

Mission Australia conducted its 19th annual survey of young people aged 15-19 in 2020. The survey aims to identify young people's values, aspirations and concerns. This year's survey had a special focus on young people's experiences of unfair treatment and COVID-19.

25,800
RESPONDENTS
aged 15-19 years



56% Female **41%** Male **2%** Gender Diverse

4% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

20% spoke a language other than English at home

Top 3 factors to securing a job:

- 1. Flexible working hours** 75%
- 2. More jobs in my local area** 59%
- 3. Work experience** 42%

Top 3 personal concerns:

- 1. Coping with stress** 43%
- 2. Mental health** 34%
- 3. Body image** 33%



More than double the proportion of females were extremely/very concerned about coping with stress (56% compared with 25% of males)

Top 3 most important issues in Australia today:



Equity and discrimination
40%



COVID-19
39%



Mental health
31%

Since 2019, the % of young people identifying **EQUITY** and **DISCRIMINATION** as an issue of national importance has increased from **25%** to **40%**

COVID-19

Young people were asked to comment on their biggest personal issue experienced in the past year. In 2020, the top 3 biggest personal issues were:

- 1. Education** 34%
- 2. Mental health** 17%
- 3. COVID-19** 9%

Of the **9%** of young people who felt **COVID-19** was their biggest personal issue:

33% were concerned about COVID-19 and education

31% were concerned about COVID-19 in general

21% were concerned about COVID-19 and isolation

17% were concerned about COVID-19 and mental health

7% were concerned about COVID-19 and financial problems

Young people were asked about their experiences of unfair treatment. In the past year:



**Experienced
unfair treatment**
27%



**Witnessed
unfair treatment**
55%

39% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents had experienced unfair treatment compared with 29% of non-Indigenous respondents

Of those who experienced unfair treatment:



41%
had experienced unfair treatment due to their gender



30%
had experienced unfair treatment due to their race/cultural background



26%
had experienced unfair treatment due to their mental health

Of those who witnessed unfair treatment:



62%
reported it was due to a person's race/cultural background



49%
reported it was due to a person's sexuality



41%
reported it was due to a person's gender

"Discrimination, seen in both race and sexual or gender preference. I myself have not been victim to this discrimination but I have seen those close to me be affected by it. People should be more educated about LGBTIQ+ and race issues." F, 17, TAS

Recommendations:

- ✓ Replicate and fund flexible and alternative learning options for young people.
- ✓ End the digital divide and ensure access to reliable internet and devices for young people.
- ✓ Focus on mental health prevention and early intervention measures, including online and outreach.
- ✓ Implement a permanent increase to income support payments for young people and their families.
- ✓ Replicate and fund early intervention services to prevent youth homelessness.
- ✓ Fund youth-specific social housing.
- ✓ Develop a new National Anti-Racism Strategy and partner with young people on anti-racism initiatives.
- ✓ Put young people at the centre of service design and development.
- ✓ Develop a national approach to supporting youth employment.

If you are a young person and need someone to talk with, you can contact Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 (24/7) [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

To download the report:  missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurveyreport