

**MISSION
AUSTRALIA**

**youth survey
report 2017**



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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of lands throughout Australia, and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continual relationship with the land and we recognise the importance of the young people who are the future leaders.

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CEO's message

With each Mission Australia *Youth Survey* we gain important insights into the lives of young Australians and an understanding of their aspirations, values, concerns and ambitions.

Now in its 16th year, the results build on knowledge gained from past reports, while also providing a snapshot of how young people feel currently about their own lives and broader national issues.

We collect and publish this information in the hope that it will be used to inform the development of policies, services and programs that have the needs of young people at their core. Young people are our future and they should be supported, nurtured and encouraged as they make their journey into adulthood and independence. Families, educators, policymakers and the broader community all have an important role to play. If we better understand the hopes, fears and everyday realities that our young people face, we will be better equipped to celebrate their achievements with them and support them through difficult times.

2017 Results

This year over 24,000 young people took part in the *Youth Survey*, providing a broad range of views and experiences. While there was a great diversity to the responses we received, a number of themes emerged that speak to the big issues that many young people face today.

We asked young people how confident they were in achieving their post-school goals and I am pleased to report that four in ten felt confident or very confident. However, when we asked if they felt there were barriers to achieving these goals, over half told us that they did foresee barriers, the most common being academic ability, financial difficulties and mental health. So despite their optimism, young people see the challenges that lie ahead of them and we as a nation need to do more to support them.

Concerns around mental health surface a number of times throughout the report. These were both personal concerns, such as coping with stress, body image and depression, and for the first time since the survey began mental health was noted as the top national issue. This may be due to the important work that is being done to destigmatise mental health issues for young people. While it is encouraging that young people are becoming more aware that mental health issues can have an impact on their lives and those around them; these findings are certainly telling us that more needs to be done. The results reinforce that it is essential that we provide a broad range of support for young people who face mental illness.

It was heartening to see that many young people felt they can reach out to friends, families and relatives when they need help. We know that there are a diversity of ways that young people ask for help and access information, so we must ensure that everyone is skilled in knowing how to get help from the variety of services and approaches available.

I would like to thank the young people who took the time to give their views, as well as the teachers, community workers and parents who supported them to do so. Through the work done by Mission Australia I constantly hear the stories of young people who have shown great resilience, optimism and insight, which gives me tremendous hope for the future. Young people have much to offer, it is important that we take the time to hear what they have to say.

James Toomey
CEO, Mission Australia



Executive summary

Demographic profile of respondents

A total of 24,055 young people aged 15-19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*. The largest number of responses came from New South Wales (30.0%), Victoria (19.9%) and Queensland (19.1%). Over half of the respondents (57.5%) were female and 5.3% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The percentage of young people who spoke a language other than English at home was 18.3%. The level of reported disability in 2017 was 4.8%, slightly higher than in 2016 (3.8%). The vast majority of respondents were studying full-time (94.9%), consistent with the 94.6% in 2016. Around four in ten (40.5%) respondents were working part-time and 34.5% were looking for work, again consistent with previous years.

Young people and plans for study and training

Young people were asked about their future plans for education and training following school. Of those who were still at school, 97.0% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. Three times the proportion of males than females indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (4.8% compared with 1.6% respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training or if they had done so in the past. Just under one in five (18.6%) respondents indicated that they were doing so. Similar proportions of both males and females indicated that they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training or that they had done so in the past (19.0% compared with 18.1% respectively).

When asked what they were planning to do after school, going to university was the most frequently chosen option (70.0%). A greater proportion of females than males indicated that they planned to do so (75.9% compared with 62.6%). Many respondents planned to get a job (32.0%) and to travel or go on a gap year (28.8%) after school, while 11.9% planned to attend TAFE or college and 8.1% planned to undertake an apprenticeship.

Confidence in achieving study/work goals after school

Respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Four in ten respondents indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.7% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 30.5% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, close to one in five young people were less confident, with 16.0% being *slightly confident* and 3.1% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (12.0% and 33.4% of males compared with 7.7% and 28.9% of females).

Academic ability, financial difficulty and mental health were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals.

Barriers to post-school goals

Respondents who were still at school were asked to indicate whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (51.6%) of respondents indicated that they felt there would be barriers, with a greater proportion of females (56.3%) than males (44.2%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Nationally, the top three barriers that young people felt would impact on their study/work goals were *academic ability* (22.0%), *financial difficulty* (14.2%) and *mental health* (13.2%).

What young people value

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. The responses were consistent with previous years, with *friendships*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction* ranked as the three most highly valued items (80.5%, 80.0% and 72.9% respectively). Also consistent with past years was the high value placed on *physical and mental health*.

Issues of personal concern

Young people were asked to rank how concerned they had been about a number of issues in the past year. The responses were consistent with previous years, with *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image* ranked as the top three issues of concern. Over four in ten respondents indicated that they were either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* about *coping with stress*. Around one third of young people were concerned about *school or study problems* and *body image*. Around one in five respondents were either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* about *depression*. The proportion of females concerned about each of these issues was much higher than the proportion of males.

Where young people go for help with important issues

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. The top three sources of help for young people were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* (84.4%, 77.7% and 61.3% respectively). Around half of respondents indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* (53.8%) and the *internet* (51.2%) for help with important issues. Around four in ten respondents indicated that they would go to their *GP or health professional* or *teacher* for help with important issues.

A greater proportion of females than males indicated that they would go to *friend/s* for help with important issues, while slightly higher proportions of males would go to their *parent/s* or *relative/family friend*.

How well do young people's families get along?

Young people were asked how well they thought their family got along. The majority of respondents rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 26.5% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 32.2% that it was *very good*. Around one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (12.2%) or *poor* (7.3%).

Most important issues in Australia today

Young people were asked to write down the three issues that they considered were the most important in Australia today. The top three issues identified in 2017 were *mental health* (33.7%), *alcohol and drugs* (32.0%) and *equity and discrimination* (27.3%). Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs*, *equity and discrimination*, *bullying* and *crime, safety and violence* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics*, *the economy and financial matters*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *population issues*, *employment* and *the environment* have declined over this period.

A greater proportion of female than male respondents identified *mental health* (38.5% and 27.8% respectively) and *equity and discrimination* (30.3% and 23.3% respectively) as major issues facing Australia today. Conversely, a greater proportion of male than female respondents identified *alcohol and drugs* (36.1% compared with 29.6%) as an important issue.

Young people identified *mental health, alcohol and drugs and equity and discrimination* as the most important issues in Australia today.

Activities that young people are involved in

As in previous years, the top three activities for young people aged 15 to 19 years were *sports (as a participant)* (75.2%), *sports (as a spectator)* (65.4%) and *volunteer work* (54.1%). A higher proportion of males reported participation in *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*, while a greater proportion of females reported participation in *volunteer work* and *arts/cultural/music activities* in the past year.

Happiness and the future

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole. The majority of young people (62.9%) felt happy about their lives overall. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a higher proportion of male than female respondents indicated they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (13.2% compared with 8.2%).

Young people were also asked to rate how positive they felt about the future. Results in 2017 are similar to those from previous years, with around two thirds of respondents feeling either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Just over one quarter of young people felt *neither positive nor negative* and around one in ten young people felt either *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

Mission Australia Youth Survey

In order to assess young people's journey into independence and the types of support they may require, the following discussion of the Youth Survey's findings is structured according to the outcomes Mission Australia services strive to achieve with the individuals, families and communities we work alongside. With the expectation that they can progress towards independence, Mission Australia provides services that aim to achieve the following outcomes for young people:

1 Developing and achieving – young people need to be skilled and confident, in education and with access to tertiary education, training or employment. All young people should have the best foundation for learning and development and be able to participate as valued members of society.

2 Economic wellbeing – young people should have access to the essentials in life and have good financial management skills. They should have pathways to economic participation, fulfilling employment and independent living.

3 Healthy – being healthy is a significant contributor to overall wellbeing and this includes participating in activities such as sport. Health incorporates both physical and mental health and Mission Australia believes that for young people to transition successfully into adulthood all aspects of health are important.

4 Housed – a supportive and stable home environment is a particularly important aspect of a young person's life; it is essential for good physical and mental health and has positive impacts on educational outcomes. Stable housing also provides a platform for other supports in the community, through schools or neighbours.

5 Inclusive and cohesive – having a strong sense of being included, having mutual support and feeling you have someone to call on at a time of need are critically important for young people. Having these bonds with the people around them plays an important part in transitioning to adulthood. Diversity needs to be respected and supported, with the benefits of this being seen as both strength building and protective.

6 Connected and participating – it is important that young people have a sense of belonging, feel part of the community and are given opportunities to participate in activities and events that allow them to develop relationships with others. Young people should have their voices heard and be actively involved in decisions affecting their lives.

7 Safe – keeping young people safe, and feeling safe, is a responsibility of the whole of society. Young people need to feel safe in their families, neighbourhoods and schools. All young people should have a safe, secure and stable home and be protected from bullying and discrimination at school and in their community.

8 Supported and resourced – young people and those around them such as their peers, family and relatives must have access to services to meet their needs. Mission Australia believes support is essential for young people whether this be universal or more targeted support. These need to be quality services which are holistic and improve outcomes over time. A holistic approach considers all life domains including: housing, recreation, social participation, employment, finances, legal, education, child and family relationships, health and mental health, alcohol and other drug use, cultural and personal identity. Services should produce evidence which helps improve service delivery. This includes listening to young people and including their opinions in service development.

Policy Context

Over 24,000 young people across Australia have shared their hopes and concerns in this year's *Youth Survey*.

Overall young people reported a positive and optimistic outlook on their lives and their futures, with many reporting a confidence in their ability to achieve their goals after school, seeing their family relationships as cohesive and positive and reporting strong engagement with their communities through a range of activities.

Despite this, many young people still see the potential challenges they may face as they transition out of school and are concerned by a range of issues which they see impacting their life personally or having broader social implications.

Mental health was one of the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's future plans, as well as being nominated by around one third of young people as an important issue in Australia today.

Alongside mental health, young people continue to nominate alcohol and drugs and equity and discrimination as the top three issues facing Australia today.

Just over half of respondents felt they may face barriers while attempting to achieve their education and employment goals after school. Alongside mental health and financial difficulties a lack of jobs was commonly cited as a potential barrier.

It is up to us as a society to ensure the right policies and programs are in place to enable young people to pursue their post-school goals, overcome the barriers they face to achieving them and address their pressing personal concerns.

Governments, families, educational institutions, health professionals, employers and community organisations all have important roles to play in facilitating successful youth transitions and addressing these broader societal issues.

We must ensure all young people are supported to make successful transitions into further education, training and employment; are healthy, safe and housed; feel included and connected within their communities and have the necessary supports to combat the challenges that arise in their lives.

In order to ensure these outcomes we make the following key recommendations:

- Expand programs that support young people to re-engage with education.
- Improve careers guidance, particularly for more vulnerable young people.
- Provide evidence-based universal mental health prevention and intervention programs for young people.
- Invest in the mental health of young people through supports to family and friends, technological responses and community based recovery-orientated programs.

- Provide psychosocial supports for young people that include links to employment.
- Invest in youth-specific alcohol and drug treatment programs and facilities.
- Increase Youth Allowance and rent assistance payments and improve access to affordable accommodation.
- Provide accessible wraparound services that support young people across all life domains and provide appropriate outreach.
- Engage young people in co-design of youth-friendly services.

Developing and achieving

The vast majority of 15-19 year olds surveyed were studying full-time and intended to complete year 12. Positively, most young people who were currently studying also reported being satisfied with their studies.

However, 3.0% of respondents were not studying at all and a further 7.1% of those who were studying were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their studies, which may lead to future disengagement.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who responded to the *Youth Survey* were largely studying full-time and satisfied with their studies. However, they were less likely to be studying and to be satisfied with their studies than their non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peers (8.4% compared to 2.6% and 13.1% compared to 6.7% respectively).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were also more likely to be planning to get an apprenticeship or go to TAFE or college and less likely to be planning to go to university than their non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peers.

Educational disengagement

We know that children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to disengage from school and that students who leave school early are at greater risk of a range of negative outcomes including unemployment, low income, social exclusion, risky health behaviours and engaging in crime.¹

Programs that work to support young people to re-engage with education are essential for ensuring positive long-term outcomes for vulnerable young people and should be expanded.

Navigator

Navigator is a Victorian Government initiative that provides support for disengaged young people, aged 12-17 years, to re-engage with an education or training pathway. Navigator services seek out disengaged learners and actively work with them and their networks, providing the support required for a successful return to education.

Mission Australia is the lead provider of this service in Victoria's Bayside Peninsula.

¹ CCYP WA (2017) *Children and young people at risk of disengaging from school*, accessed at: <https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/media/1422/report-education-children-at-risk-of-disengaging-from-school-literature-review.pdf>

Barriers to achievement of goals

While four in ten young people indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve their post-school goals, close to one in five young people were only slightly confident or not at all confident in achieving their goals.

In addition, over half of respondents felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study or work goals after school. The top three barriers cited were academic ability, financial difficulty and mental health. Females were more likely to report all of these barriers than males.

In terms of academic ability, we know socioeconomic status impacts on educational outcomes and targeted funding is required to address disadvantage and the inequity in education that may lead to a disparity in results.

Early intervention and strengthening the communities in which young people live and learn can also address disadvantage in early childhood development which has flow on effects to later academic outcomes.

Financial difficulty was cited as a barrier by 17.9% of young women and 8.9% of young men. Lack of financial resources can be a major inhibitor for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and for young people from rural and regional areas who may need to relocate to pursue their study or career goals.

The costs encountered by young people intending to pursue university and vocational education need to be reviewed to ensure that financial difficulty does not prevent young people from furthering their studies.

Increases to Youth Allowance and rent assistance payments and improved access to affordable accommodation are also required to ease the financial pressure on young people and enable them to pursue their goals.

Youth Allowance rates currently leave young people struggling to meet their basic needs and the private rental market is extremely unaffordable in many places. Over 50% of recipients of Youth Allowance are living below the poverty line.² The payment rates must be urgently increased.

Further investment in scholarship programs and targeted supports for under-represented groups are required. Young people also need to be made aware of the financial supports that are available and provided with help to navigate them if needed.

Alarmingly, mental health was cited as a barrier to future goals by 13.2% of respondents overall and an even higher proportion of females (16.9% of females compared to 7.4% of males).

While our *Youth Mental Health Report*³ found almost one quarter of respondents in 2016 had a probable serious mental illness, with the right policies and programs this should not be a barrier to future plans and young people can be supported on their journey to recovery.

² ACOSS & SPRC *Poverty in Australia* 2016, accessed at: <http://www.acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Poverty-in-Australia-2016.pdf>

³ <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/research/young-people/706-five-year-mental-health-youth-report/file>

As a first step, schools should provide evidence-based universal mental health prevention and intervention programs for young people. This will require additional government funding for schools to resource these programs.

Advice on career pathways

The labour market is rapidly changing for young people and they need the information and resources to be able to pursue their career pathways.

Participation in higher education is growing, while vocational education and training and apprenticeships are declining. The transition between full-time education and full-time work is also taking longer for young people and underemployment is a significant issue.⁴

Some young people do not have the information they need about available jobs and pathways to set and meet their post-school goals. In some cases this may be due to a lack of parental support and input or a lack of engagement with career guidance counsellors.⁵

However, most young people do talk to their parents about their career plans and parents should be included as participants in career-planning programs and provided with knowledge and support as necessary.⁵

More broadly, career guidance programs aimed at young people at risk of disengaging from education can help more vulnerable young people improve their outcomes. Careers advice while at school also supports young people who do not plan to pursue further education to find pathways into work.⁵

To be effective, schools-based careers guidance must be responsive to both the current labour market and the skill needs of the future. Future work skills include digital literacy, financial literacy, problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, science and maths.⁶

It is important that more vulnerable young people are supported into stable career pathways and into professions that will thrive. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) need to be accessible for all young people to prepare them for the future.

Careers guidance must provide up-to-date information to young people and should be available to young people at risk of disengaging from education.

⁴ Foundation for Young Australians (2015) *How young people are faring in the transition from school to work, report card*, accessed at: <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/How-young-people-are-faring-report-card-2015-FINAL.pdf>

⁵ Australian Institute of Family Studies (2017) *The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children Annual Statistical Report 2016*. Melbourne: AIFS. p.26-31

⁶ Foundation for Young Australians (2015) *How young people are faring in the transition from school to work, report card*, accessed at: <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/How-young-people-are-faring-report-card-2015-FINAL.pdf>

Economic wellbeing

A considerable 32.0% of young people responding to the *Youth Survey* planned to get a job after school.

Currently youth unemployment sits at 13% and is more than double the general unemployment rate creating a significant barrier to work.⁷ Just over one in ten young people noted lack of jobs as a barrier to achievement of study/work goals.

Barriers to employment

Young people who experience greater difficulty finding work often experience specific barriers, including problems with mental health, housing or childcare.⁸

The prominence of mental health as a nominated barrier to future goals in this year's *Youth Survey* is of concern in relation to young people seeking employment, as well as those pursuing future study.

Employment can provide young people with a sense of purpose and value as well as an opportunity to interact with other people.⁹

Employment can also assist people experiencing mental illness on their journey to recovery. It is important that psychosocial supports for young people include connections to employment and that such programs have the flexibility to increase and decrease the levels of support according to the young person's needs.

Targeted employment programs such as the Personal Helpers and Mentors Employment Service and Disability Employment Services can help people with a psychosocial disability to pursue employment.

In order to assist young people to meet their goals, we need to address their barriers to employment as well as assisting them to negotiate employment pathways. Tailored supports are required that meet the needs of young people, especially where barriers to employment exist, such as mental health or locational disadvantage.

A greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people than non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people indicated the presence of a range of barriers to achieving their post-school goals including family responsibilities, where they live, lack of school support, transport, lack of family support and discrimination.

This suggests the need for a holistic approach to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people including providing support to families and schools and strengthening the communities in which they live. These efforts should be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and local organisations.

⁷ ABS (2017) 6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, Aug 2017, accessed at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/46DFE12FCDB783D9CA256B740082AA6C?OpenDocument>

⁸ Oxenbridge, S. & Evesson, J. (2012) Young people entering work: A review of the research, Ref: 18/12, Employment Research Australia

⁹ Social Ventures Australia (2016) Fundamental principles for youth employment, accessed at: <http://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/Fundamental-principles-for-youth-employment-report.pdf>

Charcoal Lane

Charcoal Lane is a social enterprise in Fitzroy (Melbourne) that combines a restaurant specialising in native flavours with a comprehensive training program for young people who have experienced vocational and non-vocational barriers to employment. Charcoal Lane enables Aboriginal and other young people to gain both accredited hospitality qualifications and professional experience within a supportive developmental environment. On completing traineeships at the restaurant, young people are well prepared to move into careers in hospitality, or other industries.

Work experience

Four in ten respondents to the *Youth Survey* were working part-time, and six in ten not in paid employment. A considerable 32.1% of females and 37.8% of male respondents were not in paid employment and looking for work.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were more likely to not be in paid employment and looking for work than their non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peers (46.4% compared to 33.8%).

Work experience whilst at school helps to build young people's skills while also exposing them to a range of opportunities and informing the development of their aspirations. Work experience also improves young people's future employment prospects and is highly valued by employers.¹⁰ It is a valuable component of transition programs for young people seeking to enter the workforce and can foster connections with the local job market.

However, working part-time while at school can also be a balancing act for young people. While young people from disadvantaged families are less likely to be employed, where they are employed they are more likely to work longer hours.¹¹ Importantly, income earned can also be an important contribution to their families. This can in turn impact on their capacity to study and their levels of stress.

¹⁰ Department of Employment, Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences – combined data for all regions surveyed in the 2013-2014 financial year

¹¹ Australian Institute of Family Studies (2017) The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children Annual Statistical Report 2016. Melbourne: AIFS. p.49

Transition to Work

The Transition to Work program is funded by the Department of Employment and focuses on young people aged 15-21 who are facing barriers to enter the workforce to pursue employment or further education. Youth Employment Specialists assist young people in the development of practical skills, connection with education or training providers, engagement with work-experience opportunities and local community services, as well as identifying job opportunities to suit their aspirations and skill set and the needs of the local job market. By intervening early to help young people stay in school, engage in training or find work, we can set them up for a better future.

Healthy

Physical and mental health was highly valued by over 71.4% of young people responding to the *Youth Survey* and deserves significant attention.

At a national level, mental health and alcohol and drugs were each nominated by around one third of young people as the most important issues facing Australia today. Therefore, physical and mental health appear to be prominent concerns for young people in relation to their own lives and more broadly.

Mental health

Mental health was the top issue of national concern for young people responding to the *Youth Survey* for the first time this year. Further, the proportion of young people indicating mental health as a national concern has more than doubled in two years. While heightened awareness of mental health and reduced stigma may be contributing to this rise, three of the top four issues of personal concern to young people, also have links to mental health: coping with stress, body image and depression.

Adolescence is the peak age of onset for many mental health disorders and our *Youth Mental Health Report* shows there has been a significant increase in the proportion of young people meeting this criteria over the past five years.¹²

Again, females reported higher levels of concern in relation to coping with stress, body image and depression than males and were also more likely to indicate mental health as a national concern. In our *Youth Mental Health Report* we also found that females were around twice as likely as males to meet the criteria for having a probable serious mental illness.

A gendered approach to the mental health of young people is therefore required that takes into account help seeking preferences, as well as other social pressures such as gender-based discrimination and ideals of appearance.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people also had high levels of personal concern around mental health related issues, with higher levels of concern around suicide than their non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peers and over one quarter nominating mental health as a national concern.

Our *Youth Mental Health Report* also found that the likelihood of probable serious mental illness was consistently and significantly higher among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people compared to non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people across the five year period.

It is essential that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people have access to culturally sensitive and age appropriate mental health services. Intergenerational disadvantage must also be addressed as a priority, with efforts led by Aboriginal elders and communities.

Community based, recovery oriented mental health supports are also needed to complement clinical and acute care services with young people engaging in the design of youth-friendly mental health services.

Happy Healthy Minds Program

The Happy Healthy Minds Program provides a range of flexible, responsive, non-clinical mental health support services to meet the needs of young people aged 8-18 years, affected by or at risk of mental illness. The service offers holistic case management, information and referrals to other services, practical and home based support, education and community development as well as programs and group work activities.

Body image

Body image was again among the top three personal concerns for young people and was a concern for a higher proportion of young women than young men.

More could be done to instil a positive body image for all young people including a commitment by the media to display more diversity of body shapes and sizes and to reduce digital manipulation of images.

We know that concerns and dissatisfaction with body image tend to peak in adolescence, as young people's bodies change and that higher body dissatisfaction is associated with greater psychological distress.¹³

Where a young person is experiencing psychological distress or develops an eating disorder, help from a professional is essential. The Butterfly Foundation's National Support Line and Web Counselling Service can offer a gateway to such professional support.

¹² <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/research/young-people/706-five-year-mental-health-youth-report/file>

¹³ Murray, K. M., Byrne, D. G., & Rieger, E. (2011) Investigating adolescent stress and body image. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34, p.269-278

Alcohol and drugs

The proportion of young people nominating alcohol and drugs as a national concern has continued to rise, from 27.0% in 2015 to 32.0% in 2017. However drugs and alcohol were only nominated as a personal concern for 6.8% and 6.0% of young people respectively.

Young people's drug and alcohol concerns appear to largely reflect what they see around them, including in their family and peers, in their communities and in the media.

Continued and targeted public health messaging is required to reduce alcohol-related harm at all ages across Australia.

For some young people drug and alcohol addiction can be a serious issue requiring access to effective and appropriate treatment. Yet, many treatment facilities are only available to those over 18 years of age and are not appropriate for young people.

Youth-specific facilities that take a holistic approach to young people's needs and provide a safe, secure and encouraging environment are much more likely to succeed long-term and should be invested in.

David Martin Place

David Martin Place is a youth detox facility that works with up to 10 young people aged 16 to 24 years at a time, as they undertake a substance withdrawal and detoxification program that integrates a medical and therapeutic model for up to 28 days. It is located on 110 acres in the NSW Southern Highlands and accepts referrals from young people Australia wide.

David Martin Place provides supervised withdrawal and a range of holistic supports and therapies. Initially, the program focusses on managing the physical symptoms of withdrawal and the development of an individual treatment plan. As treatment progresses and physical symptoms are reduced, the focus shifts to addressing psychosocial issues.

Young people leaving the program may move on to the rehabilitation program at Triple Care Farm, alternative rehabilitation programs, other treatment services, or may be ready to transition back to the community.

Housed

We know that for young people mental health and homelessness are closely related. In fact our recent *Youth Mental Health and Homelessness* report¹⁴ showed that young people with a probable serious mental illness are 3.5 times more likely to have spent time away from home because they felt like they could not go back, than those without a probable serious mental illness.

¹⁴ <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/research/young-people/720-mission-australia-youth-mental-health-and-homelessness-report/file>

We also know that for young people, poor family functioning and family conflict can be precursors for homelessness. This often starts with couch surfing and can lead to more entrenched homelessness.

The *Youth Mental Health and Homelessness* report found that the likelihood of spending time away from home increases as the young person's rating of family functioning decreases regardless of whether the young person had a probable serious mental illness or not.

In this year's *Youth Survey* close to one quarter of young people indicated a personal concern around family conflict and one in five young people did not report a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either fair or poor.

Early intervention is particularly crucial for young people to promote family reconciliation where possible as is the provision of safe and stable housing where the young person cannot live with their family.

Reconnect

Reconnect supports young people aged 12–18 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The aim is to improve family relationships so the young person may be able to return to the family home. If this is not possible, the young person will be supported to obtain alternative housing. In addition the young person will be supported to remain engaged at school and to address their other needs, such as mental health, addiction issues and life skills.

Mission Australia runs seven Reconnect services and demonstrated strong improvements in wellbeing for clients in a recent evaluation.¹⁵

Young people also have to deal with a largely unaffordable housing market in many parts of Australia and there is an inadequate supply of social and affordable housing options to cater for the young people who need them.

In addition to early intervention programs and an increase in social and affordable housing, supported accommodation models that are linked to education and employment, as well as those with more intensive case management supports should be invested in to meet the needs of young people at risk of homelessness.

¹⁵ <https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/research/homelessness/687-reconnect-evaluation-report/file>

Youth Accommodation Support Services (YASS) (WA)

Operating from a Perth residential facility, this service provides 24/7 accommodation and support for up to six young people, aged 15 to 18 years, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Providing holistic support for up to three months, the service aims to help young people to address issues underlying their homelessness (e.g. drug and alcohol issues, mental health and family relationships), increase life skills (e.g. financial management, cooking), transition to stable long-term accommodation and engage/re-engage with education or employment.

Governments should develop a multi-partisan policy to halve youth homelessness by 2020 which addresses mental health, education, employment and community participation outcomes for young people and is funded accordingly.

Inclusive and cohesive

For all young people, feeling included in their families and their communities is an important part of growing up.

A total of 5.3% of respondents to this year's *Youth Survey* identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. A vibrant culture and connection to community are significant factors in strengthening the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.¹⁶ This should be recognised by programs working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Traditional Camp - Queensland

Mission Australia, in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS), runs camps on local, traditional country to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who are involved in the criminal justice system and are at high risk of reoffending.

Up to 10 camping trips per year are planned to a local national park to do cultural activities to strengthen young people's connection to culture and country.

It is also important that young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds feel included and that services are designed to cater to their needs. This year, 15.1% of *Youth Survey* respondents were born overseas and 18.3% spoke a language other than English at home.

¹⁶ WA Commissioner for Children and Young People (2011) Aboriginal children and young people speak out about culture and identity. Subiaco: WA Commissioner for Children and Young People. Available at: <https://www.ccp.wa.gov.au/media/1305/policy-brief-wellbeing-research-aboriginal-children-on-culture-and-identity-june-2011.pdf>

Equity and discrimination was nominated as an important issue in Australia today by over one quarter (27.6%) of respondents and much more can be done to combat discrimination at a systemic, as well as an interpersonal level, across the nation.

Connected and participating

Participating in activities helps young people to build social networks, as well as to develop new skills.

Over two thirds of young people indicated that they had participated in sports as a participant and/or a spectator. Around half of young people reported participation in volunteer work or arts, cultural and musical activities.

Research has identified a clear nexus between creativity and addressing mental illness.¹⁷ Considering young people's concerns about mental health, expanded access to creative arts activities could be a key support.

Creative arts therapies such as dance, music, poetry, drama and art provide opportunities for young people to express emotions symbolically that they may otherwise not be able to communicate.¹⁸

Creative Youth Initiative (CYI)

Creative Youth Initiative (CYI), is a unique service that provides free TAFE accredited programs for young people aged 16-25 who are facing many and varied challenges in their lives, such as homelessness, mental health concerns, substance abuse, family breakdown, unemployment or poor educational experiences.

Based in Surry Hills at the Mission Australia Centre (MAC), CYI helps young people develop their creativity through the visual arts program, *Artworks!* and the music program, *Sounds of the Street*. This in turn builds self-esteem, encourages self-expression and provides positive learning experiences in a safe and supportive environment. In addition, it provides young people with the opportunity to access free training programs run in partnership with TAFE as well as personalised individual support.

It is important that all young people, including vulnerable young people, have access to a range of activities to build confidence including sport, arts, cultural and mentoring activities.

¹⁷ Mission Australia, *Creative Youth Initiative - That Thing That Changed Everything: Using Creativity as a Tool for Positive Change in Young People's Lives*, 2010, p.6

¹⁸ Murphy, J. (1999) *Coping with Teen Suicide*, New York, The Rosen Publishing Group

Safe

Close to one fifth of young people nominated personal safety and bullying/emotional abuse as issues of personal concern. Over one in ten young people also indicated that bullying and crime, safety and violence were issues of national concern.

It is imperative that young people feel safe in their homes, schools and communities; otherwise they may spend more time in unsafe environments. Youth outreach programs are therefore vital to reach vulnerable young people where they are at.

Youthbeat (TAS)

The Youthbeat outreach program is a trusted presence that provides support to young people on the streets in some of Hobart's most disadvantaged areas. Youthbeat provides support, information and referrals to services and provides safety, information and guidance for young people at risk as well as connecting them with community services, family and peers. Youthbeat's vans are manned by professional youth workers who are trained to manage challenging behaviours, alcohol and drug-fueled incidents and support young people experiencing homelessness. Youthbeat helps young people to become strong, healthy adults who actively participate in community life.

Supported and resourced

Friends (84.4%), parents (77.7%), relatives or family friends (61.3%) and siblings (53.8%) were the most commonly cited sources of help for young people.

Young people need to feel confident seeking help and know where to turn. Equally those who young people turn to for support must be equipped with the information and resources to effectively help young people in times of need.

In light of rising concerns about mental health, young people's tendency to turn to friends should be recognised as an opportunity to educate young people about 'mental health first aid' and provide peer support networks.

It is also pleasing to note that over four in ten young people indicated they would seek help from a GP or health professional with important issues, and one third of young people indicated the school counsellor as a source of support.

Over half of young people would go to the internet for help, one in six would access an online counselling website and one in eight would phone a telephone hotline for help with important issues.

Therefore, technology that provides an alternative to face-to-face service delivery should be supported and invested in to meet the needs of young people.

ReachOut

ReachOut is an online mental health organisation for young people and their parents. It is accessed by 132,000 people in Australia every month and offers a range of tools including:

- Next Step: a tool that recommends customised support options based on a young person's symptoms and how significantly the symptoms are affecting them.
- The Toolbox: a digital tool that recommends mental health and wellbeing apps and digital resources.

More broadly, services delivered in local communities must identify a range of avenues that young people are likely to access and provide appropriate outreach to young people in the places where they meet and spend their time.

Wraparound services that support young people across all life domains provide a promising way forward. This approach provides supports to people with complex needs, including easy access points and referrals when and where necessary.

By listening to young people, including their responses to the *Youth Survey*, we can better support them to achieve their goals and live full and meaningful lives. We can also more carefully consider the society in which we live today and how to best create the society in which young people hope to live in the future.

If you need someone to talk with you can contact Kids Helpline 24/7 on **1800 55 1800** or go to **kidshelp.com.au** for online counselling. You may also wish to contact headspace 24/7 on **1800 650 890** or go to **eheadspace.org.au** for online counselling. eheadspace is a confidential, free and secure space where young people aged 12 - 25 years or their family can chat, email or speak on the phone with a qualified youth mental health professional

About the survey

Survey background

In 2017, Mission Australia conducted its 16th annual survey of young people. As in previous years, the survey aimed to identify both the values and issues of concern to young people. A small number of amendments were made to the survey this year. Most notably, new questions were added to explore young people's perceptions surrounding any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study or work goals after school and to examine young people's housing circumstances.

Participation

A total of 24,055 young Australians aged 15-19 years participated in the survey. Of these, 95.0% of respondents completed the survey online, with the remainder completing a hard copy version.

Areas of focus

As well as collecting valuable socio-demographic data, the *Youth Survey 2017* sought to capture the views and perspectives of young people on a broad range of issues. Topics covered by the survey this year included education and employment, influences on post-school goals, housing and homelessness, participation in community activities, general wellbeing, values and concerns, preferred sources of support, as well as feelings about the future.

Methodology

Following approval from State and Territory Education Departments, as well as Catholic Education Offices, to approach secondary school principals across Australia, information about Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017* and an electronic link to the online version of the survey were distributed. Information was also distributed to Mission Australia services, networks of other service providers, Commonwealth, State/Territory and local government departments, youth organisations and peak bodies.

Changes in 2017

The *Youth Survey* features a number of focus questions that change every year. Details of this year's changes to the survey have been outlined below.

- Young people were asked about how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school, ranking responses on a 5 point scale from *not at all confident* to *extremely confident*.
- Respondents were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of these goals. If young people responded 'yes' to this question, they

were prompted to indicate from a list of items which ones they saw as barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals. The items included *academic ability, admission/job requirements, lack of school support, family responsibilities, lack of information, lack of family support, financial difficulty, discrimination, mental health, physical health, transport, where you live, lack of jobs* and other.

- This year respondents were able to provide a free text response to the *other* item in the question asking what they were planning to do after they leave school. Written responses for the *other* category will inform the future development of this question.
- Respondents were asked a range of questions to understand their housing circumstances. These included *time spent away from home* because they felt they could not go back, including their age and frequencies of such experiences.
- This year an additional item was added to the question asking respondents to indicate where they would go to for help with important issues in their lives. The item *GP or health professional* was added as an option alongside *brother/sister, community agency, friend/s, internet, magazines, parent/s, relative/family friend, school counsellor, teacher, telephone hotline* and *online counselling website*.

Please note that not all questions asked in the survey are presented in the current report. These questions will inform other research publications to be released throughout 2018.

This report

This report contains an executive summary, a national summary, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people's chapter and a chapter for each state and territory. In the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander chapter, the responses of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are compared to those of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents.

Each of the chapters contains a breakdown of key data by gender and where applicable, comparisons with previous years' data.

Please note that throughout the report, percentages in all tables, figures and text are rounded to one decimal place and may not necessarily total 100%. Not all respondents answered all survey questions. The data presented for each question are for those who responded.

Care needs to be taken when interpreting and generalising the results for certain states or territories because of the small sample sizes and the imbalance between the number of young females and males participating in the survey.

National summary



Profile of respondents

State and territory distribution

A total of 24,055 young people aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*. Respondents came from across Australia and Figure 1.1 indicates the number and percentages from each state/territory. There were 17 respondents who did not indicate which state/territory they lived in.

Gender breakdown

Over half (57.5%) of respondents were female, 39.6% were male and 1.5% of young people responded other. A further 1.4% of respondents did not answer this question.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 1,265 (5.3%) respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 1,082 (4.6%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 105 (0.4%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.3% identified as both). A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6.3% compared with 4.0%).

Language background other than English

A total of 3,596 (15.1%) respondents stated that they were born overseas and 4,344 (18.3%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the more than 90 languages spoken at home, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Filipino/Tagalog and Cantonese.

Disability

A total of 1,117 (4.8%) respondents indicated that they had a disability, with a slightly greater proportion of males (5.6%) than females (3.3%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities overall were (in order of frequency): autism, learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), physical disability and deafness or hearing impairment.

Detailed national results

Education

As indicated in Table 1.1, 94.9% of respondents were studying full-time, similar to the 94.6% of respondents in 2016. A slightly greater proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (96.2% compared with 93.8% respectively), while a slightly greater proportion of males (3.8%) than females (2.1%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents reported that they were either *very satisfied* (13.3%) or *satisfied* (56.4%) with their studies. Less than one in ten were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.7% and 5.4% respectively). As shown in Table 1.2, a slightly higher proportion of females than males reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (13.0% and 58.2% of females compared with 13.7% and 55.2% of males respectively).

Figure 1.1: Percentage of respondents by state/territory

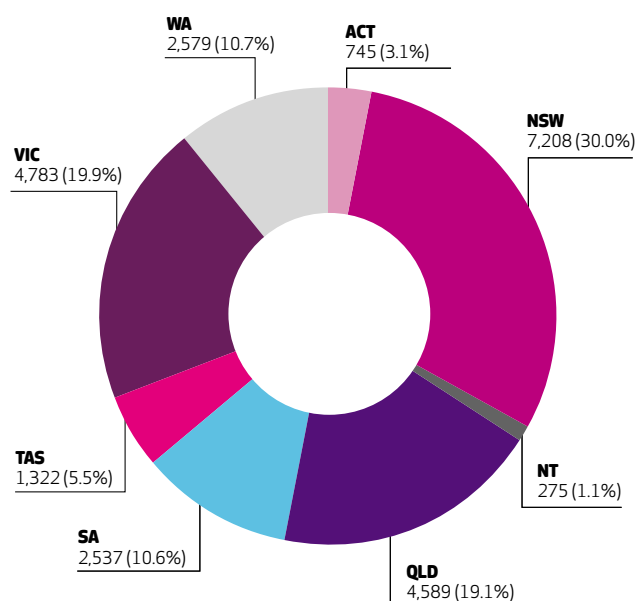


Table 1.1: Participation in education

	National %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	96.2	93.8
Studying part-time	2.1	1.6	2.5
Not studying	3.0	2.1	3.8

Table 1.2: Satisfaction with studies

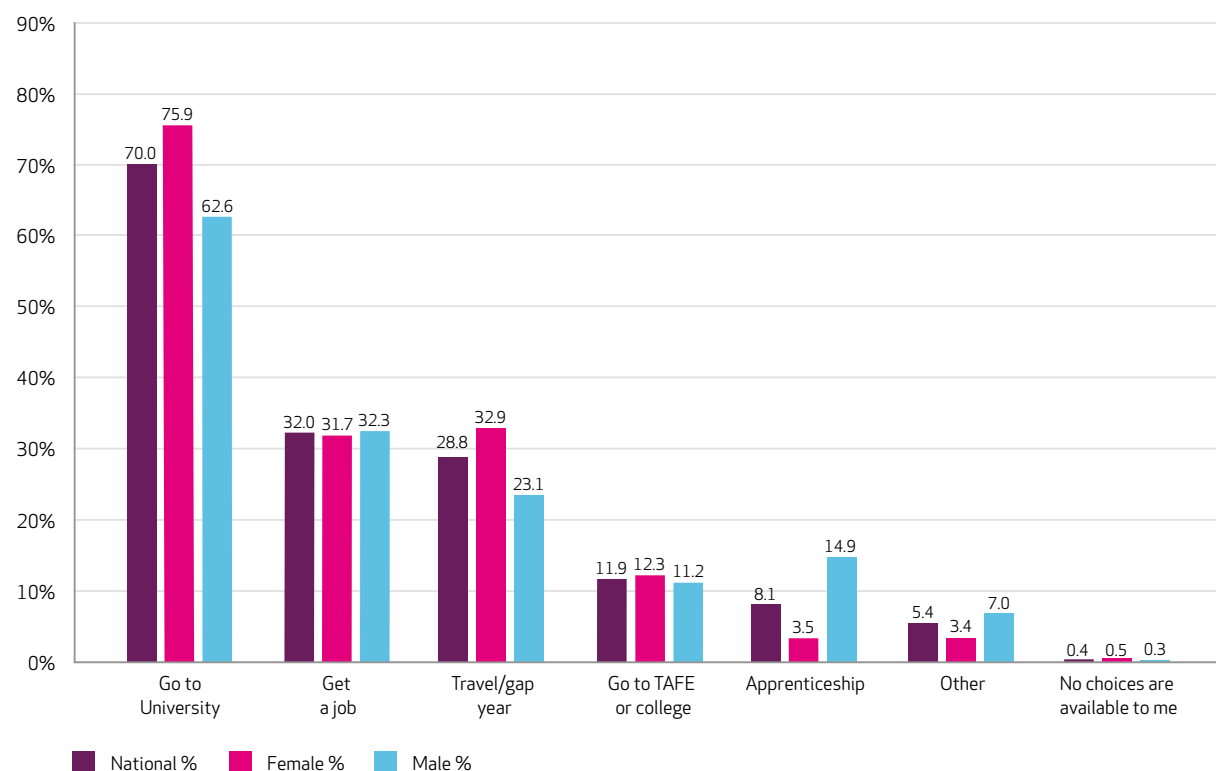
	National 2017 %	Female %	Male %	National 2016 %	National 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	13.0	13.7	16.0	16.0
Satisfied	56.4	58.2	55.2	55.9	56.7
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	22.5	23.9	22.3	21.5
Dissatisfied	5.4	5.2	5.3	4.2	4.4
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.0	2.0	1.5	1.3

Of those who were still at school, 97.0% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. Three times the proportion of males than females indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (4.8% compared with 1.6% respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training or if they had done so in the past. Just under one in five (18.6%) respondents indicated that they were doing so. Similar proportions of both males and females indicated that they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training or that they had done so in the past (19.0% compared with 18.1% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 1.2 shows that seven in ten (70.0%) respondents planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (32.0%) and to travel or go on a gap year (28.8%) after school. Overall, 11.9% planned to attend TAFE or college and 8.1% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.4%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both male and female respondents, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (75.9% compared with 62.6% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (32.9% compared with 23.1% of males). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (14.9% compared with 3.5% of females).

Figure 1.2: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of national frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 1.3 shows respondents' participation in paid employment. Only 0.5% of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Four in ten (40.5%) respondents, the majority of whom were still at school, reported part-time employment. Six in ten respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 34.5% looking for work and 24.4% not looking for work. This is consistent with the 2016 and 2015 results.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents reported full-time employment (0.8% compared with 0.3% respectively), while a higher proportion of female respondents were employed part-time (44.2% compared with 35.6% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male than female respondents were looking for work (37.8% compared with 32.1% respectively).

Table 1.3: Participation in paid employment

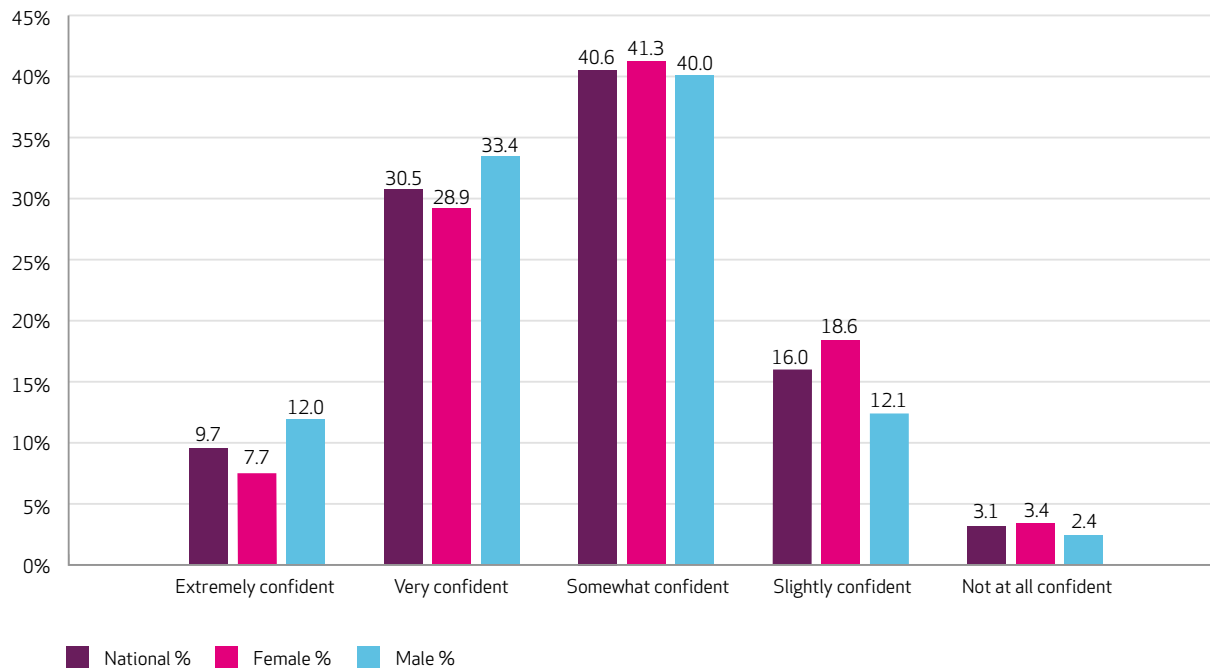
	National %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.3	0.8
Employed part-time	40.5	44.2	35.6
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	32.1	37.8
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	23.4	25.9

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 1.2. Four in ten respondents indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.7% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 30.5% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, close to one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 16.0% being *slightly confident* and 3.1% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (12.0% and 33.4% of males compared with 7.7% and 28.9% of females).

Figure 1.3: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



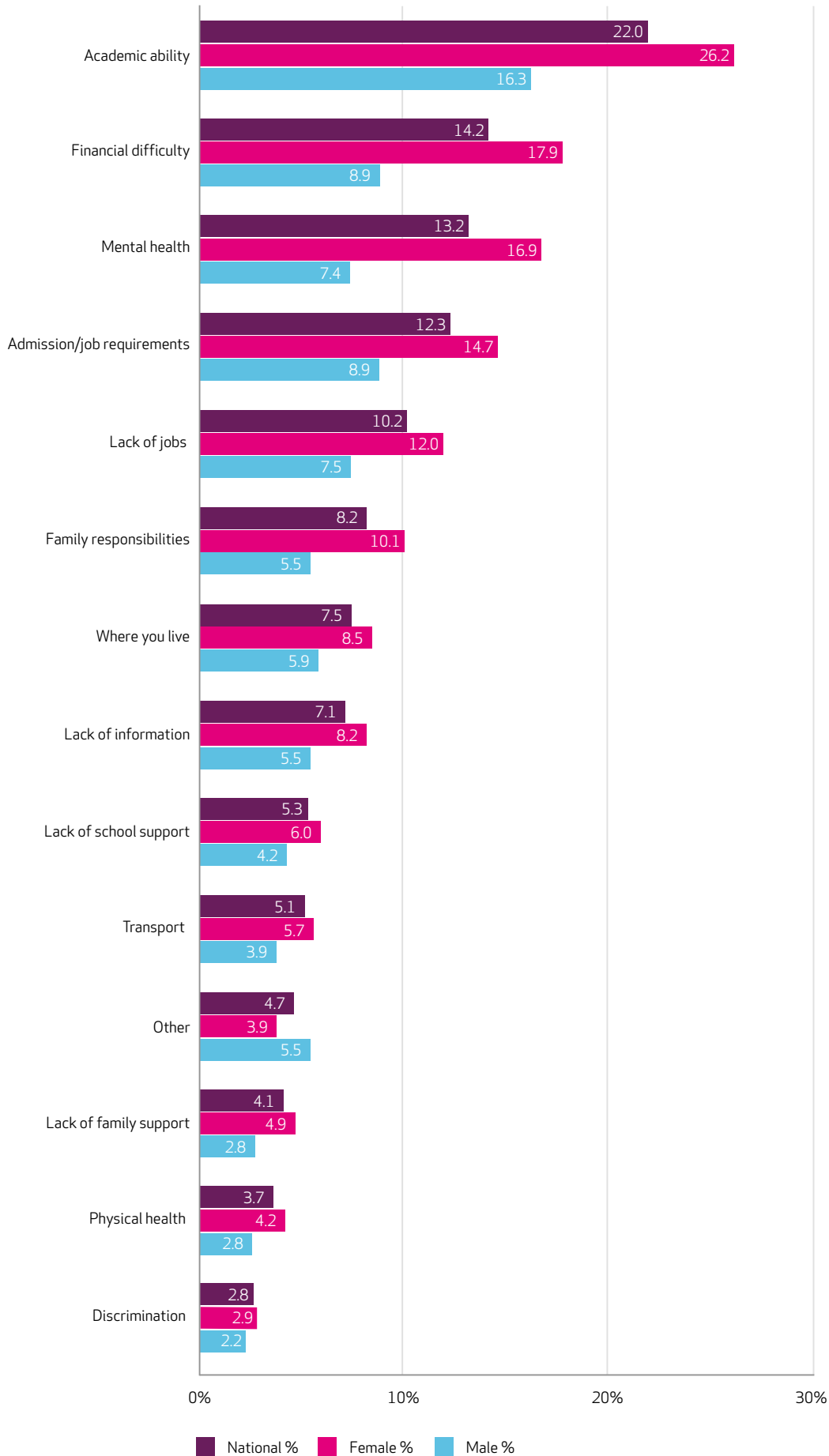
Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (51.6%) of respondents indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (56.3%) than males (44.2%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 1.4 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated each item as a barrier. Nationally, the top three barriers young people saw impacting the achievement of their study/work goals after school were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*.

- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (22.0%, 14.2% and 13.2% respectively).
- Just over one in ten respondents indicated that they saw *admission/job requirements* and *a lack of jobs* as barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals.

Figure 1.4: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of national frequency.

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 1.4, the top three barriers for females were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*, while for males the top barrier was *academic ability*, followed by *financial difficulty* and *admission/job requirements* in equal proportions. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that all items were a barrier on them achieving their study/work goals after school.

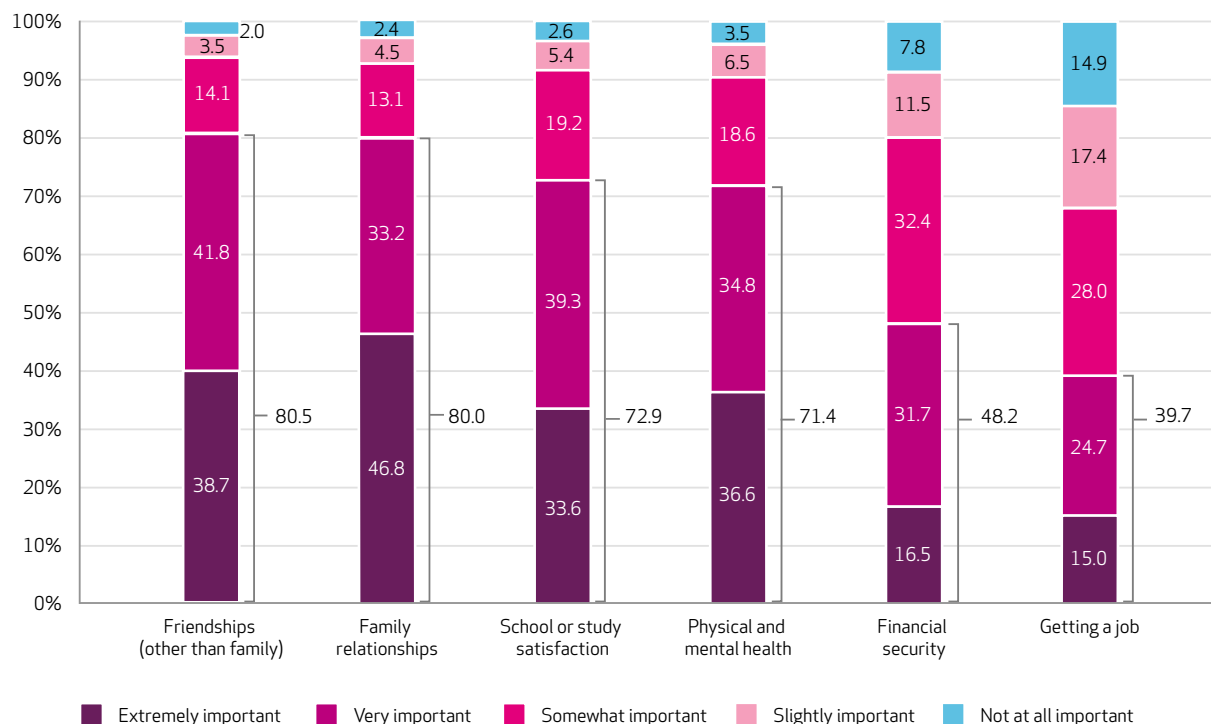
- Around twice the proportion of females than males indicated that *mental health* (16.9% and 7.4% respectively) and *financial difficulty* (17.9% and 8.9% respectively) were barriers which may impact on their study/work goals after school.
- Just over one quarter (26.2%) of female respondents and 16.3% of male respondents indicated that *academic ability* was a barrier.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 1.5 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. In 2017 responses were consistent with previous years, with *friendships (other than family)*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction* ranked as the three most highly valued items. Also consistent with past years is the high value placed on *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were highly valued by 80.5% respondents (*extremely important*: 38.7%; *very important*: 41.8%). *Family relationships* were also valued very highly by 80.0% of respondents (*extremely important*: 46.8%; *very important*: 33.2%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 33.6%; *very important*: 39.3%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 36.6%; *very important*: 34.8%).
- Almost half of respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 16.5%; *very important*: 31.7%).
- Close to four in ten young people highly valued *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 15.0%; *very important*: 24.7%).

Figure 1.5: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and friendships (other than family) were the two most highly valued items by both females and males, as shown in Table 1.4. The order of these items differed however, with females indicating that family relationships was the most highly valued item, while for males the most highly valued item was friendships. The third top item for females was school or study satisfaction while for males it was physical and mental health. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- Family relationships were highly valued by 83.2% of females (extremely important: 52.0%; very important: 31.2%) compared with 77.4% of males (extremely important: 40.6%; very important: 36.8%).
- Friendships were highly valued by 82.1% of females (extremely important: 41.1%; very important: 41.0%) compared with 79.1% of males (extremely important: 35.4%; very important: 43.7%).
- School or study satisfaction was highly valued by 78.1% of females (extremely important: 38.5%; very important: 39.6%) compared with 66.7% of males (extremely important: 27.0%; very important: 39.7%).
- Physical and mental health was highly valued by 73.9% of females (extremely important: 38.9%; very important: 35.0%) compared with 68.7% of males (extremely important: 33.4%; very important: 35.3%).

Table 1.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	41.1	41.0	13.1	3.4	1.3
Family relationships	52.0	31.2	11.3	4.1	1.5
School or study satisfaction	38.5	39.6	16.5	4.1	1.4
Physical and mental health	38.9	35.0	17.9	6.0	2.2
Financial security	16.6	34.2	32.7	10.6	5.9
Getting a job	14.1	25.6	28.5	17.2	14.5
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	35.4	43.7	15.2	3.7	1.9
Family relationships	40.6	36.8	15.2	4.8	2.7
School or study satisfaction	27.0	39.7	22.9	7.0	3.4
Physical and mental health	33.4	35.3	19.7	7.2	4.4
Financial security	16.2	28.9	32.2	13.0	9.7
Getting a job	16.2	23.7	27.3	17.9	14.9

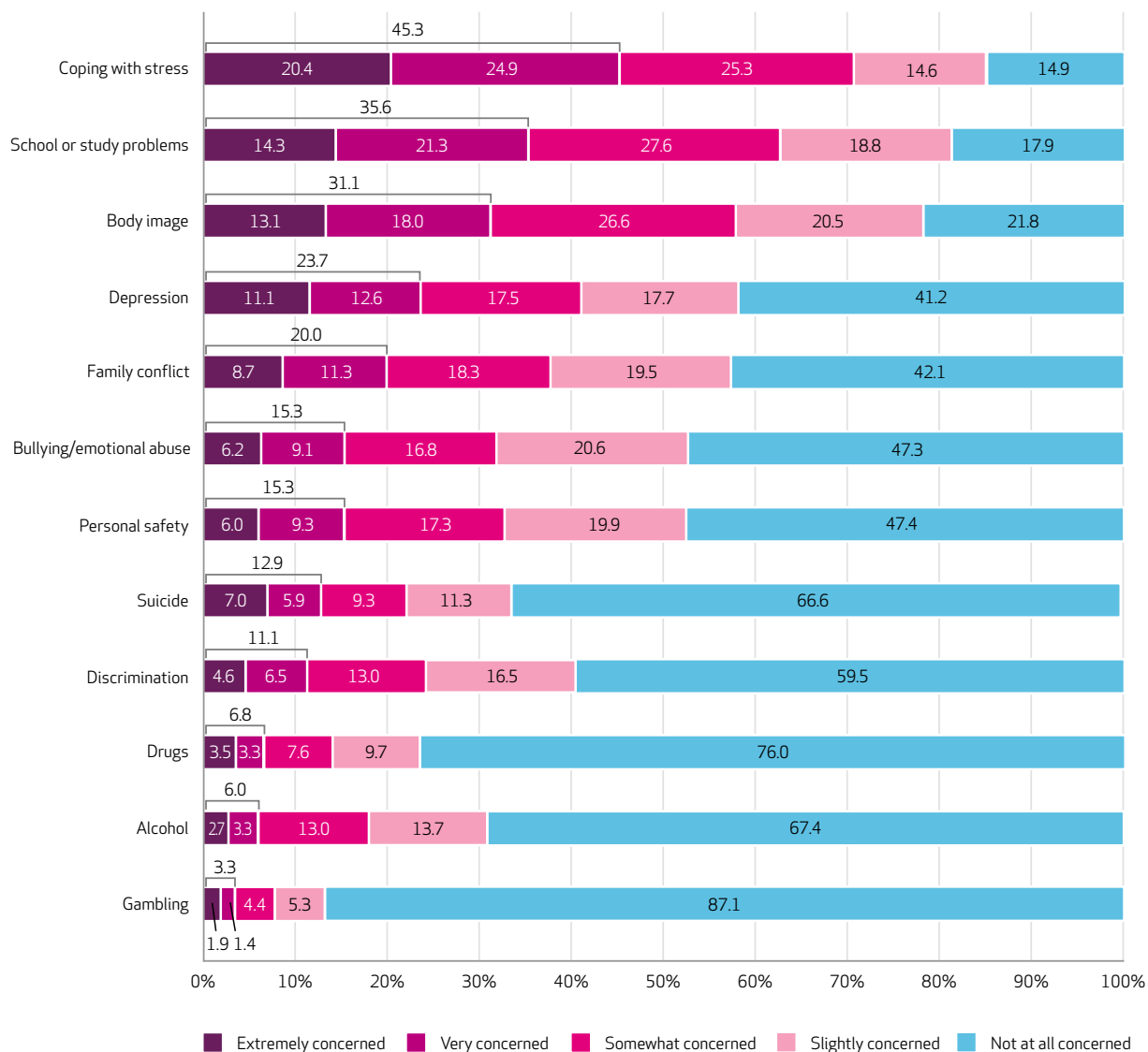
Note: Items were ranked according to the summed responses for extremely important and very important for each item. Items are listed in order of national frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 1.6. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from extremely concerned to not at all concerned. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either extremely concerned or very concerned for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people were coping with stress, school or study problems and body image. Compared to the results from previous years, the top three issues of concern remain unchanged.

- Coping with stress was the top issue of concern, with 45.3% of respondents indicating that they were either extremely concerned (20.4%) or very concerned (24.9%) about this issue.
- School or study problems was a major concern for 35.6% of young people (extremely concerned: 14.3%; very concerned: 21.3%).
- Body image was also an important issue of concern for 31.1% of respondents (extremely concerned: 13.1%; very concerned: 18.0%).
- Around one quarter (23.7%) of respondents were either extremely concerned (11.1%) or very concerned (12.6%) about depression.

Figure 1.6: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked according to the summed responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for both males and females as highlighted in Table 1.5. The proportion of females concerned about all of these (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- Just under six in ten females indicated that *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 27.1%; *very concerned*: 31.1%), compared with around one quarter of all males (*extremely concerned*: 10.1%; *very concerned*: 16.7%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school and study problems* with 43.8% (*extremely concerned*: 17.9%; *very concerned*: 25.9%) indicating this as a major concern, compared with 23.8% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.6%; *very concerned*: 15.2%).
- Four in ten (40.9%) females were concerned about *body image* (*extremely concerned*: 17.6%; *very concerned*: 23.3%) compared with only 16.8% of males (*extremely concerned*: 5.9%; *very concerned*: 10.9%).
- Close to three in ten (27.9%) females indicated a major concern about *depression* (*extremely concerned*: 12.9%; *very concerned*: 15.0%), compared to 16.4% of males (*extremely concerned*: 7.2%; *very concerned*: 9.2%).

Table 1.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	27.1	31.1	24.8	10.6	6.4
School or study problems	17.9	25.9	28.3	16.9	11.1
Body image	17.6	23.3	29.2	17.8	12.1
Depression	12.9	15.0	19.5	18.5	34.1
Family conflict	10.4	14.0	20.3	20.9	34.4
Bullying/emotional abuse	6.8	11.2	18.8	22.1	41.2
Personal safety	6.5	10.8	19.3	21.3	42.1
Suicide	7.3	7.0	10.5	13.1	62.2
Discrimination	4.7	7.6	14.2	18.3	55.2
Drugs	2.7	3.5	7.8	10.2	75.8
Alcohol	1.9	3.5	14.0	15.0	65.6
Gambling	1.1	1.2	3.8	5.0	89.0
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.1	16.7	26.5	20.5	26.1
School or study problems	8.6	15.2	27.1	22.3	26.8
Body image	5.9	10.9	23.5	24.8	35.1
Depression	7.2	9.2	14.9	17.1	51.6
Family conflict	5.6	7.6	15.6	18.0	53.3
Bullying/emotional abuse	4.4	6.2	14.3	19.0	56.1
Personal safety	4.8	7.3	14.6	18.1	55.2
Suicide	5.4	4.1	7.4	8.9	74.2
Discrimination	3.5	4.7	11.2	14.1	66.4
Drugs	3.9	3.0	7.2	9.0	76.9
Alcohol	3.2	2.9	11.5	12.1	70.3
Gambling	2.2	1.7	5.1	5.8	85.2

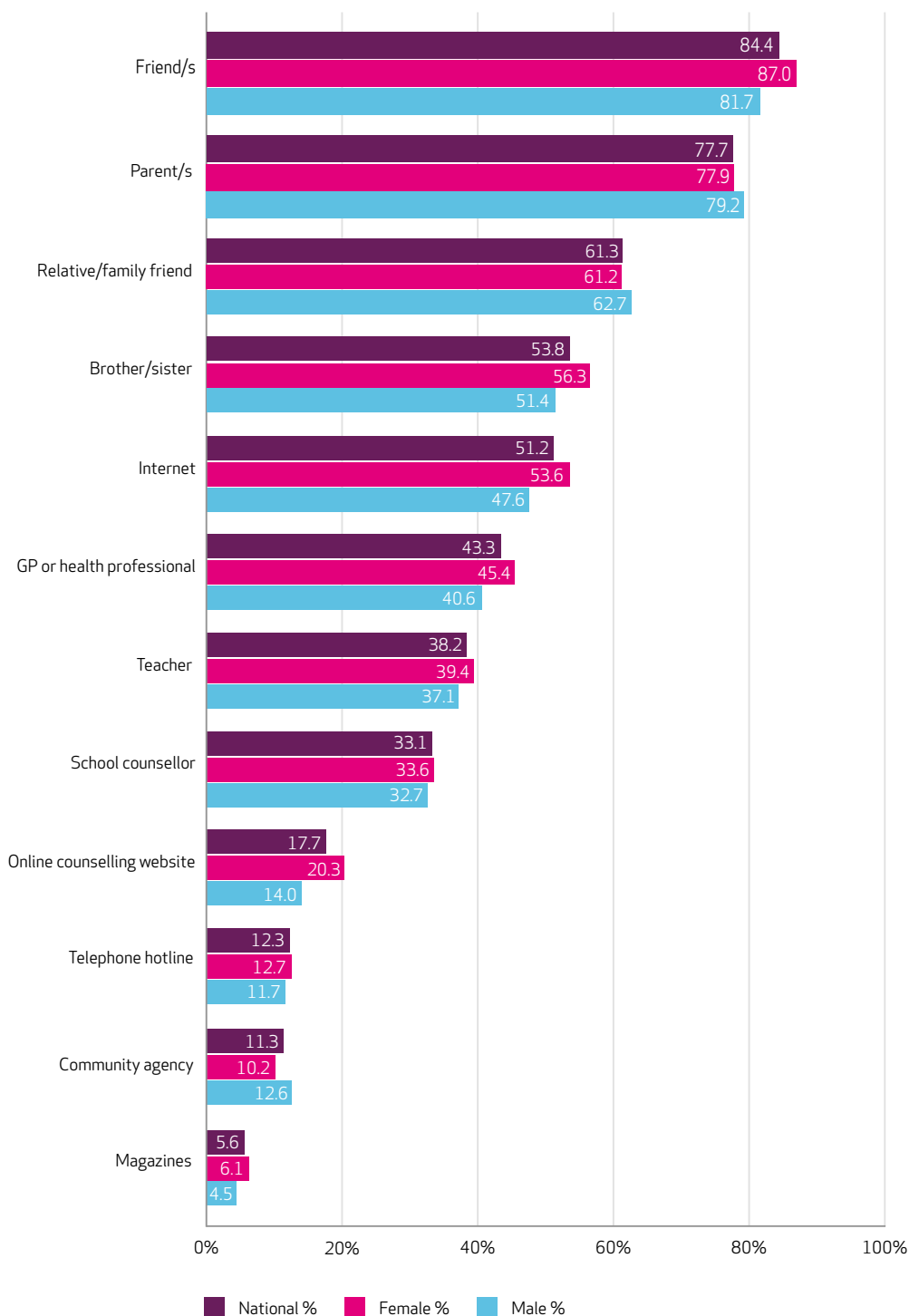
Note: Items were ranked according to the summed responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of national frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 1.7 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s* (84.4%), *parent/s* (77.7%) and *relative/family friend* (61.3%) were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people.
- Around half of respondents indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* (53.8%) or the *internet* (51.2%) for help with important issues in their lives.
- Around four in ten of respondents indicated that they would go to their *GP or health professional* (43.3%) or *teacher* (38.2%) for help with important issues.

Figure 1.7: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of national frequency.

Gender differences

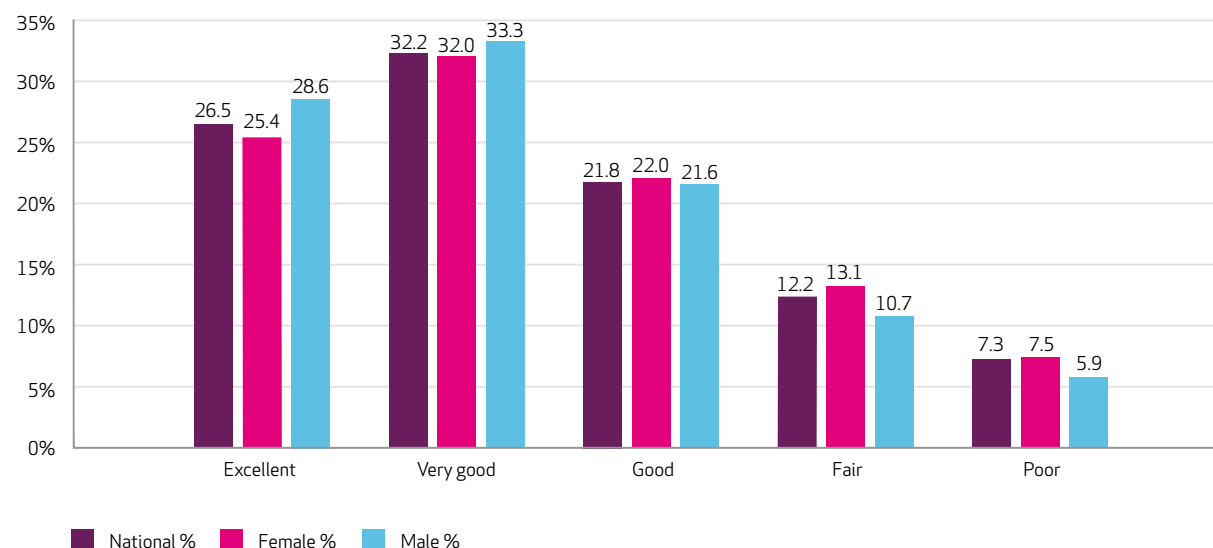
As shown in Figure 1.7, the top three sources of help for both genders were consistent with national results, although a greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents indicated that they would go to *friend/s* for help with important issues, while slightly higher proportions of males would go to *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- Almost nine in ten female and just over eight in ten male respondents indicated that they would go to *friend/s* for help with important issues (87.0% compared with 81.7% respectively).
- A similar proportion of male and female respondents indicated they would go to *parent/s* (79.2% compared with 77.9%) or a *relative/family friend* (62.7% compared with 61.2%) for help.
- A greater proportion of females than males would go to their *brother/sister* (56.3% compared with 51.4%), the *internet* (53.6% compared with 47.6%) or a *GP or health professional* (45.4% compared with 40.6%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked about how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 1.8 shows that the majority of respondents rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 26.5% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 32.2% that it was *very good*. However, around one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (12.2%) or *poor* (7.3%). A slightly greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* or *very good* (28.6% and 33.3% compared to 25.4% and 32.0% respectively).

Figure 1.8: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 1.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people were *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *equity and discrimination*.

- Around one third of young people identified *mental health* (33.7%) or *alcohol and drugs* (32.0%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Almost three in ten respondents identified *equity and discrimination* (27.3%) as a major issue.
- Between 2015 and 2017, the proportion of those indicating *mental health* as a national concern rose from 14.9% to 33.7%, while the proportion indicating *alcohol and drugs* as a national concern rose from 27.0% to 32.0%.
- Since 2015, *equity and discrimination*, *bullying and crime*, *safety and violence* have also been increasingly identified as a key issue facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics*, *the economy and financial matters*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *population issues*, *employment* and *the environment* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Mental health and *alcohol and drugs* were the top two issues for both females and males, although the order was reversed. *Equity and discrimination* was identified as the third most important issue in Australia today by both female and male respondents.

- A greater proportion of female than male respondents identified *mental health* (38.5% and 27.8% respectively) and *equity and discrimination* (30.3% and 23.3% respectively) as major issues facing Australia today.
- Conversely, a greater proportion of male than female respondents identified *alcohol and drugs* (36.1% compared with 29.6%) as an important issue.

Table 1.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	Female %	Male %	National 2016 %	National 2015 %
Mental health	33.7	38.5	27.8	20.6	14.9
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	29.6	36.1	28.7	27.0
Equity and discrimination	27.3	30.3	23.3	27.0	25.0
International relations	13.6	13.0	14.3	16.2	13.4
Education	13.0	13.3	12.8	11.6	12.2
The economy and financial matters	12.7	11.7	14.1	14.7	18.9
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	11.5	11.4	12.8	10.1
The environment	10.9	12.0	9.6	11.5	12.8
Bullying	10.6	11.7	9.5	10.1	9.3
Population issues	10.3	10.6	9.9	16.0	15.3
Employment	10.2	8.5	12.7	9.9	12.7
Health	8.3	8.2	8.6	10.3	9.5
Homelessness/housing	8.2	9.5	6.6	7.5	7.8
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	9.3	3.7	7.4	13.2
Politics	6.8	5.1	9.0	12.8	16.1

Note: Items are listed in order of national frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 1.7. As in previous years, the top three activities for young people aged 15 to 19 years were *sports (as a participant)* (75.2%), *sports (as a spectator)* (65.4%) and *volunteer work* (54.1%).

- Around half (52.7%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Around four in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (41.3%), three in ten had participated in *youth groups and clubs* (30.6%) or a *religious group/activity* (29.2%) and just under one quarter had participated in an *environmental group/activity* (23.7%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 1.7, the top two activities for both genders were consistent with national results, although greater proportions of males than females were involved in both *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*. The third top activity for males was *volunteer work*, while for females it was *arts/cultural/music activities*.

- Close to eight in ten (78.0%) of male respondents and 73.7% of female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* over the past year.
- A larger proportion of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (70.2% compared with 62.4%).
- Overall a greater proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities*, *volunteer work* and *student leadership activities* (60.7%, 59.5% and 46.3% compared with 41.3%, 46.7% and 34.8% respectively).

Table 1.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	Female %	Male %	National 2016 %	National 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	73.7	78.0	75.7	74.3
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	62.4	70.2	67.0	67.4
Volunteer work	54.1	59.5	46.7	53.5	51.3
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	60.7	41.3	52.7	50.7
Student leadership activities	41.3	46.3	34.8	42.5	40.0
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	31.9	28.7	30.6	33.1
Religious group/activity	29.2	32.0	25.4	28.7	30.8
Environmental group/activity	23.7	25.0	21.5	24.6	22.0
Political groups/organisations	8.2	7.7	7.8	8.7	7.7

Note: Items are listed in order of national frequency.

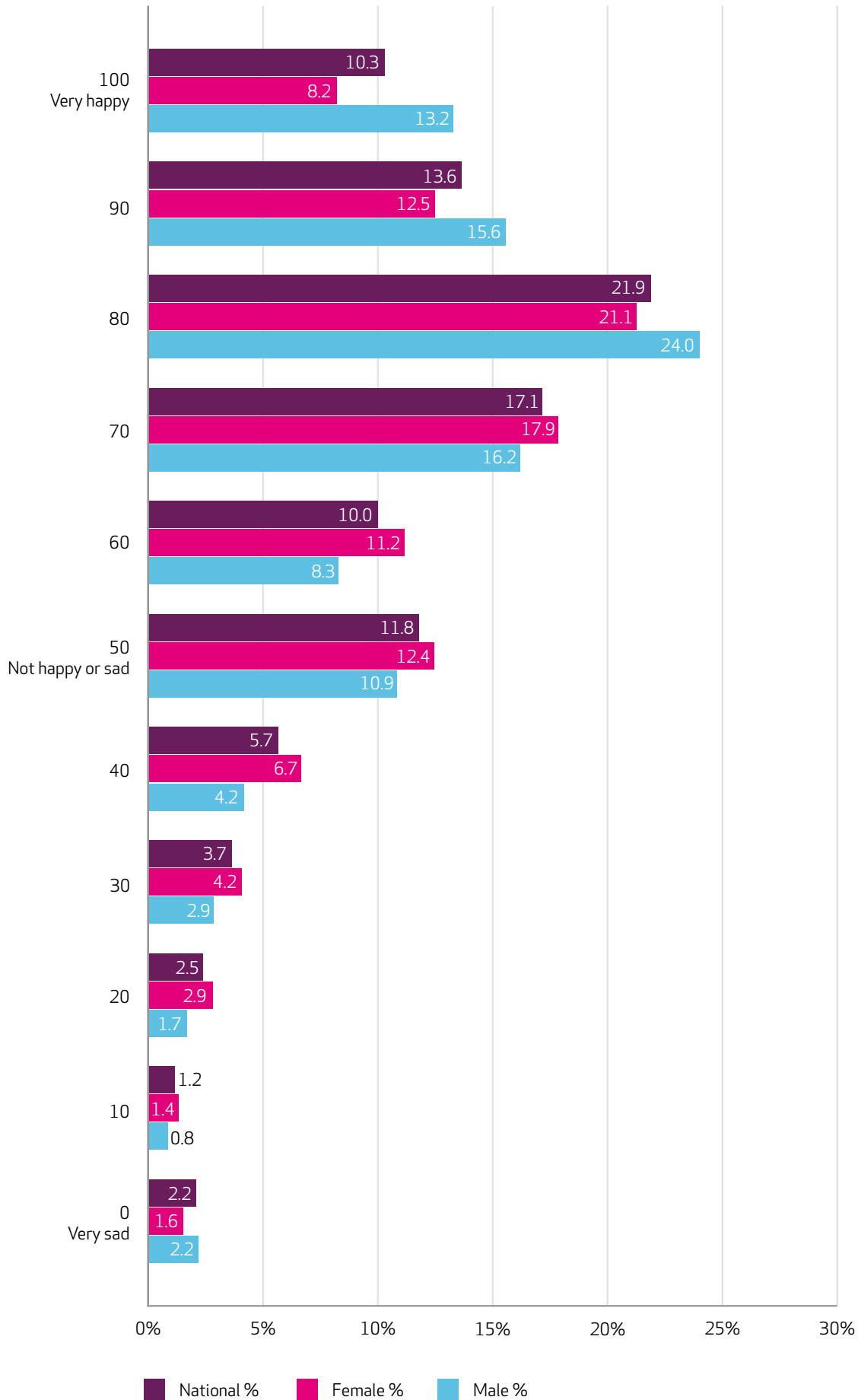
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 1.9 shows, the majority of young people (62.9%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy about their lives overall. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a higher proportion of male than female respondents indicated they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (13.2% compared with 8.2%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 1.9: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 1.8 shows that results are similar to those in 2016 and 2015, with around two thirds of respondents feeling either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, one in ten young people felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Just under two thirds of respondents felt either *positive* (46.6%) or *very positive* (15.8%) about the future.
- Over one quarter (27.5%) of respondents felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- One in ten respondents felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future (*negative*: 7.1%; *very negative*: 3.1%).
- A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 19.0% of males indicating they felt *very positive* about the future compared to 13.4% of females.

Table 1.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	Female %	Male %	National 2016 %	National 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	13.4	19.0	17.3	15.0
Positive	46.6	46.6	47.7	47.1	46.8
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	29.6	24.6	26.1	28.2
Negative	7.1	7.8	5.9	6.5	7.5
Very negative	3.1	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.5

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander summary



Profile of respondents

In total, 1,265 (5.3%) respondents to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017* identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 1,082 (4.6%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 105 (0.4%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.3% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (6.3% compared with 4.0%).

Gender breakdown

Half (50.7%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents were male and 49.3% were female.

Language background other than English

A total of 26 (2.1%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported speaking an Indigenous language at home.

Disability

A total of 156 (13.1%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they had a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities were (in order of frequency): autism, learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), intellectual disability and Down syndrome.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 2.1, 84.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents were studying full-time (compared to 95.6% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents). A higher proportion of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males than females reported that they were not studying at all (9.2% compared with 5.2%).

Respondents who reported that they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. Close to six in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported that they were either *very satisfied* (9.6%) or *satisfied* (49.0%) with their studies. Just over one in ten were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (5.8% and 7.3% respectively). As shown in Table 2.2, a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males reported feeling either *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (7.4% and 54.9% of females compared with 11.1% and 48.9% of males respectively).

Table 2.1: Participation in education

	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %
Studying full-time	95.6	84.9	88.6	84.3
Studying part-time	1.8	6.7	6.2	6.6
Not studying	2.6	8.4	5.2	9.2

Table 2.2: Satisfaction with studies

	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2017 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2016 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.5	9.6	7.4	11.1	14.2	16.2
Satisfied	56.9	49.0	54.9	48.9	49.9	48.2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22.9	28.2	28.8	27.3	26.6	26.2
Dissatisfied	5.3	7.3	6.1	8.1	4.0	5.6
Very dissatisfied	1.4	5.8	2.8	4.6	5.2	3.7

Of those who were still at school, 89.7% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents stated that they intended to complete Year 12 (compared to 97.4% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents). The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males who indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 was more than three times that of female respondents (14.4% compared with 3.9% respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Close to one third (32.1%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they are doing so (compared to 17.6% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents), with similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (33.3% compared with 31.6% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 2.1 shows notable differences in the reported plans of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents compared to non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents. While the most common plan among both groups of respondents was to go to university, a higher proportion of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated intentions to do so (67.8% compared with 35.0% respectively). A higher proportion of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents were also planning to travel or go on a gap year after school (27.8% compared with 16.8% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents). Greater proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated plans to get a job (32.1% compared with 30.1%), to get an apprenticeship (16.6% compared with 7.1%) and to attend TAFE or college (16.0% compared with 10.9%). A small minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (0.8%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

A greater proportion of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males reported plans to go to university after school (52.5% compared with 32.6% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year (26.4% compared with 15.2%) or to go to TAFE or college (21.9% compared with 17.5%). Conversely, however, a much greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males than females reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship (32.2% compared with 9.5%) and similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females indicated plans to get a job (40.6% compared with 39.4%) after leaving school.

Figure 2.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 2.3 shows participation in paid employment amongst both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents. Only a small minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (2.2%) and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents (0.4%) were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Around three in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported part-time employment (31.4% compared to 41.1% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents). A greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they were currently looking for work compared to non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents (46.4% compared with 33.8%). One in five (20.0%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents were not in paid employment and not looking for work.

Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males reported full-time employment (2.0% compared with 1.1% respectively), while a greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents reported part-time employment (34.7% compared with 28.8%). Similar proportions of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females reported that they were looking for work (48.1% compared with 47.0%).

Table 2.3: Participation in paid employment

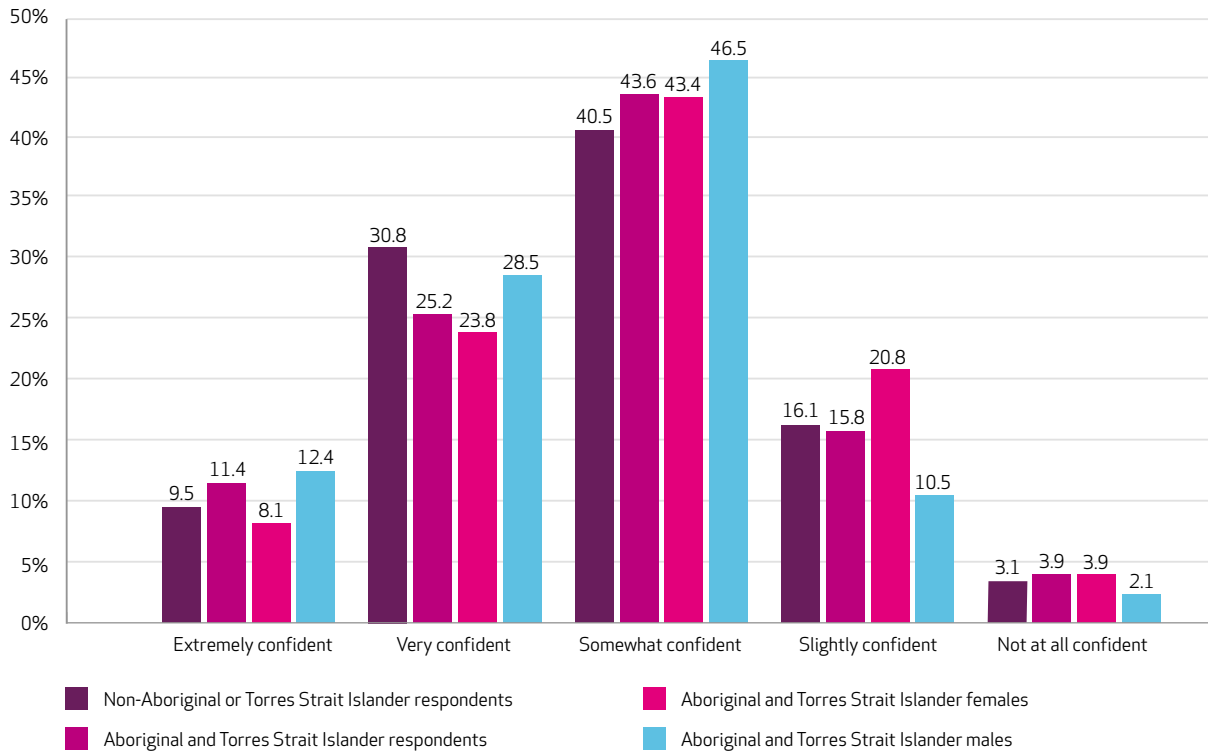
	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %
Employed full-time	0.4	2.2	2.0	1.1
Employed part-time	41.1	31.4	34.7	28.8
Not in paid employment, looking for work	33.8	46.4	47.0	48.1
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.7	20.0	16.3	22.0

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*. Similar proportions of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with around four in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (*extremely confident*: 11.4%; *very confident*: 25.2%) and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents (*extremely confident*: 9.5%; *very confident*: 30.8%) indicating this response. However, one in five young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 15.8% being *slightly confident* and 3.9% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (12.4% and 28.5% of males compared with 8.1% and 23.8% of females respectively).

Figure 2.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



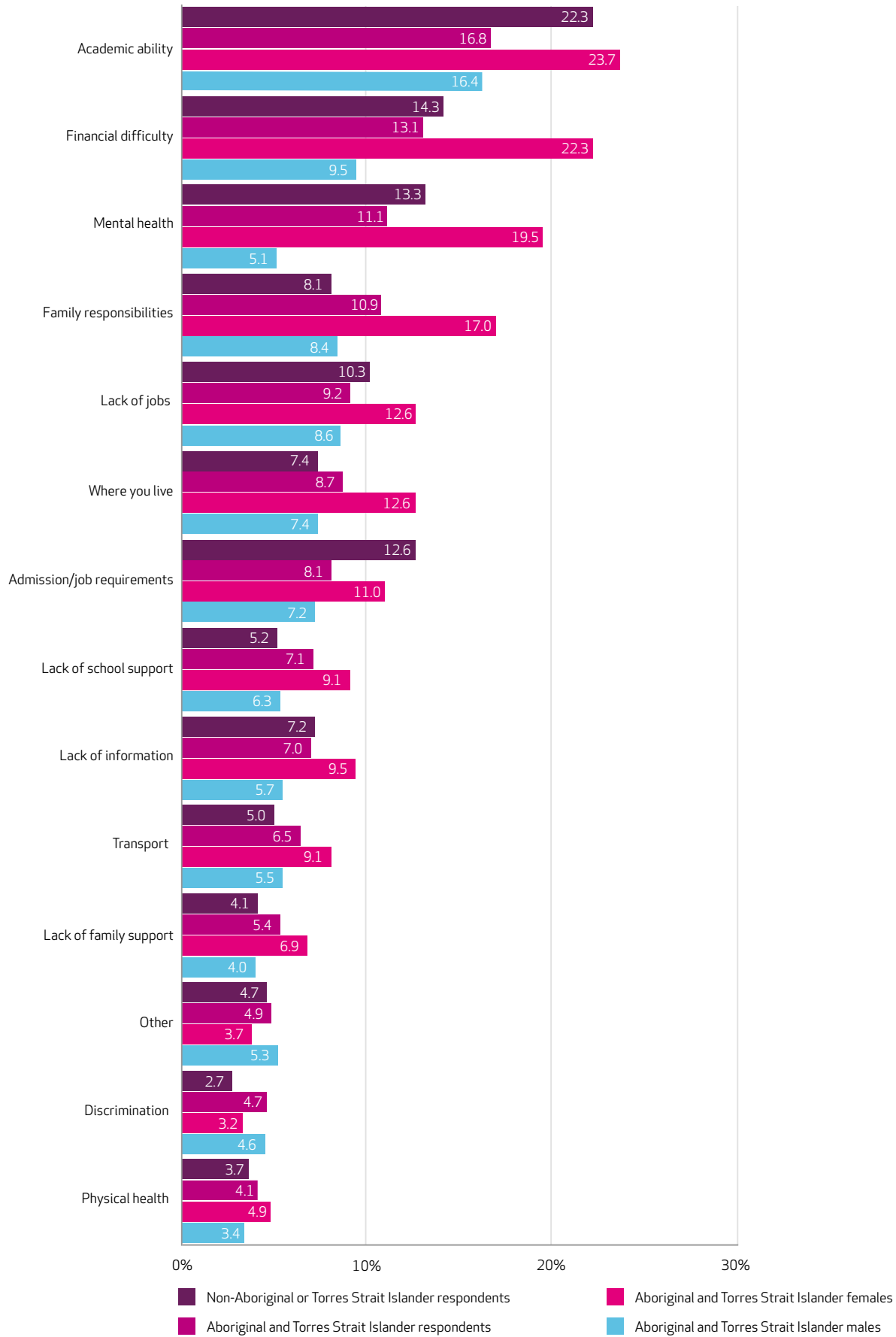
Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (54.0%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a much greater proportion of females (62.4%) than males (44.9%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 2.3 shows the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents who indicated each item as a barrier. The top three barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents' post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*. These were the same top three barriers as for non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents.

- A greater proportion of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents saw *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health* as barriers to their study/work goals (22.3%, 14.3% and 13.3% compared with 16.8%, 13.1% and 11.1% respectively).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander than non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that *family responsibilities* and *where you live* would impact on the achievement of study/work goals after school (10.9% and 8.7% compared with 8.1% and 7.4% respectively).

Figure 2.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 2.3, there were some differences in the barriers identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males. While *academic ability* and *financial difficulty* were identified as the top two barriers by both females and males, the other issue that made up their top three differed. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females *mental health* was the third top barrier, while for males it was a *lack of jobs*.

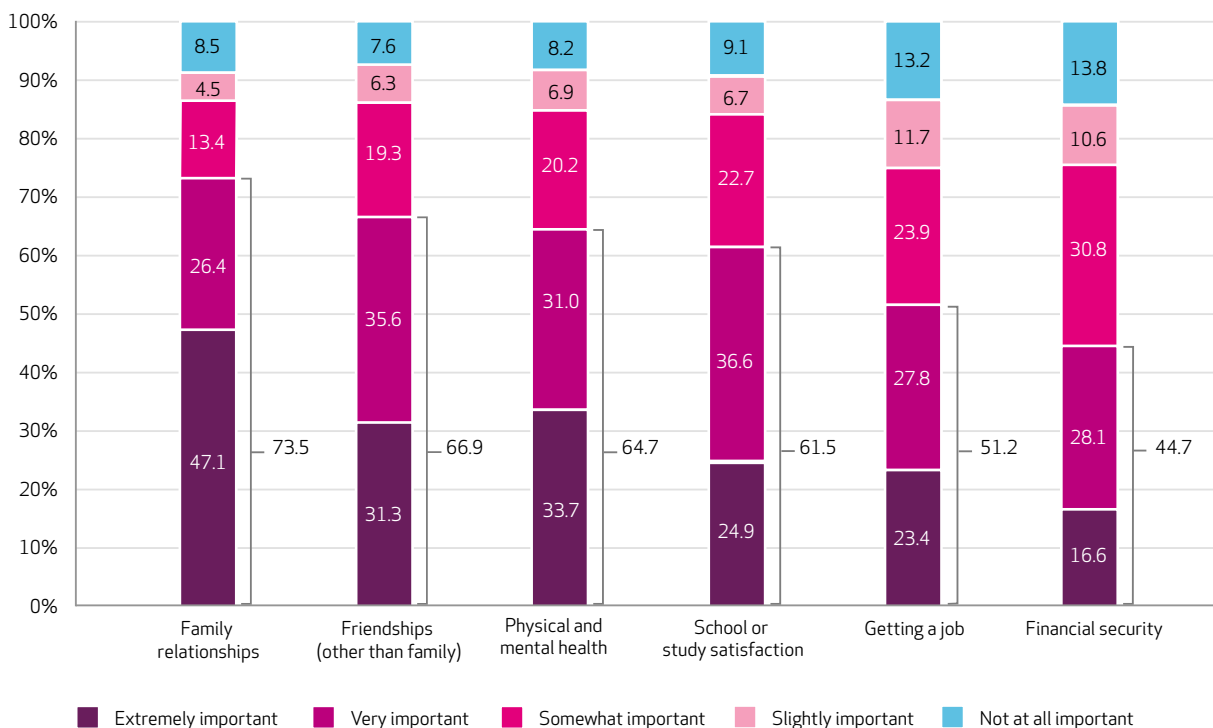
- Close to one quarter (23.7%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and 16.4% of males indicated that *academic ability* was a barrier.
- A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males also indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier to the achievement of future study/work goals (22.3% compared with 9.5% of males respectively).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females were nearly four times as likely to indicate *mental health* as a barrier to the achievement of future study/work goals than males (19.5% compared to 5.1%).
- Despite a *lack of jobs* ranking higher up the list for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males, overall a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female than male respondents indicated that a *lack of jobs* was a barrier to study/work goals (12.6% compared with 8.6% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males).

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 2.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents this year were *family relationships*, *friendships* and *physical and mental health*. The next most valued item among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents was *school or study satisfaction*.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 73.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (*extremely important*: 47.1%; *very important*: 26.4%). *Friendships* were also valued highly by 66.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (*extremely important*: 31.3%; *very important*: 35.6%).
- Around two thirds of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents highly valued both *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 33.7%; *very important*: 31.0%) and *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 24.9%; *very important*: 36.6%).
- Around half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents placed a high value on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 23.4%; *very important*: 27.8%) and over four in ten highly valued *financial security* (*extremely important*: 16.6%; *very important*: 28.1%).

Figure 2.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

There were some differences in the most highly valued items for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females. While *family relationships* and *physical and mental health* were ranked among the three most highly valued items by both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females, the other item making up their top three differed. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females, *family relationships* was the most highly valued item, followed by *school or study satisfaction* and then *physical and mental health*. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males, *family relationships* was the most highly valued item, followed by *friendships* and then *physical and mental health*.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 78.2% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (*extremely important*: 52.2%; *very important*: 26.0%) compared with 76.1% of males (*extremely important*: 46.4%; *very important*: 29.7%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 70.1% of males (*extremely important*: 31.9%; *very important*: 38.2%) compared with 68.6% of females (*extremely important*: 31.5%; *very important*: 37.1%).
- Around seven in ten females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 35.8%; *very important*: 33.6%) compared with 64.1% of males (*extremely important*: 31.4%; *very important*: 32.7%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by around seven in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (*extremely important*: 29.0%; *very important*: 40.6%) and just under six in ten males (*extremely important*: 21.5%; *very important*: 37.3%).

Table 2.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	52.2	26.0	14.3	4.5	3.1
Friendships (other than family)	31.5	37.1	20.4	7.4	3.6
Physical and mental health	35.8	33.6	19.7	7.8	3.1
School or study satisfaction	29.0	40.6	20.7	5.2	4.5
Getting a job	22.2	29.9	25.9	12.4	9.5
Financial security	14.3	34.1	33.0	9.9	8.6
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	46.4	29.7	12.4	4.8	6.7
Friendships (other than family)	31.9	38.2	19.5	6.1	4.3
Physical and mental health	31.4	32.7	21.8	7.2	6.9
School or study satisfaction	21.5	37.3	26.2	8.2	6.8
Getting a job	23.8	28.9	24.3	12.1	10.9
Financial security	17.9	26.0	30.8	12.4	12.9

Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

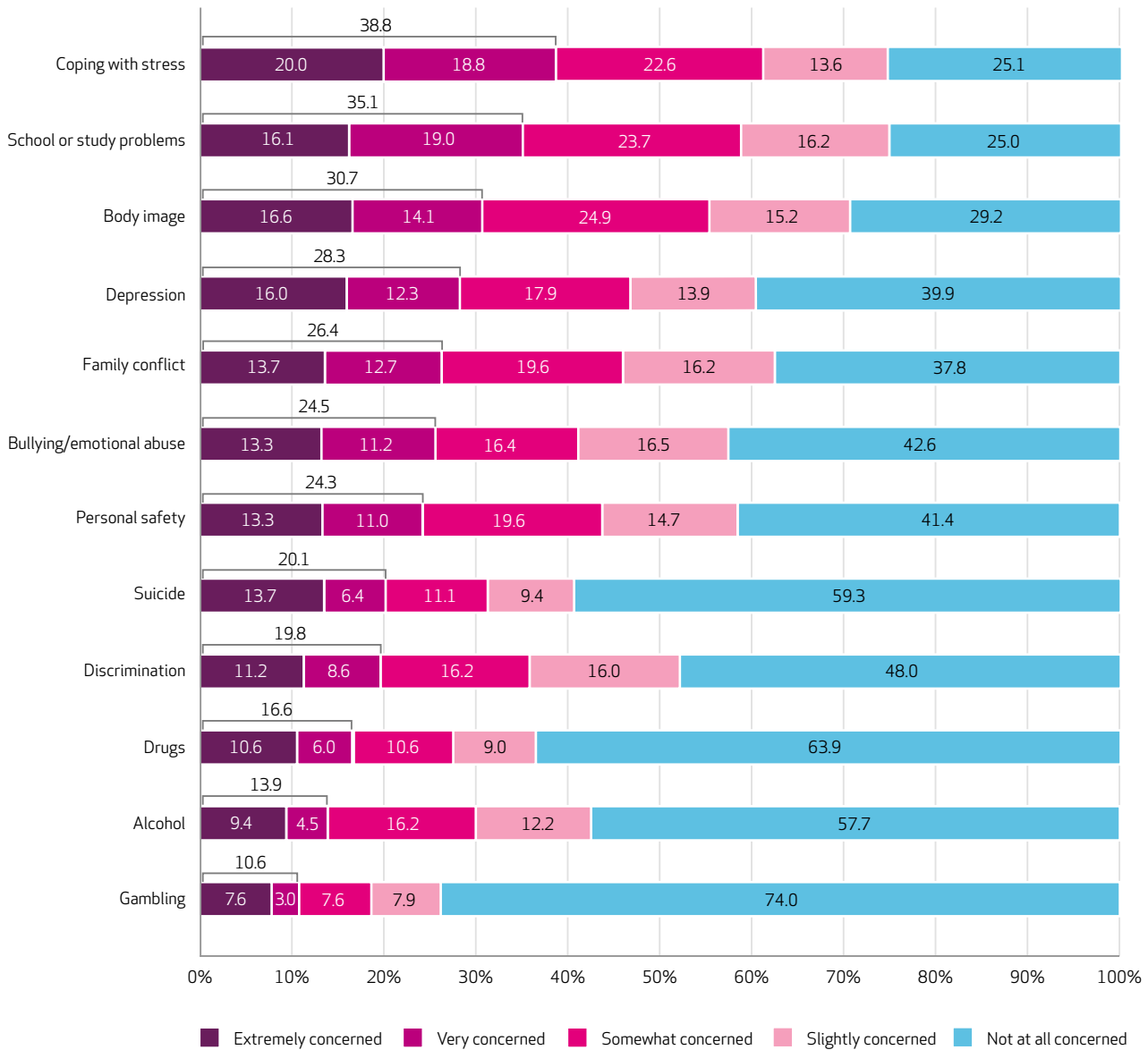
What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 2.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents in 2016.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents, with 38.8% indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (20.0%) or *very concerned* (18.8%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 35.1% (*extremely concerned*: 16.1%; *very concerned*: 19.0%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 30.7% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents (*extremely concerned*: 16.6%; *very concerned*: 14.1%).
- Just under three in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents were *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* about *depression* (*extremely concerned*: 16.0%; *very concerned*: 12.3%).

Figure 2.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress and *school or study problems* were the top two issues of concern for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females, as highlighted in Table 2.5. The third top issue of concern differed, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females indicating that *body image* was their third top issue of concern, while for males *depression* and *personal safety* were in equal third position. The proportion of females concerned about all of these (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For around half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 27.8%; *very concerned*: 25.3%), compared with around one quarter of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males (*extremely concerned*: 10.3%; *very concerned*: 13.9%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems*, with 47.5% (*extremely concerned*: 18.5%; *very concerned*: 29.0%) indicating that this was a major concern, compared with 21.5% of males (*extremely concerned*: 9.1%; *very concerned*: 12.4%).

- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 41.4% (*extremely concerned*: 20.9%; *very concerned*: 20.5%) indicating that *body image* was a major concern, compared with 18.1% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.8%; *very concerned*: 9.3%).
- Depression* was a major concern for 34.7% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females (*extremely concerned*: 17.7%; *very concerned*: 17.0%) and 18.2% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.9%; *very concerned*: 9.3%).

Table 2.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	27.8	25.3	24.8	11.8	10.3
School or study problems	18.5	29.0	22.8	16.1	13.6
Body image	20.9	20.5	28.5	15.8	14.3
Depression	17.7	17.0	20.8	15.0	29.6
Family conflict	15.8	18.0	22.0	17.2	27.0
Bullying/emotional abuse	12.9	16.9	18.1	18.9	33.2
Personal safety	14.0	14.6	21.7	17.9	31.9
Suicide	12.0	9.8	12.1	10.5	55.6
Discrimination	8.3	10.9	18.7	19.2	42.9
Drugs	6.3	7.4	10.5	8.9	66.9
Alcohol	4.9	4.3	18.4	13.0	59.5
Gambling	2.4	2.7	5.8	8.0	81.2
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.3	13.9	22.6	16.9	36.4
School or study problems	9.1	12.4	26.9	18.3	33.3
Body image	8.8	9.3	22.6	16.2	43.1
Depression	8.9	9.3	16.5	14.0	51.3
Family conflict	8.0	9.1	18.4	16.4	48.0
Bullying/emotional abuse	8.6	7.2	15.6	15.6	53.0
Personal safety	9.0	9.2	18.3	13.6	49.9
Suicide	10.0	3.8	10.4	9.0	66.8
Discrimination	8.1	7.4	15.5	14.4	54.5
Drugs	9.8	5.7	11.3	9.3	63.9
Alcohol	8.9	5.0	15.1	12.6	58.5
Gambling	6.6	3.8	9.1	8.2	72.2

Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 2.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

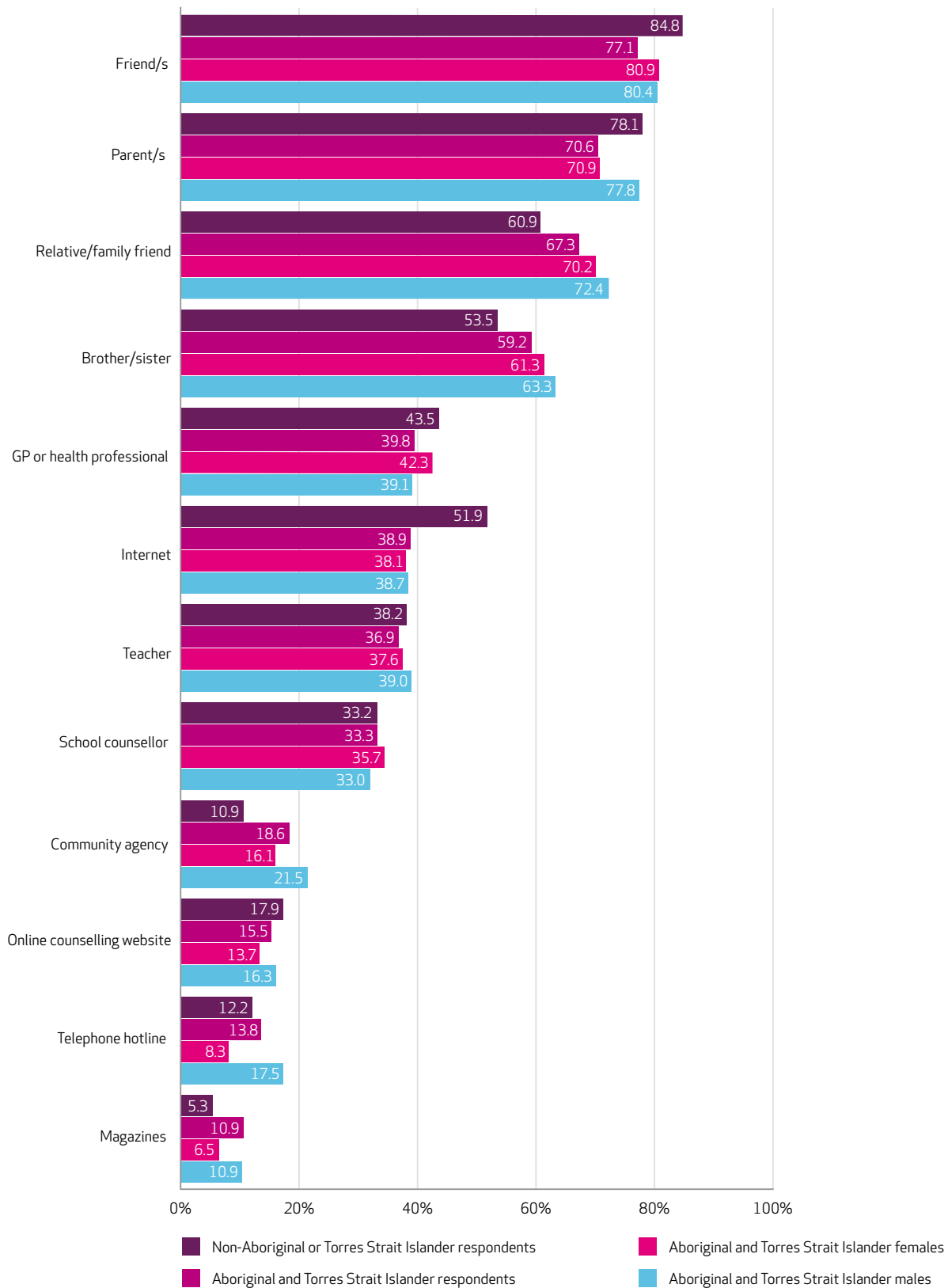
- The top source of help reported by both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people was *friend/s* (77.1% compared with 84.8%), followed by *parent/s* (70.6% compared with 78.1%) and then *relative/family friend* (67.3% compared with 60.9%).
- Six in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues in their lives (59.2% compared with 53.5% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents).
- Around four in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they would go to their *GP or health professional* (39.8%) or the *internet* (38.9%) for help with important issues.

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 2.6, the top three sources of help for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*. Similar proportions of female and male respondents indicated that they would go to each of the sources listed for help.

- Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males indicated that they would go to *friend/s* (80.9% compared with 80.4%) for help, while greater proportions of males than females indicated that they would go to their *parent/s* (77.8% compared with 70.9%) for help with important issues.
- Similar proportions of both male and female respondents indicated that they would go to a *relative/family friend* (72.4% compared with 70.2%) for help with important issues.
- Similar proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females also indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* (63.3% compared with 61.3%) and the *internet* (38.7% compared with 38.1%) for help with important issues in their lives.
- Slightly greater proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males indicated that they would go to their *GP or health professional* (42.3% compared with 39.1%).

Figure 2.6: Where young people go for help with important issues

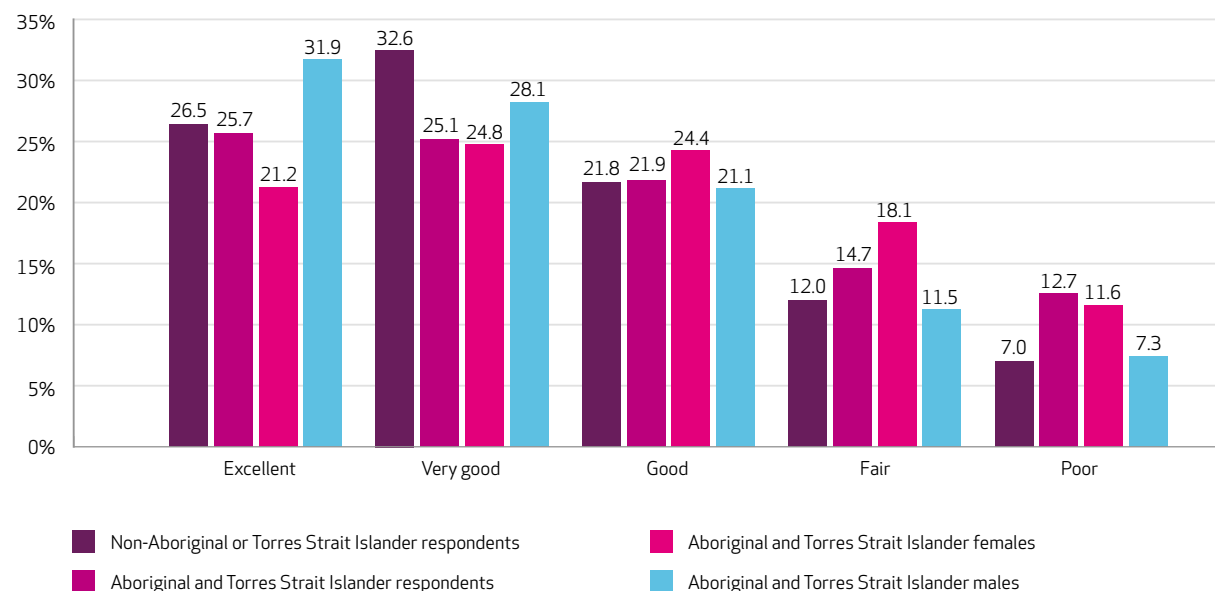


Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 2.7 shows that the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents rated their family's ability to get along positively, with 25.7% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent*, 25.1% that it was *very good* and 21.9% that it was *good*. However, around one quarter of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (14.7%) or *poor* (12.7%). A greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males than females rated their families ability to get along as *excellent* (31.9% compared with 21.2%).

Figure 2.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 2.6. In 2017, the top three issues identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were *alcohol and drugs*, *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*. These were the same top three issues identified this year by non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents, although the order of the first and second top issues was reversed.

- Just over four in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue in Australia today (41.0% compared with 31.5% of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents).
- Around one quarter of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people identified *mental health* (27.6%) and *equity and discrimination* (23.1%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *bullying* have been increasingly identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics*, *employment*, *the economy and financial matters*, *homelessness/housing* and *population issues* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males both identified *alcohol and drugs* as the most important in Australia today. The second top issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females was *mental health*, followed by *equity and discrimination*, while for males the second top was *equity and discrimination*, followed by *mental health*.

- Around four in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females identified *alcohol and drugs* as a major issue facing Australia today (43.7% and 40.7% respectively).
- Around four in ten female respondents and just under one in five male respondents identified *mental health* as an important issue (39.0% and 19.3% respectively).
- A greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males identified *equity and discrimination* (25.9% compared with 22.7%) and *bullying* (16.2% compared with 11.1%) as important national issues.

Table 2.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2017 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2016 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2015 %
Alcohol and drugs	31.5	41.0	40.7	43.7	30.9	32.2
Mental health	34.1	27.6	39.0	19.3	14.4	10.7
Equity and discrimination	27.6	23.1	25.9	22.7	21.5	24.8
Bullying	10.5	12.7	16.2	11.1	11.6	10.4
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	11.6	11.6	12.2	12.5	11.2
International relations	13.7	11.2	10.4	12.8	12.0	11.3
The economy and financial matters	12.8	10.2	10.6	10.3	13.9	15.8
Education	13.1	10.1	11.8	9.2	10.3	10.9
Employment	10.3	8.3	8.5	9.4	10.5	15.1
Politics	6.8	6.9	5.6	6.9	11.5	16.6
Homelessness/housing	8.3	6.4	8.5	5.1	7.7	10.5
Population issues	10.6	6.4	5.0	6.6	11.6	9.2
Health	8.5	5.9	5.4	6.2	8.2	6.7
The environment	11.2	5.6	5.2	6.6	8.0	7.1

Note: Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 2.7. The top three activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities*. These were also the top three activities identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in 2016 and 2015. Comparatively, the top three activities identified by non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents this year were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*.

- A total of 73.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)* and around six in ten (61.9%) were involved in *sports (as a spectator)*.
- Around half of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities* (50.4%) and *volunteer work* (47.5%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 2.7, the top three activities for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females and males were the same, although male respondents reported involvement in *arts/cultural/music activities* and *volunteer work* in equal proportions. A greater proportion of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*, while a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males reported participation in *arts/cultural/music activities*.

- A total of 78.2% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and 70.4% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females were involved in *sports (as a participant)* over the past year.
- A greater proportion of male respondents than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (65.8% compared with 58.4%).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females than males were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (57.1% compared with 43.1%) and *volunteer work* (52.2% compared with 43.1%).

Table 2.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2017 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2016 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.3	73.5	70.4	78.2	72.9	74.4
Sports (as a spectator)	65.7	61.9	58.4	65.8	65.0	66.6
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.9	50.4	57.1	43.1	52.9	53.7
Volunteer work	54.5	47.5	52.2	43.1	46.7	45.2
Student leadership activities	41.6	38.2	42.1	34.6	40.8	38.9
Youth groups and clubs	30.5	34.9	34.4	33.4	37.0	36.5
Religious group/activity	29.3	28.1	26.9	24.8	30.4	29.3
Environmental group/activity	23.5	27.9	25.4	27.9	30.0	28.5
Political groups/organisations	7.9	12.9	9.4	9.9	14.3	13.1

Note: Items are listed in order of frequency amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

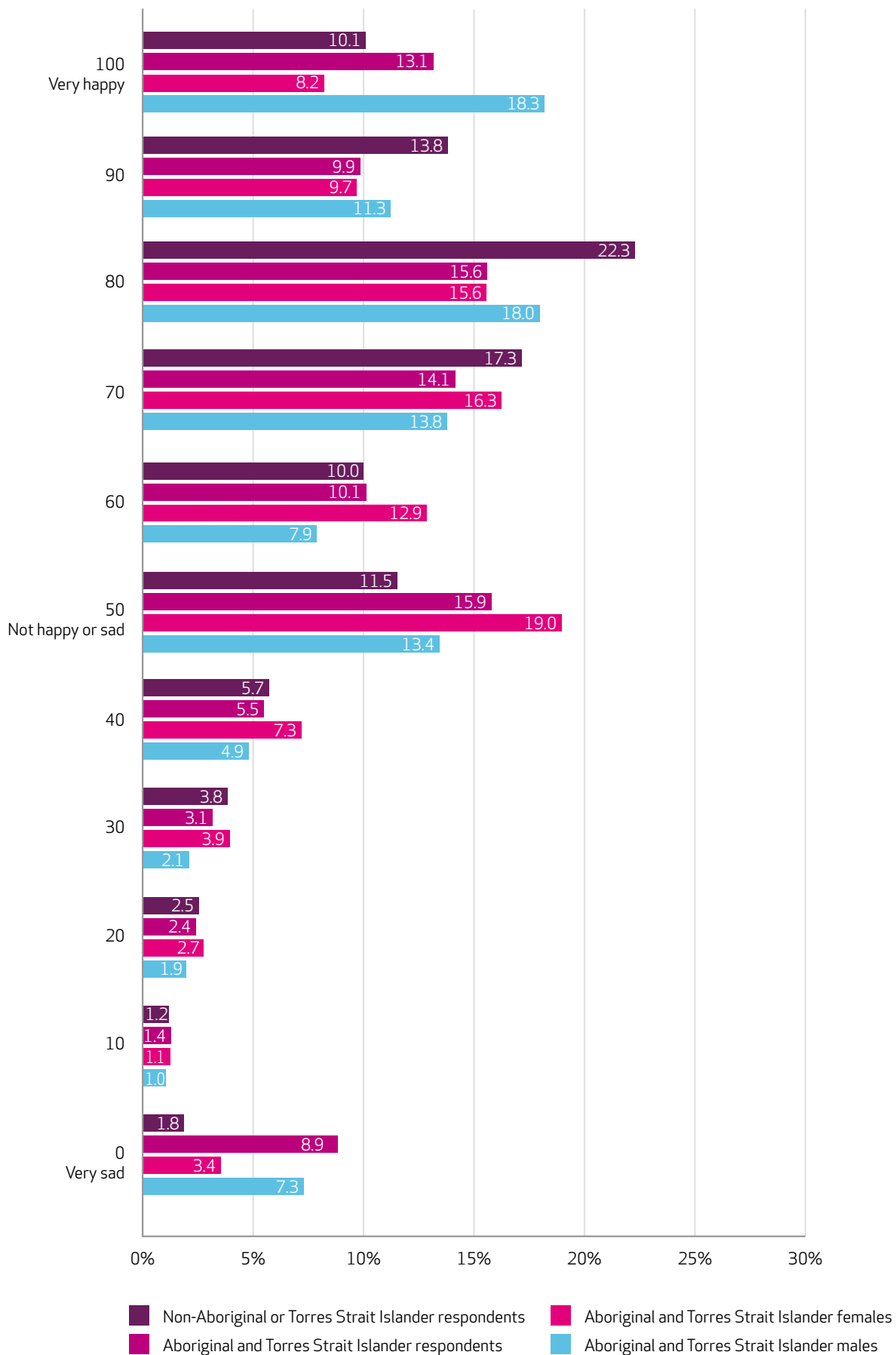
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 2.8 shows, over half of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (52.7%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall about their lives (compared to around two thirds of non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents). Around twice the proportion of male respondents than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* (18.3% compared with 8.2%) or *very sad* (7.3% compared with 3.4%) about their lives as a whole.

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 2.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 2.8 shows that results are similar to those in 2016 and 2015 with close to six in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents feeling either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Just over one in ten (12.9%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Close to six in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents felt *either positive* (41.7%) or *very positive* (17.2%) about the future.
- Around three in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (28.3%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- A total of 5.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents felt *negative* about the future and 7.4% felt *very negative*.
- A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 21.2% of males indicating they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 12.3% of females.

Table 2.8: Feelings about the future

	Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander respondents %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2017 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2016 %	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents 2015 %
Very positive	15.7	17.2	12.3	21.2	18.4	18.4
Positive	46.9	41.7	42.6	45.1	36.0	40.7
Neither positive nor negative	27.4	28.3	34.8	24.1	27.9	27.8
Negative	7.1	5.5	6.7	4.8	6.3	7.2
Very negative	2.8	7.4	3.4	4.8	11.4	6.0

Australian Capital Territory



Profile of respondents

In total, 745 young people from the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2017.

Gender breakdown

Around half (50.2%) of respondents from the ACT were female and 46.6% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 34 (4.6%) respondents from the ACT identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 26 (3.6%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 4 (0.5%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.5% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (5.6% compared with 2.5%).

Language background other than English

A total of 131 (17.9%) respondents from the ACT stated that they were born overseas and 150 (20.6%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 40 languages spoken at home in the ACT, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Italian, Hindi, Spanish and Arabic.

Disability

A total of 44 (6.1%) respondents from the ACT indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (6.3%) than females (4.3%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in the ACT were (in order of frequency): autism, physical disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), deafness or hearing impairment and learning disability.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 3.1, 96.6% of respondents from the ACT were studying full-time. Similar proportions of female and male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (97.3% compared with 96.8%), similar proportion of females (2.1%) and males (2.0%) also reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from the ACT reported that they were either *very satisfied* (16.9%) or *satisfied* (52.5%) with their studies. A minority of respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (2.2% and 5.9% respectively). As shown in Table 3.2, a higher proportion of males than females from the ACT reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (75.3% compared with 65.1%).

Table 3.1: Participation in education

	National %	ACT %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	96.6	97.3	96.8
Studying part-time	2.1	0.9	0.5	1.2
Not studying	3.0	2.4	2.1	2.0

Table 3.2: Satisfaction with studies

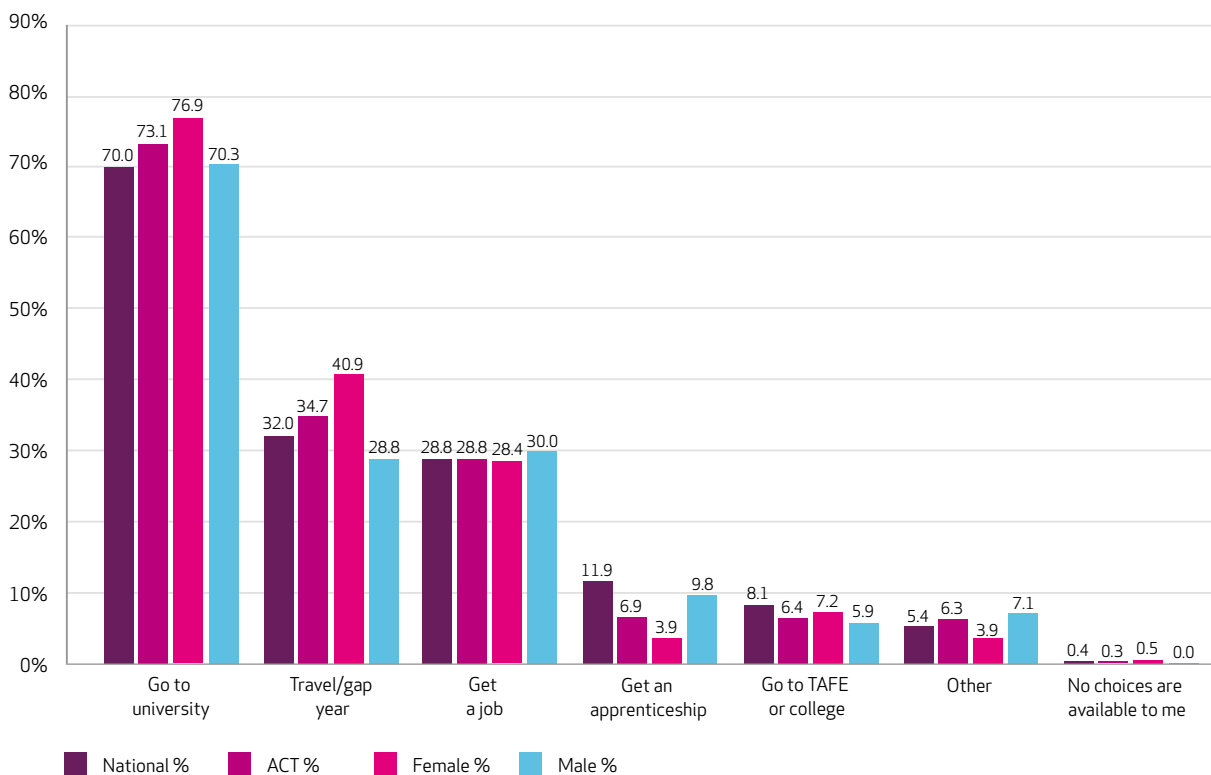
	National %	ACT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	ACT 2016 %	ACT 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	16.9	17.3	16.2	16.2	14.7
Satisfied	56.4	52.5	47.8	59.1	49.8	58.0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	22.5	24.7	19.7	23.7	20.7
Dissatisfied	5.4	5.9	7.7	4.1	7.5	3.3
Very dissatisfied	1.7	2.2	2.5	0.9	2.9	3.3

Of those who were still at school in the ACT, 97.9% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A slightly higher proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (3.9% compared with 0.3% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 12.9% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a higher proportion of females than males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (14.5% compared with 10.5% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 3.1 shows that over seven in ten (73.1%) respondents from the ACT planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to travel or go on a gap year (34.7%) and get a job (28.8%). Overall, 6.9% of young people from the ACT planned to undertake an apprenticeship and 6.4% reported plans to go to TAFE or college. A small minority of respondents (0.3%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from the ACT, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (76.9% compared with 70.3% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (40.9% compared with 28.8% of males). A larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (9.8% compared with 3.9% of females).

Figure 3.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 3.3 shows participation in paid employment amongst respondents from the ACT. In line with the national results, only a minority (0.1%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. A total of 44.5% respondents from the ACT reported part-time employment. Over half of ACT respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 30.6% looking for work and 24.8% not looking for work.

Only a small proportion of males (0.3%) and no females from the ACT reported full-time employment, while there was a higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (52.6% compared with 36.3% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (34.8% compared with 26.6% females respectively).

Table 3.3: Participation in paid employment

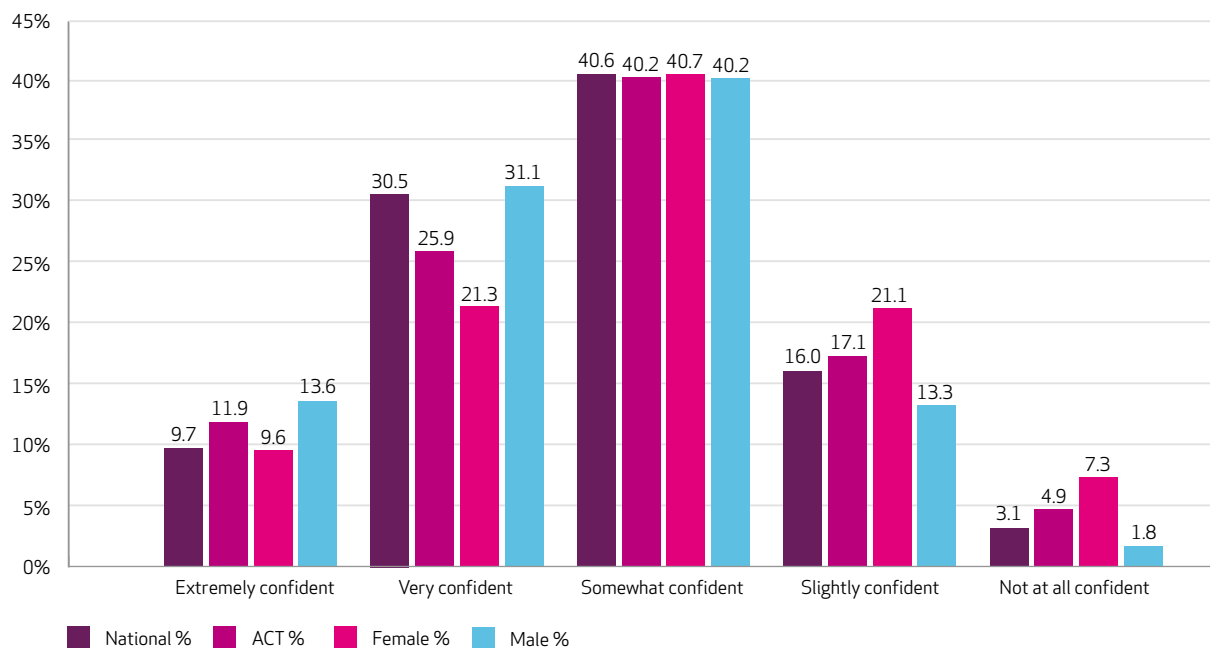
	National %	ACT %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3
Employed part-time	40.5	44.5	52.6	36.3
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	30.6	26.6	34.8
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	24.8	20.8	28.6

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 3.2. Close to four in ten respondents from the ACT indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 11.9% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 25.9% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, just over one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 17.1% being *slightly confident* and 4.9% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (13.6% and 31.1% of males compared with 9.6% and 21.3% of females respectively).

Figure 3.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Close to half (49.2%) of respondents from the ACT indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (56.2%) than males (41.5%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 3.3 shows the percentage of respondents from the ACT who indicated each item as being a barrier. In the ACT, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *mental health* and *admission/job requirements*.

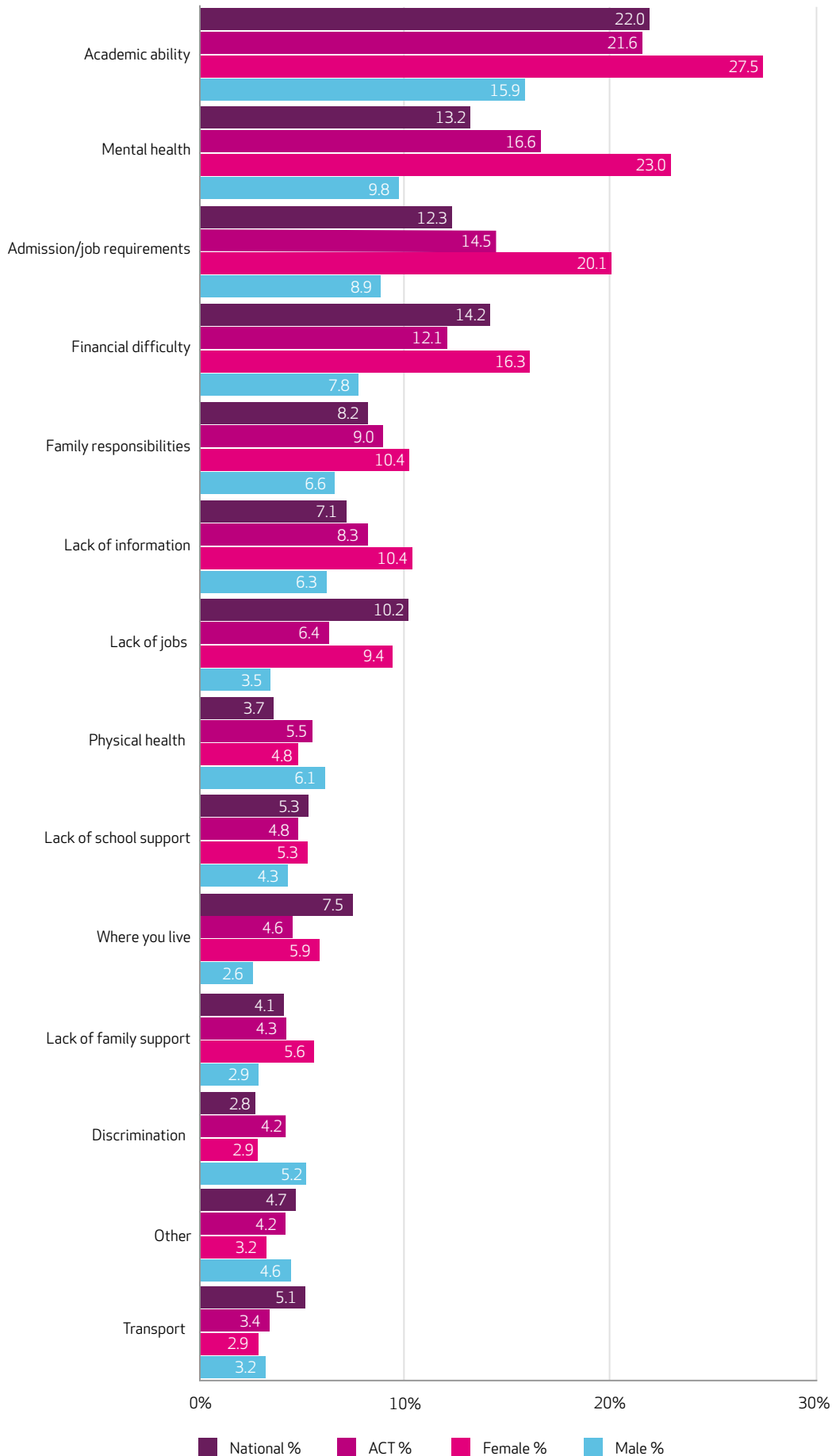
- *Academic ability*, *mental health* and *admission/job requirements* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (21.6%, 16.6% and 14.5% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 3.3, the top three barriers for females and males alike were *academic ability*, *mental health* and *admission/job requirements*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that most of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- A total of 27.5% of female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared with 15.9% of male respondents.
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *mental health* and *admission/job requirements* as a barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (23.0% compared with 9.8% and 20.1% compared with 8.9%).
- Almost double the proportion of females than males indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (16.3% compared with 7.8%).

Figure 3.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



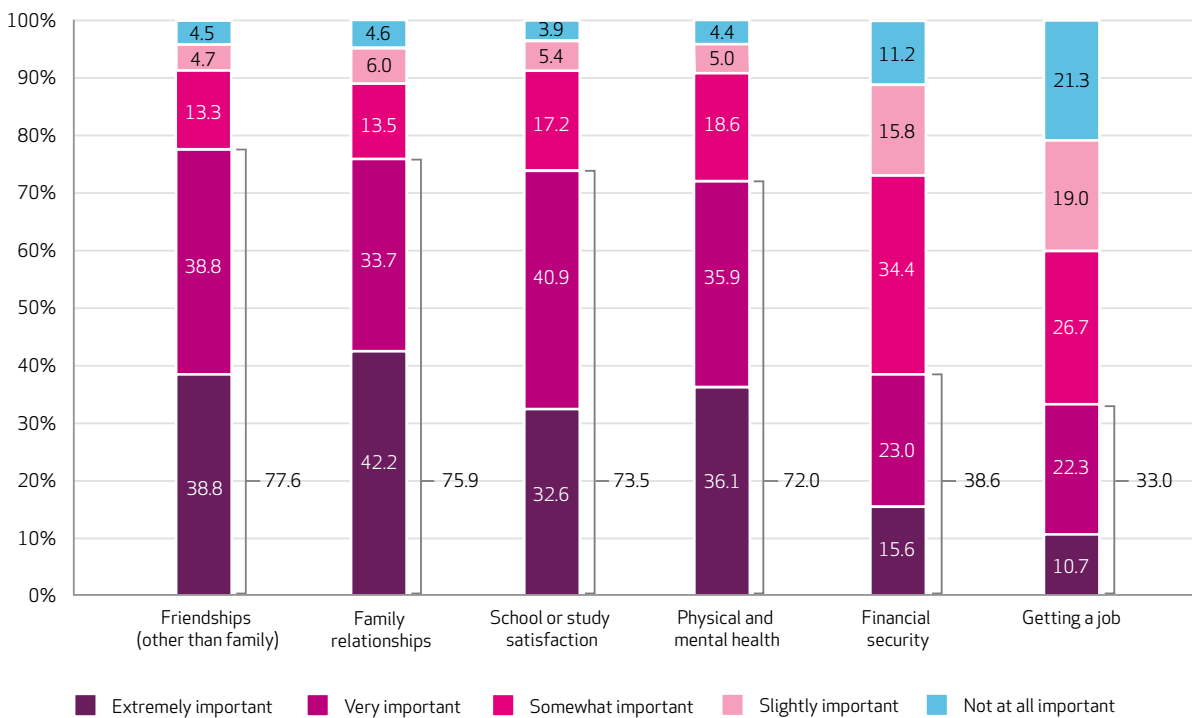
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships, financial security, friendships, getting a job, physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 3.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from the ACT this year were *friendships, family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for ACT respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were valued highly by 77.6% of respondents (*extremely important*: 38.8%; *very important*: 38.8%). *Family relationships* were highly valued by 75.9% of respondents from the ACT (*extremely important*: 42.2%; *very important*: 33.7%).
- Just over seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 32.6%; *very important*: 40.9%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 36.1%; *very important*: 35.9%).
- Around four in ten ACT respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 15.6%; *very important*: 23.0%) and one third on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 10.7%; *very important*: 22.3%).

Figure 3.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

School or study satisfaction and *family relationships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by females in the ACT, while males most highly valued *friendships* and *family relationships*, as shown in Table 3.4. The third item for females was *friendships* while for males it was *physical and mental health*. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 80.0% of females (*extremely important*: 45.0%; *very important*: 35.0%) compared with 73.0% of males (*extremely important*: 39.3%; *very important*: 33.7%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 80.7% of females (*extremely important*: 39.8%; *very important*: 40.9%) and 67.9% of males (*extremely important*: 26.3%; *very important*: 41.6%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 79.6% of females (*extremely important*: 41.7%; *very important*: 37.9%) compared with 76.2% of males (*extremely important*: 35.3%; *very important*: 40.9%).
- Almost three quarters (74.6%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 38.4%; *very important*: 36.2%) compared with 69.5% of males (*extremely important*: 32.5%; *very important*: 37.0%).

Table 3.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	41.7	37.9	13.4	4.6	2.5
Family relationships	45.0	35.0	11.9	6.2	1.9
School or study satisfaction	39.8	40.9	12.7	4.6	1.9
Physical and mental health	38.4	36.2	18.0	5.7	1.6
Financial security	14.4	27.0	37.3	13.9	7.4
Getting a job	10.1	25.8	25.5	20.5	18.1
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	35.3	40.9	13.8	4.7	5.3
Family relationships	39.3	33.7	15.2	5.9	5.9
School or study satisfaction	26.3	41.6	22.2	5.7	4.2
Physical and mental health	32.5	37.0	20.3	4.2	6.0
Financial security	16.2	18.8	32.9	18.2	13.8
Getting a job	10.9	19.8	28.0	18.0	23.3

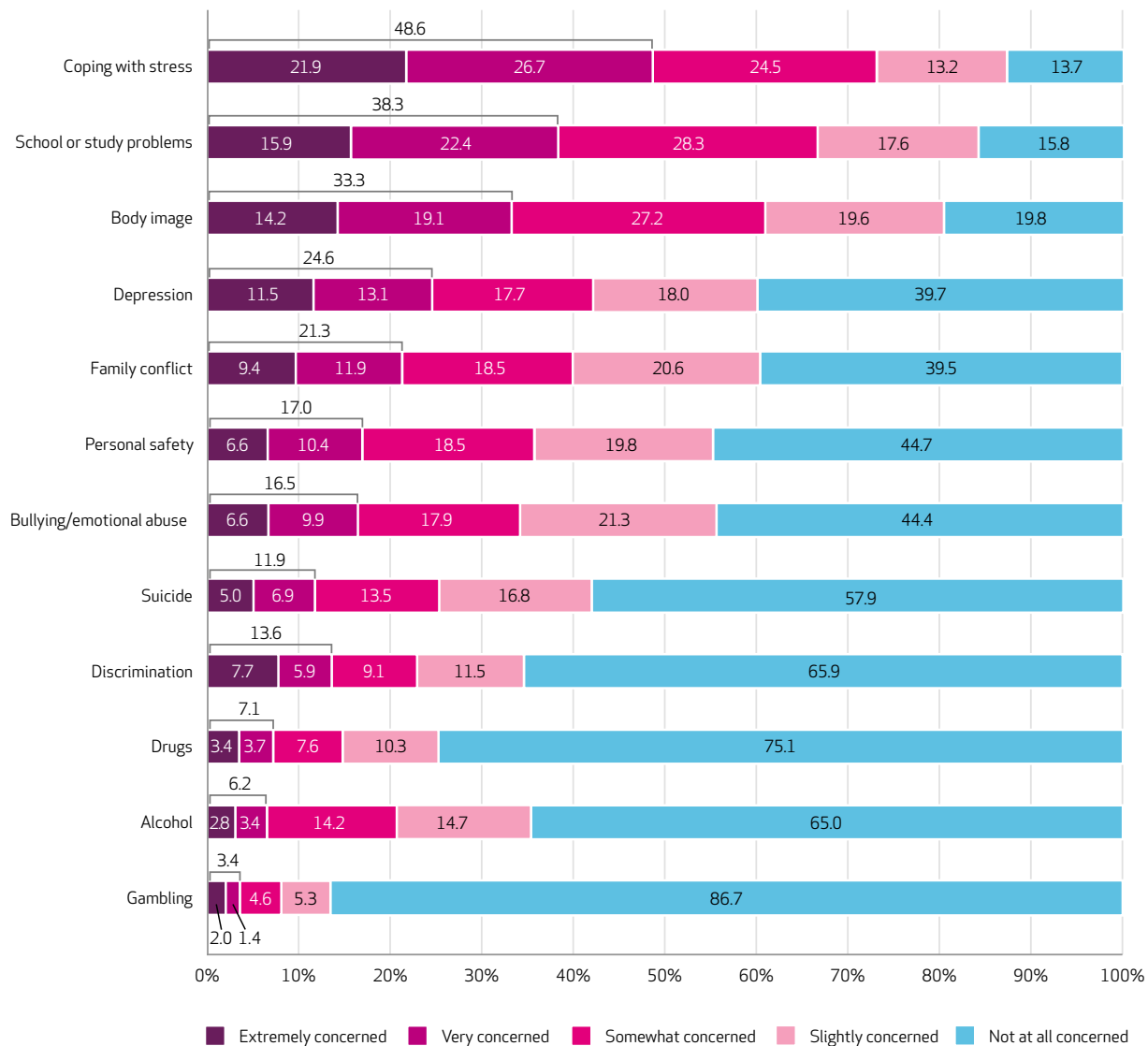
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 3.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from the ACT were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 48.6% of respondents from the ACT indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (21.9%) or *very concerned* (26.7%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 38.3% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 15.9%; *very concerned*: 22.4%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 33.3% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 14.2%; *very concerned*: 19.1%).
- Around one in four respondents were either *extremely concerned* (11.5%) or *very concerned* (13.1%) about *depression*.

Figure 3.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and males in the ACT, as highlighted in Table 3.5. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For 65.4% of females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 35.1%; *very concerned*: 30.3%), compared with one quarter of males (*extremely concerned*: 10.7%; *very concerned*: 13.9%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 43.5% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 20.9%; *very concerned*: 22.6%), compared with 25.3% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.7%; *very concerned*: 16.6%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 43.9% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 19.8%; *very concerned*: 24.1%), compared with 16.9% of males (*extremely concerned*: 6.1%; *very concerned*: 10.8%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 33.2% of females (*extremely concerned*: 17.0%; *very concerned*: 16.2%) and 15.1% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.0%; *very concerned*: 7.1%).

Table 3.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	35.1	30.3	19.5	11.4	3.8
School or study problems	20.9	22.6	27.7	14.4	14.4
Body image	19.8	24.1	31.2	15.2	9.8
Depression	17.0	16.2	20.0	15.7	31.1
Family conflict	9.6	13.7	19.1	18.3	39.3
Personal safety	6.0	5.2	16.9	24.0	47.8
Bullying/emotional abuse	7.3	10.0	13.8	24.1	44.7
Suicide	6.7	9.7	13.5	13.5	56.6
Discrimination	4.4	6.3	15.0	19.7	54.6
Drugs	1.4	1.6	8.4	13.3	75.3
Alcohol	1.6	3.0	11.9	14.6	69.0
Gambling	0.5	1.1	1.4	4.6	92.4
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.7	13.9	27.0	20.8	27.6
School or study problems	7.7	13.9	26.7	20.2	31.5
Body image	6.1	10.8	24.0	25.4	33.6
Depression	8.0	7.1	15.6	18.3	51.0
Family conflict	5.1	6.0	10.4	17.0	61.5
Personal safety	3.0	4.5	13.3	17.2	61.9
Bullying/emotional abuse	3.2	7.3	15.0	17.3	57.2
Suicide	5.7	3.3	7.2	9.0	74.9
Discrimination	4.8	2.4	12.5	17.0	63.4
Drugs	5.3	2.4	6.5	10.9	74.9
Alcohol	3.5	2.3	9.1	9.9	75.1
Gambling	3.3	0.6	4.2	3.9	88.1

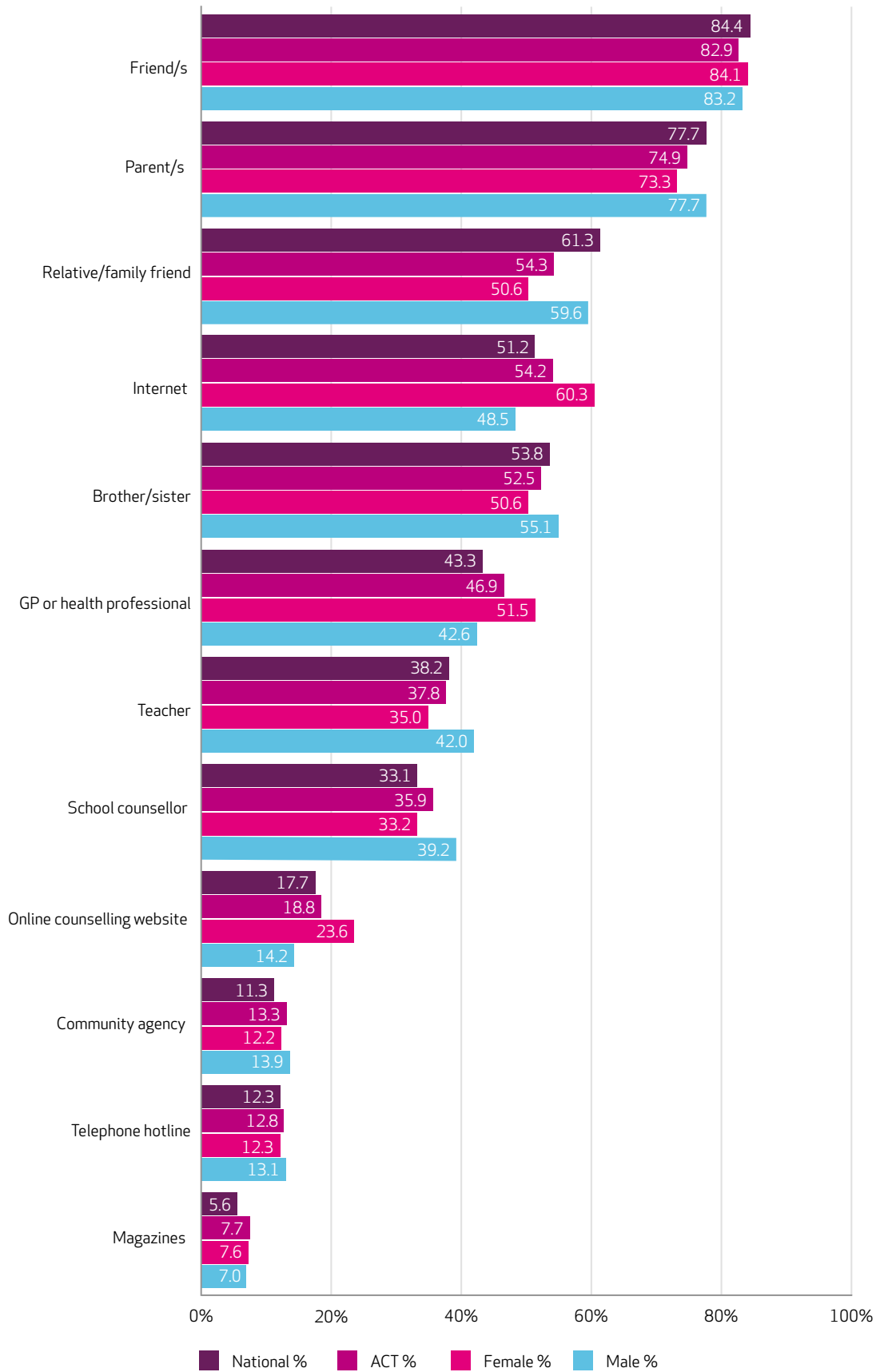
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 3.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in the ACT were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relatives/family friends* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (82.9%, 74.9% and 54.3% respectively).
- Over half (54.2%) of all respondents indicated that they would go to the *internet* for help with important issues in their lives.
- Around half of all respondents from the ACT indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* (52.5%) or a *GP or health professional* (46.9%) with less reporting their *teacher* (37.8%) as a source of help with important issues.

Figure 3.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

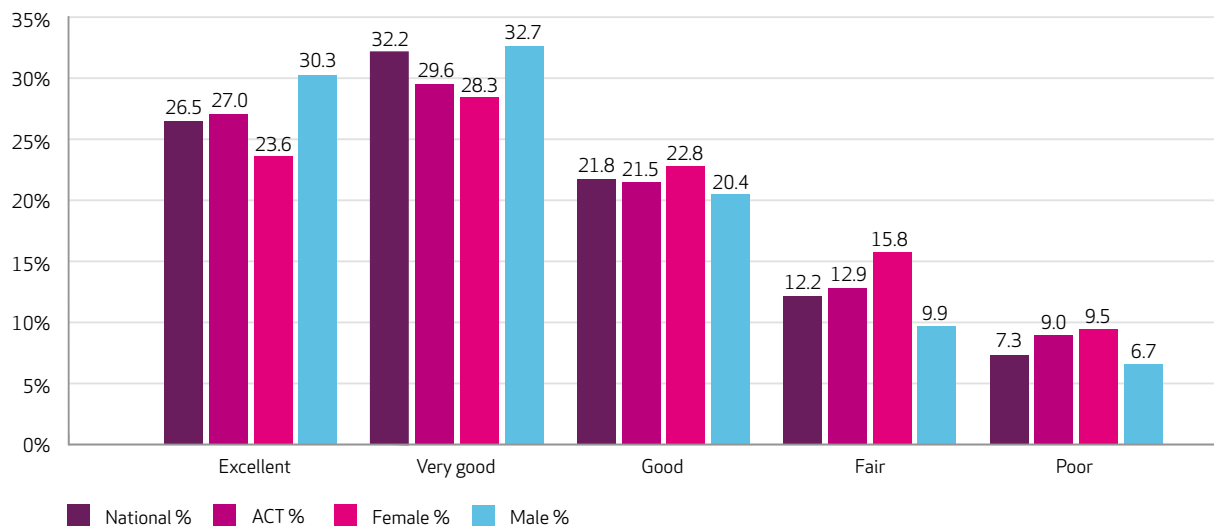
As shown in Figure 3.6, the top three sources of help for males and the top two sources for females were consistent with the national results. Females indicated that they would go to the *internet* over a *relative/family friend*.

- Over eight in ten female and male respondents in the ACT indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (84.1% compared with 83.2%).
- Greater proportions of males than females from the ACT would go to their *parent/s* (77.7% compared with 73.3%) and a *relative/family friend* for help (59.6% compared with 50.6%).
- Six in ten females (60.3%) and almost half of males (48.5%) indicated that they would go to the *internet* for help.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 3.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from the ACT rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 27.0% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 29.6% that it was *very good*. However, over one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (12.9%) or *poor* (9.0%). A greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (30.3% compared with 23.6%).

Figure 3.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 3.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from the ACT were *equity and discrimination*, *mental health* and *alcohol and drugs*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally, however in a different order.

- Almost one third (32.7%) of young people identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue in Australia today.
- Three in ten young people from the ACT identified *mental health* (30.1%) and almost one quarter of young people identified *alcohol and drugs* (23.9%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Around one in seven respondents identified *the environment* (16.2%) and *international relations* (15.5%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *equity and discrimination*, *health*, *international relations* and *education* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *population issues*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *alcohol and drugs*, *the environment*, *homelessness/housing* and *politics* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Equity and discrimination and *mental health* were top equal issues for female respondents with *alcohol and drugs* second and *the environment* third. For males, *alcohol and drugs*, *equity and discrimination* and *mental health* were the top three issues of national importance in the ACT.

- Around four in ten females (39.1%) and one in five males (21.8%) identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- Greater proportions of females than males identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue (39.1% compared with 27.0%).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (27.6% compared with 20.5%).

Table 3.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	ACT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	ACT 2016 %	ACT 2015 %
Equity and discrimination	27.3	32.7	39.1	27.0	22.4	23.9
Mental health	33.7	30.1	39.1	21.8	26.3	10.4
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	23.9	20.5	27.6	21.9	29.9
The environment	10.9	16.2	19.9	12.6	16.6	20.9
International relations	13.6	15.5	15.5	15.0	12.0	11.2
Population issues	10.3	14.1	13.0	16.0	15.1	22.4
Education	13.0	11.5	12.1	11.3	11.2	7.5
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	11.3	16.1	6.8	8.9	17.9
The economy and financial matters	12.7	11.3	13.0	9.2	14.5	11.9
Politics	6.8	10.0	6.8	14.0	11.0	11.9
Health	8.3	8.9	10.2	7.2	10.2	3.0
Homelessness/housing	8.2	8.9	11.2	6.8	10.2	11.9
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	8.8	9.6	8.5	13.8	7.5
Employment	10.2	6.9	6.8	6.8	7.7	6.7
Bullying	10.6	5.2	5.0	5.8	9.7	4.5

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 3.7. The top three activities for young people from the ACT were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities*. These were also the top three activities for young people from the ACT in 2015.

- Over three quarters of young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)* and around six in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities* (77.5%, 63.9% and 59.0% respectively).
- A total of 57.0% respondents indicated that they were involved in *volunteer work*.
- Around four in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (40.7%) and one quarter in *youth groups and clubs* (25.8%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 3.7, the top activity for both females and males in the ACT was *sports (as a participant)* however the following two activities differed between genders. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the second top activity, followed by *volunteer work*. For males, *sports (as a spectator)* was the second top activity, followed by *arts/cultural/music activities*.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (83.2% compared with 72.6%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (66.6% compared with 61.2%).
- Overall, greater proportions of female than male respondents from the ACT were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (64.7% compared with 53.6%), *volunteer work* (64.0% compared with 49.8%) and *student leadership activities* (42.3% compared with 39.2%).

Table 3.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	ACT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	ACT 2016 %	ACT 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	77.5	72.6	83.2	71.0	72.0
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	63.9	61.2	66.6	59.2	70.0
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	59.0	64.7	53.6	54.7	46.8
Volunteer work	54.1	57.0	64.0	49.8	56.8	37.0
Student leadership activities	41.3	40.7	42.3	39.2	42.1	42.4
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	25.8	25.2	26.7	25.3	29.8
Religious group/activity	29.2	25.4	24.8	24.8	21.7	26.5
Environmental group/activity	23.7	24.8	26.4	22.9	22.3	26.9
Political groups/organisations	8.2	13.2	12.8	12.2	11.1	11.8

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

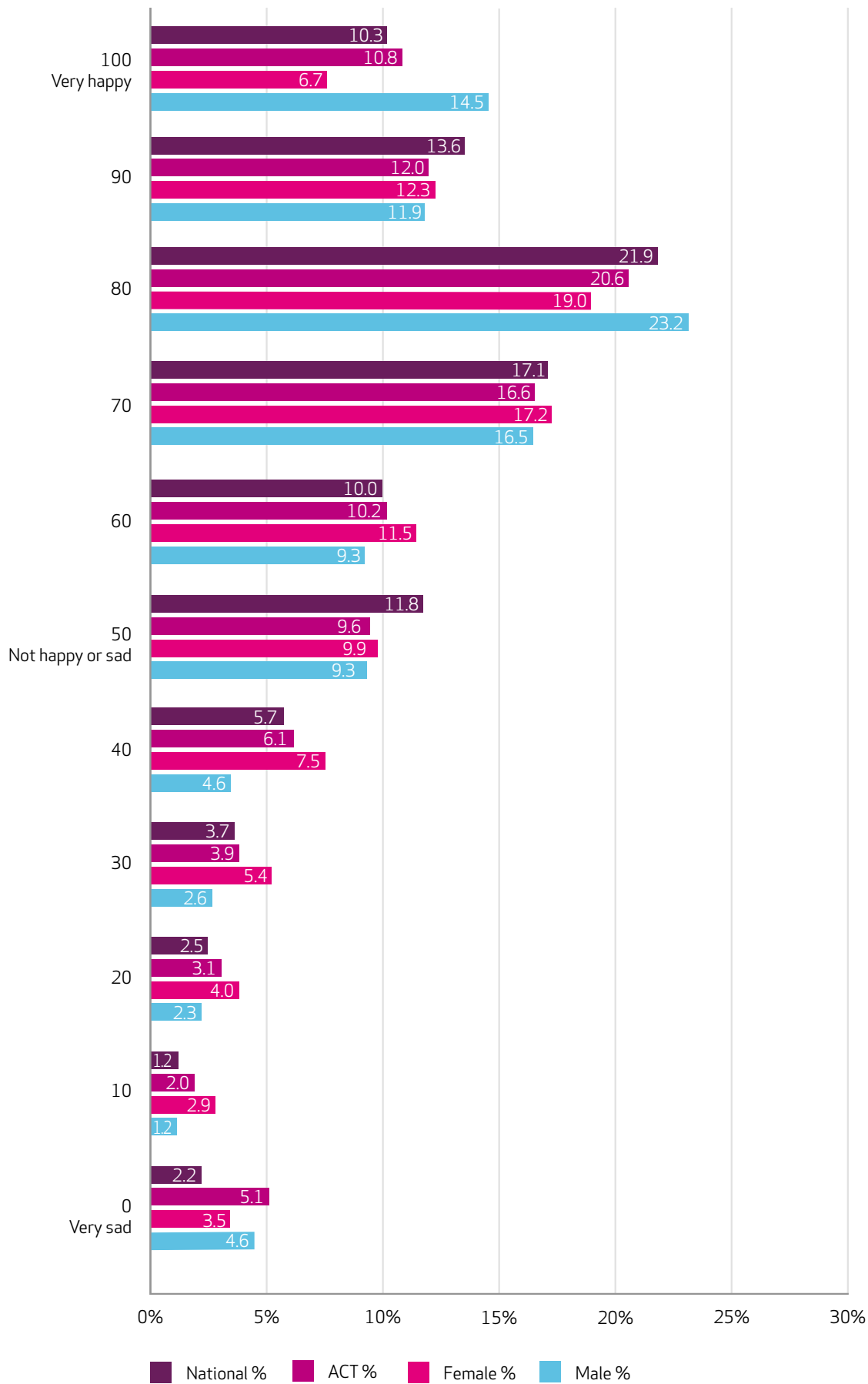
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 3.8 shows, the majority of young people from the ACT (60.0%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although more than double the proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (14.5% compared with 6.7%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 3.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 3.8 shows that, in line with the national results, around two thirds of respondents from the ACT felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, just under one in six young people from the ACT felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around six in ten respondents from the ACT felt either *positive* (44.8%) or *very positive* (16.8%) about the future.
- Almost one quarter of respondents (23.7%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- A total 9.9% of respondents felt *negative* about the future and 4.8% felt *very negative*.
- A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 19.3% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 13.8% of females.
- A higher proportion of females than males reported feeling *very negative* about the future (5.4% compared with 2.9%).

Table 3.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	ACT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	ACT 2016 %	ACT 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	16.8	13.3	19.3	16.0	20.0
Positive	46.6	44.8	41.2	50.3	39.4	38.7
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	23.7	26.0	21.6	28.9	29.0
Negative	7.1	9.9	14.1	5.8	9.6	7.7
Very negative	3.1	4.8	5.4	2.9	6.2	4.5

New South Wales



Profile of respondents

In total, 7,208 young people from New South Wales (NSW) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Almost two thirds (63.7%) of respondents from NSW were female and 33.9% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 459 (6.5%) respondents from NSW identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 426 (6.0%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 19 (0.3%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.2% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (9.5% compared with 4.6%).

Language background other than English

A total of 831 (11.7%) respondents from NSW stated that they were born overseas and 1,343 (19.0%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 80 languages spoken at home in NSW, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean and Arabic.

Disability

A total of 324 (4.6%) respondents from NSW indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (5.9%) than females (3.3%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in NSW were (in order of frequency): autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disability, physical disability and depressive disorder.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 4.1, 95.4% of respondents from NSW were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (96.7% compared with 93.6% respectively), while a greater proportion of males (4.5%) than females (2.2%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from NSW reported that they were either *very satisfied* (13.1%) or *satisfied* (55.1%) with their studies. Less than one in ten were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.8% and 6.0% respectively). As shown in Table 4.2, a slightly higher proportion of females than males from NSW reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (13.1% and 57.8% of females compared with 13.4% and 51.4% of males respectively).

Table 4.1: Participation in education

	National %	NSW %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	95.4	96.7	93.6
Studying part-time	2.1	1.4	1.1	1.9
Not studying	3.0	3.2	2.2	4.5

Table 4.2: Satisfaction with studies

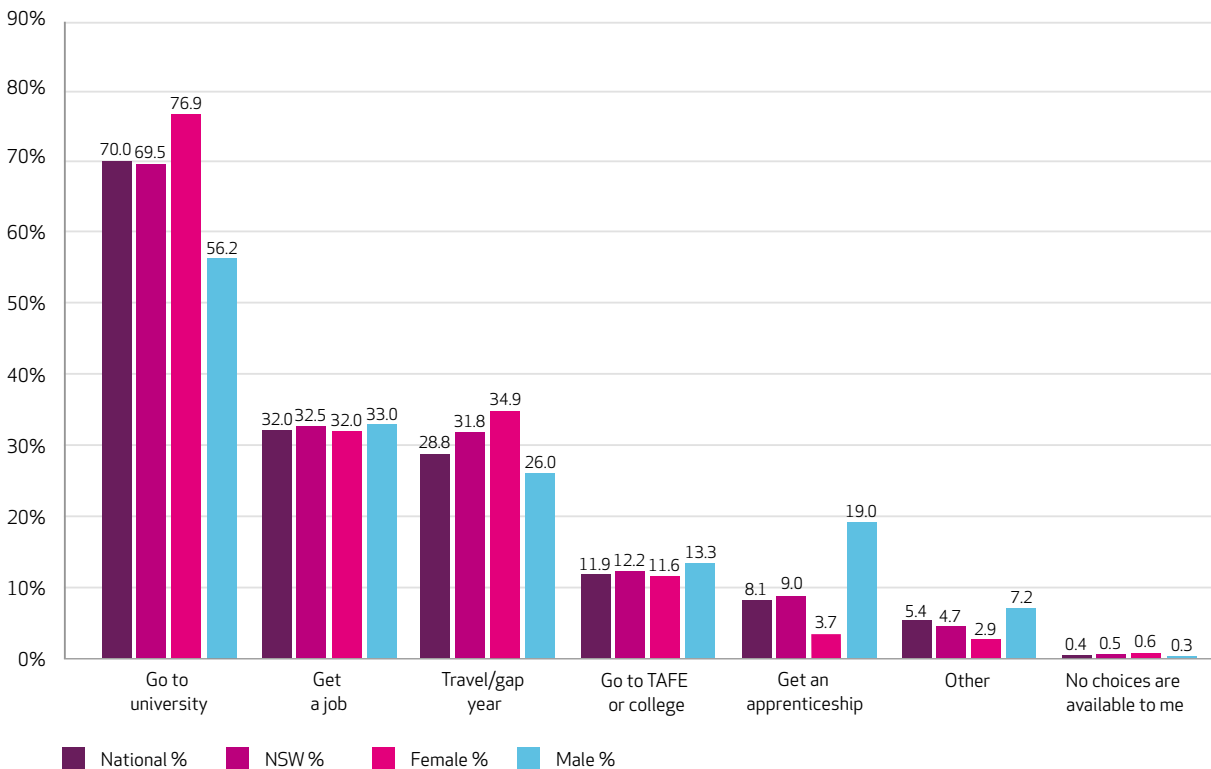
	National 2017 %	NSW 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NSW 2016 %	NSW 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	13.1	13.1	13.4	14.3	14.4
Satisfied	56.4	55.1	57.8	51.4	55.1	54.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	24.0	22.7	26.2	24.1	23.9
Dissatisfied	5.4	6.0	5.5	6.5	4.5	5.2
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.7	1.0	2.6	1.8	1.6

Of those who were still at school in NSW, 96.1% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A greater proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (7.1% compared with 1.9% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 16.6% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a slightly higher proportion of males than females reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (18.9% compared with 15.2% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 4.1 shows that around seven in ten (69.5%) respondents from NSW planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (32.5%) and to travel or go on a gap year (31.8%) after school. Overall, 12.2% of young people from NSW planned to attend TAFE or college and 9.0% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.5%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both male and female respondents from NSW, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (76.9% compared with 56.2% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (34.9% compared with 26.0% of males). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (19.0% compared with 3.7% of females).

Figure 4.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 4.3 shows participation in paid employment among respondents from NSW. In line with national results, only a minority (0.5%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Four in ten (40.1%) respondents from NSW reported part-time employment. Six in ten NSW respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 32.8% looking for work and 26.6% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents from NSW reported full-time employment (0.9% compared with 0.2% respectively), while a higher proportion of female respondents were employed part-time (41.9% compared with 36.4% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (37.4% compared with 30.5% of females respectively).

Table 4.3: Participation in paid employment

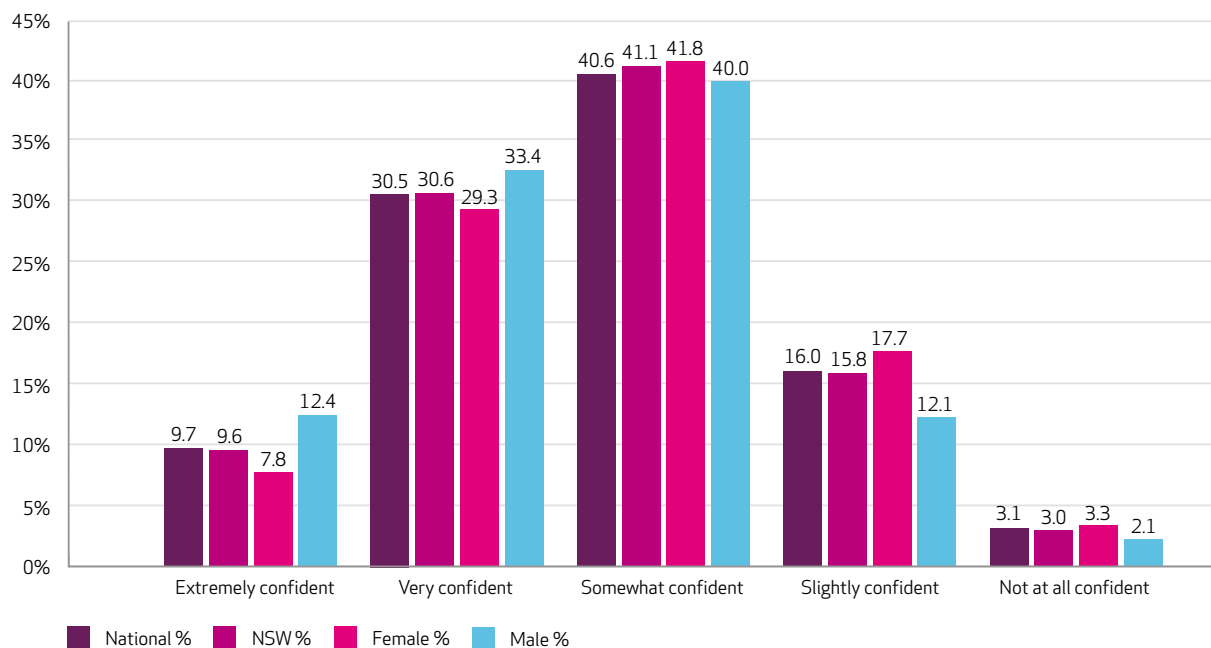
	National %	NSW %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.9
Employed part-time	40.5	40.1	41.9	36.4
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	32.8	30.5	37.4
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	26.6	27.4	25.3

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*. Four in ten respondents indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.6% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 30.6% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, close to one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 15.8% being *slightly confident* and 3.0% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (12.4% and 33.4% of males compared with 7.8% and 29.3% of females).

Figure 4.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (54.0%) of respondents indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (57.9%) than males (46.5%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who indicated the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 4.3 shows the percentage of respondents from NSW who indicated each item as a barrier. In NSW, the top barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty*, *admission/job requirements* and *mental health* (third equal).

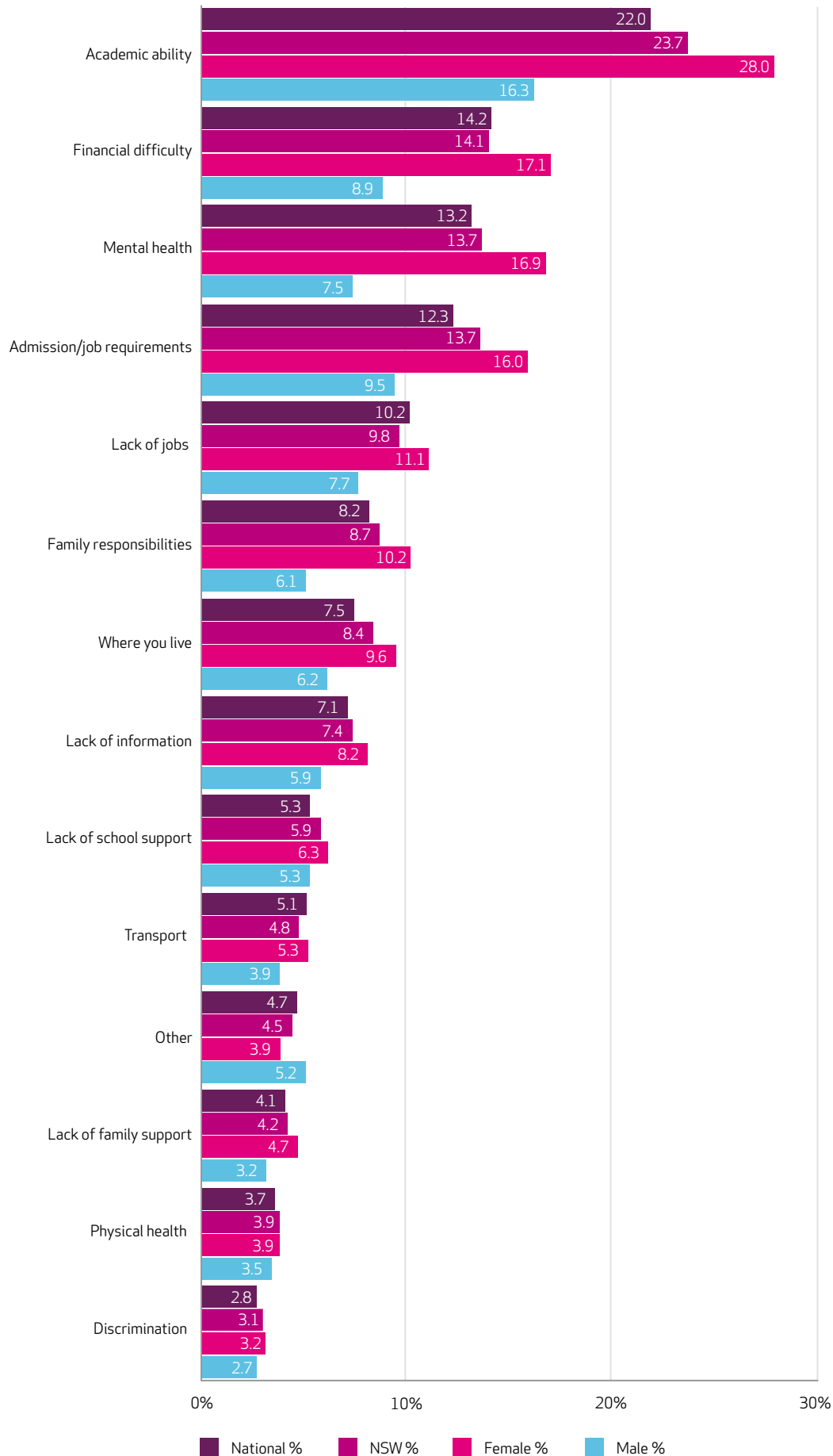
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty*, *admission/job requirements* and *mental health* (third equal) were the four most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (23.7%, 14.1%, 13.7% and 13.7% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 4.3, the top three barriers for females were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*, while for males the top three barriers were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *admission/job requirements*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that all items were a barrier to them achieving their study/work goals after school.

- A total of 28.0% of female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared with 16.3% of male respondents.
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *mental health* as a barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (16.9% compared with 7.5%).
- Around twice the proportion of females than males indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (17.1% compared with 8.9%).

Figure 4.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



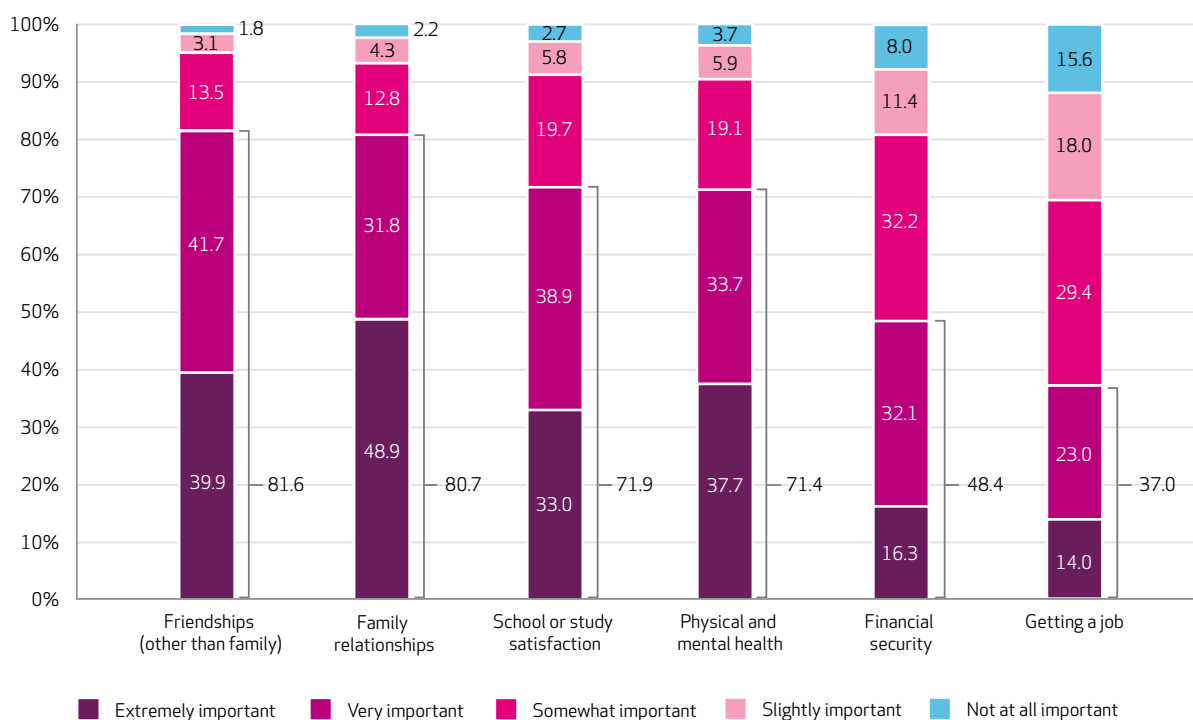
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 4.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from NSW this year were *friendships*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for NSW respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were valued highly by 81.6% of respondents (*extremely important*: 39.9%; *very important*: 41.7%). *Family relationships* were also highly valued by 80.7% of respondents from NSW (*extremely important*: 48.9%; *very important*: 31.8%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 33.0%; *very important*: 38.9%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 37.7%; *very important*: 33.7%).
- Almost half of NSW respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 16.3%; *very important*: 32.1%) and around four in ten on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 14.0%; *very important*: 23.0%).

Figure 4.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were the two most highly valued items by both females and males in NSW, as shown in Table 4.4. The order of these items differed however, with females indicating that *family relationships* was the most highly valued item, while for males the most highly valued item was *friendships*. The third item for females was *school or study satisfaction* while for males it was *physical and mental health*. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 83.4% of females (*extremely important*: 53.3%; *very important*: 30.1%) compared with 76.9% of males (*extremely important*: 41.6%; *very important*: 35.3%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 83.1% of females (*extremely important*: 42.3%; *very important*: 40.8%) compared with 79.4% of males (*extremely important*: 35.9%; *very important*: 43.5%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 77.2% of females (*extremely important*: 37.8%; *very important*: 39.4%) compared with 63.1% of males (*extremely important*: 24.1%; *very important*: 39.0%).
- Just under three quarters (73.9%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 39.9%; *very important*: 34.0%) compared with 67.5% of males (*extremely important*: 34.0%; *very important*: 33.5%).

Table 4.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	42.3	40.8	12.6	2.8	1.3
Family relationships	53.3	30.1	11.2	4.0	1.4
Physical and mental health	39.9	34.0	18.2	5.4	2.5
School or study satisfaction	37.8	39.4	17.2	4.1	1.5
Financial security	16.4	33.4	32.7	11.1	6.4
Getting a job	12.0	23.4	29.7	18.6	16.3
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	35.9	43.5	15.1	3.7	1.8
Family relationships	41.6	35.3	15.7	4.7	2.7
Physical and mental health	34.0	33.5	20.9	6.7	4.9
School or study satisfaction	24.1	39.0	24.3	8.9	3.7
Financial security	16.1	30.5	31.4	12.1	9.9
Getting a job	17.8	22.1	29.2	16.9	13.9

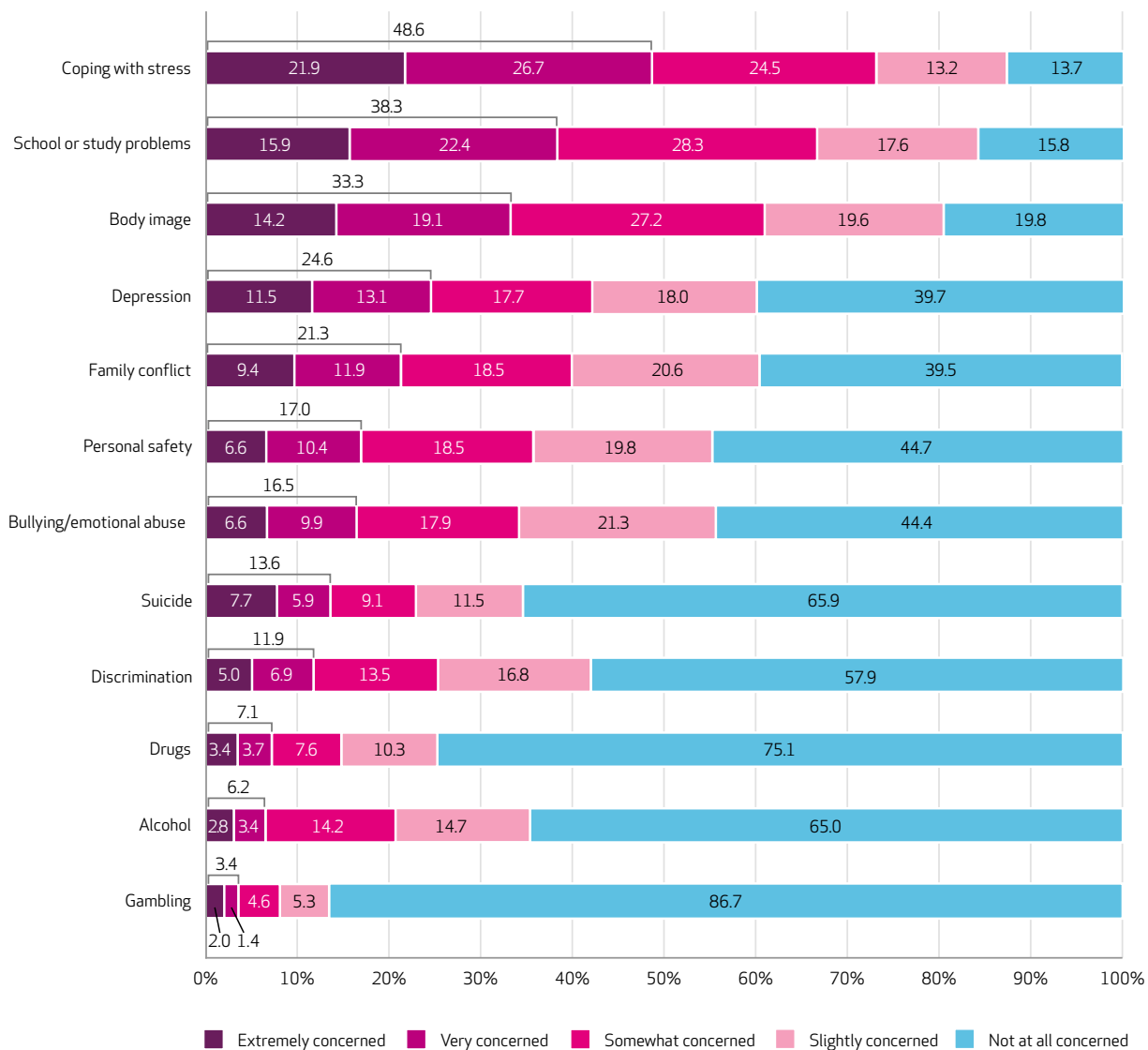
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 4.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from NSW were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified at the national level.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 48.6% of respondents from NSW indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (21.9%) or *very concerned* (26.7%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 38.3% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 15.9%; *very concerned*: 22.4%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 33.3% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 14.2%; *very concerned*: 19.1%).
- Around one in four respondents were either *extremely concerned* (11.5%) or *very concerned* (13.1%) about *depression*.

Figure 4.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *depression* were the top three issues of concern for males in NSW, as highlighted in Table 4.5. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For around six in ten females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 27.9%; *very concerned*: 31.9%), compared with over one in four males (*extremely concerned*: 8.7%; *very concerned*: 16.6%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 45.2% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 19.5%; *very concerned*: 25.7%), compared with 25.3% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.7%; *very concerned*: 16.6%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 42.1% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 18.5%; *very concerned*: 23.6%), compared with 16.3% (*extremely concerned*: 5.5%; *very concerned*: 10.8%) of males.
- *Depression* was a major concern for 27.8% of females (*extremely concerned*: 12.9%; *very concerned*: 14.9%) and 17.3% of males (*extremely concerned*: 7.5%; *very concerned*: 9.8%).

Table 4.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	27.9	31.9	23.8	10.1	6.4
School or study problems	19.5	25.7	28.9	15.9	10.0
Body image	18.5	23.6	29.0	17.6	11.3
Depression	12.9	14.9	19.0	18.8	34.3
Family conflict	10.8	14.2	19.8	21.9	33.3
Personal safety	7.2	11.4	19.6	20.7	41.1
Bullying/emotional abuse	7.0	11.4	19.3	22.4	39.9
Suicide	7.7	6.5	9.9	13.2	62.7
Discrimination	4.9	7.8	14.1	18.4	54.8
Drugs	2.7	3.9	7.8	10.4	75.2
Alcohol	2.1	3.5	14.8	16.1	63.5
Gambling	1.3	1.2	3.9	4.7	89.0
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.0	17.6	26.3	19.3	26.7
School or study problems	8.7	16.6	27.3	21.2	26.2
Body image	5.5	10.8	24.6	24.0	35.1
Depression	7.5	9.8	15.5	16.9	50.3
Family conflict	6.1	7.8	16.4	19.1	50.7
Personal safety	4.9	8.7	16.6	18.2	51.6
Bullying/emotional abuse	4.9	6.8	15.3	19.8	53.2
Suicide	6.3	4.5	7.3	8.7	73.2
Discrimination	4.1	5.2	12.5	13.8	64.3
Drugs	4.0	3.2	7.2	10.1	75.6
Alcohol	3.6	3.1	12.8	12.3	68.2
Gambling	2.7	1.7	5.9	6.5	83.2

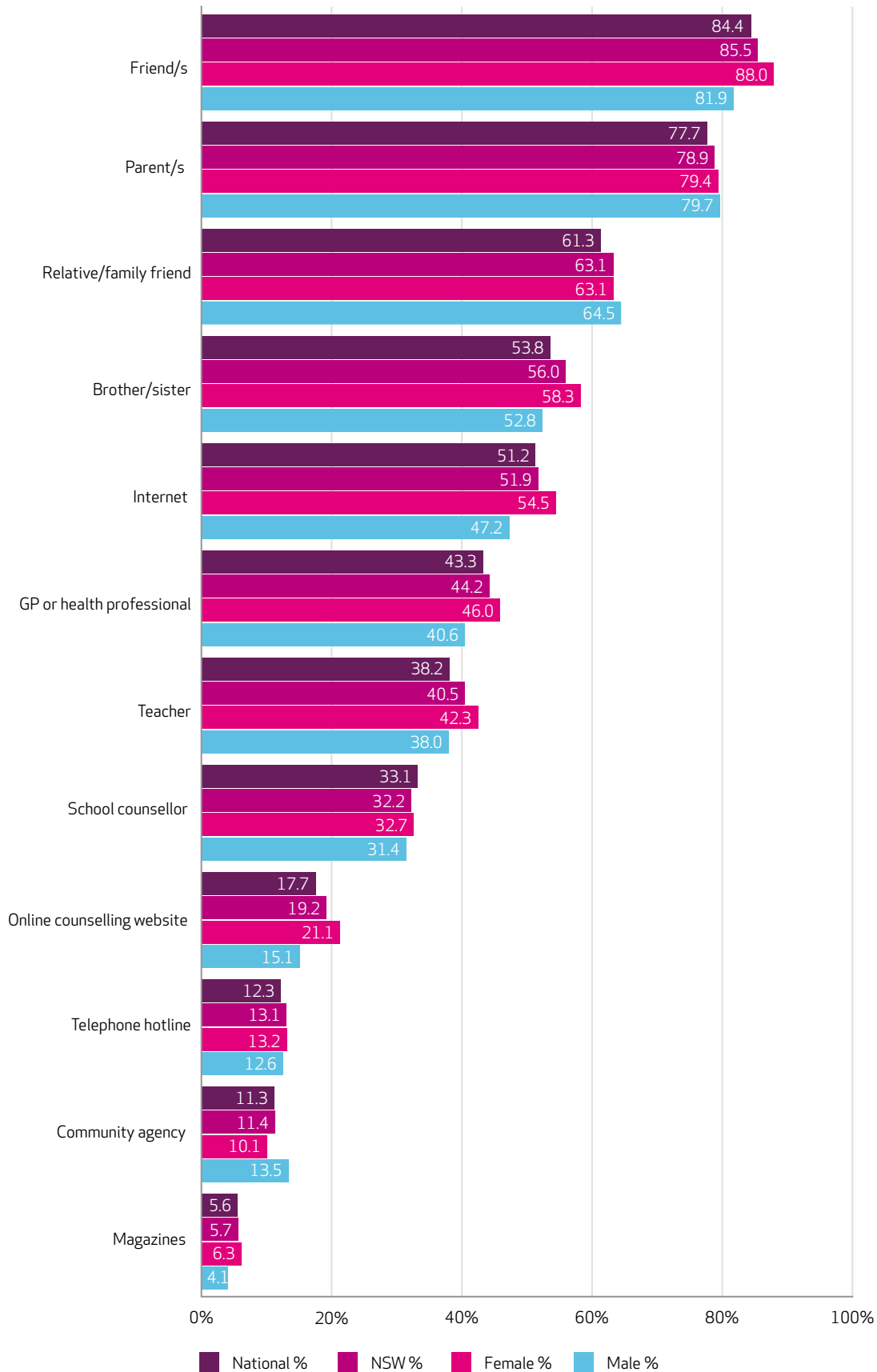
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 4.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in NSW were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (85.5%, 78.9% and 63.1% respectively).
- Over half (56.0%) of all respondents from NSW indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues in their lives.
- About half (51.9%) of all respondents indicated that they would go to the *internet* for help and over four in ten indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (44.2%) with slightly less reporting their *teacher* (40.5%) as a source of help with important issues.

Figure 4.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

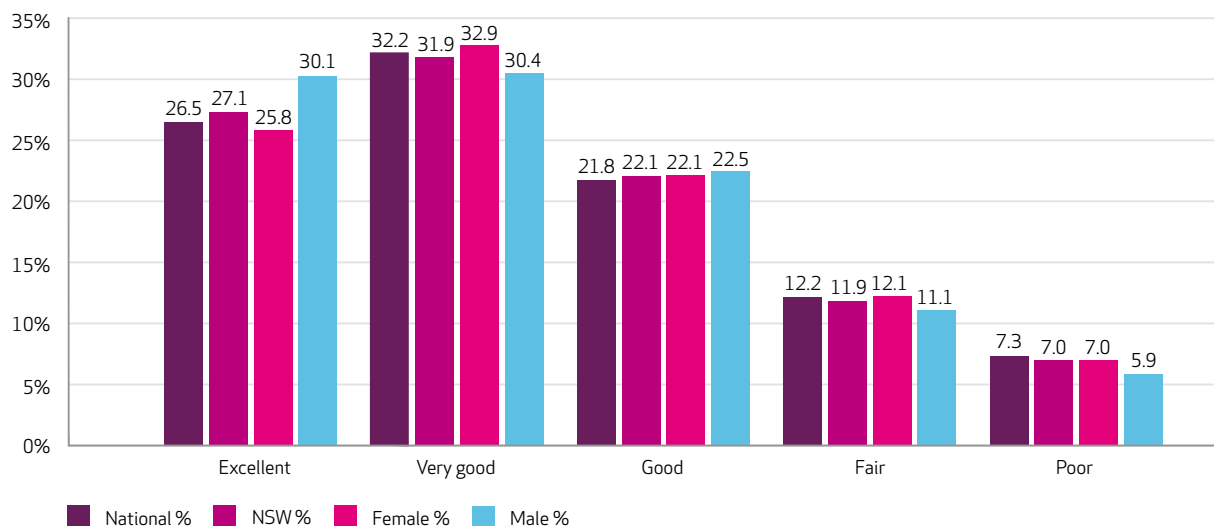
As shown in Figure 4.6, the top three sources of help for both males and females were consistent with NSW and national results. A greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents indicated that they would go to *friend/s* for help with important issues.

- Just under nine in ten female respondents and eight in ten male respondents in NSW indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (88.0% compared with 81.9%).
- Similar proportions of male and female respondents indicated that they would go to *parent/s* (79.7% compared with 79.4%) or a *relative/family friend* for help (64.5% compared with 63.1%).
- Greater proportions of females than males from NSW would go to their *brother/sister* (58.3% compared with 52.8%), a *GP or health professional* (46.0% compared with 40.6%), the *internet* (54.5% compared with 47.2%) or *online counselling websites* (21.1% compared with 15.1%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 4.7 shows that, in line with national results, the majority of respondents from NSW rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 27.1% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 31.9% that it was *very good*. However, almost one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (11.9%) or *poor* (7.0%). A greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (30.1% compared with 25.8%).

Figure 4.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 4.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from NSW were *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *equity and discrimination*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally.

- Almost four in ten (38%) young people identified *mental health* as an important issue in Australia today.
- Over three in ten young people from NSW identified *alcohol and drugs* (31.9%) and around a quarter of young people identified *equity and discrimination* (26.0%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Around one in seven respondents identified *education* (13.9%) and *international relations* (13.2%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *equity and discrimination*, *alcohol and drugs* and *the environment* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *the economy and financial matters*, *politics*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *crime*, *safety and violence*, *international relations* and *bullying* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Mental health and *alcohol and drugs* were the top two issues for both female and male respondents in NSW, although the order was reversed. *Equity and discrimination* was identified as the third most important issue in Australia today by both female and male respondents.

- Around four in ten females (41.7%) and three in ten males (31.5%) identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- Greater proportions of females than males identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue (28.3% compared with 22.1%).
- Conversely, a slightly greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (35.7% compared with 30.0%).

Table 4.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	NSW 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NSW 2016 %	NSW 2015 %
Mental health	33.7	38.0	41.7	31.5	22.6	17.2
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	31.9	30.0	35.7	28.2	25.8
Equity and discrimination	27.3	26.0	28.3	22.1	27.9	24.1
Education	13.0	13.9	14.5	13.1	12.4	13.3
International relations	13.6	13.2	12.5	14.7	18.9	15.4
The economy and financial matters	12.7	12.3	11.7	13.9	14.5	19.9
The environment	10.9	11.9	12.8	10.3	11.0	12.5
Bullying	10.6	11.2	11.5	10.9	10.4	9.4
Population issues	10.3	10.6	11.1	9.6	16.1	15.6
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	10.3	10.6	9.8	12.8	9.3
Health	8.3	8.6	8.6	8.6	10.7	9.9
Employment	10.2	7.9	6.8	9.7	7.0	11.0
Homelessness/housing	8.2	7.8	8.5	6.5	8.3	7.9
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.7	8.4	3.1	6.1	12.1
Politics	6.8	6.4	5.1	8.8	12.9	15.5

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 4.7. The top three activities for young people from NSW, as they were nationally, were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*. These were also the top three activities for young people from NSW in 2016 and 2015.

- Three quarters of young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, six in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and over half were involved in *volunteer work* (74.8%, 62.6% and 56.2% respectively).
- Over half (54.3%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Over four in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (44.8%) and one third had participated in a *religious group/activity* (33.9%) and *youth groups and clubs* (33.3%).
- Around one quarter (24.1%) of young people from NSW had participated in an *environmental group/activity* over the past year.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 4.7, the top activity for both females and males in NSW was *sports (as a participant)* however the following two activities differed between genders. For females, *volunteer work* was the second top activity, followed by *arts/cultural/music activities*. For males, *sports (as a spectator)* was the second top activity, followed by *volunteer work*.

- A total of 75.8% of male respondents and 74.8% of female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* over the past year.
- A larger proportion of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (65.7% compared with 61.1%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *volunteer work* (62.2% compared with 45.7%).

Table 4.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	NSW 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NSW 2016 %	NSW 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	74.8	74.8	75.8	78.1	74.6
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	62.6	61.1	65.7	68.1	66.8
Volunteer work	54.1	56.2	62.2	45.7	56.0	53.2
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	54.3	61.8	40.5	52.9	52.1
Student leadership activities	41.3	44.8	50.7	34.8	44.2	44.4
Religious group/activity	29.2	33.9	37.5	28.1	31.1	36.1
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	33.3	34.8	30.7	32.6	34.8
Environmental group/activity	23.7	24.1	26.1	20.9	25.2	21.1
Political groups/organisations	8.2	8.6	8.8	7.3	8.3	8.3

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

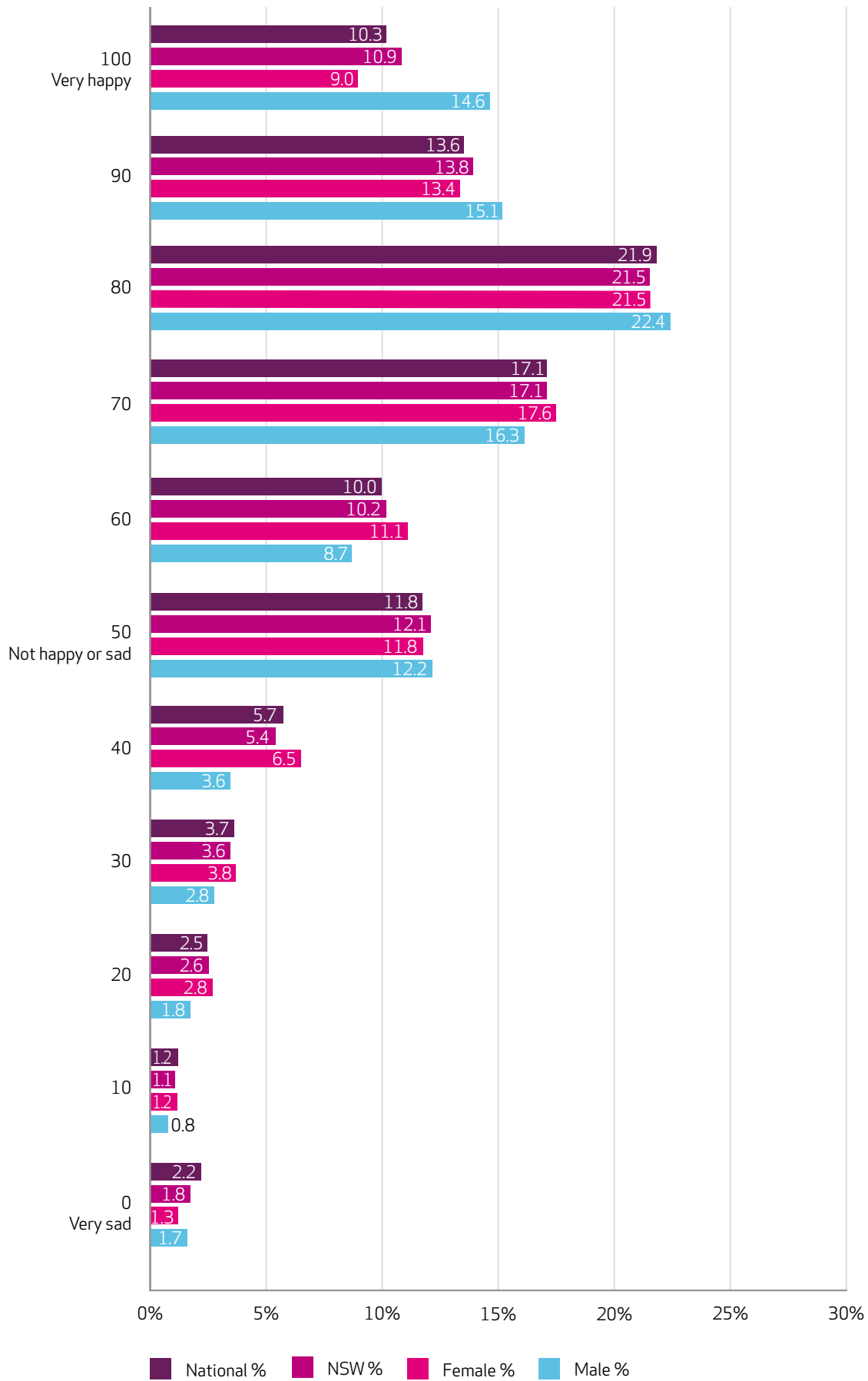
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 4.8 shows, the majority of young people from NSW (63.3%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (14.6% compared with 9.0%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 4.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 4.8 shows that, in line with the national results, around two thirds of respondents from NSW felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, less than one in ten young people from NSW felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around two thirds of respondents from NSW felt either *positive* (47.4%) or *very positive* (15.8%) about the future.
- Over one quarter of respondents (27.2%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- A total of 6.8% of respondents felt *negative* about the future and 2.8% felt *very negative*.
- A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 19.7% of males indicating they felt *very positive* about the future compared to 13.8% of females.

Table 4.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	NSW 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NSW 2016 %	NSW 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	15.8	13.8	19.7	17.9	15.2
Positive	46.6	47.4	48.1	47.2	47.2	46.8
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	27.2	28.5	24.9	25.9	28.5
Negative	7.1	6.8	7.4	5.2	6.5	7.5
Very negative	3.1	2.8	2.2	3.0	2.5	1.9

Northern Territory



Profile of respondents

In total, 275 young people from the Northern Territory (NT) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

A total of 58.5% of respondents from the NT were female and 33.8% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 58 (21.2%) respondents from the NT identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 52 (19.0%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 3 (1.1%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 1.1% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (20.9% compared with 16.8%).

Language background other than English

A total of 76 (27.9%) respondents from the NT stated that they were born overseas and 107 (39.2%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 30 languages spoken at home in the NT, the most common were Tiwi and Filipino/Tagalog.

Disability

A total of 17 (6.6%) respondents from the NT indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (6.9%) than females (4.5%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in the NT were (in order of frequency): intellectual disability, learning disability, autism and deafness or hearing impairment.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 5.1, 91.3% of respondents from the NT were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (94.4% compared with 91.4%), while a slightly greater proportion of males (5.4%) than females (4.3%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from the NT reported that they were either *very satisfied* (8.5%) or *satisfied* (56.6%) with their studies. Around one in ten were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (3.9% and 7.0% respectively). As shown in Table 5.2, a slightly higher proportion of females than males from the NT reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (11.7% and 57.1% of females compared with 3.4% and 63.6% of males respectively).

Table 5.1: Participation in education

	National %	NT %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	91.3	94.4	91.4
Studying part-time	2.1	2.5	1.2	3.2
Not studying	3.0	6.2	4.3	5.4

Table 5.2: Satisfaction with studies

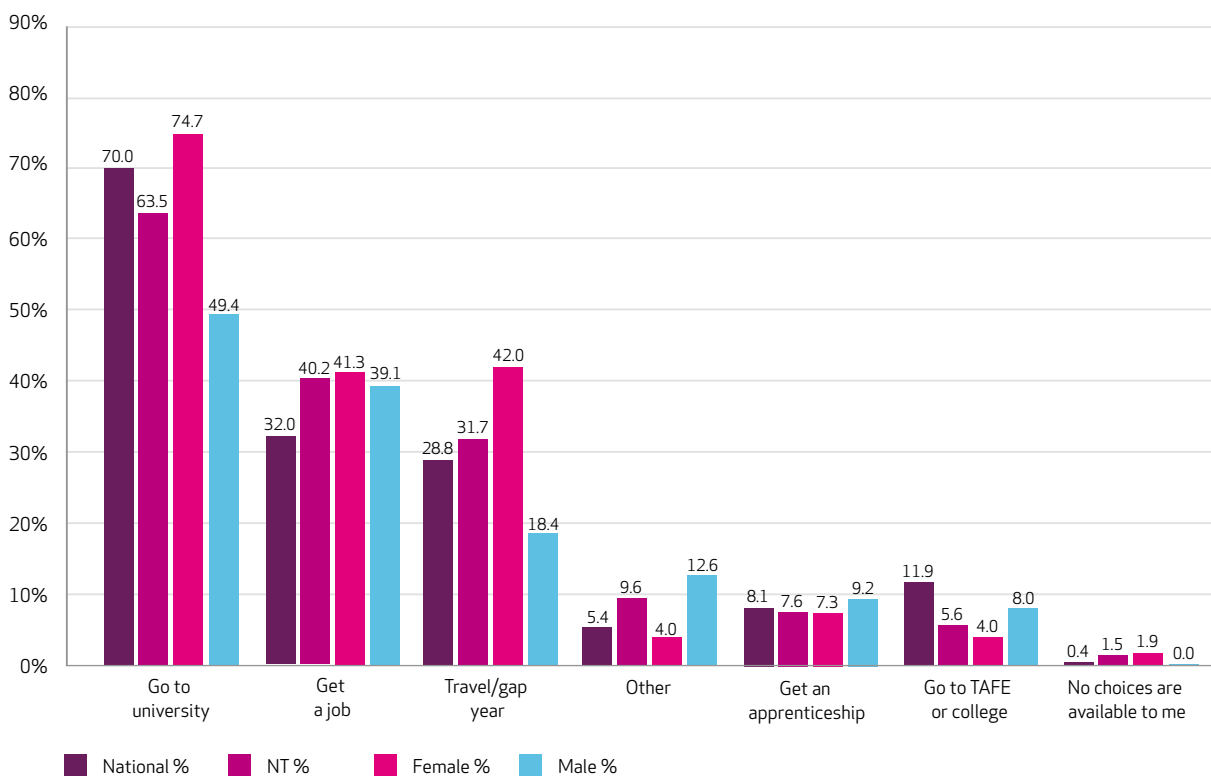
	National %	NT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NT 2016 %	NT 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	8.5	11.7	3.4	11.6	17.7
Satisfied	56.4	56.6	57.1	63.6	48.1	58.1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	24.0	26.0	19.3	30.6	15.2
Dissatisfied	5.4	7.0	4.5	9.1	4.6	6.6
Very dissatisfied	1.7	3.9	0.6	4.5	5.1	2.5

Of those who were still at school in the NT, 96.4% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A slightly higher proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (3.4% compared with 2.7% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 29.0% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a similar proportion of females and males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (28.8% and 28.3% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 5.1 shows that 63.5% of respondents from the NT planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (40.2%) and to travel or go on a gap year (31.7%) after school. Overall, 7.6% of young people from the NT planned to attend TAFE or college and 5.6% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A minority of respondents (1.5%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both male and female respondents from the NT, a much higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (74.7% compared with 49.4% respectively). A much greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (42.0% compared with 18.4%). A larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (9.2% compared with 7.3% of females) and to attend TAFE or college (8.0% compared with 4.0%).

Figure 5.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 5.3 shows participation in paid employment amongst respondents from the NT. In line with the national results, only a minority (1.9%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Just over four in ten (43.2%) respondents from the NT reported part-time employment. Around half of NT respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 32.2% looking for work and 22.7% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents from the NT reported full-time employment (2.2% compared with 1.3% respectively), while there was a higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (50.3% compared with 35.6%). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (35.6% compared with 28.7%).

Table 5.3: Participation in paid employment

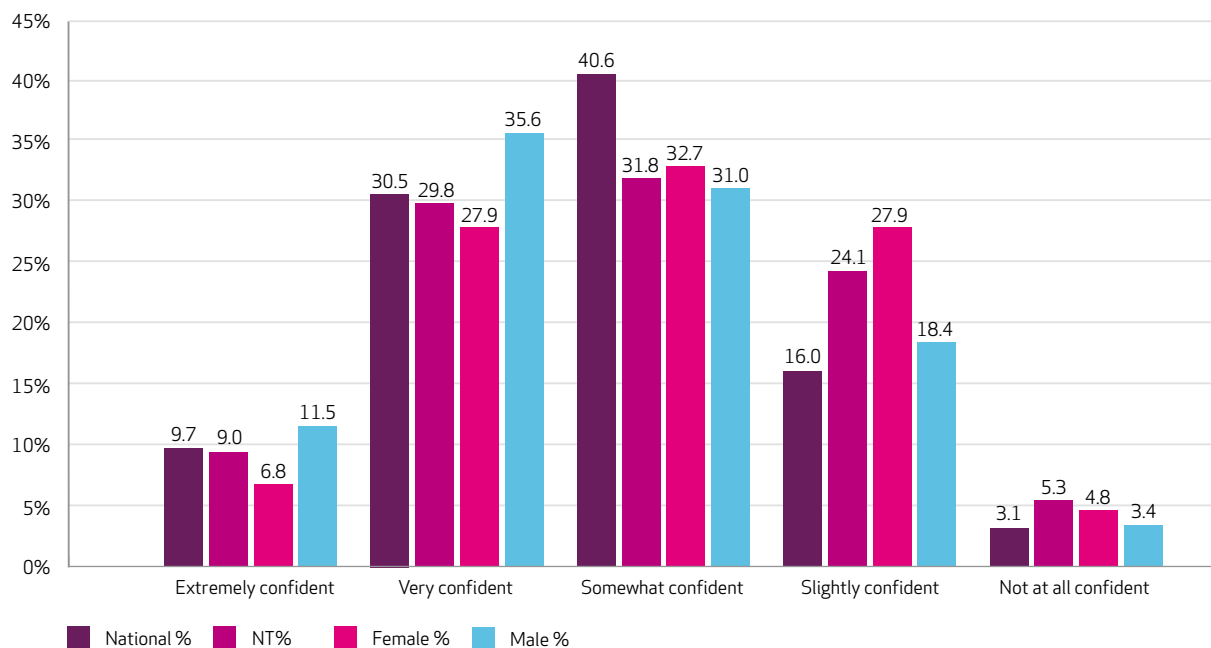
	National %	NT %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	1.9	1.3	2.2
Employed part-time	40.5	43.2	50.3	35.6
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	32.2	28.7	35.6
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	22.7	19.7	26.7

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 5.2. Four in ten respondents indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.0% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 29.8% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, three in ten young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 24.1% being *slightly confident* and 5.3% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (11.5% and 35.6% of males compared with 6.8% and 27.9% of females respectively).

Figure 5.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Around two thirds (65.7%) of respondents indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a slightly greater proportion of females (66.7%) than males (63.2%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 5.3 shows the percentage of respondents from the NT who indicated each item as being a barrier. In the NT, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *where you live*.

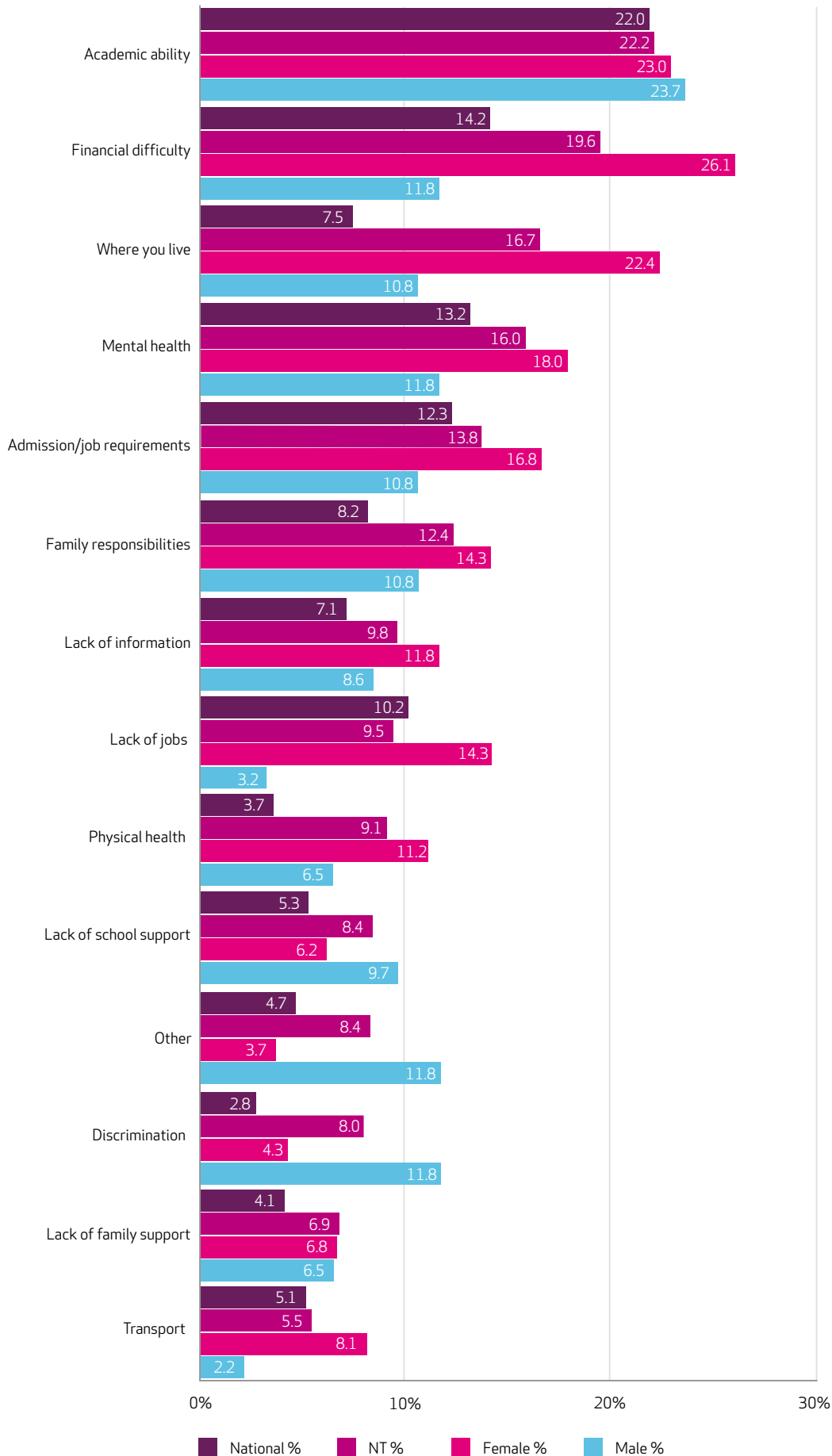
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *where you live* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (22.2%, 19.6% and 16.7% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 5.3, the top three barriers for females were *financial difficulty*, *academic ability* and *where you live*, while for males the top barrier was *academic ability*, with *financial difficulty*, *mental health* and *discrimination* the second top barriers (all in equal proportions). A greater proportion of females than males indicated that many of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Close to one quarter of female and male respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (23.0% and 23.7% respectively).
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *financial difficulty* and *where you live* as barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (26.1% compared with 11.8% and 22.4% compared with 10.8% respectively).
- More than twice the proportion of males than females indicated that *discrimination* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (11.8% compared with 4.3%).

Figure 5.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



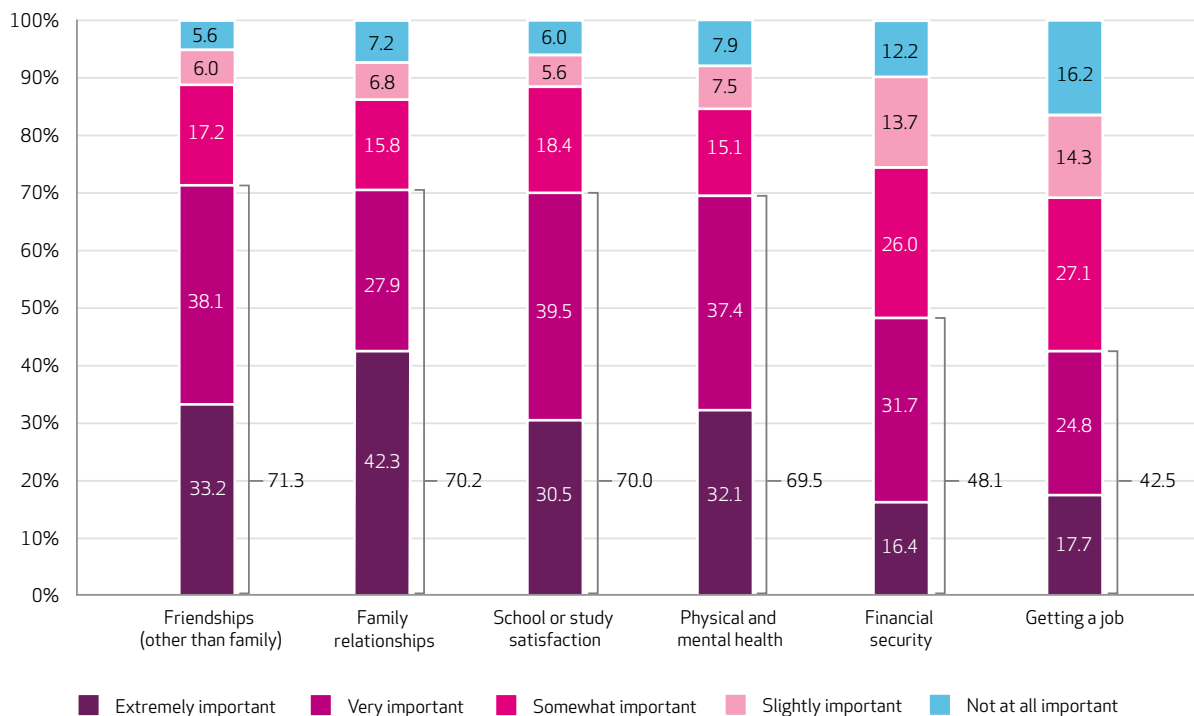
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017, young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 5.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from the NT this year were *friendships*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for NT respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were highly valued by 71.3% of respondents from the NT (*extremely important*: 33.2%; *very important*: 38.1%) and *family relationships* were highly valued by 70.2% of respondents (*extremely important*: 42.3%; *very important*: 27.9%).
- Seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 30.5%; *very important*: 39.5%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 32.1%; *very important*: 37.4%).
- Almost half of NT respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 16.4%; *very important*: 31.7%) and over four in ten on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 17.7%; *very important*: 24.8%).

Figure 5.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships, *friendships* and *school or study satisfaction* were ranked as the three most highly valued items by both females and males in the NT, as shown in Table 5.4. The order of the top three items differed, however, with *family relationships*, *school or study satisfaction* and *friendships* being the top three most highly valued items for females, while for males *friendships* was the most highly valued, followed by *school or study satisfaction* and then *family relationships*. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 79.8% of females (*extremely important*: 50.6%; *very important*: 29.2%) compared with 66.0% of males (*extremely important*: 35.2%; *very important*: 30.8%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 77.1% of females (*extremely important*: 33.8%; *very important*: 43.3%) compared with 71.5% of males (*extremely important*: 35.2%; *very important*: 36.3%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 78.0% of females (*extremely important*: 36.1%; *very important*: 41.9%) and 67.1% of males (*extremely important*: 25.3%; *very important*: 41.8%).
- Just over three quarters (76.0%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 33.1%; *very important*: 42.9%) compared with 64.9% of males (*extremely important*: 31.9%; *very important*: 33.0%).

Table 5.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	33.8	43.3	16.6	5.1	1.3
Family relationships	50.6	29.2	14.3	3.9	1.9
School or study satisfaction	36.1	41.9	16.8	4.5	0.6
Physical and mental health	33.1	42.9	16.9	5.2	1.9
Financial security	17.9	35.8	25.2	13.9	7.3
Getting a job	18.2	29.9	27.3	13.6	11.0
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	35.2	36.3	17.6	6.6	4.4
Family relationships	35.2	30.8	18.7	9.9	5.5
School or study satisfaction	25.3	41.8	20.9	6.6	5.5
Physical and mental health	31.9	33.0	15.4	11.0	8.8
Financial security	15.4	29.7	29.7	13.2	12.1
Getting a job	17.4	19.6	30.4	15.2	17.4

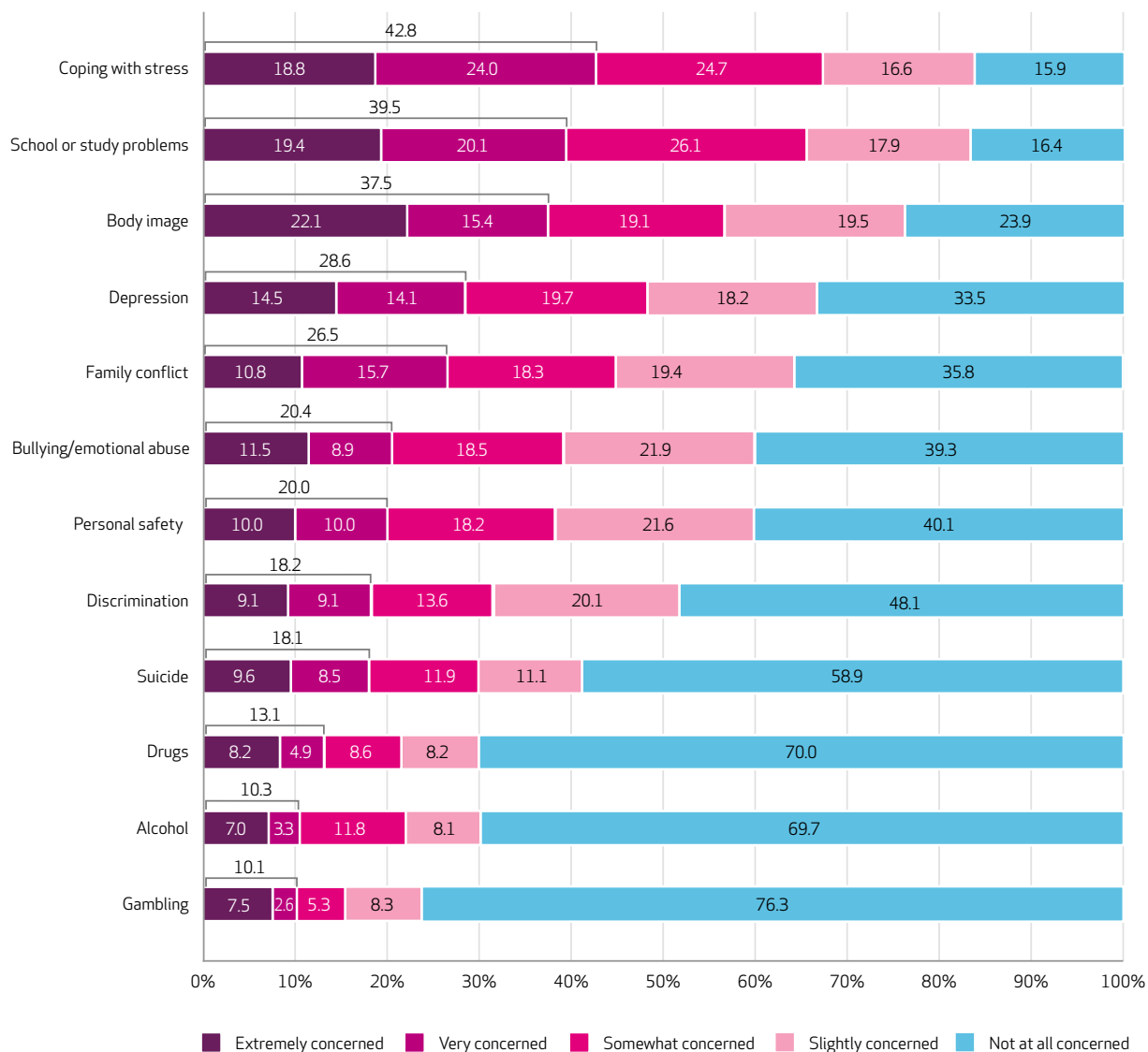
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 5.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from the NT were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 42.8% of respondents from the NT indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (18.8%) or *very concerned* (24.0%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 39.5% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 19.4%; *very concerned*: 20.1%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 37.5% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 22.1%; *very concerned*: 15.4%).
- Almost three in ten respondents were either *extremely concerned* (14.5%) or *very concerned* (14.1%) about depression.

Figure 5.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and males in the NT, as highlighted in Table 5.5. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- Over half of females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 23.4%; *very concerned*: 29.7%), compared with under three in ten for males (*extremely concerned*: 10.9%; *very concerned*: 18.5%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 52.3% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 25.2%; *very concerned*: 27.1%), compared with 21.7% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.7%; *very concerned*: 13.0%).
- Concerns about *body image* were also considerably higher among females, with 46.2% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 26.6%; *very concerned*: 19.6%), compared with 20.5% of males (*extremely concerned*: 10.8%; *very concerned*: 9.7%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 32.7% of females (*extremely concerned*: 13.5%; *very concerned*: 19.2%) and 17.4% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.7%; *very concerned*: 8.7%).

Table 5.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	23.4	29.7	27.2	12.0	7.6
School or study problems	25.2	27.1	27.1	12.9	7.7
Body image	26.6	19.6	20.3	16.5	17.1
Depression	13.5	19.2	23.1	17.9	26.3
Family conflict	11.0	21.4	20.1	18.2	29.2
Bullying/emotional abuse	10.2	11.5	20.4	22.9	35.0
Personal safety	10.9	10.9	23.1	26.3	28.8
Discrimination	5.2	11.7	16.2	22.1	44.8
Suicide	7.7	12.2	12.8	14.7	52.6
Drugs	3.9	7.1	9.7	8.4	71.0
Alcohol	3.2	4.5	10.2	10.8	71.3
Gambling	2.6	1.3	6.5	9.8	79.7
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.9	18.5	22.8	23.9	23.9
School or study problems	8.7	13.0	25.0	29.3	23.9
Body image	10.8	9.7	18.3	28.0	33.3
Depression	8.7	8.7	17.4	20.7	44.6
Family conflict	5.4	7.5	19.4	22.6	45.2
Bullying/emotional abuse	5.4	6.5	17.4	22.8	47.8
Personal safety	6.5	9.8	13.0	15.2	55.4
Discrimination	7.8	5.6	11.1	18.9	56.7
Suicide	5.4	3.2	12.9	6.5	72.0
Drugs	7.7	2.2	6.6	9.9	73.6
Alcohol	6.5	2.2	15.1	4.3	72.0
Gambling	7.6	5.4	4.3	6.5	76.1

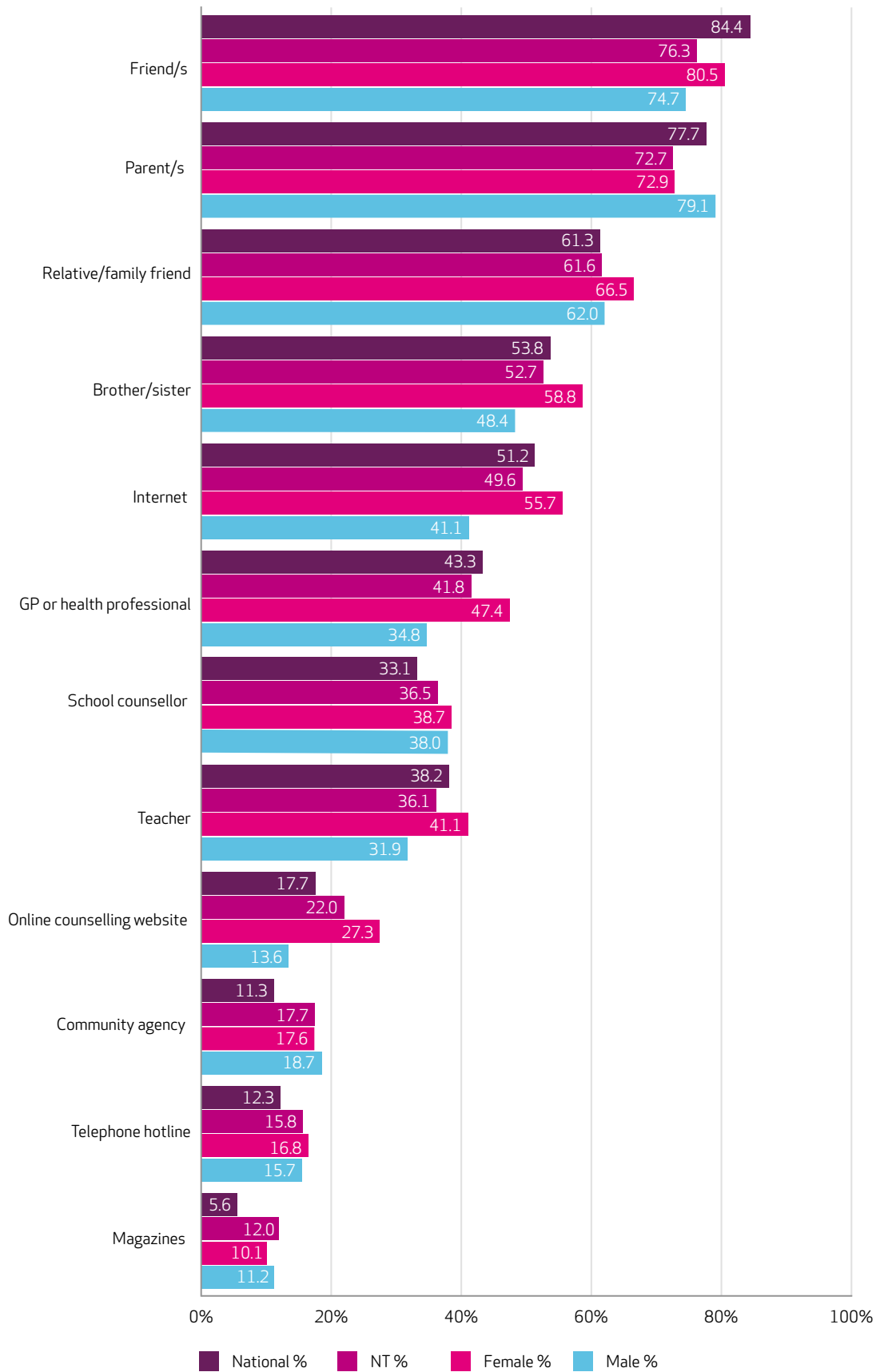
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 5.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in the NT were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and a *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (76.3%, 72.7% and 61.6% respectively).
- Over half (52.7%) of all respondents from the NT indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues in their lives.
- Half of all respondents indicated that they would go to the *internet* (49.6%) for help and around four in ten indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (41.8%).

Figure 5.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

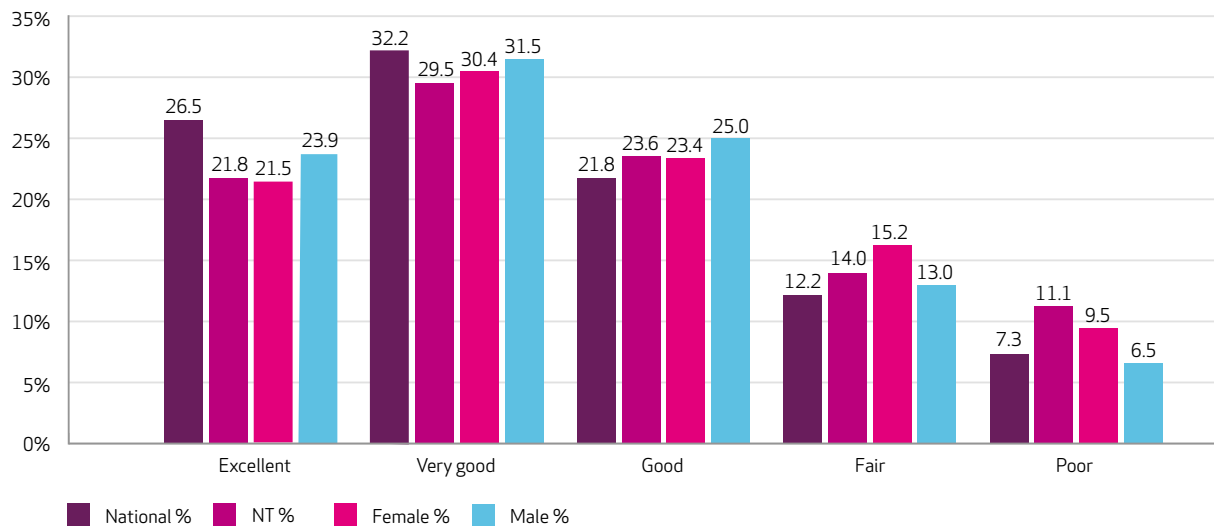
As shown in Figure 5.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with the NT and the national results. A greater proportion of females indicated that they would go to *friend/s* or a *relative/family friend* for help with important issues, while a greater proportion of males indicated that they would go to their *parent/s*.

- Eight in ten female respondents and three quarters of male respondents in the NT indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (80.5% compared with 74.7%).
- A higher proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they would go to their *parent/s* (79.1% compared with 72.9%).
- Greater proportions of females than males from the NT would go to their *relative/family friend* (66.5% compared with 62.0%), *brother/sister* (58.8% compared with 48.4%), the *internet* (55.7% compared with 41.1%), a *GP or health professional* (47.4% compared with 34.8%) or their *teacher* (41.1% compared with 31.9%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 5.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from the NT rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 21.8% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 29.5% that it was *very good*. One quarter of young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (14.0%) or *poor* (11.1%). A slightly greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (23.9% compared with 21.5%).

Figure 5.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 5.6. In 2017, the top three issues identified by young people from the NT were *alcohol and drugs*, *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally, although the order of the top two was reversed.

- Just over one third of young people from the NT identified *alcohol and drugs* (35.0%) and *mental health* (34.2%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Over one quarter (27.4%) of young people from the NT identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue in Australia today.
- Around one in ten respondents identified *health* (11.5%), *education* (10.7%), *international relations* (10.7%) and *the economy and financial matters* (10.3%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *equity and discrimination*, *body image* and *international relations* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *homelessness*, *crime, safety and violence*, *alcohol and drugs*, *employment*, *education*, *population issues* and *bullying* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Mental health, alcohol and drugs and equity and discrimination were the top three issues for both female and male respondents in the NT, although the order of the top items differed. For females, the number one national issue was *mental health*, followed by *alcohol and drugs* and then *equity and discrimination*. For males, the top national issue was *alcohol and drugs*, followed by *equity and discrimination* and then *mental health*.

- Greater proportions of females than males identified *mental health* as an important national issue (41.3% compared with 27.3%).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* (39.0% compared with 35.5%) and *equity and discrimination* (31.2% compared with 27.5%) as important issues for Australia.

Table 5.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	NT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NT 2016 %	NT 2015 %
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	35.0	35.5	39.0	35.8	40.8
Mental health	33.7	34.2	41.3	27.3	16.8	19.7
Equity and discrimination	27.3	27.4	27.5	31.2	21.6	20.6
Health	8.3	11.5	10.9	13.0	5.8	7.3
Education	13.0	10.7	9.4	14.3	8.4	13.8
International relations	13.6	10.7	7.2	13.0	7.4	8.7
The economy and financial matters	12.7	10.3	8.0	14.3	11.1	11.5
Population issues	10.3	9.4	5.8	14.3	14.2	12.4
Bullying	10.6	8.5	10.1	7.8	9.5	10.6
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	8.1	8.7	9.1	11.6	14.2
The environment	10.9	7.3	8.0	7.8	13.7	6.9
Employment	10.2	6.4	6.5	7.8	4.7	11.5
Body image	4.6	6.0	8.7	2.6	1.6	1.2
Homelessness/housing	8.2	6.0	6.5	6.5	4.7	14.7
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.0	8.0	2.6	4.7	6.4

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 5.7. The top activity for young people from the NT was *sports (as a participant)*, as it was nationally, followed by *arts/cultural/music activities* and *sport (as a participant)*.

- Six in ten (60.2%) young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, while over half were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work* (55.6%, 55.1% and 51.8% respectively).
- Around four in ten young people reported participation in *youth groups and clubs* (42.4%) and *religious group/activity* (37.9%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 5.7, the top activity for both females and males in the NT was *sports (as a participant)* however the following two activities differed between genders. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the second top activity, followed by *volunteer work*. For males, *sports (as a spectator)* was the second top activity, followed by *arts/cultural/music activities*.

- A total of 61.2% of female respondents and 59.1% of male respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* over the past year.
- A larger proportion of male than female respondents was involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (58.6% compared with 55.3%).
- Overall, greater proportions of females than males from the NT were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (58.7% compared with 49.4%) and *volunteer work* (58.3% compared with 44.9%).

Table 5.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	NT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NT 2016 %	NT 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	60.2	61.2	59.1	71.4	69.8
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	55.6	58.7	49.4	56.4	61.6
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	55.1	55.3	58.6	60.8	60.6
Volunteer work	54.1	51.8	58.3	44.9	53.8	60.2
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	42.4	44.6	38.2	35.2	45.3
Religious group/activity	29.2	37.9	40.4	31.4	28.8	34.3
Student leadership activities	41.3	35.7	37.9	33.3	36.8	48.1
Environmental group/activity	23.7	27.5	26.1	28.4	31.7	33.0
Political groups/organisations	8.2	14.9	12.4	15.1	10.5	17.1

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

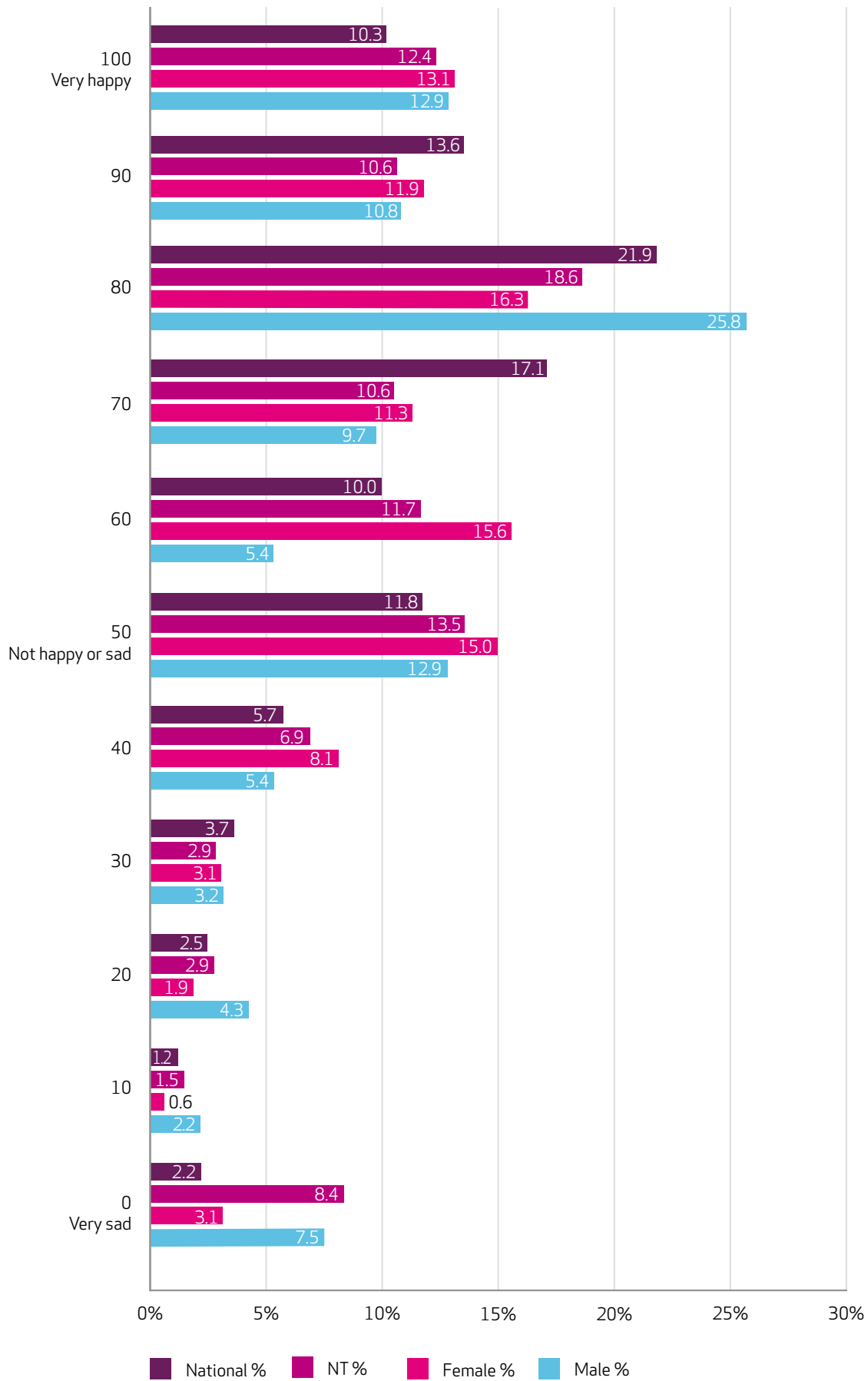
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 5.8 shows, just over half of young people from the NT (52.2%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is a lower proportion than found nationally (69.2%). A greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very sad* with their lives as a whole (7.5% compared with 3.1%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 5.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 5.8 shows that the majority of respondents from the NT felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, a higher proportion of young people from the NT felt *very negative* about the future when compared to the national results (7.1% compared to 3.1% nationally).

- Just under six in ten respondents from the NT felt either *positive* (44.2%) or *very positive* (13.0%) about the future.
- Around three in ten (28.6%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- Equal proportions felt *negative* or *very negative* about the future (both 7.1%).
- A higher proportion of females than males reported feeling generally positive about the future (*very positive*: 12.7%; *positive*: 47.8% for females compared with *very positive*: 13.2%; *positive*: 42.9% for males).
- A slightly higher proportion of males than females reported feeling *very negative* about the future (5.5% compared with 3.8%).

Table 5.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	NT 2017 %	Female %	Male %	NT 2016 %	NT 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	13.0	12.7	13.2	19.8	13.1
Positive	46.6	44.2	47.8	42.9	35.9	47.6
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	28.6	27.4	34.1	30.4	28.8
Negative	7.1	7.1	8.3	4.4	6.3	6.1
Very negative	3.1	7.1	3.8	5.5	7.6	4.4

Queensland



Profile of respondents

In total 4,589 young people from Queensland (QLD) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Around half (50.9%) of respondents from QLD were female and 46.0% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 183 (4.1%) respondents from QLD identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 141 (3.1%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 26 (0.6%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.4% identified as both). A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (4.1% compared with 3.3%).

Language background other than English

A total of 798 (17.5%) respondents from QLD stated that they were born overseas and 769 (16.9%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 70 languages spoken at home in QLD, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Korean, Mandarin, Filipino/Tagalog, Japanese and Vietnamese.

Disability

A total of 198 (4.4%) respondents from QLD indicated that they had a disability, with almost double the proportion of males (5.0%) than females (2.9%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in QLD were (in order of frequency): autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disability, physical disability and deafness or hearing impairment.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 6.1, 95.5% of respondents from QLD were studying full-time. About the same proportions of female and male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (96.6% and 94.7%), while a slightly greater proportion of males (3.2%) than females (1.9%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from QLD reported that they were either *very satisfied* (15.1%) or *satisfied* (56.6%) with their studies. A minority of respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.8% and 5.0% respectively). As shown in Table 6.2, similar proportions of females and males from QLD reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (13.8% and 59.2% of females compared with 16.5% and 55.0% of males respectively).

Table 6.1: Participation in education

	National %	QLD %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	95.5	96.6	94.7
Studying part-time	2.1	1.8	1.5	2.0
Not studying	3.0	2.7	1.9	3.2

Table 6.2: Satisfaction with studies

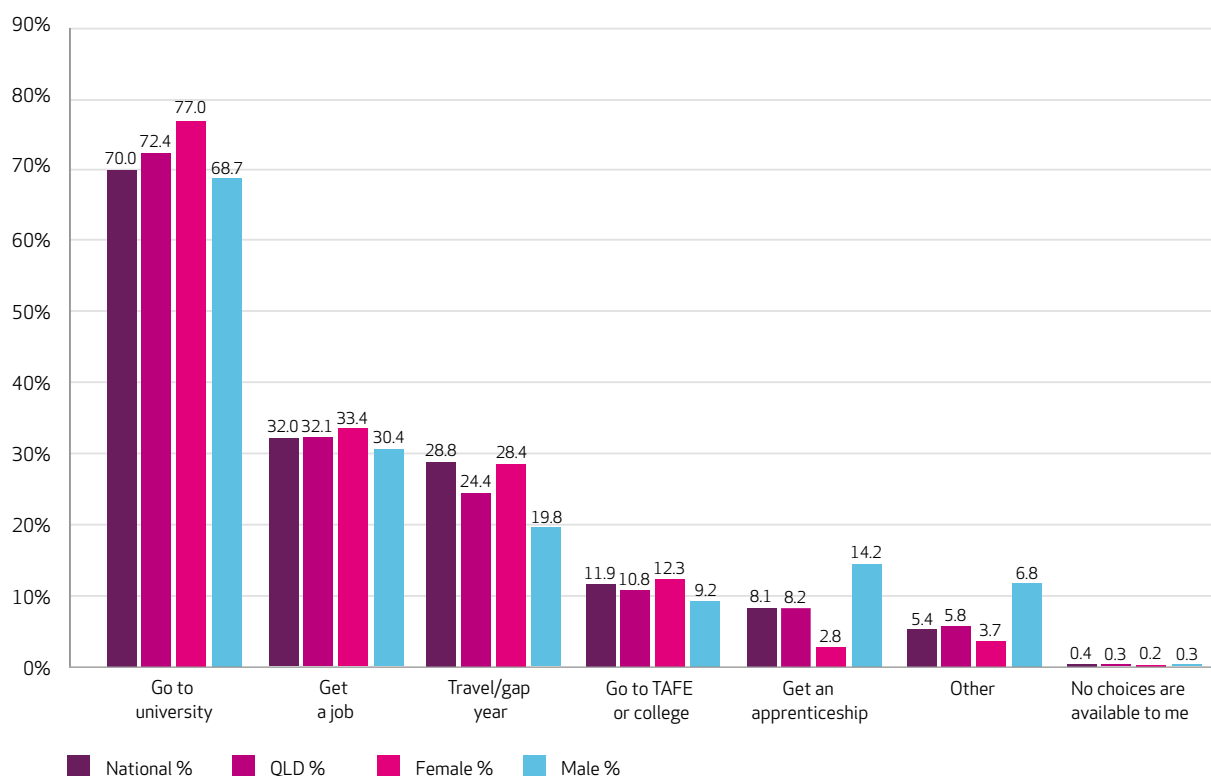
	National %	QLD 2017 %	Female %	Male %	QLD 2016 %	QLD 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	15.1	13.8	16.5	16.1	17.9
Satisfied	56.4	56.6	59.2	55.0	58.8	57.6
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	21.5	20.5	22.1	20.8	19.6
Dissatisfied	5.4	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.1	3.9
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.0

Of those who were still at school in QLD, 98.4% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A slightly greater proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (2.0% compared with 0.9% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 23.0% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a similar proportion of females and males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (23.9% compared with 21.5% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 6.1 shows that just over seven in ten (72.4%) respondents from QLD planned to go to university after school. Around three in ten respondents also indicated plans to get a job (32.1%) and close to one quarter (24.4%) planned to travel or go on a gap year after school. Overall, 10.8% of young people from QLD planned to attend TAFE or college and 8.2% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.3%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from QLD, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (77.0% compared with 68.7% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (28.4% compared with 19.8% of males). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (14.2% compared with 2.8% of females).

Figure 6.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 6.3 shows participation in paid employment amongst respondents from QLD. In line with national results, only a minority (0.6%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. More than four in ten (43.1%) respondents from QLD reported part-time employment. Almost six in ten QLD respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 34.1% looking for work and 22.3% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents from QLD reported full-time employment (0.9% compared with 0.2% respectively), while there was a higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (48.2% compared with 37.7% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (35.9% compared with 32.4% of females).

Table 6.3: Participation in paid employment

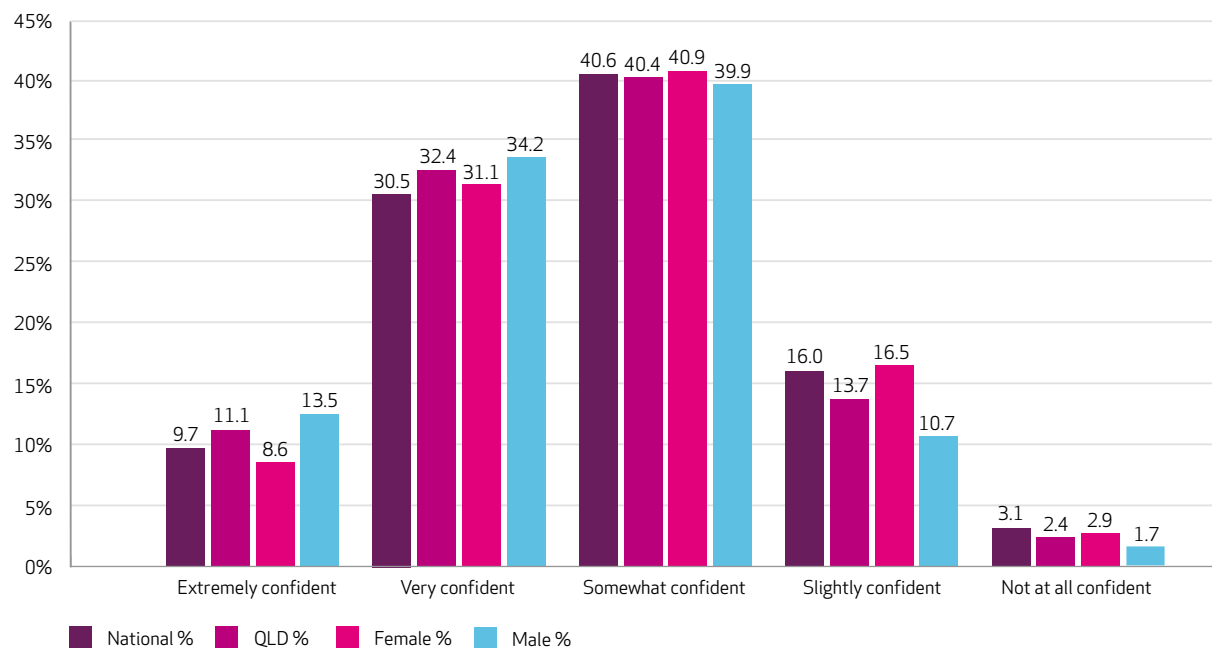
	National %	QLD %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.9
Employed part-time	40.5	43.1	48.2	37.7
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	34.1	32.4	35.9
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	22.3	19.2	25.5

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 6.2. Over four in ten respondents from QLD indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 11.1% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 32.4% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, one in six young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 13.7% being *slightly confident* and 2.4% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (13.5% and 34.2% of males compared with 8.6% and 31.1% of females).

Figure 6.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Around half (50.4%) of respondents from QLD indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (57.3%) than males (42.4%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 6.3 shows the percentage of respondents from QLD who indicated each item as being a barrier. In QLD, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *admission/job requirements*.

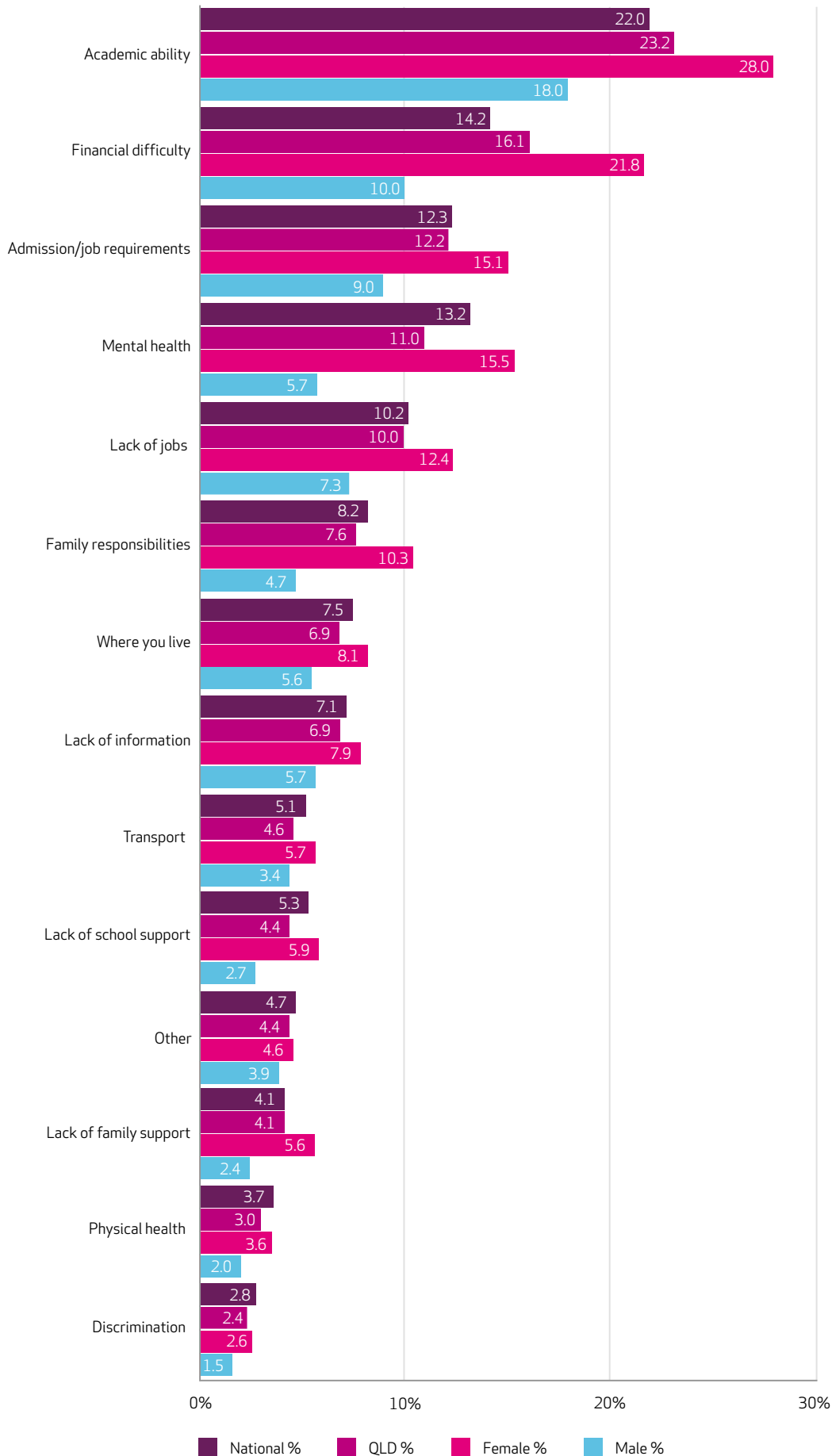
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *admission/job requirements* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (23.2%, 16.1% and 12.2% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 6.3, the top two barriers for both females and males were *academic ability* and *financial difficulty*. However, for females *mental health* was the third top barrier, while for males it was *admission/job requirements*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that all of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Almost three in ten female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared with close to one in five male respondents (28.0% compared with 18.0% respectively).
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *financial difficulty* as a barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (21.8% compared with 10.0%).
- Almost three times the proportion of female than male respondents indicated that *mental health* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (15.5% compared with 5.7%).
- A greater proportion of females than males indicated that *admission/job requirements* was a barrier which may impact on their study/work goals after school (15.1% compared with 9.0%).

Figure 6.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



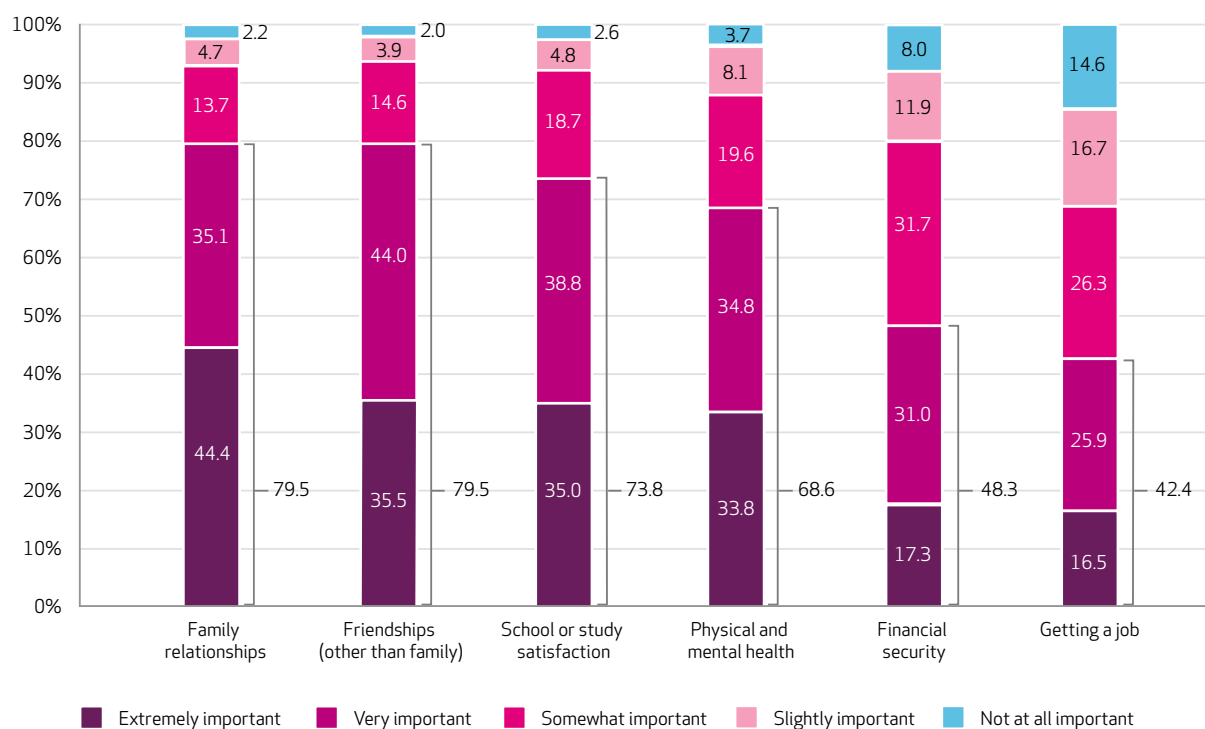
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 6.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from QLD this year were *family relationships* and *friendships* (equal first) followed by *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for QLD respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Family relationships* and *friendships* were both valued highly by 79.5% of respondents (*extremely important*: 44.4%; *very important*: 35.1% and *extremely important*: 35.5%; *very important*: 44.0%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 35.0%; *very important*: 38.8%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 33.8%; *very important*: 34.8%).
- Almost half of QLD respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 17.3%; *very important*: 31.0%).

Figure 6.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by both females and males in QLD, as shown in Table 6.4. The order of these items differed however, with *family relationships* being the most highly valued item for females, while for males *friendships* were valued most highly. The third top item was *school or study satisfaction* and for both female and male respondents. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 82.3% of females (*extremely important*: 49.9%; *very important*: 32.4%) compared with 77.5% of males (*extremely important*: 39.2%; *very important*: 38.3%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 81.7% of females (*extremely important*: 38.2%; *very important*: 43.5%) compared with 77.9% of males (*extremely important*: 32.4%; *very important*: 45.5%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 77.9% of females (*extremely important*: 39.3%; *very important*: 38.6%) and 70.1% of males (*extremely important*: 30.8%; *very important*: 39.3%).
- Seven in ten (70.3%) females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 36.2%; *very important*: 34.1%) compared with 67.2% of males (*extremely important*: 30.7%; *very important*: 36.5%).

Table 6.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	49.9	32.4	11.8	4.5	1.4
Friendships (other than family)	38.2	43.5	13.2	3.8	1.4
School or study satisfaction	39.3	38.6	16.9	3.8	1.4
Physical and mental health	36.2	34.1	19.7	7.8	2.3
Financial security	16.9	33.9	32.8	10.2	6.1
Getting a job	16.4	27.3	28.1	15.4	12.8
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	39.2	38.3	15.3	4.8	2.5
Friendships (other than family)	32.4	45.5	16.2	3.9	2.0
School or study satisfaction	30.8	39.3	20.7	5.7	3.5
Physical and mental health	30.7	36.5	20.0	8.0	4.8
Financial security	17.3	28.7	30.8	13.9	9.4
Getting a job	16.2	24.8	24.5	18.4	16.0

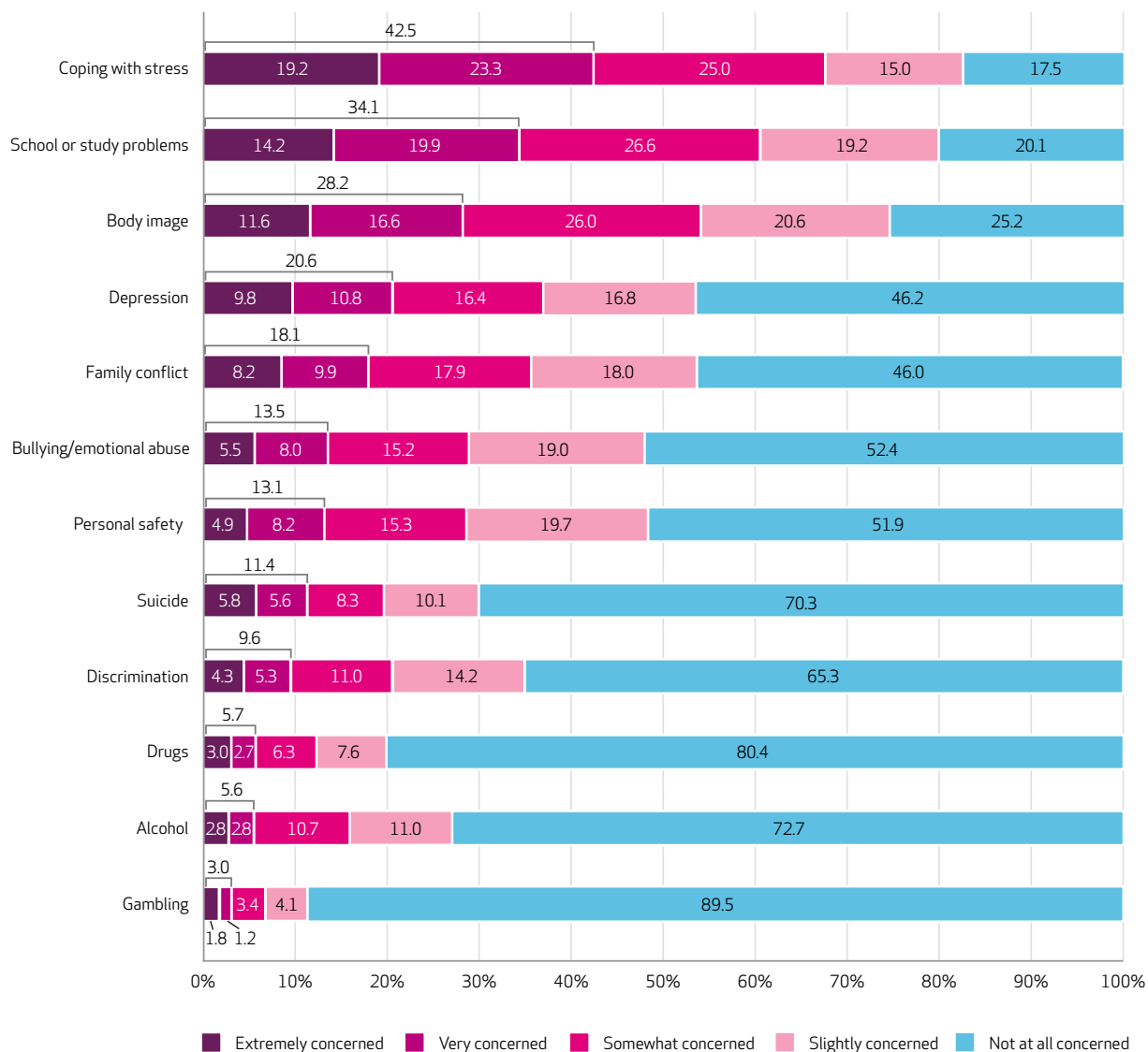
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 6.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from QLD were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 42.5% of respondents from QLD indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (19.2%) or *very concerned* (23.3%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for just over one third of young people (*extremely concerned*: 14.2%; *very concerned*: 19.9%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 28.2% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 11.6%; *very concerned*: 16.6%).
- Around one in five respondents were either *extremely concerned* (9.8%) or *very concerned* (10.8%) about depression.

Figure 6.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and males in QLD, as highlighted in Table 6.5. The proportion of females concerned about these (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For 57.5% of female respondents *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 27.6%; *very concerned*: 29.9%), compared with 26.5% of males (*extremely concerned*: 9.9%; *very concerned*: 16.6%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 44.5% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 19.1%; *very concerned*: 25.4%), compared with 22.6% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.2%; *very concerned*: 14.4%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 39.1% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 16.8%; *very concerned*: 22.3%), compared with 15.8% of males (*extremely concerned*: 5.1%; *very concerned*: 10.7%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for around one quarter of females (*extremely concerned*: 12.3%; *very concerned*: 13.0%) and 14.5% of males (*extremely concerned*: 6.2%; *very concerned*: 8.3%).

Table 6.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	27.6	29.9	25.4	9.8	7.3
School or study problems	19.1	25.4	27.8	16.6	11.1
Body image	16.8	22.3	29.0	17.2	14.6
Depression	12.3	13.0	19.8	17.3	37.7
Family conflict	10.6	13.8	21.3	18.6	35.7
Bullying/emotional abuse	6.5	10.1	18.2	20.5	44.6
Personal safety	5.4	10.3	18.1	21.0	45.3
Suicide	6.3	7.3	10.0	12.0	64.3
Discrimination	4.3	6.5	12.8	15.6	60.8
Drugs	2.4	3.0	6.3	8.5	79.8
Alcohol	2.1	3.3	11.4	12.0	71.1
Gambling	1.2	0.9	3.2	3.2	91.5
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	9.9	16.6	25.3	20.5	27.7
School or study problems	8.2	14.4	25.9	22.8	28.7
Body image	5.1	10.7	23.5	24.7	36.0
Depression	6.2	8.3	13.1	16.6	55.8
Family conflict	5.2	5.6	14.5	17.6	57.0
Bullying/emotional abuse	4.0	5.6	12.1	18.1	60.3
Personal safety	3.9	6.2	12.4	18.5	58.9
Suicide	4.3	3.6	6.2	8.1	77.8
Discrimination	3.3	3.8	9.2	12.8	70.9
Drugs	2.9	2.5	6.4	6.5	81.7
Alcohol	3.0	2.1	10.1	10.1	74.7
Gambling	1.5	1.6	3.7	5.1	88.1

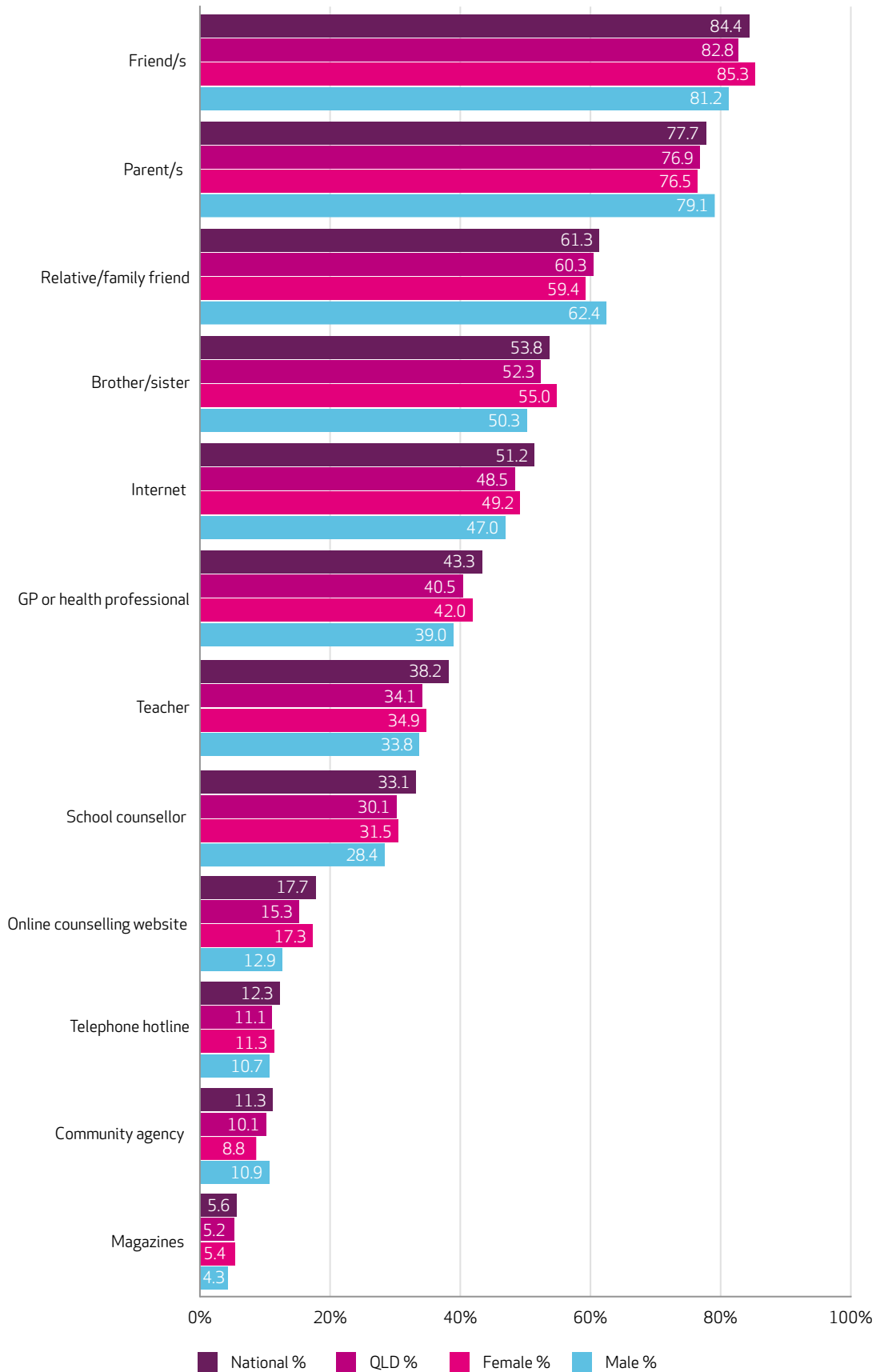
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 6.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in QLD were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (82.8%, 76.9% and 60.3% respectively).
- Over half (52.3%) of all respondents from QLD indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues in their lives.
- Nearly half of all respondents indicated that they would go to the *internet* (48.5%) and around four in ten reported their *GP or health professional* as a source of help with important issues.

Figure 6.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

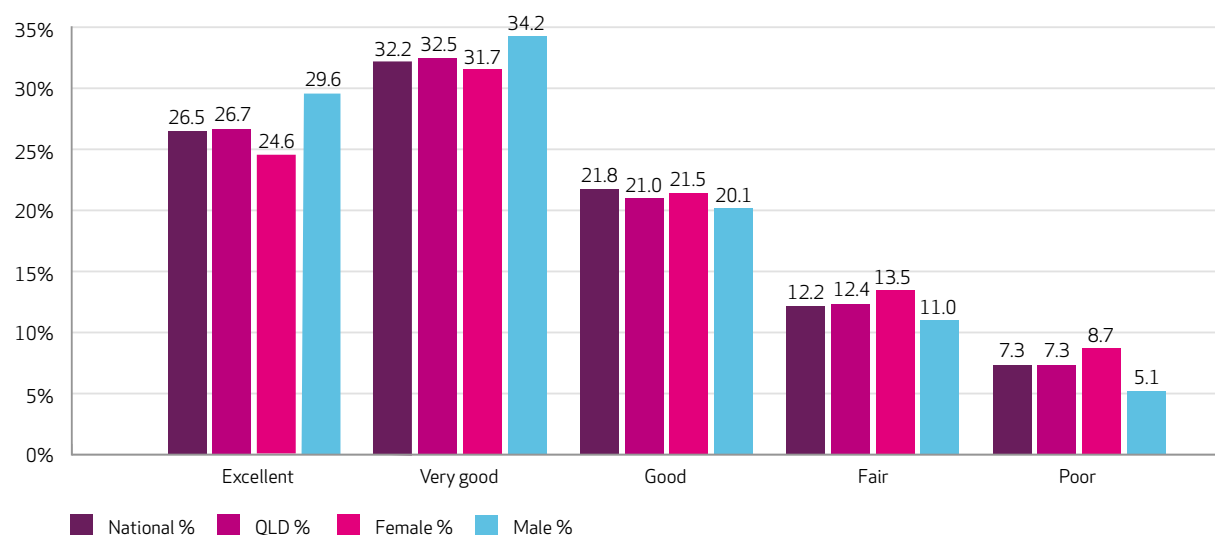
As shown in Figure 6.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with QLD and the national results.

- A higher proportion of female than male respondents indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (85.3% compared with 81.2%).
- Slightly higher proportions of male than female respondents indicated that they would go to their *parent/s* or a *relative/family friend* for help (79.1% compared with 76.5% and 62.4% compared with 59.4%).
- A greater proportion of females than males from QLD would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues (55.0% compared with 50.3%).
- Similar proportions of female and male respondents would go to the *internet* (49.2% and 47.0%), a *GP or health professional* (42.0% compared with 39.0%) or their *teacher* (34.9% compared with 33.8%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 6.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from QLD rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 26.7% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 32.5% that it was *very good*. However, almost one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (12.4%) or *poor* (7.3%). A slightly greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (29.6% compared with 24.6%).

Figure 6.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 6.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from QLD were *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *equity and discrimination*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- Around one third of young people from QLD identified *mental health* and *alcohol and drugs* as important issues in Australia today (33.9% and 33.4% respectively).
- One quarter of young people from QLD identified *equity and discrimination* (25.4%) as an important issue in Australia today.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *crime, safety and violence* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *LGBTIQ issues*, *politics*, *population issues*, *the environment* and *the economy and financial matters* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

There were some differences in the top three issues of national importance for females and males in QLD. *Mental health* was the number one issue of national importance for females, followed by *alcohol and drugs* and then *equity and discrimination*. For males, *alcohol and drugs* was the top national issue, followed by *mental health* and then *equity and discrimination*.

- Around four in ten females (40.2%) and nearly three in ten males (27.8%) from QLD identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- A greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (38.1% compared with 29.7%).
- A greater proportion of females than males identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue (28.7% compared with 21.9%).

Table 6.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	QLD 2017 %	Female %	Male %	QLD 2016 %	QLD 2015 %
Mental health	33.7	33.9	40.2	27.8	21.8	15.1
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	33.4	29.7	38.1	31.6	25.1
Equity and discrimination	27.3	25.4	28.7	21.9	25.9	24.9
The economy and financial matters	12.7	13.6	12.8	14.4	15.7	18.2
International relations	13.6	13.3	12.8	14.0	15.7	12.7
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	13.0	13.7	12.7	13.1	9.8
Education	13.0	12.7	13.3	12.0	11.0	12.2
Employment	10.2	11.0	9.2	13.2	11.1	12.1
Bullying	10.6	10.4	12.5	8.5	10.7	9.4
The environment	10.9	9.3	9.0	10.0	9.2	14.0
Population issues	10.3	9.1	9.1	8.8	11.0	14.7
Health	8.3	9.0	7.8	10.3	11.3	10.5
Politics	6.8	8.1	6.0	9.9	13.2	14.8
Homelessness/housing	8.2	6.3	7.0	5.7	5.6	7.6
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.1	7.4	3.9	5.9	15.5

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 6.7. The top three activities for young people from QLD were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*. These were also the top three activities for young people from QLD in 2016 and 2015.

- Almost eight in ten young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, seven in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and nearly six in ten were involved in *volunteer work* (78.3%, 69.3% and 57.5% respectively).
- More than half (53.9%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Four in ten respondents reported participation in *student leadership activities* (40.9%) and around three in ten had participated in *youth groups and clubs* (31.1%) and *religious group/activity* (30.1%) over the past year.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 6.7, the top two activities for both females and males in QLD were *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the third top activity, while for males *volunteer work* was the third top.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (80.8% compared with 76.6%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (74.2% compared with 65.5%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (63.5% compared with 43.4%), *volunteer work* (60.6% compared with 54.7%) and *student leadership activities* (46.4% compared with 35.0%).

Table 6.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	QLD 2017 %	Female %	Male %	QLD 2016 %	QLD 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	78.3	76.6	80.8	76.3	74.2
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	69.3	65.5	74.2	68.5	70.0
Volunteer work	54.1	57.7	60.6	54.7	55.6	54.8
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	53.9	63.5	43.4	53.8	53.3
Student leadership activities	41.3	40.9	46.4	35.0	47.3	45.2
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	31.1	33.8	28.0	31.7	31.4
Religious group/activity	29.2	30.1	34.2	25.9	30.0	30.5
Environmental group/activity	23.7	23.8	24.7	22.3	26.2	23.1
Political groups/organisations	8.2	8.2	7.5	8.0	8.9	7.5

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

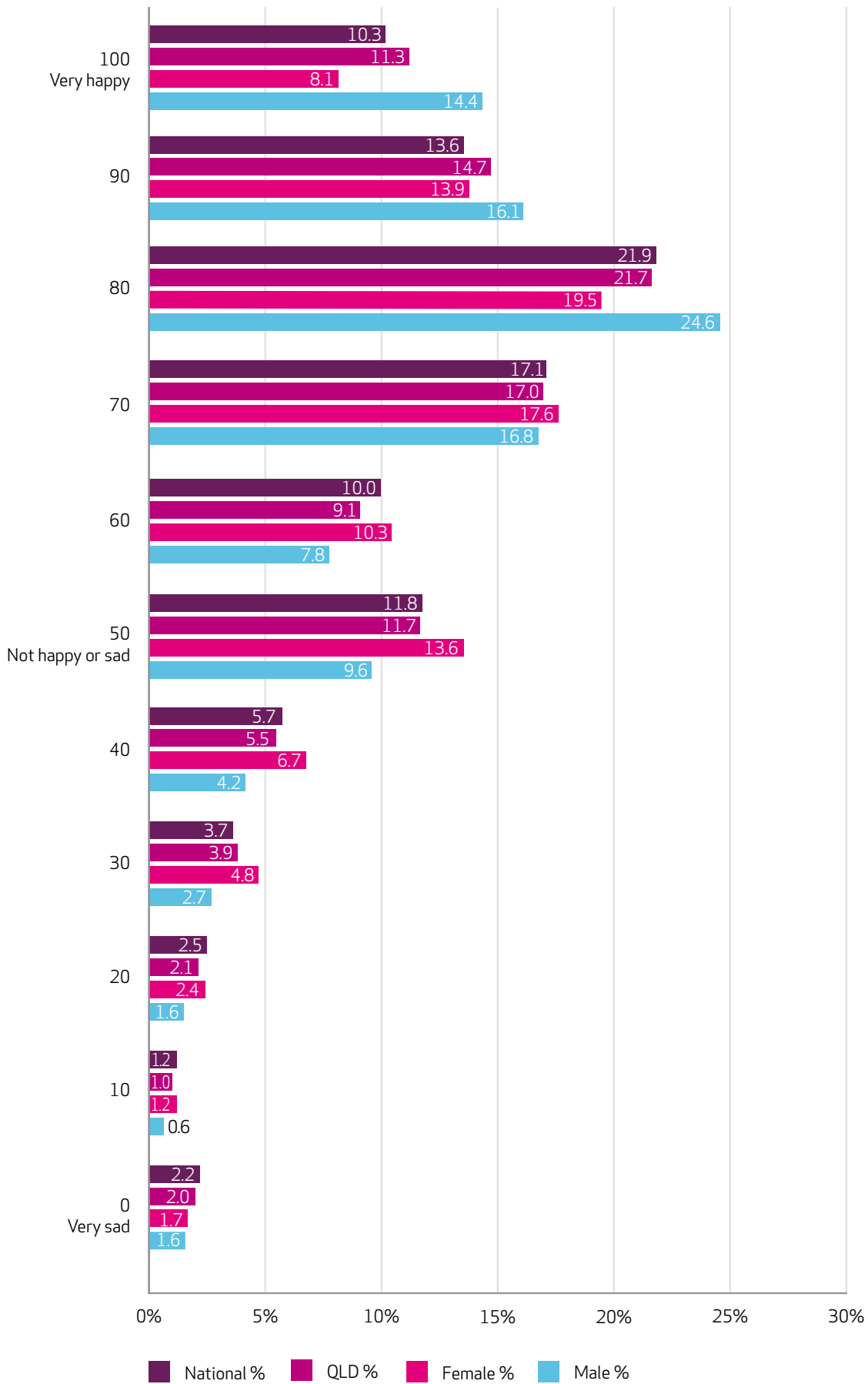
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 6.8 shows, the majority of young people from QLD (64.7%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (14.4% compared with 8.1%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 6.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 6.8 shows that, in line with the national results, over six in ten respondents from QLD felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, less than one in ten young people from QLD felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- The majority of respondents from QLD felt either *positive* (47.7%) or *very positive* (17.2%) about the future.
- More than one quarter of respondents (26.2%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- Less than one in ten respondents felt *negative* (6.1%) or *very negative* (2.8%) about the future.
- A higher proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 20.1% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 14.4% of females.

Table 6.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	QLD 2017 %	Female %	Male %	QLD 2016 %	QLD 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	17.2	14.4	20.1	17.8	15.6
Positive	46.6	47.7	47.7	48.9	48.8	47.1
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	26.2	28.3	23.7	25.1	27.6
Negative	7.1	6.1	6.8	5.3	5.6	7.5
Very negative	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.0	2.8	2.2

South Australia



Profile of respondents

In total, 2,537 young people from South Australia (SA) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Half (50.1%) of respondents from SA were female and 47.0% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 116 (4.6%) respondents from SA identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 103 (4.1%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 11 (0.4%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.1% identified as both). A higher proportion of female than male respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (5.4% compared with 3.7%).

Language background other than English

A total of 271 (10.8%) respondents from SA stated that they were born overseas and 372 (14.9%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 60 languages spoken at home in SA, the most common were (in order of frequency): Vietnamese, Chinese, Nepali, Filipino/Tagalog and Greek.

Disability

A total of 117 (4.7%) respondents from SA indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (5.0%) than females (3.6%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in SA were (in order of frequency): learning disability, autism, physical disability, intellectual disability, depressive disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 7.1, 91.7% of respondents from SA were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (92.2% compared with 91.5%), while a slightly greater proportion of males (3.5%) than females (2.9%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from SA reported that they were either *very satisfied* (13.0%) or *satisfied* (55.7%) with their studies. A minority of respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.6% and 5.0% respectively). As shown in Table 7.2, a slightly higher proportion of females than males from SA reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (13.6% and 57.4% of females compared with 12.6% and 55.1% of males respectively).

Table 7.1: Participation in education

	National %	SA %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	91.7	92.2	91.5
Studying part-time	2.1	5.1	4.9	5.0
Not studying	3.0	3.3	2.9	3.5

Table 7.2: Satisfaction with studies

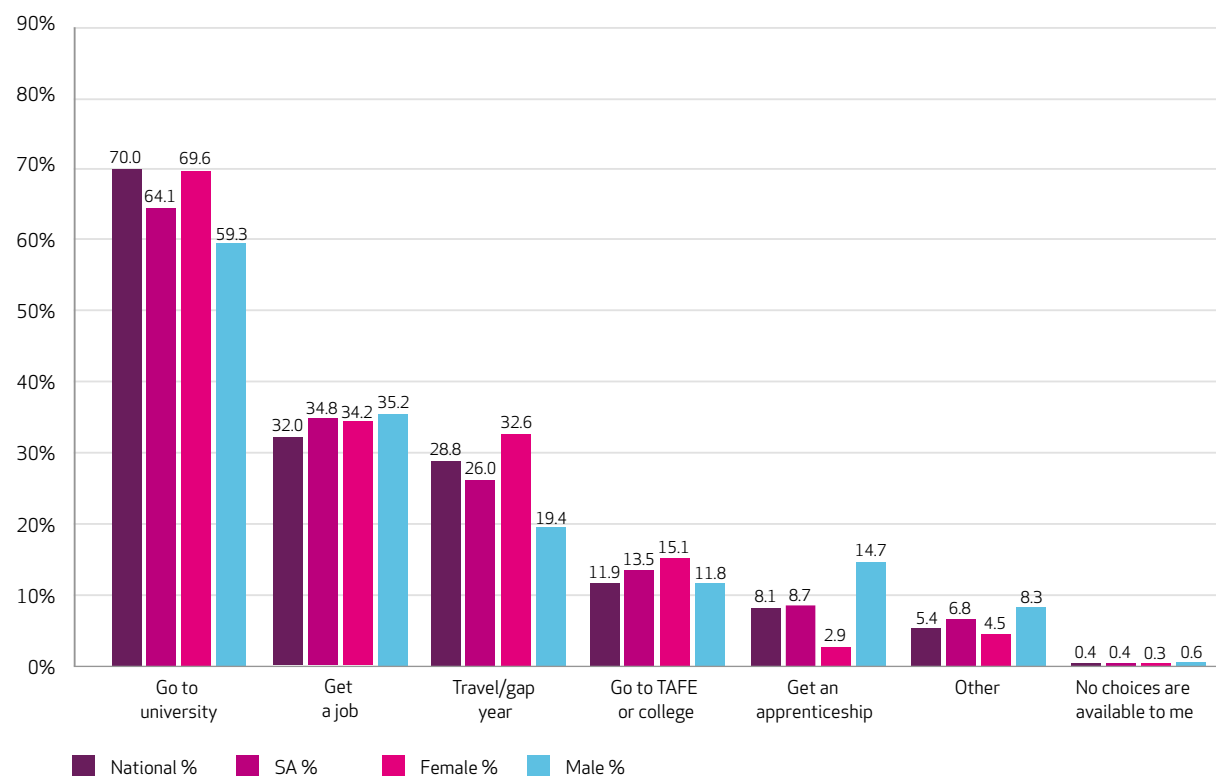
	National %	SA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	SA 2016 %	SA 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	13.0	13.6	12.6	18.7	16.2
Satisfied	56.4	55.7	57.4	55.1	53.7	56.2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	24.6	23.4	25.8	21.7	22.0
Dissatisfied	5.4	5.0	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.2
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.4	1.3

Of those who were still at school in SA, 96.8% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A greater proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (4.4% compared with 1.9% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 21.2% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a slightly higher proportion of females than males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (22.2% compared with 19.9% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 7.1 shows that 64.1% of respondents from SA planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (34.8%) and to travel or go on a gap year (26.0%) after school. Overall, 13.5% of young people from SA planned to attend TAFE or college and 8.7% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.4%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from SA, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (69.6% compared with 59.3% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (32.6% compared with 19.4%). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (14.7% compared with 2.9% of females).

Figure 7.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week on average. Table 7.3 shows participation in paid employment among respondents from SA. In line with the national results, only a minority (0.6%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Over one third (35.0%) of respondents from SA reported part-time employment. Close to two-thirds of SA respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 39.7% looking for work and 24.7% not looking for work.

The same proportion of female and male respondents from SA reported full-time employment (0.6%), while there was a higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (40.1% compared with 29.7% males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (41.5% compared with 37.8% females).

Table 7.3: Participation in paid employment

	National %	SA %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Employed part-time	40.5	35.0	40.1	29.7
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	39.7	37.8	41.5
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	24.7	21.4	28.2

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 7.2. Four in ten respondents from SA indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.2% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 29.6% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, just over one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 17.5% being *slightly confident* and 3.9% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (10.4% and 31.2% of males compared with 7.6% and 28.7% of females respectively).

Figure 7.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (52.5%) of respondents from SA indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (58.6%) than males (46.2%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 7.3 shows the percentage of respondents from SA who indicated each item as being a barrier. In SA, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*.

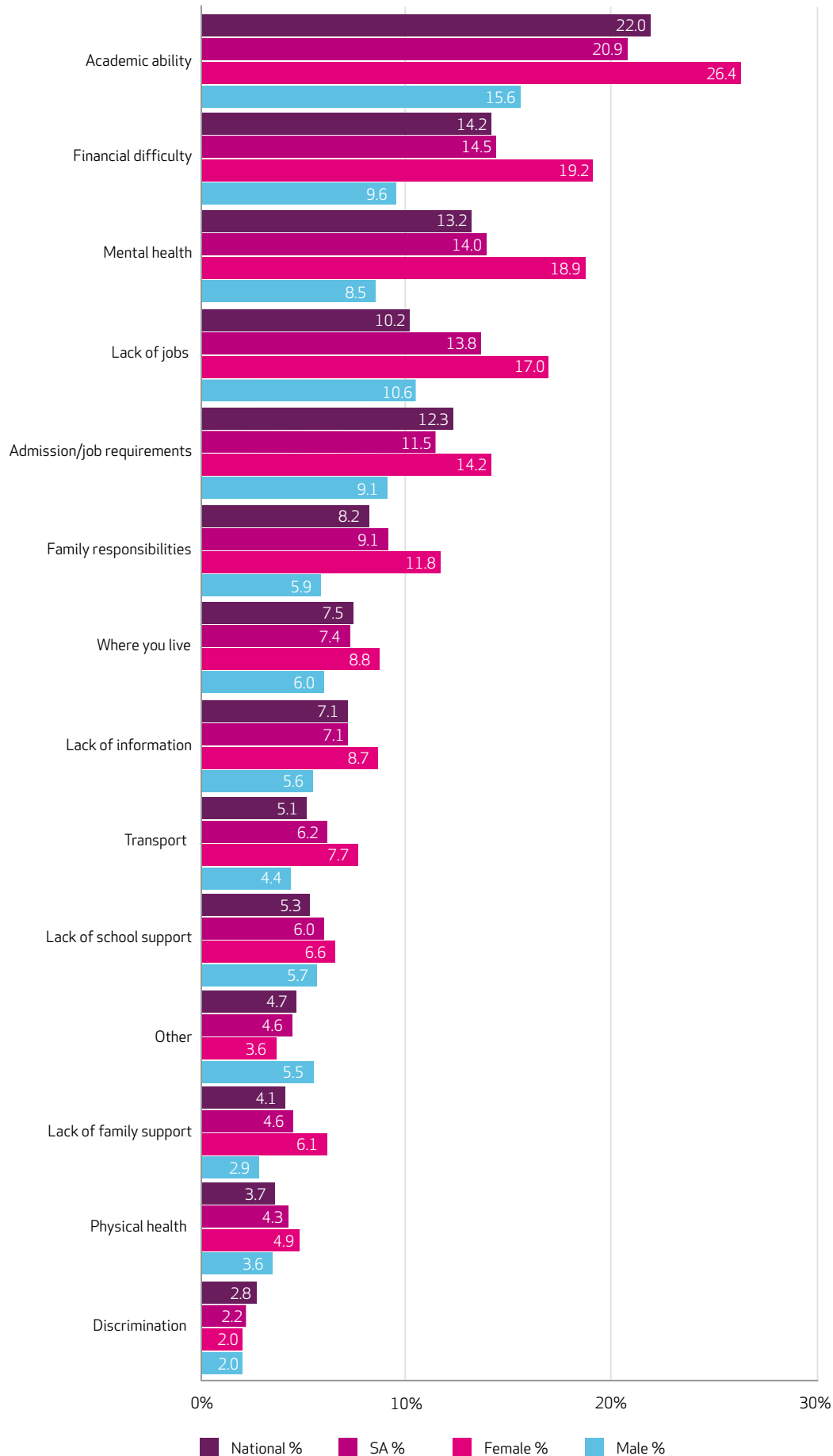
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (20.9%, 14.5% and 14.0% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 7.3, *academic ability* was the top barrier for both females and males. For females, the second top barrier to the achievement of their study/work goals was *financial difficulty* followed by *mental health*, while for males it was a *lack of jobs* followed by *financial difficulty*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that most of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Just over one quarter of female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared to around one in six male respondents (26.4% and 15.6% respectively).
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *mental health* as a barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (18.9% compared with 8.5%).
- Around twice the proportion of females than males indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (19.2% compared with 9.6%).
- Despite ranking higher up the list for males, a larger proportion of females than males indicated that a *lack of jobs* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (17.0% compared with 10.6%).

Figure 7.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



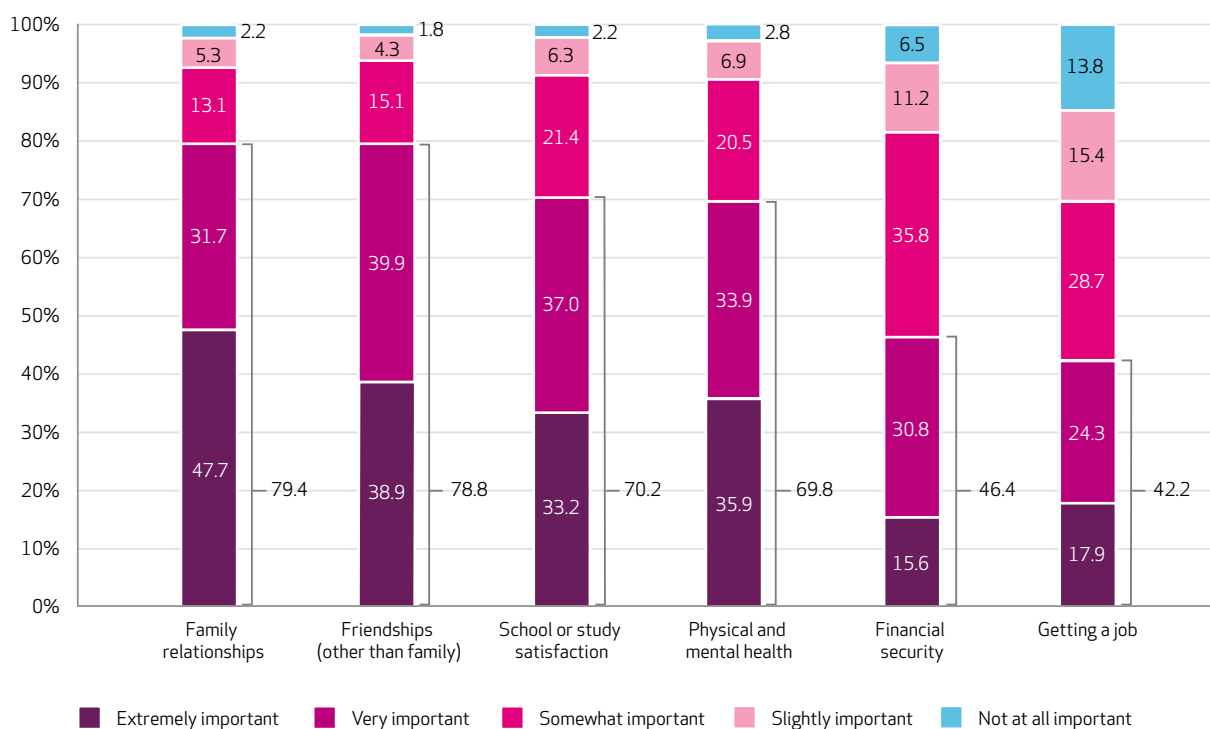
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 7.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from SA this year were *family relationships*, *friendships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for SA respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Family relationships* were valued highly by 79.4% of respondents (*extremely important*: 47.7%; *very important*: 31.7%). *Friendships* were also highly valued by 78.8% of respondents from SA (*extremely important*: 38.9%; *very important*: 39.9%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 33.2%; *very important*: 37.0%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 35.9%; *very important*: 33.9%).
- *Financial security* was valued highly by 46.4% of respondents (*extremely important*: 15.6%; *very important*: 30.8%) and around four in ten placed a high value on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 17.9%; *very important*: 24.3%).

Figure 7.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by both females and males in SA, as shown in Table 7.4. The order of the top two items differed, however, with *family relationships* being the most highly valued item for females, while for males *friendships* were valued most highly. The third top item for females was *school or study satisfaction* and for males it was *physical and mental health*. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these, and all of the other items, was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 82.1% of females (*extremely important*: 52.7%; *very important*: 29.4%) compared with 78.0% of males (*extremely important*: 43.5%; *very important*: 34.5%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 79.7% of females (*extremely important*: 41.6%; *very important*: 38.1%) compared with 78.4% of males (*extremely important*: 35.9%; *very important*: 42.5%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 76.3% of females (*extremely important*: 38.3%; *very important*: 38.0%) and 64.8% of males in SA (*extremely important*: 28.0%; *very important*: 36.8%).
- Just under three quarters (73.2%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 39.5%; *very important*: 33.7%) compared with 66.7% of males (*extremely important*: 32.0%; *very important*: 34.7%).

Table 7.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	52.7	29.4	11.6	4.7	1.6
Friendships (other than family)	41.6	38.1	14.2	4.6	1.5
School or study satisfaction	38.3	38.0	16.6	5.5	1.5
Physical and mental health	39.5	33.7	19.6	5.3	1.8
Financial security	16.2	33.7	35.1	9.7	5.3
Getting a job	19.0	25.5	27.4	14.2	13.9
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	43.5	34.5	13.6	5.7	2.8
Friendships (other than family)	35.9	42.5	15.9	4.0	1.6
School or study satisfaction	28.0	36.8	25.5	6.9	2.7
Physical and mental health	32.0	34.7	21.3	8.5	3.4
Financial security	15.2	28.1	35.7	13.0	8.0
Getting a job	17.1	23.1	29.1	17.2	13.5

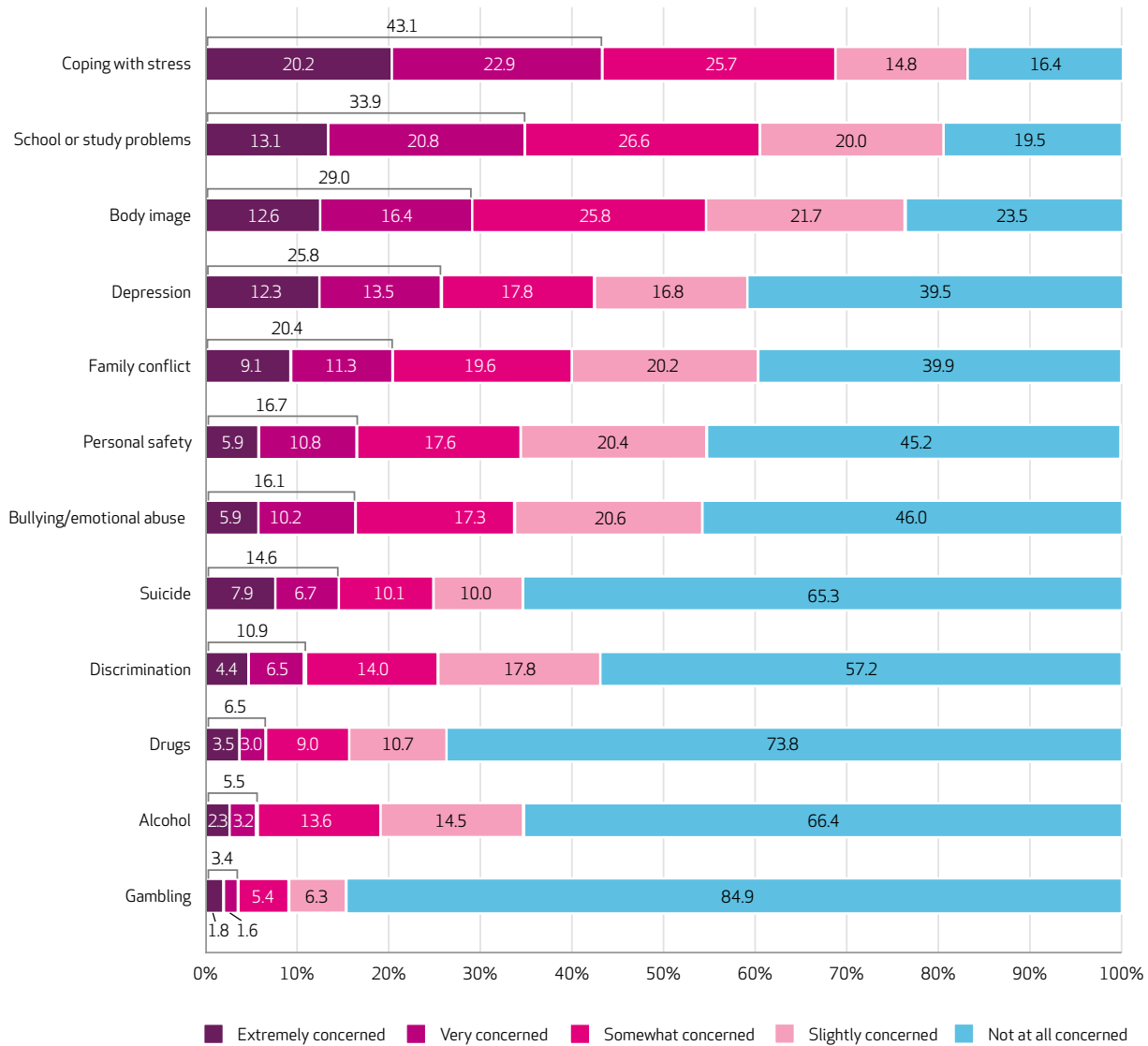
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 7.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from SA were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 43.1% of respondents from SA indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (20.2%) or *very concerned* (22.9%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 33.9% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 13.1%; *very concerned*: 20.8%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 29.0% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 12.6%; *very concerned*: 16.4%).
- Around one quarter of respondents were either *extremely concerned* (12.3%) or *very concerned* (13.5%) about *depression*.

Figure 7.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress and *school or study problems* were the top two issues of concern for both males and females in SA, as highlighted in Table 7.5. For females, *body image* was the third top concern, while for males the third top concern was *depression*. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For close to six in ten females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 28.3%; *very concerned*: 30.1%), compared with around one quarter of males (*extremely concerned*: 10.7%; *very concerned*: 15.7%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 42.9% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 17.3%; *very concerned*: 25.6%), compared with 24.4% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.4%; *very concerned*: 16.0%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 41.4% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 18.5%; *very concerned*: 22.9%), compared with 15.5% of males (*extremely concerned*: 5.6%; *very concerned*: 9.9%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 32.2% of females (*extremely concerned*: 15.1%; *very concerned*: 17.1%) and 17.7% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.2%; *very concerned*: 9.5%).

Table 7.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	28.3	30.1	25.5	10.2	6.0
School or study problems	17.3	25.6	28.3	16.7	12.1
Body image	18.5	22.9	30.2	16.6	11.8
Depression	15.1	17.1	20.6	17.4	29.8
Family conflict	12.4	14.1	21.7	22.2	29.7
Personal safety	6.6	13.7	19.8	21.7	38.2
Bullying/emotional abuse	7.9	13.9	19.0	22.9	36.4
Suicide	9.2	8.7	11.6	11.6	59.0
Discrimination	5.0	7.9	17.1	20.5	49.5
Drugs	3.7	3.5	10.0	11.5	71.3
Alcohol	2.2	3.9	16.3	16.9	60.6
Gambling	1.5	1.8	5.8	6.4	84.5
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	10.7	15.7	26.7	19.8	27.1
School or study problems	8.4	16.0	24.6	24.2	26.8
Body image	5.6	9.9	21.3	27.5	35.6
Depression	8.2	9.5	15.3	16.7	50.3
Family conflict	5.3	8.2	17.4	18.3	50.8
Personal safety	5.3	7.5	14.6	19.8	52.8
Bullying/emotional abuse	3.7	6.5	15.2	18.5	56.0
Suicide	6.1	3.9	8.1	8.6	73.4
Discrimination	3.1	4.9	10.6	15.2	66.2
Drugs	2.7	2.6	7.6	10.2	76.9
Alcohol	2.1	2.7	10.5	12.4	72.3
Gambling	1.8	1.5	5.0	6.3	85.5

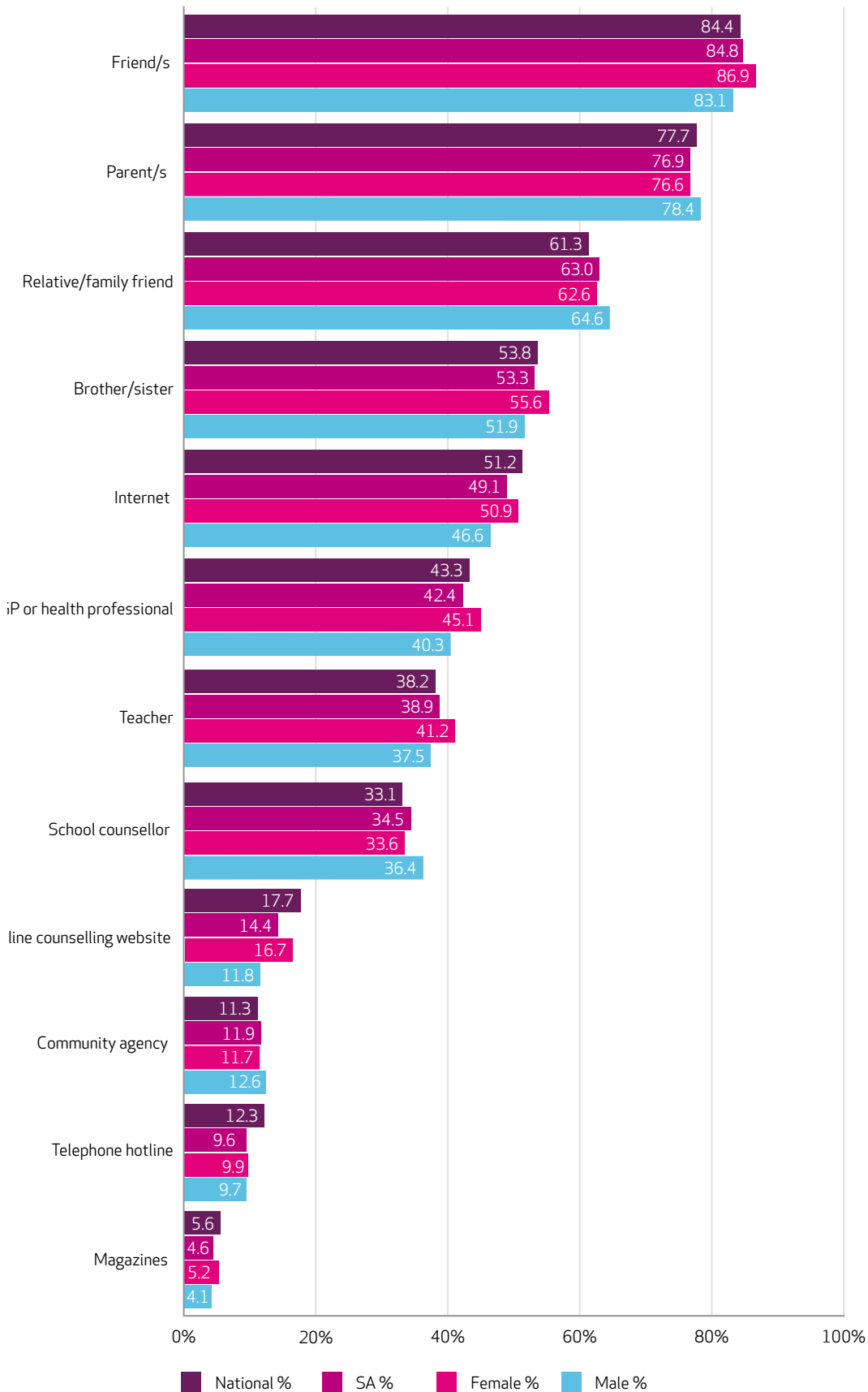
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 7.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in SA were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (84.8%, 76.9% and 63.0% respectively).
- Over half (53.3%) of all respondents from SA indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues.
- Close to half of all respondents indicated that they would go to the *internet* (49.1%) for help and around four in ten indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (42.4%) or their *teacher* (38.9%) for help with important issues.

Figure 7.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

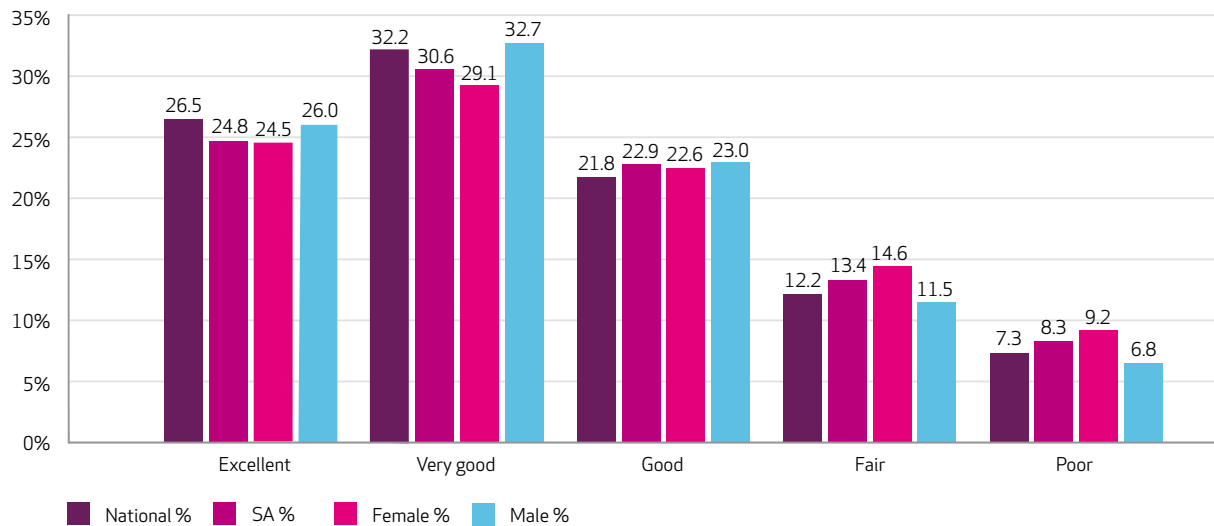
As shown in Figure 7.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with SA and the national results.

- A greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (86.9% compared with 83.1%).
- A slightly greater proportion of males than females would go to their *parent/s* (78.4% compared with 76.6%) or a *relative/family friend* for help (64.6% compared with 62.6%).
- Greater proportions of females than males from SA would go to their *brother/sister* (55.6% compared with 51.9%), the *internet* (50.9% compared with 46.6%), a *GP or health professional* (45.1% compared with 40.3), their *teacher* (41.2% compared with 37.5%) or *online counselling websites* (16.7% compared with 11.8%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 7.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from SA rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 24.8% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 30.6% that it was *very good*. However, around one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (13.4%) or *poor* (8.3%). Similar proportions of males and females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (26.0% compared with 24.5%).

Figure 7.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 7.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from SA were *alcohol and drugs*, *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally, although the order of the top two was reversed.

- Around three in ten young people identified *alcohol and drugs* (31.0%) and *mental health* (29.8%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Around one quarter of young people identified *equity and discrimination* (25.5%) as an important issue in Australia today.
- Around one in six respondents identified *employment* (16.6%) and *the economy and financial matters* (15.5%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs*, *equity and discrimination*, *bullying*, *international relations* and *education* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics*, *population issues*, *the economy and financial matters*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *the environment* and *employment* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Mental health, alcohol and drugs and *equity and discrimination* were the top three issues for both female and male respondents in SA, although the order of the top items differed. For females, *mental health* was the number one issue, followed by *equity and discrimination* and *alcohol and drugs*. For males, *alcohol and drugs* was the number one national issue, followed by *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*.

- Around one third of females and one quarter of males from SA identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today (35.4% and 24.5% respectively).
- Greater proportions of females than males identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue (29.7% compared with 21.2%).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (33.4% compared with 28.8%).

Table 7.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	SA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	SA 2016 %	SA 2015 %
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	31.0	28.8	33.4	28.5	24.3
Mental health	33.7	29.8	35.4	24.5	17.0	15.0
Equity and discrimination	27.3	25.5	29.7	21.2	21.5	21.7
Employment	10.2	16.6	14.5	18.7	17.7	19.7
The economy and financial matters	12.7	15.5	15.0	15.8	17.6	22.3
International relations	13.6	14.5	14.0	15.2	15.9	11.3
Education	13.0	13.4	12.9	14.3	11.6	12.2
Bullying	10.6	13.1	16.2	10.3	10.0	9.8
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	9.4	7.9	11.3	11.0	8.3
The environment	10.9	8.1	8.8	7.5	9.6	12.5
Health	8.3	7.3	8.1	6.4	9.0	8.9
Homelessness/housing	8.2	7.3	8.2	6.7	6.9	6.6
Politics	6.8	7.1	5.2	9.0	13.7	20.8
Population issues	10.3	6.9	5.0	8.9	18.5	16.5
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.5	8.1	4.3	7.8	11.6

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 7.7. The top three activities for young people from SA, as well as nationally, were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*.

- Close to seven in ten young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, six in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and over four in ten were involved in *volunteer work* (69.3%, 61.9% and 44.6% respectively).
- Over four in ten (42.0%) respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Around three in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (29.9%) and *youth groups and clubs* (28.1%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 7.7, the top activity for both females and males in SA was *sports (as a participant)* however the following two activities differed between genders. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the second top activity, followed by *volunteer work*, while for males, *sports (as a spectator)* was the second top activity, followed by *volunteer work*.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (73.1% compared with 66.3%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (65.4% compared with 41.3%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *volunteer work* (49.5% compared with 39.4%), *arts/cultural/music activities* (49.6% compared with 32.9%) and *student leadership activities* (34.0% compared with 26.1%).

Table 7.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	SA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	SA 2016 %	SA 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	69.3	66.3	73.1	70.1	69.8
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	61.9	41.3	65.4	63.2	63.5
Volunteer work	54.1	44.6	49.5	39.4	52.4	51.1
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	42.0	49.6	32.9	49.4	51.5
Student leadership activities	41.3	29.9	34.0	26.1	36.9	33.9
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	28.1	28.1	28.7	32.8	38.0
Religious group/activity	29.2	24.2	24.6	23.9	29.8	32.2
Environmental group/activity	23.7	17.7	20.8	14.4	20.2	20.4
Political groups/organisations	8.2	6.1	6.0	5.7	7.0	8.0

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

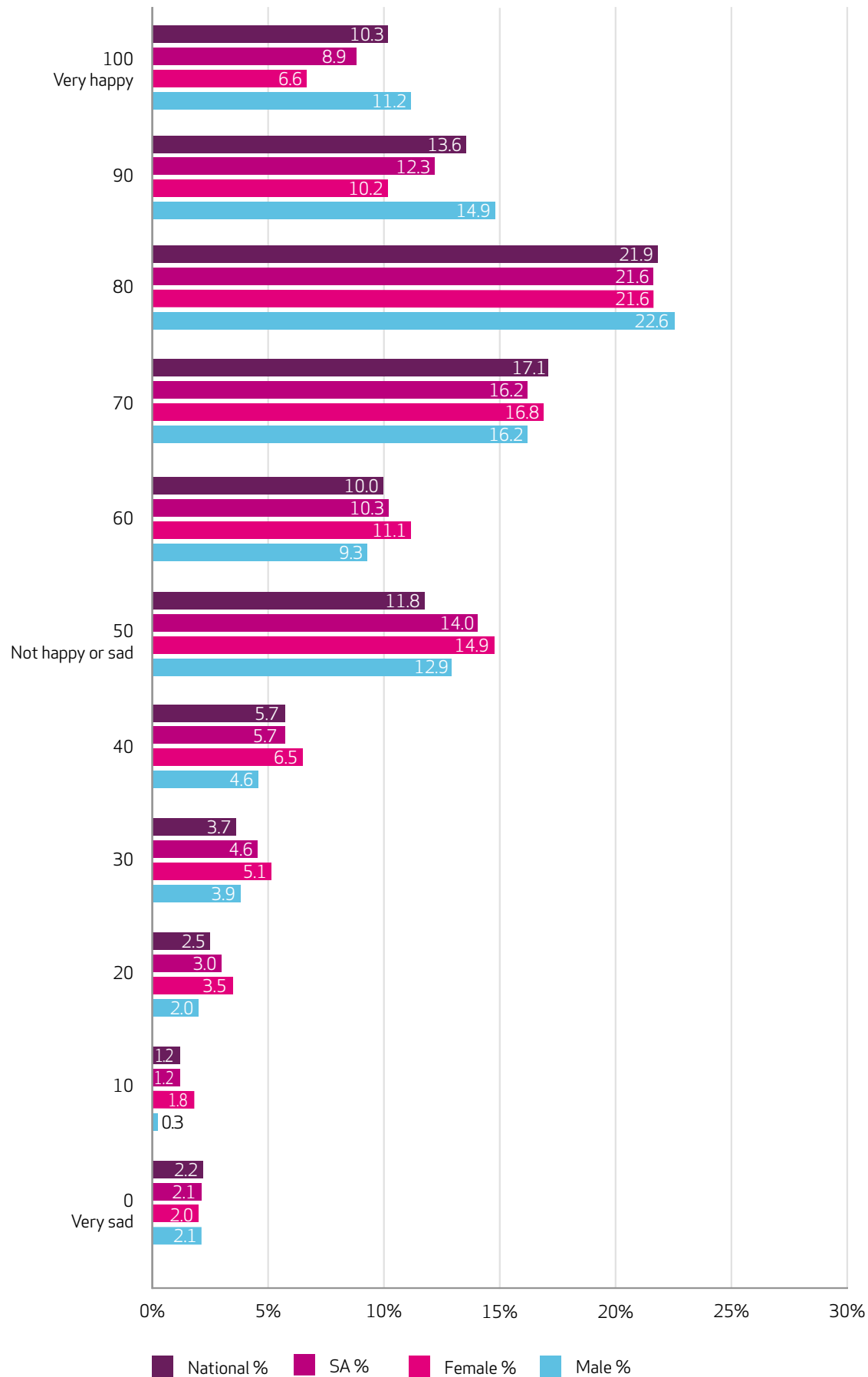
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 7.8 shows, the majority of young people from SA (59.0%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (11.2% compared with 6.6%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 7.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 7.8 shows that the majority of respondents from SA felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, over one in ten young people from SA felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around six in ten respondents from SA felt either *positive* (43.9%) or *very positive* (14.9%) about the future.
- Over one quarter of respondents (27.5%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- More than one in ten respondents felt *negative* (8.0%) or *very negative* about the future (3.3%).
- A larger proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 17.7% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 12.1% of females.

Table 7.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	SA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	SA 2016 %	SA 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	14.9	12.1	17.7	15.9	12.4
Positive	46.6	43.9	43.6	45.1	45.2	45.5
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	29.9	32.0	27.8	27.7	31.0
Negative	7.1	8.0	9.1	6.6	7.9	8.3
Very negative	3.1	3.3	3.2	2.9	3.2	2.8

Tasmania



Profile of respondents

In total, 1,322 young people from Tasmania (TAS) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Nearly half (49.1%) of respondents from TAS were male and 47.4% were female.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 127 (9.7%) respondents from TAS identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 98 (7.5%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 16 (1.2%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 1.0% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (9.5% compared with 7.9%).

Language background other than English

A total of 143 (10.9%) respondents from TAS stated that they were born overseas and 154 (11.8%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 40 languages spoken at home in TAS, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, French, Spanish, German, Hindi and Japanese.

Disability

A total of 87 (6.8%) respondents from TAS indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (7.3%) than females (4.4%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in TAS were (in order of frequency): learning disability, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Down syndrome, deafness or hearing impairment and depressive disorder.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 8.1, 94.3% of respondents from TAS were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of females than males reported that they were studying full-time (96.0% compared with 93.1%), while a greater proportion of males (4.2%) than females (2.2%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from TAS reported that they were either *very satisfied* (12.3%) or *satisfied* (60.0%) with their studies. Very few respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.3% and 4.2% respectively). As shown in Table 8.2, roughly the same proportion of females and males from TAS reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (11.0% and 62.1% of females compared with 13.4% and 59.1% of males respectively).

Table 8.1: Participation in education

	National %	TAS %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	94.3	96.0	93.1
Studying part-time	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.8
Not studying	3.0	3.4	2.2	4.2

Table 8.2: Satisfaction with studies

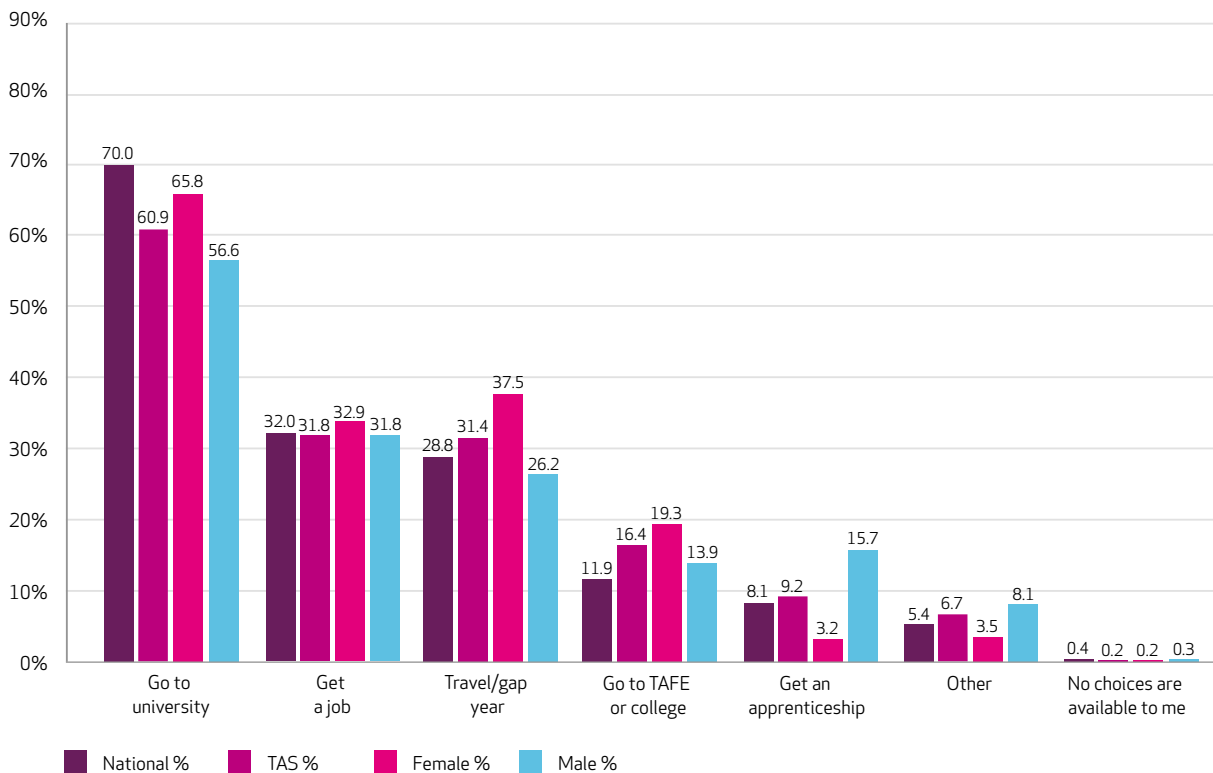
	National %	TAS 2017 %	Female %	Male %	TAS 2016 %	TAS 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	12.3	11.0	13.4	17.0	15.0
Satisfied	56.4	60.0	62.1	59.1	58.0	58.0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	22.2	22.1	22.0	19.8	21.3
Dissatisfied	5.4	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.3	0.7	1.3	1.0	1.3

Of those who were still at school in TAS, 95.4% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. More males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (7.1% compared with 1.8% of females). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 16.2% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with similar proportions of males and females reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (16.8% compared with 15.0% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 8.1 shows that just over six in ten (60.9%) respondents from TAS planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (31.8%) and to travel or go on a gap year (31.4%) after school. Overall, 16.4% of young people from TAS planned to attend TAFE or college and 9.2% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.2%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from TAS, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (65.8% compared with 56.6% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (37.5% compared with 26.2% of males). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (15.7% compared with 3.2% of females).

Figure 8.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 8.3 shows participation in paid employment among respondents from TAS. In line with the national results, only a minority (0.3%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. More than four in ten (41.3%) respondents from TAS reported part-time employment. Almost six in ten TAS respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 35.5% looking for work and 22.8% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents from TAS reported full-time employment (0.5% compared with 0.1% respectively), while there was a higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (48.2% compared with 35.6% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (36.1% compared with 34.4% of females).

Table 8.3: Participation in paid employment

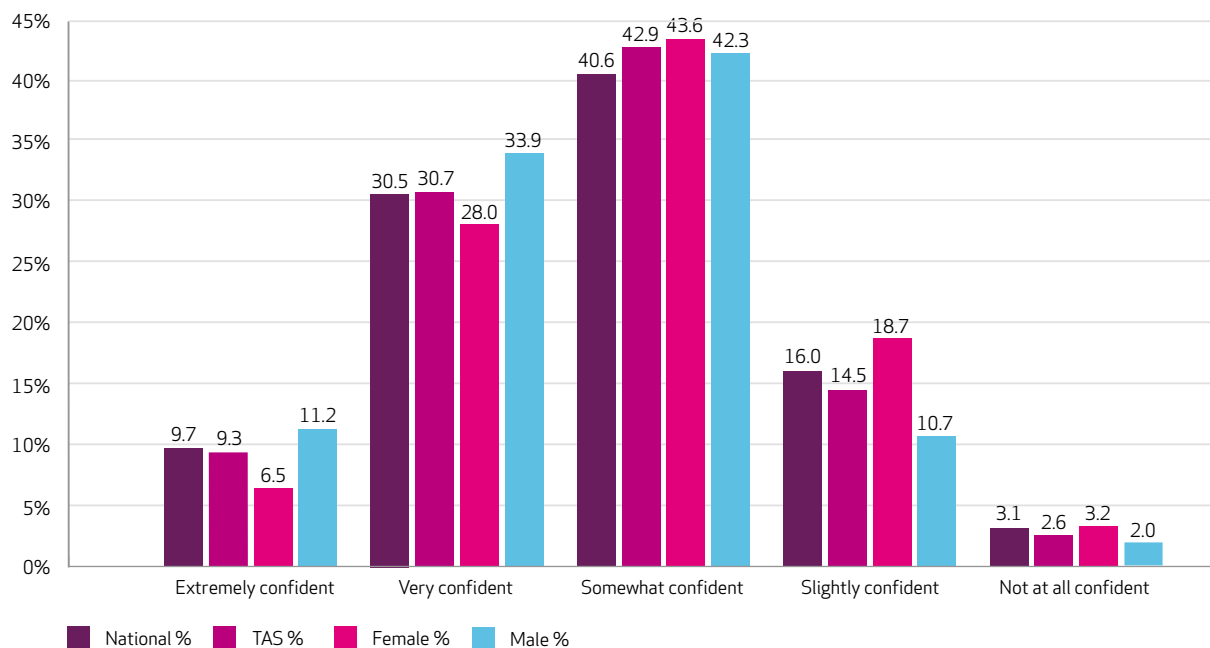
	National %	TAS %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.5
Employed part-time	40.5	41.3	48.2	35.6
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	35.5	34.4	36.1
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	22.8	17.4	27.8

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 8.2. Four in ten respondents from TAS indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.3% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 30.7% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, close to one in six young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 14.5% being *slightly confident* and 2.6% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A slightly higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (11.2% and 33.9% of males compared with 6.5% and 28.0% of females respectively).

Figure 8.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just under half (49.7%) of respondents from TAS indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (53.8%) than males (45.3%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 8.3 shows the percentage of respondents from TAS who indicated each item as being a barrier. In TAS, the top barrier to young people's post-school goals was *academic ability*, followed by *financial difficulty* and *mental health* (in equal proportions) and then *admission/job requirements*.

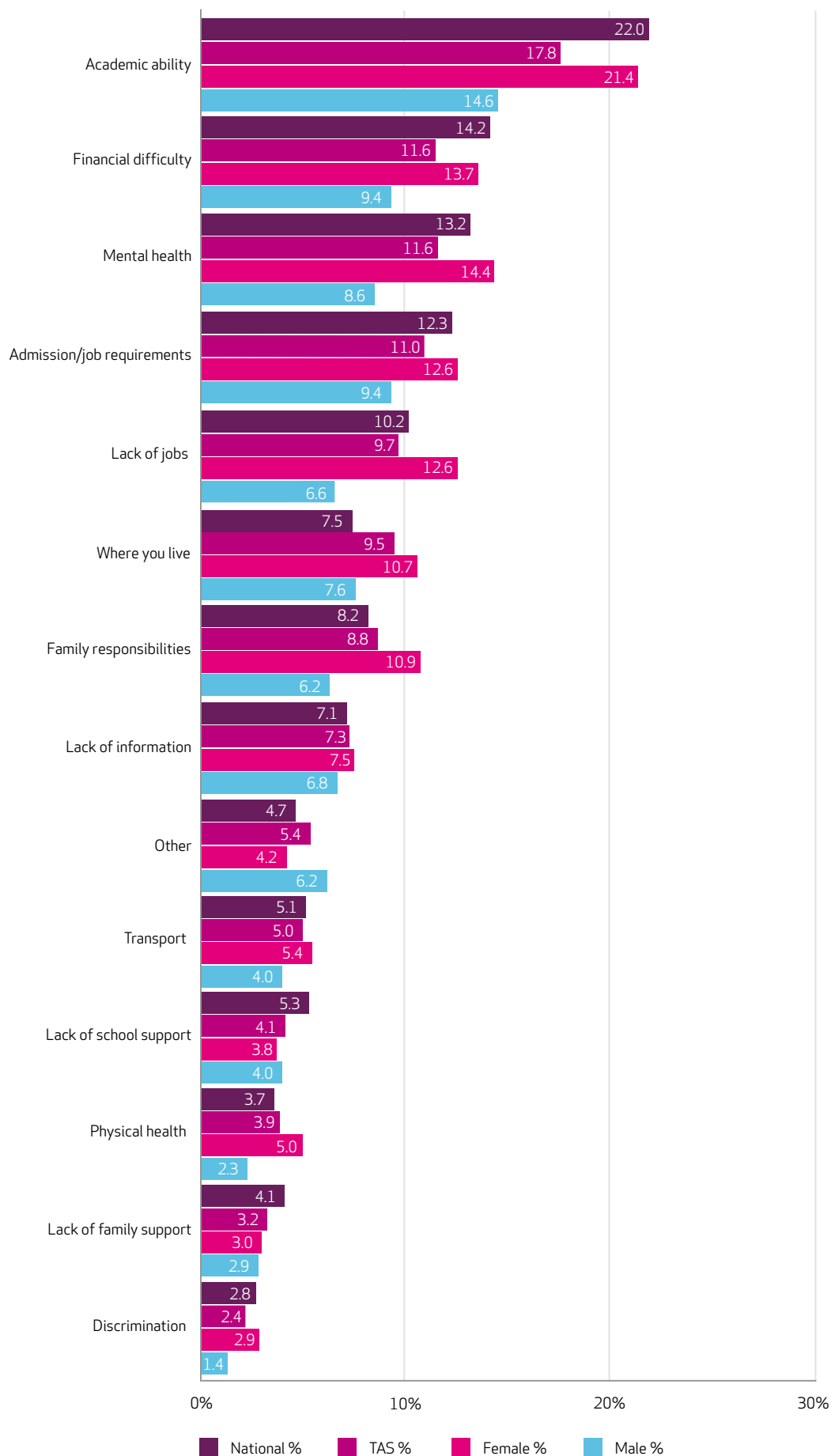
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty*, *mental health* and *admission/job requirements* were the four most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (17.8%, 11.6%, 11.6% and 11.0% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 8.3, the top three barriers for females were *academic ability*, *mental health* and *financial difficulty*, while for males the top barrier was *academic ability*, followed by *financial difficulty* and *admission/job requirements* in equal proportions. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that most items were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Over one in five female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared with almost one in seven male respondents (21.4% compared with 14.6%).
- More females than males reported *mental health* (14.4% compared with 8.6%) and *financial difficulty* (13.7% compared with 9.4%) as barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school.
- More females than males also indicated that *admission/job requirements* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (12.6% compared with 9.4%).

Figure 8.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 8.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from TAS this year were *friendships*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for TAS respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were valued highly by 79.0% of respondents (*extremely important*: 37.0%; *very important*: 42.0%). *Family relationships* were also highly valued by 77.5% of respondents from TAS (*extremely important*: 41.4%; *very important*: 36.1%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 33.1%; *very important*: 37.6%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 33.1%; *very important*: 37.6%).
- Around four in ten TAS respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 13.2%; *very important*: 29.8%) and *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 13.9%; *very important*: 24.2%).

Figure 8.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by females and males in TAS, as shown in Table 8.4. The order of the top two items differed however, with *family relationships* being the most highly valued item for females, while for males *friendships* were valued most highly. The third top item for females was *school or study satisfaction*, while for males it was *physical and mental health*. The proportion of female respondents who highly valued these and all of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 83.3% of females (*extremely important*: 49.9%; *very important*: 33.4%) compared with 73.3% of males (*extremely important*: 34.1%; *very important*: 39.8%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 82.3% of females (*extremely important*: 40.8%; *very important*: 41.5%) compared with 77.7% of males (*extremely important*: 34.1%; *very important*: 43.6%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 77.7% of females (*extremely important*: 32.4%; *very important*: 45.3%) and 69.0% of males in TAS (*extremely important*: 26.5%; *very important*: 42.5%).
- *Physical and mental health* was highly valued by 72.6% of females (*extremely important*: 35.0%; *very important*: 37.6%) and 70.5% of males (*extremely important*: 31.6%; *very important*: 38.9%).

Table 8.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	40.8	41.5	13.3	2.7	1.6
Family relationships	49.9	33.4	10.7	4.2	1.8
School or study satisfaction	32.4	45.3	17.2	3.9	1.3
Physical and mental health	35.0	37.6	17.9	7.7	1.8
Financial security	11.5	32.6	38.3	11.2	6.4
Getting a job	13.5	26.3	32.9	16.2	11.2
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	34.1	43.6	17.3	3.0	1.9
Family relationships	34.1	39.8	19.3	3.6	3.2
School or study satisfaction	26.5	42.5	23.6	3.9	3.5
Physical and mental health	31.6	38.9	20.1	6.3	3.2
Financial security	15.2	27.5	35.1	11.3	10.9
Getting a job	14.1	22.7	27.1	20.3	15.8

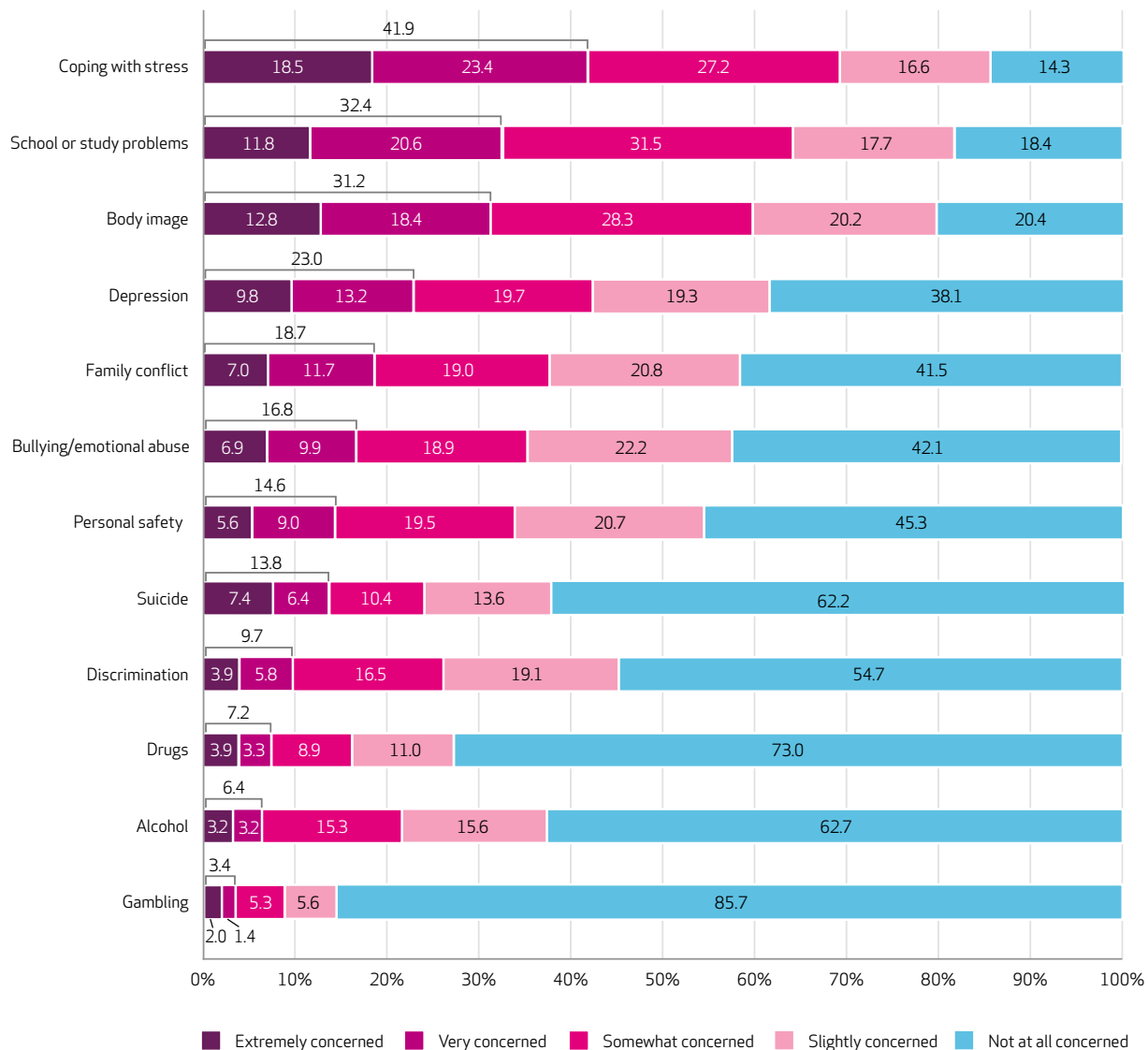
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 8.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The items were ranked in order of concern by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely concerned* or *very concerned* for each item. The top three issues of concern for young people from TAS were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 41.9% of respondents from TAS indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (18.5%) or *very concerned* (23.4%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 32.4% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 11.8%; *very concerned*: 20.6%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 31.2% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 12.8%; *very concerned*: 18.4%).
- Nearly one in four respondents were either *extremely concerned* (9.8%) or *very concerned* (13.2%) about depression.

Figure 8.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *body image* and *school or study problems* were the top three issues of concern for females and *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *depression* were the top three issues of concern for males in TAS, as highlighted in Table 8.5. The proportion of females concerned about these (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For over half of females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 25.7%; *very concerned*: 29.8%), compared with under three in ten males (*extremely concerned*: 11.1%; *very concerned*: 18.0%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with over four in ten indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 12.9%; *very concerned*: 28.2%), compared with 23.1% of males (*extremely concerned*: 9.1%; *very concerned*: 14.0%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 45.6% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 18.5%; *very concerned*: 27.1%), compared with 17.2% of males (*extremely concerned*: 6.8%; *very concerned*: 10.4%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 26.9% of females (*extremely concerned*: 11.1%; *very concerned*: 15.8%) and 18.2% of males (*extremely concerned*: 7.3%; *very concerned*: 10.9%).

Table 8.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	25.7	29.8	27.2	10.6	6.8
School or study problems	12.9	28.2	32.4	15.5	11.0
Body image	18.5	27.1	28.8	15.9	9.7
Depression	11.1	15.8	21.9	21.2	29.9
Family conflict	8.0	14.2	21.5	24.1	32.2
Bullying/emotional abuse	7.5	13.0	21.1	24.4	34.0
Personal safety	5.4	10.4	22.6	22.6	39.1
Suicide	8.0	7.3	11.4	16.1	57.3
Discrimination	3.1	7.4	16.4	23.0	50.0
Drugs	1.5	3.3	8.5	11.7	75.1
Alcohol	1.6	3.1	16.5	18.6	60.2
Gambling	0.3	0.8	4.6	5.9	88.5
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	11.1	18.0	27.6	23.1	20.2
School or study problems	9.1	14.0	31.4	20.8	24.6
Body image	6.8	10.4	28.5	24.4	29.9
Depression	7.3	10.9	17.6	18.2	46.0
Family conflict	4.8	9.5	16.8	18.6	50.3
Bullying/emotional abuse	5.4	7.1	16.9	20.8	49.9
Personal safety	4.9	7.3	16.8	19.8	51.2
Suicide	5.2	5.6	9.4	11.8	68.0
Discrimination	3.2	4.0	16.7	16.4	59.8
Drugs	4.3	3.5	9.5	10.6	72.2
Alcohol	3.0	3.3	14.3	13.5	65.9
Gambling	2.2	1.6	5.7	5.2	85.3

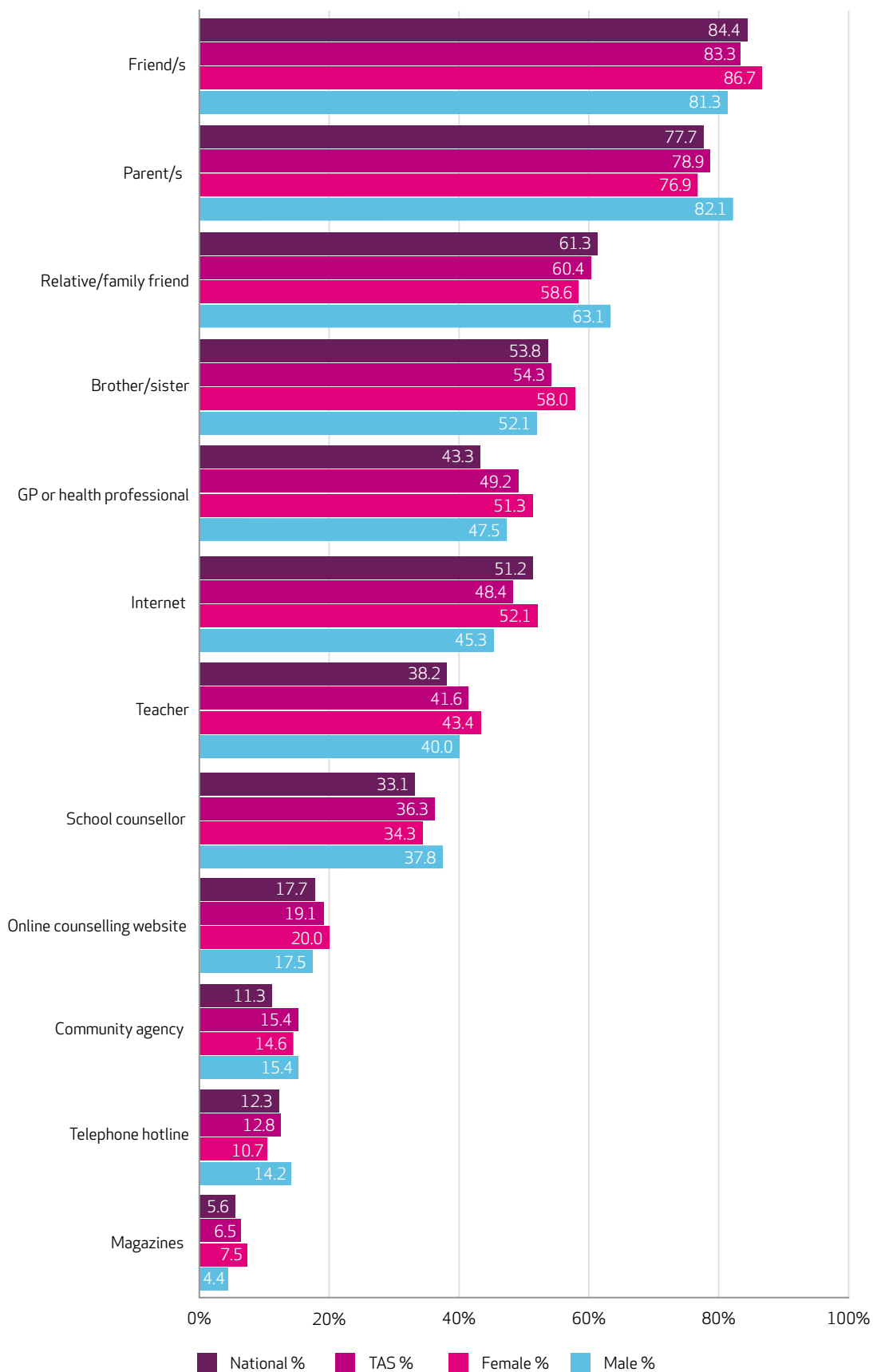
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 8.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in TAS were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (83.3%, 78.9% and 60.4% respectively).
- A total of 54.3% respondents from TAS indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* for help with important issues in their lives.
- Nearly half of all respondents indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (49.2%) or the *internet* (48.4%) and just over four in ten (41.6%) reported their *teacher* as a source of help with important issues.

Figure 8.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

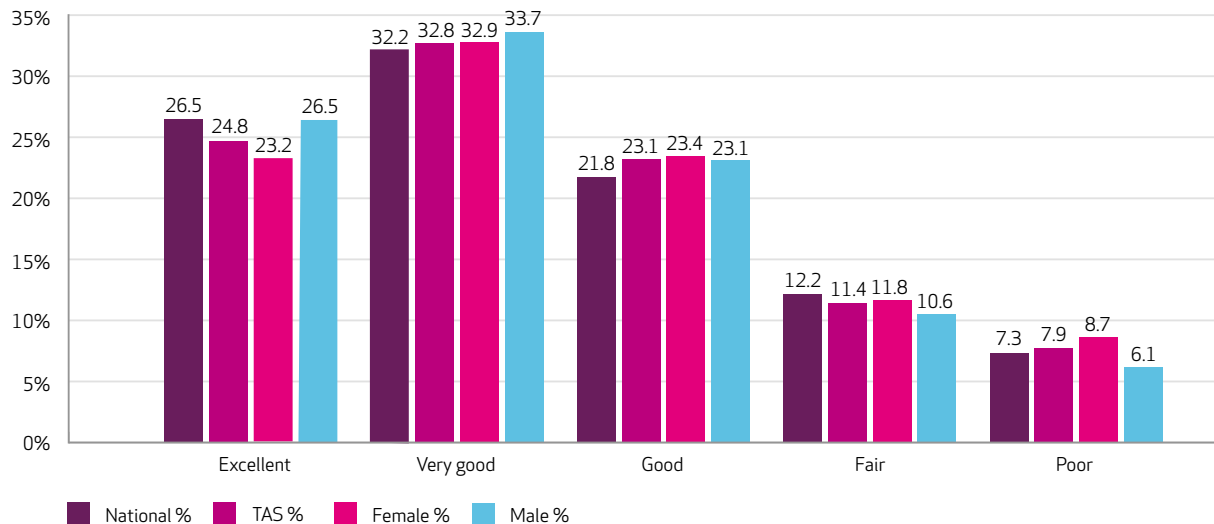
As shown in Figure 8.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with TAS and the national results.

- A greater proportion of female than male respondents indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (86.7% compared with 81.3%).
- Conversely, a greater proportion of males than females indicated that they would go to their *parent/s* (82.1% compared with 79.7%) or *relative/family friend* (63.1% compared with 58.6%) for help with important issues.
- Greater proportions of females than males from TAS would go to their *brother/sister* (58.0% compared with 52.1%), *GP or health professional* (51.3% compared with 47.5%), the *internet* (52.1% compared with 45.3%) and their *teacher* (43.4% compared with 40.0%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 8.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from TAS rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 24.8% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 32.8% that it was *very good*. However, almost one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (11.4%) or *poor* (7.9%). A slightly greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* compared with females (26.5% compared with 23.2%).

Figure 8.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 8.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from TAS were *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs* and *equity and discrimination*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally.

- About one third of young people identified *mental health* and *alcohol and drugs* as important issues in Australia today (33.1% and 29.8% respectively).
- A total of 27.6% of young people from TAS identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue in Australia today.
- Around one in seven respondents identified *education* (13.9%) and *international relations* (13.2%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs*, *bullying* and *education* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics*, *the economy and financial matters*, *LGBTIQ issues*, *employment*, *health* and *population issues* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

There were some differences in the top three issues of national importance for females and males in TAS. *Mental health* was the number one issue of national importance for females, followed by *equity and discrimination* and then *alcohol and drugs*. For males, *alcohol and drugs* was the top national issue, followed by *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*.

- Around four in ten female and nearly three in ten male respondents from TAS (39.6% and 28.8% respectively) identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- A similar proportion of females and males identified *equity and discrimination* as a major issue (29.4% compared with 27.7%).
- A greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (33.5% compared with 26.3%).

Table 8.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	TAS 2017 %	Female %	Male %	TAS 2016 %	TAS 2015 %
Mental health	33.7	33.1	39.6	28.8	17.1	14.6
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	29.8	26.3	33.5	26.7	26.1
Equity and discrimination	27.3	27.6	29.4	27.7	27.9	25.7
The environment	10.9	13.9	15.9	12.2	14.1	12.3
International relations	13.6	13.0	13.3	12.9	12.0	14.3
Population issues	10.3	12.8	12.7	12.8	17.2	15.7
Education	13.0	12.2	12.9	11.3	12.4	10.1
Employment	10.2	11.7	10.2	13.3	13.1	16.6
Bullying	10.6	11.3	13.6	9.5	10.4	7.6
Health	8.3	9.1	9.1	9.5	13.4	13.7
The economy and financial matters	12.7	9.1	7.2	11.7	13.8	17.6
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	8.8	8.0	9.2	10.6	8.1
Homelessness/housing	8.2	8.2	10.0	6.8	7.8	8.9
Politics	6.8	7.3	5.9	8.3	13.9	17.7
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.7	10.8	3.2	10.3	15.2

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 8.7. The top three activities for young people from TAS were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities*. *Sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* were also the top two activities for young people from TAS in previous years.

- Eight in ten young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)* and seven in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* (80.2% and 70.2% respectively).
- A total of 56.5% of young people were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Around half of respondents indicated that they were involved in *volunteer work* (50.4%) or *student leadership activities* (49.5%) and around one third had participated in *youth groups and clubs* (32.9%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 8.7, the top three activities for males and females in TAS were *sports (as a participant)*, *sport (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities*, however the order of the second and third activity was reversed. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the second top activity, followed by *sports (as a spectator)* while for males, *sports (as a spectator)* was the second top activity, followed by *arts/cultural/music activities*.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (82.8% compared with 78.8%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (75.4% compared with 65.5%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (67.0% compared with 46.7%), *volunteer work* (58.6% compared with 43.6%) and *student leadership activities* (57.5% compared with 43.1%).

Table 8.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	TAS 2017 %	Female %	Male %	TAS 2016 %	TAS 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	80.2	78.8	82.8	72.0	75.8
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	70.2	65.6	75.4	66.5	70.0
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	56.5	67.0	46.7	48.1	47.2
Volunteer work	54.1	50.4	58.6	43.6	48.4	47.1
Student leadership activities	41.3	49.5	57.5	43.1	40.9	39.1
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	32.9	38.1	27.2	29.3	28.5
Religious group/activity	29.2	26.3	28.0	24.3	19.3	23.6
Environmental group/activity	23.7	24.6	26.6	23.0	24.7	21.0
Political groups/organisations	8.2	7.2	6.0	6.6	8.6	8.7

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

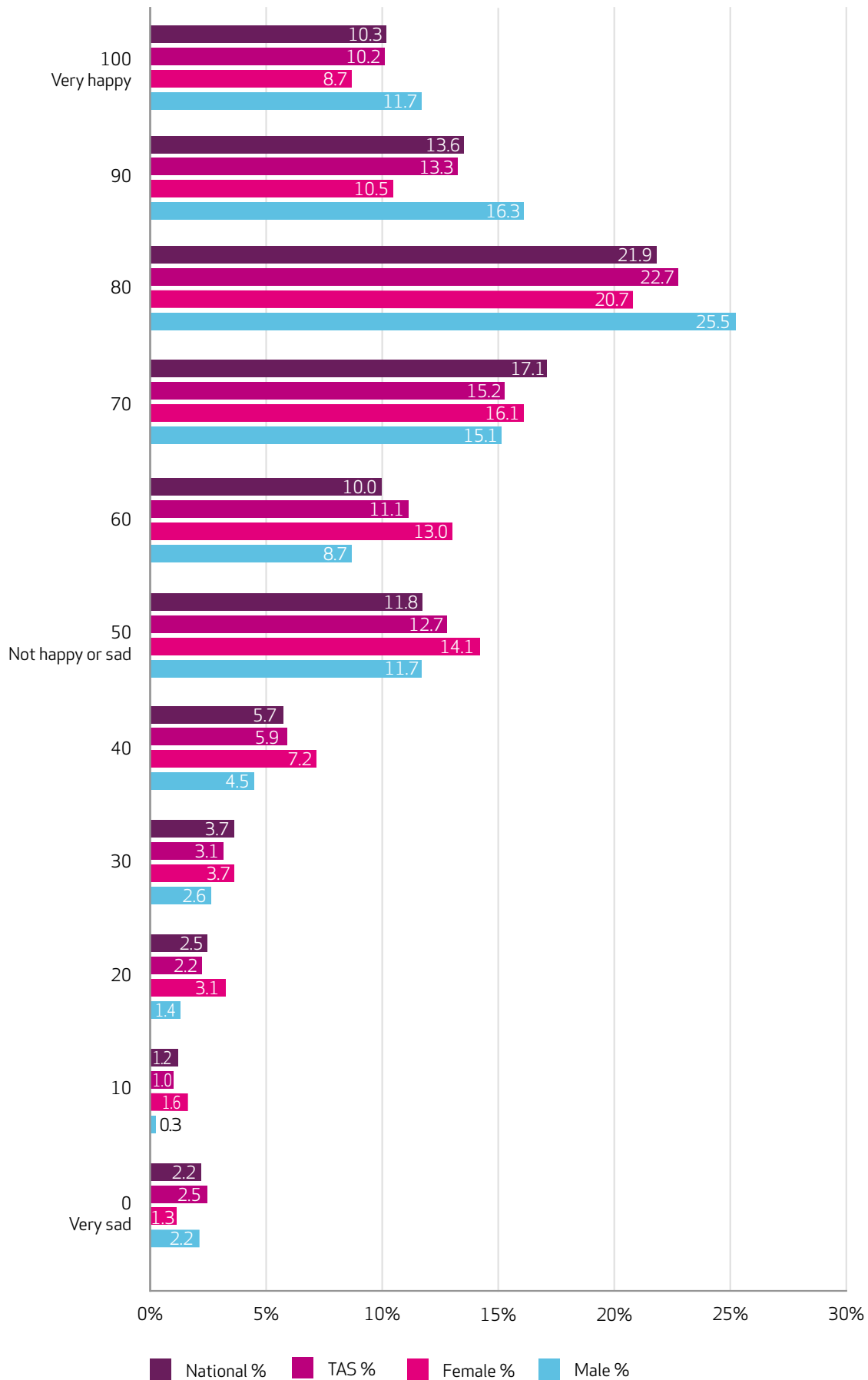
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 8.8 shows, the majority of young people from TAS (61.4%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. A slightly greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (11.7% compared with 8.7%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 8.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 8.8 shows that, in line with the national results, around six in ten respondents from TAS felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, around one in ten young people from TAS felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around six in ten respondents from TAS felt either *positive* (45.0%) or *very positive* (15.5%) about the future.
- Nearly three in ten respondents (28.9%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- More than one in ten respondents felt *negative* (7.3%) or *very negative* (3.2%) about the future.
- A slightly larger proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 18.9% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 11.1% of females.

Table 8.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	TAS 2017 %	Female %	Male %	TAS 2016 %	TAS 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	15.5	11.1	18.9	15.7	14.4
Positive	46.6	45.0	44.0	47.9	45.8	44.6
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	28.9	34.0	24.3	28.2	29.4
Negative	7.1	7.3	8.4	6.1	6.6	8.5
Very negative	3.1	3.2	2.6	2.8	3.6	3.2

Victoria



Profile of respondents

In total, 4,783 young people from Victoria (VIC) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Almost two thirds (65.3%) of respondents from VIC were female and 32.5% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 106 (2.2%) respondents from VIC identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 91 (1.9%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 6 (0.1%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.2% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (3.6% compared with 1.4%).

Language background other than English

A total of 669 (14.1%) respondents from VIC stated that they were born overseas and 1,021 (21.7%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 80 languages spoken at home in VIC, the most common were (in order of frequency): Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Disability

A total of 188 (4.0%) respondents from VIC indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (4.9%) than females (3.2%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in VIC were (in order of frequency): autism, learning disability, physical disability, deafness or hearing impairment and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 9.1, 96.5% of respondents from VIC were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (97.7% compared with 94.8%), while a slightly greater proportion of males (3.1%) than females (1.2%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from VIC reported that they were either *very satisfied* (14.4%) or *satisfied* (59.7%) with their studies. A minority of respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (1.1% and 4.5% respectively). As shown in Table 9.2, a slightly higher proportion of females than males from VIC reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (14.8% and 60.4% of females compared with 13.5% and 59.2% of males respectively).

Table 9.1: Participation in education

	National %	VIC %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	96.5	97.7	94.8
Studying part-time	2.1	1.5	1.1	2.1
Not studying	3.0	2.0	1.2	3.1

Table 9.2: Satisfaction with studies

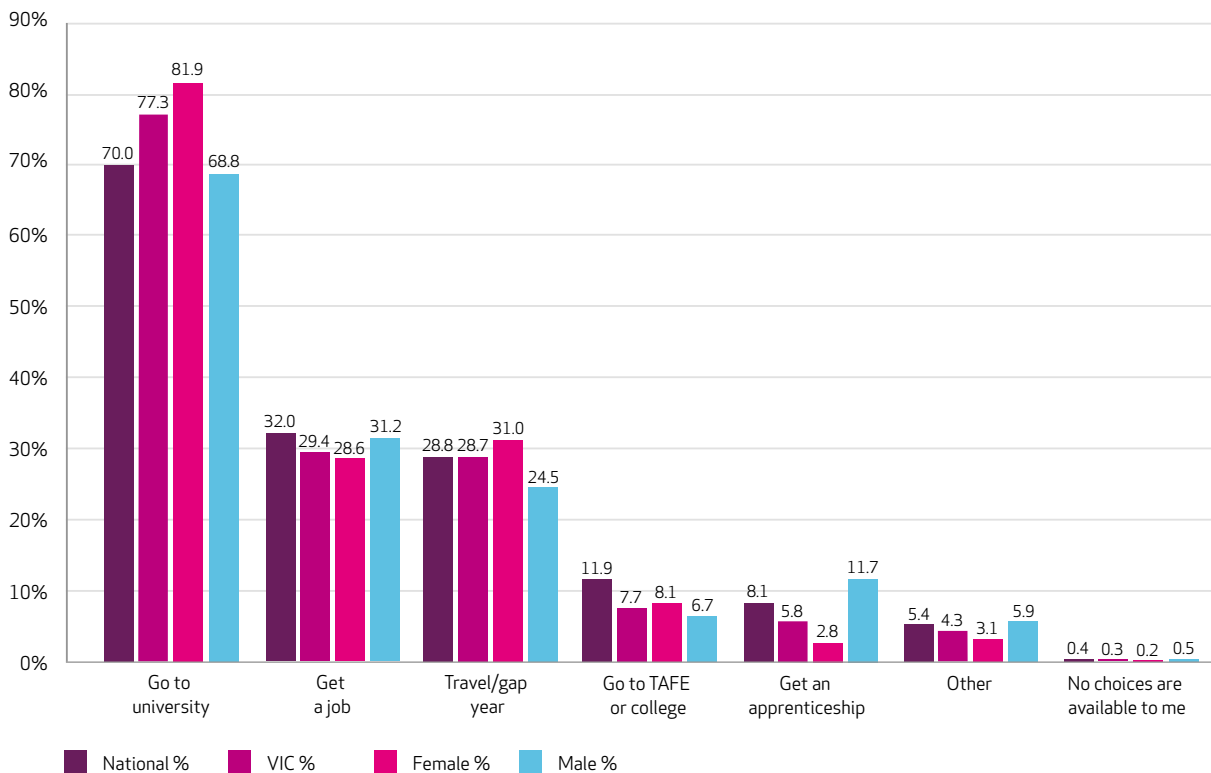
	National %	VIC 2017 %	Female %	Male %	VIC 2016 %	VIC 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	14.4	14.8	13.5	18.9	17.3
Satisfied	56.4	59.7	60.4	59.2	57.0	57.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	20.2	19.5	21.5	19.0	19.8
Dissatisfied	5.4	4.5	4.6	4.1	3.8	3.7
Very dissatisfied	1.7	1.1	0.7	1.7	1.2	1.2

Of those who were still at school in VIC, 97.3% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A higher proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (5.0% compared with 1.4% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 14.4% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a slightly higher proportion of males than females reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (15.9% compared with 13.6% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 9.1 shows that close to eight in ten (77.3%) respondents from VIC planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (29.4%) and to travel or go on a gap year (28.7%) after school. Overall, 7.7% of young people from VIC planned to attend TAFE or college and 5.8% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.3%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from VIC, a much higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (81.9% compared with 68.8% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (31.0% compared with 24.5% of males). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (11.7% compared with 2.8% of females).

Figure 9.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who answered that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 9.3 shows participation in paid employment amongst respondents from VIC. In line with the national results, only a minority (0.4%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. Over four in ten (43.2%) respondents from VIC reported part-time employment. Close to six in ten VIC respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 32.7% looking for work and 23.7% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of male and female respondents from VIC reported full-time employment (0.9% compared with 0.1% respectively), while there was a slightly higher proportion of female respondents employed part-time (44.3% compared with 41.7% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (35.9% compared with 30.8% of females).

Table 9.3: Participation in paid employment

	National %	VIC %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.9
Employed part-time	40.5	43.2	44.3	41.7
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	32.7	30.8	35.9
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	23.7	24.7	21.5

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 9.2. Four in ten respondents from VIC indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 9.7% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 30.9% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 17.2% being *slightly confident* and 3.0% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (12.1% and 35.7% of males compared with 8.5% and 28.7% of females respectively).

Figure 9.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just under half (48.1%) of respondents from VIC indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (51.2%) than males (41.1%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 9.3 shows the percentage of respondents from VIC who indicated each item as being a barrier. In VIC, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *mental health* and *financial difficulty*.

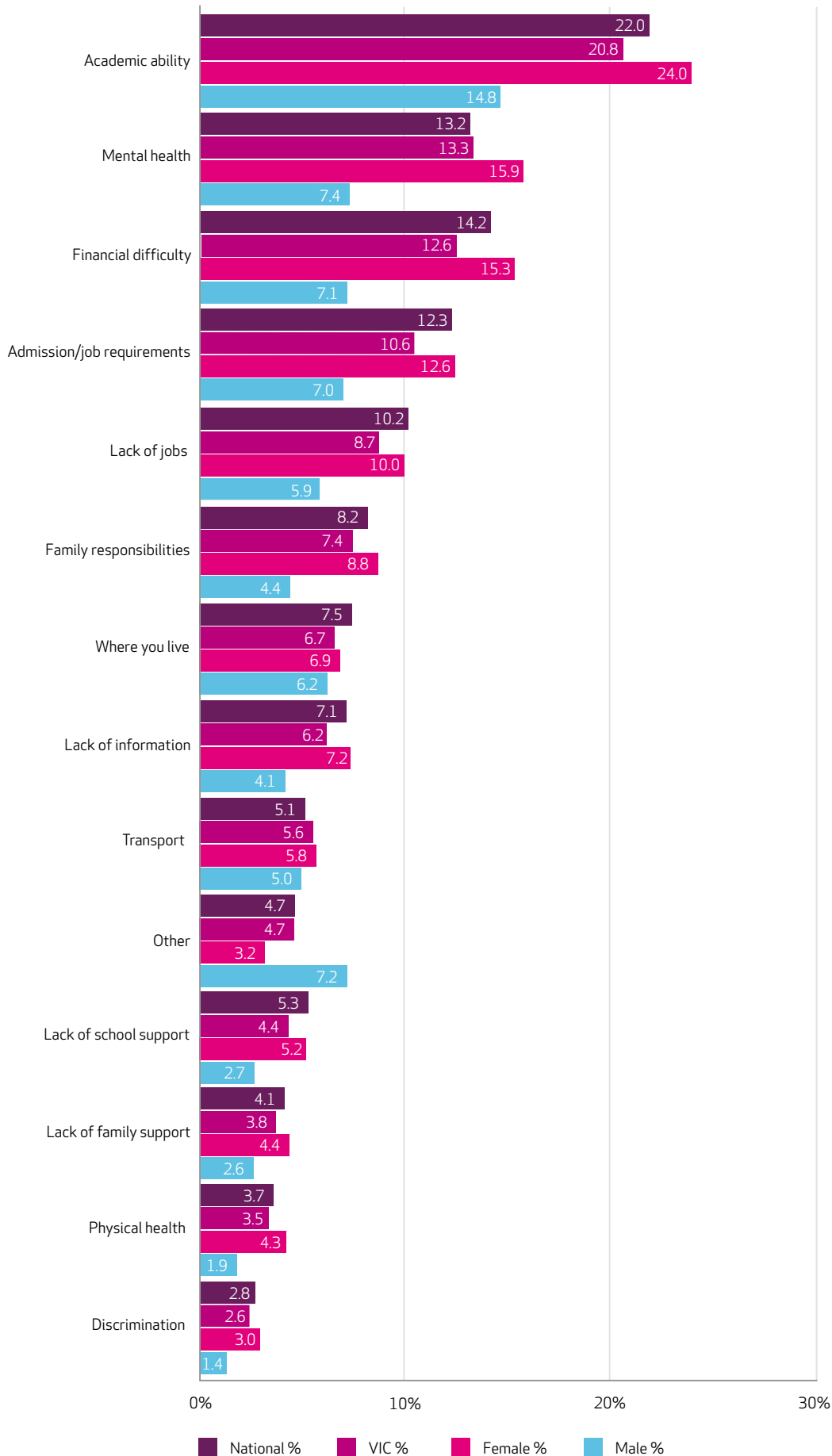
- *Academic ability*, *mental health* and *financial difficulty* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (20.8%, 13.3% and 12.6% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 9.3, the top three barriers for both females and males were *academic ability*, *mental health* and *financial difficulty*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that most of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Around one quarter of female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared to around one in six male respondents (24.0% and 14.8% respectively).
- More than double the proportion of females than males reported *mental health* as a barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school (15.9% compared with 7.4%).
- Around twice the proportion of females than males indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (15.3% compared with 7.1%).

Figure 9.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



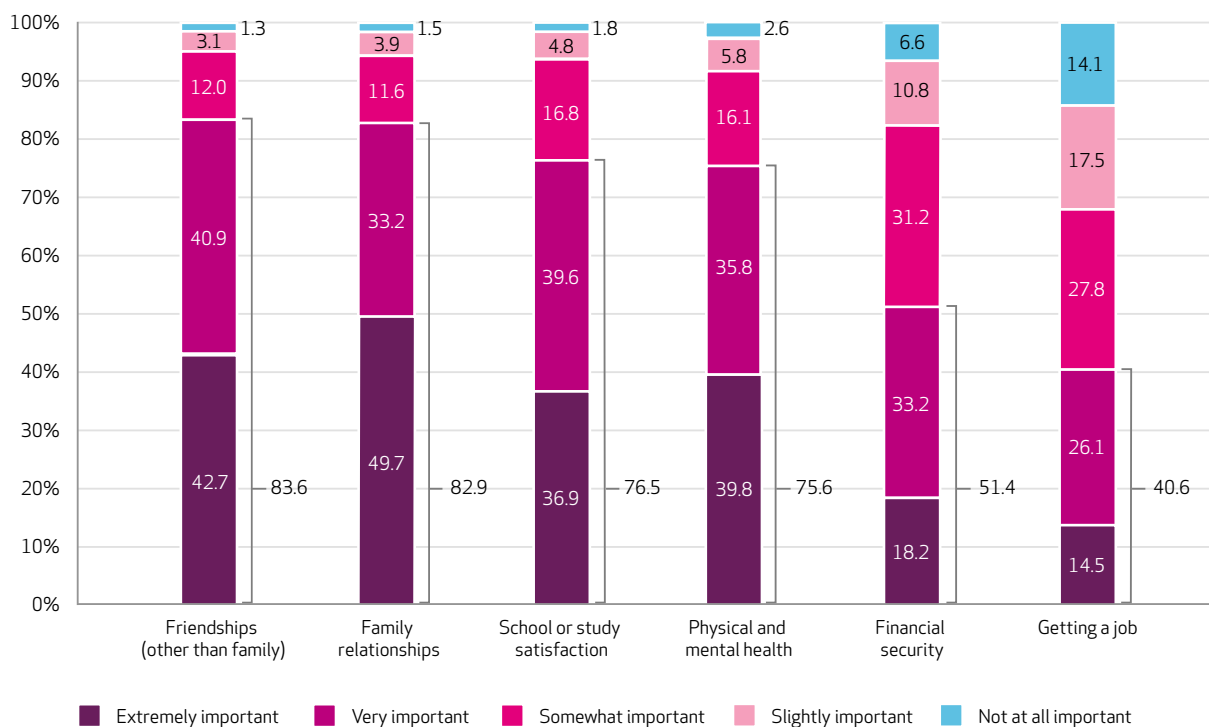
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships*, *financial security*, *friendships*, *getting a job*, *physical and mental health* and *school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 9.4, the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from VIC this year were *friendships*, *family relationships* and *school or study satisfaction*. The next most valued item for VIC respondents was *physical and mental health*.

- *Friendships* were valued highly by 83.6% of respondents (*extremely important*: 42.7%; *very important*: 40.9%). *Family relationships* were also highly valued by 82.9% of respondents from VIC (*extremely important*: 49.7%; *very important*: 33.2%).
- Just over three quarters of respondents highly valued *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 36.9%; *very important*: 39.6%) and *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 39.8%; *very important*: 35.8%).
- Around half of VIC respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 18.2%; *very important*: 33.2%) and four in ten on *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 14.5%; *very important*: 26.1%).

Figure 9.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by females and males in VIC, as shown in Table 9.4. Two items differed however, with *family relationships* being the most highly valued item for females, while for males *friendships* were valued most highly. The third item for females was *school and study satisfaction* and for males it was *physical and mental health*. The proportion of female respondents, who highly valued these and most of the other items was higher than the proportion of males.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 84.8% of females (*extremely important*: 54.4%; *very important*: 30.4%) compared with 80.5% of males (*extremely important*: 41.3%; *very important*: 39.2%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 84.6% of females (*extremely important*: 44.0%; *very important*: 40.6%) compared with 82.4% of males (*extremely important*: 40.2%; *very important*: 42.2%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 81.2% of females (*extremely important*: 41.4%; *very important*: 39.8%) and 68.4% of males in VIC (*extremely important*: 28.5%; *very important*: 39.9%).
- Just over three quarters (77.0%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 40.5%; *very important*: 36.5%) compared with 73.2% of males (*extremely important*: 38.6%; *very important*: 34.6%).

Table 9.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	44.0	40.6	11.5	3.0	1.0
Family relationships	54.4	30.4	10.6	3.4	1.2
School or study satisfaction	41.4	39.8	14.5	3.5	0.8
Physical and mental health	40.5	36.5	15.8	5.4	1.9
Financial security	18.3	34.9	31.5	10.1	5.3
Getting a job	13.0	26.5	28.4	17.4	14.6
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Friendships (other than family)	40.2	42.2	12.9	3.4	1.2
Family relationships	41.3	39.2	13.3	4.5	1.6
School or study satisfaction	28.5	39.9	21.1	7.3	3.1
Physical and mental health	38.6	34.6	16.6	6.8	3.4
Financial security	17.6	30.4	31.0	12.1	8.9
Getting a job	17.4	25.6	26.7	17.5	12.7

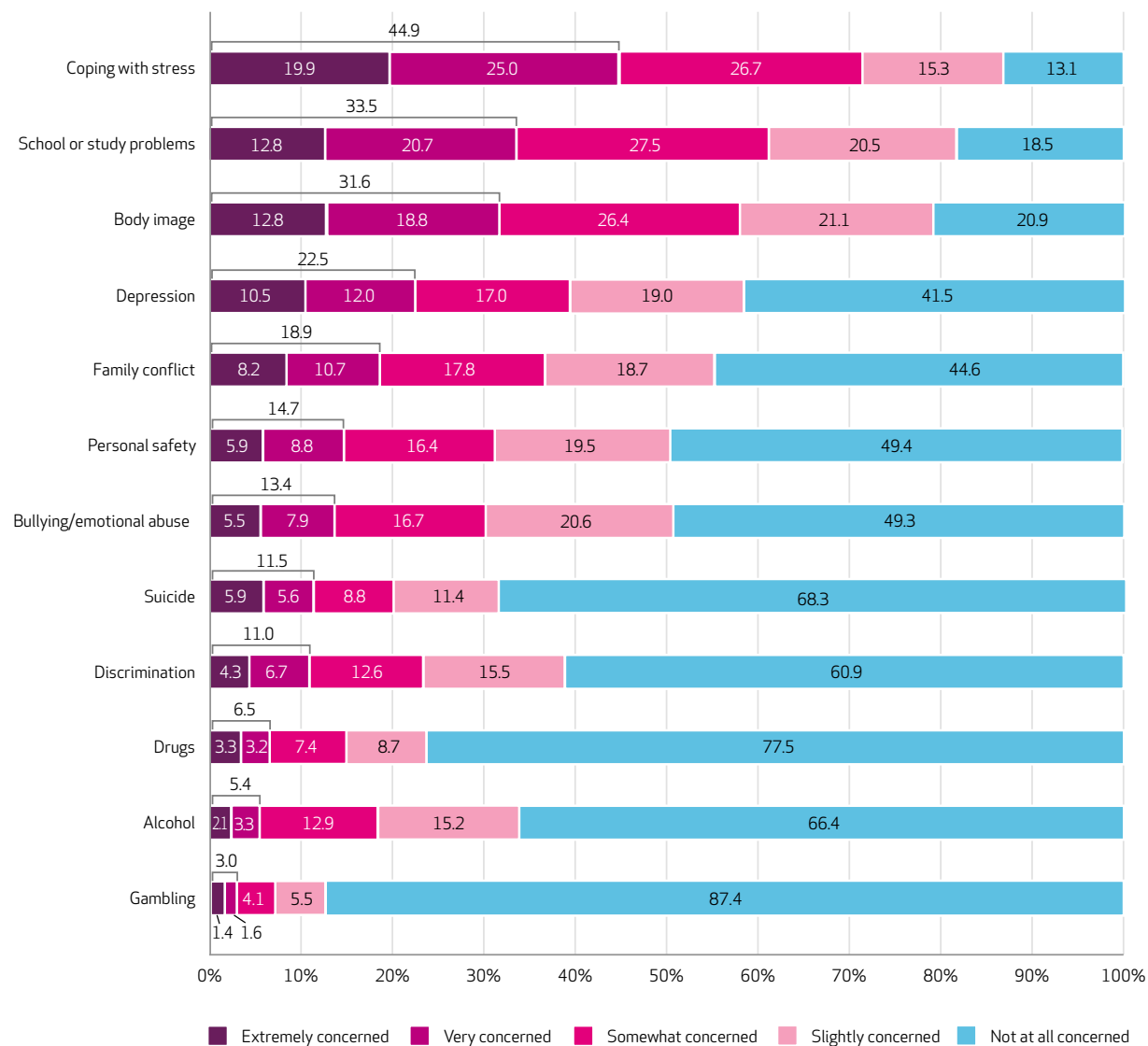
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 6.4. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The top three issues of concern for young people from VIC were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 44.9% of respondents from VIC indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (19.9%) or *very concerned* (25.0%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for one third of young people (*extremely concerned*: 12.8%; *very concerned*: 20.7%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 31.6% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 12.8%; *very concerned*: 18.8%).
- Just over one in five (22.5%) respondents were either *extremely concerned* (10.5%) or *very concerned* (12.0%) about *depression*.

Figure 9.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and males in VIC, as highlighted in Table 9.5. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For 55.0% of females *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 24.8%; *very concerned*: 30.2%), compared with around one quarter of males (*extremely concerned*: 9.6%; *very concerned*: 14.9%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 39.4% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 14.7%; *very concerned*: 24.7%), compared with 21.0% of males (*extremely concerned*: 8.4%; *very concerned*: 12.6%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 38.4% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 15.6%; *very concerned*: 22.8%), compared with 17.9% of males (*extremely concerned*: 6.7%; *very concerned*: 11.2%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 25.7% of females (*extremely concerned*: 11.9%; *very concerned*: 13.8%) and 15.0% of males (*extremely concerned*: 6.7%; *very concerned*: 8.3%).

Table 9.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	24.8	30.2	26.4	12.1	6.5
School or study problems	14.7	24.7	28.3	19.3	13.0
Body image	15.6	22.8	29.1	19.8	12.7
Depression	11.9	13.8	18.2	19.8	36.3
Family conflict	9.3	12.4	19.2	20.1	39.0
Personal safety	6.1	10.1	18.5	20.4	44.9
Bullying/emotional abuse	5.5	9.1	18.5	21.5	45.3
Suicide	5.8	6.3	9.7	12.8	65.4
Discrimination	4.4	7.5	13.5	17.4	57.2
Drugs	2.6	3.1	7.3	8.8	78.2
Alcohol	1.3	3.4	13.5	15.5	66.4
Gambling	0.8	1.3	3.4	5.4	89.1
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	9.6	14.9	27.9	22.1	25.6
School or study problems	8.4	12.6	26.7	23.4	28.8
Body image	6.7	11.2	21.4	23.9	36.8
Depression	6.7	8.3	14.5	17.7	52.8
Family conflict	5.7	7.4	15.1	15.7	56.1
Personal safety	5.1	6.1	12.4	17.6	58.8
Bullying/emotional abuse	4.6	5.3	13.2	18.9	58.0
Suicide	5.2	3.9	7.0	8.4	75.5
Discrimination	3.2	5.0	10.5	11.8	69.4
Drugs	4.5	3.2	7.7	8.4	76.3
Alcohol	3.6	3.1	12.2	15.0	66.2
Gambling	2.3	2.0	5.4	6.0	84.3

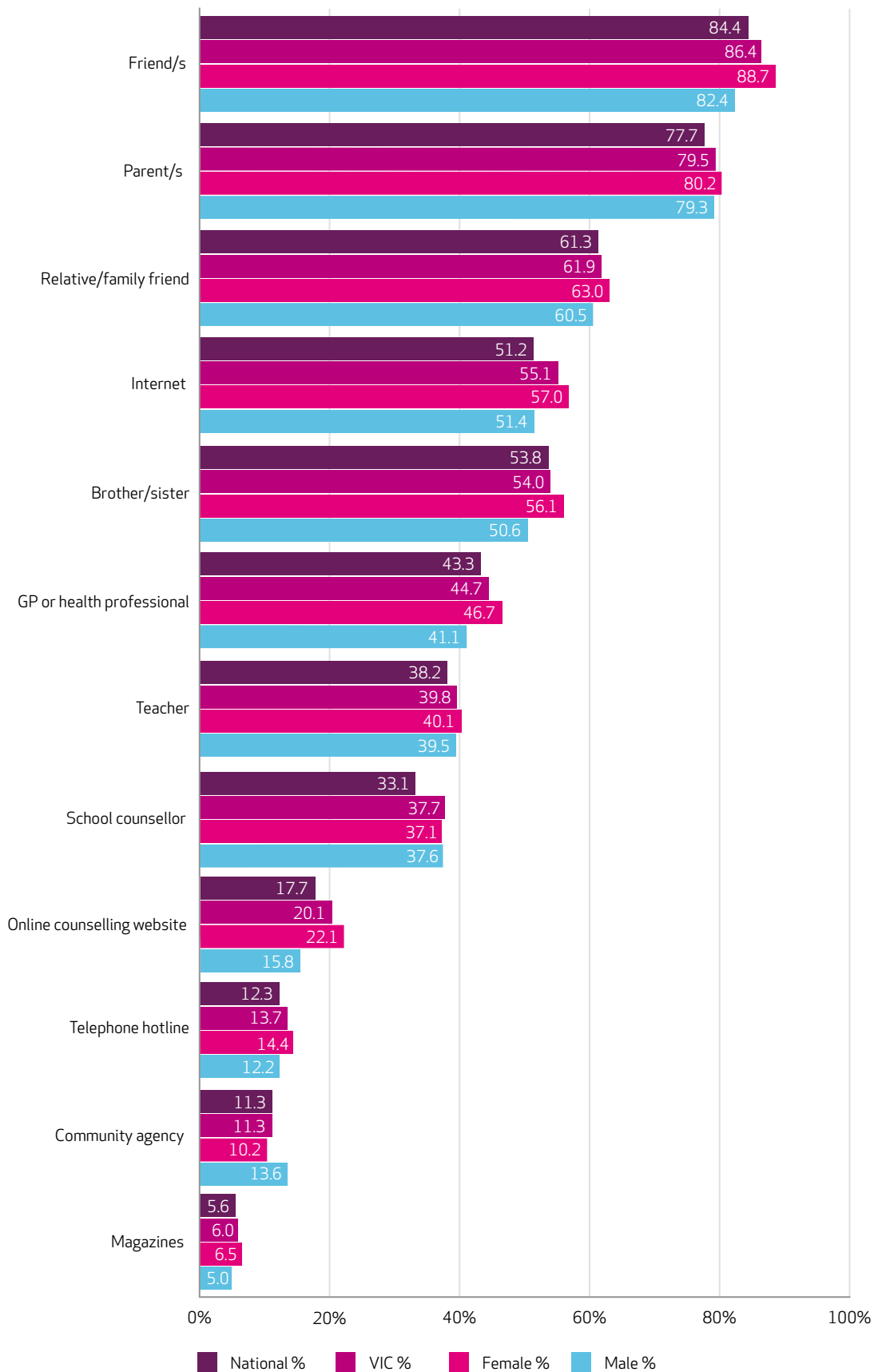
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 9.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in VIC were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (86.4%, 79.5% and 61.9% respectively).
- Similar proportions of respondents from VIC indicated that they would go to the *internet* (55.1%) or their *brother/sister* (54.0%) for help with important issues in their lives.
- Around four in ten of all respondents indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (44.7%) or their *teacher* (39.8%) for help with important issues.

Figure 9.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

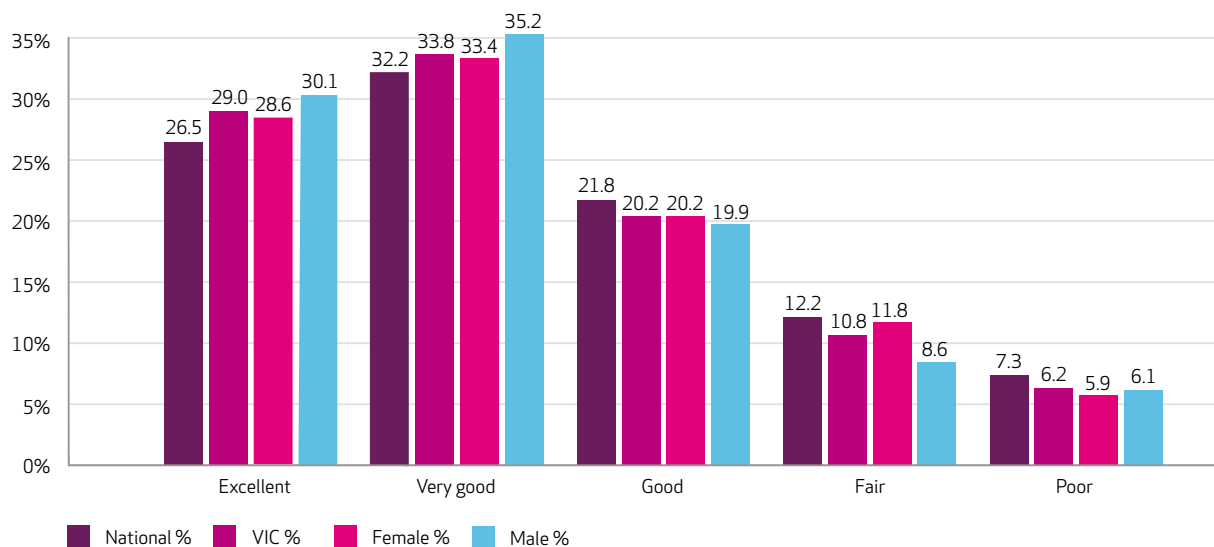
As shown in Figure 9.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with VIC and the national results.

- A greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (88.7% compared with 82.4%).
- Similar proportions of female and male respondents indicated that they would go to *parent/s* (80.2% compared with 79.3%) and a slightly greater proportion of females would go to a *relative/family friend* for help (63.0% compared with 60.5%).
- Greater proportions of females than males from VIC would go to the *internet* (57.0% compared with 51.4%), their *brother/sister* (56.1% compared with 50.6%), a *GP or health professional* (46.7% compared with 41.1%) and *online counselling websites* (22.1% compared with 15.8%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 9.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from VIC rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 29.0% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 33.8% that it was *very good*. However, almost one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (10.8%) or *poor* (6.2%). Similar proportions of males and females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (30.1% compared with 28.6% respectively).

Figure 9.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 9.6. In 2017 the top issues identified by young people in VIC were *alcohol and drugs* and *equity and discrimination* (in equal proportions), followed by *mental health*.

- Almost three in ten young people from VIC identified *alcohol and drugs* (29.9%), *equity and discrimination* (29.9%) and *mental health* (29.7%) as important issues in Australia today.
- *International relations* and *crime, safety and violence* were also identified as major issues by young Victorians (15.1% and 15.0% respectively).
- Since 2015, *mental health, homelessness/housing, equity and discrimination* and *crime, safety and violence* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *politics, the economy and financial matters, LGBTIQ issues, employment* and *population issues* have declined over this period.

Gender differences

There were some differences in the top three issues of national importance for females and males in VIC. For females, *equity and discrimination* was the number one issue, followed by *mental health* and then *alcohol and drugs*. For males, *alcohol and drugs* was the number one national issue, followed by *mental health* and then *equity and discrimination*.

- Close to one third of female and one quarter of male respondents from VIC identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today (32.3% and 25.5% respectively).
- Greater proportions of females than males identified *equity and discrimination* as a major issue (32.7% compared with 24.9%).
- Conversely, a slightly greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue (33.1% compared with 28.5%).

Table 9.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	VIC 2017 %	Female %	Male %	VIC 2016 %	VIC 2015 %
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	29.9	28.5	33.1	25.3	28.8
Equity and discrimination	27.3	29.9	32.7	24.9	30.6	27.3
Mental health	33.7	29.7	32.3	25.5	18.4	11.9
International relations	13.6	15.1	14.5	16.0	16.4	13.4
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	15.0	15.0	15.7	15.6	12.6
Population issues	10.3	13.5	14.2	12.0	20.7	15.1
Homelessness/housing	8.2	12.5	14.5	8.8	8.9	7.9
The economy and financial matters	12.7	12.0	10.3	14.6	13.3	17.6
The environment	10.9	12.0	13.3	9.7	13.8	13.2
Education	13.0	11.7	11.4	12.7	10.3	11.4
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	9.0	11.3	4.3	10.1	14.1
Bullying	10.6	8.9	9.0	9.0	8.8	8.8
Health	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.7	8.9
Employment	10.2	8.0	6.3	10.6	7.4	11.5
Politics	6.8	5.2	4.1	7.2	12.2	16.2

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 9.7. The top three activities for young people from VIC were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *arts/cultural/music activities*. These were also the top three activities for young people from VIC in previous years.

- Just over three quarters of young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, around seven in ten were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and over half were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (76.2%, 68.2% and 54.7% respectively).
- Just over half (53.8%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in *volunteer work*.
- Just over four in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (42.6%) and close to three in ten had participated in *youth groups and clubs* (28.0%).

Gender differences

As shown in Table 9.7, the top two activities for both males and females in VIC were *sports (as a participant)* and *sports (as a spectator)*, however the third top activity differed between genders. For females, *arts/cultural/music activities* was the third top activity while for males it was *volunteer work*.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (79.3% compared with 75.1%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (76.7% compared with 64.1%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *arts/cultural/music activities* (61.3% compared with 41.2%), *volunteer work* (59.2% compared with 44.0%) and *student leadership activities* (46.6% compared with 35.1%).

Table 9.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	VIC 2017 %	Female %	Male %	VIC 2016 %	VIC 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	76.2	75.1	79.3	78.7	75.6
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	68.2	64.1	76.7	69.2	67.7
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	54.7	61.3	41.2	55.9	48.5
Volunteer work	54.1	53.8	59.2	44.0	53.2	46.3
Student leadership activities	41.3	42.6	46.6	35.1	41.9	36.5
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	28.0	27.3	28.7	28.4	26.9
Religious group/activity	29.2	26.5	28.2	23.1	27.1	26.5
Environmental group/activity	23.7	24.6	25.9	21.3	25.0	22.1
Political groups/organisations	8.2	8.3	7.6	9.0	9.9	7.1

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

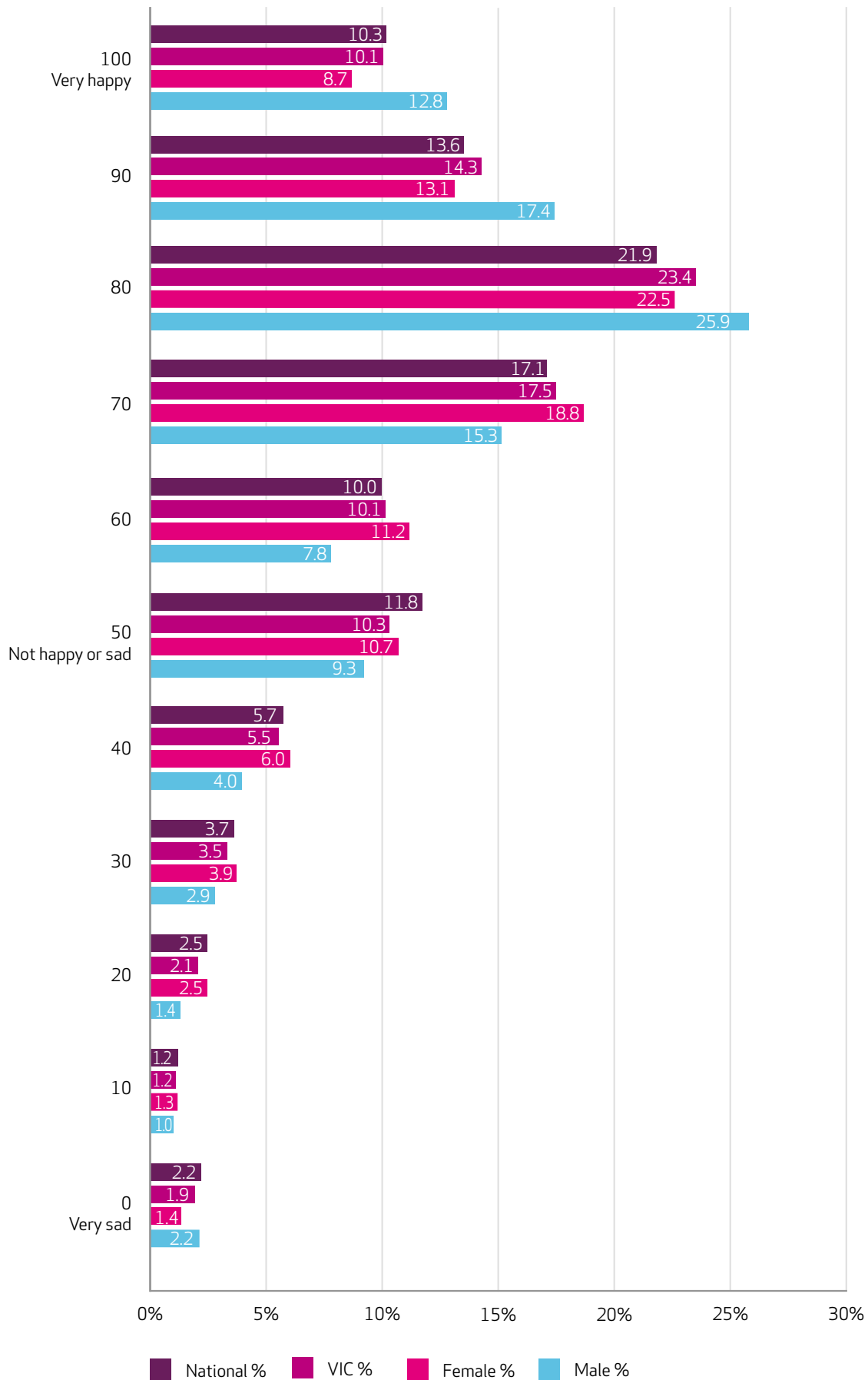
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 9.8 shows, the majority of young people from VIC (65.3%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (12.8% compared with 8.7%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 9.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 9.8 shows that, in line with the national results, around two thirds of respondents from VIC felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, less than one in ten young people from VIC felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around two thirds of respondents from VIC felt either *positive* (47.6%) or *very positive* (16.2%) about the future.
- Around one quarter of respondents (26.7%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- A total of 6.9% of respondents felt *negative* about the future and 2.7% felt *very negative*.
- A slightly larger proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 19.5% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 14.5% of females.

Table 9.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	VIC 2017 %	Female %	Male %	VIC 2016 %	VIC 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	16.2	14.5	19.5	17.9	16.5
Positive	46.6	47.6	47.2	49.4	49.3	47.4
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	26.7	29.0	22.1	24.4	26.5
Negative	7.1	6.9	7.2	6.3	6.3	7.0
Very negative	3.1	2.7	2.2	2.8	2.2	2.6

Western Australia



Profile of respondents

In total, 2,597 young people from Western Australia (WA) aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.

Gender breakdown

Over half (52.2%) of respondents from WA were female and 44.0% were male.

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

A total of 180 (7.1%) respondents from WA identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of this total, 143 (5.6%) respondents identified as Aboriginal, while 20 (0.8%) identified as Torres Strait Islander (the remaining 0.7% identified as both). A higher proportion of male than female respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (6.5% compared with 5.9%).

Language background other than English

A total of 675 (26.6%) respondents from WA stated that they were born overseas and 423 (16.7%) young people reported speaking a language other than English at home. Of the 70 languages spoken at home in WA, the most common were (in order of frequency): Filipino/Tagalog, Afrikaans, Indonesian, Italian and French.

Disability

A total of 142 (5.7%) respondents from WA indicated that they had a disability, with a greater proportion of males (6.4%) than females (3.3%) reporting a disability. The most frequently cited disabilities in WA were (in order of frequency): learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism, anxiety disorder and depressive disorder.

Detailed results

Education

As indicated in Table 10.1, 93.3% of respondents from WA were studying full-time. A slightly higher proportion of female than male respondents reported that they were studying full-time (94.6% compared with 92.8%), while a slightly greater proportion of males (4.7%) than females (3.1%) reported not studying at all.

Respondents who reported that they were currently studying were asked how satisfied they were with their studies. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *very satisfied* to *very dissatisfied*. As in previous years, the majority of respondents from WA reported that they were either *very satisfied* (8.6%) or *satisfied* (53.6%) with their studies. A minority of respondents were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* (2.2% and 6.5% respectively). As shown in Table 10.2, a slightly higher proportion of males than females from WA reported feeling *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with their studies (10.4% and 54.4% of males compared with 7.2% and 54.4% of females respectively).

Table 10.1: Participation in education

	National %	WA %	Female %	Male %
Studying full-time	94.9	93.3	94.6	92.8
Studying part-time	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.5
Not studying	3.0	4.1	3.1	4.7

Table 10.2: Satisfaction with studies

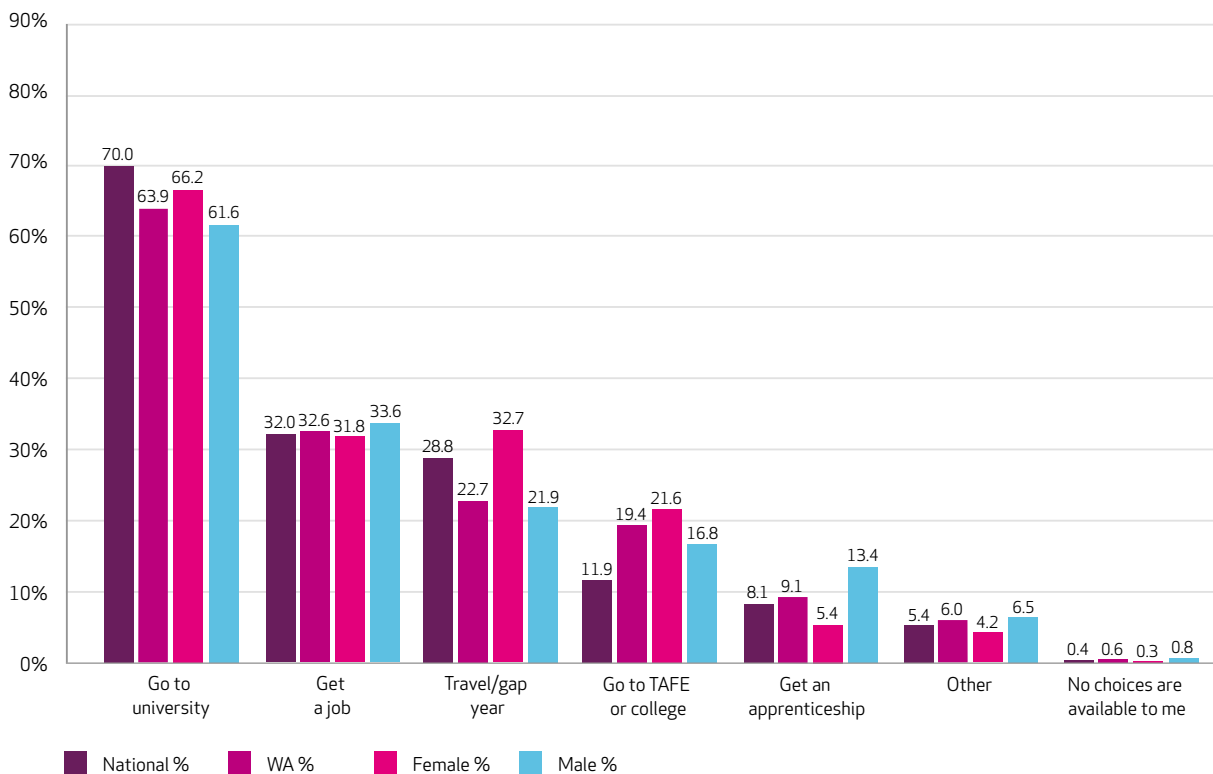
	National %	WA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	WA 2016 %	WA 2015 %
Very satisfied	13.3	8.6	7.2	10.4	9.7	12.4
Satisfied	56.4	53.6	54.4	54.4	51.5	56.2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23.3	29.1	31.1	26.1	31.0	25.0
Dissatisfied	5.4	6.5	6.5	6.1	5.9	4.9
Very dissatisfied	1.7	2.2	0.8	3.0	2.0	1.4

Of those who were still at school in WA, 96.7% stated that they intended to complete Year 12. A higher proportion of males indicated that they did not intend to complete Year 12 (4.5% compared with 2.2% of females respectively). In 2017, respondents were asked whether they were currently undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training, or if they had done so in the past. Overall, 23.5% of young people indicated that they are doing so, with a higher proportion of females than males reporting participation in an apprenticeship, traineeship, TAFE or similar training (25.7% compared with 20.7% respectively).

Respondents who were still at school were also asked what they were planning to do after leaving school. Figure 10.1 shows that over six in ten (63.9%) respondents from WA planned to go to university after school. Many respondents also indicated plans to get a job (32.6%) and to travel or go on a gap year (22.7%) after school. Overall, 19.4% of young people from WA planned to attend TAFE or college and 9.1% reported plans to undertake an apprenticeship. A small minority of respondents (0.6%) indicated that they felt no choices were available to them after they left school.

While going to university was the most frequently chosen option among both female and male respondents from WA, a higher proportion of females than males stated that they planned to do so (66.2% compared with 61.6% respectively). A greater proportion of female respondents also reported plans to travel or go on a gap year after school (32.7% compared with 21.9%) or to go to TAFE or college (21.6% compared with 16.8%). A much larger proportion of males indicated that they were planning to undertake an apprenticeship (13.4% compared with 5.4% of females).

Figure 10.1: Plans after leaving school



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Employment

Respondents were asked whether they currently have paid work. Those who reported that they had paid employment were asked to specify how many hours they worked per week, on average. Table 10.3 shows participation in paid employment among respondents from WA. In line with the national results, only a minority (0.9%) of respondents who reported paid employment were employed full-time. However, given the percentage of respondents who were still at school this is not surprising. More than one third (36.0%) of respondents from WA reported part-time employment. Just over six in ten WA respondents reported that they were not in paid employment, with 38.9% looking for work and 24.2% not looking for work.

Similar proportions of female and male respondents from WA reported full-time employment (1.0% compared with 0.4% respectively), while a higher proportion of female respondents were employed part-time (43.4% compared with 27.7% of males). Conversely, a greater proportion of male respondents were looking for work (42.7% compared with 35.7% of females).

Table 10.3: Participation in paid employment

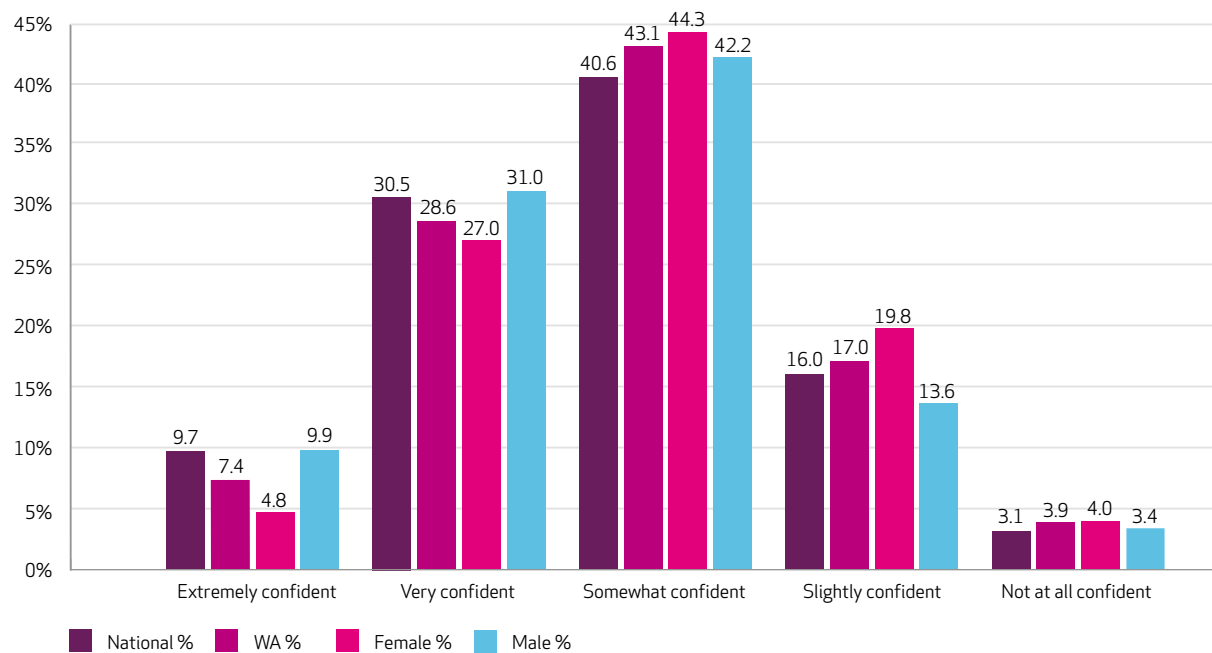
	National %	WA %	Female %	Male %
Employed full-time	0.5	0.9	1.0	0.4
Employed part-time	40.5	36.0	43.4	27.7
Not in paid employment, looking for work	34.5	38.9	35.7	42.7
Not in paid employment, NOT looking for work	24.4	24.2	19.9	29.2

Note: Part-time is considered to be less than 35 hours per week and full-time is 35 hours or more.

How confident are young people in achieving their study/work goals?

In 2017, respondents were asked how confident they were in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. Responses for this question were rated on a 5 point scale from *extremely confident* to *not at all confident*, as shown in Figure 10.2. Almost four in ten respondents from WA indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 7.4% indicating that they were *extremely confident* and 28.6% indicating that they were *very confident*. However, one in five young people were less confident in their ability to achieve their goals, with 17.0% being *slightly confident* and 3.9% *not at all confident* in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school. A higher proportion of male than female respondents reported feeling *extremely confident* or *very confident* (9.9% and 31.0% of males compared with 4.8% and 27.0% of females respectively).

Figure 10.2: Confidence in achieving study/work goals



Barriers to the achievement of young people's study/work goals after school

Young people in 2017 were asked whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Just over half (52.4%) of respondents from WA indicated that they felt there would be barriers to the achievement of their study/work goals, with a greater proportion of females (58.6%) than males (43.9%) reporting the presence of barriers.

Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. Figure 10.3 shows the percentage of respondents from WA who indicated each item as being a barrier. In WA, the top three barriers to young people's post-school goals were *academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health*.

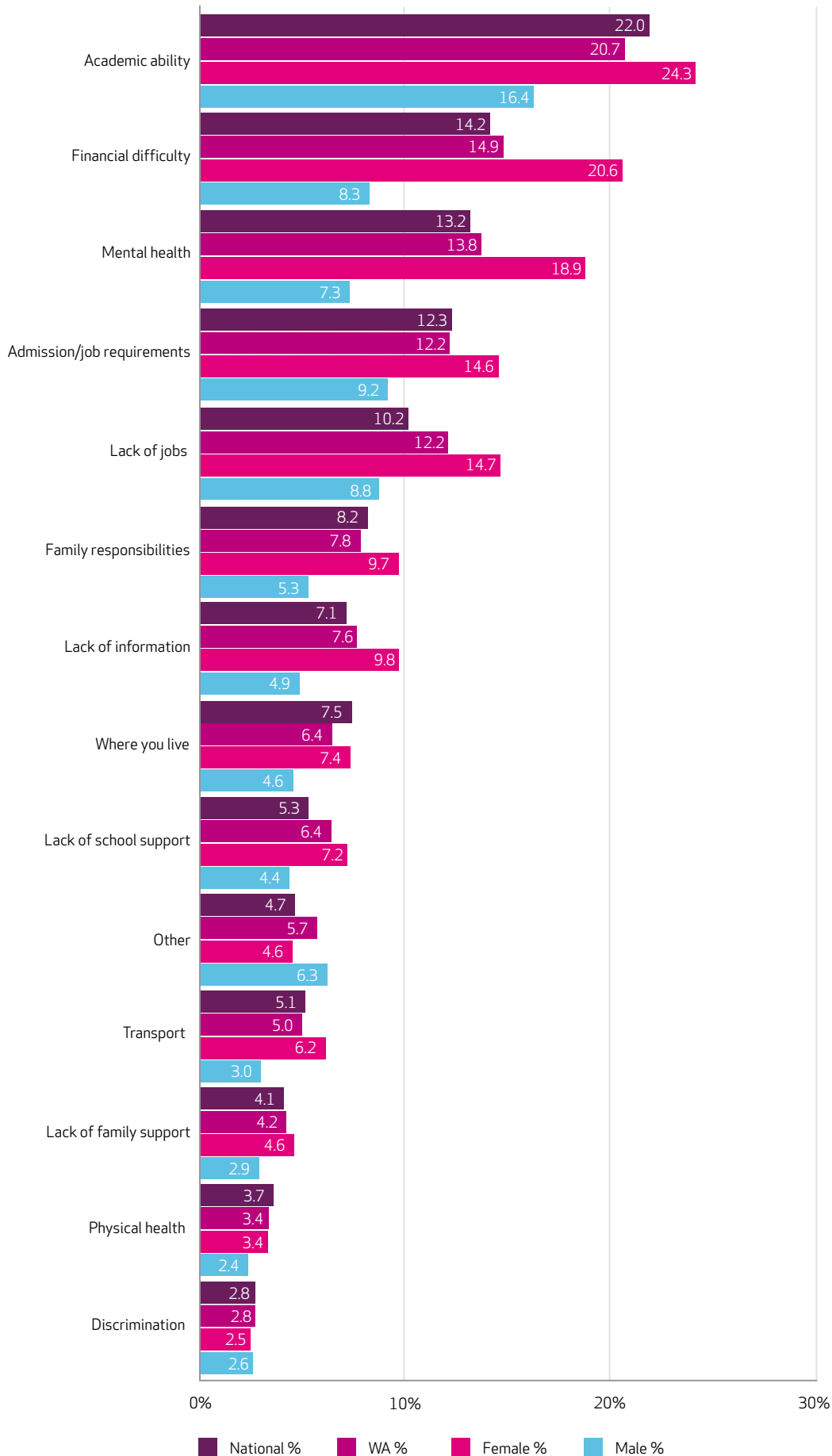
- *Academic ability*, *financial difficulty* and *mental health* were the three most commonly cited barriers to young people's post-school goals (20.7%, 14.9% and 13.8% respectively).

Gender differences

As shown in Figure 10.3, while the top barrier for both females and males was *academic ability*, the other barriers making up their top three differed between genders. For females, the second and third top barriers were *financial difficulty* and *mental health*, while for males *admission/job requirements* was the second top barrier followed by a *lack of jobs*. A greater proportion of females than males indicated that many of the items listed were a barrier to them achieving their goals after school.

- Close to one quarter of female respondents saw *academic ability* as a major barrier which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school, compared to around one in six male respondents (24.3% and 16.4% respectively).
- More than twice the proportion of females than males indicated that *financial difficulty* was a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (20.6% compared with 8.3%).
- More than twice the proportion of females than males reported *mental health* as a barrier which may impact on their achievements after school (18.9% compared with 7.3%).
- Despite ranking higher up the list for males, a higher proportion of females than males reported *admission/job requirements* (14.6% compared with 9.2%) and a *lack of jobs* (14.7% compared with 8.8%) as barriers.

Figure 10.3: Barriers to achievement of study/work goals



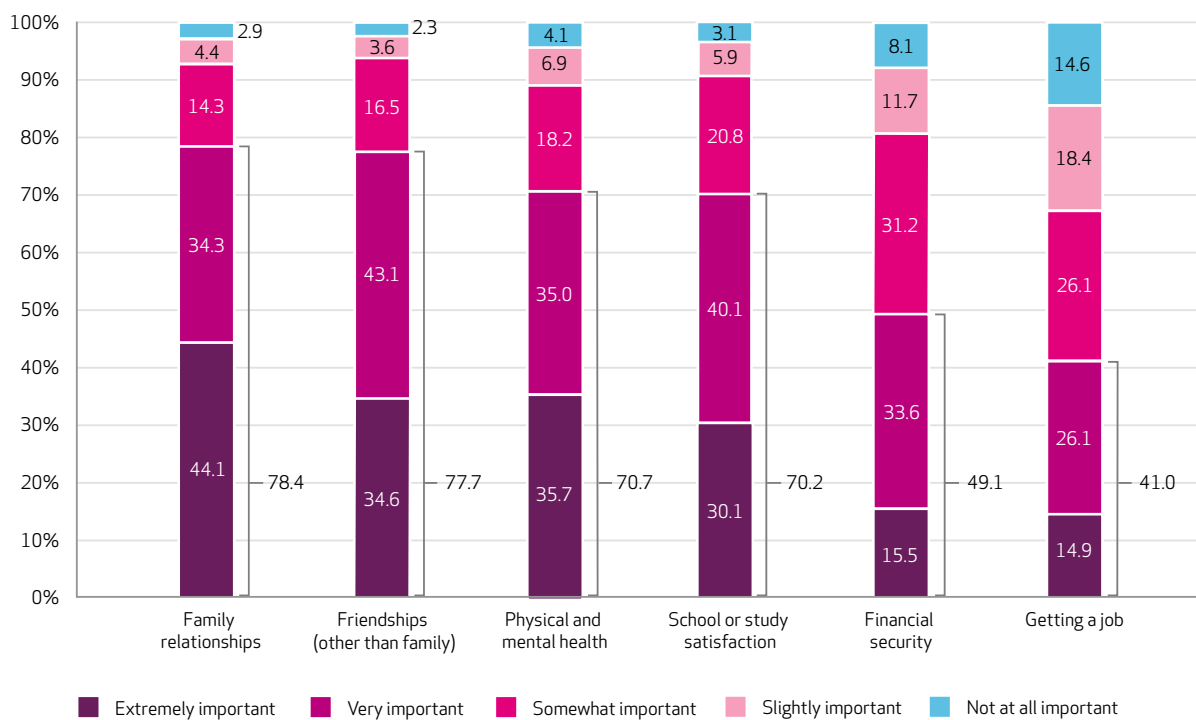
Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What do young people value?

In 2017 young people were again asked how much they valued *family relationships, financial security, friendships, getting a job, physical and mental health and school or study satisfaction*. Responses for these items were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely important* to *not at all important*. In Figure 10.4 the items were ranked in order of importance by summing together the number of respondents who selected either *extremely important* or *very important* for each item. The three most highly valued items for respondents from WA this year were *family relationships, friendships and physical and mental health*. The next most valued item for WA respondents was *school or study satisfaction*.

- *Family relationships* were valued highly by 78.4% of respondents (*extremely important*: 44.1%; *very important*: 34.3%). *Friendships* were also highly valued by 77.7% of respondents from WA (*extremely important*: 34.6%; *very important*: 43.1%).
- Around seven in ten respondents highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 35.7%; *very important*: 35.0%) and *school or study satisfaction* (*extremely important*: 30.1%; *very important*: 40.1%).
- Around half of WA respondents placed a high value on *financial security* (*extremely important*: 15.5%; *very important*: 33.6%) and around four in ten valued *getting a job* (*extremely important*: 14.9%; *very important*: 26.1%).

Figure 10.4: What young people value



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item.

Gender differences

Family relationships and *friendships* were ranked as the two most highly valued items by both females and males in WA, as shown in Table 10.4. The order of the top two items differed, however, with *family relationships* being the most highly valued item for females, while for males *friendships* were valued most highly. The third top item for females was *school or study satisfaction* while for males it was *physical and mental health*.

- *Family relationships* were highly valued by 81.8% of females (*extremely important*: 47.8%; *very important*: 34.0%) compared with 77.0% of males (*extremely important*: 41.2%; *very important*: 35.8%).
- *Friendships* were highly valued by 77.6% of females (*extremely important*: 35.8%; *very important*: 41.8%) compared with 79.5% of males (*extremely important*: 33.7%; *very important*: 45.8%).
- *School or study satisfaction* was highly valued by 77.5% of females (*extremely important*: 36.1%; *very important*: 39.4%) and 66.1% of males (*extremely important*: 23.6%; *very important*: 42.5%).
- Around three quarters (73.5%) of females highly valued *physical and mental health* (*extremely important*: 38.3%; *very important*: 35.2%) compared with 68.8% of males (*extremely important*: 32.7%; *very important*: 36.1%).

Table 10.4: What young people value by gender

Females	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	47.8	34.0	12.1	4.0	2.0
Friendships (other than family)	35.8	41.8	16.8	4.0	1.6
Physical and mental health	38.3	35.2	17.2	6.7	2.6
School or study satisfaction	36.1	39.4	18.1	4.5	2.0
Financial security	16.4	38.5	29.9	10.3	4.9
Getting a job	16.3	27.8	25.6	17.9	12.5
Males	Extremely important %	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Slightly important %	Not at all important %
Family relationships	41.2	35.8	15.7	4.6	2.7
Friendships (other than family)	33.7	45.8	15.4	3.1	2.0
Physical and mental health	32.7	36.1	19.7	7.3	4.3
School or study satisfaction	23.6	42.5	23.7	7.2	3.0
Financial security	13.9	28.5	33.1	13.8	10.6
Getting a job	12.8	24.6	27.0	19.4	16.2

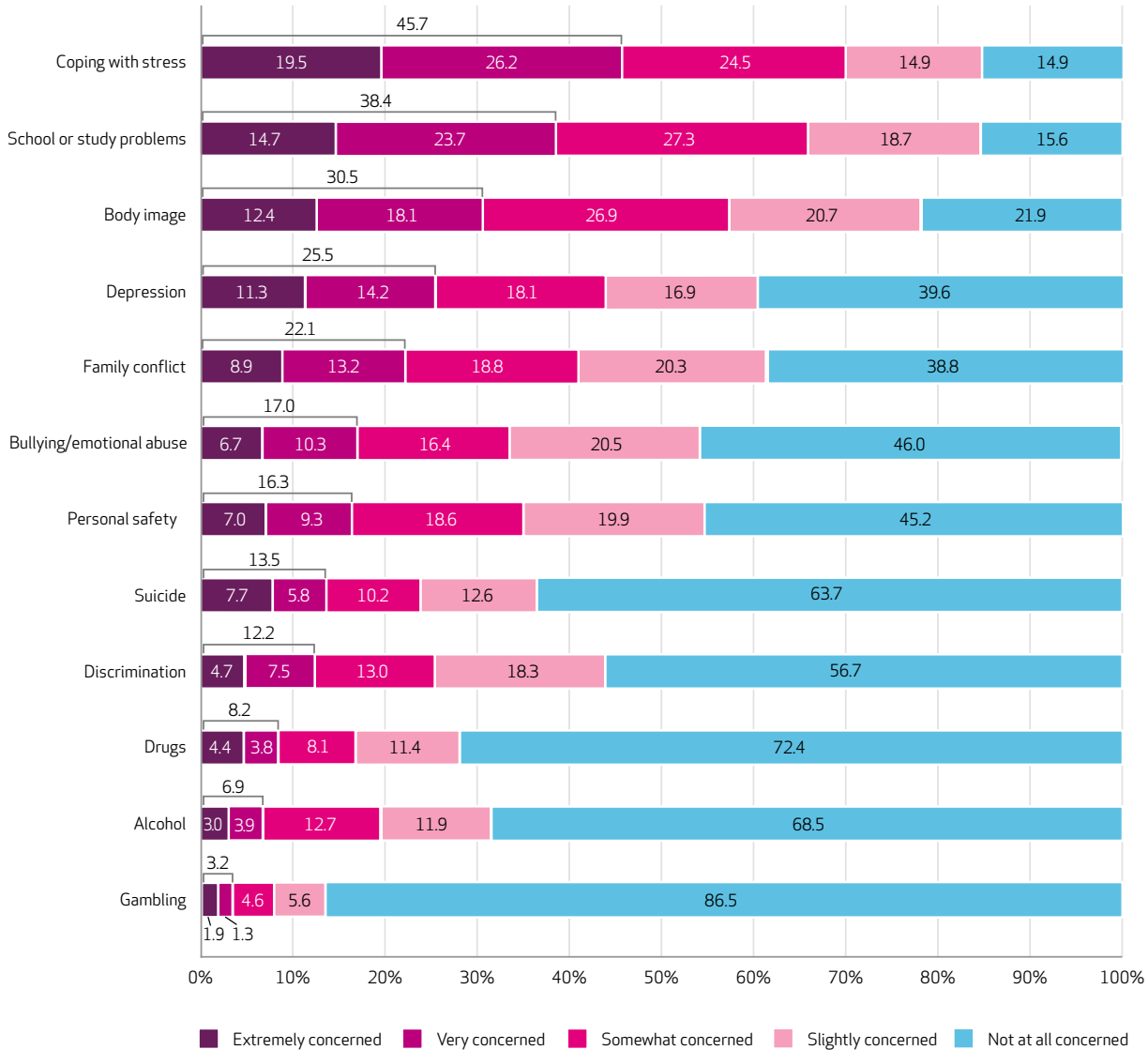
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely important* and *very important* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

What issues are of personal concern to young people?

Respondents were asked to rate how concerned they were about a number of issues, shown in Figure 10.5. Responses were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *extremely concerned* to *not at all concerned*. The top three issues of concern for young people from WA were *coping with stress*, *school or study problems* and *body image*. These were the same top three issues identified nationally.

- *Coping with stress* was the top issue of concern, with 45.7% of respondents from WA indicating that they were either *extremely concerned* (19.5%) or *very concerned* (26.2%) about this issue.
- *School or study problems* was a major concern for 38.4% of young people (*extremely concerned*: 14.7%; *very concerned*: 23.7%).
- *Body image* was also an important issue of concern for 30.5% of respondents (*extremely concerned*: 12.4%; *very concerned*: 18.1%).
- Around one in four respondents were either *extremely concerned* (11.3%) or *very concerned* (14.2%) about *depression*.

Figure 10.5: Issues of personal concern to young people



Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item.

Gender differences

Coping with stress, *school or study problems* and *body image* were the top three issues of concern for females and males in WA, with *depression* being equal third for males, as highlighted in Table 10.5. The proportion of females concerned about these three (and many of the other issues) was much higher than the proportion of males.

- For six in ten females, *coping with stress* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 27.1%; *very concerned*: 33.9%), compared with close to three in ten males (*extremely concerned*: 9.8%; *very concerned*: 18.6%).
- Females were also more concerned about *school or study problems* with 48.6% indicating that this was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 18.8%; *very concerned*: 29.8%), compared with 26.6% of males (*extremely concerned*: 9.2%; *very concerned*: 17.4%).
- Concerns about *body image* were considerably higher among females, with 41.4% indicating that *body image* was a major concern (*extremely concerned*: 17.8%; *very concerned*: 23.6%), compared with 18.0% of males (*extremely concerned*: 5.9%; *very concerned*: 12.1%).
- *Depression* was a major concern for 31.5% of females (*extremely concerned*: 13.7%; *very concerned*: 17.8%) and 18.0% of males (*extremely concerned*: 7.5%; *very concerned*: 10.5%).

Table 10.5: Issues of personal concern to young people by gender

Females	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	27.1	33.9	22.7	10.6	5.7
School or study problems	18.8	29.8	25.2	17.3	8.8
Body image	17.8	23.6	29.9	17.9	10.9
Depression	13.7	17.8	21.4	17.0	30.1
Family conflict	10.9	16.3	21.7	22.0	29.0
Bullying/emotional abuse	8.1	13.7	18.4	22.3	37.5
Personal safety	7.5	10.7	20.3	23.7	37.8
Suicide	8.9	6.8	12.1	14.9	57.3
Discrimination	5.5	9.2	14.5	19.7	51.2
Drugs	3.4	3.8	8.7	13.3	70.7
Alcohol	2.4	3.7	14.5	12.3	67.1
Gambling	0.9	1.0	3.3	5.6	89.2
Males	Extremely concerned %	Very concerned %	Somewhat concerned %	Slightly concerned %	Not at all concerned %
Coping with stress	9.8	18.6	26.8	20.1	24.6
School or study problems	9.2	17.4	29.9	21.2	22.2
Body image	5.9	12.1	23.4	24.6	34.0
Depression	7.5	10.5	14.8	17.0	50.3
Family conflict	5.8	9.7	15.3	18.6	50.5
Bullying/emotional abuse	4.2	6.3	14.5	19.0	56.0
Personal safety	5.5	8.0	16.7	16.0	53.8
Suicide	5.2	4.3	8.2	10.3	72.0
Discrimination	2.8	5.6	10.8	16.8	64.0
Drugs	4.8	3.6	7.0	9.1	75.5
Alcohol	2.9	4.1	10.6	11.4	71.0
Gambling	1.9	1.8	5.6	5.4	85.3

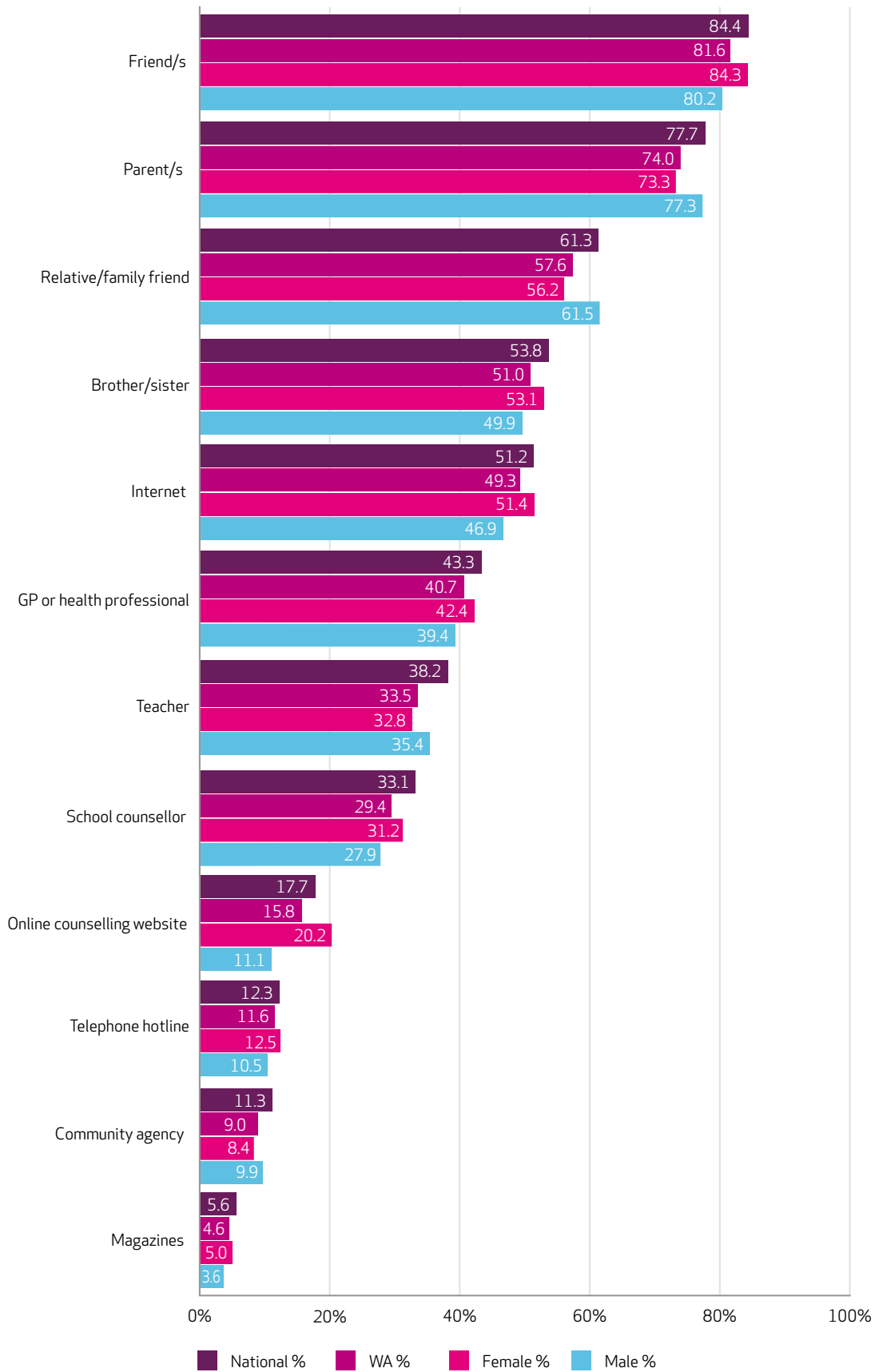
Note: Items were ranked by summing the responses for *extremely concerned* and *very concerned* for each item. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Where do young people go for help with important issues?

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. Figure 10.6 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would go to each source. The top three sources of help for young people in WA were *friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relative/family friend*.

- *Friend/s*, *parent/s* and *relatives/family friends* were the three most commonly cited sources of help for young people (81.6%, 70.4% and 57.6% respectively).
- Around half of all respondents from WA indicated that they would go to their *brother/sister* (51.0%) or the *internet* (49.3%) for help with important issues in their lives.
- Around four in ten respondents indicated that they would go to a *GP or health professional* (40.7%) and one third indicated they would go to their *teacher* (33.5%) for help with important issues.

Figure 10.6: Where young people go for help with important issues



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option. Items are listed in order of State frequency.

Gender differences

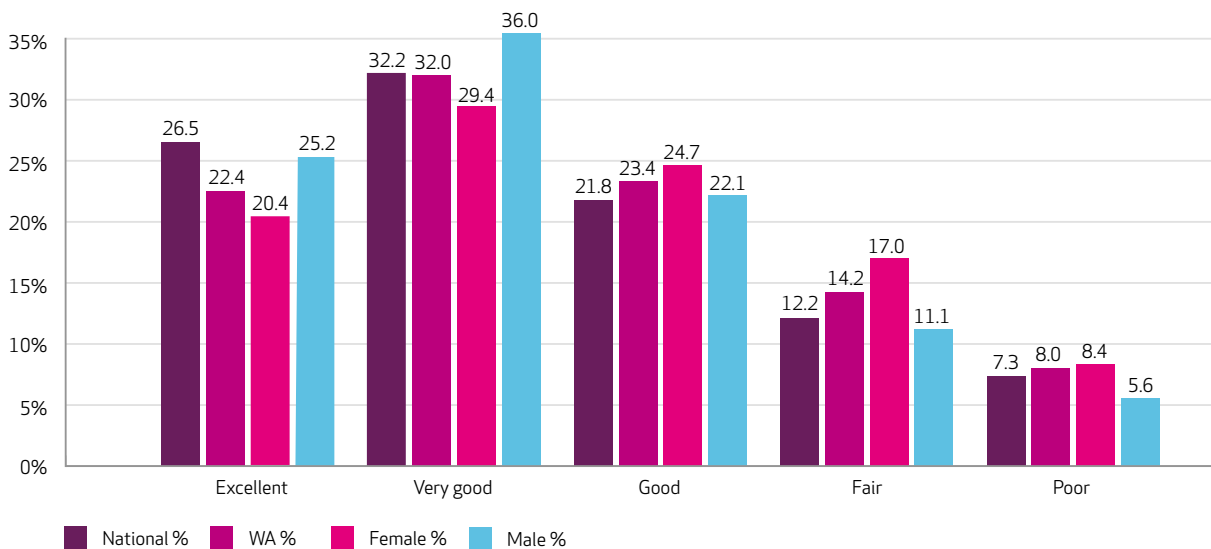
As shown in Figure 10.6, the top three sources of help for both females and males were consistent with WA and the national results. However, a greater proportion of female respondents than male respondents indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues, while a greater proportion of males would go to their *parent/s* or *relative/family friend* for help.

- A greater proportion of female than male respondents in WA indicated that they would go to their *friend/s* for help with important issues (84.3% compared with 80.2%).
- A greater proportion of males than females indicated that they would go to their *parent/s* (77.3% compared with 73.3%) or a *relative/family friend* (61.5% compared with 56.2%) for help.
- Greater proportions of females than males from WA would go to their *brother/sister* (53.1% compared with 49.9%), the *internet* (51.4% compared with 46.9%), their *GP or health professional* (42.4% compared with 39.4%) or *online counselling websites* (20.2% compared with 11.1%) for help with important issues in their lives.

How well do young people feel their families get along?

Respondents were asked how well they thought their family got along. Responses to this question were rated on a 5 point scale, ranging from *excellent* to *poor*. Figure 10.7 shows that, in line with the national results, the majority of respondents from WA rated their family's ability to get along very positively, with 22.4% indicating that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* and 32.0% that it was *very good*. However, over one in five young people did not report such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either *fair* (14.2%) or *poor* (8.0%). A greater proportion of males than females reported that their family's ability to get along was *excellent* (25.2% compared with 20.4%).

Figure 10.7: Family's ability to get along



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

Young people were asked to write down the three issues they considered were most important in Australia today. The information provided by respondents was categorised and is listed in order of frequency in Table 10.6. In 2017 the top three issues identified by young people from WA were *alcohol and drugs*, *mental health* and *equity and discrimination*. These were also the top three issues identified nationally, although the order of the top two issues was reversed.

- Almost four in ten (37.9%) young people identified *alcohol and drugs* as an important issue in Australia today.
- Just over one third of young people from WA identified *mental health* (34.4%) and close to three in ten young people identified *equity and discrimination* (29.2%) as important issues in Australia today.
- Around one in seven respondents identified *education* (13.9%) and *employment* (13.6%) as major issues.
- Since 2015, *mental health*, *alcohol and drugs*, *employment* and *bullying* have been increasingly identified as key issues facing the nation. Conversely, mentions of *population issues*, *politics*, *the economy and financial matters* and *LGBTIQ* issues have declined over this period.

Gender differences

Mental health and *alcohol and drugs* were the top two issues of national importance for both females and males in WA, although the order of these issues was reversed. *Equity and discrimination* was identified as the third most important issue in Australia today by both female and male respondents.

- Around four in ten females (40.4%) and three in ten males (28.8%) from WA identified *mental health* as a major issue facing Australia today.
- A greater proportion of males than females identified *alcohol and drugs* (43.8% compared with 34.0%) as an issue of national importance.
- Similar proportions of male and female respondents identified *equity and discrimination* as an important issue (23.7% compared with 23.6%)

Table 10.6: Most important issues in Australia today

	National 2017 %	WA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	WA 2016 %	WA 2015 %
Alcohol and drugs	32.0	37.9	34.0	43.8	38.0	32.7
Mental health	33.7	34.4	40.4	28.8	22.0	15.5
Equity and discrimination	27.3	29.2	23.6	23.7	24.8	28.1
Education	13.0	13.9	14.7	13.2	14.1	12.3
Employment	10.2	13.6	11.9	16.5	13.2	9.6
The economy and financial matters	12.7	13.1	12.3	14.1	13.2	18.6
Bullying	10.6	11.7	14.0	9.4	10.0	9.9
International relations	13.6	11.4	10.5	12.0	12.1	12.7
The environment	10.9	9.3	11.2	7.2	11.2	9.8
Crime, safety and violence	11.3	8.3	8.3	8.7	9.5	9.1
Population issues	10.3	7.1	6.8	7.1	11.5	13.7
Health	8.3	6.9	6.1	7.7	7.7	7.4
Politics	6.8	6.9	5.4	8.8	10.7	13.3
LGBTIQ issues*	7.1	6.4	9.5	2.4	5.6	10.3

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency. *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ) issues.

What activities are young people involved in?

Young people were asked to identify the activities that they have been involved in over the past year from the list shown in Table 10.7. The top three activities for young people from WA, as they were nationally, were *sports (as a participant)*, *sports (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*.

- Almost three quarters of young people reported being involved in *sports (as a participant)*, close to two thirds were involved in *sports (as a spectator)* and just over half were involved in *volunteer work* (72.9%, 64.1% and 52.1% respectively).
- Around half (49.0%) of respondents indicated that they had participated in *arts/cultural/music activities*.
- Nearly four in ten young people reported participation in *student leadership activities* (37.3%) and nearly three in ten had participated in *youth groups and clubs* (28.4%) over the past year.

Gender differences

As shown in Table 10.7, the top three activities for both males and females in WA were *sports (as a participant)*, *sport (as a spectator)* and *volunteer work*.

- Greater proportions of male than female respondents were involved in *sports (as a participant)* (78.5% compared with 68.0%) and *sports (as a spectator)* (68.3% compared with 61.0%).
- A higher proportion of female than male respondents were involved in *volunteer work* (57.5% compared with 45.8%) and *arts/cultural/music activities* (57.1% compared with 40.0%) over the past year.

Table 10.7: Activities young people were involved in over the past year

	National 2017 %	WA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	WA 2016 %	WA 2015 %
Sports (as a participant)	75.2	72.9	68.0	78.5	67.9	77.4
Sports (as a spectator)	65.4	64.1	61.0	68.3	60.3	68.3
Volunteer work	54.1	52.1	57.5	45.8	41.6	53.5
Arts/cultural/music activities	52.7	49.0	57.1	40.0	47.9	45.8
Student leadership activities	41.3	37.3	37.4	37.0	31.0	33.1
Youth groups and clubs	30.6	28.4	29.7	26.4	29.5	38.7
Religious group/activity	29.2	25.5	27.4	23.1	22.4	33.6
Environmental group/activity	23.7	24.8	22.5	26.3	21.2	23.0
Political groups/organisations	8.2	7.1	5.3	7.8	8.1	5.9

Note: Items are listed in order of State frequency.

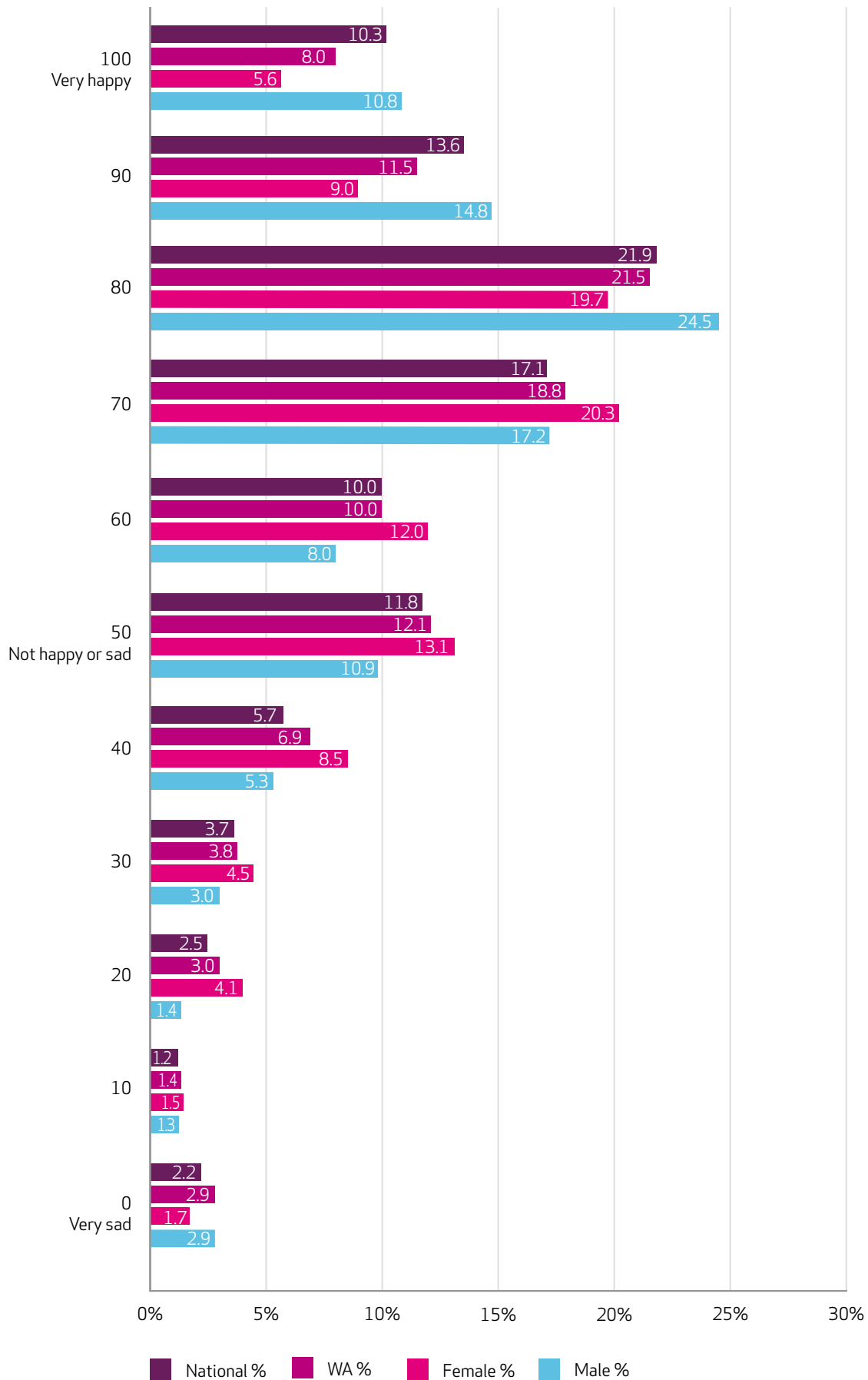
How happy are young people?

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being *very sad*, 5 *not happy or sad* and 10 *very happy*. In line with recommendations from the authors of this question¹, responses were standardised on a scale of 0 – 100, with 100 being the happiest.

As Figure 10.8 shows, the majority of young people from WA (59.8%) responded in the range 70 to 100, indicating that they felt happy overall with their lives. This is consistent with the national results. Responses were similar for both males and females, although a greater proportion of male than female respondents indicated that they felt *very happy* with their lives as a whole (10.8% compared with 5.6%).

¹ Cummins, R.A., & Lau, A.L.D., 2005, *Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC) (English)*, Manual, 3rd Edition.

Figure 10.8: How happy young people are



How do young people feel about the future?

Young people were asked how positive they felt about the future, with responses rated on a 5 point scale from *very positive* to *very negative*. Table 10.8 shows that, in line with the national results, almost six in ten respondents from WA felt either *very positive* or *positive* about the future. Overall, just over one in ten young people from WA felt *very negative* or *negative* about the future.

- Around six in ten respondents from WA felt either *positive* (44.3%) or *very positive* (13.5%) about the future.
- Three in ten respondents (30.0%) felt *neither positive nor negative* about the future.
- More than one in ten respondents felt *negative* (8.2%) or *very negative* (3.9%) about the future.
- A larger proportion of males than females reported feeling generally positive about the future, with 16.9% of males indicating that they felt *very positive* about the future compared with 10.3% of females.

Table 10.8: Feelings about the future

	National 2017 %	WA 2017 %	Female %	Male %	WA 2016 %	WA 2015 %
Very positive	15.8	13.5	10.3	16.9	14.3	13.2
Positive	46.6	44.3	43.9	46.4	44.7	48.5
Neither positive nor negative	27.5	30.0	34.0	25.7	28.5	28.4
Negative	7.1	8.2	8.6	7.3	7.2	6.7
Very negative	3.1	3.9	3.2	3.7	5.4	3.2

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- Brisbane City Council
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- City of Marion
- City of Whittlesea
- Darebin City Council Youth Services
- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
- Girl Guides NSW & ACT
- Golden Plains Shire Council
- headspace
- Hillsong Church Australia
- Liverpool City Council
- Maribyrnong Youth Services, Maribyrnong City Council
- MidCoast Council
- Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) Australia
- SA Department for Communities and Social Inclusion
- SA Department for Education and Child Development
- Scouts Australia
- Shire of Derby/West Kimberley
- The City of Holdfast Bay
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- The Family Centre
- Uniting (NSW.ACT)
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- Youth Coalition of the ACT
- Youth Futures WA
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- Youth Network of Tasmania
- YMCA of Brisbane

Mission Australia would also like to acknowledge the many organisations and individuals who promoted the survey via social media.

Who is Mission Australia?

Mission Australia is a non-denominational Christian community service organisation, with more than 155 years of experience in standing together with Australians in need on their journey to independence.

Our evidence-based, client-centred services are focused on reducing homelessness and strengthening communities across Australia. Our services are tailored to the needs and preferences of the clients and communities we serve. Our programs range from early intervention to intensive wrap-around services. They include services targeting homelessness; providing integrated family support; parenting programs; early childhood education; mental health services; residential drug and alcohol programs; youth programs; access to safe and secure housing; and programs to build capacity, resilience and opportunity for local communities.

We work in partnership with others to achieve our goal. This includes communities, supporters, government, businesses and other organisations. We measure our impact, collecting evidence of what works to inform our service design and delivery, and to advocate for change.

We stand together with Australians in need until they can stand for themselves.


Thank you


This publication would not have been possible without over 24,000 young people who completed Mission Australia's *Youth Survey 2017*.


Our special thanks to them, the staff of Mission Australia and the many other organisations who supported their involvement.

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