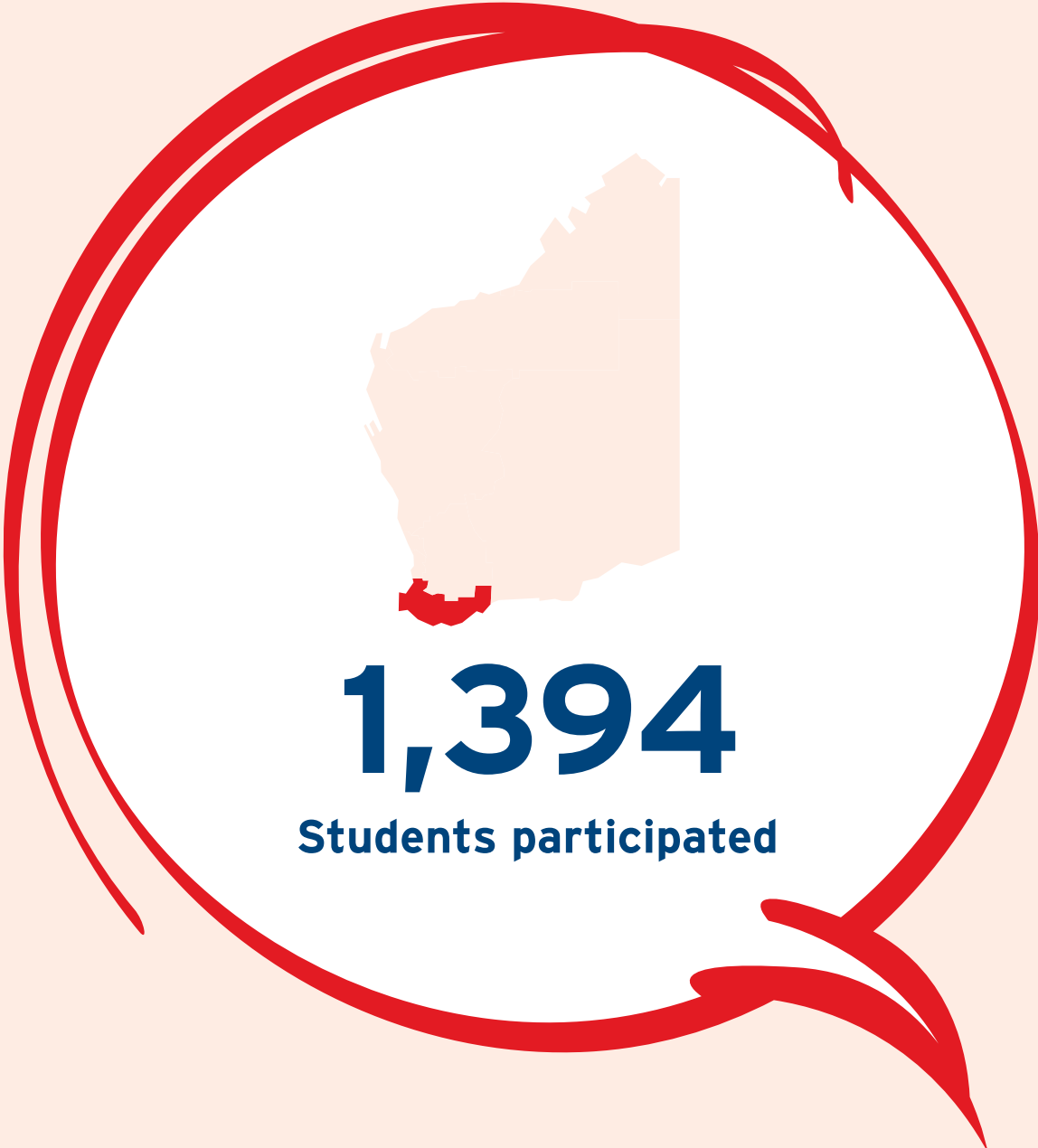


# South West



# South West key findings

**Two-thirds (67.8%)** of secondary students in the South West reported **they had done vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous week**. This is the highest proportion across all regions.



**Just over two-fifths (41.0%)** of Aboriginal students in the South West **rated their health as very good or excellent** which is a lower proportion than non-Aboriginal students (50.3%).

**A higher proportion of male** secondary students in the South West than those across the state **reported low life satisfaction** (0 to 4 out of 10) (19.3% vs 13.4%).



**Young people** in the South West are **more likely** than other students around the state **to go to a mental health service** like Headspace when they need help with mental health issues (53.0% vs 41.1%).

Year 9 to Year 12 students in the South West are **more likely to report having experiences with marijuana** compared to the rest of the state (36.4% vs 28.4%).

**Female secondary students** in the South West **are much less likely** than male students **to feel like they belong in their community** (53.4% vs 67.1%).

**Only, 15.4 per cent said they talk Aboriginal language 'some' or 'a lot'** (all of WA: 24.1%), while 64.4 per cent said they talk none (all of WA: 37.1%).

**More than one in ten (11.3%)** Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West **said it is not very important to attend school every day**. This is the highest proportion saying it is not very important across WA regions.



**A very high 29.7 per cent** of Aboriginal secondary students **do not know the highest level of education they want to achieve** (non-Aboriginal: 13.2%).



**Secondary school students** in the South West are **much less likely** than students across the state to be worried a lot or somewhat **that someone in their home or family will hurt somebody else** (12.8% vs 15.4%).



**Over four-fifths (82.9%)** of Aboriginal students **reported that their family gets along well or very well**, marginally more than non-Aboriginal students (76.6%).

**More than one-quarter (27.6%)** of secondary students said if they were having serious problems **there is not an adult they would feel okay talking to**, or they weren't sure.

**One in five (20.4%)** Aboriginal students **does not have enough money in their family for them to go on a school excursion or camp** (non-Aboriginal: 8.7%).

## Overview

A total of 1,394 students across Years 4 to 12 from five primary schools and six secondary schools in the South West took part in the Speaking Out Survey 2021.

Just under one-half (53.7%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students surveyed in the South West identified as girls, 42.6 per cent identified as boys and 3.7 per cent selected the option that they identify 'in another way'.

In total, 5.3 per cent of participants reported being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Of the students surveyed in the South West region, 98.4 per cent reported speaking English at home and 9.2 per cent reported (also) speaking other language(s) at home; 1.6 per cent reported they do not speak English at home.

The other languages spoken included Filipino/Tagalog, Italian, Spanish, French and Japanese.

Students in the South West enjoyed doing the survey and appreciated the opportunity to have their say:

*“Thanks for doing this for us kids we don't really Get stuff like this thank you.”*

*(female, 8 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“I thought that I felt safe and didn't need to be embarrassed to what I say about myself. I really liked it because I actually get to say what has happened to me as well.”*

*(student who selected 'in another way', 9 year-old, undisclosed Aboriginal status)*

*“I liked the survey because it was really fun and something to do.”*

*(male, 11 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“Thank you so much for making this survey, it makes me feel heard. I hope this will help lots of teenagers around me who are struggling.”*

*(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I enjoyed it, i found myself diving into what my true values and ambitions are a lot more than i normally would and it was a good form of self reflection.”*

*(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**▲▲ I think this survey is a really good idea and could be really powerful and important. I think these surveys should be more common and are the only true way to understand young people and let them have their say. ▼▼**

*(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“This is a very good idea and I hope my results are concise and helpful.”*

*(male, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Solid, surprisingly I would recommend.”*

*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

# Healthy and connected

▲▲ **My family, and circle of friends and relevant adults are all very good at what they do, especially when it comes to mental health... however removing the stigma surrounding having a simple conversation about mental health would be helpful to everyone no matter what circumstance they are in. ▼▼**

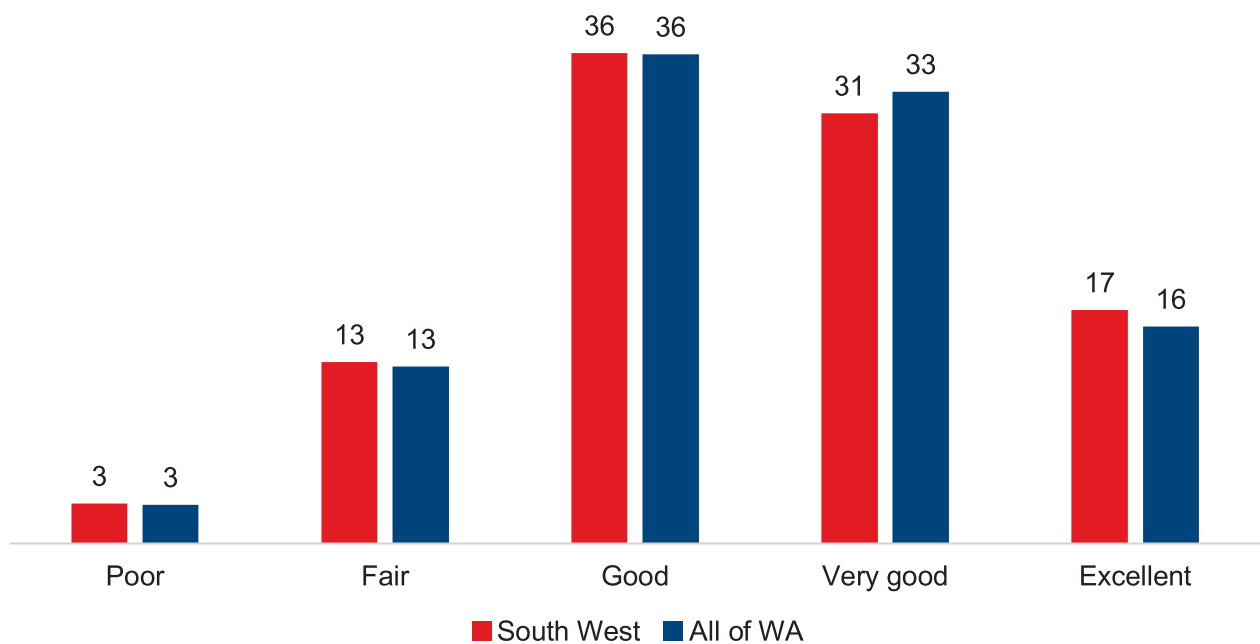
*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

## Physical health

Of the Year 4 to Year 12 students surveyed in the South West, just under one-half (48.3%) reported that their health is very good or excellent (Years 4–6: 50.4%; Years 7–12: 47.2%), while 16.1 per cent reported that their health is poor or fair (Years 4–6: 6.4%; Years 7–12: 21.1%).

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

**Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students reporting their general health ratings**



Over one-quarter (27.2%) of secondary students reported having a long-term health problem, while 13.1 per cent reported having a disability. These results are consistent with those across the state.

The most commonly reported disabilities and/or long-term health problems were asthma, anxiety and depression and visual impairments.

Over two-fifths (42.0%) of students reported they care very much about eating healthy food (Years 4–6: 51.9%; Years 7–12: 36.9%). More than one-half (55.8%) of secondary students reported eating fruit twice a day or more, while 60.8 per cent said they eat vegetables twice a day or more (all of WA: 52.2% and 53.7% respectively).

Over one-half (57.4%) of secondary students in the South West reported physical activity, sport or exercise is 'definitely' an important part of their life (all of WA: 53.0%).

Two-thirds (67.8%) of secondary students in the South West reported they had done vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous week. This is the highest proportion across all regions (all of WA: 61.9%). A higher proportion of female and male students in the South West than those across the state reported doing vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous week (male: 76.1% vs 72.0%; female: 61.4% vs 53.4%).

Of the students surveyed in the South West:

- 42.0% reported caring very much about how they look (Years 4–6: 32.2%; Years 7–12: 46.8%).
- 56.7 per cent reported they eat breakfast every day (Years 4–6: 74.3%; Years 7–12: 47.7%), while 18.6 per cent reported they hardly ever or never eat breakfast every day (Years 4–6: 5.7%; Years 7–12: 25.2%).
- 77.3 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students reported going to sleep on a school night before 9pm, while 49.0 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students reported going to sleep on a school night before 10pm.
- 68.5 per cent reported brushing their teeth twice or more the previous day (Years 4–6: 65.9%; Years 7–12: 69.8%) and 52.4 per cent reported having ever had a filling (Years 4–6: 42.3%; Years 7–12: 57.7%).

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

## Mental health

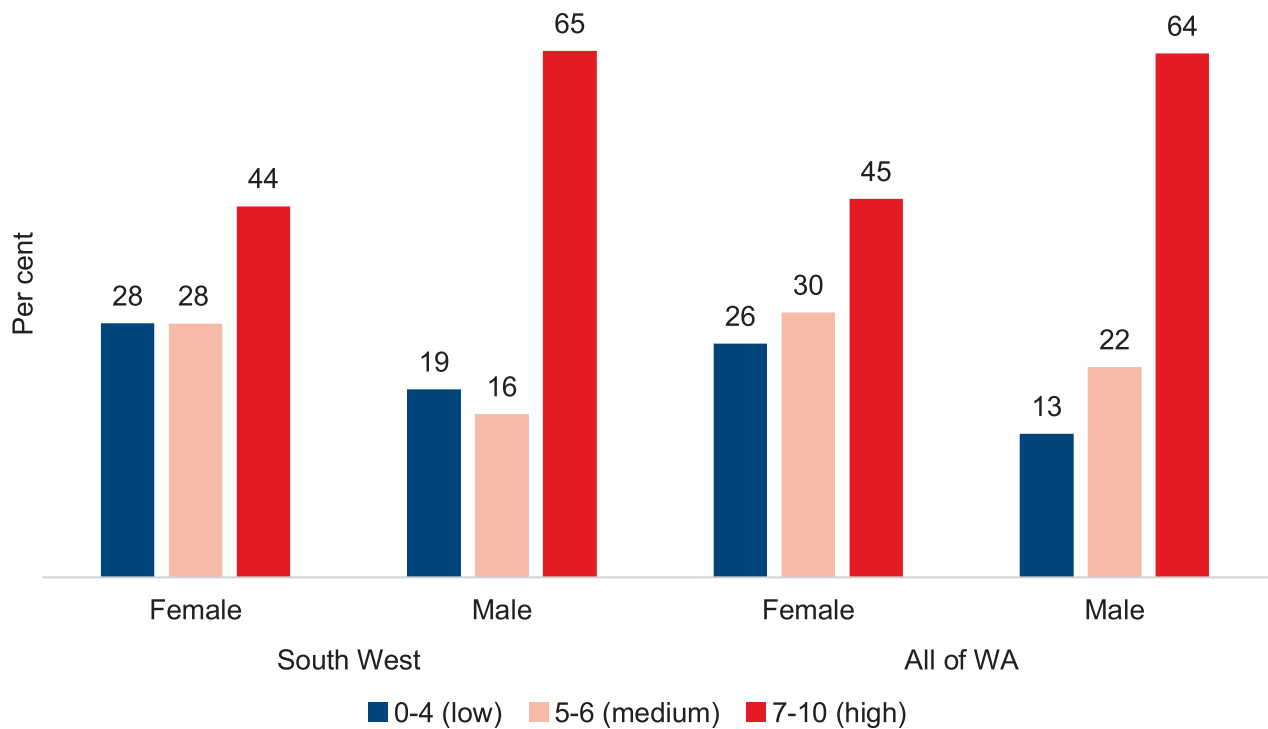
Of the students surveyed in the South West, 6.9 is the mean life satisfaction (on a scale from 0 to 10), (Years 4–6: 7.9; Years 7–12: 6.4). The mean life satisfaction across all of WA is 6.8.

Over three-fifths (61.3%) of students reported a high life satisfaction (7 to 10) (Years 4–6: 79.1%; Years 7–12: 52.0%), while 18.9 per cent reported a low life satisfaction (0 to 4) (Years 4–6: 6.2%; Years 7–12: 25.5%).

Overall reported life satisfaction in the South West is broadly consistent with the results for the rest of WA, across both primary and secondary school.

Similar to findings across WA, female secondary students in the South West are less likely than their male peers to rate their life satisfaction as high (43.9% vs 64.7%). At the same time, male secondary students in the South West are more likely than male students across the state to report low life satisfaction scores (19.3% vs 13.4%).

**Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students rating their life satisfaction on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is the worst possible life and 10 the best possible life**



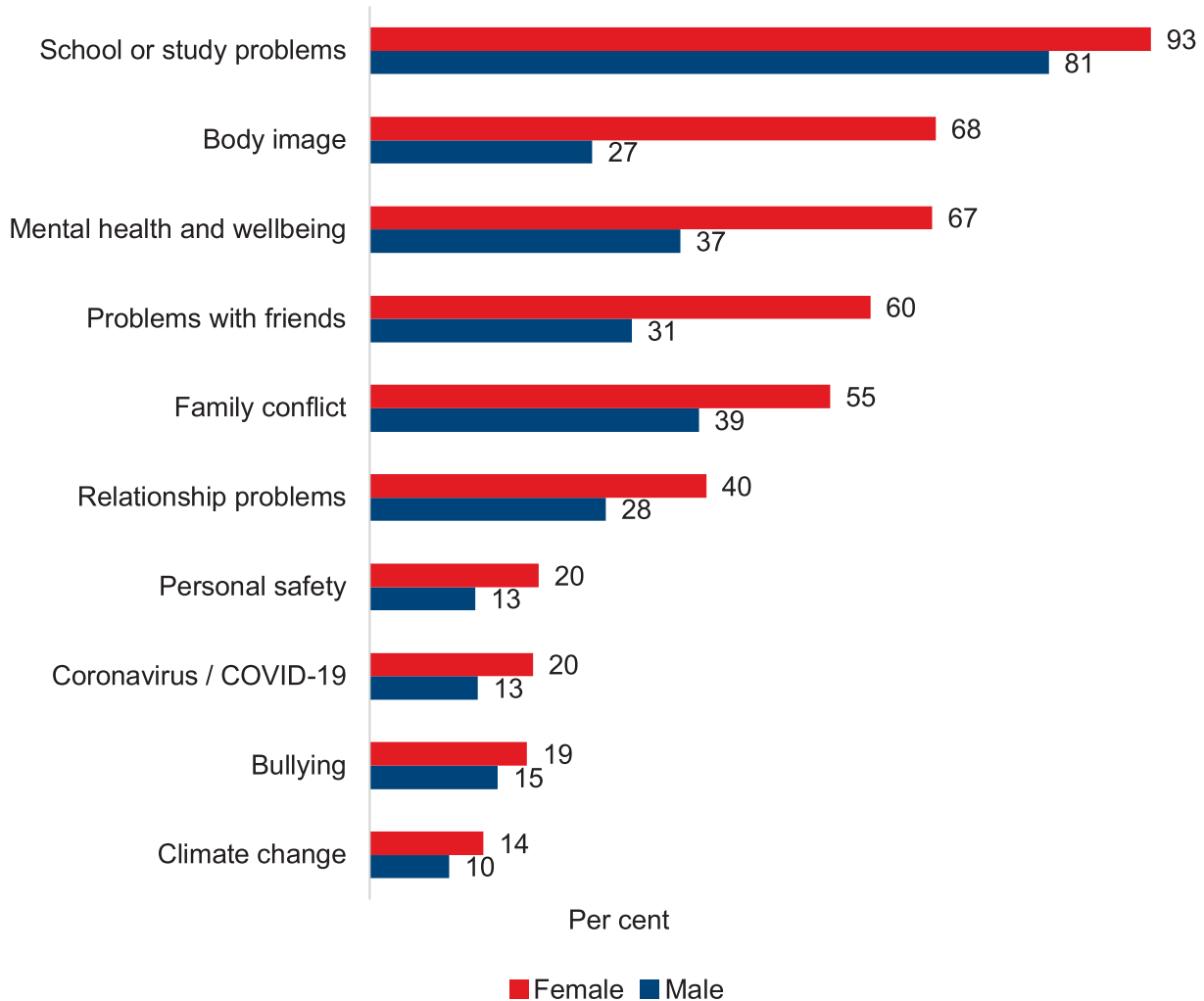
Of the students surveyed in the South West:

- 48.1 per cent agreed (Years 4–6: 45.9%; Years 7–12: 49.3%) and 27.1 per cent strongly agreed they are happy with themselves (Years 4–6: 46.5%; Years 7–12: 17.1%).
- 42.6 per cent agreed (Years 4–6: 38.4%; Years 7–12: 44.8%) and 29.5 per cent strongly agreed they feel good about themselves (Years 4–6: 52.2%; Years 7–12: 17.9%).
- 48.6 per cent of secondary students agreed and 20.4 per cent strongly agreed they can deal with things that happen in their life.
- In Years 9 to 12, 62.6 per cent reported they had felt sad, blue or depressed for two or more weeks in a row in the previous 12 months (all of WA: 59.2%).

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

Year 9 to Year 12 students were also asked about sources of stress in the previous 12 months. School and study problems (88.3%) were the most commonly reported source of stress, followed by mental health and wellbeing (55.5%), body image (51.3%), problems with friends (48.3%) and family conflict (48.3%). There are marked gender differences in the responses, with greater proportions of female students reporting being affected by stress across all sources.

**Proportion of Year 9 to Year 12 students reporting sources of stress in the last 12 months by gender**



The gender differences in the South West are consistent with those for the rest of WA.

**Access to support for physical and mental health**

Over two-thirds (67.3%) of secondary students in the South West said they know where to get support in their school for stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries, while 59.4 per cent said they know where to get support in their local area. Notably, the proportion knowing where to get help in the local area is higher than for the rest of the state (all of WA: 48.7%).

In line with the rest of the state, just over one-third (36.6%) reported they had received help for any problems with stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries in the previous 12 months (female: 42.6% and male: 28.7%).

One-quarter (26.5%) reported there had been a time in the previous 12 months when they had wanted or needed to see someone for their health but weren't able to. Three-fifths (62.5%) of these students reported not seeing someone for their health due to feeling embarrassment or shame, while 39.6 per cent reported they were unsure who to see or where to go.

The most commonly used sources of support for secondary students in the South West were a parent or someone who acts as a parent (81.7%), friends including boyfriend or girlfriend (72.1%), other family (60.8%), school psychologist, school chaplain or school nurse (54.1%), mental health service like Headspace (53.0%) and doctor or GP (51.8%).

Notably, young people in the South West are more likely than other students around the state to go to a mental health service like Headspace (53.0% vs 41.1%). They are also less likely to go to a teacher for assistance than students across the state (40.4% vs 47.8%).

Of these students, 69.0 per cent found a mental health service (e.g. Headspace) helpful, 69.8 per cent found a doctor helpful and 62.4 per cent found a school psychologist, chaplain or school nurse helpful.

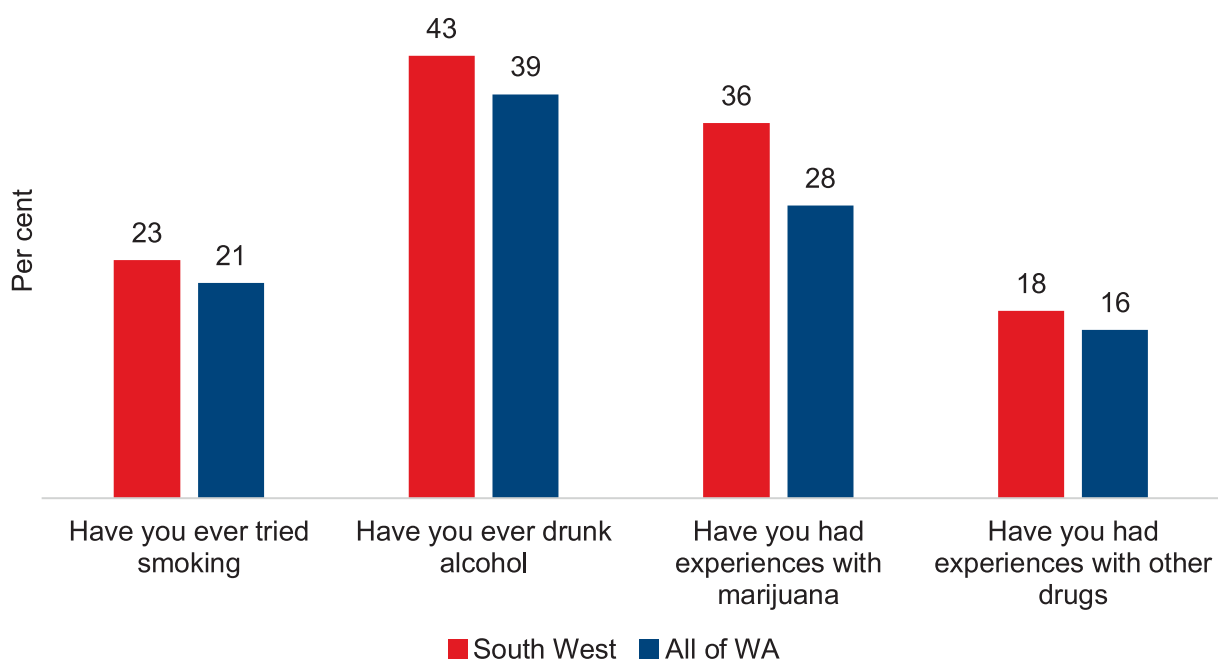
## Risk-taking and healthy behaviours

### Alcohol and other drugs

Just under one-quarter (23.1%) of Year 7 to Year 12 students in the South West have tried smoking, while 42.9 per cent have tried alcohol. These proportions are on par with the rest of WA (20.9% and 39.2% respectively).

Year 9 to Year 12 students in the South West are more likely to report having experiences with marijuana compared to the rest of the state (36.4% vs 28.4%), while they reported in the same proportions as WA students overall when it comes to other drugs (18.2% vs 16.3%).

**Proportion of young people in Years 7 to 12 who responded ‘yes’ to the question on whether they have tried smoking or drinking, or had experiences with marijuana or other drugs (Years 9 to 12 only)**



Note: The questions asked were: Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?; Have you ever drunk alcohol (more than just a few sips, like a full can of beer or a glass of wine)?; Have you ever had any experiences with marijuana?; Have you ever had any experiences with other drugs? Response options were: ‘No’, ‘Yes’ and ‘Prefer not to say’.



Around seven in ten Year 7 to Year 12 students in the South West reported having learnt 'some' or 'a lot' about alcohol (75.8%) or cigarettes/smoking at school (67.7%). Notably, compared to the rest of WA, students in the South West are more likely to report learning at least a little bit or more about marijuana at school (58.5% vs 50.0%) or other drugs (64.7% vs 55.0%).

Over two-thirds (68.6%) of students thought people their age should not use any substances including cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana or other drugs.

### **Sexual health**

One-half (49.4%) of secondary students said they had learnt nothing or only a little bit about sexual health and ways to support their sexual health at school, while more than one-half (58.4%) said they have learnt nothing or a little bit about pregnancy or contraception.

Just under one-half (46.6%) of students reported they feel they don't know enough about sexual health and pregnancy or they aren't sure, while 50.9 per cent reported this regarding the topic of pregnancy and contraception.

Two-fifths (44.8%) of secondary students in the South West said that if they needed help for something, they did not know or were not sure where to go to access services regarding their reproductive or sexual health (all of WA: 40.8%).

In Years 9 to 12, 60.1 per cent of female students and 33.8 per cent of male students reported they had ever been sent unwanted sexual material, such as pornographic pictures, videos or words.

### **Problematic behaviours and emotions related to being online**

Just over one-third (32.0%) of students in the South West said they feel bothered 'fairly often' or 'very often' when they cannot be on the internet (Years 4–6: 25.4%; Years 7–12: 34.7%), while 22.7 per cent said they feel bothered when they cannot play electronic games (Years 4–6: 28.5%; Years 7–12: 20.3%).

When it comes to mobile phones, 29.4 per cent of male and 46.1 per cent of female secondary students said they feel bothered 'fairly often' or 'very often' when they cannot use their mobile phone. Further, 7.4 per cent of male and 14.1 per cent of female secondary students said they go without eating or sleeping either 'fairly often' or 'very often' because of their mobile phone.

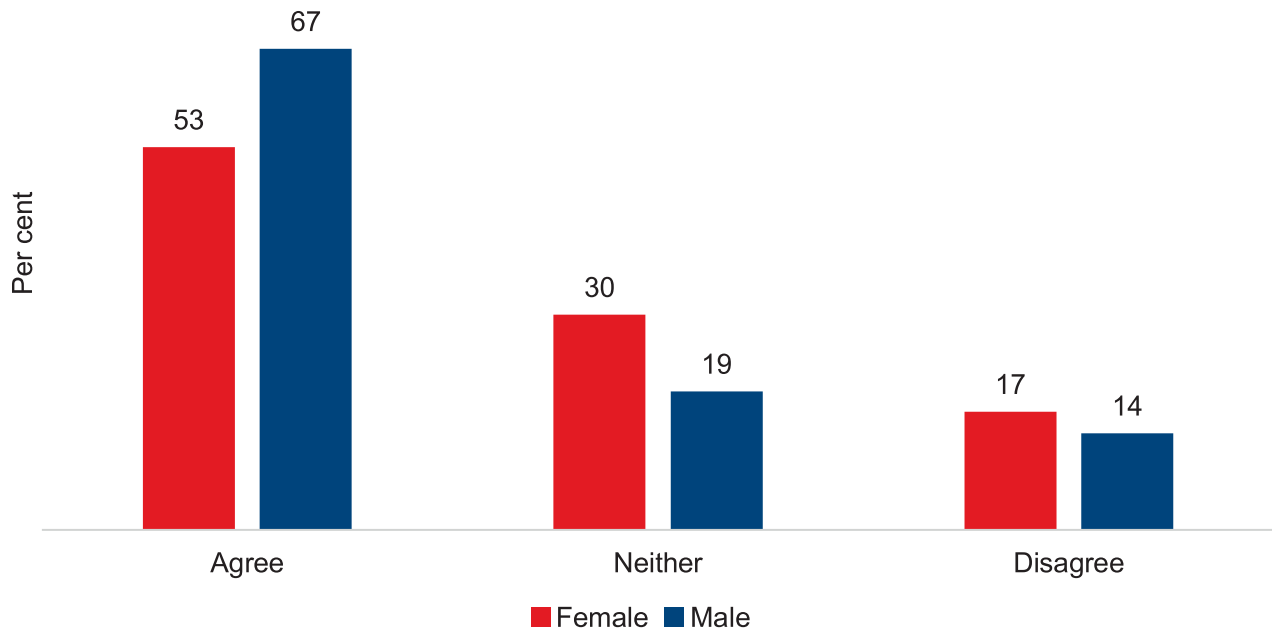
Notably, compared to male students in the rest of the state, male secondary students in the South West are more likely to 'never/almost never' feel bothered when they can't go on the internet (27.6% vs 21.6%), use their mobile phone (35.1% vs 26.1%) and are more likely to 'never/almost never' go without eating or sleeping because of their mobile phone (72.4% vs 68.4%).

### **Connection to community**

The majority (85.7%) of Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South West agreed they like where they live, while 75.6 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed. These results are similar to those across the state.

Most (71.5%) Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South West feel like they belong in their community, while 58.0 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed. Female secondary students are much less likely than male students to feel like they belong in their community (53.4% vs 67.1%).

**Proportion of young people in Years 7 to 12 who feel like they belong in their community**



These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

Over three-quarters (76.3%) of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that there are lots of fun things to do where they live, while 46.3 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed. The difference between primary and secondary students is consistent with the rest of the state.

In terms of their community, of the students surveyed in the South West:

- 77.2 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that there are outdoor places for them to go in their area, like parks, ovals or skate parks, while 79.4 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.
- 64.8 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that their neighbours are friendly, while 64.0 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.
- 60.4 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that when they go to the shops the people there are friendly, while 69.2 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

When it comes to activities outside of school:

- Around one-half (46.0%) of students said they spend time being active outdoors outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 49.9%; Years 7–12: 44.1%).
- 41.3 per cent said they spend time practising or playing a sport outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 38.8%; Years 7–12: 42.6%).
- 35.8 per cent said they spend time hanging out with friends outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 37.0%; Years 7–12: 35.3%).
- 54.7 per cent male and 31.4 per cent female students reported playing games on a game console, computer or tablet every day or almost every day.

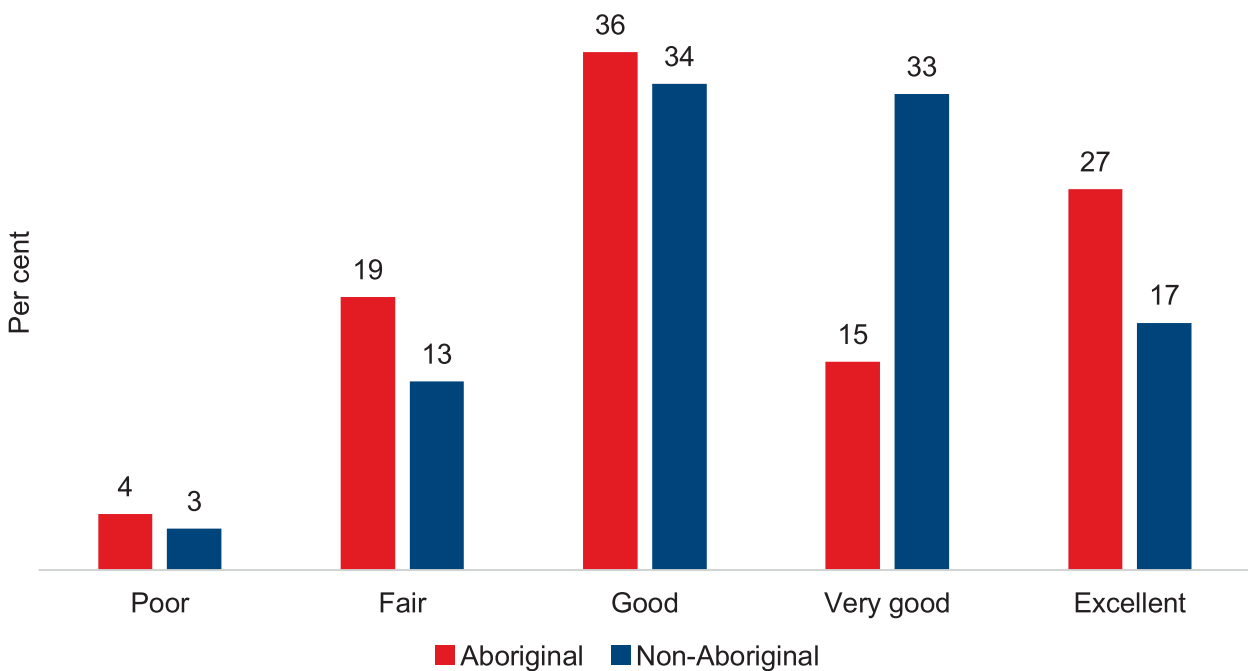
Less than one-third (30.5%) of secondary students said they spend time doing homework every day or almost every day. This is lower than the average across the state (40.5%).

### Aboriginal children's and young people's views on feeling healthy and connected

Just over two-fifths (41.0%) of Aboriginal students in the South West rated their health as very good or excellent which is a lower proportion than non-Aboriginal students (50.3%).

Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students are less likely than non-Aboriginal students to eat breakfast and lunch every day (breakfast: 38.3% vs 57.4%; lunch: 53.1% vs 64.0%). Aboriginal secondary students in the South West are also more likely than non-Aboriginal students to eat fruit never or only a few times a week (42.4% vs 23.0%) or eat vegetables never or only a few times a week (31.9% vs 12.8%).

### Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students reporting their general health ratings



Aboriginal students reported similar interest and involvement in physical exercise as their non-Aboriginal peers. Nearly three-fifths (59.1%) of the Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West reported that physical activity, sport or exercise is 'definitely' an important part of their life, consistent with non-Aboriginal students (57.5%). Almost two-thirds (63.2%) of Aboriginal students reported they had done vigorous exercise three or more

times in the previous week, compared to 68.1 per cent of non-Aboriginal students.

One-half (50.9%) of Aboriginal students in the South West reported a high life satisfaction (7 to 10 out of 10) and almost one-quarter (23.7%) reported low life satisfaction (1 to 4 out of 10) (non-Aboriginal: 61.0% and 18.8% respectively).

Most Year 4 to Year 12 Aboriginal students agreed with the statements:

- I feel good about myself (72.2%).
- I am able to do things as well as most people (70.5%).
- I am happy with myself (76.1%).

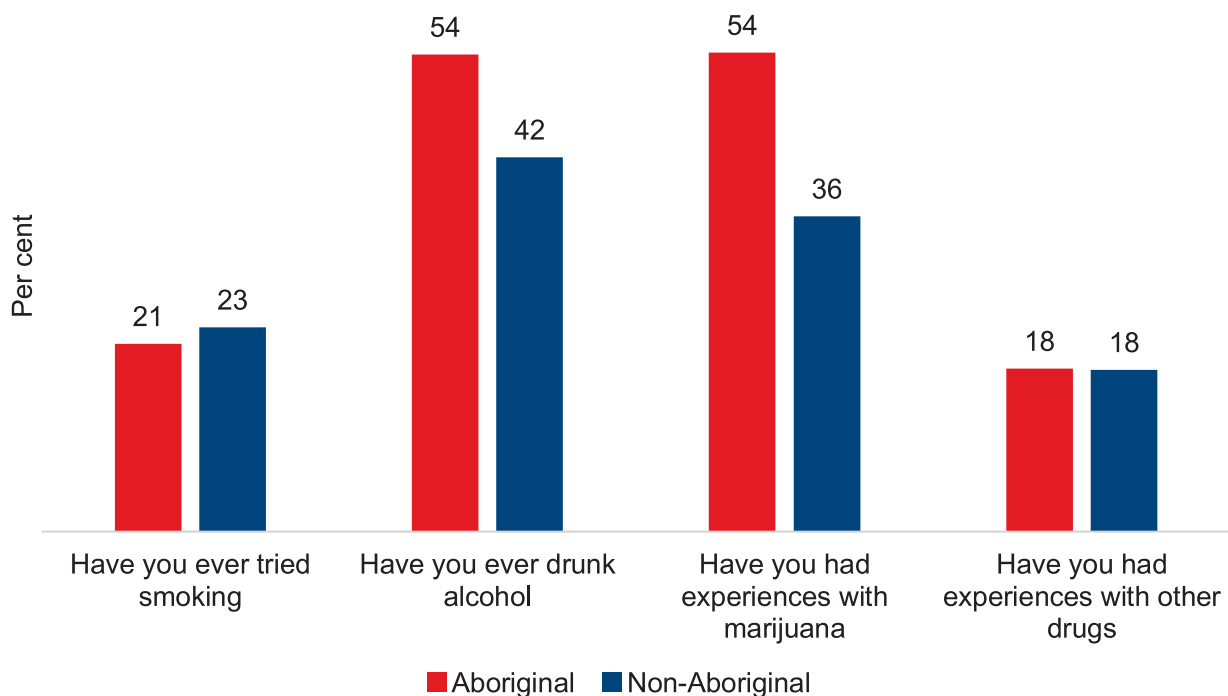
Results between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students are comparable for both primary and secondary students surveyed.

The top three stressors reported by Aboriginal Year 9 to Year 12 students were school or study problems (78.8%), mental health

and wellbeing (50.6%) and problems with friends (50.0%). Notably, Aboriginal students are less likely to be stressed due to body image compared to non-Aboriginal students (Aboriginal: 34.0%; non-Aboriginal: 51.8%).

One in five (21.2%) Aboriginal secondary students in the South West has tried smoking; this is consistent with non-Aboriginal students (23.1%), whereas over one-half (53.9%) of Aboriginal secondary students have drunk alcohol, compared to 42.3 per cent of non-Aboriginal students.

**Proportion of young people in Years 7 to 12 who have tried smoking or drinking, or had experiences with marijuana or other drugs (Years 9 to 12 only)**



*Note: The questions asked were: Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?; Have you ever drunk alcohol (more than just a few sips, like a full can of beer or a glass of wine)?; Have you ever had any experiences with marijuana?; Have you ever had any experiences with other drugs? Response options were: 'No', 'Yes' and 'Prefer not to say'.*

When it comes to Year 9 to Year 12 students, Aboriginal students are more likely to have had experiences with marijuana as non-Aboriginal students (54.1% vs 35.6%), however are equally as likely to have had experiences with other drugs (18.4% vs 18.3%).

In terms of connection to culture and community, of the Aboriginal students surveyed in the South West:

- 64.7 per cent said they know their family's country (all of WA: 69.6%), and of these students 63.5 per cent said they spend time on their family's country (all of WA: 77.4%).
- 35.1 per cent said they do cultural or traditional activities with their family (all of WA: 47.8%).

A very low proportion of Aboriginal students in the South West reported speaking an Aboriginal language. Only 15.4 per cent said they talk Aboriginal language 'some' or 'a lot' (all of WA: 24.1%), while 64.4 per cent said they talk none (all of WA: 37.1%).

Most (78.1%) Aboriginal children (Years 4 to 6) in the South West feel like they belong in their community (non-Aboriginal: 74.1%). Just over one-half (54.2%) of Aboriginal secondary students feel like they belong in their community, which is consistent with their non-Aboriginal peers (58.6%).

## What do children and young people in the South West say about being healthy and connected?

Students were asked the following open text questions related to health and mental health:

- Thinking about mental health and other emotional worries, like stress, anxiety and depression, what are some of the ways families, communities, schools or adults in general could be more helpful?

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with seeking help for health issues, including mental health worries?

### Talking about mental health

*"It's extremely hard to find a way to talk to somebody about mental health anonymously and with out people such as friends and family, especially parents, from knowing you talked to somebody."*

*(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"A lot of the time kids don't know what's going on and are confused. I think WA needs to work on locating kids that are struggling but hiding it and understanding how important diagnosis is to kids."*

*(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"I feel like schools should be addressing and furthermore discussing mental health disorders because they never do, and I really depended on myself to find out what's wrong with me, also the school should keep information confidential, rather than telling other teachers, vice versa."*

*(female, 16 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*"Removing the stigmas surrounding mental health."*

*(male, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"I haven't tried reaching out to anyone outside and reaching for therapy on anything, it's hard when you can't find the time and that my parents don't really support me doing it, I'm scared honestly. I don't know."*

*(male 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"Just bring more awareness to the issues children and teens do face, and not let it go unrecognised or undermined."*

*(female, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

### Feeling anxiety, depression or sadness

*“Well usually I cry everyday and night and I cry myself to sleep every night some times I cut myself when I bored but no ones knows about any of this.”*

*(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I feel like people talk behind my back and say nasty stuff like fat shamed.”*

*(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I have very bad stress and anxiety and depression about the way I look and other things by being bullied and hurt by others.”*

*(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I have anxiety but idk how to tell people.”*

*(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**■ ■ I had a lot of problems with self image, i felt i was ugly, skinny and gross. I starterer going to the gym and it helped me tremendously, i feel it should be promoter more in high schools across austrialia as it really was a life saver for me and some of my friends. ■ ■**

*(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Sometimes I feel like I’m not good enough and just makes me sad and I have no one to talk to...”*

*(female, 15 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“I got admitted to hospital after attempting suicide and let out same day with no house to go to.”*

*(female, 16 year-old, Non-Aboriginal)*

### Talking about getting support

*“I would like the commissioner to know that kids that can’t afford therapy should be able to get it for a lower price or for free because they feel the need to express their feelings.”*

*(female, 11 year-old, undisclosed Aboriginal status)*

*“I have a friend who is struggling with depression/self harm, she has actively sought help but her parents have told her she is not allowed to get a therapist because she is “overreacting”. Nearly all of my queer friends have been suicidal and at school there is an enormous amount of openly displayed homophobic and transphobic comments made by students and even sometimes teachers. To be honest I would like to see a vast amount of more education for the general population about queer mental health.”*

*(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I regularly experience anxiety, stress, depression and panic/anxiety attacks, yet my mother refuses to take me to the doctor because she thinks I’m overreacting, and I’m too young to feel this way. If there was a way to go to a doctor without parents knowledge this would be helpful.”*

*(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Definitely make things more accessible for kids and teens with unsupportive parents, parents who don’t understand and try to control their children in a way that is seriously detrimental to a child’s mental well-being. Discrete so that children can feel safe in who they are talking to without fear of judgement, without the fear of parents finding out and stopping their kids from getting the medical/ mental help they need and are not receiving from their parents or guardians.”*

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“There needs to be better ways to get diagnosed with mental health conditions without going through parents as people are often to embarrassed or brushed off by parents to get the services they need... Additionally adults, parents and the community need to be better informed and take more seriously mental health problems.”*  
(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“Seeking help for a eating disorder is slow and a long wait when you need help.”*  
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“I was supposed to receive a call from CAMHs and never got one. For a community advocating mental health, I feel like an inconvenience and a prop in a business. Nobody genuinely cares, the guy who sexually assaulted me got therapy but I didn’t.”*  
(female, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“Sometimes it’s hard in rural areas because the therapists are not suitable for you and there are so few.”*  
(male, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

### Views on their local area

In total, 717 students from the South West responded to the free text question: ‘If there was one thing you could change about your local area, what would it be?’ Of the students surveyed in the South West, the top things that they would like to change in their local area were:

- More fun activities to do and places to hang out.
- Would like more, closer shops, a mall, movies, greater diversity.
- New or better skate parks, bike trails etc.
- More, upgraded outdoor spaces or parks.

*“More basketball courts around the place and more hang out spots with phone chargers.”*  
(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“Something i would change in my local area is that there would be like a oval or something to do (park etc ).”*  
(female, 12 year-old, Aboriginal)

*“More places for young people to go (actually fun, not just what middle aged men think kids would find fun).”*  
(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“I wish there was a more diverse culture in Margaret River. I barely see any publicly queer or interesting people walking around town.”*  
(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“To create a better public transport system between the main town and the smaller “fringe towns” to increase accessibility and to encourage people to use their cars less.”*  
(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

**▲ more hang out places for teenagers. like yeah skateparks are cool and they are building a huge one and they think that that caters for everyone but it doesn’t, kids don’t like that or kids have disabilities that prevent them from doing that. maybe like a room with a range of activities for kids to do, but only a limited amount of people because someone get anxious in big crowds. ▼▼**

*(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Maybe more activities for teens. As we are a tourist town there isn’t much to do. Most food places serve alcohol so we aren’t allowed to enter. Not having a licence is also hard because going to the beach is the most popular thing to do in summer and without a car we have to find lifts which can get complicated. Street festivals are always good fun and maybe a few more food options for teens.”*

*(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**▲▲ They need everything more, there are 27,000 people in the Capel shire and about 7000 of those are in the direct town of Capel. There are no high school, bar[el]y an[y] competitor shops, no young kids or teenage activities unless they are makeshift or pop up. The town needs a revamp, they’re spending money in the wrong places. ▼▼**

*(male, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Having something like a hang out spot for our age, like a diner. Or an arcade, bowling alley. Something fun.”*

*(female, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Pathways between towns or more public transport to get around easier.”*

*(female, 17 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“More entertaining places for teenagers to hang out and do activities without the risk of drug use and violence.”*

*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

A number of students in the South West talked about wanting more things to do that don’t cost money or are affordable.

*“More public sporting venues that we don’t have to pay to get in. Things like parks with basketball courts or something like that.”*

*(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“More places for teens to hang out that are free because at parks there are always little kids and other places like movies cost money.”*

*(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“It would just be more free things to do because money is not always an option people have so it’s would be good to have more facilities for younger people around my age.”*

*(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“More social hangouts for kids our age that don’t cost money.”*

*(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*



## Learning and participating

**▲▲ That we aren't robots. We go to school in the morning at 8:55, work all day except for our breaks. Come home and are expected to do an hour of study, along with our own home chores and out of school lives like sport or jobs. ▼▼**

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

### Attendance

Most students (88.7%) in the South West said it is very or somewhat important for them to be at school every day (very important: 48.9%, somewhat important: 39.8%). Nevertheless, students in the South West are less likely than those across the state to think being at school is very important (Years 4–6: 56.4% vs 64.5%; Years 7–12: 44.9% vs 48.0%).

More than one in ten (11.3%) Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West said it is not very important to attend school every day. This is the highest proportion saying it is not very important across WA regions.

One-fifth (20.0%) of secondary students reported they had wagged school for a full day or more in the previous year, while 14.3 per cent reported they had been suspended from school.

These results are consistent with the rest of WA.

### Liking school and sense of belonging

Around one-quarter (23.7%) of students in the South West reported liking school a lot (Years 4–6: 40.1%; Years 7–12: 15.2%), and 25.1 per cent likes school a bit (Years 4–6: 24.7%; Years 7–12: 25.3%). At the same time,

a relatively high proportion of students in both primary and secondary school reported that they don't like school at all compared to students across the state (Years 4–6: 6.0% vs 3.1%; Years 7–12: 13.1% vs 10.4%).

The majority (65.8%) of secondary students in the South West feel like they belong at their school. Over one in 10 (11.9%) strongly disagree that school is a place where they belong.

Most (70.3%) students in the South West agreed they feel happy at school (Years 4–6: 87.4%; Years 7–12: 61.6%), and 70.5 per cent agreed they like learning at school (Years 4–6: 81.8%; Years 7–12: 64.9%).

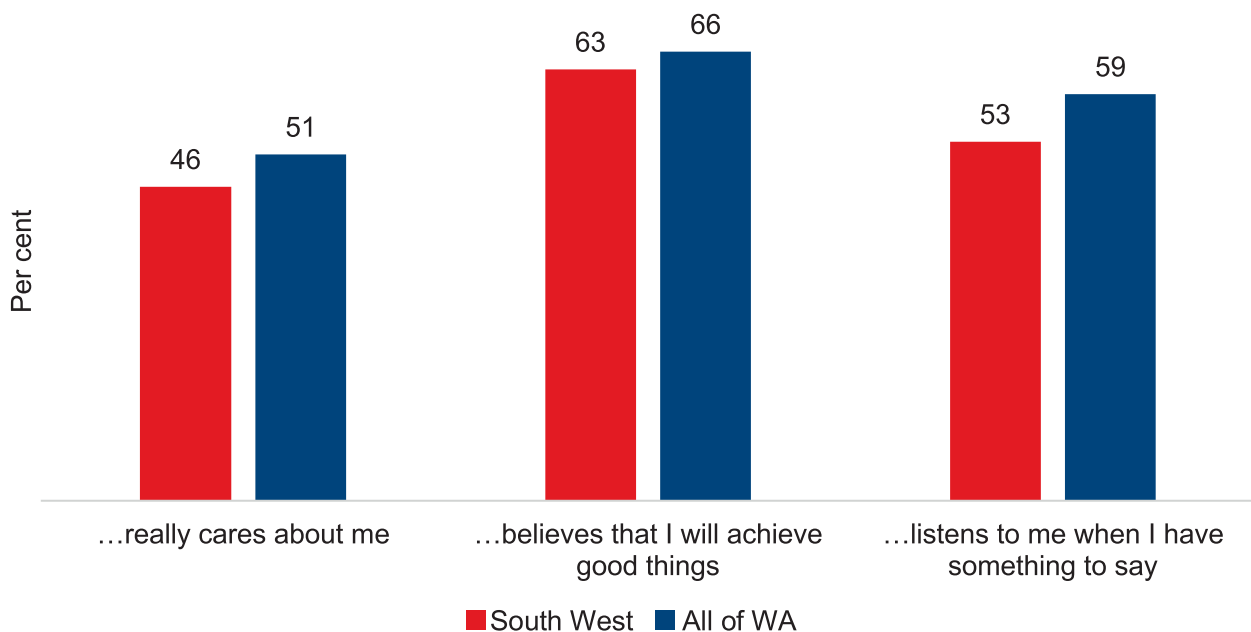
In terms of their relationships with others, over two-thirds (68.3%) of students in the South West said they usually get along with classmates (Years 4–6: 67.4%; Years 7–12: 68.7%), while 66.9 per cent said they usually get along with their teachers (Years 4–6: 77.0%; Years 7–12: 61.6%).

These results are consistent with the rest of WA.

Over three-quarters (76.0%) of students reported it is 'pretty much true' or 'very much true' there is a teacher or another adult in the school who believes the student will achieve good things (Years 4–6: 89.5%; Years 7–12: 69.0%), while 65.3 per cent said it is 'pretty much true' or 'very much true' true that a teacher or another adult at their school really cares about them (Years 4–6: 84.6%; Years 7–12: 55.2%).

Students in Years 4 to 6 are less likely than those across the state to report it is 'very much true' that a teacher cares about them or listens to them when they have something to say.

**Proportion of Year 4 to 6 students responding ‘very much true’ when posed the statement: ‘At my school, there is a teacher or another adult who...’**



Of the students surveyed in the South West:

- 33.7 per cent reported, if needed, they almost always get help from teachers in class (Years 4–6: 44.6%; Years 7–12: 28.1%), while 46.4 per cent reported they get it sometimes (Years 4–6: 44.7%; Years 7–12: 47.4%).
- 57.0 per cent said their parents often ask about schoolwork/homework (Years 4–6: 57.8%; Years 7–12: 56.6%).
- One-third (32.6%) of secondary students feel pressured by schoolwork ‘a lot’ (female: 38.8%, male: 23.1%).

These results are consistent with those across the state.

**Feeling safe at school**

Just under one-third (31.7%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West said they feel safe at school all the time (Years 4–6: 40.0%; Years 7–12: 27.3%), while 46.4 per cent said they feel safe at school most of the time (Years 4–6: 39.1%; Years 7–12: 50.3%).

One in five (20.7%) students said they feel safe at school only sometimes or less (Years 4–6: 19.1%; Years 7–12: 21.5%).

These results are consistent with those across WA.

Over one-third (36.8%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students reported they had been bullied, cyberbullied or both by students from their school (Years 4–6: 34.4%; Years 7–12: 38.1%).

Female students in secondary school are significantly more likely to have been bullied than their male peers (particularly cyberbullied). In Years 7 to 12, only 39.8 per cent of female students reported they had never been bullied, compared to 60.6 per cent of their male peers.

In terms of the nature of the bullying, students in the South West reported the following:

- 34.7 per cent had been (traditionally) bullied (Years 4–6: 32.9%; Years 7–12: 35.6%).
- 12.7 per cent had been cyberbullied (Years 4–6: 4.4%; Years 7–12: 17.1%).

Among students who reported having ever been bullied or cyberbullied (or both), 40.2 per cent reported this had happened in the previous three months while 17.1 per cent reported they had missed school in the past because they were afraid someone might bully them (female: 20.3%; male: 11.7%).

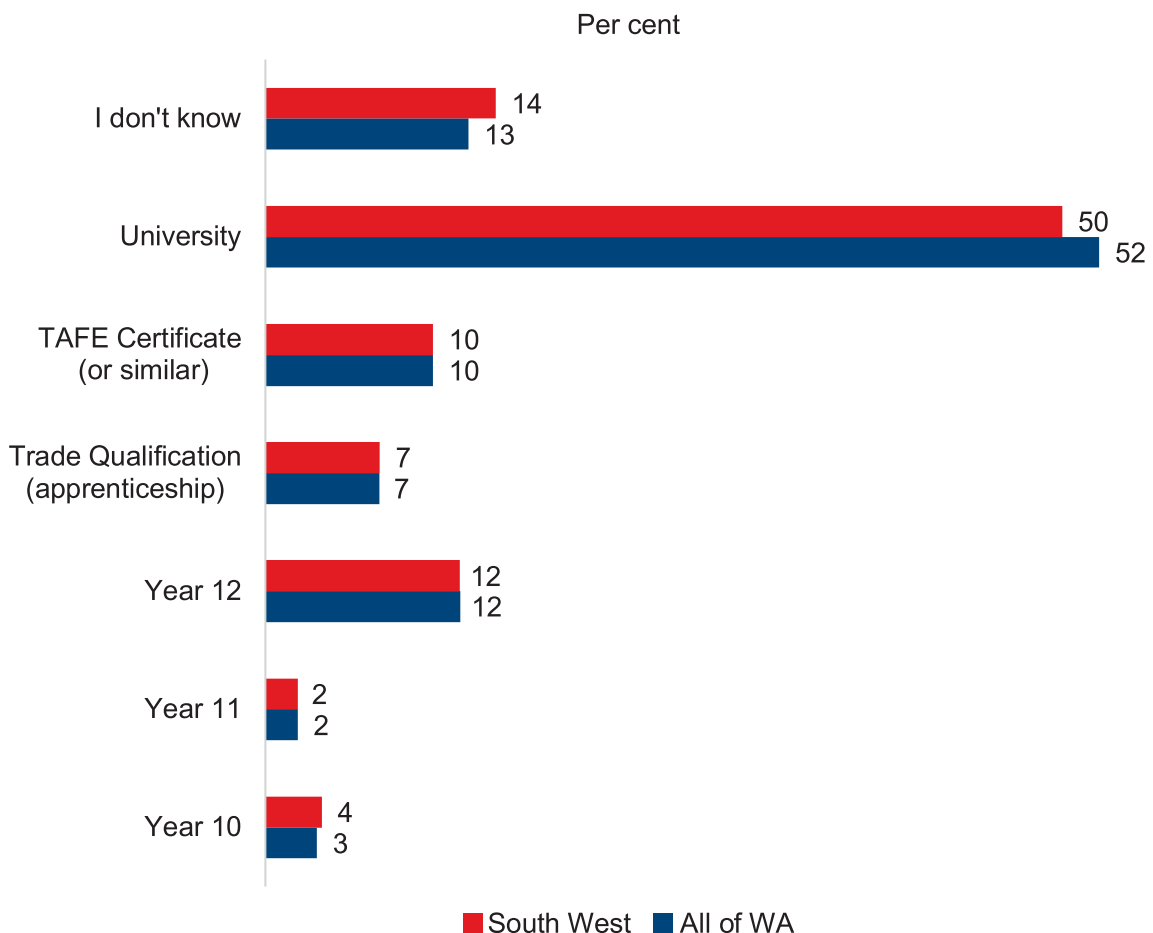
### Transition from school

One-half (49.5%) of secondary students in the South West reported they want to attend university, on par with the rest of WA (51.8%).

Just under one-fifth (17.8%) do not intend to go on to further study after secondary school, while a similar proportion (17.5%) planned to pursue further education at TAFE (or similar) or a trade qualification.

Most secondary students (61.1%) said it is 'very much true' or 'pretty much true' that at their school they are learning knowledge and skills that will help them in the future (all of WA: 61.4%).

### Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students reporting highest level of education they would like to achieve (single choice only)



More than one-half (57.5%) of secondary students in the South West reported having a paid job sometime over the previous 12 months (all of WA: 45.2%). Over two-fifths (41.6%) of secondary students in the South West reported having a regular part-time job (all of WA: 28.0%). This is the highest proportion across the state.

The vast majority of students reported working so they could have money of their own to spend on things they want (72.3%), while 9.3 per cent said it is to get skills and experience.

### Independence and autonomy

Of the secondary students in the South West:

- 87.0 per cent said they are allowed to go to and from school on their own (all of WA: 80.9%).
- 84.7 per cent said they are allowed to go places other than school on their own (all of WA: 76.0%).
- 33.9 per cent said they are allowed to go out alone at night in their local area (all of WA: 31.2%).

Similar to the responses across the state, female young people are less likely than their male peers and brothers to be allowed to do these things. Yet, female young people in the South West are generally more likely than their female peers across the state to be allowed to go to and from school on their own, go to places other than school and cycle on main roads without an adult.

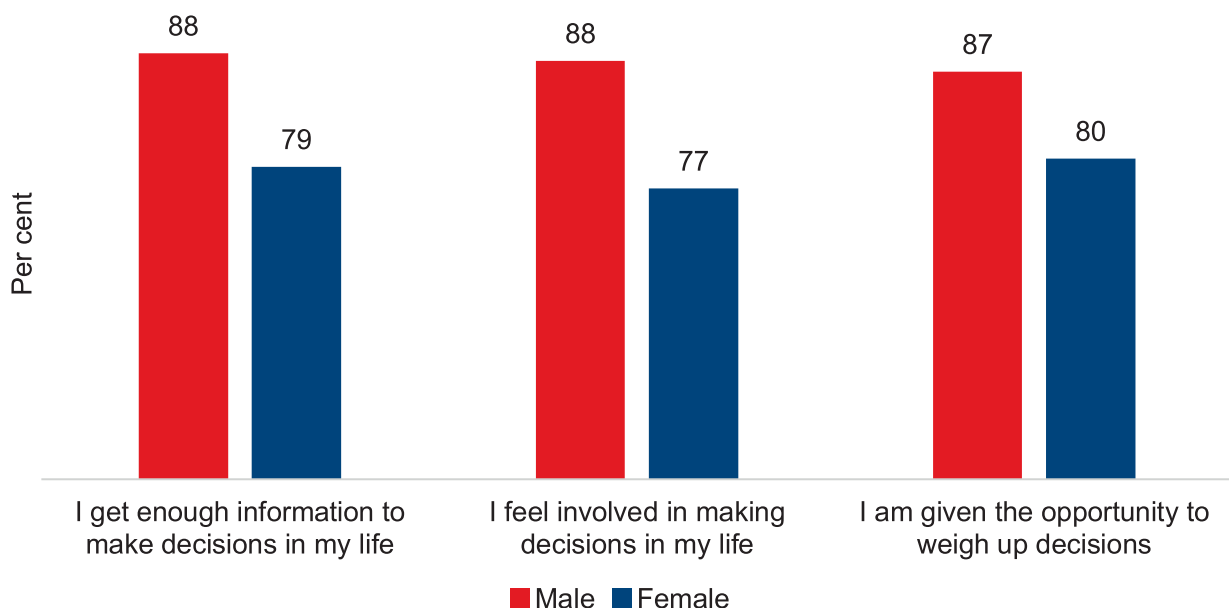
Most secondary students in the South West (81.9%) agreed or strongly agreed that they get enough information to make decisions in their life, feel involved in making decisions about their life (80.0%) and that they are given opportunities to weigh up decisions (81.7%).

These results are consistent with those across WA.

Male secondary students are more likely to agree with all three statements.

The gender difference is consistent with results for the rest of the state.

### Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreeing with three statements regarding making decisions in their life



### Aboriginal children's and young people's views on learning and participating

Less than one-half (40.4%) of Aboriginal students in the South West said that being at school every day is very important to them, while 41.0 per cent said it is somewhat important and 18.6 per cent said it is not very important.

Aboriginal students in the South West are more likely than their non-Aboriginal peers to have attended multiple schools since they started primary school or secondary school with one in five (20.6%) Aboriginal secondary students having attended three or more schools compared to one in ten (10.3%) non-Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal students are much more likely to have been suspended from school (been sent home for a few days for doing something wrong) than their non-Aboriginal peers (28.3%

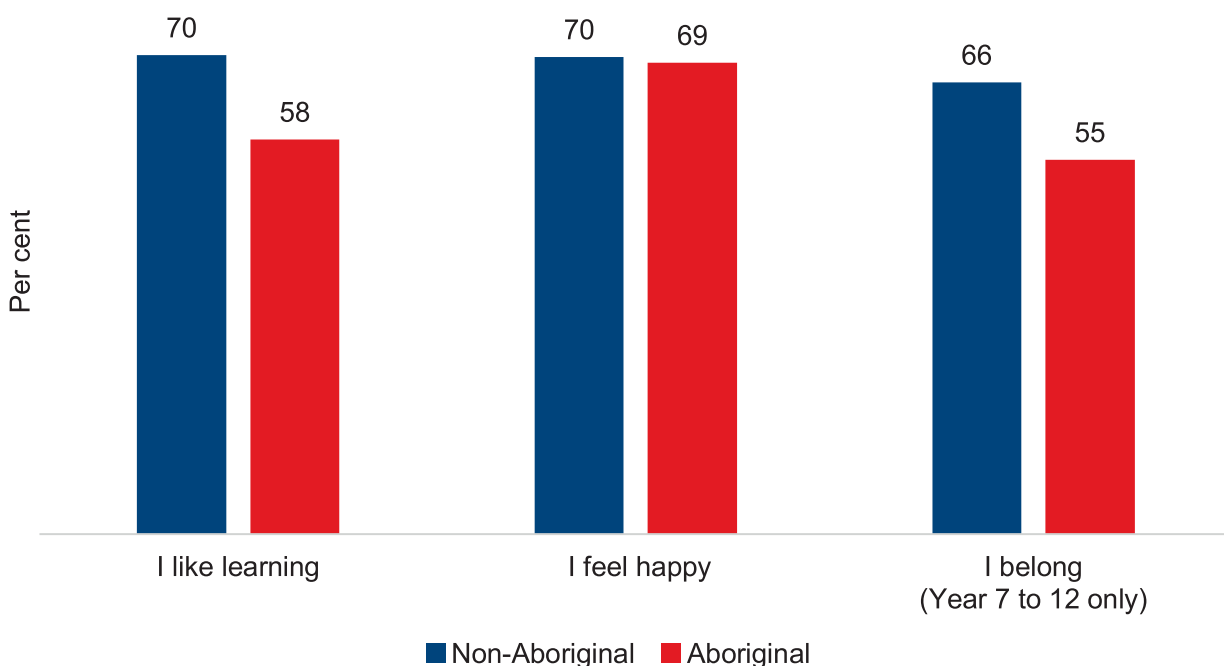
vs 13.5%). Furthermore, Aboriginal students in the South West are more than twice as likely to report that they had wagged school in the previous 12 months for a full day or more compared to non-Aboriginal students (48.6% compared to 18.5%).

Just over two-fifths (41.1%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West reported liking school (non-Aboriginal: 48.5%).

Over two-thirds (69.2%) of Year 4 to Year 12 Aboriginal students in the South West agree that their school is a place where they feel happy, which is consistent with non-Aboriginal students (70.0%). However, when it comes to liking learning, Aboriginal students are less likely to agree compared to non-Aboriginal students (57.9% vs 70.3%).

Further, Aboriginal secondary students in the South West are less likely than their non-Aboriginal peers to agree their school is a place where they belong (54.9% vs 66.3%).

### Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students agreeing that school is a place where they like learning, feel happy, and belong (Year 7 to 12 only)



Just over one-half (60.4%) of Year 4 to Year 12 Aboriginal students in the South West said they usually get along with their classmates, while 27.5 per cent said they sometimes get along with their classmates.

Most (72.8%) Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West feel safe at school all or most of the time (non-Aboriginal: 78.7%). Around one in ten (11.0%) feel safe only a little bit of the time or never (non-Aboriginal: 6.0%).

Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West reported experiencing bullying by students from their school in similar proportions to non-Aboriginal students (39.2% compared to 36.5%).

Aboriginal students in the South West are much less likely than their non-Aboriginal peers to plan to go to university after secondary school (18.9% vs 51.2%). Some are planning to do a TAFE certificate (6.4%) or a trade qualification (11.9%), while a very high 29.7 per cent do not know the highest level of education they want to achieve (non-Aboriginal: 13.2%).

## What do children and young people in the South West say about learning and participating?

### Talking about stress at school

The following responses are from secondary school students who were asked the open text question: 'The majority of secondary school students feel stressed by school work or study. What do you think are the main reasons for this?'

*"It's quite difficult, school assigns so much assignments and coping with them + family issues + mental health is definitely a struggle."*

*(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"Probably all the school and homework because that gives me nightmares thinking about the stacks of homework I get and makes me stressed."*

*(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**It is crucial that students maintain a good work, life and school balance but sometimes it feels almost impossible to do so when you have so many other things going on. For example, I work at my parents shop everyday after school from 3-5 and on the weekends from 10-3. This makes me feel tired all the time and having a huge ton of homework and assignments to do after working these shifts is not the best. I want to be able to invest a good amount of time doing what I enjoy and actually getting enough rest. ▀ ▀**

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*"Too much work and not enough assistance from teachers to do it."*

*(male, 15 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*"People could be more understanding of the work load of atar and lower expectations of things not school related like helping in house."*

*(female, 16 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“The school system. The ATAR system as a whole is absolutely ridiculous. It is disgusting that 95% of people that I know have some type of mental illness. These mental illnesses are caused by the unnecessary stress that is caused by school.”*

*(female, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Not enough support, little communication between teachers leading to to many assignments on one day. Very little support in the class room. Unclear as to what we are meant to be doing.”*

*(female, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“There is so much of it and we are made to feel as if the rest of our lives depends on it.”*

*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

### Other comments on school

*“I think that there’s a problem with students using slurs at school and teachers ignoring it. It’s really hurtful to minorities in the classes.”*

*(student who selected ‘in another way’, 3 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Schools can be more helpful towards people getting bullied and teased.”*

*(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“LGBTQI hate happens a lot at schools and is never addressed by teachers and it is hard as a student to speak up about it Teachers who care about more than your homework would be helpful too.”*

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“School needs to do better because it’s a literal hell hole for homophobia and racism and other forms of discrimination.”*

*(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Being able to use headphones In class can help with adhd and help me concentrate.”*

*(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**▲▲ I feel pretty safe around these places except school but school will always feel unsafe because you cannot control what others do or think. ▼▼**

*(student who selected ‘in another way’, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Making mental health a reasonable excuse to be excused from school or work, making period cramps a reason to be excused from school as well, making the environment more friendly for members of the LGBT community and safer and more friendly for people of colour, serving punishments to those who are outwardly and openly discriminated, including: racist, homophobic, transphobic etc.”*

*(student who selected ‘in another way’, 15 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“I want no school uniform for public schools they are not comfable and kids can’t concentrate in class so I say don’t make kids wear something they aren’t comfable with and if we have to go to school at least let us wear clothing of our choice.”*

*(female, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Being at school with someone who committed indecent assault to me and he was charged and arrested, but still the school has not removed him, therefore every time I see him I have a panic/anxiety attack. Makes me feel very unsafe.”*

*(female, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“And if there could be a large part in the curriculum dedicated to teaching us about disabilities and how to understand and treat people with said disabilities that would be really good.”*

*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

## Safe and Supported

**“ Sometimes I get a little stressed when it comes to paying for class trips that are expensive because my mum is a single parent and she gets stressed with having to pay everything and I feel bad for wanting to go. ”**

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

### Supportive relationships

More than three-quarters (78.3%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West reported it is ‘very much true’ or ‘pretty much true’ that they live with a parent or another adult who listens when they have something to say

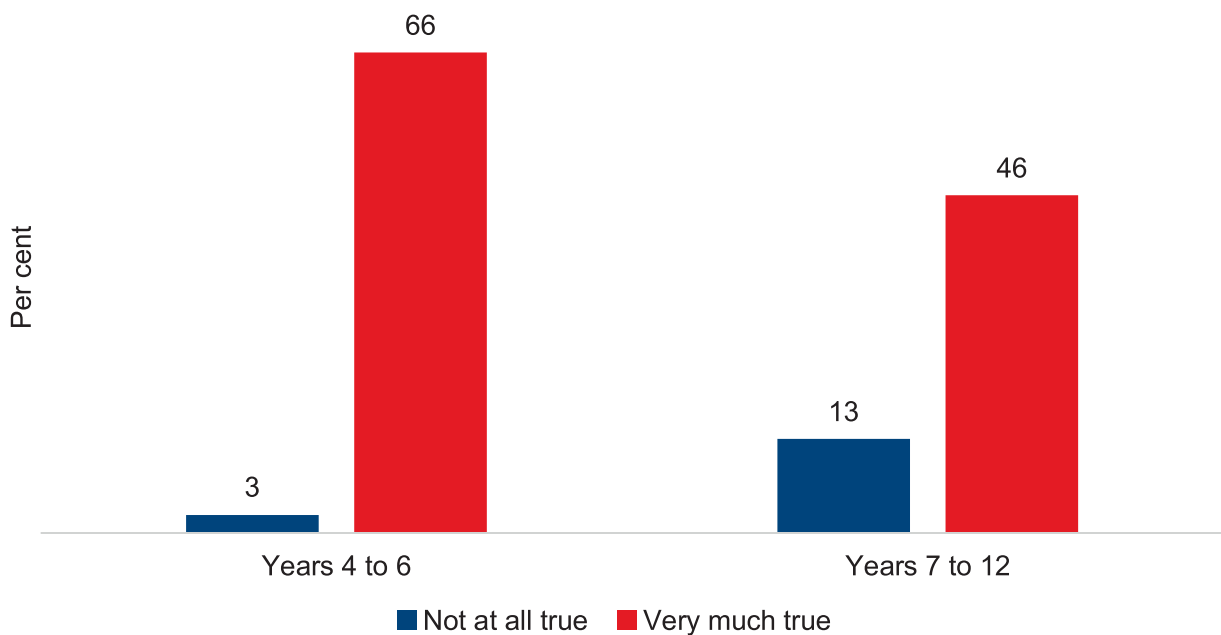
(Years 4–6: 83.2%; Years 7–12: 75.9%).

Two-thirds (67.0%) said it is ‘very much true’ they live with a parent or another adult who believes they will achieve good things (Years 4–6: 66.1%; Years 7–12: 67.4%).

Most (65.7%) Year 4 to Year 6 students reported it is ‘very much true’ they live with a parent or another adult they can talk to about their problems or worries, while 46.2 per cent of Year 7 to 12 students reported this. A low proportion (2.5%) of Year 4 to Year 6 students reported this statement is ‘not at all true’, while 12.9 per cent of secondary students said it is ‘not at all true’ they live with a parent or another adult they could talk to.

These results are consistent with those across WA.

### Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students responding to the statement: ‘Where I live, there is a parent or adult who I can talk to about my problems’



*Note: Response options ‘pretty much true’ and ‘a little true’ have been omitted from this graph.*



Over three-quarters (77.0%) of students in the South West said their family gets along very well or well (Years 4–6: 82.9%; Years 7–12: 73.9%).

Most (79.8%) Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South West said that if they were having serious problems there is an adult they would feel okay talking to. One in five (20.2%) Year 4 to Year 6 students said there is not an adult they would feel okay talking to or they weren't sure.

Similarly, just over two-thirds (68.6%) of secondary students said that if they were having serious problems there is an adult they would feel okay talking to. Almost one-third (31.4%) of secondary students said there is not an adult they would feel okay talking to or they weren't sure.

These results are consistent with the results across WA.

In terms of friendships, students in the South West reported:

- 54.0 per cent felt they are very good at making and keeping friends (Years 4–6: 59.7%; Years 7–12: 51.0%).
- 84.9 per cent reported they feel they have enough friends (Years 4–6: 88.4%; Years 7–12: 83.2%).
- 45.4 per cent said they feel their friends care about them a lot (Years 4–6: 52.6%; Years 7–12: 41.7%).

These results are consistent with those across the state.

### Material basics

Most students in the South West have the material basics they need, however, almost one in ten (9.1%) Year 4 to Year 12 students only sometimes or never has enough food to eat at home when they are hungry (all of WA: 9.6%).

Two-thirds (67.0%) of students said there is always enough food, and 23.9 per cent said there is often enough food. These results are consistent with those across WA.

Nine in ten students reported having enough money in their family to afford school excursions and/or camps (89.8%) and having 'the right kind of clothes' to fit in with people their age (89.6%).

A relatively high proportion of secondary students in the South West do not have their own mobile phone (13.1% vs 8.3% for all of WA). In particular, a lower proportion (82.8%) of male secondary students have their own mobile phone compared to male students across WA (90.7%) and their female peers in the South West (90.1%).

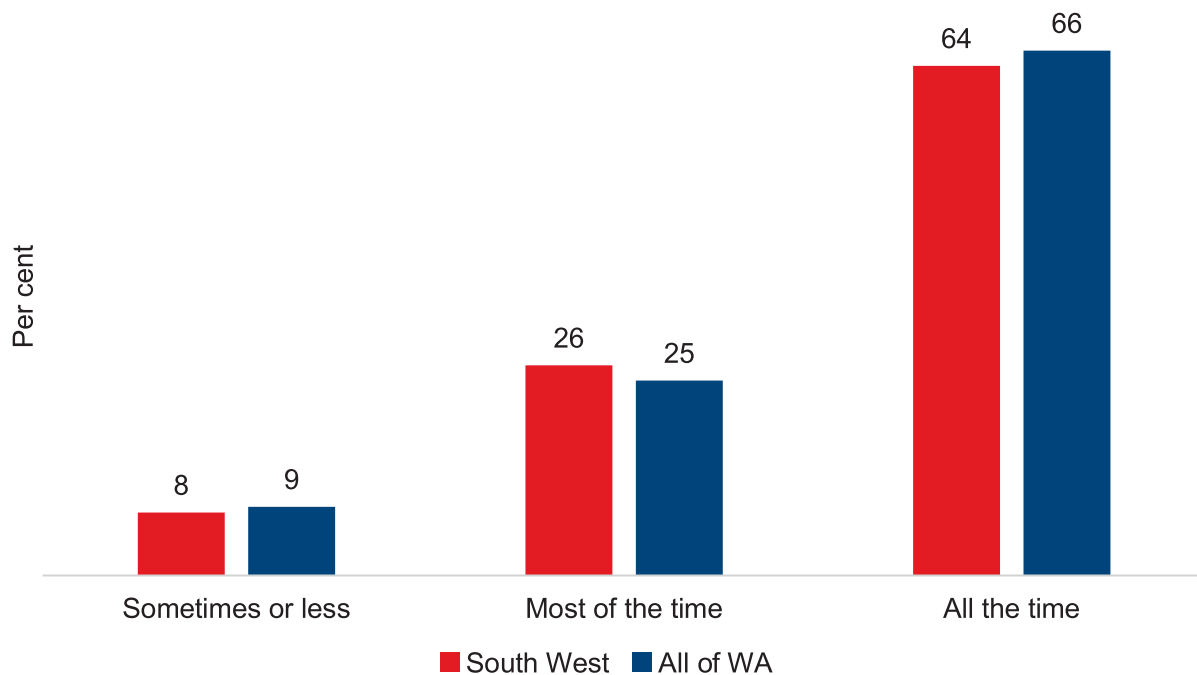
Students in Years 4 to 6 in the South West are also less likely than those across the state to have access to the internet at home (87.9% vs 94.0%), while secondary school students in the South West have comparable access to the internet at home as those across the state (97.0% vs 97.4%).

### Safe in the home

Just under two-thirds (64.0%) of students said they feel safe at home all the time (Years 4–6: 65.1%; Years 7–12: 63.5%), while 26.4 per cent said they feel safe at home most of the time (Years 4–6: 24.4%; Years 7–12: 27.5%).

These results are consistent with the rest of WA.

**Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students reporting how safe they feel at home**



Around one-quarter (23.7%) of students said they are ‘somewhat’ or ‘a lot’ worried that someone in their home or family will be fighting (all of WA: 24.4%) and one in five (20.0%) is ‘somewhat’ or ‘a lot’ worried that someone in their family would hurt themselves (all of WA: 21.9%).

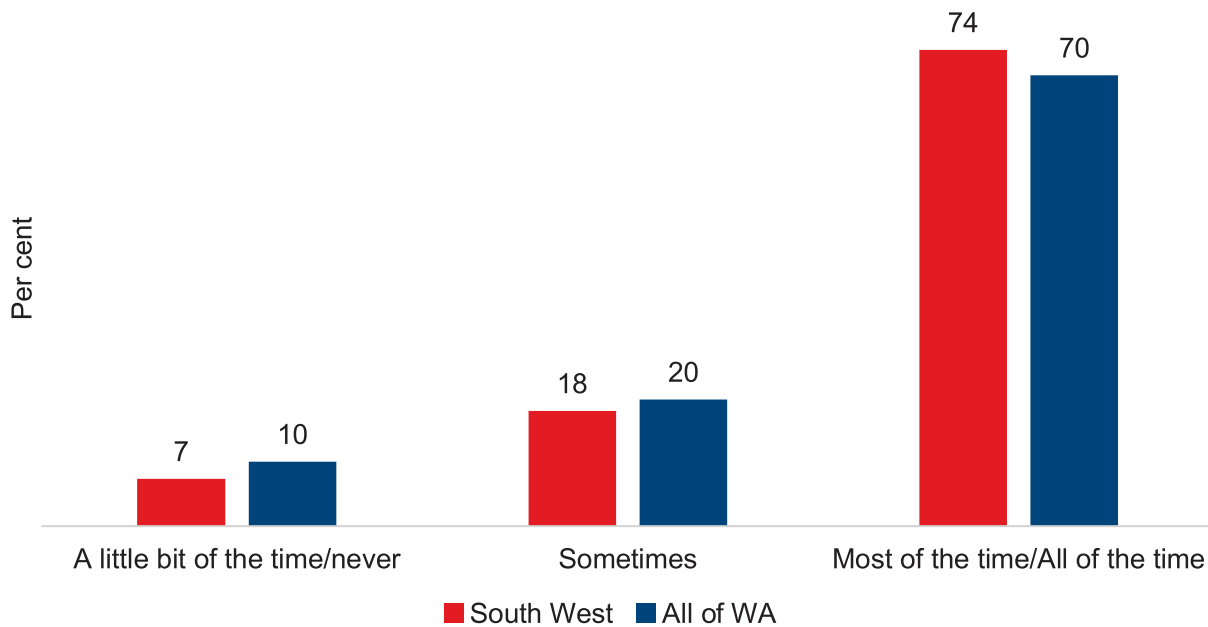
Secondary school students in the South West are much less likely than students across the state to be worried ‘a lot’ or ‘somewhat’ that someone in their home or family will hurt somebody else (12.8% vs 15.4%). In particular, three-quarters (74.8%) of secondary students are ‘not at all’ worried about this (all of WA: 69.1%).

Nearly one-third (31.6%) of secondary students reported they had stayed away from home overnight because of a problem.

**Safe in the community**

Three in ten (30.2%) students said they feel safe in their local area all the time (Years 4–6: 30.2%; Years 7–12: 30.2%), while 41.4 per cent said they feel safe in their local area most of the time (Years 4–6: 36.8%; Years 7–12: 43.7%).

**Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students reporting how often they feel safe in their local area**



Female secondary students are much less likely to feel safe in their local area all the time than their male peers (21.6% vs 42.0%). One-third (32.1%) of female secondary students feel safe only sometimes or less compared to 15.2 per cent of male students.

These results are consistent with the rest of WA.

Of Year 9 to Year 12 students in the South West, 45.5 per cent reported they had ever been hit or physically harmed by someone on purpose (male: 60.9%; female: 34.8%). Male students in the South West are much more likely than male students across the state to report being hit or physically harmed by someone on purpose (60.9% vs 50.7%).

Students who reported being hit or physically harmed by someone on purpose in the previous 12 months were also asked further questions about the nature and location of the incident.

Most male secondary students in the South West reported being harmed by another child or young person (85.8%) and 25.4 per

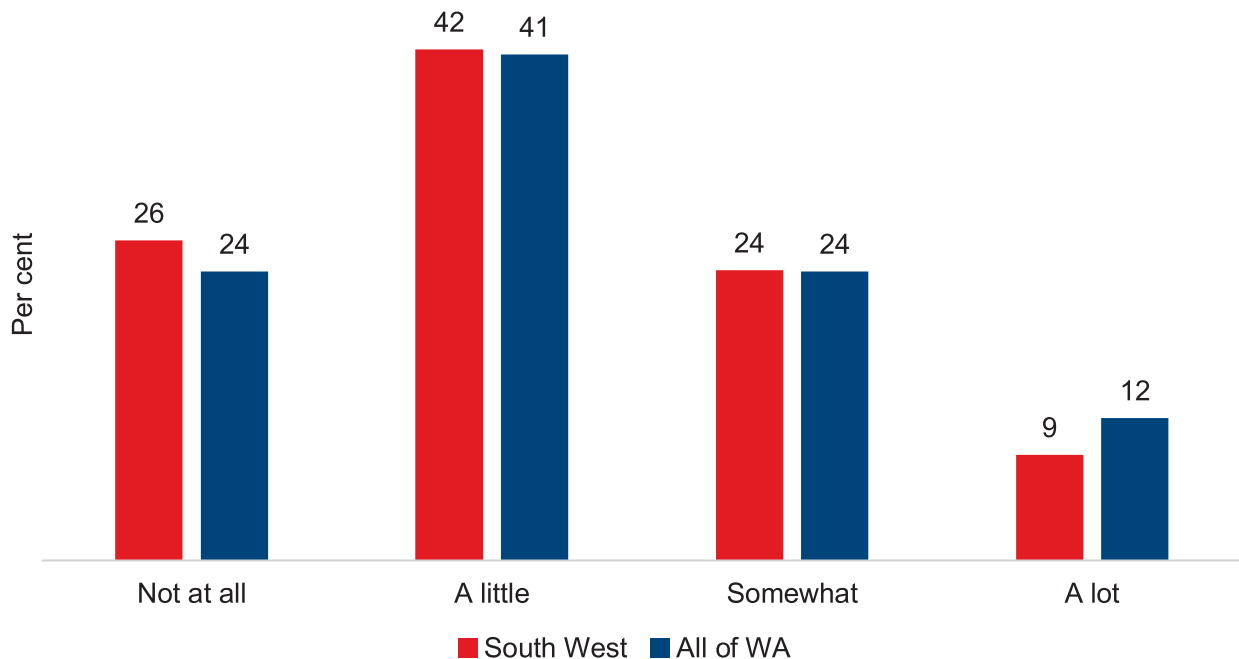
cent reported being harmed by an adult. In contrast, 56.4 per cent of female students reported being harmed by another child or young person and 45.7 per cent were harmed by an adult.

There are also differences in the locations of the incidents reported between male and female students. Male students reported the incident predominantly taking place at school (54.1%), followed by at home (37.2%) and in a public place (e.g. in town, shops, sports centre) (30.6%). Female students reported the incident predominantly taking place at home (73.2%), followed by at school (24.5%) and in a public place (14.2%).

**Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic**

When asked about the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting changes to daily life, 32.3 per cent of students in the South West reported the pandemic affected their life in a bad way ‘a lot’ (8.6%) or ‘somewhat’ (23.7%). Over one-quarter (26.1%) of students responded ‘not at all’ when posed this question.

**Proportion of students responding to the question: ‘Thinking about the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting changes to daily life, how much has this affected your life in a bad way?’**



Of Year 9 to Year 12 students, 16.2 per cent reported the COVID-19 pandemic had been a source of stress to them in the previous year (all of WA: 20.8%).

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, students in the South West also reported:

- 28.6 per cent reported feeling very or somewhat stressed/anxious (all of WA: 31.2%).
- 55.8 per cent reported feeling very or somewhat relaxed when they thought of COVID-19 (all of WA: 52.8%).
- 43.4 per cent reported feeling ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ worried if they missed school due to COVID-19 in the previous calendar year – 2020 (all of WA: 48.5%).

the South West reported that it is ‘very much true’ that where they live there is a parent or another adult who:

- believes they will achieve good things (73.6%).
- listens to them when they have something to say (56.3%).
- they can talk to about their problems or worries (57.2%).

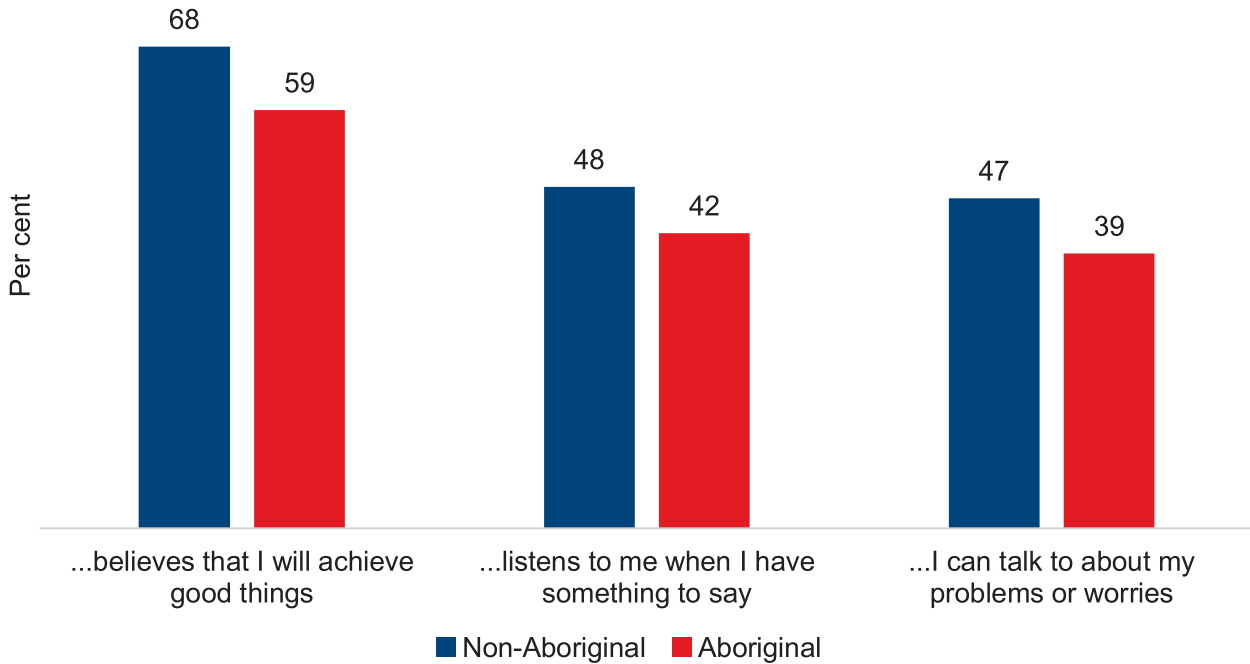
These results are consistent with non-Aboriginal students in the South West. However, the same is not true for Aboriginal secondary students who reported ‘very much true’ in lower proportions across all three questions compared to non-Aboriginal students.

**Aboriginal children’s and young people’s views on feeling safe and supported**

**Supportive relationships**

Most Year 4 to Year 6 Aboriginal students in

**Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students responding ‘very much true’ to the statement: ‘Where I live, there is a parent or adult who...’**



In terms of family harmony, over four-fifths (82.9%) of Aboriginal students reported that their family gets along well or very well, marginally more compared to non-Aboriginal students (76.6%).

Most Aboriginal students in the South West reported they are very good (56.7%) or okay at making friends (36.8%). Further, 80.4 per cent feel that they have enough friends and that their friends care about them a lot (48.2%) or some (30.8%).

**Material basics**

Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South West are marginally more likely to be experiencing some form of material disadvantage in comparison to their non-Aboriginal peers.

- One in seven (14.4%) Aboriginal students reported there is only sometimes or less often enough food to eat at home when they are hungry (non-Aboriginal: 8.3%).

- One in ten (9.9%) Aboriginal students does not have a family car that is used for transport (non-Aboriginal: 2.6%).
- One in five (20.4%) Aboriginal students does not have enough money in their family for them to go on a school excursion or camp (non-Aboriginal: 8.7%).
- Over one in five (21.7%) Aboriginal secondary students do not have their own tablet, laptop or computer, compared to 13.3 per cent of non-Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal students are much more likely to report living in a primary household of six people or more (24.6%) compared to non-Aboriginal students (11.1%).

## Feeling safe

The majority (87.4%) of Aboriginal children and young people in the South West feel safe at home most or all of the time. This is marginally lower than the result for non-Aboriginal children and young people (92.2%).

Compared to non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students in the South West are more likely to worry a lot that someone in their home or family will be fighting (Aboriginal: 13.5%; non-Aboriginal: 8.9%) or hurt themselves (Aboriginal: 17.3%; non-Aboriginal: 8.1%) and Aboriginal secondary students are more likely to worry a lot that someone in their family will get arrested (Aboriginal: 11.3%; non-Aboriginal: 4.2%).

When it comes to safety in their local area, 75.1 per cent of Aboriginal children and young people in the South West reported feeling safe most or all of the time. This is consistent with non-Aboriginal students (72.9%).

## What do children and young people in the South West say about being safe and supported?

### Supportive relationships

*“I didn’t have any friends in primary school because I was different. I came to high school and found one friend who has been really nice to me, and treated me in such a way, that I am so grateful. After my terrible primary school experiences, I began to feel terrible about my self and even slightly suicidal at times, but my new high school friend treats me like an equal, to which I appreciate her friendship. She is my only friend, but she still makes me feel like I belong. I still don’t fully fit-in in school, but my new BFF makes me want to come to school.”*

*(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**“I Personally, I just keep going because I look into the future, I know i have potential. This is because my mum and dad is so supportive and loving, and my mum really helps me set those goals, and she shows me how to get there. ”**

*(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Listen to your kids and don’t dismiss their emotions and don’t call them names and accept them.”*

*(student who selected ‘in another way’, 13 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“I... have this one teacher that me and my friend always go to talk to about our problems and they are really good because I have grown and truest full relationship with them and she has helped me through a lot and sees my side of the story.”*

*(female, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“Be there for them even if they don’t want your help.”*

*(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Stop yelling and speak to us like humans.”*

*(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“We have a lot going on that u don’t know about u need to take it easy and stop putting so much pressure on us.”*

*(female, 15 year-old, Aboriginal)*

*“If they could just listen to us and not think, oh its just a teenager his problems are small.”  
(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Talk to me as if I’m on the same level as you not just some 15 year old cheeky boy who doesn’t know anything.  
(male, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

### Feeling unsafe

The following statements were generally in response to the question: ‘What are some of the things that make you feel unsafe?’

*“I feel unsafe as a part of the LGBTQIA+ community in my conservative town. And feel unable to express myself for fear of getting verbally attacked.”  
(student who selected ‘in another way’, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I’m a girl, and I’m teenage, so I guess it’s kind of expected now for me to feel a little unsafe when I’m out. I guess people have the power to make me feel somewhat unsafe.”  
(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“People drinking around town and then coming to the skate park or just young people coming to the skate park drunk/on other drugs because you don’t know what could happen.”  
(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“My dad makes me feel unsafe at times because he gets angry easily.”  
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

**▲▲ I’d work on making it a safer community so I can feel safe to go on runs early in the morning or late in the afternoon. I find that there are many creepy people (mostly men) in the area and many of my friends and I constantly talk about feeling unsafe in the city, the streets, neighbourhoods, parks, shops , stores, and transport stations. Just to let you know: many young girls in this area clutch keys in case something happens, hold deodorant to spray in a predators eyes. Fix this. We want to be safe and not taught that we have to be careful. ▼▼**

*(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*


*“Please listen to our voices. We want to be heard. My friends and I are all scared or men we don’t know. Please fix this. Thanks.”  
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“When I am on a form of public transport, in school, public, shops or anywhere and there are constantly people staring at me because I am my own person, confident, vocal and unique, in the best way possible that is not offensive or disrespectful. Most people see me normally, however, straight homophobic men, men who do not like gays, or men who conform to the stereotype of being straight meaning they will automatically hate, be violent toward of bully anyone who is not straight or popular. I feel as if I fall into that group and the men I face are very violent, threatening and make me feel judged and worthless.”*

*(male, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Prevalence of drugs and violence in my peers and others my age, and their family members.”*

*(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*



**In town, students from school have followed me and my friends, thrown stuff at us, harassed us, verbally abused us and more.**

*(student who selected 'in another way', 15 year-old, Aboriginal)*