

# national survey of young australians 2008

key and emerging issues



Mission Australia



# Foreword

## National Survey of Young Australians 2008

The seventh National Survey of Young Australians gives Mission Australia a clearer sense of the times we are in and the challenges faced by young people. Our vision – to see a fairer Australia by enabling people to find pathways to a better life – is constantly informed by the findings revealed in this annual survey. When we know clearly what is happening and what matters to young people, we are better placed to develop programs and services to support them.

Our founding purpose implies a passion to nurture human transformation. We work to reveal the love of God. Our core values – compassion, integrity, respect, perseverance and celebration – inspire us as we build partnerships with others in response to perceived need.

In light of this survey we are challenged to think wisely and discern carefully the realities faced by many young Australians. This survey is a valuable tool for us as we engage in the constant process of discerning the way ahead.

My hope is that you find this seventh National Survey of Young Australians a valuable resource and that you might feel inspired to work with us to see a fairer Australia.

**Keith Mascord**  
National Chaplain



# Introduction

## Introduction

In 2008 Mission Australia conducted its seventh consecutive annual 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.

## Participation

45,558 young people aged 11 to 24 participated in the survey in 2008, including 3,700 who completed their survey online. The response rate increased by more than 50% between 2007 and 2008.

## Areas of focus

The survey was deliberately kept brief (15 questions) in order to encourage a large response from a diversity of young people. Seven questions sought respondents' views on a variety of issues such as what they value, their issues of concern, who they turn to for advice and support, what activities they are involved in, and who they admire. The remaining questions collected demographic data including age, gender, state/territory location, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification and disability status.

## Methodology

The survey was distributed to a wide 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 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, which contained an additional free text question inviting respondents to elaborate on their issues of concern.

The questions relating to what young people value, their concerns, and their sources of advice presented respondents with a list of options which they were asked to rank in order of importance. The data reported for these questions are the proportions of respondents who ranked each item first, second or third. This methodology follows that of previous years and enables comparisons with previous survey results.

The survey questions have remained largely unchanged since 2002, primarily to enable comparisons over time. There have, however, been some changes to the list of options provided for some questions based on responses to previous surveys, as well as ongoing feedback from young people, youth workers and researchers.

## 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 that compares responses from Indigenous and non Indigenous respondents. Each of the chapters contains a breakdown of the key data by age and gender. It is anticipated that an additional publication exploring the qualitative responses of the online participants will be released in 2009.



# Executive summary

## Demographic information

Responses were received from 45,558 young people around the country. Young people in each state and territory participated, with the largest proportion (31.7%) coming from New South Wales. Respondents came from diverse communities across Australia, with about 60% living in a capital city and the remainder in other areas of each state and territory. About half of the surveys were received from respondents aged between 11 and 14, a further 47.5% from respondents aged 15 to 19 and a small proportion (2.3%) from those aged 20 to 24. Just over half of the surveys (56.6%) were completed by females and 43.4% by males. About 2,500 responses were received from Indigenous young people and about 6,800 from young people who spoke a language other than English at home. About 2,350 respondents indicated they had a disability.

## Key questions

As in previous years, there was a great deal of consistency around what young people value, where they go for advice and support and who they admire, namely their *family* and *friends*. A more complex picture has emerged from the data around young people's issues of concern.

## What young people value

*Family relationships* and *friendships* are clearly the two main items valued by all age groups and both genders. Nationally, about three quarters of respondents indicated that they highly valued *family relationships*, and about 62% highly valued *friendships*. Around a third of respondents nationally highly valued *physical and mental health* and *being independent*. Of continuing interest is the significant difference between the proportions of young men and young women who highly value *getting a job* (22.8% and 11.9% respectively).

## Issues of concern

Nationally, *body image*, *drugs* and *family conflict* were the top three issues for respondents, with just over a quarter identifying each as being a major concern. The proportion of respondents who identified *body image* declined from around one in three in 2007 to one in four in 2008. Conversely, the proportion who identified *drugs* as a major concern increased from one in five to one in four in 2008. A number of issues were of concern, with nine being of significant concern to at least one in five respondents. This included the new item *personal safety*.

Results varied considerably by age and gender. *Drugs* was clearly the top issue of concern for 11 to 14 year olds, who were much more likely to identify it as a significant concern than respondents aged 15 to 24. The proportion of 11 to 14 year olds who identified *drugs* as an important issue rose from 22.9% in 2007 to 31.2% in 2008. Male respondents (29.3%) were also more likely than female respondents (23.5%) to be very concerned about *drugs*.

Concern about *body image* increased with age and it was the top issue for young adult respondents of whom about a third identified it as an issue of serious concern. One fifth of male respondents and one quarter of female respondents were significantly concerned about *body image*.

The second and third top issues for the young adult group were *depression* and *coping with stress*. Although the proportion of young adults who identified these issues has declined since 2007, they were both of significant concern to about 30% of the young adult group this year:

*Physical/sexual abuse* was an important concern for over a quarter (26.7%) of female respondents, who were much more likely than male respondents (17.5%) to identify it as a major concern.

A number of issues were of significant concern to respondents regardless of gender or age. *Family conflict, suicide, personal safety* and *bullying/emotional abuse* were all identified as important concerns by around a fifth or more of respondents across all age and gender groups.

## Where young people go for advice and support

The top three responses on where young people go for advice and support when they have a personal problem continue to be *friends, parents* and *relative/family friend*. Nationally, *friends* were an important source of advice and support for about 85% of respondents. Three quarters of respondents identified *parents* as a major source of support and around 60% identified *relative/family friend*. These were the top three responses for all age groups and both genders, both nationally and for respondents from each of the states and territories. The *internet* was identified as an important source of advice and support by about a fifth of respondents nationally. Close to 84% of respondents indicated they had enough information on issues that concerned them.

## Community participation

The 2008 survey shows that young Australians were participating in a variety of activities. About two thirds of respondents were participating in *sports*, while about 44% were involved in *arts/cultural* activities. About a quarter of respondents were involved in *youth groups and clubs* or *religious* activities. Participation in *sports* and *arts/cultural* activities declined with age, however, young adults were much more likely than 11 to 19 year olds to be involved in *volunteer* activities. In 2008, males were more likely than females to be involved in *sports* activities and females more likely than males to be involved in *arts/cultural* activities.

## Who young people admire

As in previous years, the top two responses to this question were clearly *family* and *friends*. *Sports figures, entertainers, international aid organisations* and *community agencies helping disadvantaged people* were also popular responses.

## Some priority issues

Some of the priority issues to emerge from this year's survey suggest more nuanced strategies by both age and gender are required. These priority issues include:

1. **Drugs:** The increased level of concern around *drugs*, especially for 11 to 14 year olds and male respondents, supports the need for enhanced education programs and strategies that take account of age and gender.
2. **Stress and depression:** Young adults continue to be particularly concerned about *coping with stress* and *depression*, and there is an ongoing need to put strategies in place to assist young adults with these issues.
3. **Body image:** Perhaps contrary to expectations, concern about *body image* increased with age. This suggests the need for strategies targeting young people into early adulthood including through their workplaces, community groups, higher educational institutions, online and the media.
4. **Personal safety:** The level of concern around the new item *personal safety* was consistent for all age groups and both genders and was higher than expected. Ensuring the safety of young people in the range of environments in which they engage should be a national priority. This will require concerted efforts from a diversity of individuals and institutions including families, educational institutions, governments and the broader community.

## Where to from here?

Around 45,600 young people from across the country took the time to participate in this survey. Their responses have contributed to a report that aims to help inform policy and program development for young Australians at the national, state/territory and local levels, and to influence the broader community's understanding of young people. It is hoped that this report will act as a stimulus and resource for discussions and action involving young people in the context of their families, educational institutions, workplaces and communities across Australia. It provides valuable information for governments at all levels and for all those concerned about the wellbeing of young Australians.



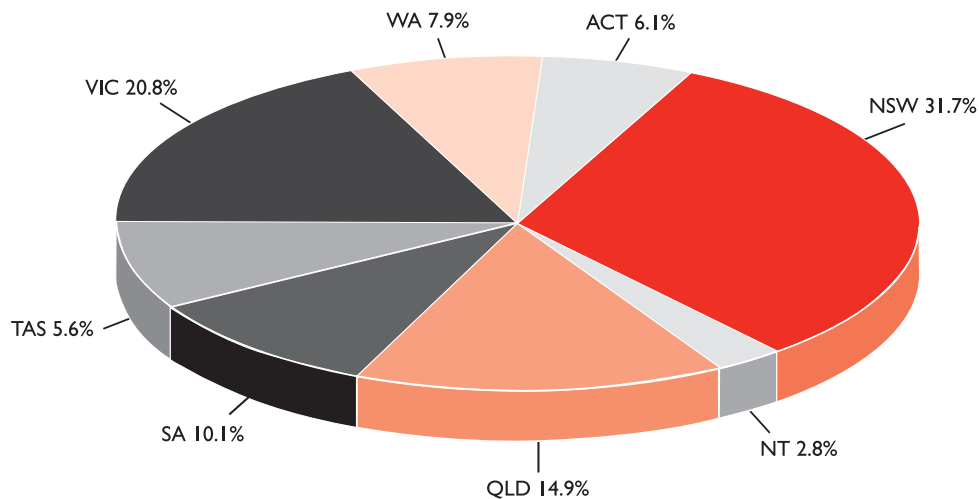
# National summary

## Profile of respondents

### State and territory distribution

A total of 45,558 young people responded to Mission Australia's 2008 National Survey of Young Australians. Respondents came from every state and territory, including 13,334 from New South Wales, 8,763 from Victoria, 6,286 from Queensland, 4,260 from South Australia, 3,307 from Western Australia, 2,558 from the Australian Capital Territory, 2,377 from Tasmania and 1,197 from the Northern Territory. Around 3,450 respondents 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 between 11 and 24 years and the results have been collated into three age groups. The largest group was aged 11 to 14 years (50.2%), followed by those aged 15 to 19 years (47.5%). As in previous years, the smallest group of responses came from young adults aged 20 to 24 years (2.3%).

Table 1: Age profile of respondents

Age in years	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
11-14 years	21,479	50.2
15-19 years	20,341	47.5
20-24 years	967	2.3
Total	42,787	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

Just over half of the responses (56.6%) were completed by females and 43.4% by males.

## Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

2,459 (5.7%) respondents 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 %
Indigenous	2,459	5.7	4.9	4.7	8.2
Non Indigenous	40,924	94.3	95.1	95.3	91.8

## Languages other than English spoken at home

Around 85% of respondents indicated that English was the only language they spoke at home. The 6,759 (14.8%) who spoke a language other than English at home spoke over 75 languages between them. The most frequently spoken were (in order of frequency): Chinese; Italian; Vietnamese; French; Filipino/Tagalog; Spanish; Cantonese; Arabic; Greek; German; and Afrikaans.

## Disability

2,353 (5.4%) respondents indicated they had a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities were (in order of frequency): Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD); dyslexia; hearing impairment; mental illness; learning disability; and Asperger's syndrome.

## Where respondents were living

As in previous years, the vast majority of respondents (92.9%) lived *with family*. Table 3 shows that with increasing age a higher proportion of respondents lived independently in a *share house* or *alone*.

Overall, 906 respondents were living in a *boarding school*, 467 were in a *juvenile justice centre* or *prison* and a further 375 respondents indicated that they were *homeless* or in *insecure housing*. 135 young people in *foster care* also participated.

Table 3: Where respondents were living

	All ages %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
With family	92.9	96.4	92.7	58.4
Boarding school	2.1	1.4	2.8	0.4
Share house	1.5	0.5	1.4	22.1
Juvenile justice centre/prison	1.1	0.7	1.0	2.3
Homeless/insecure housing	0.9	0.5	0.7	2.2
Other	0.7	0.3	0.8	4.9
Alone	0.5	0.1	0.4	9.6
Foster care	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0

## Living in or outside a capital city

As Table 4 shows, around 60% of respondents lived in a capital city. The proportion of young people living outside a capital city was lowest among the 20 to 24 year age group, of whom just over a third (34.8%) did not live in a capital city.

Table 4: Geographic location of respondents

	Total number	All ages %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Live in capital city	26,201	59.4	59.8	59.0	65.2
Not in capital city	17,931	40.6	40.2	41.0	34.8

## Main source of income

Parents/family, as in previous surveys, were the main source of income for a majority of respondents (72.0%). Table 5 shows that respondents become less financially dependent on parents/family as they became 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

	All ages %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Parents/family	72.0	87.5	59.3	9.5	73.7	70.5
Employment	22.9	10.1	34.3	66.5	22.0	23.9
Government allowance	3.7	1.0	5.3	22.9	3.3	3.8
No income	1.1	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.4
Other	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.4

## Study and work

The survey included questions about the study and employment status of respondents. Results for 11 to 14 year olds were excluded from this section, as the compulsory age for secondary education in Australia is around 16 years of age.

Three quarters (74.4%) of respondents aged 15 to 24 years were *studying full time*. As might be expected, the 15 to 19 year age group were much more likely than the young adult group to be *studying full time* (76.2% compared with 36.4%). Nearly 20% of 20 to 24 year olds were *studying part time*, compared with 13.9% of 15 to 19 year olds. Just over two fifths (43.8%) of 20 to 24 year olds were *not studying*, compared with less than one in ten (9.8%) 15 to 19 year olds. Female respondents were much more likely than male respondents to be *studying full time* (79.0% compared with 68.5%) while male respondents were slightly more likely than female respondents to be *studying part time* or *not studying*.

Table 6: Participation in education

	Total %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Studying full time	74.4	76.2	36.4	79.0	68.5
Studying part time	14.2	13.9	19.8	12.1	16.9
Not studying	11.4	9.8	43.8	8.9	14.6

Table 7 shows respondents' participation in employment. About two fifths (41.0%) of the young adult group were *working full time* compared with only 1.5% of the 15 to 19 year age group. About half of the younger age group, however, were *working part time* or had *casual or temporary work*. Participation rates for male and female respondents were similar.

Table 7: Participation in employment

	Total %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Working full time	3.3	1.5	41.0	3.6	2.8
Working part time	21.1	21.4	16.8	21.4	20.8
Casual or temporary work	28.7	29.2	18.1	30.2	26.7
Unemployed/looking for work	26.2	26.6	18.4	24.3	28.8
Too young to work or choose not to	20.7	21.4	5.7	20.5	20.9

## Detailed national results

### What do young people value?

Young people were asked to rank what they valued from the list of options set out in Table 8. There were two changes made to the options provided in 2008. *Making a difference in the community* was a new inclusion, while *peer acceptance* was removed as an option.

The data from this question has been very consistent across the seven years of the survey. In 2008, as in previous years, *family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by a large proportion of respondents and were clearly ranked first and second respectively. *Physical and mental health* was ranked third in 2008 as in 2007, but *being independent* was valued highly by nearly the same percentage of respondents.

- *Family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by 75.3% and 62.3% respectively of respondents.
- *Physical and mental health* and *being independent* were each valued highly by about a third of respondents.

Table 8: What young people value

	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %	2005 %
Family relationships	75.3	76.2	72.3	73.3
Friendships (other than family)	62.3	60.3	66.8	68.3
Physical and mental health	31.8	33.1	N/A	N/A
Being independent	31.7	32.9	35.2	36.0
Feeling needed and valued	26.2	25.6	29.3	30.7
School or study satisfaction	21.0	19.5	24.9	22.1
Getting a job	16.9	15.9	20.3	17.6
Spirituality/faith	14.0	14.5	13.9	15.3
Financial security	13.4	12.6	16.2	16.1
Making a difference in the community	7.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
Peer acceptance	N/A	9.8	12.2	12.5
Environmental issues	N/A	N/A	8.9	8.7

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

### Age differences

Table 9 highlights the similarities as well as the differences in what young people valued across the age groups. The top two items for all age groups were *family relationships* and *friendships*, with 70% or more in each of the age groups highly valuing *family relationships*. The proportion of young adults who highly valued *friendships* was considerably lower than for those under 20 years of age. Around one third of respondents in all age groups highly valued *physical and mental health* and *being independent*.

- *Family relationships* was ranked first by all three age groups, with 70% or more of respondents in each age group indicating it was highly valued.
- About 63% of young people aged 11 to 19 years highly valued *friendships*, compared with 44.6% of 20 to 24 year olds.
- About a third of respondents in each age group highly valued *physical and mental health* and *being independent*.

Table 9: What young people value, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Family relationships	77.4	73.9	70.0
Friendships (other than family)	63.2	63.9	44.6
Physical and mental health	31.5	32.6	29.0
Being independent	29.0	34.1	33.5
Feeling needed and valued	25.7	25.9	33.2
School or study satisfaction	23.1	19.3	11.2
Getting a job	18.2	14.9	18.6
Spirituality/faith	13.9	13.6	18.6
Financial security	11.7	14.1	29.3
Making a difference in the community	7.9	7.2	11.0

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

*Feeling needed and valued* was ranked highly by a quarter of those aged under 20 and one third of the young adult group. *School or study satisfaction* was valued highly by a higher proportion of those in the 11 to 19 year age groups than by young adults. Conversely, a much higher proportion of young adults than those aged 11 to 19 highly valued *financial security*.

- Close to a quarter of respondents aged 11 to 19 highly valued *feeling needed and valued*, compared with one third (33.2%) of young adults.
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 23.1% of 11 to 14 year olds, more than twice the proportion of 20 to 24 year olds (11.2%).
- *Financial security* was highly valued by 29.3% of young adults, compared with 11.7% of those in the 11 to 14 year age group and 14.1% of those aged 15 to 19.

## Gender differences

Table 10 shows that the top two items for both female and male respondents were identical, namely *family relationships* and *friendships*. About a third of both genders highly valued *physical and mental health* and *being independent*.

- Just under 80% of female respondents compared with just over 70% of male respondents highly valued *family relationships*.
- *Friendships* were highly valued by two thirds (67.6%) of female respondents and 56.7% of male respondents.
- *Physical and mental health* and *being independent* were each highly valued by about a third of male and female respondents.

Table 10: What young people value, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Family relationships	79.8	70.1
Friendships (other than family)	67.6	56.7
Physical and mental health	30.4	34.0
Being independent	30.6	32.8
Feeling needed and valued	27.3	24.4
School or study satisfaction	21.3	20.7
Getting a job	11.9	22.8
Spirituality/faith	13.8	14.0
Financial security	11.2	16.0
Making a difference in the community	7.3	8.1

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Responses from males and females were similar on a number of items, with the main difference being the proportion of each group who valued *getting a job*. Young males were almost twice as likely as young females to value this highly.

- *Getting a job* was highly valued by 22.8% of male respondents compared with 11.9% of female respondents.

### What issues are of concern to young people?

Young people were asked to rank the issues that concerned them from the list of options set out in Table 11. There were two changes to the list provided in 2008. *Personal safety* was added as an option and *sexuality* was expanded to read *sexuality (relationships, health, identity)*.

Table 11 shows that the top three issues of concern for young people in 2008 were *body image*, *drugs* and *family conflict*, with about a quarter of respondents being concerned about each of them. The data shows there was no one 'standout' issue, with nine issues being of major concern to at least one in five respondents.

- *Body image* was of major concern to around a quarter (26.3%) of respondents. It was also the top ranked issue last year, when a higher proportion (32.3%) of respondents identified it as a major concern.
- *Drugs* and *family conflict* were also each of concern to around a quarter of respondents (26.0% and 25.9% respectively). In 2007 one in five respondents indicated *drugs* was a major issue.
- The new item, *personal safety*, was of major concern to just over one fifth (22.9%) of respondents.

Table 11: Issues of concern to young people

	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %	2005 %
Body image	26.3	32.3	28.1	N/A
Drugs	26.0	20.1	N/A	N/A
Family conflict	25.9	29.3	28.6	34.8
Suicide	24.6	23.9	28.0	41.3
Personal safety	22.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.6	22.7	27.5	31.4
Physical/sexual abuse	22.6	21.2	27.9	37.5
Alcohol	20.9	20.5	N/A	N/A
Coping with stress	20.4	26.9	27.6	32.1
School or study problems	18.6	25.4	26.4	24.9
The environment	18.4	23.4	N/A	N/A
Depression	17.8	19.6	25.8	33.6
Self harm	13.7	14.7	21.5	N/A
Discrimination	12.6	12.9	18.4	19.9
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	12.2	9.6	13.3	12.0
Alcohol and other drug issues	N/A	N/A	28.2	33.6

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

The clustering of issues in Table 11 makes the age and gender breakdowns provided below of particular interest.

### Age differences

Table 12 shows that some issues such as *body image*, *coping with stress* and *depression* were significant concerns for a higher proportion of young adults than those aged 11 to 19. *Drugs* was a major concern for a much larger proportion of 11 to 14 year olds than those aged 15 to 24.

Some issues such as *personal safety* and *physical/sexual abuse* were of major concern to similar proportions of respondents across each of the age groups. Both of these were identified as being of significant concern by over one fifth of respondents in each of the age groups.

- *Body image* was of major concern to about a quarter (23.6%) of 11 to 14 year olds compared with one third (32.1%) of 20 to 24 year olds. It was the top issue of concern for the young adult group.
- *Drugs* were about twice as likely to be of major concern to 11 to 14 year olds (31.2%) than 20 to 24 year olds (16.6%). In 2007, 22.9% of 11 to 14 year olds indicated *drugs* were a significant issue.
- *Coping with stress* was an issue of major concern for 30.7% of young adults, compared with 17.0% of 11 to 14 year olds.
- *Depression* was a major concern for 28.8% of 20 to 24 year olds, compared with 14.8% of 11 to 14 year olds.
- *Personal safety* and *physical/sexual abuse* were both of significant concern to at least one fifth of respondents from all three age groups.

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

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Body image	23.6	<b>28.1</b>	<b>32.1</b>
Drugs	<b>31.2</b>	20.9	16.6
Family conflict	<b>26.4</b>	<b>26.2</b>	20.4
Suicide	<b>25.3</b>	<b>24.2</b>	20.6
Personal safety	23.3	22.9	21.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	23.7	20.7	18.0
Physical/sexual abuse	23.0	22.6	24.6
Alcohol	22.7	17.7	18.9
Coping with stress	17.0	23.7	<b>30.7</b>
School or study problems	17.4	20.3	12.6
The environment	20.1	16.4	18.6
Depression	14.8	20.6	<b>28.8</b>
Self harm	13.3	14.3	10.9
Discrimination	11.5	13.8	12.2
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	11.8	12.1	14.2

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

*Family conflict* was of concern to a slightly higher proportion of those aged under 20 years than the young adult group.

- Just over a quarter of respondents aged 11 to 19 years and about a fifth (20.4%) of young adult respondents identified *family conflict* as a major concern.

## Gender differences

There were both differences and similarities in the issues of concern for males and females. *Body image* was the top ranked issue for female respondents, and whilst over a fifth of male respondents also indicated it was a major concern it was not one of the top three issues for this group. A higher proportion of young women than young men also nominated *physical/sexual abuse* as a major concern. *Drugs* and *alcohol* were major concerns for higher proportions of male respondents than female respondents.

- *Body image* was a major concern for 28.8% of female respondents compared with 22.2% of male respondents. This compares with 34.9% and 27.9% respectively in 2007.
- *Drugs* was a major concern for 29.3% of male respondents compared with 23.5% of female respondents.
- A quarter (24.4%) of male respondents identified *alcohol* as a major concern compared with 17.3% of female respondents.
- *Physical/sexual abuse* was a major concern for 26.7% of female respondents compared with 17.5% of male respondents.
- *Sexuality* was identified as a major concern by a relatively small proportion of both male and female respondents, but was more likely to be of significant concern to males (15.0%) than females (9.8%).

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

	Female %	Male %
Body image	<b>28.8</b>	22.2
Drugs	23.5	<b>29.3</b>
Family conflict	<b>26.9</b>	<b>25.0</b>
Suicide	24.9	24.2
Personal safety	23.3	22.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	21.9	22.8
Physical/sexual abuse	<b>26.7</b>	17.5
Alcohol	17.3	<b>24.4</b>
Coping with stress	21.2	19.4
School or study problems	18.6	18.6
The environment	17.6	19.3
Depression	18.8	16.6
Self harm	13.9	13.4
Discrimination	12.4	12.8
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	9.8	15.0

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Almost all of the remaining items were of major concern to very similar proportions of male and female respondents. About a quarter of both genders were concerned about *family conflict* and *suicide*, while over a fifth of both genders were concerned about *personal safety* and *bullying/emotional abuse*.

- *Family conflict* was a top three issue for both genders, with around a quarter of female and male respondents indicating it was a major concern.
- *Suicide* and *personal safety* were major concerns for around a quarter of male and female respondents.
- *Bullying/emotional abuse* was a major concern for around one in five female and male respondents.

### Where do young people turn for advice and support when they have a personal problem?

The sources of advice and support for young people when they have a problem have remained very consistent over time as shown in Table 14. The top three sources of advice were very clearly *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*. The fourth ranked item, the *internet*, has been identified as a key source of advice and support by an increasing proportion of respondents over the years of the survey, increasing from 10.1% in 2002 to 20.3% in 2008.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were overwhelmingly the most important sources of advice for respondents in 2008, as they have been for each of the seven years of the survey.
- *Friends* were a major source of advice for 85.1% of respondents, while *parents* were a main source of advice for 74.1% of respondents.
- One in five (20.3%) respondents identified the *internet* as an important source of advice and support.

Table 14: Where young people turn for advice and support

	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %	2005 %
<b>Friends</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b>86.4</b>	<b>87.3</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>74.2</b>	<b>75.7</b>
<b>Relative/family friend</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>64.0</b>	<b>64.9</b>
Internet	20.3	19.1	16.8	15.7
School counsellor	11.5	10.8	11.6	10.8
Teacher	11.4	10.5	9.3	9.9
Magazines	11.2	11.6	13.5	12.7
Community agencies eg youth worker	11.1	11.6	9.3	9.9
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	8.5	8.6	8.6	9.0
Telephone helpline	5.9	5.8	6.2	5.8

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

### Age differences

The major sources of support and advice for all age groups were *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*. The proportions who identified *friends* and *relative/family friend* were consistent across the age groups, while the proportion who identified *parents* as a major source of advice and support declined with age.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were the top three sources of advice and support for all age groups.
- Over 83% of respondents in all three age groups identified *friends* as a major source of advice.
- 78.9% of 11 to 14 year olds identified *parents* as an important source of advice, as did 71.3% of 15 to 19 year olds and 64.9% of 20 to 24 year olds.

Table 15: Where young people turn for advice and support, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
<b>Friends</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>87.8</b>	<b>86.3</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>64.9</b>
<b>Relative/family friend</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>59.5</b>
Internet	15.2	23.7	30.2
School counsellor	12.6	10.5	6.7
Teacher	12.7	10.0	6.2
Magazines	10.4	11.8	9.7
Community agencies eg youth worker	9.9	10.4	14.0
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	7.5	8.9	14.5
Telephone helpline	6.5	4.7	6.5

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

The proportion of respondents who identified the *internet* as a key source of advice and support increased with age.

- 30.2% of young adults identified the *internet* as a major source of advice, compared with 15.2% of 11 to 14 year olds and 23.7% of 15 to 19 year olds.

## Gender differences

Responses on where young males and females turn for advice and support have been very consistent over the years of the survey. The top three items in 2008 were identical for both genders, namely *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*. However, a much higher proportion of female than male respondents identified *friends* and *relative/family friend* as major sources, of advice, while similar proportions of both genders identified parents.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were the top three sources of advice and support for both female and male respondents.
- 89.6% of female respondents identified *friends* as a major source of advice, compared with 79.7% of male respondents.
- *Parents* were an important source of advice for around three quarters of each gender.
- *Relative/family friend* was identified as a major source of advice and support by 65.3% of female respondents and 56.9% of male respondents.

Table 16: Where young people turn for advice and support, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Friends	89.6	79.7
Parents	76.2	73.0
Relative/family friend	65.3	56.9
Internet	16.3	24.3
School counsellor	11.0	12.0
Teacher	9.9	13.3
Magazines	12.2	9.3
Community agencies eg youth worker	7.5	14.2
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	7.2	9.9
Telephone helpline	4.9	6.8

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified the *internet* as a key source of advice and support. Male respondents were also more likely to identify *community agencies* as a source of advice and support.

- The *internet* was an important source of advice and support for 24.3% of male respondents compared with 16.3% of female respondents.
- 14.2% of male respondents identified *community agencies* as a major source of advice and support, about twice the proportion (7.5%) of female respondents.

## Is there enough information on issues that concern young people?

Around 84% of all respondents indicated they had enough information on issues that concerned them. This is similar to the figure for 2007 which was 82.9%. As in previous years and shown in Table 17, the proportion who indicated they did not have enough information was larger for respondents aged 20 to 24 than for those aged 11 to 19. A quarter (24.5%) of the young adult group wanted more information, compared to 14.9% of respondents aged 11 to 14 years. The responses for males and females were similar:

Table 17: Access to enough information

	2008						2007
	All ages %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %	All ages %
Enough information	83.7	85.1	83.9	75.5	83.3	85.4	82.9
Not enough information	16.3	14.9	16.1	24.5	16.7	14.6	17.1

The survey asked what respondents would like more information about. A number of issues featured in their responses. They included (in order of most frequently mentioned): alcohol and drugs; sexuality and sex education; adolescence and youth-related issues; environmental issues; depression; suicide and self harm; stress and anxiety; school and study; sexual abuse; bullying; and global issues including terrorism, war and politics.

## What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities they are involved in from the list set out in Table 18. There was one change to the list provided in 2008. *Sports* was divided into two categories: *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*.

The results shown in Table 18 indicate that *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities were the top three activities for respondents in 2008. *Youth groups and clubs* was the fourth ranked activity. These results are similar to previous years, when *sports*, *arts/cultural* and *youth groups and clubs* were routinely the top three responses.

- *Sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities were the three most popular activities for respondents in 2008.
- Two thirds of respondents (67.6%) participated in *sports (as a participant)*, followed by 46.5% who participated in *sports (as a spectator)* and 44.1% who participated in *arts/cultural* activities.
- Just over a quarter of respondents participated in *youth groups and clubs* and *religious* activities (26.8% and 25.9% respectively).
- Over one fifth of respondents (22.2%) participated in *volunteer* activities.

Table 18: Activities young people were involved in

	Number 2008	2008 %	2007 %	2006 %	2005 %
Sports (as a participant)	30,782	67.6	66.7*	68.2*	64.5*
Sports (as a spectator)	21,189	46.5			
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	20,072	44.1	42.8	43.0	40.7
Youth groups and clubs	12,199	26.8	27.4	27.1	30.8
Religious	11,800	25.9	24.7	23.6	20.6
Volunteer	10,109	22.2	21.6	21.4	21.3
Environmental	6,522	14.3	13.2	11.0	6.5
Student Representative Council	5,633	12.4	13.1	13.6	11.2

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed. \*Appeared as the single item *sports* prior to 2008.

## Age differences

Table 19 shows that while *sports (as a participant)* had the highest levels of involvement for all three age groups, participation declined with age. Conversely, participation in *volunteer* activities increased with age.

- Involvement in *sports (as a participant)* was highest among 11 to 14 year olds (73.8%), declining to 63.6% for 15 to 19 year olds and 42.8% for 20 to 24 year olds.
- Involvement in *sports (as a spectator)* remained steadier across the age groups, at just under half of those aged 11 to 19 and around two fifths of the young adult group.
- Around two fifths (38.4%) of 20 to 24 year olds were involved in *volunteer* activities, compared with 17.8% of 11 to 14 year olds and 25.1% of 15 to 19 year olds.

Table 19: Activities young people were involved in, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Sports (as a participant)	73.8	63.6	42.8
Sports (as a spectator)	45.4	48.3	39.1
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	47.3	41.4	32.5
Youth groups and clubs	26.1	26.4	30.3
Religious	25.9	25.0	25.1
Volunteer	17.8	25.1	38.4
Environmental	13.3	13.7	13.4
Student Representative Council	10.0	13.2	9.7

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed.

## Gender differences

The top three activities for both male and female respondents were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities, although the rankings were different. As in previous years, a higher proportion of male than female respondents were involved in *sports* activities, while a higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural* activities.

- 73.0% of male respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* compared with 64.5% of female respondents.
- A higher proportion of male respondents than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (52.3% compared with 42.4%).
- A much higher proportion of female respondents (52.7%) than male respondents (33.0%) was involved in *arts/cultural* activities.

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

	Female %	Male %
Sports (as a participant)	64.5	73.0
Sports (as a spectator)	42.4	52.3
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	52.7	33.0
Youth groups and clubs	25.9	27.1
Religious	25.6	25.4
Volunteer	23.6	19.6
Environmental	13.2	14.0
Student Representative Council	11.2	12.3

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed.

Substantial proportions of both genders were also involved in *youth groups and clubs*, *religious* activities and *volunteer* activities.

- About a quarter of respondents of both genders were involved in *youth groups and clubs* and *religious* activities.
- About a quarter (23.6%) of female respondents and a fifth (19.6%) of male respondents were involved in *volunteer* activities.

## What three people or organisations do young people admire?

Respondents were asked to indicate three people or organisations they admired. As in previous years, *family* members were most commonly listed and comprised about 30% of the responses given. The second most common response was *friends*. The information respondents provided has been categorised and listed in order of frequency in Table 21.

Table 21: People and organisations young people admire

	Total number	Percentage
<b>Family</b>	<b>31,096</b>	<b>30.2</b>
<b>Friends</b>	<b>18,233</b>	<b>17.7</b>
<b>Sports teams, players and coaches</b>	<b>6,928</b>	<b>6.7</b>
Entertainers	6,341	6.2
International aid organisations	6,022	5.8
Community agencies helping disadvantaged people	4,983	4.8
Organisations and research supporting seriously ill people	3,489	3.4
Schools and their staff	2,734	2.7
Animal protection groups	2,683	2.6
Businesses and business people	2,485	2.4
Environmental groups	2,227	2.2
Religious figures	2,149	2.1
Telephone helplines	1,514	1.5
Political organisations and figures	1,463	1.4
Protection agencies	1,397	1.4
Youth organisations and leaders	1,356	1.3
Medical professionals and hospitals	1,237	1.2
Myself	818	0.8
Organisations and research supporting mental health	679	0.7
Historical figures	581	0.6
Volunteers/donors	378	0.4
Pets and other animals	216	0.2
Community groups/organisations	202	0.2
Dance/music/ballet teachers outside school	160	0.2
Confident/successful/hardworking people	144	0.1
Scientists and scientific organisations	117	0.1
Sick and disabled people, those in difficult times	117	0.1



# Northern Territory summary

## Profile of respondents

### Age breakdown

1,197 surveys were returned from the Northern Territory (NT), which was 2.8% of the total number of responses that indicated which state/territory they came from. The largest group from the NT was aged 11 to 14 years (51.6%) followed by 15 to 19 years (43.1%) and 20 to 24 years (5.3%). Only a small number of respondents were aged 20 to 24 years and results for this group should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1: Age profile of respondents

Age in years	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
11-14 years	598	51.6
15-19 years	500	43.1
20-24 years	62*	5.3
Total	1,160	2.8% of national total

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.

\*Results for this group should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size.

### Gender breakdown

57.1% of NT respondents were female and 42.9% were male.

### Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

190 or 16.3% of NT respondents identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This was much higher than the national figure of 5.7%.

Table 2: Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

	Total number	NT %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Indigenous	190	16.3	5.7	11.3	20.7	18.0
Non Indigenous	975	83.7	94.3	88.7	79.3	82.0

### Languages other than English spoken at home

86.0% of respondents from the NT indicated that English was the only language they spoke at home. The 167 (14.0%) who spoke a language other than English at home spoke over 35 languages between them. The most frequently spoken were (in order of frequency): Kriol; Filipino/Tagalog; Spanish; Vietnamese; French; Indonesian; and Italian.

### Disability

66 or 5.6% of NT respondents indicated they had a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities were (in order of frequency): Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD); Asperger's syndrome; dyslexia; depression; and hearing impairment.

## Where respondents were living

The majority of NT respondents were living *with family* (87.0%), which was just below the national rate of 92.9%. Table 3 shows that with increasing age a higher proportion of respondents lived independently in a *share house* or *alone*.

56 respondents were living in a *boarding school* and 19 were in a *juvenile justice centre* or *prison*. 12 young people who were *homeless* or in *insecure housing* participated in the survey, as did four who were in *foster care*.

Table 3: Where respondents were living

	NT %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
With family	87.0	92.9	95.1	84.9	43.3
Boarding school	4.8	2.1	1.7	9.2	0.0
Share house	2.9	1.5	1.2	1.4	33.3
Juvenile justice centre/prison	1.6	1.1	0.3	1.2	5.0
Other	1.2	0.7	0.7	1.2	6.7
Alone	1.1	0.5	0.0	1.0	11.7
Homeless/insecure housing	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.0
Foster care	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.0

## Living in or outside a capital city

As Table 4 shows, a significant majority of respondents from the NT lived in the capital city, Darwin, although about a quarter (25.5%) lived in other parts of the Territory. The proportion of those living in Darwin was lowest among the 15 to 19 year age group, of whom about two thirds (66.0%) lived in the capital.

Table 4: Geographic location of respondents

	Total Number	NT %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Live in capital city	885	74.5	59.4	81.5	66.0	85.5
Not in capital city	303	25.5	40.6	18.5	34.0	14.5

## Main source of income

*Parents/family*, as in previous surveys, were the main source of income for a majority (65.6%) of NT respondents. Table 5 shows that respondents became less financially dependent on *parents/family* as they got older and found *employment* or became eligible for a *government allowance*.

Table 5: Main source of income

	NT %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Parents/family	65.6	72.0	83.0	53.9	5.0
Employment	30.2	22.9	14.2	41.3	86.7
Government allowance	2.8	3.7	1.4	3.9	8.3
No income	1.0	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.0
Other	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0

## Study and work

The survey included questions about the study and employment status of respondents. Results for 11 to 14 year olds were excluded from this section, as the compulsory age for secondary education in Australia is around 16 years of age.

Around two thirds (66.1%) of NT respondents were *studying full time* compared with three quarters (74.4%) of respondents nationally. Respondents in the 15 to 19 year age group were much more likely than the young adult group to be *studying full time* (72.2% compared with 16.4%). 15.1% of 15 to 19 year olds and 27.9% of 20 to 24 year olds were *studying part time*. More than half of the 20 to 24 year age group were *not studying*, compared with just over one tenth (12.7%) of the 15 to 19 year age group. Female respondents were slightly more likely than male respondents to be *studying full time*, while male respondents were more likely than females to be *not studying*.

**Table 6: Participation in education**

	NT %	National %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Studying full time	66.1	74.4	72.2	16.4	68.3	62.7
Studying part time	16.5	14.2	15.1	27.9	17.5	15.2
Not studying	17.4	11.4	12.7	55.7	14.2	22.1

Table 7 shows respondents' participation in employment. 12.9% of NT respondents were *working full time*, about four times the national figure of 3.3%. The 20 to 24 year age group were much more likely than the 15 to 19 year age group to be *working full time* (77.0% compared with 4.8%). Around half of the younger group were either *working part time* or had *casual or temporary work*. Responses by gender were fairly similar.

**Table 7: Participation in employment**

	NT %	National %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Working full time	12.9	3.3	4.8	77.0	15.2	9.7
Working part time	22.7	21.1	24.5	8.2	21.7	23.1
Casual or temporary work	24.7	28.7	26.6	9.8	25.1	24.5
Unemployed/looking for work	19.0	26.2	21.0	3.3	17.6	21.3
Too young to work or choose not to	20.7	20.7	23.1	1.6	20.4	21.3

## Detailed results

### What do young people value?

Young people were asked to rank what they valued from the list of options set out in Table 8. There were two changes made to the options provided in 2008. *Making a difference in the community* was a new inclusion, while *peer acceptance* was removed as an option.

In 2008, as in previous years, *family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by a large proportion of respondents and were ranked first and second respectively. *Being independent* was the third top item (30.0%) and *physical and mental health* the fourth (26.2%). Nationally, the ranking of these two items was reversed.

- *Family relationships* were valued highly by more than three quarters (77.8%) of NT respondents.
- *Friendships* were valued highly by 61.7% of NT respondents, very similar to the national figure of 62.3%.
- 30.0% of NT respondents highly valued *being independent*.
- About a quarter of respondents highly valued *physical and mental health* (26.2%) and *feeling needed and valued* (25.3%).

Table 8: What young people value

	NT 2008 %	National 2007 %	NT 2007 %	NT 2006 %	NT 2005 %
<b>Family relationships</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>73.0</b>	<b>69.9</b>
<b>Friendships (other than family)</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>46.4</b>
<b>Being independent</b>	<b>30.0</b>	31.7	<b>36.0</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>47.4</b>
Physical and mental health	26.2	<b>31.8</b>	32.6	N/A	N/A
Feeling needed and valued	25.3	26.2	24.6	26.8	21.1
School or study satisfaction	21.8	21.0	23.1	25.2	8.8
Getting a job	17.3	16.9	15.6	23.0	28.1
Spirituality/faith	15.7	14.0	13.2	18.2	21.4
Financial security	14.3	13.4	14.6	17.4	40.4
Making a difference in the community	8.5	7.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
Peer acceptance	N/A	N/A	9.2	9.5	10.7
Environmental issues	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.9	10.5

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

## Age differences

Table 9 shows that there were both similarities and differences across the age groups. *Family relationships* and *friendships* were the top two items for all age groups, although the proportion who highly valued *friendships* decreased with age. *Physical and mental health* was the third ranked item for the 11 to 14 year olds, whilst for the 15 to 19 year olds it was *being independent*. *Being independent* and *financial security* were ranked equal third by 20 to 24 year old respondents.

- Over three quarters of each age group highly valued *family relationships*.
- *Friendships* were valued highly by nearly two thirds (around 63%) of 11 to 19 year olds, compared with just under half (47.5%) of 20 to 24 year olds.
- Just over a quarter (27.2%) of 11 to 14 year olds compared with about a fifth (20.3%) of 20 to 24 year olds highly valued *feeling needed and valued*.

Table 9: What young people value, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
<b>Family relationships</b>	<b>79.3</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>78.0</b>
<b>Friendships (other than family)</b>	<b>63.5</b>	<b>62.9</b>	<b>47.5</b>
<b>Being independent</b>	27.1	<b>32.7</b>	<b>33.9</b>
Physical and mental health	<b>29.4</b>	22.7	30.5
Feeling needed and valued	27.2	22.5	20.3
School or study satisfaction	20.7	24.6	8.5
Getting a job	18.2	16.6	18.6
Spirituality/faith	15.2	16.2	13.8
Financial security	11.4	15.4	<b>33.9</b>
Making a difference in the community	6.9	9.5	15.3

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

The major difference was in the proportion of respondents who highly valued *financial security*. 20 to 24 year olds were much more likely than 11 to 19 year olds to value this item.

- *Financial security* was highly valued by a third (33.9%) of young adults, about three times the rate of the 11 to 14 year age group (11.4%).

## Gender differences

*Family relationships* and *friendships* were the top two items for both genders, although in both cases the proportion of male respondents who highly valued them was over 12% lower than the proportion of female respondents. *Being independent* was the third ranked item for female respondents, while for male respondents it was *physical and mental health*.

- 83.1% of female respondents highly valued *family relationships* compared with 70.7% of male respondents.
- A greater proportion of female than male respondents highly valued *friendships* (68.6% compared with 53.0%).
- One in three male respondents (32.1%) highly valued *physical and mental health* compared with one in five (22.0%) female respondents.
- About 30% of respondents of both genders highly valued *being independent*.

Table 10: What young people value, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Family relationships	83.1	70.7
Friendships (other than family)	68.6	53.0
Being independent	28.5	31.8
Physical and mental health	22.0	32.1
Feeling needed and valued	26.7	23.1
School or study satisfaction	22.5	20.8
Getting a job	13.0	22.7
Spirituality/faith	13.6	18.8
Financial security	13.2	15.5
Making a difference in the community	8.0	9.2

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

Another difference between the genders was the proportion of each who highly valued *getting a job*.

- Over a fifth (22.7%) of male respondents highly valued *getting a job* compared with 13.0% of female respondents.

## What issues are of concern to young people?

Young people were asked to rank the issues that concerned them from the list of options set out in Table 11. There were two changes to the list provided in 2008. *Personal safety* was added as an option and *sexuality* was expanded to read *sexuality (relationships, health, identity)*.

Table 11 shows that the top three issues of concern for NT respondents were *drugs*, *family conflict* and *physical/sexual abuse*, each of which were of major concern to around a quarter of NT respondents. These were similar to the top three items nationally, although in the national responses *body image* featured rather than *physical/sexual abuse*. Table 11 also shows that there was a spread of issues that were of significant concern to NT respondents, with 11 issues being of major concern to around one in five or more of them.

- *Drugs* was the top issue of concern for respondents from the NT, with more than a quarter (26.5%) identifying it as a major concern, an increase from one in five (21.1%) in 2007.
- *Family conflict* and *physical/sexual abuse* were both major concerns for around a quarter of NT respondents (26.1% and 24.6% respectively).
- The new item, *personal safety*, was an issue of significant concern for just under a quarter (23.1%) of NT respondents.

Table 11: Issues of concern to young people

	NT 2008 %	National 2008 %	NT 2007%	NT 2006 %	NT 2005 %
Drugs	26.5	26.0	21.1	N/A	N/A
Family conflict	26.1	25.9	29.8	35.6	33.9
Physical/sexual abuse	24.6	22.6	20.6	27.1	29.8
Suicide	23.7	24.6	21.2	25.8	31.6
Personal safety	23.1	22.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Body image	22.7	26.3	29.1	26.7	N/A
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.3	22.6	22.3	20.3	26.3
Alcohol	21.8	20.9	22.8	N/A	N/A
The environment	19.9	18.4	26.2	N/A	N/A
School or study problems	19.6	18.6	25.8	29.6	17.9
Coping with stress	19.3	20.4	26.0	31.0	43.9
Depression	16.7	17.8	19.8	26.5	45.6
Self harm	13.9	13.7	13.8	22.8	N/A
Discrimination	13.5	12.6	14.6	15.2	24.6
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	11.7	12.2	9.8	9.9	7.0
Alcohol and other drugs	N/A	N/A	N/A	31.1	42.1

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

The clustering of issues shown in Table 11 makes the age and gender breakdowns below of particular interest.

### Age differences

Table 12 shows a complex picture of the issues of concern for the three age groups. While there were some items that concerned similar proportions of respondents across the age groups, such as *the environment*, others such as *drugs*, *family conflict* and *depression* varied considerably with age. 11 to 19 year olds were more likely than 20 to 24 year olds to identify *drugs* and *family conflict* as major concerns, while 20 to 24 year olds were more likely than 11 to 19 year olds to identify *depression* as a key concern. Unlike young adults nationally, whose top three issues of concern were *body image*, *coping with stress* and *depression*, young adults in the NT identified *physical/sexual abuse*, *personal safety* and *bullying/emotional abuse* as their top three issues of concern.

- *Drugs* were of major concern to just under 30% (29.7%) of 11 to 14 year olds, compared with 13.1% of 20 to 24 year olds.
- Around a quarter of 11 to 19 year olds were significantly concerned about *family conflict*, compared with around one in ten young adults.
- Around one in five 11 to 19 year olds and 30.0% of 20 to 24 year olds identified *personal safety* as a major concern.
- *Physical/sexual abuse* was identified as a significant concern by about one in four (27.5%) 11 to 14 year olds, one in five (21.7%) 15 to 19 year olds and one in three (31.7%) 20 to 24 year olds.
- A higher proportion of respondents aged 20 to 24 than those aged 11 to 19 identified *depression* as a major concern (25.0% compared with around 16%).

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

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Drugs	<b>29.7</b>	23.8	13.1
Family conflict	25.7	<b>28.5</b>	13.1
Physical/sexual abuse	<b>27.5</b>	21.7	<b>31.7</b>
Suicide	<b>26.9</b>	20.8	21.3
Personal safety	23.1	22.2	<b>30.0</b>
Body image	21.1	<b>25.3</b>	19.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	23.2	20.6	<b>27.9</b>
Alcohol	22.8	20.8	14.8
The environment	20.3	18.3	21.3
School or study problems	16.6	<b>24.8</b>	8.5
Coping with stress	15.3	23.4	26.2
Depression	15.0	17.2	25.0
Self harm	12.9	15.2	16.7
Discrimination	12.6	14.6	13.1
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	11.6	11.2	11.7

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

## Gender differences

There were both similarities and differences in the items identified as issues of major concern by male and female respondents. Some issues, such as *family conflict*, *suicide*, and *personal safety* were major concerns for similar proportions of both genders. Male respondents were more likely than females to identify *drugs* and *alcohol* as issues of concern, while female respondents were more likely than males to identify *physical/sexual abuse* and *body image* as major concerns.

- *Drugs* were identified as a major concern by 30.2% of male respondents and 24.0% of female respondents.
- Nearly twice the proportion of female respondents (30.0%) as male respondents (17.5%) identified *physical/sexual abuse* as a major concern.
- Over one fifth of both genders identified *suicide*, *personal safety* and *bullying/emotional abuse* as significant issues of concern.

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

	Female %	Male %
Drugs	24.0	<b>30.2</b>
Family conflict	<b>27.4</b>	<b>24.5</b>
Physical/sexual abuse	<b>30.0</b>	17.5
Suicide	23.8	23.6
Personal safety	23.8	21.9
Body image	<b>24.8</b>	19.8
Bullying/emotional abuse	21.7	23.2
Alcohol	19.7	<b>24.9</b>
The environment	19.2	20.5
School or study problems	19.4	19.7
Coping with stress	20.3	17.8
Depression	18.4	14.3
Discrimination	13.6	13.3
Self harm	12.8	15.5
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	7.9	16.0

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

## Where do young people turn for advice and support when they have a personal problem?

The sources of advice and support for young people when they have a problem have remained very consistent over time as shown in Table 14. The top three sources of advice in 2008 were clearly *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*. Responses from the NT were very similar to national responses across most items, although NT respondents were slightly less likely than their national counterparts to identify the *internet* as a major source of advice.

- 85.2% of NT respondents identified *friends* as an important source of advice and support, almost identical to the national figure of 85.1%.
- Nearly three quarters (74.0%) identified *parents* as a major source of advice and support.
- Just under two thirds (62.3%) of respondents from the NT indicated that a *relative/family friend* was an important source of advice when they had a personal problem.
- 15.4% of NT respondents compared with 20.3% of national respondents identified the *internet* as a major source of advice and support.

Table 14: Where young people turn for advice and support

	NT 2008 %	National 2008 %	NT 2007%	NT 2006 %	NT 2005 %
Friends	85.2	85.1	84.0	86.8	89.3
Parents	74.0	74.1	73.8	75.2	64.3
Relative/family friend	62.3	61.0	65.3	68.5	66.7
Internet	15.4	20.3	18.3	12.7	7.3
Magazines	11.7	11.2	10.5	8.5	3.6
School counsellor	11.0	11.5	10.9	13.7	1.8
Teacher	10.9	11.4	10.7	9.7	13.2
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	9.9	8.5	9.6	10.4	20.8
Community agencies eg youth worker	9.7	11.1	11.7	11.2	26.8
Telephone helpline	6.8	5.9	6.3	4.7	7.3

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

### Age differences

As Table 15 shows, the top three responses for each of the age groups were very clearly *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*, and the proportions of respondents identifying these items were similar for each group. The proportion of 20 to 24 year olds in the NT who identified the *internet* as a top source of advice was half the rate of their national counterparts (15.0% compared with 30.2%).

- Over 83% of respondents in each age group indicated that *friends* were a major source of advice and support.
- At least 72% of each of the age groups identified *parents* as a major source of advice and support, with about 81% of young adults indicating they were significant.
- A *relative/family friend* was identified as an important source of advice by just under two thirds (about 63%) of each age group.

Table 15: Where young people turn for advice and support, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Friends	86.4	83.7	87.1
Parents	76.2	72.1	80.6
Relative/family friend	62.7	63.4	62.9
Internet	13.2	17.3	15.0
Magazines	12.3	11.9	6.6
School counsellor	11.8	11.4	3.4
Teacher	12.8	8.9	8.3
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	8.5	9.9	14.5
Community agencies eg youth worker	10.0	8.1	6.8
Telephone helpline	6.0	7.8	1.6

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

## Gender differences

The top three sources of advice for both genders in the NT were *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*. The proportion who turned to *parents* was about the same for both groups, while the proportion of males who turned to *friends* or *relative/family friend* was about 10% lower than the proportion of females in each case. Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to identify the *internet* as an important source of advice.

- 89.5% of female respondents and 79.4% of male respondents identified *friends* as a major source of advice and support.
- About three quarters of both genders identified *parents* as a major source of advice.
- Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to identify *relative/family friend* as a key source of advice and support (67.0% compared with 56.3%).
- Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to identify the *internet* as a major source of advice (19.2% and 12.3% respectively).

Table 16: Where young people turn for advice and support, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Friends	89.5	79.4
Parents	74.4	74.3
Relative/family friend	67.0	56.3
Internet	12.3	19.2
Magazines	14.3	8.2
School counsellor	10.2	11.7
Teacher	9.0	13.1
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	6.8	13.8
Community agencies eg youth worker	7.0	12.8
Telephone helpline	6.2	7.2

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two or three by respondents.

## Is there enough information on issues that concern young people?

81.3% of all respondents from the NT indicated that they had enough information on issues that concerned them. This is in line with both the 2008 national figure (83.7%) and the NT figure for 2007 (80.0%). As in previous years and shown in Table 17, the proportion who indicated they did not have enough information increased slightly with age, from 17.9% of 11 to 14 year olds to 24.2% of 20 to 24 year olds. A slightly higher proportion of females than males said they did not have enough information on issues of concern (20.8% compared with 15.6%).

Table 17: Access to enough information

	2008							2007
	NT %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %	NT %
Enough information	81.3	83.7	82.1	81.5	75.8	79.2	84.4	80.0
Not enough information	18.7	16.3	17.9	18.5	24.2	20.8	15.6	20.0

The survey asked what respondents would like more information about. A number of issues featured in their responses. They included (in order of most frequently mentioned): alcohol and drugs; environmental issues; sexuality and sex education; sexual abuse; physical abuse; depression; global issues including terrorism, war and politics; emotional abuse; adolescence and youth-related issues; and suicide and self harm.

## What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities they are involved in from the list set out in Table 18. There was one change to the list provided in 2008. *Sports* was divided into two categories: *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*.

The top three activities that NT respondents were involved in were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities. These activities were also the top three nationally. Over a quarter of NT respondents also participated in *youth groups and clubs*, *volunteer* activities and *religious* activities.

- 69.3% of NT respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* and 45.3% were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*.
- Just over two fifths (43.0%) of respondents were involved in *arts/cultural* activities.
- Respondents from the NT were slightly more likely to be involved in *volunteer* activities than respondents nationally (27.1% compared with 22.2%).

Table 18: Activities young people were involved in

	NT 2008 %	National 2008 %	NT 2007%	NT 2006 %	NT 2005 %
Sports (as a participant)	69.3	67.6	63.6*	70.4*	58.0*
Sports (as a spectator)	45.3	46.5			
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	43.0	44.1	36.0	42.7	19.4
Youth groups and clubs	28.7	26.8	27.5	35.7	41.9
Volunteer	27.1	22.2	23.0	25.2	33.3
Religious	26.5	25.9	24.4	28.4	31.0
Environmental	16.6	14.3	11.8	12.7	9.8
Student Representative Council	13.0	12.4	10.9	13.8	17.1

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed. \*Appeared as the single item *sports* prior to 2008.

## Age differences

Table 19 highlights that while *sports (as a participant)* had the highest level of involvement for all three age groups, participation significantly declined with age. Conversely, participation increased with age for involvement in *youth groups and clubs* and *volunteer* activities.

- About three quarters (74.6%) of 11 to 14 year old respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* compared with just over a half (56.5%) of 20 to 24 year olds. However, the latter is well above the national figure of 42.8% for this age group.
- Around 43% of 11 to 19 year olds were involved in *arts/cultural* activities compared with one in three (33.9%) young adults.
- Young adults were involved in *volunteer* activities at twice the rate of those aged 11 to 14 (46.8% compared with 23.2%).

**Table 19: Activities young people were involved in, by age**

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Sports (as a participant)	74.6	64.2	56.5
Sports (as a spectator)	44.5	45.8	37.1
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	43.5	43.4	33.9
Youth groups and clubs	25.4	30.0	38.7
Volunteer	23.2	27.6	46.8
Religious	24.7	27.2	25.8
Environmental	14.9	16.4	19.4
Student Representative Council	13.4	11.0	11.3

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed.

## Gender differences

The top three activities were the same for both male and female respondents, namely *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities. However, the rankings were slightly different and there were substantial differences by gender in the proportions of young people participating in these activities. Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to be involved in *sports* activities, while female respondents were more likely than male respondents to be involved in *arts/cultural* activities.

- Around three quarters (73.6%) of male respondents compared with two thirds (65.9%) of female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)*.
- About half (50.6%) of female respondents were involved in *arts/cultural* activities compared with about a third (33.1%) of male respondents.
- Close to 30% of both male and female respondents were involved in *youth groups and clubs*.

**Table 20: Activities young people were involved in, by gender**

	Female %	Male %
Sports (as a participant)	65.9	73.6
Sports (as a spectator)	42.4	49.1
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	50.6	33.1
Youth groups and clubs	27.7	30.2
Volunteer	29.2	24.1
Religious	23.1	30.6
Environmental	15.7	17.6
Student Representative Council	11.6	14.4

Note: Data is a tally of all activities listed.

## What three people or organisations do young people admire?

Respondents were asked to indicate three people or organisations they admired. As in previous years, *family* members were most commonly listed and comprised about 29% of the responses given. The second most common response was *friends*. The information respondents provided has been categorised and listed in order of frequency in Table 21.

Table 21: People and organisations young people admire

	Total number	Percentage
<b>Family</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>28.8</b>
<b>Friends</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>19.9</b>
<b>Sports teams, players and coaches</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>7.1</b>
International aid organisations	143	5.0
Entertainers	141	4.9
Community agencies helping disadvantaged people	130	4.5
Organisations and research supporting seriously ill people	106	3.7
Animal protection groups	85	3.0
Businesses and business people	80	2.8
Environmental groups	76	2.6
Schools and their staff	73	2.5
Protection agencies	51	1.8
Youth organisations and leaders	46	1.6
Religious figures	41	1.4
Medical professionals and hospitals	32	1.1
Political organisations and figures	32	1.1
Telephone helplines	29	1.0
Organisations and research supporting mental health	20	0.7

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- Christian Schools Australia
- Country Health SA – Mid North Cluster
- CREATE Foundation
- Department for Communities' Office for Youth, WA
- Department for Families and Communities – Families SA – Youth Justice Directorate
- Girl Guides Australia
- Glenorchy City Council – Youth and Community Safety Program
- Infoxchange Youth News – [www.youth.infoxchange.net.au](http://www.youth.infoxchange.net.au)
- Inspire Foundation – [www.inspire.org.au](http://www.inspire.org.au)
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- Macquarie Group Foundation
- Maribymong City Council
- Middle Years of Schooling Association Inc.
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- The Reach Foundation
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- Westpac Banking Corporation
- [www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au](http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au) – The Victorian Government's web initiative for young people
- Youth Action & Policy Association (NSW)
- Youth Affairs Council of South Australia
- Youth Affairs Council of Victoria
- Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia
- Youth Affairs Network of Queensland
- Youth Network of Tasmania

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## Thank you

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