

youth survey

MISSION
AUSTRALIA 2019



Dear principal,

We are writing to invite your school to participate in the 2019 Mission Australia Youth Survey. This letter provides background to the Youth Survey and an overview of the methodology, as well as information about how to get your school involved.

Purpose of the study

Now in its 18th year, the Mission Australia Youth Survey is Australia's largest annual survey of young people of its kind. With over 28,000 respondents in 2018, the Youth Survey offers important insights into the lives of young Australians and an understanding of their values, concerns, challenges and ambitions. It is an authoritative source of information that helps to equip schools, community organisations, governments and NGOs with evidence to support programs for young people in their transition into adulthood.

Description of the study

The survey seeks to gather a range of insights into the lives of young people aged 15 to 19 across Australia. Specifically:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Sociodemographic information◆ Engagement with school and post-school aspirations◆ Personal values and concerns◆ Issues of national importance◆ Wellbeing and sources of support | And new focus areas for 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Bullying◆ Housing◆ Disability◆ Young people's voice |
|---|--|

The study will involve the completion of an online questionnaire that takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. The majority of questions require young people to check a box to indicate their response (such as yes/no questions or scales that rate the response from 1 to 5). There are a small number of questions that allow for free-text responses.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?

Schools that anticipate collecting more than 100 responses (unless an alternative amount is agreed prior to data collection) are able to request a tailored report of Youth Survey findings specific to the school. These reports are released to schools late in Term 4, following the publication of the *Mission Australia Youth Survey Report*. Schools have remarked that the tailored reports help to plan for wellbeing and school engagement programs for their students.

This **complimentary service** must be arranged in advance. To do this, please sign and return the attached 'School Principal Consent Form' and tick the box to indicate you wish to receive a school report for 2019. Students will then enter this code when completing the survey online. The coded responses are then collated to produce the report.

How does Mission Australia maintain ethical conduct in this research?

The 2019 Mission Australia Youth Survey has undergone ethical review and Mission Australia, the ACT, NSW, NT, SA, TAS, QLD and VIC Departments of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Offices of Bathurst, Broken Bay, Canberra and Goulburn, Maitland-Newcastle, Parramatta, Sydney, the NT, Brisbane, Cairns, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Townsville, SA, Tasmania, Ballarat, Melbourne, Sale, Sandhurst and WA have approved this research. We have experienced unexpected delays with the WA Department of Education; we anticipate their approval will be delivered soon.) The Mission Australia letter of ethics approval is enclosed in the information pack.

All information provided by students will be treated in the strictest of confidence. The survey is conducted through SurveyGizmo, which is a survey tool based in the USA. Data provided through this survey is encrypted and transferred to SurveyGizmo's server in the USA. By completing this survey, participants agree to this transfer. All data will be stored securely on a password protected drive at Mission Australia, accessible only to the Research team.

Standing together with Australians in need until they can stand for themselves

Your school and your students will not be identified in any reports resulting from the study. However, Mission Australia has a duty of care to the young people who take part in this study. If a student's response to the wellbeing question (Q24) indicates probable serious mental distress (PSMD), or if other responses indicate signs of abuse, neglect or harm, we are ethically obliged by the Department of Education and Training within your State/Territory and/or the Catholic Diocese in your region to report identifiable information back to you, the school principal (the date of birth, gender and postcode of the student). We are additionally legally obliged to report any responses which indicate risk of abuse, neglect or harm to the regulatory body in your State/Territory. **Should a student/s response indicate potential risk cases of abuse, neglect or harm and/or high PSMD results, you may receive notifications on a weekly basis.** After receiving the notification, please follow the child protection and wellbeing policies in place at your school and as stipulated by child protection legislation in your State/Territory.

We anticipate few risks from your students' involvement in this study. We have been careful to make sure that the questions in the survey cause little distress. We have built in information about sources of support (Kids Helpline and headspace) throughout the survey to make this information available for young people, should the questions cause anxiety. Participation is entirely voluntary. Both you, as School Principal, and your students are able to withdraw from participation in the Youth Survey at any time. Students' data will not be used if they choose to withdraw from the study; any incomplete responses will be removed and destroyed to protect their information.

How can I get my school involved?

There are four steps to take to get your school involved in the 2019 Youth Survey. Please see the enclosed 'toolkit' for further resources and documentation.

1. Complete and sign the 'School Principal Consent Form'. Tick 'yes' or 'no' to state whether you are interested in receiving a report for your school.

You can complete the consent form via [the online School Principal Consent Form](#) or scan and return the School Principal Consent PDF form to us at youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au.

⇒ If you ticked 'yes' to receive a report, we will allocate your school a unique 2019 code for students to enter when completing the survey online.

2. Organise a time in your school calendar for students to complete the survey. The survey is open **between April and 31st July** and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete per student.
3. **We encourage you to inform parents/caregivers about the intention to participate in the Youth Survey.** You may wish to send out a 'Parent Consent Form' and request their consent. Please see the 'Letter to Parents' document, which can be modified to distribute electronically if appropriate.
4. Get students to take part via www.missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey. Young people can take part in class time or in students' own time, and the survey can be completed on a laptop, computer or via smartphone.

How can I get more information?

We will happily answer any questions you have about the Youth Survey or about getting your school involved. Please write to the Research Team at youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au or call (08) 8218 2851.

For additional information about the Youth Survey, please go to our website at <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-impact-policy-advocacy/youth-survey>

We are eager to have your school involved in 2019 and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Joann Fildes
Head of Research and Evaluation, Mission Australia