

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Please read this information carefully. If you are happy to participate, please add your signature to the parent consent form and return the form to your school as soon as possible.

What is the Mission Australia Youth Survey?

Now in its 23rd year, the Mission Australia Youth Survey is Australia's largest annual survey of young people of its kind. With 19,500 respondents in 2023, the Youth Survey helps schools, community organisations, governments and policymakers gain an understanding of young people's values, concerns, challenges and ambitions.

Why am I being asked to take part and what are you asking me to do?

We are looking to hear from all young people in Australia between the ages of 15 and 19. The survey enquires about sociodemographic information; issues of national importance; engagement with school and post-school aspirations; mental health and wellbeing; sources of support and community connections; housing and financial situation; climate issues; as well as personal concern across a range of topics such as body image, bullying/emotional abuse, discrimination, and stress. Additional focus areas for 2024 enquire about social media use, loneliness, and opinions relating to alcohol and drugs.

Regardless of your background, ability, gender or where you live, we want to hear from you! Sharing your thoughts and experiences will help Mission Australia to develop reports that are widely used by governments, community organisations and policymakers across the country to develop programs that support young people. Data collected will be used to produce reports, publications and presentations. Data will also be retained for use in future reports. In reporting we only use national, state and/or postcode-level results. Your school may also request a report based on school-level data, which your school will use to develop programs that respond to the needs of you and your peers.

The online questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. You will be asked to complete the survey either during class or in your own time. Most of the questions require you to check a box to indicate your response (such as yes/no questions or scales that rate the response from 1 to 5). A small number of questions allow for free-text responses.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?

All information that you provide will be treated in the strictest of confidence. The survey is conducted through Alchemer, which is a survey tool based in the USA. Data provided through this survey is encrypted and transferred to Alchemer's server in the USA. By completing this survey, participants agree to

this transfer. All data will be stored securely on a password protected drive at Mission Australia, accessible only to the project research team. Your answers to the survey will be kept confidential. Your parents or teachers will not know what you write. You will not be identified in any reports resulting from the study.

However, Mission Australia has a duty of care to the young people who take part in the Youth Survey. If any of your answers to the open-text questions indicate you might be unsafe or at any risk of harm, we will alert your School Principal or Child Protection Authority, so they can help to make you safe. Additionally, if your responses indicate you might be experiencing symptoms of psychological distress, we will inform your School Principal so they can provide support.

Mission Australia's Youth Survey has obtained Human Research Ethics Committee approval from the University of Melbourne.¹ We anticipate few risks from your involvement in this study. There is no contact between researchers and participants or parents. We have been careful to make sure that the questions in the survey cause little distress. If you begin to feel anxious about any of the survey questions, you can skip that question. If the questions make you feel like you need someone to talk to, we recommend that you contact one of the following sources of support, in addition to your parent/caregiver or school counsellor:

- Kids Helpline [1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800) or go to kidshelp.com.au
- headspace [1800 650 890](tel:1800650890) or go to headspace.org.au
- Lifeline [13 11 14](tel:131114) or go to lifeline.org.au
- QLife [1800 184 527](tel:1800184527) or go to qlife.org.au
- Butterfly Foundation [1800 334 673](tel:1800334673) or go to butterfly.org.au

How do I agree to participate?

Participation is completely voluntary: it is up to you if you wish to take part in the survey or not. If you decide to take part and then change your mind, you are welcome to stop at any time and exit the survey before selecting 'finish'. The research team will not use any of your responses in our reports if you choose not to complete the survey; the data will be removed and destroyed to protect your information.

Where can I get more information?

You can find out more about the Mission Australia Youth Survey by going to our website:

missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey

You can also contact the Mission Australia Research & Insights Team by emailing youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au.

¹ University of Melbourne researchers involved in the Youth Survey are: Dr Kate Filia, Prof Eoin Killackey, Dr Caroline Gao

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Please read this information carefully. If you are happy for your child to participate, please sign and return the parent consent form to your child's school as soon as possible.

What is the Mission Australia Youth Survey?

Now in its 23rd year, the Mission Australia Youth Survey is Australia's largest annual survey of young people of its kind. With 19,500 respondents in 2023, the Youth Survey helps schools, community organisations, governments and policymakers gain an understanding of young people's values, concerns, challenges and ambitions.

Why is my child being asked to take part and what will they be asked to do?

The survey seeks to gather a range of insights into the experiences of young people aged 15 to 19 across Australia. The survey enquires about sociodemographic information; issues of national importance; engagement with school and post-school aspirations; mental health and wellbeing; sources of support and community connections; housing and financial situation; climate issues; as well as personal concern across a range of topics such as body image, bullying/emotional abuse, discrimination, and stress. Additional focus areas for 2024 enquire about social media use, loneliness, and opinions relating to alcohol and drugs.

Your child's participation in the Youth Survey supports Mission Australia's advocacy to governments, community organisations and policymakers to develop programs that support young people in need. Your child's school may also request a report based on school-level data. These reports may help your child's school develop programs that respond to the needs of your child and their peers.

Your child is invited to complete an online questionnaire. Your child will be asked to complete the questionnaire either in class or in their own time. The questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes. Most questions require young people to check a box to indicate their response. A small number of questions allow for free-text responses.

Will my child be identifiable in this study?

All information your child provides will be treated in the strictest of confidence. The survey is conducted through Alchemer, which is a survey tool based in the USA. Data provided through this survey is encrypted and transferred to Alchemer's server in the USA. By completing this survey, participants agree to this transfer. All data will be stored securely on a password protected drive at Mission Australia, accessible only to the project research team.

Data we collect will be used to produce reports, publications and presentations, this includes retaining data for future use. In public reporting we only use national, state and/or postcode-level results. Your child's answers to the survey

will be kept confidential and your child will not be identified in any publicly available reports resulting from the study.

However, Mission Australia has a duty of care to the young people taking part in the Youth Survey. **If any of your child's answers to the free-text questions indicate that they might be unsafe or at any risk of harm, abuse or neglect, we are obliged by the Department of Education in your State/Territory, or your local Catholic Diocese, to alert your child's school Principal, or Child Protection Authority, and share identifiable information so the school can re-identify the student and help to make them safe as necessary.** Additionally, if your child's responses indicate that they might be experiencing symptoms of psychological distress, we will inform your child's school Principal so they can provide your child support in accordance with the school's wellbeing policies.

Mission Australia's Youth Survey has gained Human Research Ethics Committee approval from the University of Melbourne.¹ We anticipate few risks from your child's involvement in this study. There is no contact between researchers and participants or parents. We have been careful to make sure that the questions in the survey cause little distress. We have built in information about sources of support (Kids Helpline, headspace and Butterfly Foundation) throughout the survey to make this information available for young people, should the questions cause anxiety. Your child is welcome to skip a question if they feel uncomfortable answering it.

How do my child and I agree to participate?

Participation is completely voluntary: it is up to you and your child whether to take part in the survey. The decision to take part or not will be respected. Your decision will not affect your family's relationship with your school. If your child starts the survey and then changes their mind, they are welcome to stop at any time and exit the survey before selecting 'finish'. The research team will not use any of your child's responses in our reports if they choose not to complete the survey; your child's data will be removed and destroyed to protect their information.

Where can I get more information?

You can find out more about the Youth Survey by going to our website: missionaustralia.com.au/youthsurvey.

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¹ University of Melbourne researchers involved in the Youth Survey: Dr Kate Folia, Prof Eoin Killackey, Dr Caroline Gao