

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.



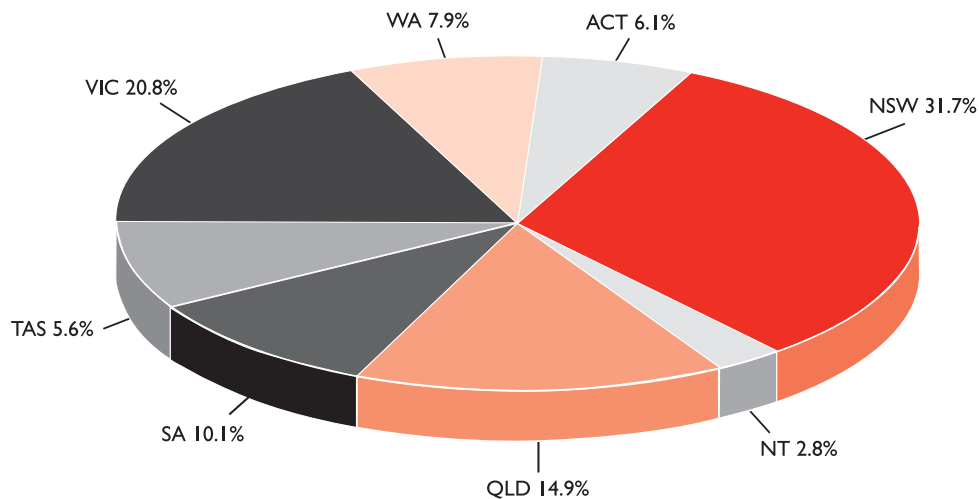
National summary

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	28.1	32.1
Drugs	31.2	20.9	16.6
Family conflict	26.4	26.2	20.4
Suicide	25.3	24.2	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	30.7
School or study problems	17.4	20.3	12.6
The environment	20.1	16.4	18.6
Depression	14.8	20.6	28.8
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	28.8	22.2
Drugs	23.5	29.3
Family conflict	26.9	25.0
Suicide	24.9	24.2
Personal safety	23.3	22.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	21.9	22.8
Physical/sexual abuse	26.7	17.5
Alcohol	17.3	24.4
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 %
Friends	85.1	86.0	86.4	87.3
Parents	74.1	73.6	74.2	75.7
Relative/family friend	61.0	63.3	64.0	64.9
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 %
Friends	83.2	87.8	86.3
Parents	78.9	71.3	64.9
Relative/family friend	63.3	60.2	59.5
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
Family	31,096	30.2
Friends	18,233	17.7
Sports teams, players and coaches	6,928	6.7
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



South Australia summary

Profile of respondents

Age breakdown

South Australia (SA) returned 4,260 surveys or 10.1% of the total number of respondents who indicated which state/territory they came from. The largest group of respondents from SA was aged 15 to 19 years (51.4%), followed closely by 11 to 14 years (46.2%), with 2.3% aged 20 to 24 years.

Table 1: Age profile of respondents

Age in years	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
11-14 years	1,934	46.2
15-19 years	2,151	51.4
20-24 years	98	2.3
Total	4,183	10.1% 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.

Gender breakdown

The proportions of female and male respondents were very similar; at 50.2% and 49.8% respectively.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

160 (3.9%) respondents identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Table 2: Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

	Total number	SA %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Indigenous	160	3.9	5.7	4.0	3.6	5.1
Non Indigenous	3,976	96.1	94.3	96.0	96.4	94.9

Languages other than English spoken at home

90.0% of respondents from South Australia indicated that English was the only language they spoke at home. The 426 (10.0%) respondents who spoke a language other than English at home spoke over 50 languages between them. The most frequently spoken were (in order of frequency): Italian; Greek; Chinese; Afrikaans; German; Spanish; French; Cantonese; and Filipino/Tagalog.

Disability

203 (4.9%) respondents indicated they had a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities were (in order of frequency): dyslexia; Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD); learning disability; hearing impairment; and visual impairment.

Where respondents were living

The majority of respondents from SA were living *with family* (93.0%), which was almost identical to 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*.

99 surveys were received from young people in a *boarding school* and 42 from young people in a *juvenile justice centre* or *prison*. A further 30 young people who were either *homeless* or in *insecure housing* also participated in the survey. 16 surveys were received from young people living in *foster care*.

Table 3: Where respondents were living

	SA %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
With family	93.0	92.9	98.0	90.6	58.8
Boarding school	2.4	2.1	0.6	4.1	0.0
Share house	1.2	1.5	0.2	1.4	14.4
Juvenile justice centre/prison	1.0	1.1	0.4	1.4	3.1
Other	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.9	7.2
Homeless/insecure housing	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.7	5.2
Alone	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.4	11.3
Foster care	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0

Living in or outside a capital city

As Table 4 shows around two thirds (64.9%) of SA respondents lived in the capital city Adelaide, with the remaining third (35.1%) living in other areas of the state. The proportion of young people living outside Adelaide was lowest among the 20 to 24 year age group, of whom just one fifth (19.6%) lived outside the capital city, less than half the proportion of 11 to 14 year olds (43.1%).

Table 4: Geographic location of respondents

	Total number	SA %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Live in capital city	2,730	64.9	59.4	56.9	71.2	80.4
Not in capital city	1,478	35.1	40.6	43.1	28.8	19.6

Main source of income

Parents/family, as in previous surveys, were the main source of income for a significant majority (69.5%) of respondents. Table 5 shows that respondents became less financially dependent on *parents/family* as they became older and found *employment* or were eligible for a *government allowance*. The results for SA were similar to the national results.

Table 5: Main source of income

	SA %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Parents/family	69.5	72.0	87.9	56.0	6.4
Employment	23.8	22.9	10.3	34.9	52.1
Government allowance	5.7	3.7	0.9	8.2	39.4
No income	0.7	1.1	0.8	0.5	1.1
Other	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	1.1

Study and work

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

83.5% of SA respondents were *studying full time*, which was above the national rate of 74.4%. As might be expected, respondents aged 15 to 19 years were much more likely than the young adult group to be *studying full time* (85.3% compared to 43.2%). Around one in five (18.9%) of the young adult group were *studying part time* and close to two in five (37.9%) were *not studying*. As was the case nationally, female respondents were more likely than male respondents to be *studying full time* (87.2% compared to 80.0%) while males were slightly more likely than females to be *studying part time* or *not studying*.

Table 6: Participation in education

	SA %	National %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Studying full time	83.5	74.4	85.3	43.2	87.2	80.0
Studying part time	8.6	14.2	8.1	18.9	6.7	10.4
Not studying	7.9	11.4	6.6	37.9	6.1	9.6

Table 7 shows respondents' participation in employment. Around a quarter (26.8%) of the 20 to 24 year age group were *working full time*, compared to just 1.0% of 15 to 19 year olds. However, about half (51.0%) of the younger group were either *working part time* or had *casual or temporary work*. Results for male and female respondents were quite similar.

Table 7: Participation in employment

	SA %	National %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %
Working full time	2.1	3.3	1.0	26.8	2.8	1.5
Working part time	23.0	21.1	23.5	13.4	23.8	22.3
Casual or temporary work	27.2	28.7	27.5	20.6	28.8	25.5
Unemployed/looking for work	28.6	26.2	28.4	33.0	26.6	30.6
Too young to work or choose not to	19.1	20.7	19.7	6.2	18.0	20.2

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.

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. In SA the third ranked item was *being independent* (33.3%) closely followed by *physical and mental health* (32.9%). Nationally, the third and fourth rankings were reversed.

- *Family relationships* and *friendships* were highly valued by 73.6% and 62.3% respectively of respondents.
- *Being independent* and *physical and mental health* were each highly valued by around one third of respondents from South Australia.

Table 8: What young people value

	SA 2008 %	National 2008 %	SA 2007 %	SA 2006 %	SA 2005 %
Family relationships	73.6	75.3	75.1	70.9	70.1
Friendships (other than family)	62.3	62.3	60.0	65.7	63.2
Being independent	33.3	31.7	34.0	36.1	39.1
Physical and mental health	32.9	31.8	33.1	N/A	N/A
Feeling needed and valued	24.0	26.2	23.9	25.2	29.4
School or study satisfaction	19.9	21.0	18.0	26.3	24.4
Getting a job	19.8	16.9	18.7	23.2	16.0
Financial security	15.1	13.4	13.5	18.0	19.3
Spirituality/faith	10.1	14.0	13.0	11.8	15.0
Making a difference in the community	8.7	7.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
Peer acceptance	N/A	N/A	11.1	12.2	12.4
Environmental issues	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.0	11.2

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 value across the age groups. The top two items for all age groups were *family relationships* and *friendships*, although the proportion of respondents highly valuing each declined for the 20 to 24 year age group. Around one third of respondents in each age group highly valued *being independent*. *Physical and mental health* was highly valued by a third of respondents aged 11 to 19 and about a quarter of young adults.

- *Family relationships* was ranked first by each age group and was highly valued by around three quarters of 11 to 19 year olds and about two thirds (64.8%) of young adults.
- About 63% of respondents aged 11 to 19 years highly valued *friendships* compared to 44.9% of those aged 20 to 24 years.
- Close to a third of respondents in each age group highly valued *being independent*.
- *Physical and mental health* was highly valued by a third (33.0%) of 11 to 19 year olds, compared with just over a quarter (27.0%) of 20 to 24 year olds.

Table 9: What young people value, by age

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Family relationships	75.6	72.2	64.8
Friendships (other than family)	63.7	62.5	44.9
Being independent	31.1	34.8	36.3
Physical and mental health	33.0	33.0	27.0
Feeling needed and valued	23.5	23.8	29.2
School or study satisfaction	21.1	19.1	13.3
Getting a job	21.1	18.0	23.1
Financial security	13.6	15.8	30.0
Spirituality/faith	10.0	10.0	18.0
Making a difference in the community	9.1	8.1	13.5

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

The main differences were in the area of *financial security* and *school or study satisfaction*. The former was highly valued by twice the proportion of young adults as 11 to 19 year olds, whilst the proportion of respondents who highly valued *school or study satisfaction* declined with age.

- 30.0% of the young adult group highly valued *financial security*, compared with about 15% of 11 to 19 year olds.
- About one in five 11 to 19 year olds compared with just over one in ten (13.3%) 20 to 24 year olds highly valued *school or study satisfaction*.

Gender differences

Table 10 shows that the top two items for both female and male respondents were identical, namely *family relationships* and *friendships*. In both cases, however, the proportion of male respondents who valued them highly was less than for female respondents. *Being independent* and *physical and mental health* were each highly valued by around a third of both genders.

- Around 80% of female respondents compared to around 70% of male respondents highly valued *family relationships*.
- *Friendships* were valued highly by 69.4% of female respondents and 55.1% of male respondents.
- Close to a third of respondents of both genders highly valued *being independent* and *physical and mental health*.

Table 10: What young people value, by gender

	Female %	Male %
Family relationships	78.0	69.4
Friendships (other than family)	69.4	55.1
Being independent	33.7	32.6
Physical and mental health	31.1	34.7
Feeling needed and valued	24.4	23.2
School or study satisfaction	19.8	20.0
Getting a job	13.5	26.0
Financial security	12.9	17.3
Spirituality/faith	10.8	9.5
Making a difference in the community	8.6	8.8

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

Responses from male and female respondents were similar on most items, with the main difference being the proportion of each 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 26.0% of male respondents compared with 13.5% 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 two issues of concern in SA were *drugs* and *body image*, with *family conflict* and *suicide* ranked equal third. Nationally, the top three issues were *body image*, *drugs* and *family conflict*. Table 11 also shows that there was a spread of issues of concern, with ten issues being of major concern to at least one in five respondents.

- The top issue of concern in 2008 was *drugs*, with 29.5% of respondents indicating it was a significant concern, an increase on the 2007 figure of 21.5%.
- *Body image* (24.6%), *family conflict* (24.2%) and *suicide* (24.2%) were each of significant concern to about a quarter of SA respondents. The 2007 figure for *body image* was 34.6%.
- The new item, *personal safety*, was of major concern to just over one fifth (21.3%) of respondents.

Table 11: Issues of concern to young people

	SA 2008 %	National 2008 %	SA 2007 %	SA 2006 %	SA 2005 %
Drugs	29.5	26.0	21.5	N/A	N/A
Body image	24.6	26.3	34.6	27.1	N/A
Family conflict	24.2	25.9	26.0	27.3	32.4
Suicide	24.2	24.6	26.4	28.7	43.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.1	22.6	21.7	28.5	31.4
Alcohol	21.7	20.9	22.7	N/A	N/A
Physical/sexual abuse	21.7	22.6	21.4	27.0	39.3
Personal safety	21.3	22.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
The environment	20.9	18.4	24.0	N/A	N/A
Coping with stress	20.1	20.4	25.3	26.6	32.9
School or study problems	18.3	18.6	24.0	25.6	22.4
Depression	18.0	17.8	17.3	26.1	36.8
Self harm	13.4	13.7	14.8	21.3	N/A
Discrimination	12.1	12.6	11.5	17.9	14.7
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	11.1	12.2	10.4	12.0	13.6
Alcohol and other drugs	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.5	33.8

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 provided below of particular interest.

Age differences

Table 12 shows that there were a number of differences between the age groups, although *drugs* appeared as one of the top three issues for each group and was clearly ranked first by 11 to 14 year old respondents. *Body image* was the top issue for the 15 to 19 year old group whereas the top issue of concern for the young adult group was *depression*.

- *Drugs* were of concern to over a third (35.7%) of 11 to 14 year olds and about a quarter of 15 to 24 year olds.
- *Family conflict* was a major concern for about a quarter of 11 to 19 year olds, compared with 15.6% of the young adult group.
- Close to a quarter of respondents aged 11 to 19 identified *suicide* as a key concern, as did just over a fifth (21.3%) of young adult respondents.
- *Depression* was an issue of major concern for just under a third (30.2%) of young adults, compared with less than one in five 11 to 19 year old respondents.
- Over a quarter of respondents aged 15 to 19 identified *body image* as an issue of major concern, compared with around one in five of the two other age groups.

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

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Drugs	35.7	24.2	26.0
Body image	21.9	27.0	22.9
Family conflict	24.9	24.0	15.6
Suicide	25.2	23.6	21.3
Bullying/emotional abuse	23.2	21.3	15.8
Alcohol	24.9	18.6	20.8
Physical/sexual abuse	22.1	21.1	27.7
Personal safety	19.7	22.4	24.0
The environment	22.6	19.1	21.5
Coping with stress	15.4	24.5	20.8
School or study problems	16.7	19.9	14.9
Depression	15.7	19.8	30.2
Self harm	13.0	13.6	10.4
Discrimination	10.5	13.3	13.8
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	10.5	11.7	10.6

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

Gender differences

There were both similarities and differences in the issues of concern for females and males as shown in Table 13. Similar proportions of male and female respondents were concerned about issues such as *family conflict*, *suicide* and *bullying/emotional abuse*. Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to identify *drugs* as an issue of concern, while female respondents were much more likely than male respondents to identify *body image* or *physical/sexual abuse*.

- Just under a third (32.8%) of male respondents identified *drugs* as an issue of major concern, compared with about a quarter (26.5%) of female respondents.
- *Body image* was an issue of major concern for about 30% (29.8%) of female respondents, compared with around one in five (18.9%) male respondents.
- *Physical/sexual abuse* was an issue of concern for one in four (26.8%) female respondents and one in six (16.3%) male respondents.
- About a quarter of both genders identified *family conflict* and *suicide* as issues of major concern.

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

	Female %	Male %
Drugs	26.5	32.8
Body image	29.8	18.9
Family conflict	24.1	24.2
Suicide	23.8	24.6
Bullying/emotional abuse	22.8	21.3
Alcohol	19.9	23.1
Physical/sexual abuse	26.8	16.3
Personal safety	20.9	21.6
The environment	20.7	20.9
Coping with stress	20.8	19.4
School or study problems	16.8	19.8
Depression	19.2	17.0
Self harm	13.5	13.2
Discrimination	11.4	12.9
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	9.3	13.1

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 were very clearly *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*, as they were nationally.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were overwhelmingly the most important sources of advice for respondents in 2008, as they have been each year.
- *Friends* were a major source of advice for 84.4% of SA respondents, very similar to the national figure of 85.1%.
- About a quarter (74.3%) of respondents from South Australia identified *parents* as a key support.

Table 14: Where young people turn for advice and support

	SA 2008 %	National 2008 %	SA 2007 %	SA 2006 %	SA 2005 %
Friends	84.4	85.1	84.8	85.5	87.0
Parents	74.3	74.1	73.0	76.3	72.8
Relative/family friend	62.7	61.0	65.2	64.9	62.8
Internet	19.1	20.3	17.9	17.0	18.8
Community agencies eg youth worker	12.0	11.1	12.2	9.8	9.1
Magazines	11.4	11.2	12.1	12.4	15.5
School counsellor	11.3	11.5	10.2	12.0	10.9
Teacher	10.2	11.4	8.7	9.1	8.5
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	7.3	8.5	8.6	7.8	10.7
Telephone helpline	6.0	5.9	7.0	6.1	4.9

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 proportion of respondents who identified *friends* as important was fairly consistent across the three groups, whilst the proportion who identified *parents* and *relative/family friend* declined with age.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were the top three sources of advice and support for all age groups.
- Over 78% of respondents in all three age groups identified *friends* as a major source of advice.
- About four in five (80.1%) respondents aged 11 to 14 identified *parents* as a key source of advice and support, as did 70.3% of 15 to 19 year olds and 60.9% of 20 to 24 year olds.
- At least half of the respondents from all age groups identified *relative/family friend* as a major source of advice.

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

	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %
Friends	82.4	86.4	78.5
Parents	80.1	70.3	60.9
Relative/family friend	65.3	61.3	52.7
Internet	14.6	22.2	30.4
Community agencies eg youth worker	10.7	12.4	20.2
Magazines	11.3	11.6	7.7
School counsellor	11.9	11.1	11.1
Teacher	10.6	9.8	13.3
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	5.9	8.0	15.4
Telephone helpline	5.9	5.7	11.2

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

The major differences by age were the proportions of respondents who identified the *internet* and *community agencies* as major sources of advice and support.

- Young adult respondents were twice as likely as 11 to 14 year olds to identify the *internet* as an important source of advice (30.4% and 14.6% respectively).
- Young adults (20.2%) were also more likely than 11 to 19 year olds (about one in ten) to identify *community agencies* as a main source of advice and support.

Gender differences

Responses on where young males and females turn for advice and support have also 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*. The proportion who turned to *parents* was similar for both groups, while the proportion of male respondents who turned to *friends* or *relative/family friend* was about 10% less than the proportion of female respondents in each case.

- *Friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend* were the top three sources of advice and support for both female and male respondents.
- 90.4% of female respondents and 78.3% of male respondents identified *friends* as a key source of advice.
- *Parents* were an important source of advice for about three quarters of both male and female respondents.

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

	Female %	Male %
Friends	90.4	78.3
Parents	76.1	73.0
Relative/family friend	67.7	58.1
Internet	14.9	23.2
Community agencies eg youth worker	8.4	15.4
Magazines	13.1	9.4
School counsellor	10.6	12.2
Teacher	7.7	12.8
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	6.2	8.2
Telephone helpline	5.0	6.8

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

Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to identify the *internet* or *community agencies* as major sources of advice.

- Nearly a quarter (23.2%) of male respondents compared with 14.9% of female respondents identified the *internet* as a major source of advice and support.
- Male respondents were also more likely than female respondents to identify *community agencies* as a major source of advice (15.4% compared with 8.4%).

Is there enough information on issues that concern young people?

Just under 86% (85.7%) of all respondents from SA indicated they had enough information on issues that concerned them. This is in line with the 2008 national figure of 83.7% and very close to the SA figure for 2007 (85.6%). As in previous years and as shown in Table 17, the proportion who indicated they did not have enough information increased with age. Around a quarter (22.9%) of the young adult group wanted more information, compared with 12.6% of respondents aged 11 to 14 years. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents indicated they wanted more information on issues of concern.

Table 17: Access to enough information

	2008							2007
	SA %	National %	11-14 yrs %	15-19 yrs %	20-24 yrs %	Female %	Male %	SA %
Enough information	85.7	83.7	87.4	85.0	77.1	83.9	87.9	85.6
Not enough information	14.3	16.3	12.6	15.0	22.9	16.1	12.1	14.4

The survey asked what respondents would like more information about, and 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; suicide and self harm; depression; bullying; and sexual abuse.

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 in Table 18 show that *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities were the top three activities for respondents from South Australia, as they were nationally.

- Just over two thirds (68.3%) of SA respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)*, and half (50.1%) were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*.
- Just over a third (35.4%) of respondents were involved in *arts/cultural* activities.
- About one fifth of South Australian respondents were involved in *youth groups and clubs*, and *religious* and *volunteer* activities.

Table 18: Activities young people were involved in

	SA 2008 %	National 2008 %	SA 2007 %	SA 2006 %	SA 2005 %
Sports (as a participant)	68.3	67.6	63.8*	70.3*	61.2*
Sports (as a spectator)	50.1	46.5			
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	35.4	44.1	35.2	40.1	33.9
Youth groups and clubs	22.3	26.8	25.8	24.8	32.0
Religious	20.3	25.9	19.8	19.9	16.5
Volunteer	19.7	22.2	21.1	19.4	20.7
Student Representative Council	12.3	12.4	14.9	13.9	13.2
Environmental	11.8	14.3	11.7	10.1	7.4

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

Age differences

Table 19 shows that involvement in *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities declined with age. Conversely, participation in *volunteer* activities and *youth groups and clubs* increased with age.

- Involvement in *sports (as a participant)* was highest among 11 to 14 year olds (76.5%) declining to 63.2% for 15 to 19 year olds and 30.6% for 20 to 24 year olds.
- About half of the respondents aged 11 to 19 were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*, compared with just under a third (30.6%) of the young adult group.
- About a third of young adults were involved in *youth groups and clubs* or *volunteer* activities, compared with about one fifth of 11 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)	76.5	63.2	30.6
Sports (as a spectator)	52.7	48.8	30.6
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	40.1	31.5	23.5
Youth groups and clubs	21.8	22.4	31.6
Religious	20.4	20.4	16.3
Volunteer	16.7	22.0	33.7
Student Representative Council	11.0	13.8	6.1
Environmental	12.0	11.4	11.2

* Data is a tally of all activities listed.

Gender differences

The top three activities that both male and female respondents were participating in were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural* activities. As in previous years, a higher proportion of male respondents than female respondents were involved in *sports* activities, while a higher proportion of female respondents than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural* activities. Participation in other activities was similar for both genders.

- Just under three quarters (72.6%) of male respondents compared with about two thirds (64.4%) of female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)*.
- More than half (54.4%) of male respondents were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*, compared with 45.9% of female respondents.
- A much higher proportion of female respondents than male respondents was involved in *arts/cultural* activities (41.8% and 28.7% respectively).

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

	Female %	Male %
Sports (as a participant)	64.4	72.6
Sports (as a spectator)	45.9	54.4
Arts/cultural eg drama, music, dance	41.8	28.7
Youth groups and clubs	21.7	22.8
Religious	21.0	19.4
Volunteer	21.7	17.7
Student Representative Council	13.4	11.1
Environmental	11.0	12.4

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 the most commonly listed and comprised about 30% of the responses given, with *friends* as the second most common response. 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
Family	2,925	30.4
Friends	1,768	18.4
Sports teams, players and coaches	1,005	10.4
Entertainers	643	6.7
International aid organisations	380	3.9
Community agencies helping the disadvantaged	365	3.8
Organisations and research supporting the seriously ill	365	3.8
Animal protection groups	241	2.5
Environmental groups	216	2.2
Businesses and business people	208	2.2
Schools and their staff	197	2.0
Religious figures	155	1.6
Protection agencies	147	1.5
Medical professionals and hospitals	123	1.3
Political organisations and figures	115	1.2
Telephone helplines	96	1.0
Youth organisations and leaders	87	0.9

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- CREATE Foundation
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- 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
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- Social Ventures Australia
- The Benevolent Society
- The FRANK Team
- The Mirabel Foundation
- The Reach Foundation
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- Westpac Banking Corporation
- 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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For further information about this report please contact:

The Research and Social Policy Unit, Mission Australia

Telephone: (02) 9219 2000

Email: socialpolicy@missionaustralia.com.au

www.missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey

National Office

Level 7, 580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: (02) 9219 2000

State and Territory Offices

NSW–ACT State Office

Level 14, 97 Bathurst Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel: (02) 9641 5000

NT State Office

Level 1, 6 Francis Drive
Palmerston NT 0830
Tel: (08) 8935 0900

QLD State Office

11 Cleveland Street
Stones Corner QLD 4120
Tel: (07) 3847 8411

SA State Office

60 Halifax Street
Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: (08) 8218 2800

TAS State Office

Hobart Centre, Suite 4, Level 1
175 Collins Street
Hobart TAS 7000
Tel: (03) 6234 3240

VIC State Office

Level 2, 398 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: (03) 8615 2200

WA State Office

Level 2, 111 Wellington Street
East Perth WA 6004
Tel: (08) 9225 0400



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