

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Report

MISSION AUSTRALIA
Youth Survey 2019

25,126 
Youth Survey 2019 respondents

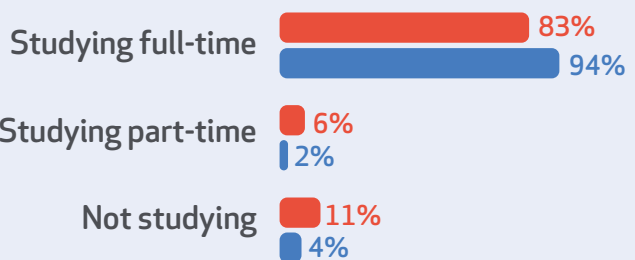
Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2019 captured the views, concerns and aspirations of 25,126 young people, **1,579 (6%) of whom identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.**

"The importance of Aboriginal education needs to be taken more seriously by all students and staff."

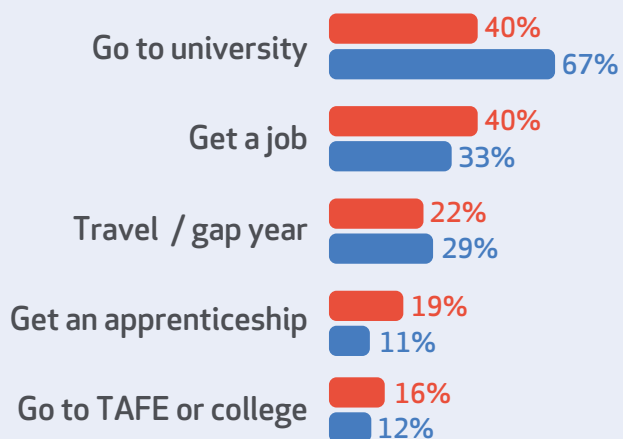
**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female
15, NSW**

 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**
 **Non-Indigenous**

Education



Post school plans

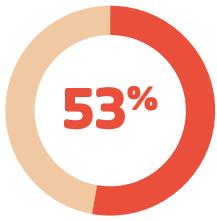


"[We need to ...] establish a more inclusive environment for all teens to reaffirm the belief that all are entitled to equal respect regardless of culture, sexuality, gender, colour or religion. Schools especially need to address social issues and inequality."

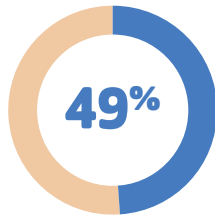
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female, 16, NSW

Challenges to study/work goals

Challenges impacting upon the achievement of their post-school goals:



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents



Non-Indigenous respondents

Top challenges to achieving post-school goals for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander respondents:



academic ability 16% compared with 21% of non-Indigenous respondents



mental health 14% compared with 17%



financial difficulties 13% compared with 13%



family responsibilities 10% compared with 8%

Personal concerns

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young respondents were much more concerned about:



domestic / family violence
17% compared with 9% of non-Indigenous respondents



alcohol
12% compared with 5%



drugs
15% compared with 7%



suicide
21% compared with 14%



discrimination
17% compared with 10%

“People shouldn’t discriminate against other people, people should respect other culture.”

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female, 16, VIC

Bullying

1.5x

the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported that they have been bullied in the past year: 30% compared with 20% of non-Indigenous respondents.

Almost 2x

the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported that the bullying occurred at home: 30% compared with 17% of non-Indigenous respondents.

Almost 3x

the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported that the bullying occurred in my neighbourhood: 17% compared with 6% of non-Indigenous respondents.

Living arrangements



2 x the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people reported a couch surfing experience: 29% compared with 12% of non-Indigenous young people.

4x

the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents rated their housing as much less than adequate or less than adequate in terms of number of bedrooms: 16% compared with 4% of non-Indigenous respondents and **access to services you need:** 12% compared with 3%.

Family



Almost 2 x the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents rated their family's ability to get along as poor: 13% compared with 7% of non-Indigenous respondents.

"Families need to be encouraged to work through the hard times, and grow together, and support each other. How can we as youth be expected to grow as individuals if our support (our family) is unstable?"

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondent, 18, NT

Wellbeing



Over half (51%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents felt happy overall with their lives, compared with 61% of non-Indigenous respondents.



Almost one third (32%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents indicated some form of distress, compared with 27% of non-Indigenous respondents.

"Whilst the stigma around mental health seems to be fading, I think there are still a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding regarding the mental health of others. I believe that we need to educate people properly and without bias." **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander female, 16, NT**

Key policy recommendations

- ✓ **Put young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the centre of service design**
- ✓ **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have influence over the policies and services that affect them**
- ✓ **Mainstream agencies should deliver culturally-appropriate programs** and, wherever possible, work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations
- ✓ **Design programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people** that support all domains of social and emotional wellbeing
- ✓ **Develop a national plan to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people** across all of their life domains
- ✓ **Support schools to stamp out racism and discrimination** by teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and histories
- ✓ **Develop a national plan to end homelessness** with clear targets for ending Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander homelessness
- ✓ **Ensure a permanent increase to income support payments** for all young people and their families to keep them out of poverty

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

For more information: researchandpolicy@missionaustralia.com.au **To download the report:** missionaustralia.com.au