary Club of North Hobart
- Uniting*Care* Moreland Hall
- Victorian Applied Learning Association (VALA)
- www.slipprysirkus.org
- Youth Action and Policy Association NSW (YAPA)
- Youth Affairs Council of South Australia
- Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
- Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia
- Youth Affairs Network of Queensland
- Youth Coalition of the ACT
- Youth Justice Directorate, Department for Families and Communities (South Australia)
- Youth Network of Tasmania
- Youth Off The Streets
- youth.gov.au, Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
- youthcentral (www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au) - the Victorian Government's website for young people

About Mission Australia

Mission Australia is a Christian community service organisation that has been transforming the lives of Australians in need for more than 150 years.

Today we are one of the nation's leading community services organisations, operating more than 550 community and employment services from 350 sites in metropolitan, rural and regional Australia.

In 2010-11, our services assisted more than 300,000 Australians by providing a hand up, a way forward and hope for the future.

We work towards creating a fairer Australia by advocating for people in need and helping them to get back on their feet. We strengthen families, empower youth, strive to solve homelessness and provide employment solutions.

Thank you

This publication would not have been possible without the more than 45,000 young people who completed the Mission Australia 2011 National Survey of Young Australians. Our special thanks to them and the staff of Mission Australia and the many other organisations who supported their involvement.

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Macquarie Group Foundation

The Macquarie Group is a diversified international provider of banking, financial, advisory and investment services. Through the Macquarie Group Foundation, Macquarie supports a wide range of community organisations. The Foundation has formed a major partnership with Mission Australia, to enhance its research into key social issues. This research guides Mission Australia's policy development and advocacy, ensuring its employment programs and community services continue to deliver to those most in need.