

NAB EDUCATION SPECIAL INSIGHT REPORT

NAB INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SURVEY 2018 – WHAT DO STUDENTS REALLY THINK ABOUT THEIR LIVES NOW & IN THE FUTURE?



NAB Behavioural & Industry Economics

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Last year NAB spoke with principals, teachers and administrators at over 90 independent schools across the country about the concerns of their students and the role schools are playing in helping young people prepare for future opportunities and challenges. This year, NAB updates this work but this time looks at these issues through the eyes of their students - over 300 across Australia in years 10 through to 12 participated in this research. Some of the issues explored include: teenage wellbeing; impacts of social media; careers and entrepreneurship; key challenges facing Australia; and whether teenagers believe they truly have a voice.

What comes through clearly is our country is in good hands as the next generation of workers, parents, business owners and community leaders, start to make their mark. Teenagers are clearly concerned about the future - both their own and Australia's more generally. For themselves, they worry about their career prospects, being successful and getting into their chosen course. More broadly, issues such as rising geopolitical tensions, cost of living, climate change and discrimination, are top of mind.

But, they're not going to live their lives as passive observers - they want to be proactive in shaping their future and that of our country. They are critical of the overall direction Australia is currently heading and don't believe their voice is being sufficiently heard, particularly by Government. When asked to think of words that best describes their generation, many said hard working, determined, motivated, ambitious, tech savvy, innovative, creative, passionate, socially aware, connected, accepting, open minded and opinionated. But many also said self-obsessed, absorbed, depressed, sad, stressed and troubled.

One frequently cited culprit of growing teenage stress is social media. And, this group spends a lot of time on it - 2 hours or more a day is not uncommon. But, while they recognise many of its shortcomings, they're more likely to highlight the benefits of social media - including keeping in touch with friends, staying informed about big issues such as world politics and the environment, and as a key platform for them to be heard.

This is an entrepreneurial generation, perhaps by default, as the pace of change necessitates them taking greater control of their careers and lives. Most have or aspire to have a part time job, and a large number would love to start their own business, even while still a school. And, when they leave school, most plan to go to university.

This generation also has very high expectations about the type of organisation they want to work for and the positive impact their work will have on the world. Passion for what they do is extremely important to them. And, if finding a job or advancing their careers requires moving overseas, they're ready to do so.

They also have strong expectations in regards to gender equality both at work and at home - raising children should be a shared responsibility and men and women should always be paid the same for the same job. Finally, many of the traditional gender biases in areas such as numeracy, literacy, leadership, speaking up and business are challenged - each gender sees itself as equally as proficient in these areas.

Australia's future is in good hands!



KEY FINDINGS:

Students assess their physical health more favourably than their mental health - on average they rated their physical health at 7.2 points out of 10 (where 10 is excellent), but their emotional health at 6.2. Boys reported higher levels of both physical (7.6) and mental health (6.7) than girls (7.1 and 6.1 respectively).

Boys report higher levels of personal happiness than girls - on average students were only 'moderately' happy (5.6 out of 10). Boys (6.1) were however happier than girls (5.4) When asked how anxious or worried they were, students on average said they were only 'somewhat' anxious (4.2). Once again, boys (3.3) were less anxious than girls (4.6), although their anxiety levels were still quite low.

Schoolwork, job prospects, being successful, getting into their chosen course and the health of loved ones are the big worries for teenagers - Girls said all factors had a bigger negative impact on their anxiety than did boys. Some areas where girls were particularly more anxious than boys include: looks and appearance; world problems; mental health and being accepted. Encouragingly, alcohol/drugs, bullying, popularity, social media, peer pressure and not having friends, were much less significant.

Students spend around 2 hours on social media every day - On average students spend around 116 minutes on social media every day. Girls (120 minutes) spend more time on social media than boys (104 minutes). Around 1 in 4 boys and girls use it for 1-2 hours a day and 1 in 5, 2-3 hours. Almost twice as many girls (25%) use social media for more than 3 hours a day than do boys (14%).

Students recognise the negatives of social media but also highlight important benefits - Students were clear that social media neither made them feel more confident about how interesting their lives were or the way they look. But they also agreed that social media was the best way to keep in touch with friends and across big issues such as world politics and the environment, and also provided an opportunity for them to be heard.

Most students have, or aspire to have, a part time job - Just over 4 in 10 students overall said they had a part-time job, and a further 4 in 10 said they didn't but want one. Among students who currently have a part time job, almost 6 in 10 work in the fast food, retail or café/restaurant industry.

A large number would love to start their own business while still at school - 4 in 10 said they would love to start a business if they knew how to.

And, they're also reasonably confident in their ability to be successful, although boys are more confident than girls - On average, students scored their ability to be successful 6.1 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely confident). Boys (6.7) were however more confident in their ability to be successful than girls (5.9).

If they were to start a business, most would choose not for profit; an online store; social media influencer/podcaster/blogger; babysitter/childcare; photographer; or tutor - For boys, the most popular choices were online store; photographer; web designer; tech support and computer device set-up and repair; and social media manager. For girls however, the most popular choices were not for profit, social media influencer, podcaster or blogger, babysitting and childcare, tutoring, clothing or jewellery designer or seller and market stall.

An even greater number aspire to own a business post school - Around 1 in 2 students said when they leave school they would like to own their own business (11%) or eventually own their own business, but start working for someone else first (39%). Less than 1 in 3 (31%) said they wanted to work for only someone else.

But first, most plan to go to university - Almost 7 in 10 students said they wanted to go to university when they finished high school and noticeably more girls (73%) than boys (62%). Around 3 in 10 (33%) want to travel or take a gap year or work casually or part time (30%). Only 13% want to start working full time, but noticeably more boys (18%) than girls (11%) and a lot more boys (16%) want to start an apprenticeship than girls (3%). More boys (12%) also wanted to go to TAFE or college than girls (8%).

Students are 'moderately' confident about achieving their life goals once they leave school, but again boys are more confident than girls - On average, students self-scored 5.9 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely confident) with boys (6.5) are noticeably more confident than girls (5.7).

But both boys and girls worry about barriers to achieving their goals, particularly not doing well enough at school, not knowing what they want to do and not having enough money - When asked to nominate the biggest barriers they might face, almost 4 in 10 (38%) said not doing well enough at school, while just over 3 in 10 (34%) said not knowing what they wanted to do with their life or not having enough money (33%). Other important barriers include: not having enough experience (27%), too much competition (24%), mental health (18%) and not enough jobs (16%).

This generation has strong expectations in regards to gender equality both at home and at work - Students were particularly strident in the belief that 'raising children is a shared responsibility for women and men' (8.9 points out of 10 where 10 is agree completely, with girls at 9.1 and boys also at a strong 8.2) and that 'men and women should always be paid the same for the same job' (8.8 points, with girls at 9.2 and boys 7.9).

And neither sex expects having children to have a negative impact on their careers - Overall this statement scored a lowly 3.1 (girls at 3.0 and boys 3.4).

They also have very clear expectations about the type of organisation they will work for - Students agreed relatively strongly that they wanted to work for an organisation or company that has 'a positive impact on the world' (7.2), with girls (7.7) higher than boys (6.2), and that 'doing meaningful work that helps others is more important than a high salary' (6.4) but girls (6.8) again much higher than boys (5.4).

In terms of career goals, passion for what they do is number one - Around 2 in 3 students (66%) want to be passionate about their work. Having a good work life balance was also important for 1 in 2 (54%). Fewer than 1 in 10 (7%) are seeking fame or recognition.

And, working outside of Australia is an attractive option for many, particularly the United States - Almost 5 in 10 (47%) said they would be willing to live outside Australia in order to find a job or to advance their career, while almost 4 in 10 (38%) said maybe they would. Only 7% said they wouldn't leave Australia. The majority who would be willing to move overseas said they would most like to work in the United States (34%), while 1 in 4 said Europe or the United Kingdom. Only 1% of students said they wanted to work in China.

Encouragingly, when asked to self-assess their abilities across a range of factors there was little perceived difference between boys and girls in key areas such as numeracy, literacy, leadership, speaking up and business - Boys and girls scored themselves as competent as each other in all these areas.

But, some gender perceptions remain, particularly around areas such as technology, interpersonal skills, and sport - Girls (7.2 points) said they were much better than boys (6.5 points) with people, while boys (7.1 points) believe they are much better at technology than do girls (5.8 points). Boys said they were also better at sport (6.7 points) than girls (5.9 points).

Students are most optimistic about their future life and job prospects - When asked how optimistic they were across a range of issues students said they were most optimistic about their future life overall, scoring 6.4 out of a possible 10, followed by future work prospects (6.1) and having a better life than their parents (5.6).

Of some concern however, students are least optimistic about the overall direction Australia is heading - This scored only 4.9 points.

Also, teenagers don't believe their voice is heard outside of their family, particularly by Government - When asked how strongly they agreed their voice was heard, on average students scored most highly (5.3 out of 10) within their family, although agreement among boys (5.9) was somewhat higher than for girls (5.1). They were far less optimistic about being heard globally (3.8), and by their domestic government (3.2).

When asked to think of words that best describes their generation students highlighted words such as hard working, determined, motivated, ambitious, tech savvy, innovative, creative, passionate, socially aware, connected, accepting, open minded, and opinionated. But they also speak of being self-obsessed, absorbed, depressed, sad, stressed and troubled.

Students believe the biggest challenges facing societies around the world today are war, terrorism and political tension and cost of living - Terrorism and political tensions was viewed as a bigger challenge by more girls than boys, but cost of living was seen as a bigger challenge by a lot more boys. The next biggest issues overall were climate change and destruction of nature, discrimination against race, gender and sexual orientation and housing affordability.

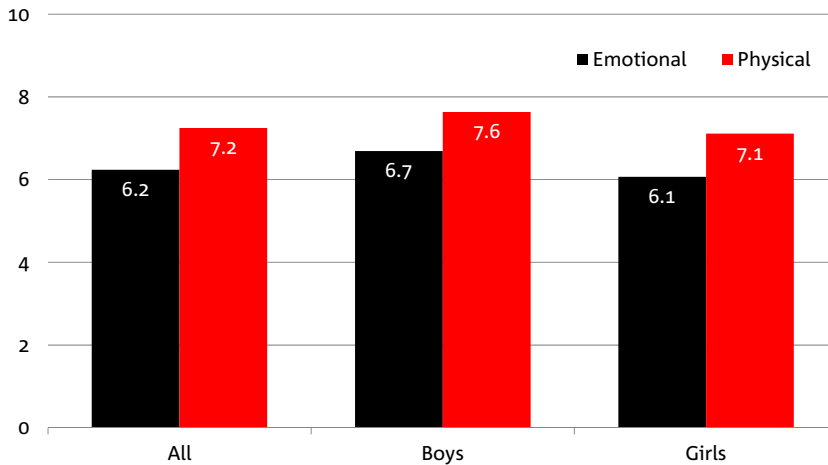
When we asked about the one thing students would do to make Australia better if they were Prime Minister for a day, the range of responses was overwhelming - They include: a more racially & gender diverse Parliament; more programs and incentives for students to create their own businesses; a new department for the protection of minorities and discriminated groups; fixed terms for Prime Ministers to avoid political instability; better training for mental health specialists in how to assist LGBTQIA+ individuals; stopping live animal exports; better protection of our ecosystems & habitats; strengthening our defence capabilities & border protection; universal Wi-Fi access; greater investment in public transport; stronger ties with other countries to increase global connectivity; better education programs about life "after school"; free tertiary education; lowering of the voting age to 16; a temporary ban on buying a house you're not going to live in; greater acknowledgement of indigenous rights; better care of the homeless; tougher action on climate change/emissions; more incentives for businesses to switch to renewable energy; better enforcement of anti-hate and equal pay laws; and a reduction in council rates.

MAIN REPORT

PART 1: STUDENT WELLBEING

HOW STUDENTS RATE THEIR HEALTH TODAY

(0 = extremely poor; 10 = excellent)



Independent secondary school students from years 10-12 were asked to self-assess aspects of their own wellbeing.

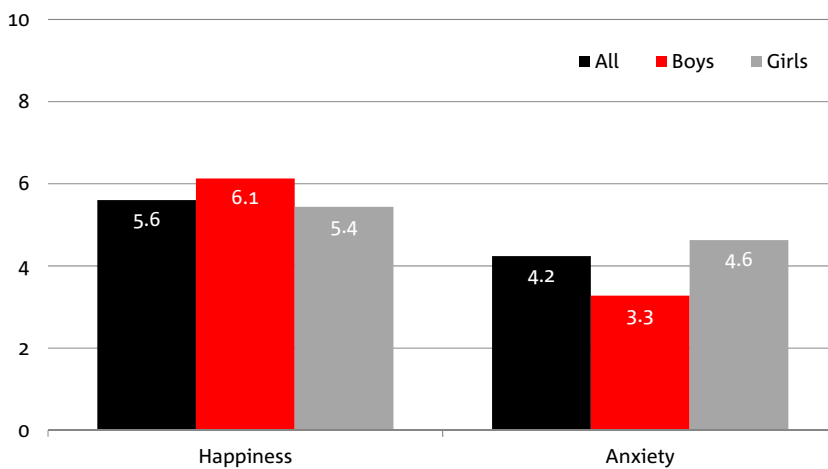
In terms of their health, students on average scored their physical health 7.2 points out of 10 (where 10 is excellent), but rated their emotional health somewhat lower (6.2 points).

Boys said they enjoyed higher levels of physical health (7.6 points) than did girls (7.1 points).

Boys (6.7 points) also rated their emotional health higher than girls (6.1 points).

HOW STUDENTS RATE HAPPINESS & ANXIETY

(0 = not at all; 10 = completely)



When they were asked how happy they had been over the past week, on average students said they were 'moderately' happy, scoring 5.6 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely).

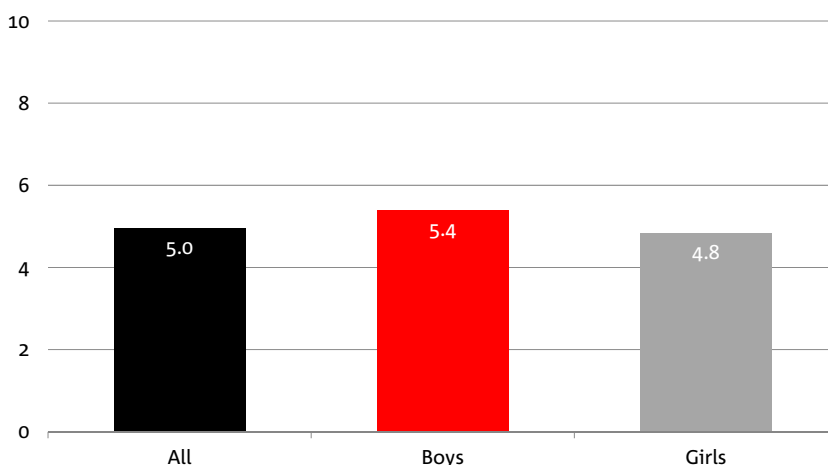
Boys (6.1 points) were however noticeably happier than girls (5.4 points.)

When asked how anxious or worried they were, students on average said they were only 'somewhat' anxious, scoring on average 4.2 points.

Girls (4.6 points) were however noticeably more anxious than boys (3.3 points), although their anxiety levels were still quite low.

HOW STUDENTS ARE HANDLING THEIR ANXIETY

(0 = not coping at all; 10 = coping very well)



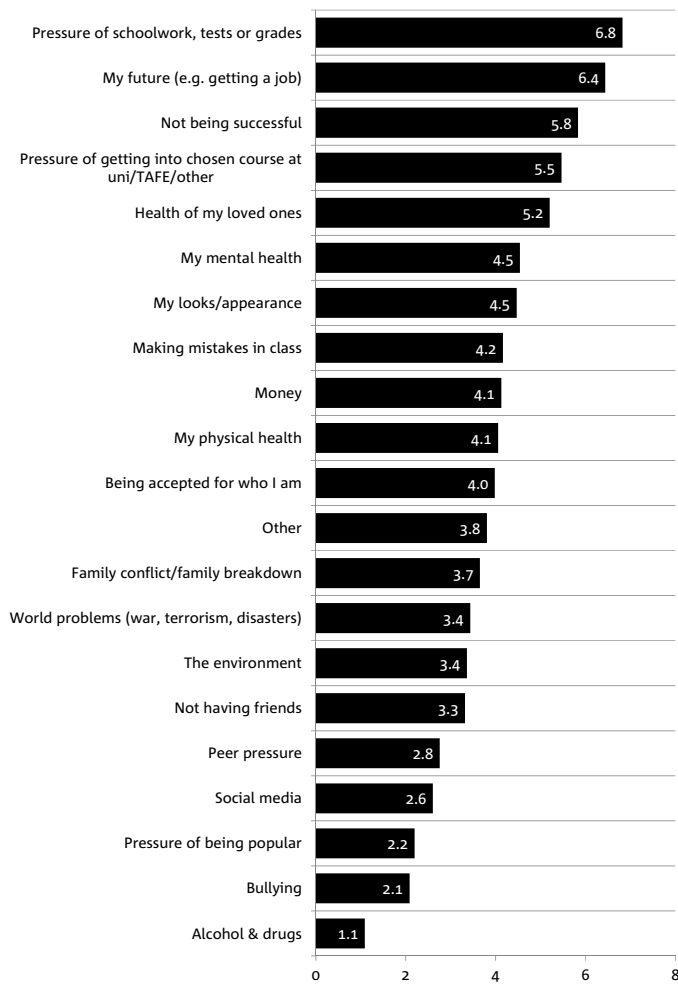
Students believe they are handling their anxieties or worries only moderately well.

On average, they scored 5.0 points out of 10 (where 10 is coping very well).

Boys (5.4 points) said they were coping with their anxiety better than girls (4.8 points).

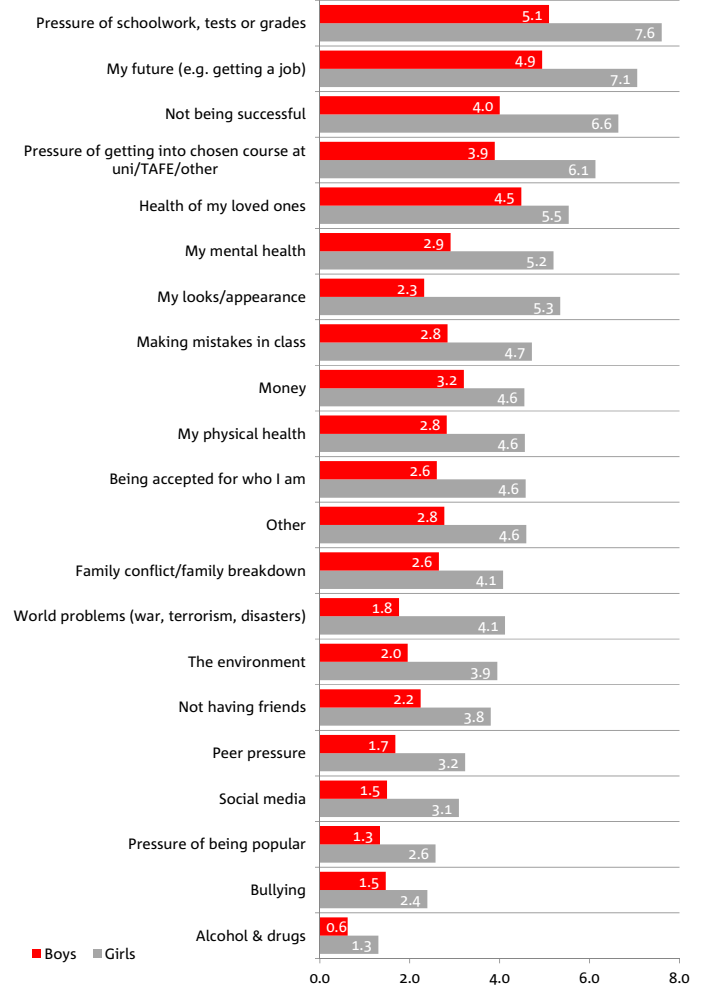
CAUSES OF ANXIETY

(0 = not at all; 10 = strong negative impact)



CAUSES OF ANXIETY

(0 = not at all; 10 = strong negative impact)



Students told us they had relatively low levels of anxiety. But when they are anxious what are the key drivers and how big an impact do they have? In this report, we asked students to tell us what caused them to be most anxious or worried.

On average, the thing that had the strongest negative impact was the pressure of schoolwork, tests or grades. Students on average scored this 6.8 points out of 10 (where 10 is strong negative impact). This was also identified as the biggest factor by both boys than girls, although the impact was far greater for girls (7.6 points) than boys (5.1 points).

The next biggest worry overall was their future (e.g. getting a job) where they scored 6.4 points). Again this had a bigger negative impact on anxiety for girls (7.1 points) than boys (4.9 points).

Other factors that had a relatively big negative impact included not being successful (5.8 points), the pressure of getting into their chosen course at university, TAFE or other institution (5.5 points) and the health of loved ones (5.2 points). Their impact was however greater for girls than boys.

In fact, girls said all factors had a bigger negative impact on their anxiety than did boys, particularly when it came to their looks and appearance (5.3 points vs. 2.3 points), world problems such as war, terrorism, disasters etc. (4.1 points vs. 1.8 points), their mental health (5.2 points vs. 2.9 points) and being accepted for who I am (4.6 points vs. 2.6 points).

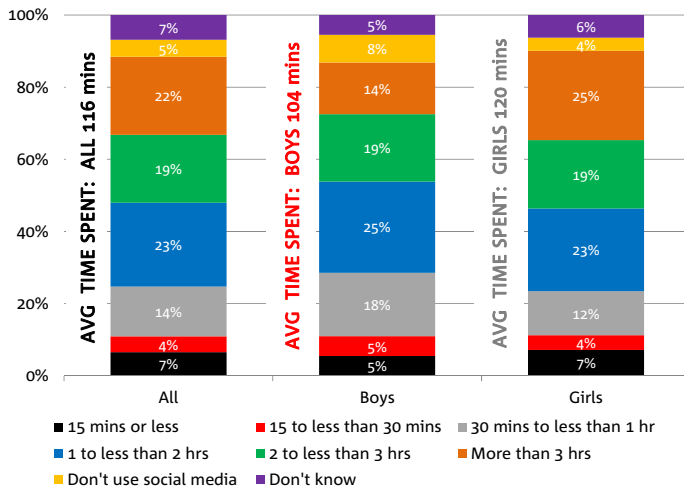
It was however particularly encouraging that the factors that had the smallest negative impact on students' anxiety were alcohol and drugs (1.1 points), bullying (2.1 points), pressure of being popular (2.2 points), social media (2.6 points), peer pressure (2.8 points) and not having friends (3.3 points).

Both boys and girls said that these factors had only a very modest negative impact on their anxiety, although their impact was somewhat bigger for girls.

PART 2: SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is everywhere and its influence is far-reaching and deep. For students, its impact can be both positive (e.g. improved communication, fun, learning, etc.) and negative (less socialising, inappropriate or unfiltered content, over-reliance on social media sites for research etc.). In this section, we ask students how much time they spend on social media, their attitudes towards social media and what they would change about it if they could.

AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA EACH DAY



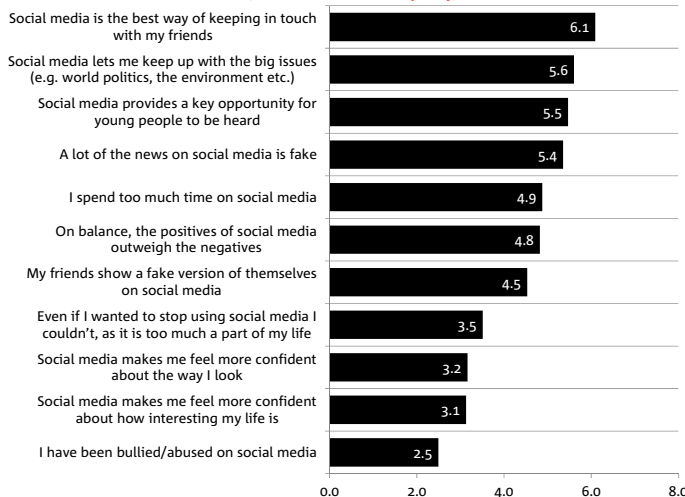
On average, students spend around 116 minutes (or nearly 2 hours) on social media every day. Girls (120 minutes) spend more time on social media than boys (104 minutes).

Around 1 in 10 students (both and girls) are on social media for less than 30 minutes a day. Around 18% of boys use social media for 30-60 minutes each day, compared to just 12% of girls. Around 1 in 4 boys (25%) and girls (23%) use it for 1-2 hours a day and 1 in 5 (19%) 2-3 hours.

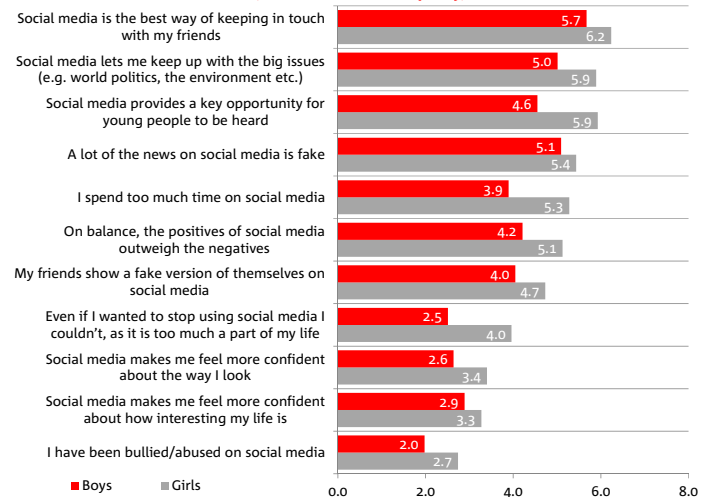
Almost twice as many girls (25%) use social media for more than 3 hours a day than do boys (14%).

But twice as many boys (8%) as girls (4%) don't use it all.

EXTENT STUDENTS AGREE WITH FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA (0 = not at all; 10 = completely)



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Concerns have been raised about the amount of time young people spend on social media today, but students have some compelling reasons why they might be using it so much.

In fact, when asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with a number of statements about social media, they agreed most that 'social media is the best way of keeping in touch with friends', scoring 6.1 points out of 10. They also agreed more strongly that 'social media lets me keep up with the big issues such as world politics, the environment etc.' (5.6 points) and 'social media provides an opportunity for young people to be heard' (5.5 points).

Students also seem to have a relatively good handle on the negatives. They next agreed most with 'a lot of the news on social media is fake' (5.4 points), and also scored lowest for 'I have been bullied or abused on social media' (2.5 points), 'social media makes me feel more confident about how interesting my life is' (3.1 points) and 'social media makes me feel more confident about the way I look' (3.2 points). Students also agreed only moderately that 'even if I wanted to stop using social media I couldn't as it's too much a part of my life' (3.5 points).

IF I HAD THE POWER TO CONTROL ALL SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR A DAY, WHAT ONE CHANGE WOULD I MAKE?

STUDENTS SAID...

"I would not allow naked photos or in underwear at any age (swimmers are an exception)."

"Take teenagers suicide comments more seriously."

"Raise more awareness about important issues like climate change, gun ownership, animal cruelty, human rights and hardships in other countries not spoken about like Palestine."

"Block or shut down all the people who make racist, homophobic, sexist, overall inhumane and disgusting comments."

"I would take away sexualised, vulgar language and imagery. Freedom of expression does not have to be so degrading and negative for the individual, nor does it have to transform our society to think like this."

"Change how public accounts can be and how easily accessible it is for anyone to get anything from it."

"Chronological time order on Instagram."

"For one day I would allow everyone to have the ability to stop all notifications etc. so they can have a social media free day."

"For Snapchat, I would change that when you are sending streaks you can actually go back and look at them even if you don't save them."

"The only possible change I can see is to improve guidelines about what is and isn't considered appropriate and try to strike down accounts that abuse their power or influence as quickly as possible."

"I would change it so that only followers can comment on posts, for instance YouTube. That way, haters cannot leave as many comments unless they are subscribed, in which case it is supporting the YouTuber in a way of subscriber counts. It wouldn't rid the internet of negativity because face it, negativity is everywhere not just social media, but it would at least have some gain for the creator."

"I would delete every person's account so that every person could start fresh."

"I would get rid of a 'like' number."

"I would get rid of photo editing on photo dominated platforms to provide a truer resemblance of who people are. I think changing people's perception of body image from an early age has negative impacts."

"I would make it more social as I'm usually unable to start a conversation with friends I haven't seen for a long time because I feel it may be awkward."

"I would put a timer on social media, like only 3 hours per day. After 3 hours you can't get into the app."

"I would want more accountability for companies like Facebook and Twitter so that things like Cambridge Analytica don't happen."

"People can see how much money someone (e.g. celebrities) is making off their posts."

"I would shut social media down for a day so people learn how dumb some of the stuff they worry about is (uploading a photo every day, sending streaks on Snapchat, watching videos on YouTube that are never going to help them in life)."

"The age at which people must be to sign up and begin using social media apps and/or even to be able to have access to technological devices. Children of such a young, impressionable age have the ability to access social media platforms which can have an impact to their life."

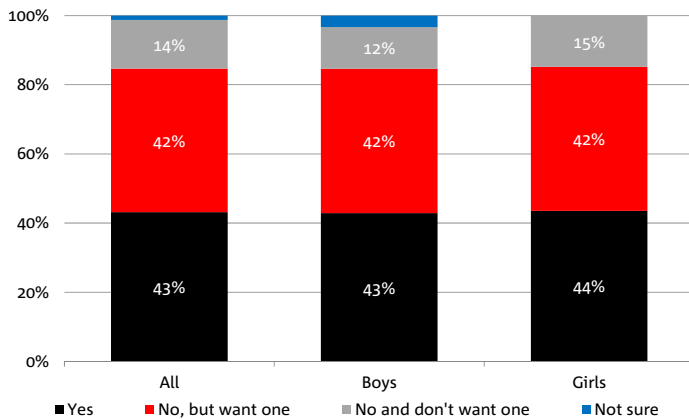
"When someone complains about bullying, harassment or anything, I would actually do something about it. I would also get rid of any hate-related page whether they are a student-run school bullying page or pages where racists, homophobic, misogynistic, etc. comments and posts are allowed."

"If I had the power to change social media for a day I would remove all the ads and spam posts that pop up when on it."

PART 3: WORK & ENTREPRENUERSHIP

In Part 3 of this report, we take a closer look at work and entrepreneurship among students. We explore whether students are currently working, where they're working and want to work in the future, their attitudes towards owning their own business, the type of business they would like to own while they were still in school, whether they feel they are preparing and being adequately prepared by their school to help them achieve their goals when they leave school, what they want to do when they finish high school, the challenges they may face in achieving their goals when they leave high school, their career goals and what they think they're good at.

CURRENTLY HAVE A PART TIME JOB



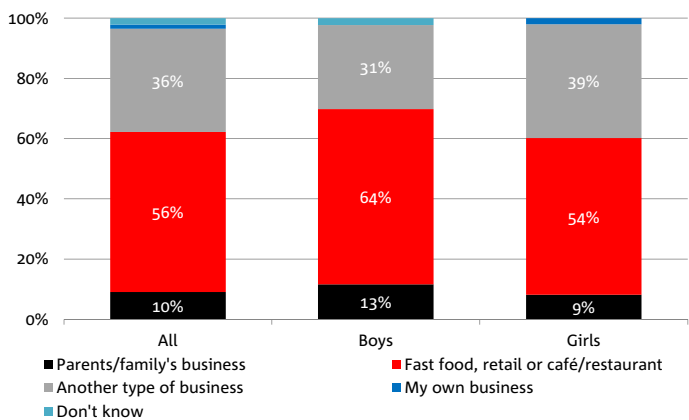
Students typically have a very positive attitude towards work. In fact, most students - over 8 in 10 - said they currently work or don't work but would like to work.

More specifically, Just over 4 in 10 (or 43%) students overall said they had a part time job, and another 4 in 10 (42%) didn't but said they want one.

Only 14% of students said they didn't work and didn't want to work.

There was very little difference between work status and attitudes between boys and girls.

WHERE STUDENTS CURRENTLY WORK



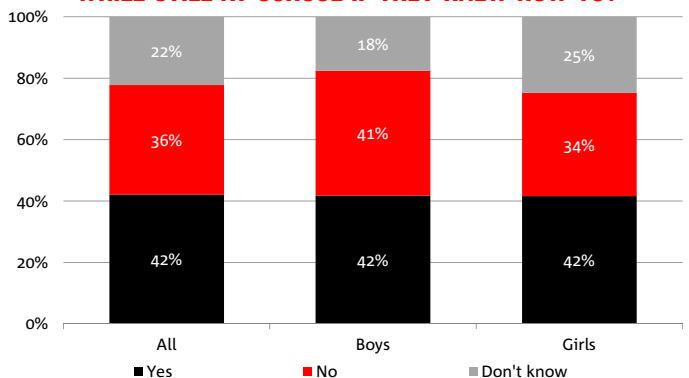
Among students who currently have a part time job, most 56% or almost 6 in 10, work in the fast food, retail or café/restaurant industry. However, more boys (64%) worked in these industries than girls (54%).

Around 1 in 10 (10%) students said they worked in their parents or family business, although slightly more boys (13%) did than girls (9%).

Around 36% of all working students worked in another type of business, but this ranged 31% for boys to 39% for girls.

Around 2% of girls said they had their own business. No boys did.

WOULD STUDENTS START THEIR OWN BUSINESS WHILE STILL AT SCHOOL IF THEY KNEW HOW TO?



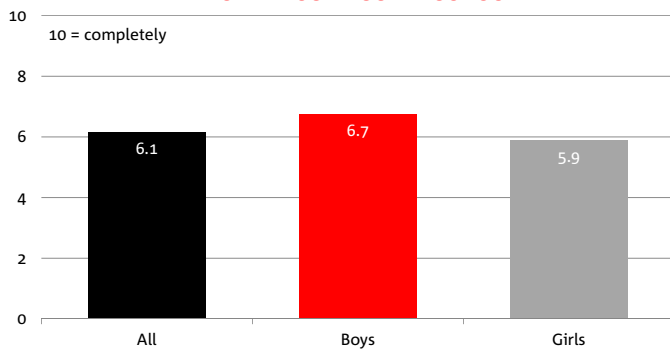
Students who didn't have their own business were asked whether they would start a business while they were still in school if they knew how to.

Their entrepreneurial spirit is clearly alive. While only 2% of girls currently say they have their own business many more want to. In fact, around 4 in 10 (42%) boys and girls said they would love to start a business if they knew how to.

Around 36% overall said they didn't want to start a business - and more boys (41%) than girls (34%).

A large number were however also unsure - around 18% of boys and 25% of girls.

HOW CONFIDENT ARE STUDENTS IN THEIR ABILITY TO BE SUCCESSFUL IF THEY STARTED THEIR OWN BUSINESS AT SCHOOL?

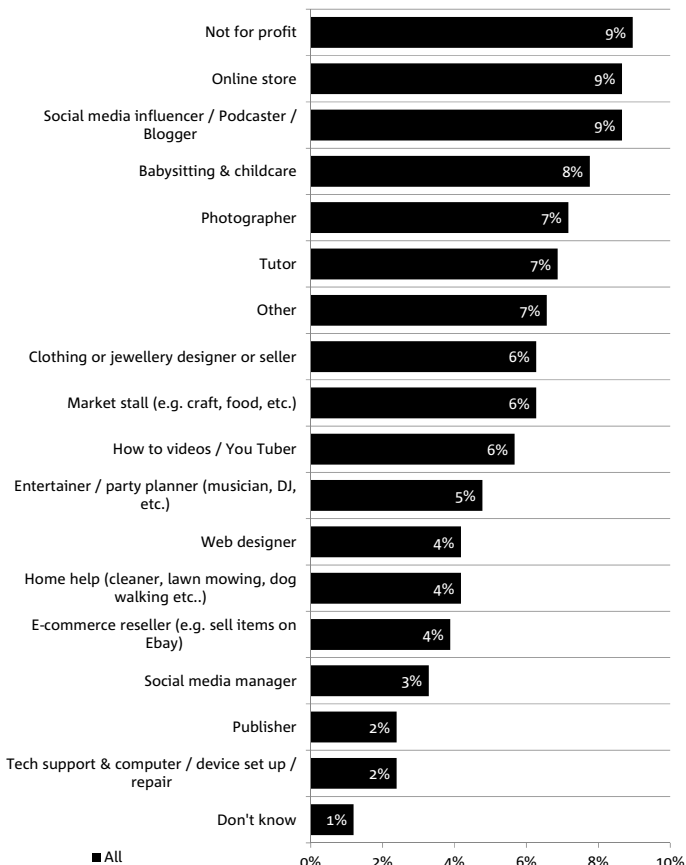


Those students who said they would start a business if they knew how to are also quite confident in their ability to be successful.

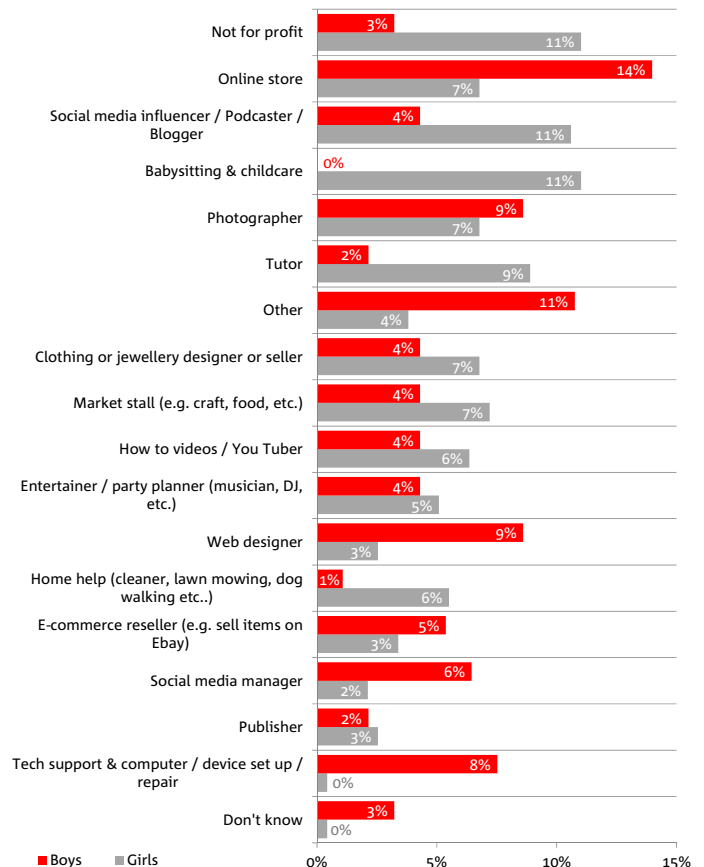
On average, they scored their ability to be successful 6.1 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely confident).

Boys (6.7 points) however were somewhat more confident in their ability to be successful than girls (5.9 points).

TYPE OF BUSINESS STUDENTS WOULD LIKE TO OWN WHILE STILL AT SCHOOL



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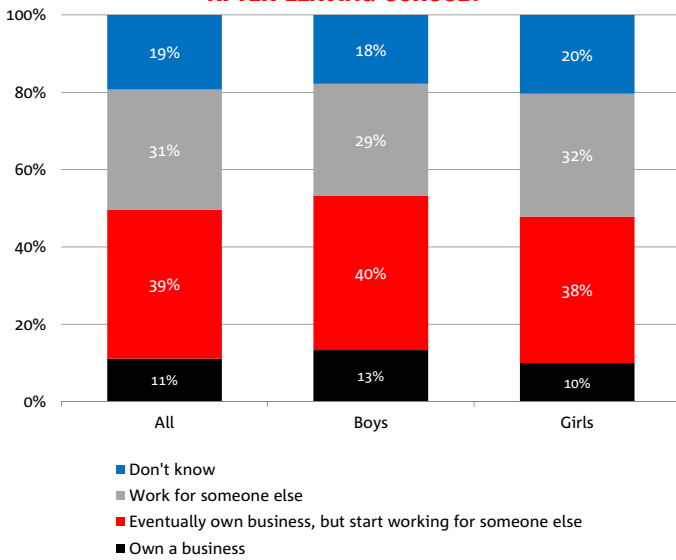
Students who wanted to own a business while still at school were also asked to tell us what type of business they thought they would like. Their responses varied.

The most popular choices overall were not for profit (9%), online store (9%) and social media influencer, podcaster or blogger (9%). This was followed by babysitting and childcare (8%), photographer (7%) and tutor (7%).

But responses were quite different by gender. For boys, the most popular choices were online store (14%), photographer (9%), web designer (9%), tech support and computer device set-up and repair (8%) and social media manager (6%).

For girls however, the most popular choices were not for profit (11%), social media influencer, podcaster or blogger (11%) and babysitting and childcare (11%). Other popular choices for girls included tutoring (9%), clothing or jewellery designer or seller (7%) and market stall (7%).

OWN A BUSINESS OR WORK FOR SOMEONE ELSE AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL?



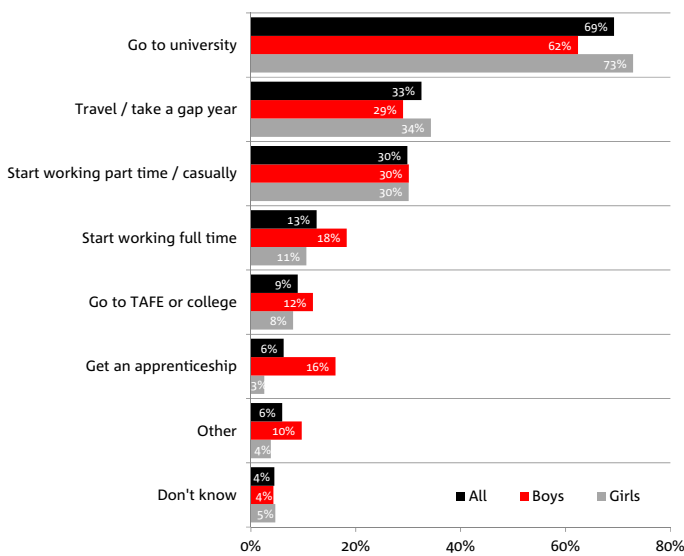
Looking further ahead, around 1 in 2 or 50% of students indicated when they leave school would like to own their own business (11%) or eventually own their own business, but start working for someone else first (39%).

Slightly more boys (13% and 40%) however said they wanted to follow these paths than did girls (10% and 38%).

Only 31% of students overall said they wanted to work for someone else, but slightly more girls (32%) than boys (29%).

Around 2 in 10 students were unsure about how they wanted to work.

WHAT STUDENTS WANT TO DO WHEN THEY FINISH HIGH SCHOOL



Almost 7 in 10 (69%) students overall said they wanted to go to university when they finished high school, but more girls (73%) wanted to go than boys (62%).

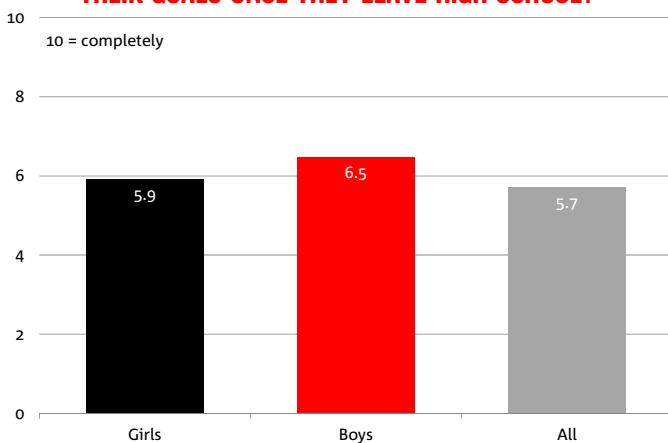
Around 33% wanted to travel or take a gap year, but more girls (34%) wanted to do so than boys (29%).

Three in 10 (30%) girls and boys wanted to start working casually or part time.

Only 13% wanted to start working full time, but noticeably more boys (18%) wanted to do so than girls (11%).

A lot more boys (16%) indicated that they wanted to start and apprenticeship than girls (3%). More boys (12%) also wanted to go to TAFE or college than girls (8%).

HOW CONFIDENT ARE STUDENTS IN ACHIEVING THEIR GOALS ONCE THEY LEAVE HIGH SCHOOL?

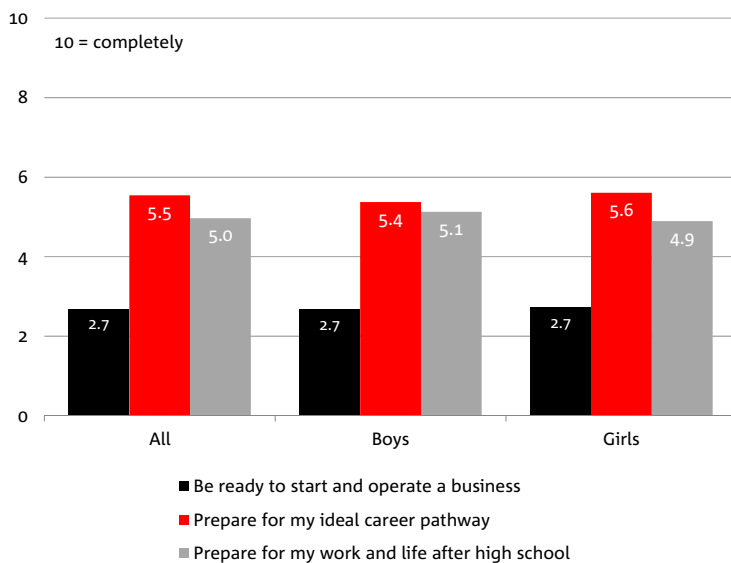


Overall, students are 'moderately' confident about achieving their goals once they leave high school.

On average, they self-scored 5.9 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely confident).

However, boys (6.5 points) are noticeably more confident about achieving their goals once they leave high school than are girls (5.7 points).

EXTENT SCHOOL IS HELPING YOU PREPARE TO...



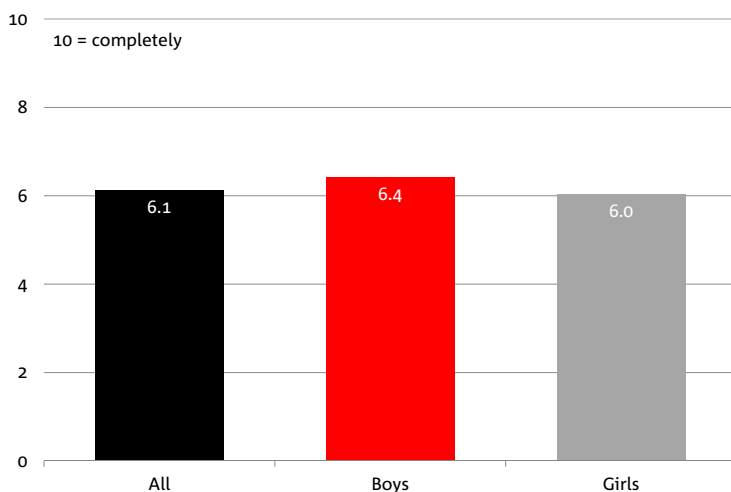
Students were also asked to assess whether they thought their school was helping them to become ready to start and operate a business if they wanted one, to prepare for their ideal pathway (e.g. work experience, career advice, personality and aptitude testing, subject selection etc.) and to prepare them for work and life after high school (e.g. relevant skills, resilience etc.).

Students scored their schools lowest for preparing them for starting and operating a business - 2.7 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely) - boys and girls shared a similar view.

They were much more positive when it came to preparing them for their ideal career pathways. On average, they score their schools 5.5 points, with girls (5.6 points) slightly more positive than boys (5.4 points).

Students rated their schools a little lower for preparing them for work and life after high school (5.0 points), but boys (5.1 points) were slightly more positive than girls (4.9 points).

HOW CONFIDENT ARE STUDENTS THEY WILL MAKE RIGHT DECISIONS AT HIGH SCHOOL TO ACHIEVE THEIR DESIRED CAREER PATH?



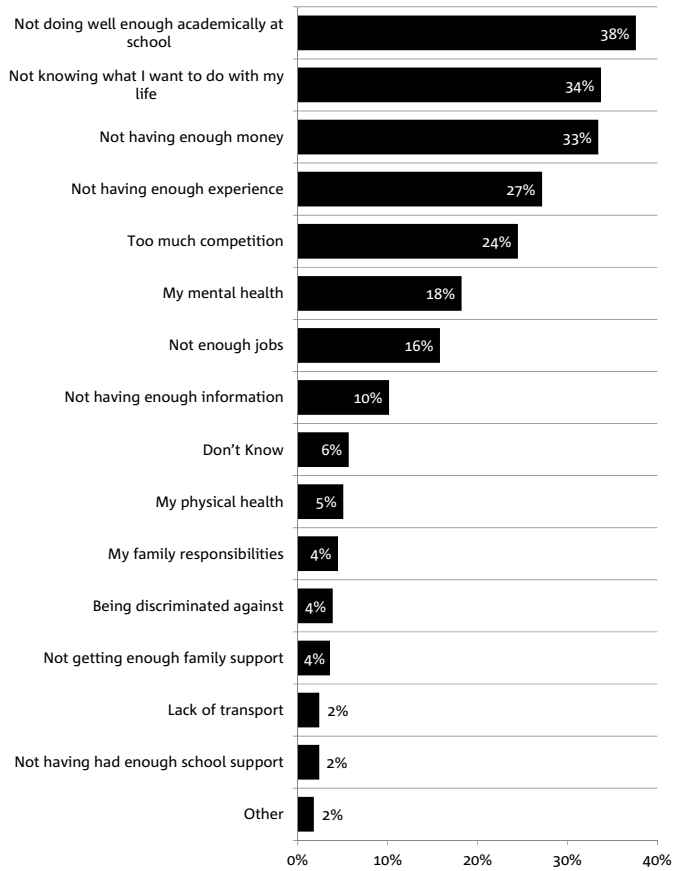
Students were somewhat more confident in their own ability to make the right choices while at high school to achieve their ideal career path (e.g. choosing the right subjects and pathways).

On average, they self-scored 6.1 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely confident).

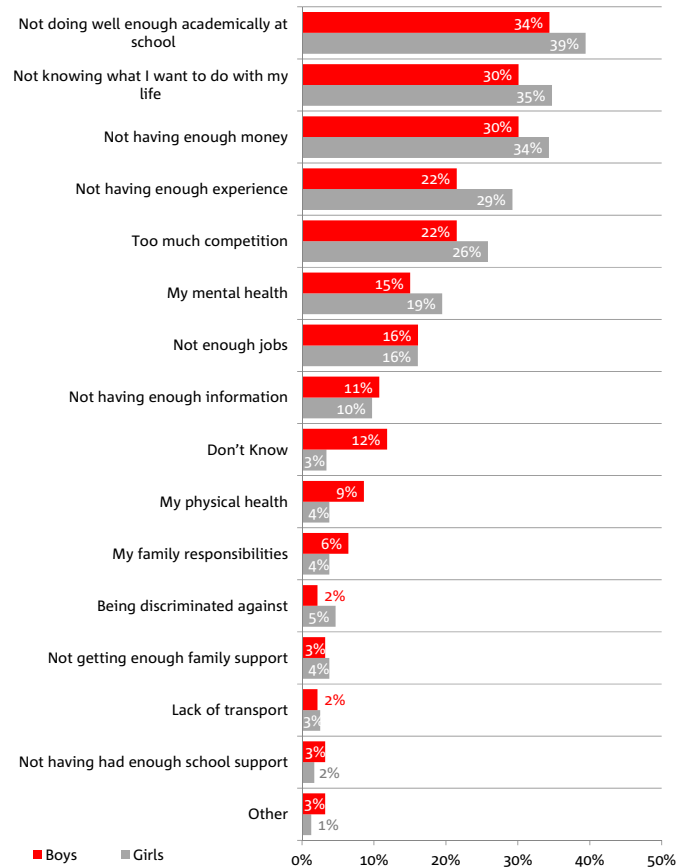
Boys (6.4 points) were however somewhat more confident than girls (6.0 points).



BIGGEST BARRIERS IN ACHIEVING GOALS AFTER LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL



BIGGEST BARRIERS IN ACHIEVING GOALS AFTER LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL



Students may face barriers and obstacles which may hinder them from achieving their goals once they leave high school.

When they were asked to nominate the biggest barriers they might face, most (38%) said not doing well enough at school was the biggest hurdle. The next biggest barriers according to just over 3 in 10 students were not knowing what they wanted to do with their life (34%) and not having enough money (33%).

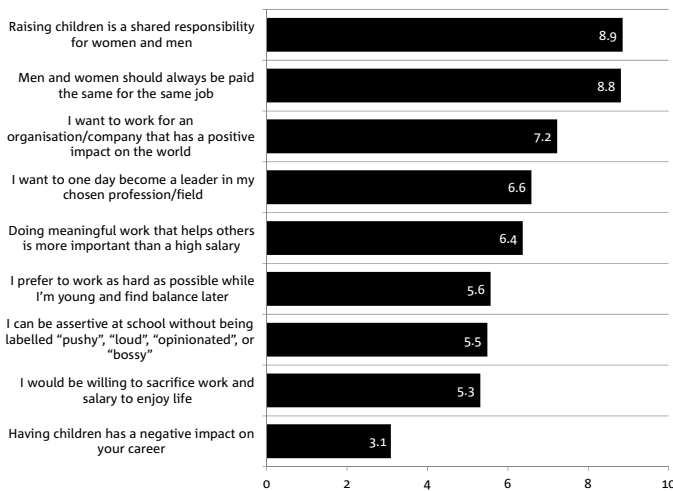
Other important barriers included not having enough experience (27%), too much competition (24%), mental health (18%) and not enough jobs (16%).

Areas where girls and boys differed the most included not having enough experience (29% for girls vs. 22% for boys), not knowing what they wanted to do with their life (35% for girls vs. 30% for boys), not doing well enough academically (39% for girls vs. 34% for boys) and physical health (9% for boys vs. 5% for girls).



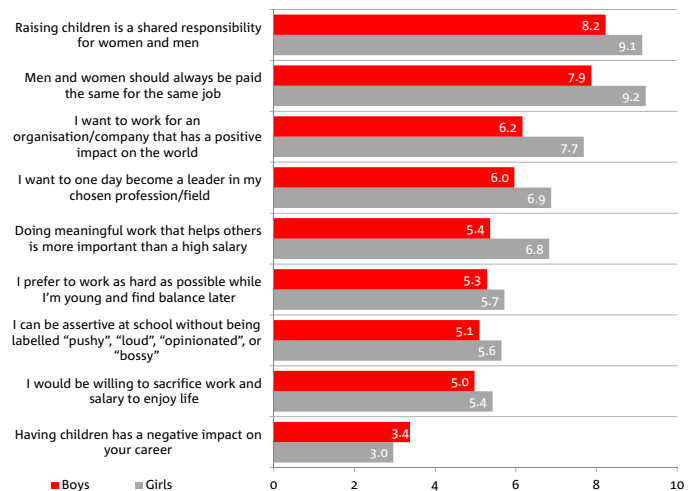
EXTENT STUDENTS AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

(0 = not at all; 10 = completely)



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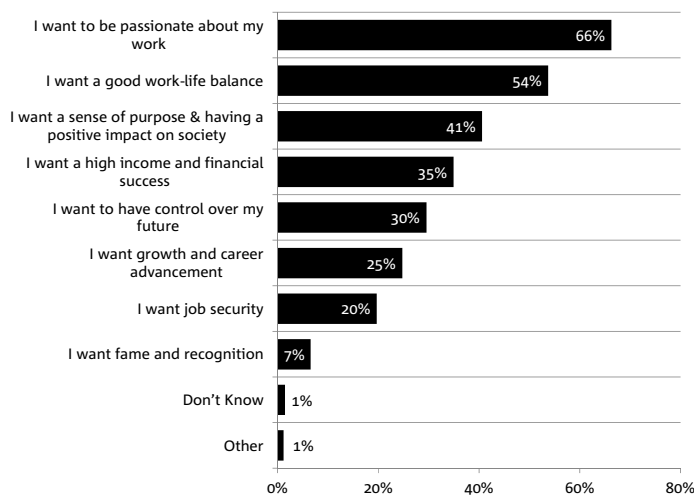
In order to better understand the aspirations and attitudes of students towards work, we asked them whether they agreed with a number of statements.

The two statements that students agreed most were 'raising children is a shared responsibility for women and men' (8.9 points out of 10 where 10 is agree completely) and 'men and women should always be paid the same for the same job' (8.8 points). Girls agreed more strongly than boys, particularly when it came to equal pay (9.2 points vs. 7.9 points).

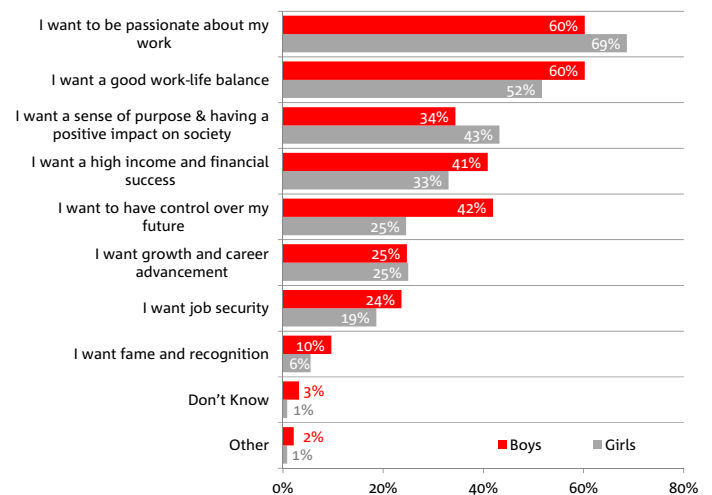
Other statements where students agreed relatively strongly included 'I want to work for an organisation or company that has a positive impact on the world' (7.2 points), 'I want to one day become a leader in my chosen profession or field' (6.4 points) and 'doing meaningful work that helps others is more important than a high salary' (6.4 points).

Overall, girls agreed more strongly than boys for all statements, except for 'having children has a negative impact on your career', where boys (3.4 points) agreed more strongly than girls (3.0 points).

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES STUDENTS' CAREER GOALS



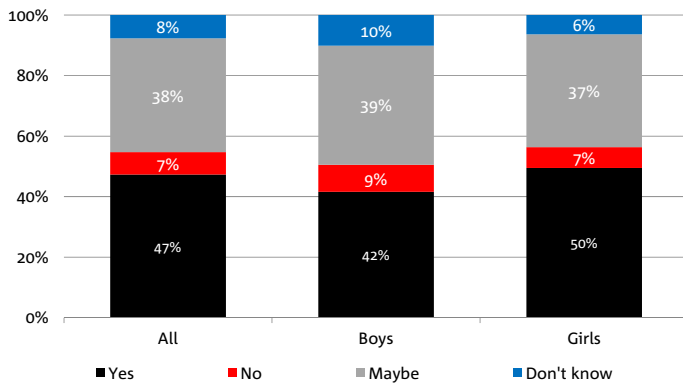
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES STUDENTS' CAREER GOALS



We asked students to tell us about their career goals. Most (2 in 3 or 66%) want to be passionate about their work, but girls (69%) more so than boys (60%).

Over 1 in 2 (54%) want a good work life balance, but this was a career goal for more boys (60%) than girls (52%). More girls (43%) valued a sense of purpose and having a positive impact on society than boys (34%), but more boys (41%) wanted a high income and financial success than did girls (33%). Significantly more boys (42%) also wanted to have control over their future than did girls (25%).

WILLING TO LIVE OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA IN ORDER TO FIND JOB OR ADVANCE CAREER?

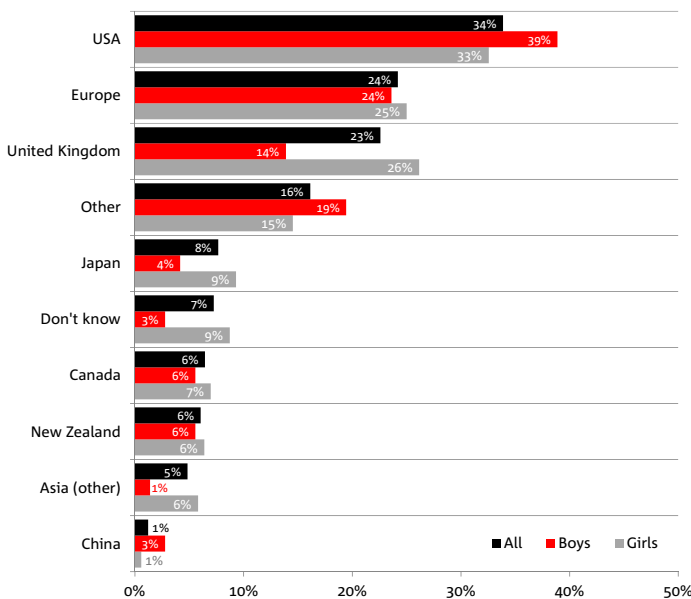


Almost 1 in 2 (47%) students also said they would be willing to live outside Australia in order to find a job or to advance their career.

Almost 4 in 10 (38%) said maybe they would. Only 7% said they wouldn't leave Australia.

More girls (50%) said they were prepared to work offshore than boys (42%), but there was more uncertainty among boys (10%) than girls (6%).

WHERE STUDENTS WOULD MOST LIKE TO WORK



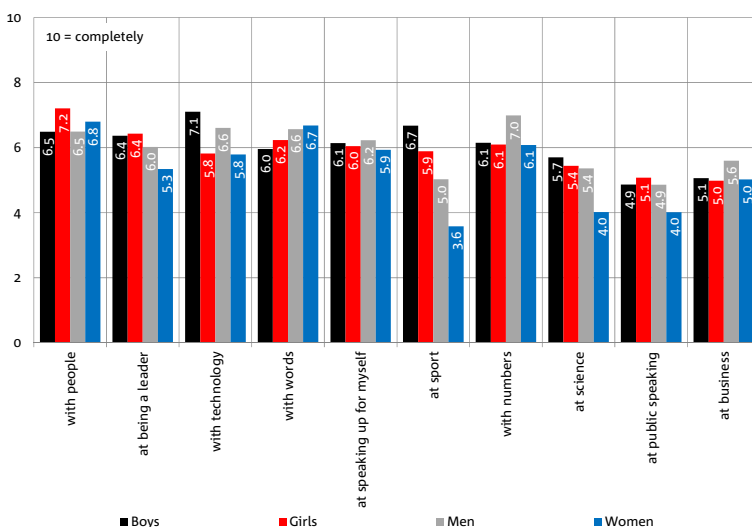
The majority of students who said they would be willing to live outside of Australia in order to find a job or advance their career also said they would most like to work in the United States (34%). But more boys (39%) wanted to work in the US than girls (33%).

Around 1 in 4 students - both boys and girls - wanted to work in Europe. Around 23% wanted to work in the United Kingdom, although this was the preferred destination for significantly more girls (26%) than boys (14%).

Boys (19%) were somewhat more willing to work in 'Other' countries than girls (15%), but more girls wanted to work in Japan (9%) and other Asian countries (6%) than did boys (4% and 1% respectively).

Only 1% of students overall said they wanted to work in China.

EXTENT STATEMENTS APPLY TO STUDENTS & ADULTS



Finally, we asked students to tell us what they thought they were good at, and compared this to the responses from NAB's Wellbeing studies for men and women.

Girls (7.2 points) said they were much better than boys (6.5 points) with people, and this gap is wider than in adulthood (6.8 points for women vs. 6.5 points for men).

Boys (7.1 points) however said they were much better at technology than girls (5.8 points) with the gap bigger than that between men and women. Boys said they were also better at sport (6.7 points) than girls (5.9 points), but less so than in adulthood (5.0 points for men vs. 3.6 points for women).

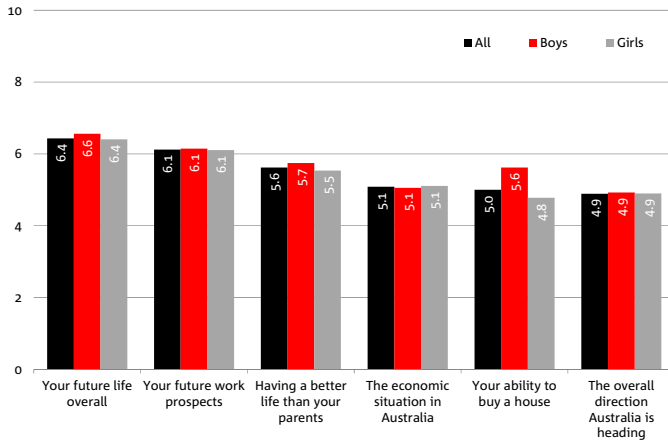
Boys and girls said they were basically equally as good as each other in all other areas.

Key differences emerge when comparing students to adults. In particular, girls have closed the gap with boys for being good at being a leader when compared to men and women. The gap has also closed at being good with numbers, at science, public speaking and business - areas where women lag well behind men in adulthood.

PART 4: FUTURE AUSTRALIA

In this section, we ask students about life in Australia. In particular, how optimistic they are, do they think they have a voice in society, and what challenges facing society today they are most concerned about. Finally, we ask them if they were Prime Minister for a day, what's the one thing they would do to make Australia better.

HOW OPTIMISTIC ARE STUDENTS ABOUT... (0 = not at all; 10 = completely)



Students said they were most optimistic about their future life overall, scoring 6.4 points out of 10 (where 10 is completely optimistic). Girls (6.6 points) were slightly more optimistic than boys (6.4 points).

Both boys and girls were next most optimistic about their future work prospects (6.1 points).

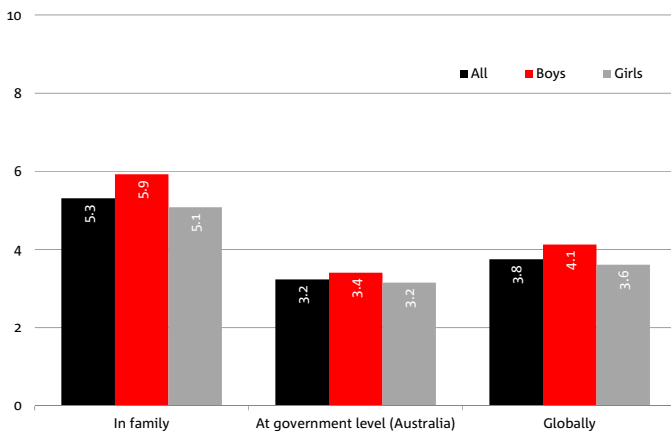
Students on average were reasonably optimistic about having a better life than their parents (5.6 points), and boys (5.7 points) slightly more so than girls (5.5 points).

Boys and girls were less confident about the economic situation in Australia (5.1 points)

Boys (5.6 points) were however much more optimistic than girls (4.8 points) about their ability to buy a house.

All students were least optimistic about the overall direction Australia is heading (4.9 points).

IN AUSTRALIA, YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS ARE CONSIDERED BEFORE IMPORTANT DECISIONS ARE TAKEN (0 = strongly disagree; 10 = strongly agree)



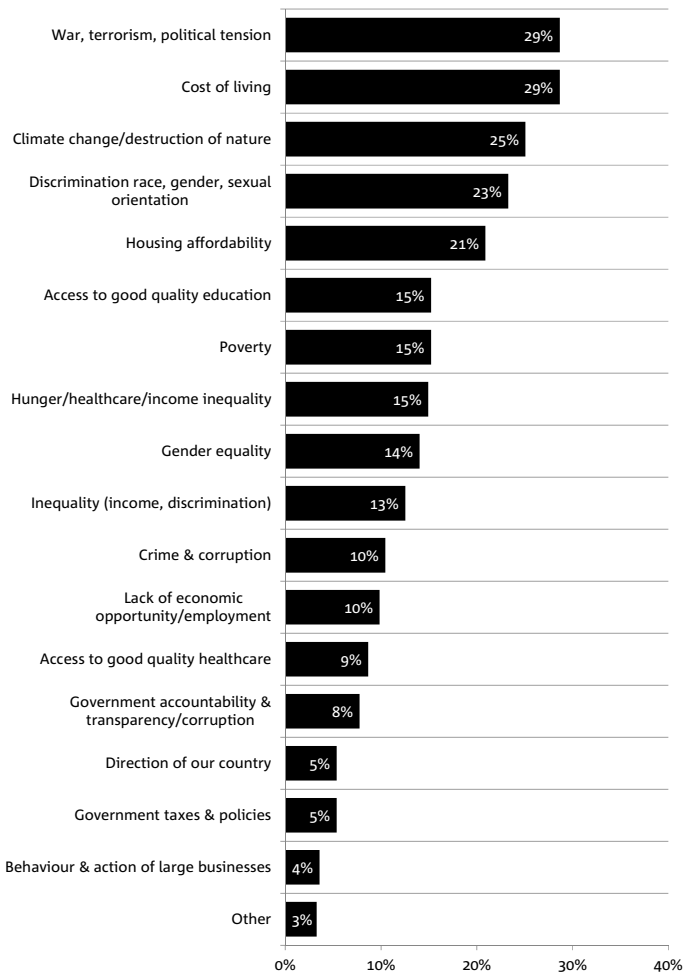
Outside of having some voice in their family, students don't believe that young people's views are considered before important decisions are taken.

When asked how strongly they agreed this was in fact the case, on average students scored 5.3 points out of 10 (where 10 is strongly agree) within their family. Agreement among boys (5.9 points) was however somewhat higher than for girls (5.1 points).

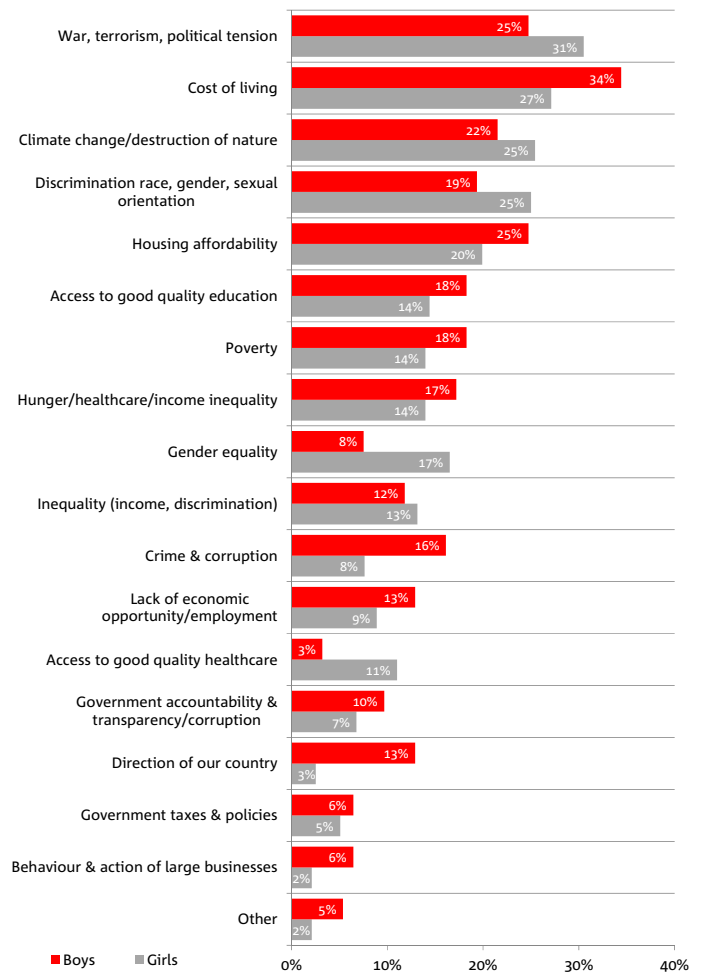
They were far less optimistic about being heard globally, scoring just 3.8 points, and by their domestic government, scoring an even lower 3.2 points overall.



SOCIETAL ISSUES STUDENTS ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT



SOCIETAL ISSUES STUDENTS ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT



We asked students to tell us what which challenges facing societies around the world today (including Australia) they were most concerned about. Overall, the most number of students highlighted war, terrorism and political tension (29%) and cost of living (29%) as the biggest challenges.

Interestingly, terrorism and political tensions was seen as a bigger challenge by more girls (31%) than boys (25%), but cost of living was seen as a bigger challenge by a lot more boys (34%) than girls (27%).

The next biggest issues overall were climate change and destruction of nature (25%), discrimination against race, gender and sexual orientation (23%) and housing affordability (21%). Students were least worried about behaviour and action of large businesses (4%), government taxes and polices (5%) and the direction of our country (5%).

Other areas where boys and girls differed most in their opinions were in regards to the direction of our country (boys 13% vs. girls 3%), crime and corruption (boys 16% vs. girls 8%), gender equality (17% girls vs. 8% boys), access to good quality healthcare (girls 11% vs. boys 3%) and discrimination (girls 25% vs. boys 19%).



IF I COULD BE PRIME MINISTER FOR A DAY, WHAT IS THE ONE THING I WOULD DO TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY BETTER?

STUDENTS SAID...

"Create programs and incentives to allow students to create a business at a discounted cost."

"Let Australian citizens be able to possess self-defence devices after having undergone rigorous training and instigate laws that do not protect offenders once they trespass on someone else's property."

"Alter laws and regulations around access to mental health specialists (for young children especially) and require all mental health specialists be trained in how to assist LGBTQIA+ individuals and other groups that tend to have poor mental health and higher suicide and self-harm statistics."

"Only allow the use of renewable energy and ban plastics and encourage more recycling, stop live animal export and any other form of animal cruelty, protect ecosystems and habitats."

"Improve and strengthen the military. Not the point where it's threatening, just so we're defended well."

"Better Wi-Fi and less crowded in transportation."

"Create stronger ties with other countries, especially well-off African countries to increase global connectivity."

"Educate students in Year 11-12 about what life after school is really like and how to find your passion - how to know what job to pursue after school."

"I make a rule that, once voted in, Prime Ministers must serve 1 term without risk of being voted out - similar to the American political system."

"I would make tertiary education free for all Australian citizens."

"Lower the voting age to 16 (for those who have a job)."

"Put a temporary ban on buying a house you're not living in. Create a 1-house policy, unless people who want to buy more than one can provide valid reasons why they need more than one."

"Stop allowing non-Australians to buy homes."

"Acknowledge indigenous rights and address the education and homelessness problems in our country."

"Create tougher policies that tackle climate change and emissions and create incentives for businesses that are willing to switch to renewable energy."

"Create a department for the protection of minorities and discriminated groups. Essentially it would be responsible for the informing/debunking myths and misconceptions and direct vulnerable people towards resources/organisations to assist them in issues. It would also be an avenue for change in laws and legislation towards minority/oppressed groups by having more specialised information and advice, as well as a network to find the opinions and suggestions of the specific group."

"Enforce anti-hate and equal pay laws".

"I would elect a more racially and gender equal parliament to represent our country. I would also stop all work done around the Great Barrier Reef and endeavour to solve problems in our own country before providing aid to foreign countries."

"Set up more support services to help aid homeless people. Place homeless people in government housing to get them off the street. Give them job opportunities and life skills for saving money. When they have full time jobs, they would pay back the government for their accommodation (this will take many years)."

"Distribute money to public schools instead of private schools."

"I would lower how much parents have to pay in rates to keep us under a roof and feed us."

"Change the marriage law in a way that Churches are able to have their own traditional marriages and all other marriages (same sex marriages) will be considered as something else such as a civil union."

"Improve border security and get rid of corruption."

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