

SKILLSROAD.COM.AU[®]
2018 **YOUTH CENSUS**

Commissioned by:





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



FOREWORD FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORT AUSTRALIA

Following the inaugural *Skillsroad 2017 Youth Census*, Apprenticeship Support Australia (ASA) commissioned the *Skillsroad 2018 Youth Census* to gain a deeper understanding of how youth living in Australia are experiencing life as they prepare for, and transition to, life after school.

The 2018 report has seen a phenomenal response. With more than 30,000 people in Australia between the ages of 15-24 participating, it is the largest body of data in the country exploring this demographic in the context of transition from school to work.

ASA is part of the business chamber movement in Australia, and with the backing of NSW Business Chamber, the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia and Business SA, we share a commitment to improve youth employment outcomes.

I would like to acknowledge the talented team behind this report. From our fantastic team of marketing professionals who are highly skilled at engaging youth to ensure participation, to our policy teams and consulting Registered Psychologist, who has grounded this study in science, using the latest psychology techniques for the first time in a study of this size. Additionally I'd like to thank the participants for giving their time on a survey so that they can be part of the narrative as we support them in their transition from school to work.

We are proud to be a thought leader on youth employment and the Youth Census is vital in supporting an evidence-based approach to the programs we develop and deliver to support youth through our national careers program, Skillsroad.

This report is just the start of a program of activity, which will run over the next twelve months to delve deeper into the findings. Some of the data in the following pages raises additional questions, which we will explore over the coming months. If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to register on our website at www.skillsroad.com.au/youth-census-2018 so that you can be a part of the ongoing conversation and receive further updates, invitations to webinars and other literature.

We have a collective responsibility to champion the best future for our youth and our country, which starts with the provision of quality and holistic career programs. It is Skillsroad's mission to unite the community in achieving this.

Darren Cocks
Managing Director,
Apprenticeship Support Australia

ABOUT US



Apprenticeship Support Australia

Apprenticeship Support Australia exists to skill Australia for tomorrow by providing trusted apprenticeship and traineeship advice and expert solutions. Every day we strive to empower Australian business to develop talent to meet their workforce needs.

With 74 offices nationally and more than 400 specialist staff, Apprenticeship Support Australia combines the 60 years of collective experience of the apprenticeships centres of NSW Business Chamber (Australian Business Apprenticeships Centre), Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Business SA and CCI WA.



Skillsroad

Skillsroad is an initiative of Apprenticeship Support Australia and the broader business chamber movement in Australia, to provide a one-stop, independent destination for students and job seekers, as well as their key supporters (parents, teachers and employers), to navigate the journey to a fulfilling career.

The Australian chamber movement represents over 300,000 businesses and collectively has a vested interest in effectively transitioning school leavers and new talent into the labour force through meaningful and fulfilling career pathways.

Skillsroad utilises best-practice, evidence based approaches to career advice and provides tools and resources anchored in positive psychology.



DANIELLE BUCKLEY

Danielle Buckley is a Registered Psychologist with extensive experience in coaching and positive psychology.

She holds a Masters of Applied Science in Coaching Psychology, a Post Graduate Diploma in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology). Danielle is a member of the International Society for Coaching Psychology and International Positive Psychology Association.

Danielle has worked in Australia, Europe, the United Kingdom and Asia developing and implementing both small and large scale coaching and behavioural change programs. She has worked with both private and public organisations, in schools and with individuals.

In her capacity as consulting psychologist to Skillsroad over the past seven years, Danielle has worked with the team at NSW Business Chamber to develop industry leading coaching and career assessments including the Skillsroad Career Quiz and Skillsroad Job Fit Test.

Danielle has honed her expertise as a leading authority on the use of positive psychology in the transition from school to work. She is a popular keynote speaker, has presented work at the World Congress of Positive Psychology in Orlando (2015), and is part-time lecturer at Upper Iowa University (Hong Kong campus).

ABOUT THE SURVEY

PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

The *Skillsroad 2018 Youth Census* survey was open from 23 August 2018 to 30 September 2018.

Youth were invited to complete the survey using an online survey tool. Invitations to participate were sent to the Skillsroad database through email and SMS as well as the *Apprenticeship Support Australia* database. Additionally, an extensive social media advertising campaign targeted 15-24 year olds, and school and career adviser networks were utilised to target a broad geographic cross-section of the youth community in all states and territories of Australia.

Participation was voluntary and all responses remained confidential. Survey participants had the option to participate in a draw to win their choice of either an eftpos gift card or travel voucher. In total, 34,071 people took part in the survey, 30,388 met the target cohort of youth living in Australia (defined as being 15-24 years old and an Australian resident), and 25,078 completed every question.

METHODOLOGY

The *Skillsroad 2018 Youth Census* survey included a total of 86 questions. Skip logic was implemented to ensure respondents only answered questions relevant to them. Questions covered nine key sections: demographic data, housing, schooling, career pathways and career guidance at school, apprenticeship and traineeship pathways, university pathways, work expectations and experience, and wellbeing. Wellbeing was measured using the Well-Being Profile (WB-Pro) (Marsh & Huppert et al, 2018).

To ensure the sample provided an evidence-based approach to understanding youth, questions were asked to assess their attitudes, fears and current realities.

In this survey, the WB-Pro was also used to explore youth wellbeing in Australia, and which factors enhance and inhibit the way youth experience their lives, particularly as they transition from school into meaningful work. This multi-dimensional measure includes 15 factors that influence wellbeing, providing insight into which areas youth are doing well in and which areas may need further attention. Some of these factors include resilience, self-esteem and autonomy, as an example.

The WB-Pro tool asks three questions related to each of the 15 wellbeing factors, however, to shorten the length of this survey for participants only two questions per factor were used.

This is the first time this tool has been used to survey a large sample of youth in Australia.



ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS



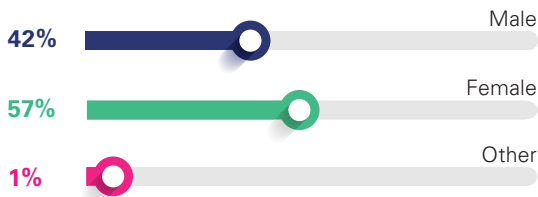
TOTAL POPULATION
34,071

SAMPLE SIZE THAT MEET THE COHORT CRITERIA
30,388

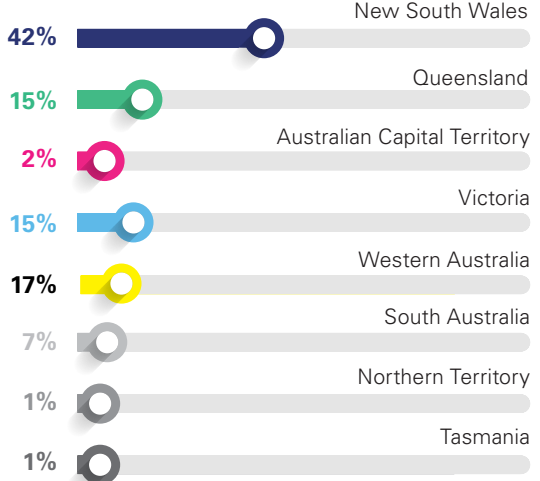
RESPONDENTS WHO COMPLETED ALL QUESTIONS
25,078



GENDER



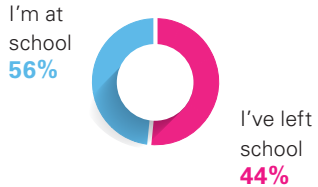
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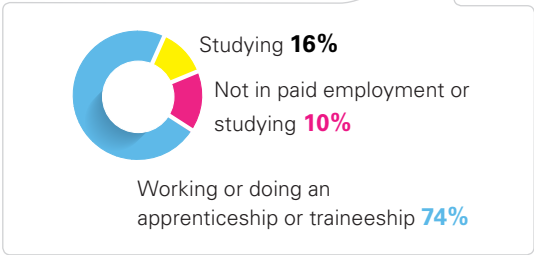
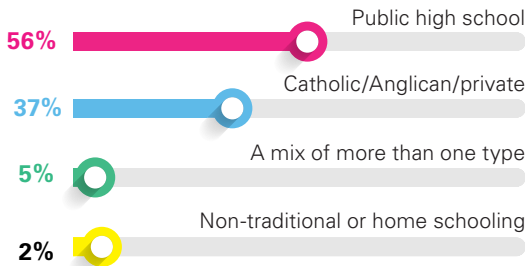
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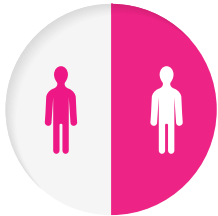
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?



TYPE OF SCHOOLING



SKILLSROAD 2018 YOUTH CENSUS HEADLINES



52%

Only half of participants reported they received quality career advice throughout their schooling.

1.



Participants in an apprenticeship reported the **highest levels of wellbeing**, compared to any other post-school pathway.

4.



Working is consistent with higher levels of wellbeing for young people.

2.



5.

Youth who have an adult available to counsel them on career questions are more likely to end up in a career that relates to their post-school education or training.

3.

6.

GOOD JOB!



It matters how youth are treated in the workplace.

Feeling cared for and supported at work was consistent with higher levels of wellbeing.

2/3 of participants

Reported they experienced sadness, anxiety or worry that significantly impacted how they study, live or work in the last twelve months.

INTRODUCTION

THE AIM OF THIS SURVEY IS TO UNDERSTAND THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH IN AUSTRALIA AND THE IMPACT THAT DIFFERENT CONTEXTS, ENVIRONMENTS AND PATHWAYS HAVE ON THEIR WELLBEING AND TRANSITION TO LIFE BEYOND SCHOOL.

Wellbeing is defined as feeling good and functioning well, and is a fundamental goal for many individuals and societies (Huppert, 2013).

Wellbeing is of interest when considering youth outcomes because research suggests that higher levels of wellbeing coincide with success across a range of dimensions including educational outcomes, employment, health and family formations (Stanwick, Ong & Karmel 2006; Noble et al 2008; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017).

This report identifies a number of observations about the experiences of youth in Australia and is broken down into nine sections:

- Wellbeing
- Career conversations and career guidance at school
- Working (during and post-school)
- Youth engagement and job outcomes
- Apprenticeship and traineeship pathways
- University pathways
- Work: expectations and experiences
- Mental health
- Housing

Policy development, educational programs and workplace initiatives should be informed by evidence. Shining a light on the experiences of youth across Australia enables the identification of opportunities to improve outcomes for them.

Amongst the key findings, approximately half of respondents reported that they didn't receive quality career conversations during their schooling. This is alarming because the pathways to achieve a

career outcome are more diverse than ever before, making access to unbiased, informative, relevant and accurate information crucial.

Furthermore, there is a disparity between the reality of the job market and young people's perception of available career opportunities. Despite a national skills shortage across many sectors, the concern that "there aren't enough jobs" was cited by youth as one of their top three biggest worries about leaving school.

The quality of career conversations at school reported by youth was also compared with their overall wellbeing scores. The statistically significant findings highlight that those who report that they do not receive quality career conversations have lower overall wellbeing scores than those who report that they do. While there may be factors requiring further exploration to better understand this result, it nonetheless reaffirms the importance of holistic career guidance programs.

The study also found that those survey participants undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship, or working in some capacity were happier overall and experienced higher levels of 'meaning,' 'resilience' and 'optimism' than all other pathways after school.

In this sample, of the Youth Census participants who were still in school, the survey also found that those who were undertaking a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, or working a part-time job, reported higher levels of wellbeing than students who were not working at all.

Respondents who were working reported that they have high expectations of managers and supervisors, and that they expect positive and friendly work environments, and to receive coaching and mentoring in the workplace, as well as opportunities for career progression.

The following pages explore these insights in more detail and provide recommendations to assist youth, as well as their parents, educators, governments and employers in helping them to thrive.



Evidence shows that people with high levels of wellbeing learn more effectively, are more productive, more creative, have better relationships, have better health and better life expectancy.

1. WELLBEING

When it comes to understanding youth in Australia, it is important to understand how different contexts and environments impact an individual's life experiences. The survey explored not only the opinions and experiences of youth, but also offers an analysis of their choices, environments, experiences and wellbeing. The Youth Census seeks to understand crucial elements and factors that contribute both positively and negatively to the wellbeing of youth as they transition from school into post-school training, education or into the workplace.

Apart from self-evident personal benefits, the positive wellbeing of an individual directly impacts their contribution to society through their active participation in education, employment and the community. As young people finish school and make the transition into adulthood they are faced with an increasing amount of decisions about their working life and which post-school pathway they will pursue. This may lead to higher levels of stress and uncertainty and it is therefore important to better understand what influences the way in which youth experience this stage of their life, and what factors can enhance or inhibit this experience.

Recent research by leading wellbeing academics (Marsh, Huppert et al, 2018) characterises wellbeing as a multidimensional construct that consists of the following 15 factors: clear thinking, competence, emotional stability, engagement, meaning, positive emotions, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, vitality, autonomy, empathy, optimism, pro-social behaviour and self-acceptance. Collectively, the positive experience of these factors leads to higher wellbeing. Evidence shows that people with high levels of wellbeing learn more effectively, are more productive, more creative, have better relationships and have better health and longer life expectancy (Huppert & So, 2013).

Using a modified version of the WB-Pro tool, the average wellbeing score for youth living in Australia in this sample was 113, with the highest possible score being 150 and the lowest being 30.

While this survey is reporting on overall wellbeing measures, due to the recent development of the tool, these overall scores cannot be compared with any other youth averages in Australia, however the data provides interesting insights into which populations in the survey are doing better than others and which contextual factors result in higher overall scores.

As an example of the findings in this sample, males reported higher levels of wellbeing than females. Unsurprisingly, youth who described themselves as physically active also experienced higher levels of wellbeing.

Many trends among youth in Australia have emerged in recent years with regard to their post-school pathway choices, housing situations and employment experiences. Such trends include a cultural bias towards university, young people living with their parents longer than in previous decades, more young people taking a gap year after finishing school, enhanced reliance on technology, and a reported increase in stress and mental health issues.

To best serve youth, it is important to understand how they are experiencing each dimension of wellbeing, as this can directly inform the development of public policy, as well as workplace and educational programs that address their specific needs.



Many youth
experience
indecision resulting
in paralysis.

2. CAREER CONVERSATIONS & CAREER GUIDANCE AT SCHOOL

Starting a career can be a stressful time for many young people. As the array of available options widen, access to unbiased, informative, relevant and accurate information is crucial. As Australia continues to face changes in the way people work, career pathways have changed, and today's young people need to acquire post-school education and skills that enable them to be life-long learners. Yet for many young people, this mindset hasn't evolved. Instead, many youth experience indecision resulting in paralysis.

In this sample, youth who are employed have higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not. However, when it comes to transitioning into work, choosing a career is stressful for young people. The Youth Census results reveal that only half of students reported receiving "quality" career conversations during their schooling.

A staggering 48% felt they did not have meaningful career conversations. Just under half of these (23%) indicated it was because they felt pushed or encouraged to pursue an unsuitable pathway. This supports the need for youth to be presented with balanced information about all the career pathways available.

In order to provide youth with information regarding all post-school pathways that are available to them, careers services must be valued and seen as an integral part of a student's development.

It is essential that there is a 'whole of community' approach to strengthening the delivery of career advice to young people and helping them to discover their skills and strengths, from government and education providers to parents and industry. Students must be exposed to a much wider range of possible career pathways available to them.

Darren Cocks, Managing Director, Apprenticeship Support Australia



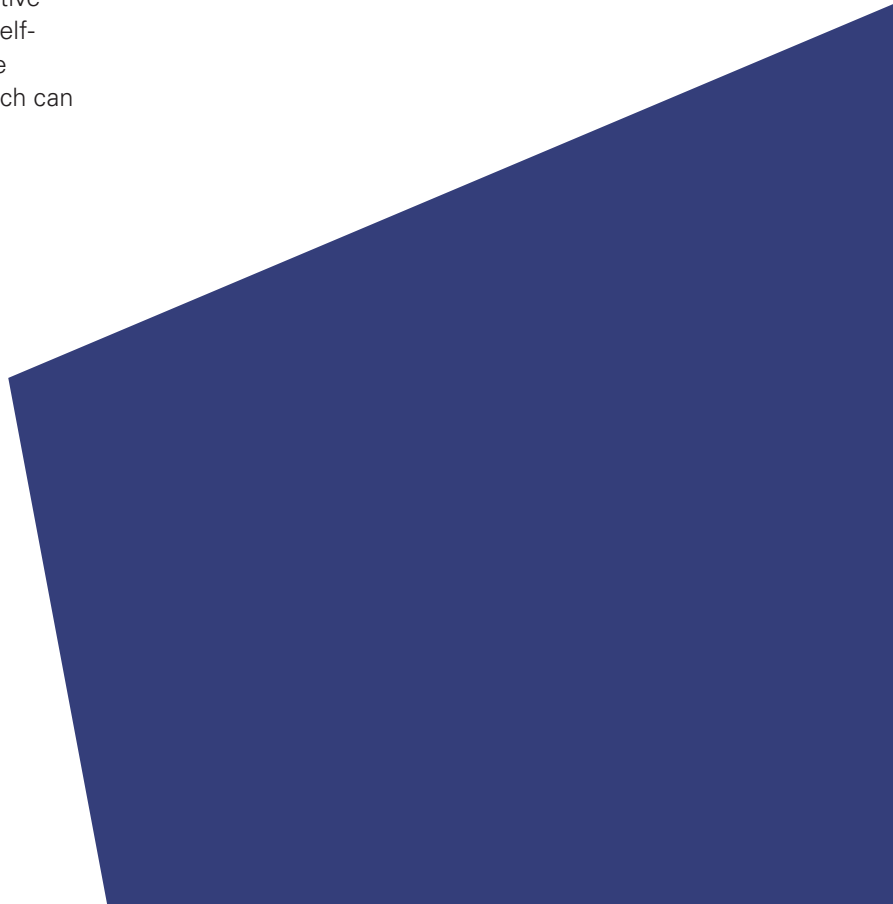
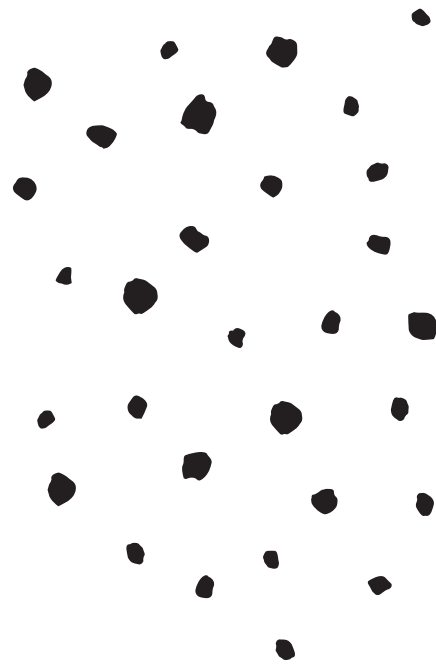
Work has been found to improve mental and physical health, improve wellbeing and helps recovery from injury and illness.

3. WORKING (DURING AND POST-SCHOOL)

There has been much research that supports the benefits of work outside of financial gains. Work has been found to improve mental and physical health, improve wellbeing and help recovery from injury and illness (Modini et al, 2016; McKee-Ryan et al, 2005). In this sample, the benefits of work are further supported, as young people who work while at school show significantly higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not.

The common factor that emerges between those who pursue pathways with higher levels of wellbeing, compared to pathways with lower levels of wellbeing is that they all involve young people pursuing a path that involves work.

Why is work so good for young people? According to respondents in this sample, people who chose an apprenticeship pathway (the pathway that led to the greatest level of wellbeing), compared to those not in any work or study (the pathway that led to the lowest levels of wellbeing) reported higher on all wellbeing dimensions, but significantly higher on: meaning, optimism, self-esteem, vitality, positive emotions, emotional stability, resilience and self-acceptance. This is a strong piece of evidence supporting the benefits of work for youth which can be gained while at school.





Having an adult available to discuss career concerns and worries is consistent with higher rates of youth engagement.

4. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND JOB OUTCOMES

Around 90% of youth who had left school within the sample were either employed or engaged in some form of post-school training. The remaining 10% reported they were not in employment or studying. This is consistent with official data reporting similar levels of youth engagement. While it is beyond the scope of this research to account for differences in youth engagement, it is possible to observe how engagement levels vary across individual factors reported in the survey.

The results indicate that having an adult available to discuss career concerns and worries is consistent with higher rates of youth engagement. Those without an adult available were 79% more likely to be disengaged post school compared to the survey population. This suggests an adult being available to counsel on career questions is important, though the availability of an adult may coincide with other factors contributing to higher engagement rates.

Youth who did not finish year 12 were also more likely to be disengaged. There may be a range of reasons for this. Students who have completed year 12 have more study opportunities available to them to support their post-school transition, while leaving school early may itself be a consequence of disengagement. Attitudes to work were used to measure how important full time work was to the respondent. Those who indicated that paid full time work was very important were more likely to be engaged in post-school employment or training.

Youth unsatisfied by the career advice they received at school were more likely to be disengaged, as were respondents who did not start thinking about their career until the final years of school.

Respondents who focussed on career questions earlier (prior to the final years of school) were 20% less likely to be disengaged. Together, these attributes suggest that good quality career advice and earlier attention to questions relating to career pathways can potentially make a difference.

Differences in the perceived expectations of parents coincided with differences in engagement rates. Youth who reported that their parents were engaged in career decisions but without specific expectations

of what career pathway should be taken were 30% less likely to be disengaged. Respondents who perceived that their parents had specific or no expectations, were 13% more likely to be disengaged.

DID SCHOOL-LEAVERS END UP WHERE THEIR EDUCATION OR TRAINING SUGGESTS?

Youth engagement is a broad measure of post-school success and does not account for aspects of whether post-school education or training was relevant to job outcomes. For example, there is the potential that school leavers pursue education or training that does not support their career objectives once they have entered the labour market.

Reviewing the job outcomes of 20-24 year olds who completed their post-school training, 75% of respondents indicated they were in jobs relevant to their education or training with the remaining 25% in jobs where their education or training is not relevant.

Those who attended university were 44% more likely to be in a job unrelated to their post school education or training, while those who pursued a trade were 16% less likely when compared to the survey sample. A number of factors could account for this discrepancy. University graduates tend to complete a broader range of subjects which do not always translate into hard skillsets intended for specific jobs or career pathways. Further, university is increasingly being promoted as the default post-school pathway which may lead to an increasing number of school leavers pursuing university before deciding on their eventual career path and leading to a higher incidence of altered career objectives and potentially unintended debt.

As with youth engagement more broadly, respondents without an adult available to discuss career concerns is consistent with higher rates of job outcomes not related to post-school education or training. Interestingly, respondents indicating the key influence on their career pathway was themselves were more likely to be in jobs unrelated to their education or training. This reinforces the role that external advisers can play in supporting informed decisions about education and training.



Youth who pursued an apprenticeship pathway reported the highest level of wellbeing compared to any other pathway, including taking a gap year.

5. APPRENTICESHIP & TRAINEESHIP PATHWAYS

Respondents were asked to share their post-school pathway and this was correlated with their wellbeing score. Youth who pursued an apprenticeship pathway scored the highest level of wellbeing compared to any other pathway, including taking a gap year. Specifically, youth who pursued an apprenticeship scored well across the wellbeing dimensions of meaning, optimism, self-esteem, vitality, positive emotions, emotional stability, resilience and self-acceptance.

Given the way apprenticeships are structured, it makes sense that meaning and optimism were the highest dimensions of wellbeing experienced by respondents. Youth who are in apprenticeships are working towards clear goals - being a qualified tradesperson - and their striving is rewarded as they gain competence. This context is aligned with essential psychological needs outlined in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2008). There are also clear guidelines, expectations and outcomes providing structure and the ability to strive towards something meaningful. As they complete each year, they are rewarded with additional pay, responsibility and tasks. When at its best the system is set up to facilitate goal focused learning and the attainment of skills, usually in an area someone is passionate about. This results in rich psychological growth.

However, within the workplace there are some challenges with the execution of apprenticeships and traineeships. Youth report that many supervisors and employers lack the essential coaching and mentoring skills that are important to young people at work today. While businesses have invested in acquiring these new skills, according to respondents, improving the quality of coaching and mentoring skills of employers is amongst one of the biggest improvements employers could make.

Workplaces have seen major changes over the last forty years, with many industries affected both

positively and negatively by globalisation, automation and the introduction of increased rules and regulations, and this has impacted the way people work. The workplace isn't the only thing that has evolved, the expectations of apprentices and trainees have also changed. Today, according to the results of this survey, apprentices and trainees go to work and expect to be coached, mentored, and experience positive and friendly work environments. Around a third of apprentices and trainees cited coaching and mentoring as their number one expectation of their employer, which was higher than the 20% observed in the entire sample.

As workplaces have evolved, the type of environments young workers expect has shifted with a move away from supervisor-supervisee relationships to learning hubs where leaders are caring, supportive and coaching is part of the culture.

This expectation has put increased pressure on many employers, who have had to learn new skills, outside of their technical ones, with more and more employers up-skilling in essential soft skills of coaching and mentoring.



A university pathway resulted in the experience of lower levels of wellbeing than many other post-school pathways.

6. UNIVERSITY PATHWAYS

In Australia, choosing a university pathway is still the most popular choice for post-school pathways, however this survey sample is over-represented by respondents who chose an apprenticeship pathway, as it collected responses from the ASA database of apprentices and trainees as one of the data collection channels. Nonetheless, those who chose a university pathway (15.8%) provide relevant insights.

The survey participants who pursued a university pathway reported lower levels of wellbeing than some other post-school pathways, however, the wellbeing score (113) was in line with the national wellbeing score overall in this Youth Census sample.

Some of these participants may have felt that they did not have meaningful career conversations during their schooling, resulting in them entering training that does not support their ultimate career objectives and negatively impacting their levels of wellbeing.





Young people who work show significantly higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not. This increase in wellbeing applies to both youth working while at school, as well as youth working post-school.

7. WORK: EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

The transition from education into post-school training and then work is an important time for young people. While most young people make this transition successfully, some do not, and a lack of employment or alternative meaningful activity brings with it a number of challenges and disadvantages. Not participating in employment, education or training is linked to future unemployment, lower incomes and employment insecurity (ABS, 2010). While long term effects of unemployment in youth have been linked to difficult relationships, lack of social and political participation, poor physical and mental health, drug and alcohol use and criminal activity (Bynner & Parsons 2002; Coles et al, 2002), in this sample, young people who work show significantly higher levels of wellbeing than those who do not. This increase in wellbeing applies to youth working while at school, as well as youth working post-school.

The data also provides insights into the critical role of the employer and their influence on youth wellbeing. Overwhelmingly, young people want to work in a positive and friendly work environment, they expect coaching and mentoring. When young people are at work, a lack of a positive and friendly environment coupled with lack of opportunity to grow and progress is the number one driver for a change of employer. This puts pressure on

employers to lift their game and consider their workplace culture and environment. It calls for employers to provide not only places of work but environments of learning and growth where young people can foster their skills, develop relationships and see opportunities for progression.

The findings highlight the critical role of the manager/supervisor and the high expectations that youth have of them. In this sample, effective management has been shown to significantly impact youth wellbeing. Respondents who work were asked to rate the performance of their manager from excellent, very good, good, okay or poor. Well over half (68%) rated their manager as excellent or good. Management ratings directly correlated with reported levels of wellbeing. There were significant differences between youth who rated their manager as excellent (and had a wellbeing score of 121) compared to poor (a wellbeing score of 109). This finding demonstrates the critical role that managers play in influencing youth experiences at work. It highlights the importance of investing time and effort into teaching managers coaching and mentoring skills which, when used effectively, promote, motivate and develop young people at work.



More work needs to be done to help youth develop resilience and positive thinking strategies and tools to enhance the way they study, live and work.



8. MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health issues amongst youth in Australia have continued to raise alarm. Recently Headspace Australia reported a significant rise in the levels of distress that young people in Australia face, with an estimated one in four young people suffering from a diagnosable mental health disorder (Headspace, October 2018). In line with the Diagnostic Statistical Manual, the universal classification system of mental health disorders, mental illness must be more than the experience or presence of negative emotions and impact one's daily functioning. While this survey shines a light on wellbeing and factors that enhance and inhibit how youth experience their lives, it was also important to explore youth's experience of negative emotions. Sadly, yet unsurprisingly and in line with other research, youth in this survey report experiencing levels of sadness, anxiety, worry or stress that significantly impacts how they study, live or work. It is important to clarify that the experience of stress, low moods, worry and anxiety are all normal emotions. It is also important to acknowledge that based on the research, the transition from school to adulthood is a particularly stressful time for many young adults and this results in a decrease in their satisfaction with life.

Youth living in the Northern Territory report experiencing the highest levels of sadness, anxiety,

worry or stress that significantly impacts how they study, live or work, while those in New South Wales experienced the lowest. There is also a large difference between males and females in the study, with almost three quarters of females reporting levels of distress that has impacted their daily functioning, versus males at 53%. These rates are concerning, and action must be taken in order to further understand levels of distress youth are experiencing. The Youth Census findings paint a strong picture that negative emotions are seriously impacting how young people experience their life and more work needs to be done to help youth develop resilience and positive thinking strategies and tools to enhance the way they study, live and work.





Youth who financially contribute to their housing, even if that was paying board to their parents, had higher levels of wellbeing than those who did not.

9. HOUSING

Housing affordability is the biggest worry for youth growing up in Australia, as the 'Great Australian Dream' of owning your own home is becoming harder to obtain for young people. Concern from youth surrounding housing affordability has also impacted the structure of households, with young people now living at home for much longer periods.

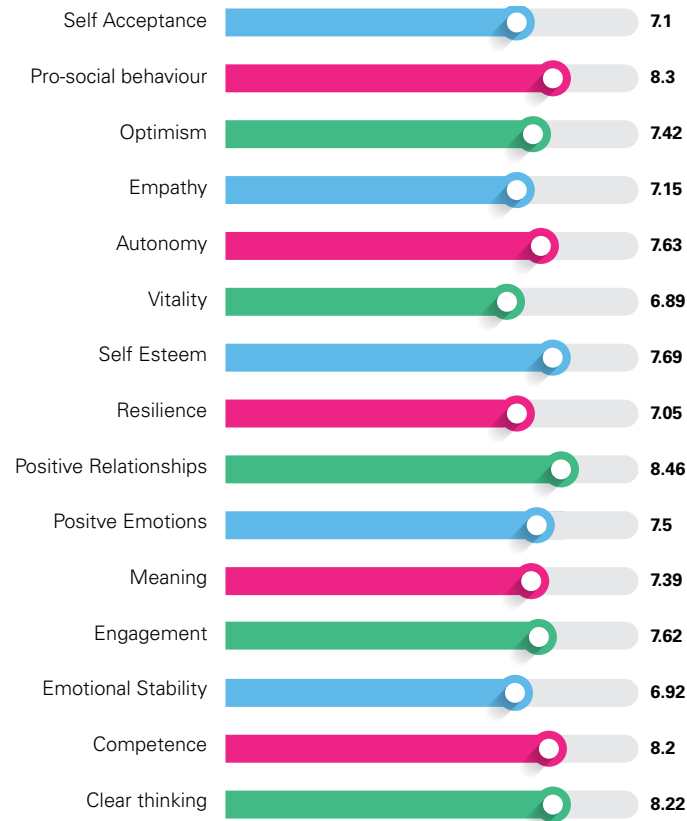
In this study most youth lived at home (82.6%) and while living at home, most do not have to make any type of financial contribution to their housing situation. However, when those who did make a contribution to their housing were compared with those who did not, it was found youth who financially contribute to their housing, even if that was paying board to their parents, had higher levels of wellbeing than those who did not. This may be able to be explained by the idea that youth who have financial responsibility also having a sense of accountability, purpose and independence even if they are living at home. Another benefit of contributing financially to their household may be in the development of financial literacy early in a young person's life.





DATA

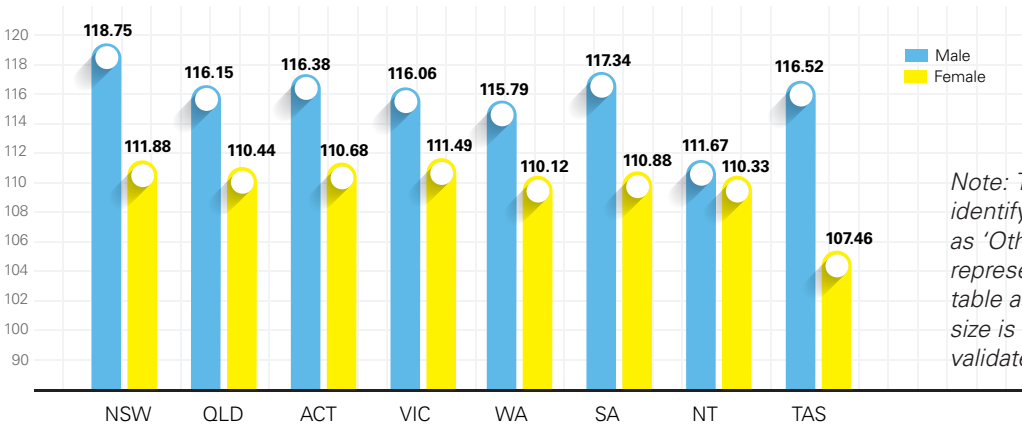
FIGURE 1. Mean wellbeing score by multidimensional wellbeing factors



Overall, youth living in Australia in this sample received an average score of 113 for their wellbeing level, with the highest possible score being 150 and the lowest being 30.

Youth scored themselves highest in: positive relationships, prosocial behaviour, clear thinking and competence. Their lowest scores were in: vitality, emotional stability, resilience and self-acceptance.

FIGURE 2. Wellbeing overall score by state and territory and gender



Note: Those who identify their gender as 'Other' are not represented in this table as the sample size is too small to validate.

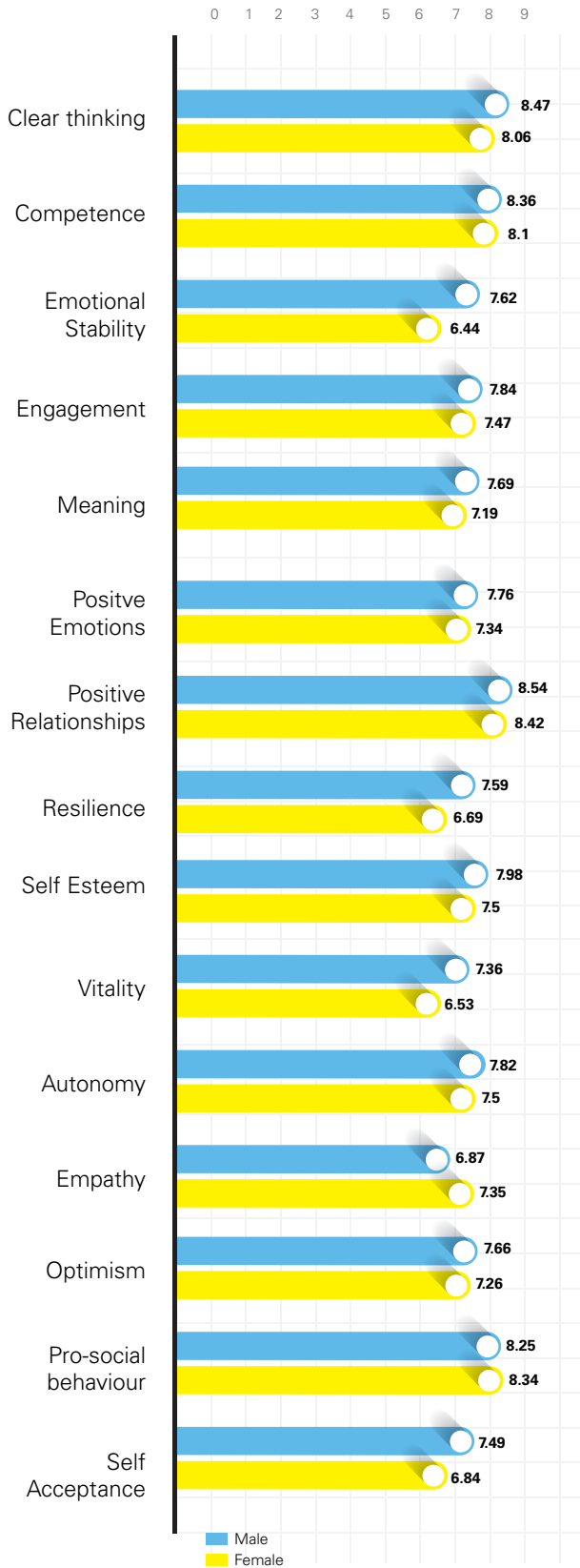


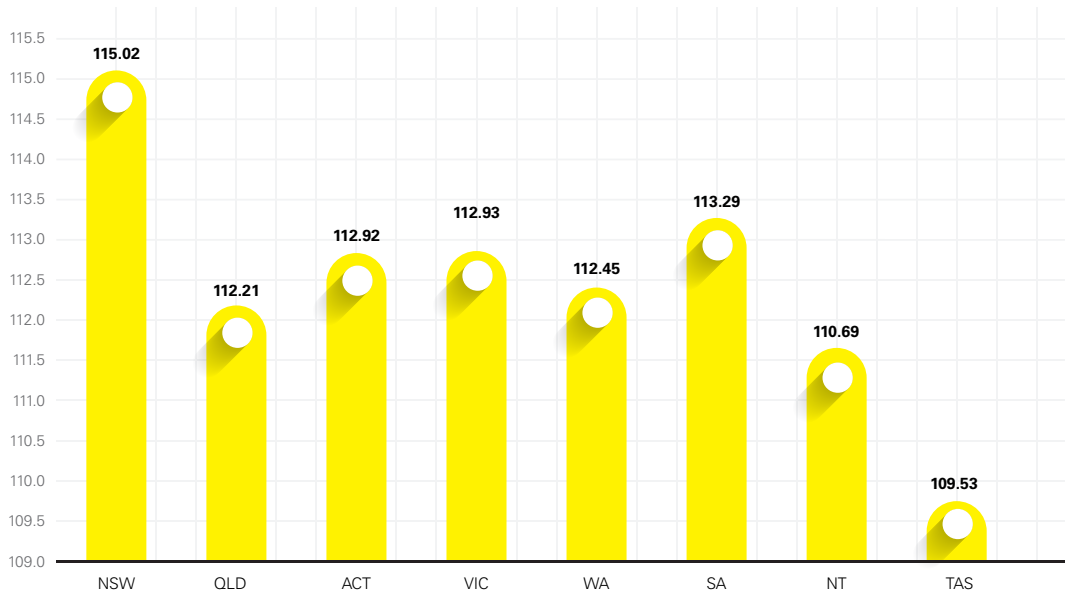
FIGURE 3. Wellbeing factors by gender

Males reported higher levels of wellbeing than females, with a score of 117 compared to 111. The difference is primarily on account of self-assessments in regard to emotional stability, where males reported themselves considerably higher than females. Males also rated themselves higher in every dimension except empathy and prosocial behaviour which females reported themselves to be higher in. Males reported higher levels of wellbeing than females in every state and territory, with females in Tasmania scoring the lowest. Females were highest on positive relationships, pro-social behaviour and competence, but lowest on vitality, emotional stability and resilience. Males were highest on positive relationships, clear thinking and pro-social behaviour, while they scored lowest on empathy, vitality and self-acceptance.

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of overall wellbeing scores by state and it is further broken down in Figure 3 to compare the overall differences in men and women across each domain.

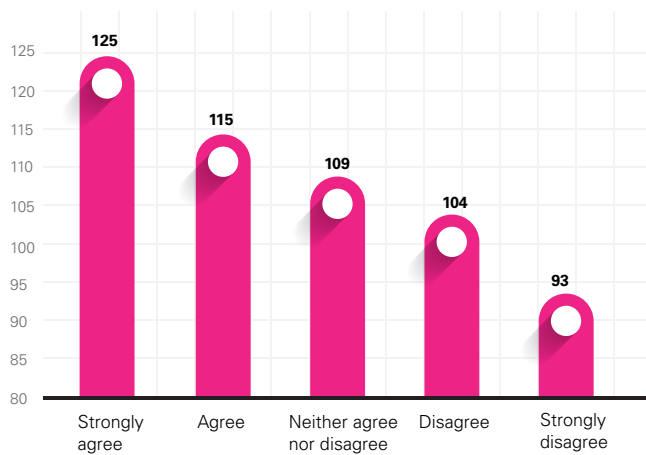
Note: Those who identify their gender as 'Other' are not represented in this table as the sample size is too small to validate.

FIGURE 4. Mean wellbeing score by State and Territory



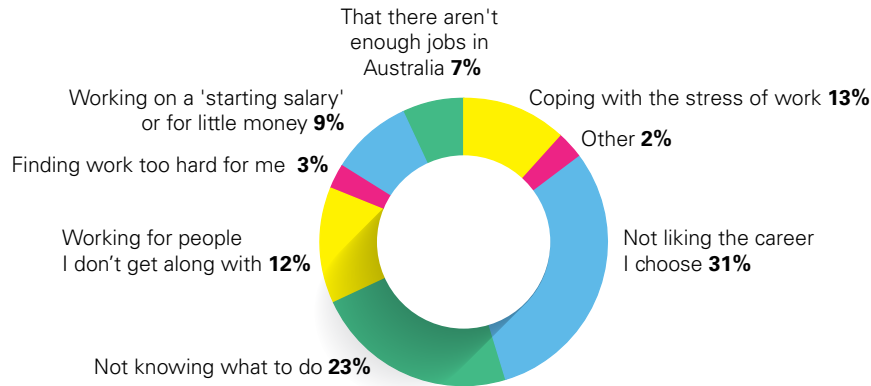
New South Wales reported the highest level of wellbeing (115), this was followed by South Australia (113). Queensland, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Western Australia all reported a score of 112. At the lower end was the Northern Territory (110) with Tasmania reporting the lowest (109).

FIGURE 5. Mean wellbeing score and physical activity



Respondents were asked if they would describe themselves as a physically active person, this was then compared with their level of wellbeing.

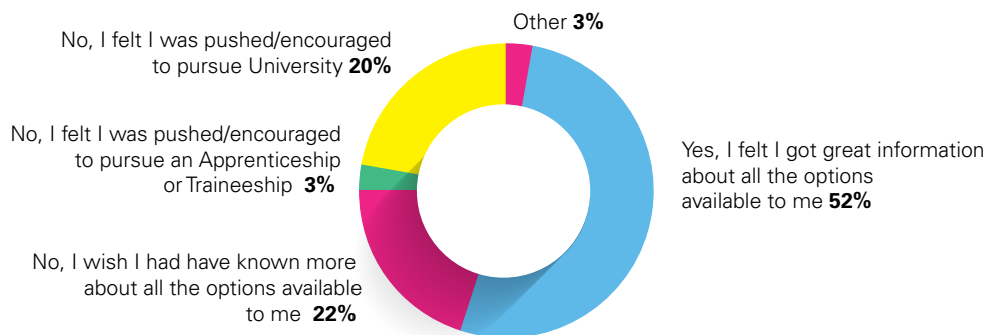
FIGURE 6. Biggest worry about starting your career



■ **Q.** What is (or was) your biggest worry about starting your career?

When it comes to choosing a career path, youth report that their biggest career worries are fear that they won't like the career they choose (31%), followed by not knowing what to do (23%).

FIGURE 7. Quality of school career conversations



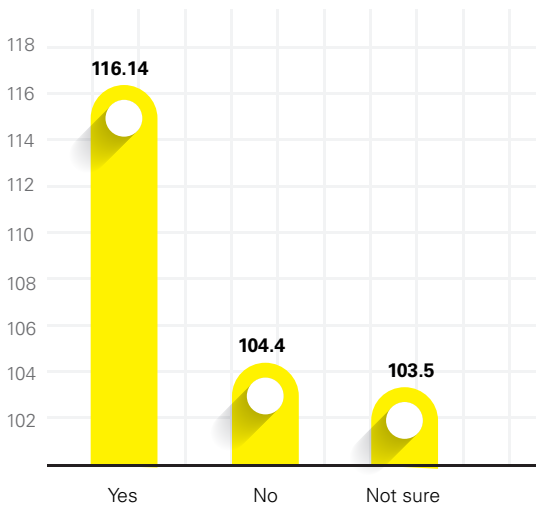
■ **Q.** Throughout your schooling, how would you rate the quality of career conversations you receive (or received)?

Just half of students (52%) reported that they felt they had good quality career conversations during their schooling that highlighted all the possible paths available to them.

FIGURE 8. Quality of career conversations by state and territory

	NSW	QLD	ACT	VIC	WA	SA	NT	TAS
Other (please specify)	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Yes, I felt I got great information about all the options available to me	52%	53%	49%	53%	49%	55%	48%	55%
No I felt I was pushed/encouraged to pursue University	19%	20%	23%	20%	22%	20%	21%	19%
No, I felt I was pushed/encouraged to pursue an Apprenticeship or Traineeship	3%	3%	1%	3%	4%	2%	1%	1%
No, I wish I had have known more about all the options available to me	23%	21%	23%	21%	23%	21%	27%	23%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

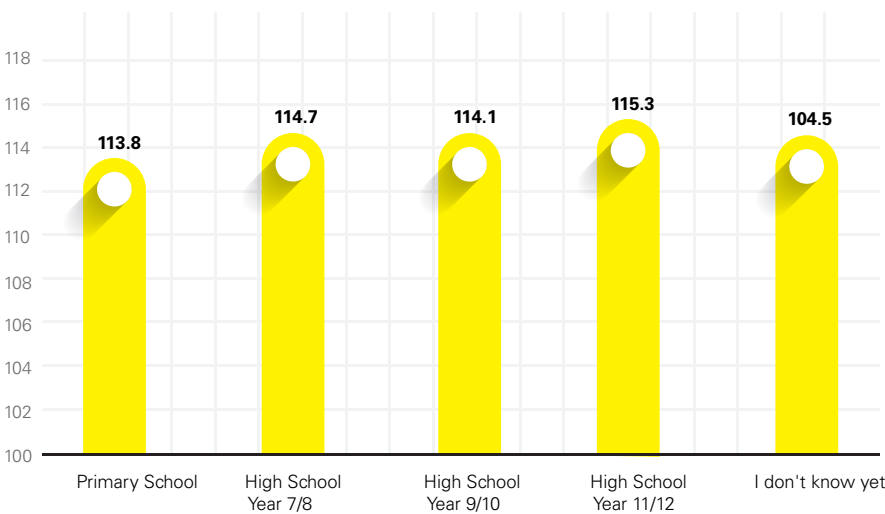
FIGURE 9. Mean wellbeing score and the ability to turn to an adult for career conversations



■ **Q.** I have an adult in my life who I can turn to to discuss my career concerns and worries.

When asked whether respondents had an adult with whom they could discuss their career concerns and worries, 79% said yes, 10.4% said no and 10.7% said not sure. When mapped to their wellbeing score, people who had someone they could have a meaningful career conversation with experienced greater levels of wellbeing (116,14) than those who did not (104,4), and those who weren't sure (103.5).

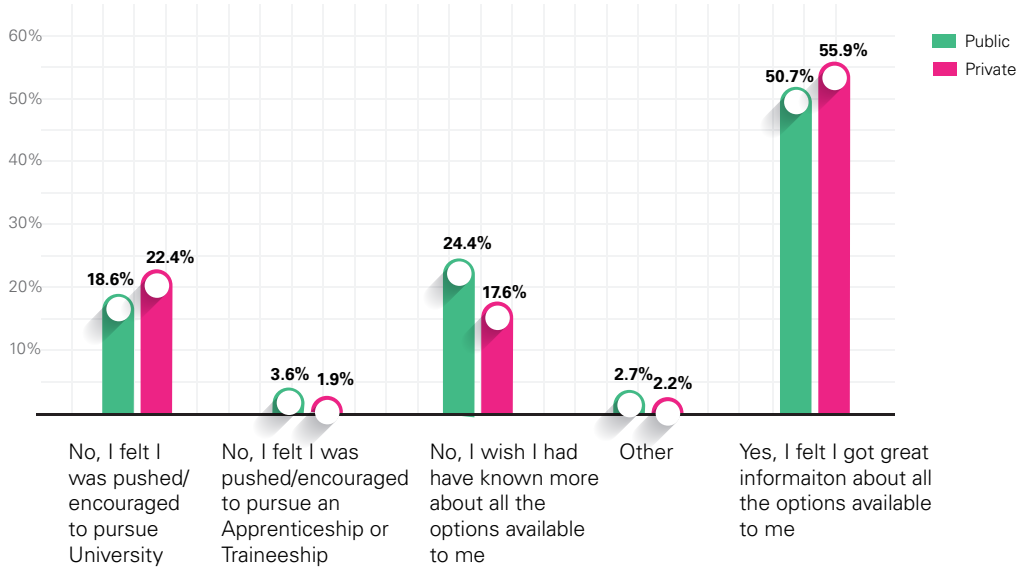
FIGURE 10. Mean wellbeing score and year career pathway decision was made



■ **Q.** When did you start thinking about your career pathway?

Most respondents started thinking about their careers in years 9 or 10 (36.6%), followed by year 11 or 12 (27%), year 7 or 8 (13%), primary school (12%) and 9% still don't know.

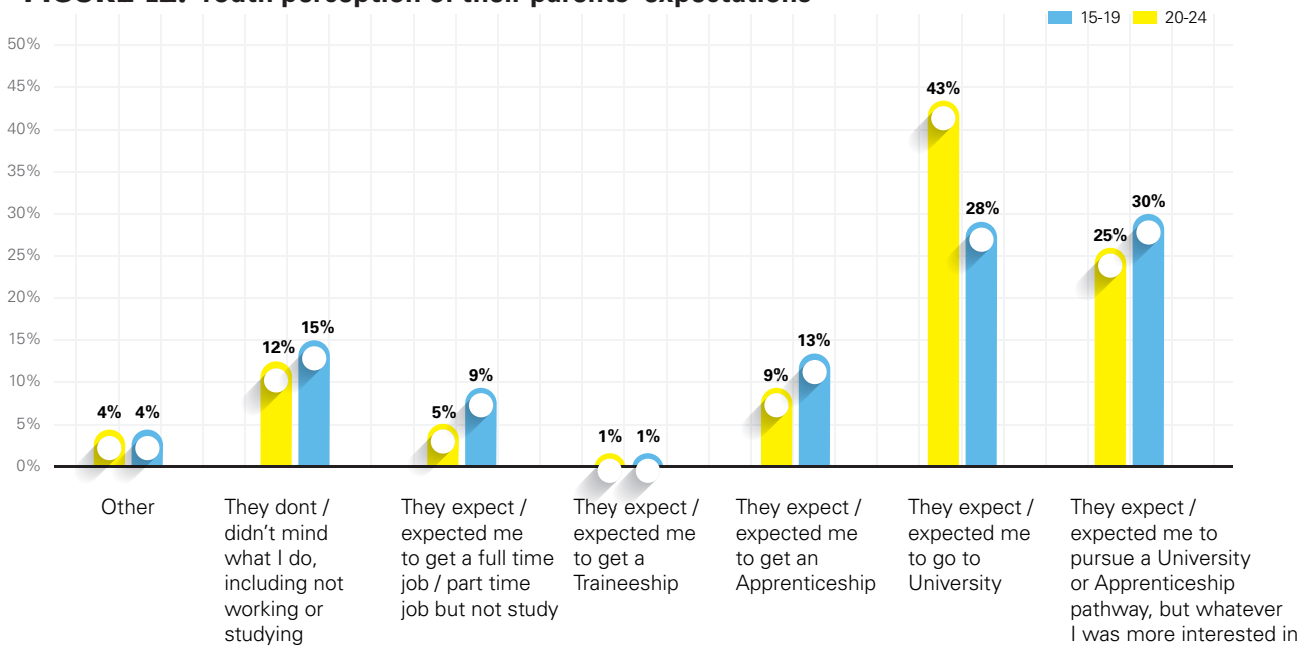
FIGURE 11. Career advice (public versus private schools)



■ **Q.** Throughout your schooling, how would you rate the quality of career conversations you receive (or received)?

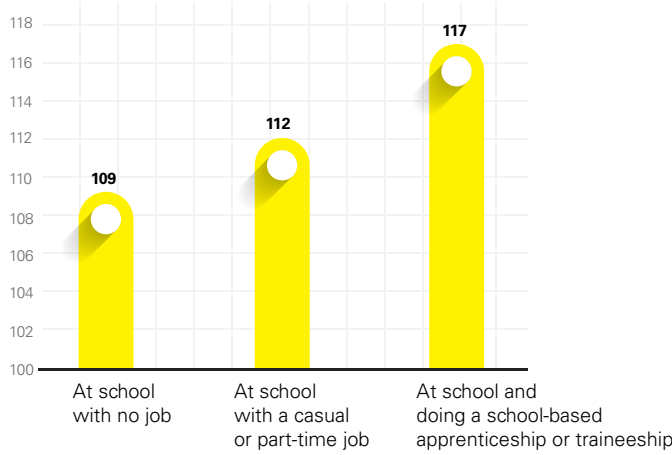
Of those respondents who attended or are attending public high schools, almost 51% said that they got great career advice, while 46.6% said they did not. This is compared with respondents who attended or are attending private schools, where almost 56% said they got great advice, while almost 42% said they did not.

FIGURE 12. Youth perception of their parents' expectations



■ **Q.** What career pathway do you think your parents or guardian expect (or expected) of when you leave or left school?

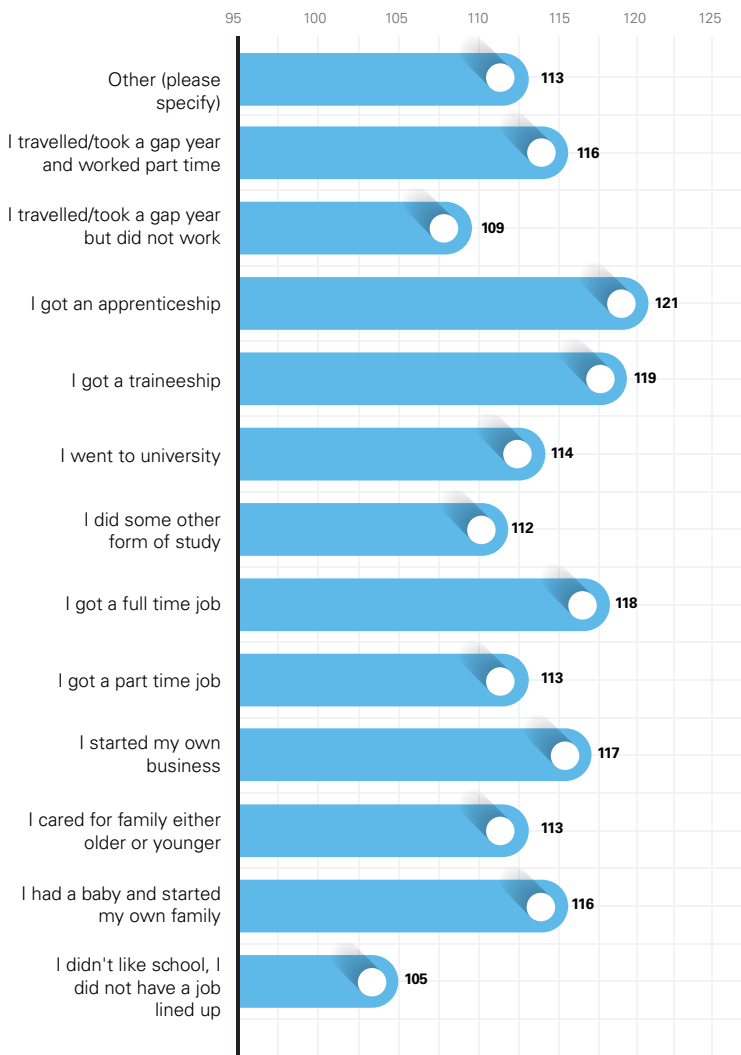
FIGURE 13. Mean wellbeing scores for youth who are still at school and working



■ Q. While studying at school, are you?

Youth who worked while at school reported higher levels of wellbeing than those that did not. Youth who were not working had a wellbeing of 109, lower than the national average. Youth who had a part time job, reported a wellbeing score of 112, while youth who were at school and doing a school based apprenticeship or traineeship reported a wellbeing score of 117.

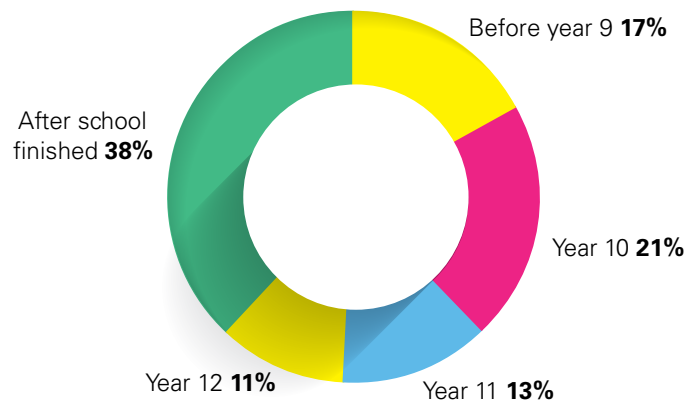
FIGURE 14. Mean wellbeing scores for post school pathways



Youth who pursued an apprenticeship reported higher levels of wellbeing (121) than the national average (113), and higher than any other pathway. The pathways that produced the next highest level of wellbeing were getting a traineeship (119) and getting a full time job (118).

FIGURE 15. Post school pathways by state and territory

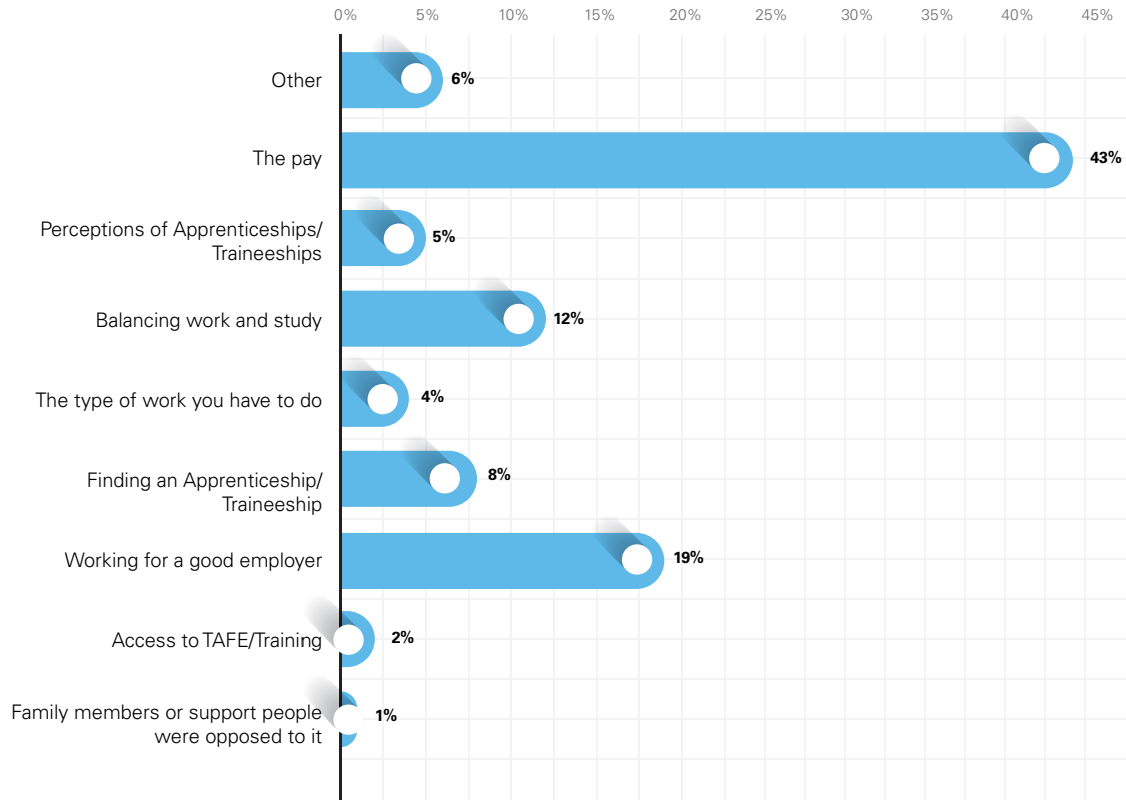
	NSW	QLD	ACT	VIC	WA	SA	NT	TAS
Other (please specify)	4%	9%	7%	6%	6%	5%	0%	18%
I'm working full time in an apprenticeship	66%	43%	56%	49%	56%	64%	17%	29%
I'm working full time in a traineeship	13%	12%	6%	12%	11%	10%	8%	6%
I've finished a trade or traineeship and am working in paid employment that is related to my qualification	6%	6%	10%	5%	4%	3%	8%	12%
I've finished a trade or traineeship and am working in paid employment that is not related to my qualification	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	6%
I've finished university and am working in paid employment in my field of study	1%	2%	4%	5%	2%	2%	8%	12%
I've finished university and am working in paid employment not related to my field of study	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	6%
I'm working in paid employment but have no post school qualification	7%	24%	15%	18%	18%	14%	58%	12%
I am an entrepreneur	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FIGURE 16. Age and decision to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship

■ **Q.** At what age did you know you wanted to complete an Apprenticeship or Traineeship?

Most respondents who pursued an apprenticeship or traineeship, made the choice to do so after school had finished. The next most popular decision point was in year 10.

FIGURE 17. Biggest concern or worry with taking on an apprenticeship or traineeship



■ **Q.** What was your biggest concern or worry about taking on an Apprenticeship or Traineeship?

In this sample, respondents said overwhelmingly that their biggest concern or worry in taking on an apprenticeship or traineeship was the pay (43%), followed by working for a good employer (18.8%). This was consistent across all states and territories as the major concern.

FIGURE 18. Main reasons for quitting an apprenticeship or traineeship

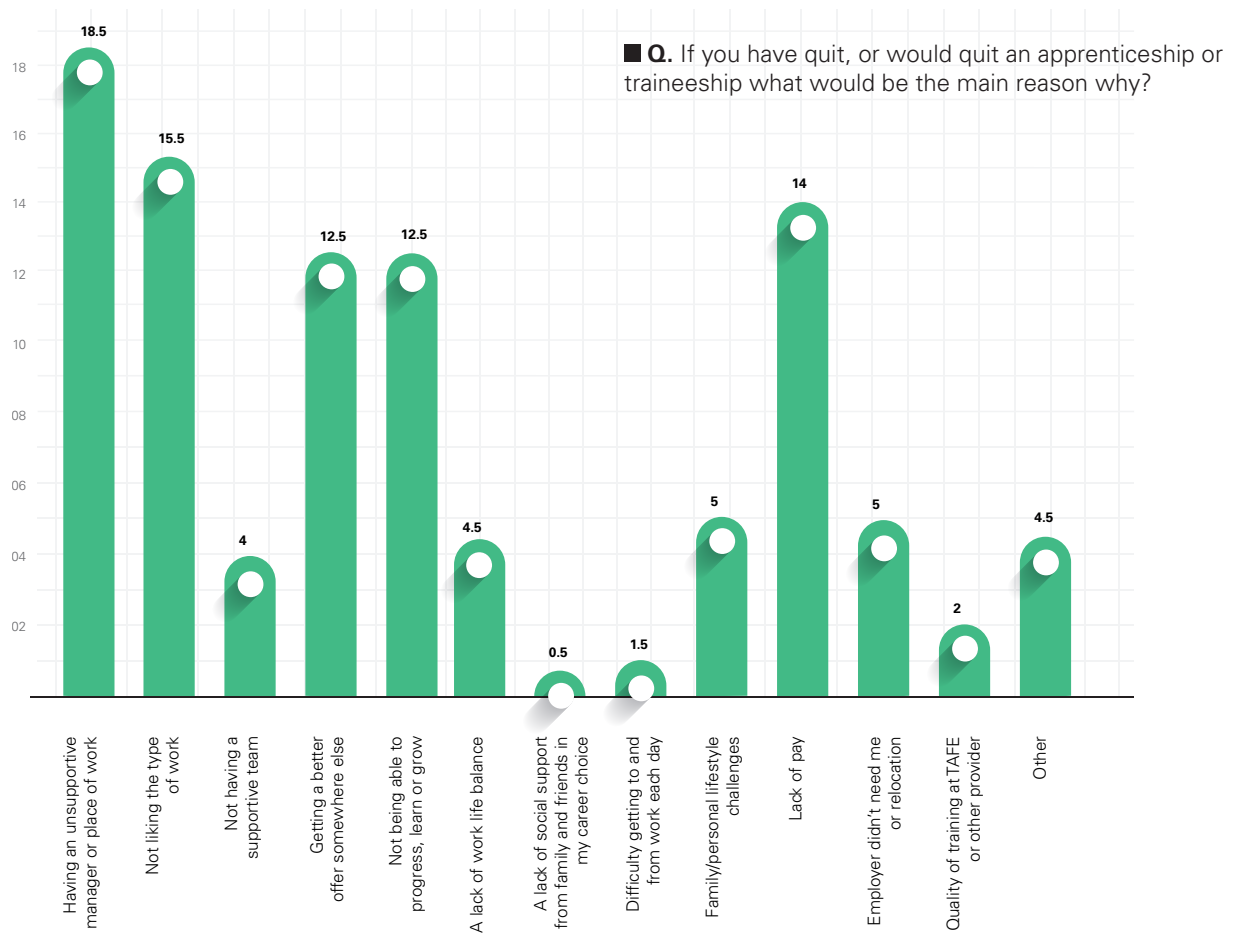


FIGURE 19. Youth views on why they would consider a better offer

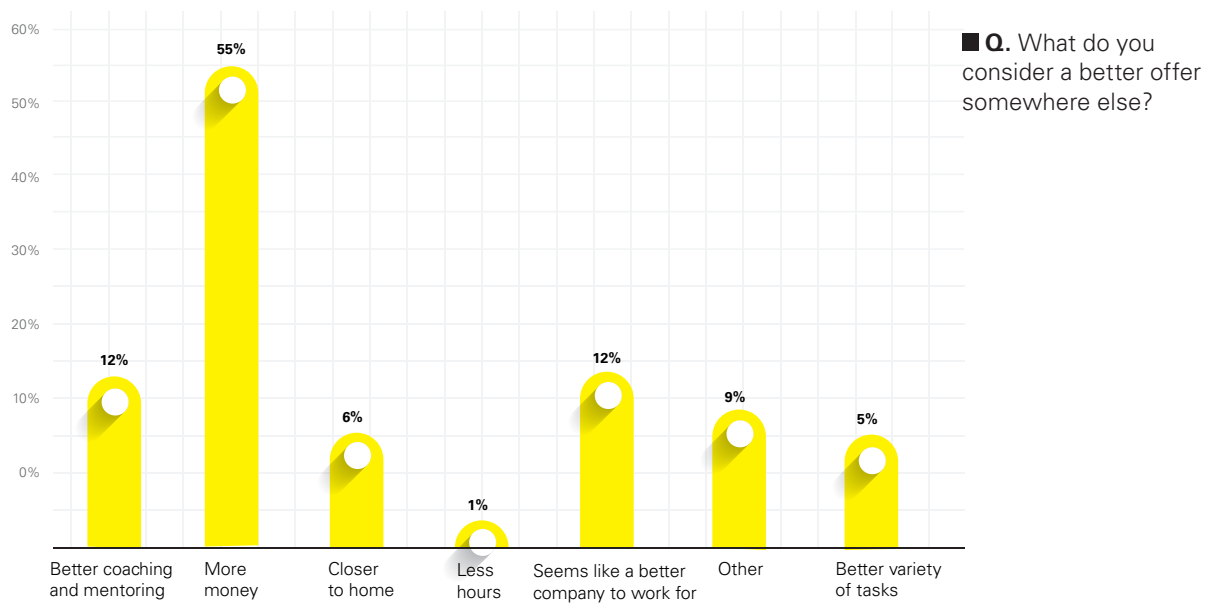
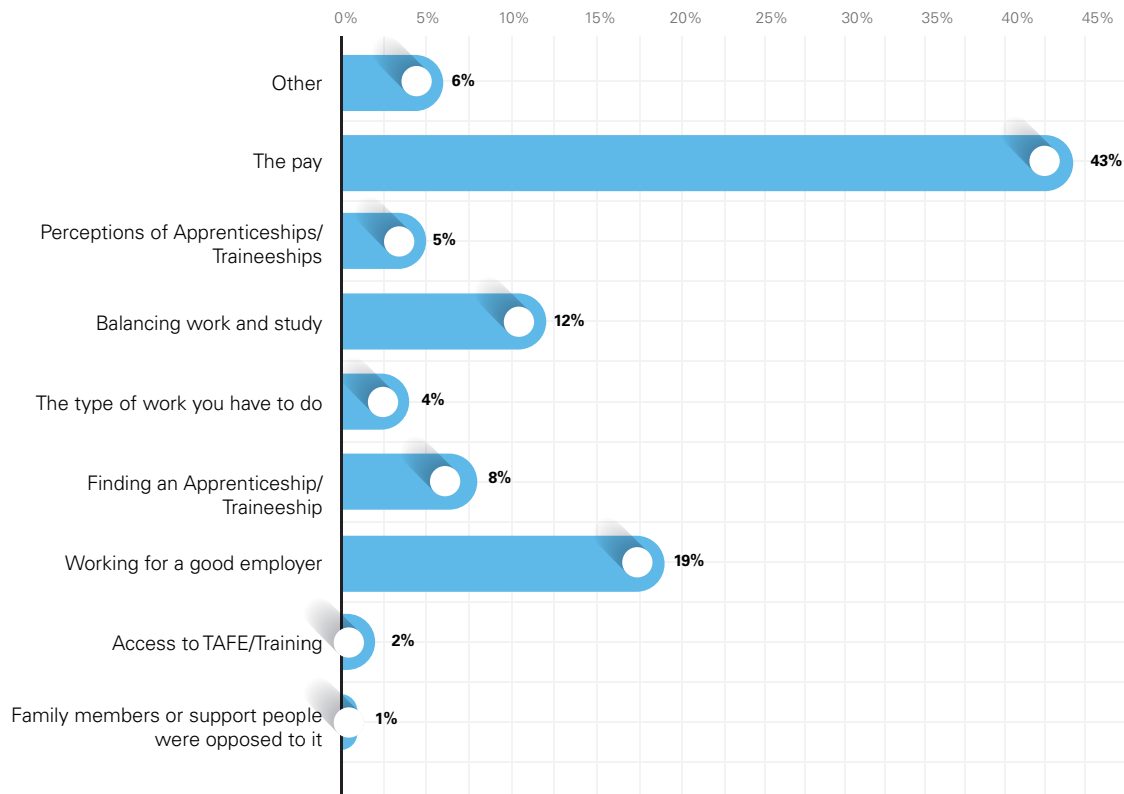


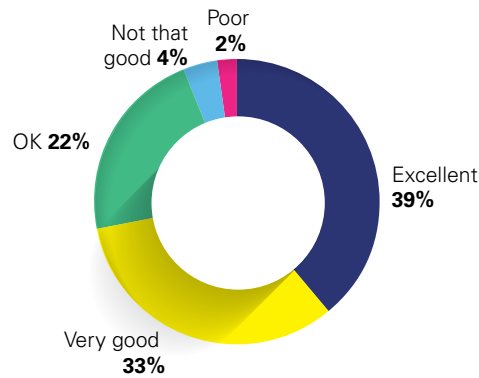
FIGURE 20. Apprentice and trainee expectations of their employer



■ Q. When you start (or started) work what is the most important thing you expect from your employer?

The data shows that for those in an apprenticeship or traineeship, coaching and mentoring is the top expectation of an employer (32%), followed by a positive and friendly work environment (31%). 80% of apprentices and trainees rated their boss/supervisor as very good or excellent and 75% said that they feel cared for and supported at work.

FIGURE 21. Performance rating of manager for those in an apprenticeship or traineeship



■ Q. How would you rate the performance of your manager?

FIGURE 22. The number one thing that could improve the quality of an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway

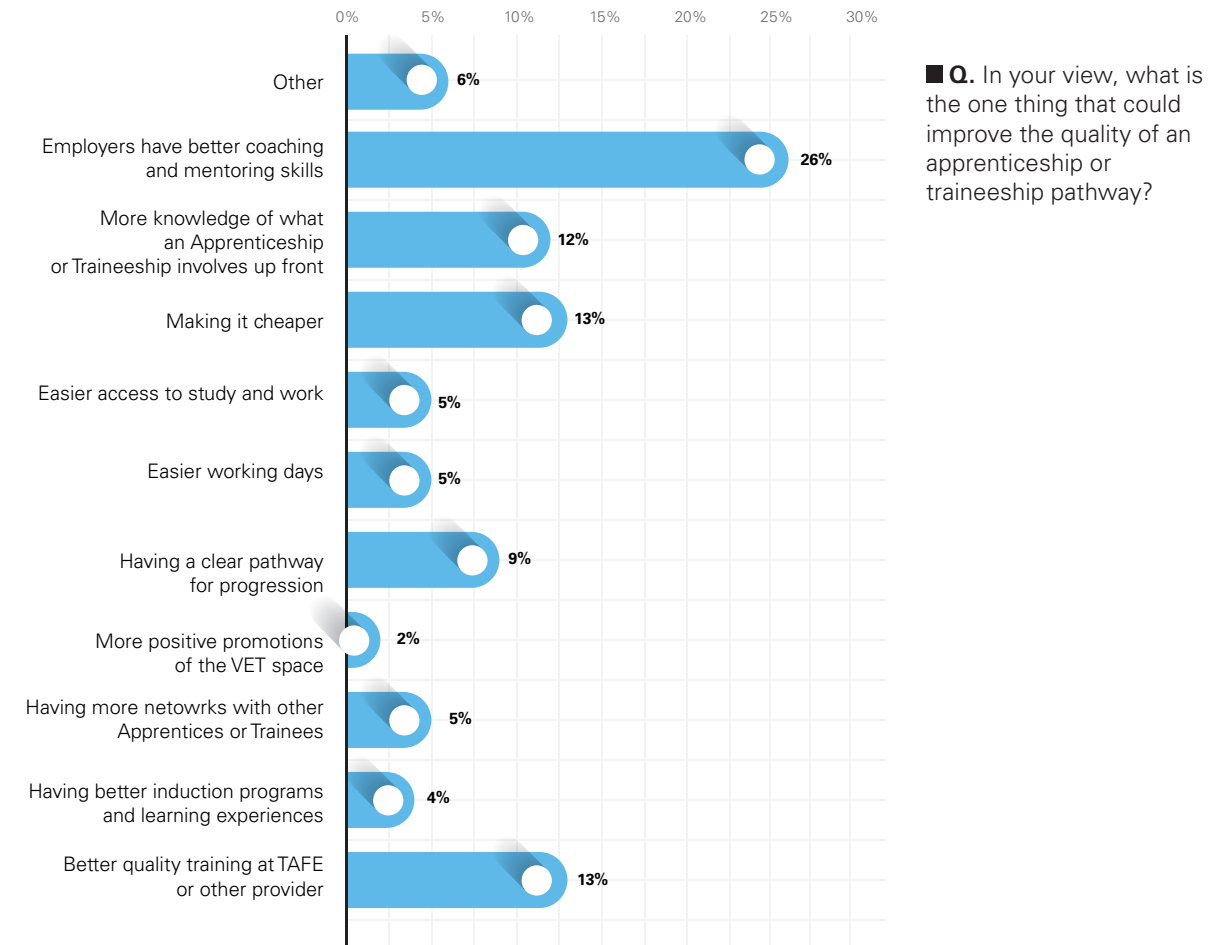
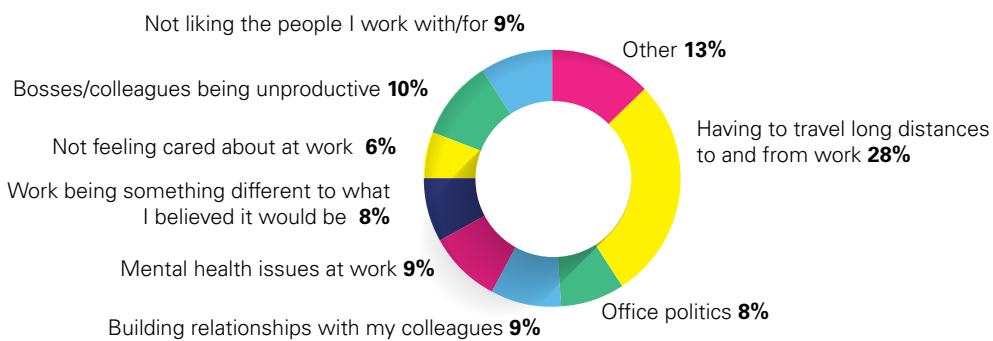
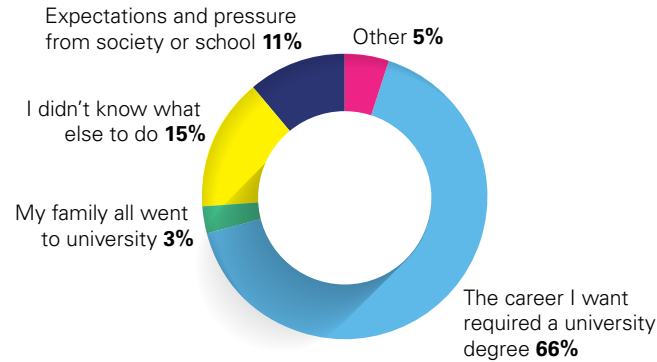


FIGURE 23. The biggest challenge at work for apprentices and trainees



In this sample, the biggest challenge was travelling long distances to and from work (18.5%) followed by bosses/colleagues being unproductive (12.3%) and then building relationships (11.5%).

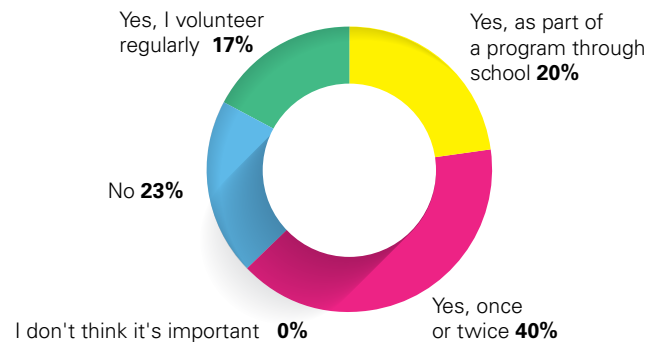
FIGURE 24. Main influence for deciding on a university pathway (asked of all youth who are or did pursue a university pathway)



■ **Q.** What was the main reason you decided on a University pathway?

This data shows that many young people (66%) pursue a university degree because the career they want requires a university degree, 14.6% went to university because they didn't know what else to do and 11% felt expectations or pressure from school or society.

FIGURE 25. Youth who participate in volunteer work (asked of all respondents)

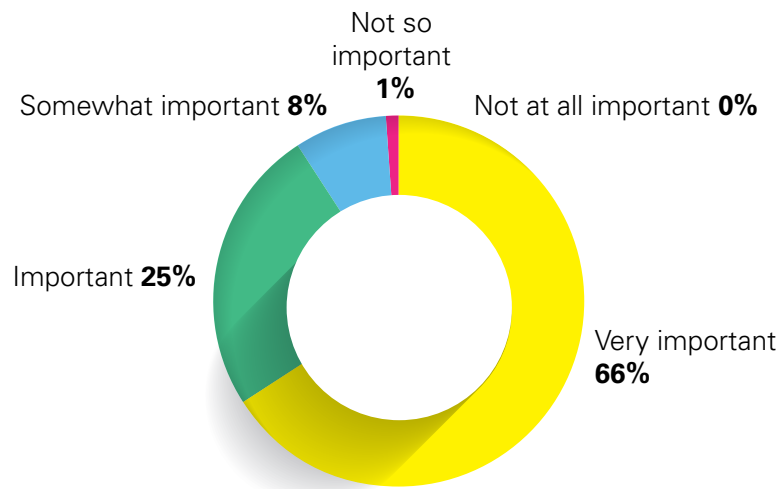


■ **Q.** Have you completed any volunteer work?

Almost 80% (77.6%) of youth in the survey had completed some type of volunteer work. Most youth (40%) reported completing volunteer work once or twice, with almost 20% (19.8%) of youth completing it through a high school program.



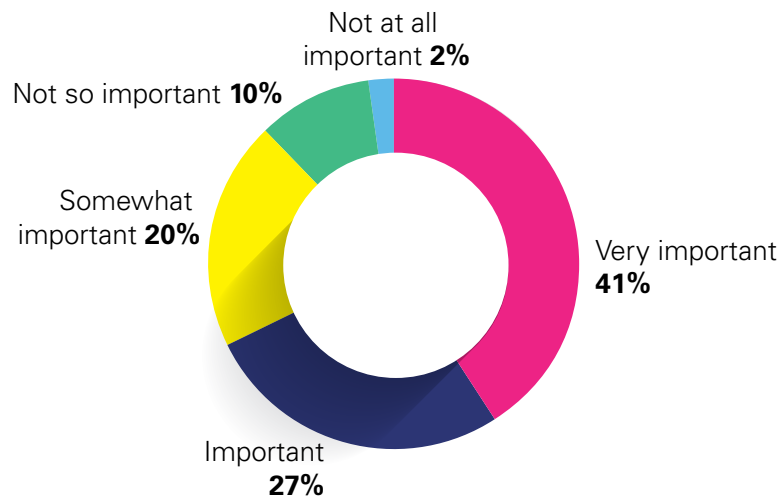
FIGURE 26. Youth attitudes to work and earning money (asked of all respondents)



■ Q. How important is it to get a job and earn money?



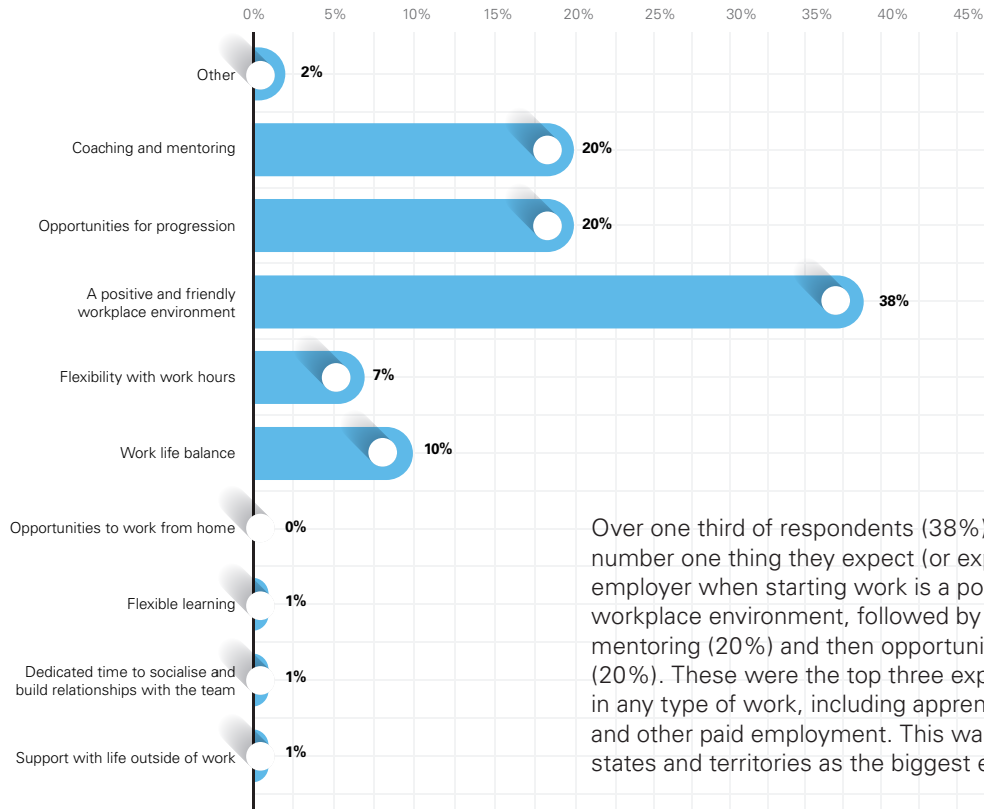
FIGURE 27. Youth attitudes to starting work full time (asked of all respondents)



■ Q. How important is it for you to start full time work?

FIGURE 28. Youth expectations of employers overall (asked of all respondents)

■ Q. When you start (or started) work what is the most important thing you expect from your employer?



Over one third of respondents (38%) report that the number one thing they expect (or expected) from an employer when starting work is a positive and friendly workplace environment, followed by coaching and mentoring (20%) and then opportunities for progression (20%). These were the top three expectations for people in any type of work, including apprenticeships, traineeships and other paid employment. This was consistent across all states and territories as the biggest expectation.

FIGURE 29. Mean wellbeing scores and current situation

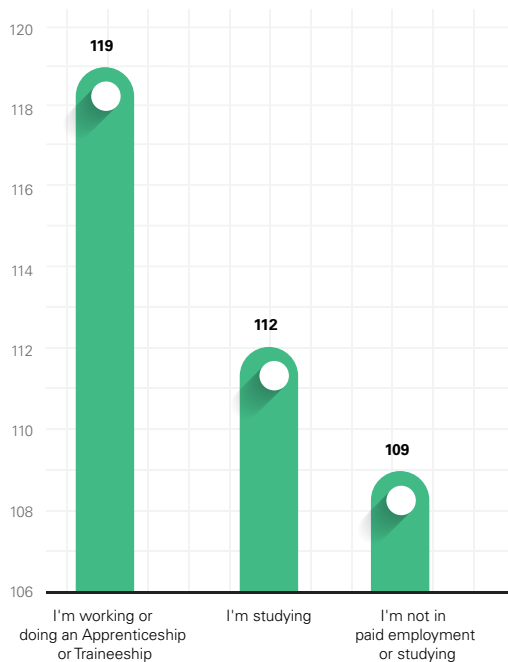
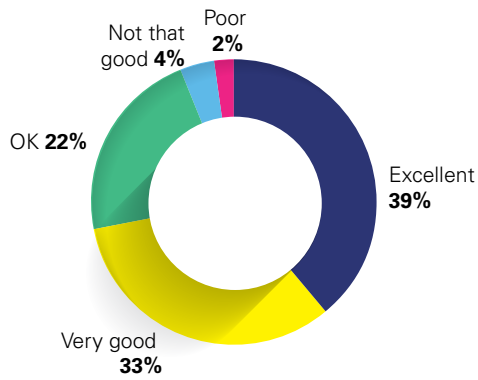




FIGURE 30. How youth rate the performance of their manager overall (asked all of youth working)

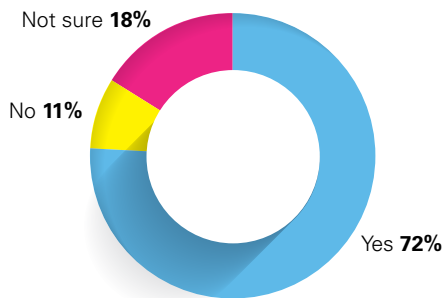


■ **Q.** How would you rate the performance of your manager?

Youth who rated their manager as excellent, reported a wellbeing score of 121, (well above national average of 113) while those who rated their manager as poor, recorded an average score of 109.



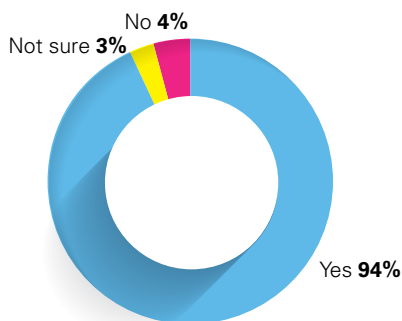
FIGURE 31. Youth feeling cared for and supported at work



■ **Q.** Do you feel cared for and supported at work?



FIGURE 32. Youth views on the importance of feeling supported and cared for at work



■ **Q.** Is it important for you to feel supported and cared for at work?

Most youth (72%) report that they feel cared for and supported at work (see figure 31), while almost all youth (94%) said it was important to feel cared for and supported at work. When correlated with wellbeing, again those who felt supported shows significantly higher levels of wellbeing than those who did not.

FIGURE 33. Mean wellbeing score compared to how youth rate performance of their manager

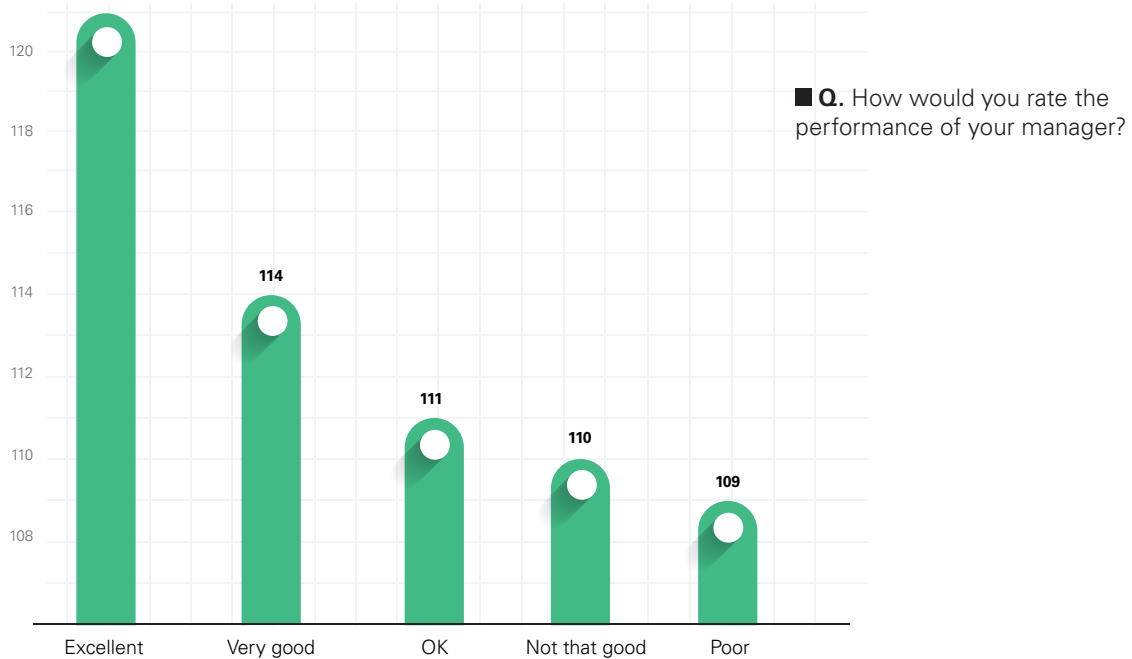


FIGURE 34. Mean wellbeing score compared to knowing what is expected of youth at work

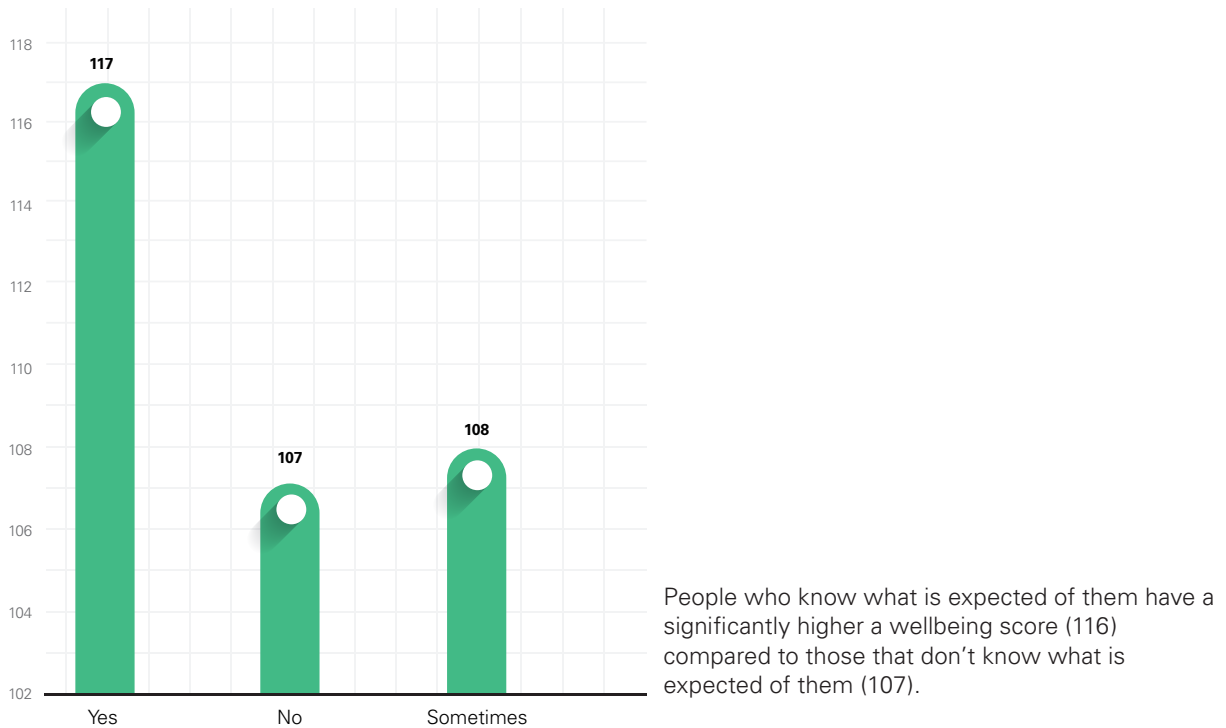
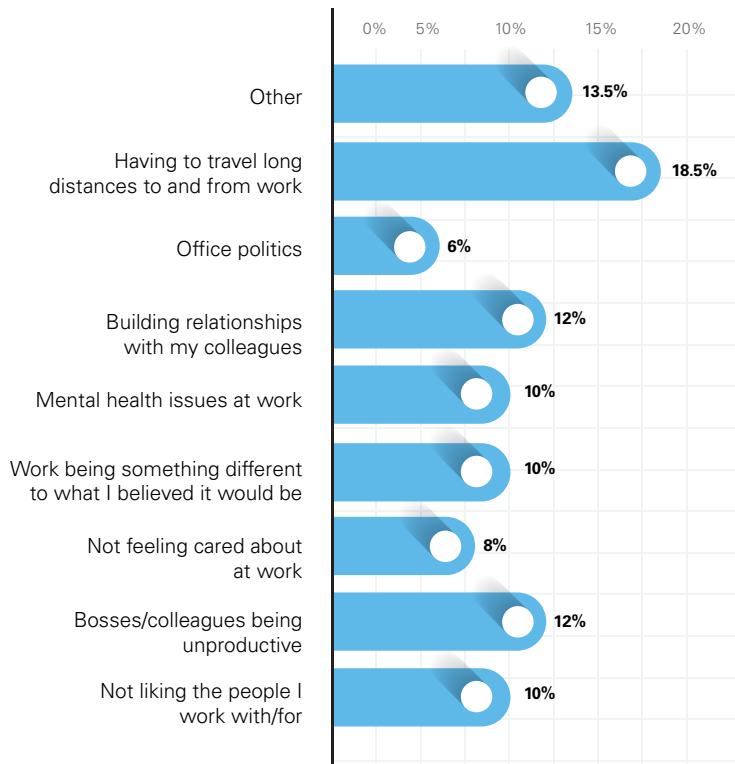
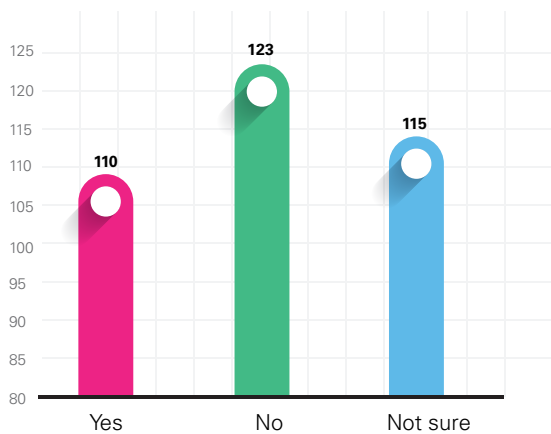


FIGURE 35. Biggest challenge for those at work



■ Q. What do you find to be the biggest challenge about work itself?

FIGURE 36. Mean wellbeing scores and the experience of sadness, anxiety, stress or worry that has significantly impacted how youth study, live, or work



■ Q. In the past 12 months have you experienced sadness, anxiety or worry that has significantly impacted how you study, live or work?

In the last 12 months, 65% of youth expressed experiencing sadness, anxiety, worry or stress that significantly impacts how they study, live or work. The experience and intensity of these negative emotions has also been shown to significantly impact their overall wellbeing. Respondents who answered “yes” show significantly reduced wellbeing levels compared to those who answered no or unsure.

FIGURE 37. Percentage of respondents who answered “Yes” to the experience of sadness, anxiety, stress or worry that has significantly impacted how they study live or work

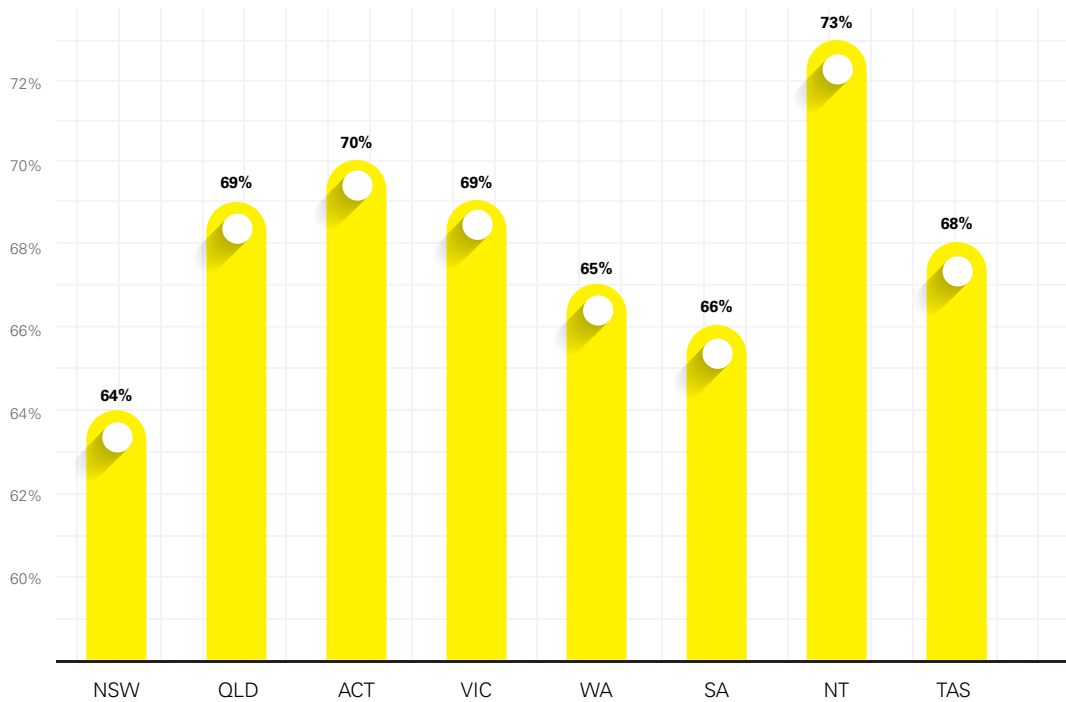
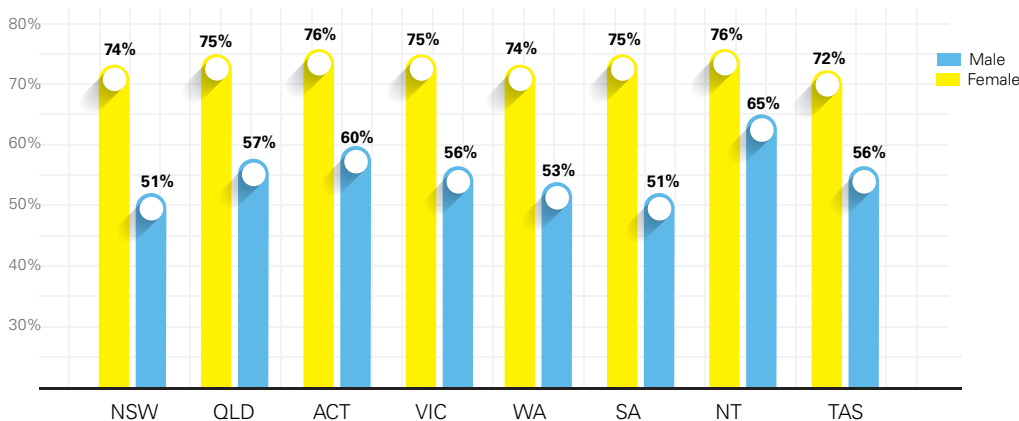


FIGURE 38. Mean of males compared to females who answered “Yes” to experiencing sadness, anxiety, stress or worry that has significantly impacted how they study, live or work



Note: Those who identify their gender as ‘Other’ are not represented in this table as the sample size is too small to validate.

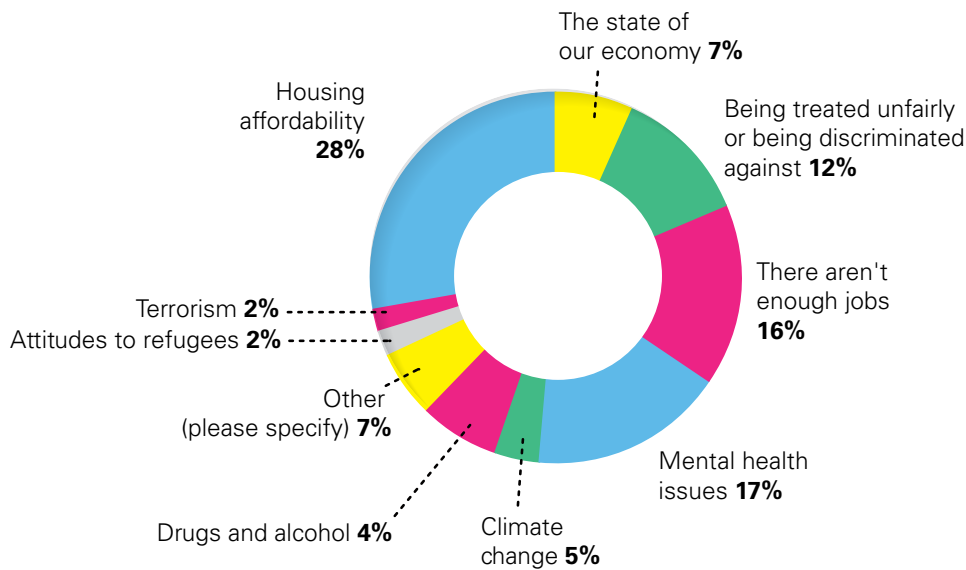
In this sample, females are experiencing higher levels of negative emotions (74%) compared to males (53%). With 74% of females answering yes to the question ‘in the last twelve months have you experienced sadness, anxiety, worry or stress that has significantly impacted how you study, live or work’. This was compared to 53% of males.

FIGURE 39. Biggest worry growing up in Australia by State and Territory (%)

■ Q. What is your biggest worry about being a young person growing up in Australia?

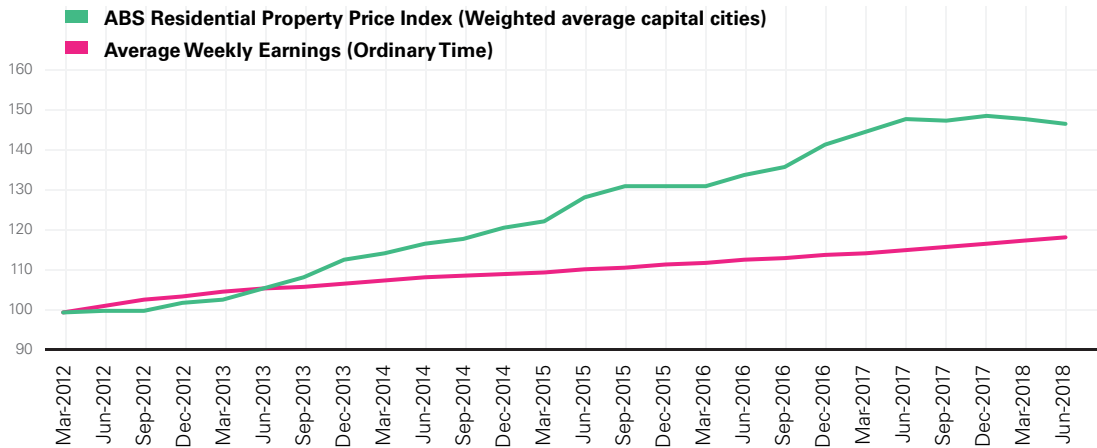
	NSW	QLD	ACT	VIC	WA	SA	NT	TAS
Other	7%	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%	11%	6%
Being treated unfairly or being discriminated against	12%	12%	12%	11%	12%	11%	11%	7%
There aren't enough jobs	11%	19%	9%	14%	25%	21%	13%	16%
Mental health issues	16%	17%	17%	19%	18%	16%	19%	20%
Drugs and alcohol	4%	5%	3%	4%	5%	4%	7%	5%
The state of our economy	6%	8%	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%	5%
Climate change	5%	6%	9%	7%	5%	6%	5%	12%
Terrorism	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%	5%
Attitudes to refugees	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	5%
Housing affordability	36%	22%	32%	29%	17%	22%	22%	19%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

FIGURE 40. Biggest worry growing up in Australia overall



Negative emotions, stress and worry can be a result of many situations young people find themselves in. In this survey, we asked young people to identify what is their biggest concern or worry about growing up in Australia. Answers included mental health issues, drugs and alcohol, discrimination, climate change, jobs, refugees, the economy and housing. Overwhelmingly, young people reported housing affordability (28%) to be their biggest worry. This is followed by mental health issues (17%) and then lack of jobs (16%). This order of concern was the same for both females and males, indigenous and non-indigenous and those who live in regional and metropolitan areas. Housing affordability is the top concern for young people living in NSW, Queensland, ACT, Victoria and SA. In WA the top concern reported was “there aren’t enough jobs” and in Tasmania it was mental health issues.

FIGURE 41. House price growth vs average weekly earnings

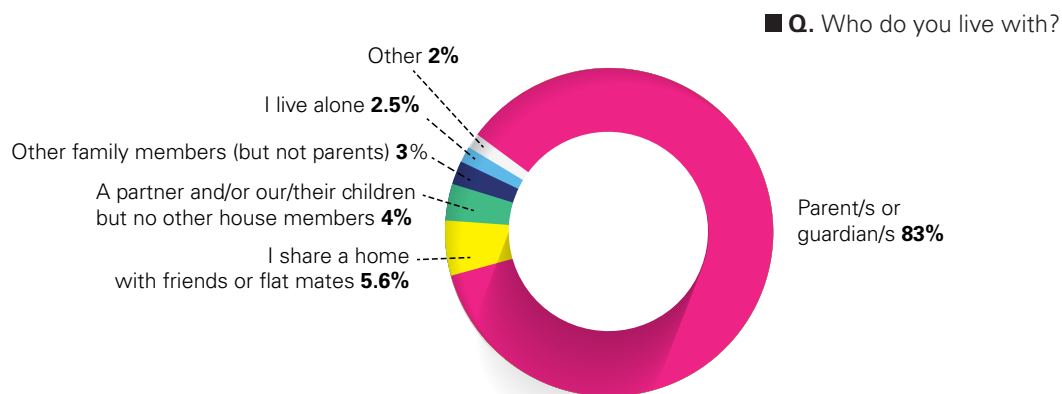


Housing affordability concerns are likely exacerbated due to the significant increase in property prices observed in some states, particularly NSW and Victoria, over the past five years (even though prices are now moderating). When comparing property price growth with measures of labour incomes, such as average weekly ordinary time earnings, it is possible to observe the extent to which residential property price growth has outpaced wages growth.

Property prices have not increased uniformly across the country with Sydney and Melbourne experiencing more dramatic price increases. Mitigating the impact of property price increases on a broader conception of housing affordability has been lower interest rates and relatively stable rental prices, both of which reduce the consumption cost of housing. However, respondent perceptions are more likely driven by property prices as these are more observable and directly linked to the aspirations of home ownership.

Even so the HIA’s housing affordability index - based on multiple measures including wages, house prices and borrowing costs - suggest a decline in housing affordability when taking into account a broader range of factors.

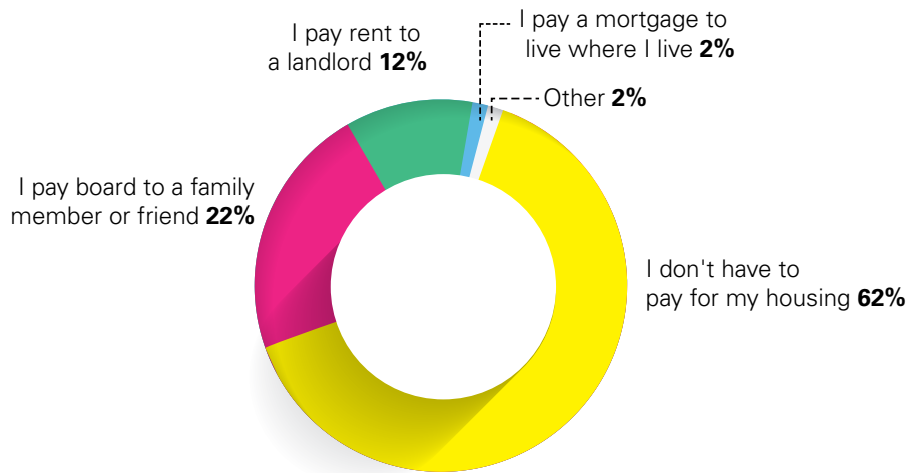
FIGURE 42. The housing situation of youth



Of the youth who responded to the survey, 83% of young people report that they currently live with their parents/ guardian. The second highest proportion share a house with friends or flatmates (5.6%), followed by living with a partner and or their children (4%), living with other family (3%), living alone (2.5%) or other (2%). This is consistent across all states with almost all youth living with parents or guardians.



FIGURE 43. How youth pay for their housing situation

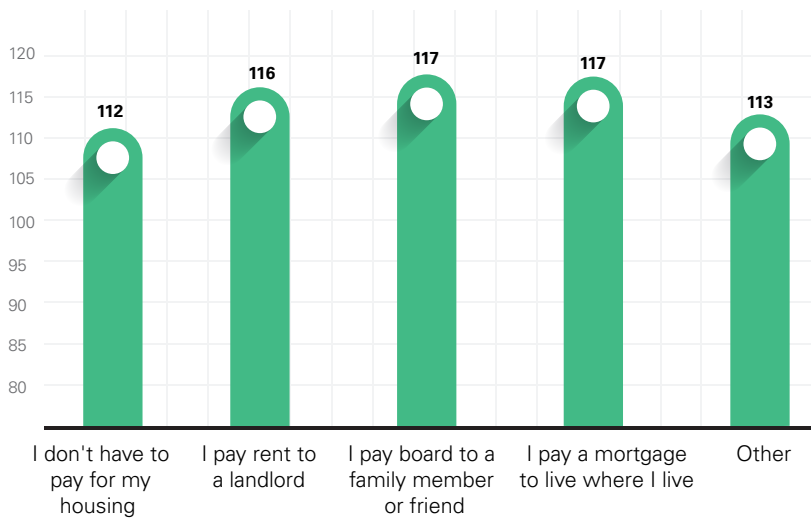


■ **Q.** How do you pay for your housing situation?

Youth reported on whether they have to make any type of financial contribution for their housing. The majority (62%) reported that they do not pay for their housing, the rest (38%) pay in some way for their housing situation. This includes 22% that pay board to a family member, 12% pay rent and 2% pay for a mortgage.



FIGURE 44. Mean wellbeing scores for how youth pay for housing



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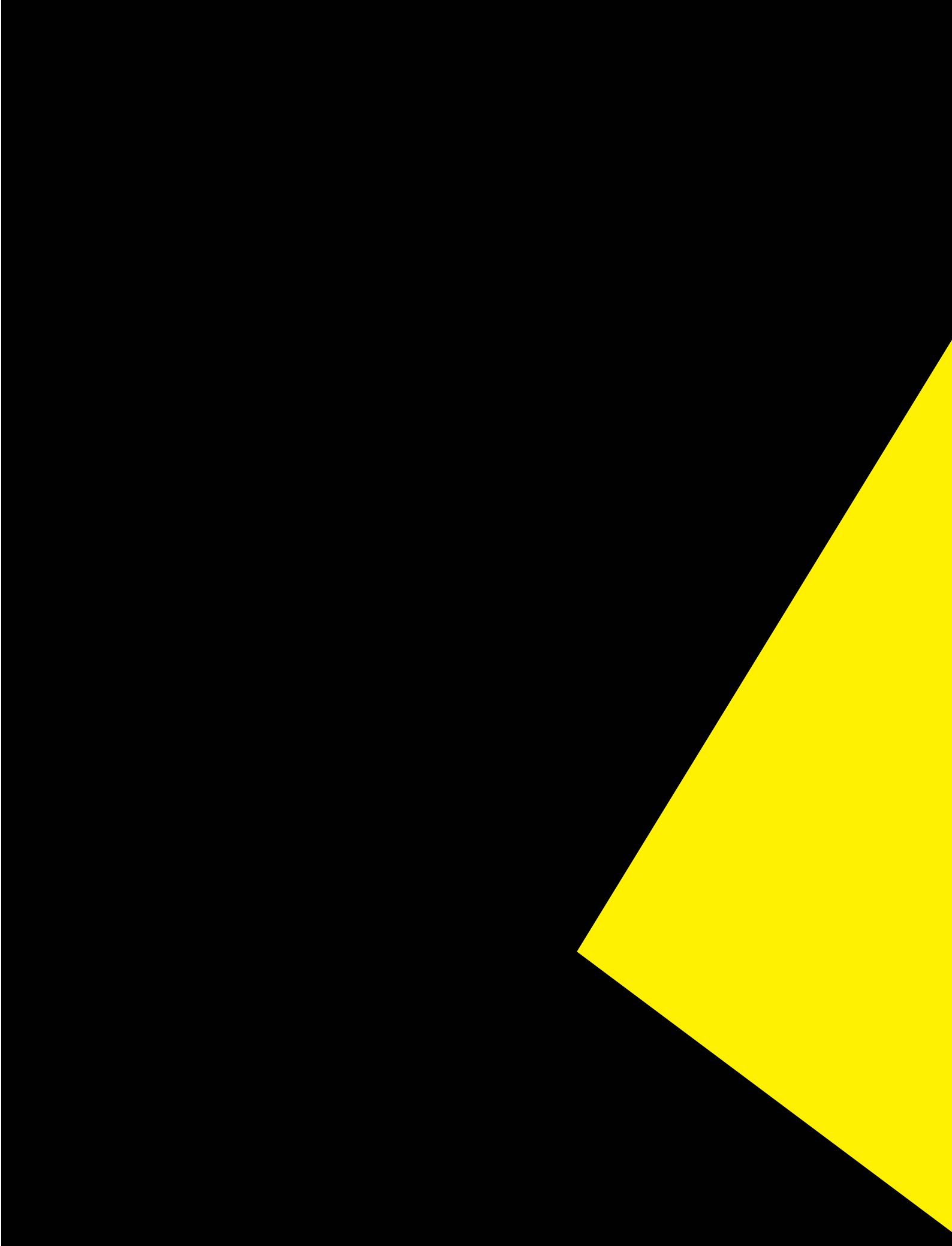
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DISCLAIMER

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