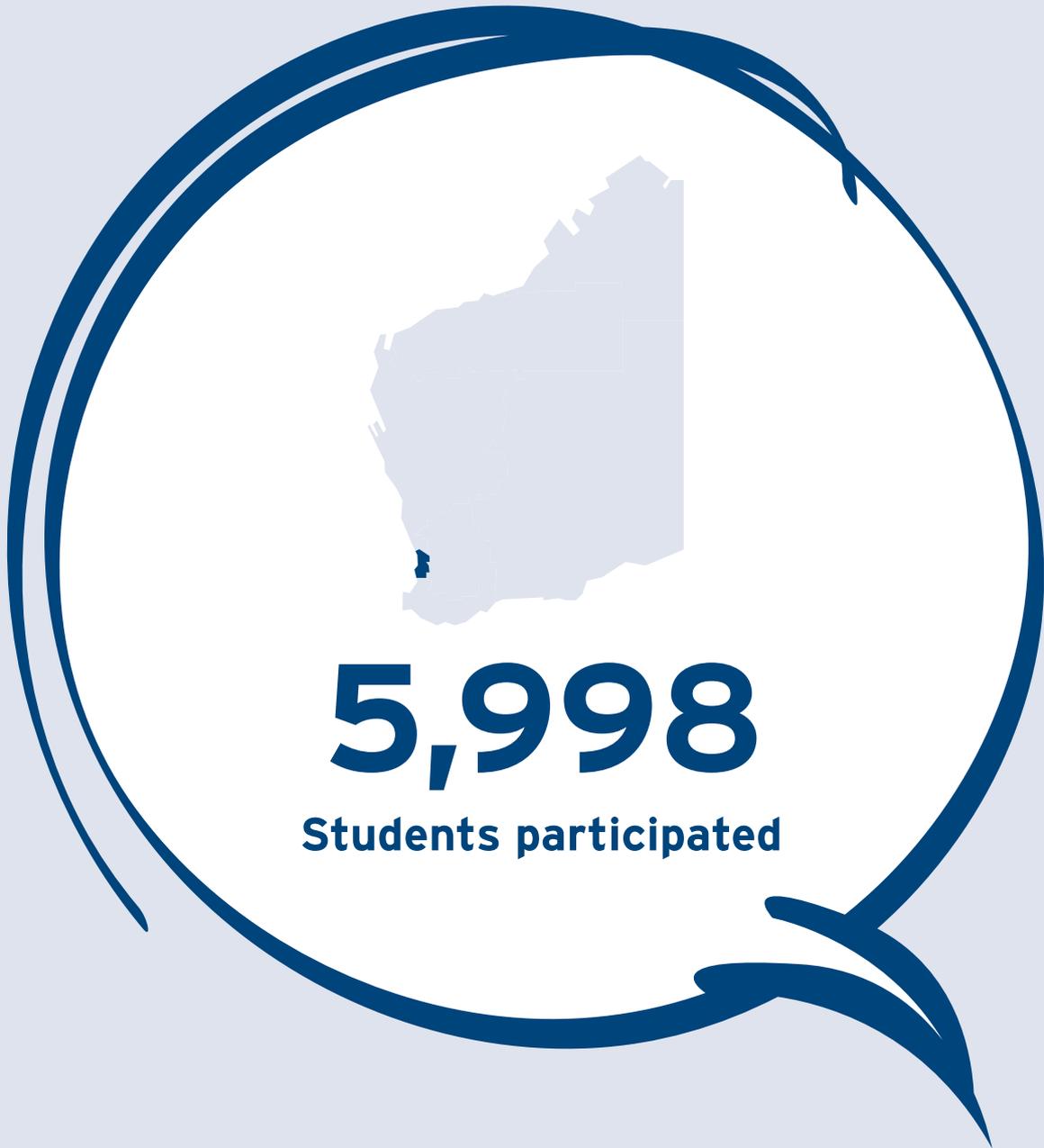


South Metropolitan



South Metropolitan key findings

Female secondary students in the South Metropolitan region **are much less likely** than their male peers **to have done vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous seven days** (48.4% vs 70.9%).



One in five (20.3%) Aboriginal secondary students in the South Metropolitan region **strongly disagreed that school is a place where they like learning** (compared to 11.6% of non-Aboriginal secondary students).

School and study problems (87.1%) were the **most commonly reported sources of stress** for Year 9 to Year 12 students, followed by mental health and wellbeing (50.1%) and family conflict (45.6%).

The majority (58.2%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region **did not work for pay in the previous 12 months**. This is the highest proportion across the state.

Only 44.8 per cent of secondary students said they know where **to get support in their local area for stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries**.



A large majority (90.8%) of students in the South Metropolitan region **said they feel safe at home all or most of the time**.



This is the lowest response across all regions.

One-quarter (24.7%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students said they were 'somewhat' or 'a lot' **worried that someone in their home or family will be fighting**.



Most Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region agreed that they **feel good about themselves (76.6%)**, are able to do things as well as other people (73.9%) and are happy with themselves (80.0%).

Aboriginal children and young people in the South Metropolitan region are **much less likely to feel safe in their local area all the time or most of the time** than non-Aboriginal children and young people (55.4% vs 67.6%).



Most Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South Metropolitan region **said they like school (70.6%)**, while only 44.7 per cent of secondary students said they like school.



Almost one-quarter (23.9%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region said there is **only sometimes or never enough food to eat at home when they are hungry** (non-Aboriginal: 8.1%).



The majority (67.9%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South Metropolitan region reported that **being at school every day is very important to them**.

Overview

A total of 5,998 students across Years 4 to 12 from 18 primary schools and 14 secondary schools in the South Metropolitan region took part in the Speaking Out Survey 2021.

Just under one-half (44.3%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region identified as girls, 52.3 per cent identified as boys and 3.4 per cent selected the option that they identify 'in another way'.

In total, 5.4 per cent of participants in the South Metropolitan region reported being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region, 94.6 per cent reported speaking English at home and almost one-quarter (23.5%) reported (also) speaking other language(s) at home. This is the highest proportion of children and young people across the state speaking another language at home. Further, of these, 5.4 per cent reported they do not speak English at home.

The other languages spoken included Chinese languages (Mandarin, Cantonese), Filipino/Tagalog, Arabic, Indonesian, and various Indian sub-continent languages (Malayalam, Hindi, Tamil).

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

"This survey is really good to get peoples feelings and I loved the questions please keep doing this it is great!" 😊

(male, 10 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I think this survey was a good idea to make sure everyone is safe/feels safe, I enjoyed this survey and it made me feel like someone was checking up on me. I found the questions easy to respond to and they were clear and simple." 😊

(female, 10 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I think it was a good idea to make this survey because you can see what people feel like their personal lives about school, at home and other places and to check if their mental health is good or not. See if they feel safe about going to school without worrying that they are gonna get bullied or get hurt. And how they think about COVID 19 to see if they are scared for it or not. I think that this survey is a amazing idea."

(female, 10 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I thought this survey was good and the questions where good I liked how there where options not to say if you didn't want to say it I liked how you didn't have to say your name or any details about you I give this survey a thumbs up and I will call the number if I need." 😊😊

(female, 11 year-old, Aboriginal)

"I really like this survey because now I know that someone is out there that wants to hear the thoughts of lots of children similar to me. I found the survey really interesting and enjoyed it. Thanks a lot Commissioner!"

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

"I like the fact that these people want to listen to what we have to say on these important matters, I feel very appreciated." Thank u :)

(student who selected 'in another way', 13 year-old, Aboriginal)

"I think this survey is a really good thing because it allows for young people voices to be heard. Which I think is important because it shows that we matter and have a say. I also think it's good because based on the results found things can change to better the well-being of you people."

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

Healthy and connected

“Don’t tell boys to toughen up when they have a problem and listen to people when they have issues.”

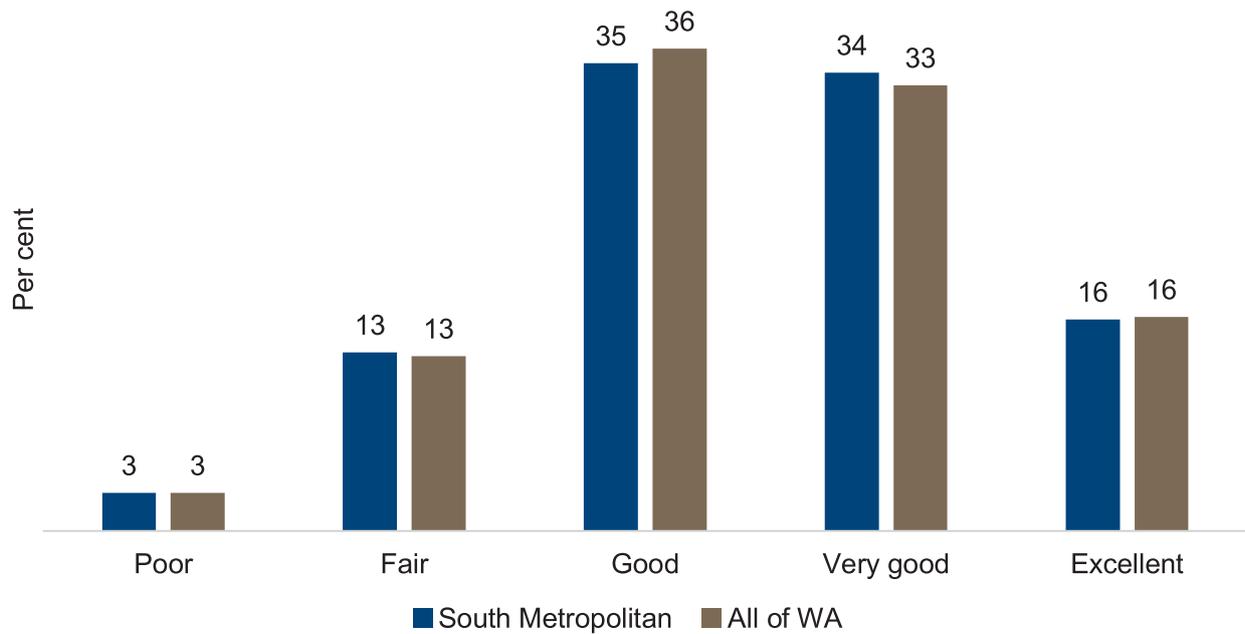
(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

Physical health

Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region, 49.4 per cent reported that their health is very good or excellent (Years 4–6: 59.5%; Years 7–12: 43.8%), while 16.0 per cent reported that their health is poor or fair (Years 4–6: 8.7%; Years 7–12: 20.2%).

These results are similar to those of students across the state.

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



One-quarter (24.6%) of secondary students reported they have long-term health problems, while 11.3 per cent reported they have a long-term 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 one-half (51.3%) of secondary students reported physical activity, sport or exercise was ‘definitely’ an important part of their life. One in five (20.1%) secondary students reported they had done vigorous exercise seven or more times in the previous week, while 40.0 per cent reported they had exercised three to six times in the previous week.

Female secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are much less likely than their male peers to have done vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous seven days (48.4% vs 70.9%).

These results are consistent with those across the WA.

Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 40.2 per cent reported caring very much about how they look (Years 4–6: 31.4%; Years 7–12: 44.9%) and 30.9 per cent reported they care some (Years 4–6: 27.6%; Years 7–12: 32.8%).
- 37.4 per cent reported they care very much about eating healthy food (Years 4–6: 45.3%; Years 7–12: 33.1%) and 46.7 per cent reported they care some (Years 4–6: 43.4%; Years 7–12: 48.6%).
- One-quarter (26.0%) of secondary students reported eating fruit only a few times a week or less.
- 54.4 per cent reported they eat breakfast every day (Years 4–6: 70.5%; Years 7–12: 45.5%), while 5.6 per cent reported they never eat breakfast (Years 4–6: 1.6%; Years 7–12: 7.9%).
- Female secondary students are much less likely than their male peers to eat breakfast every day (67.1% vs 83.0%).
- Two-thirds (67.9%) reported brushing their teeth twice or more the previous day (Years 4–6: 69.3%; Years 7–12: 67.2%) and 43.2 per cent reported having ever had a filling (Years 4–6: 38.0%; Years 7–12: 46.2%).

- 69.5 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students reported going to sleep on a school night before 9pm, while 38.5 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students reported going to sleep on a school night before 10pm.

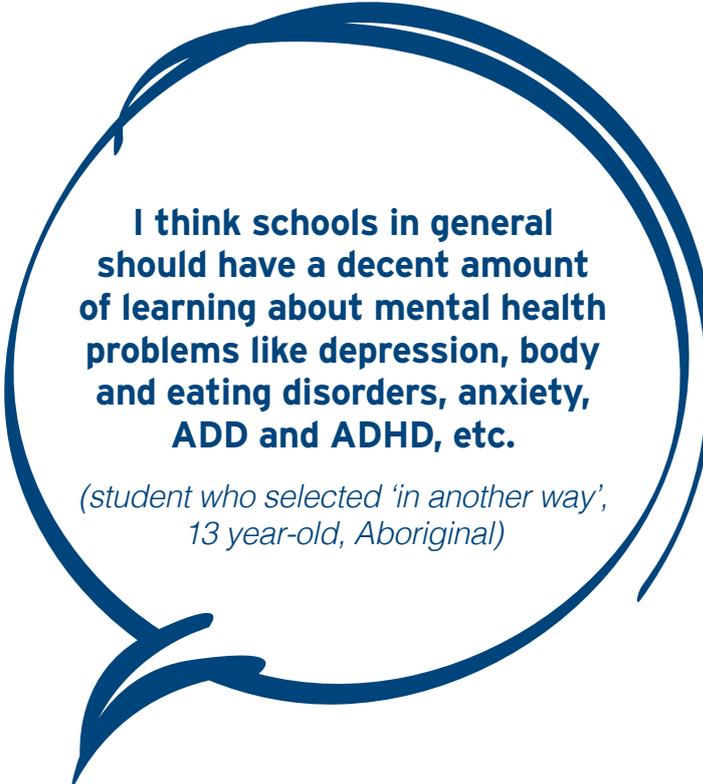
These results are consistent with those across the state.

Mental health

Of the Year 4 to Year 12 students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region, 6.9 is the mean life satisfaction (on a scale from 0 to 10), (Years 4–6: 7.7; Years 7–12: 6.4). The mean life satisfaction across all of WA is 6.8.

More than three-fifths (62.6%) of students reported a high life satisfaction (7 to 10) (Years 4–6: 77.5%; Years 7–12: 54.2%) and 15.3 per cent reported a low life satisfaction (0 to 4) (Years 4–6: 8.2%; Years 7–12: 19.3%).

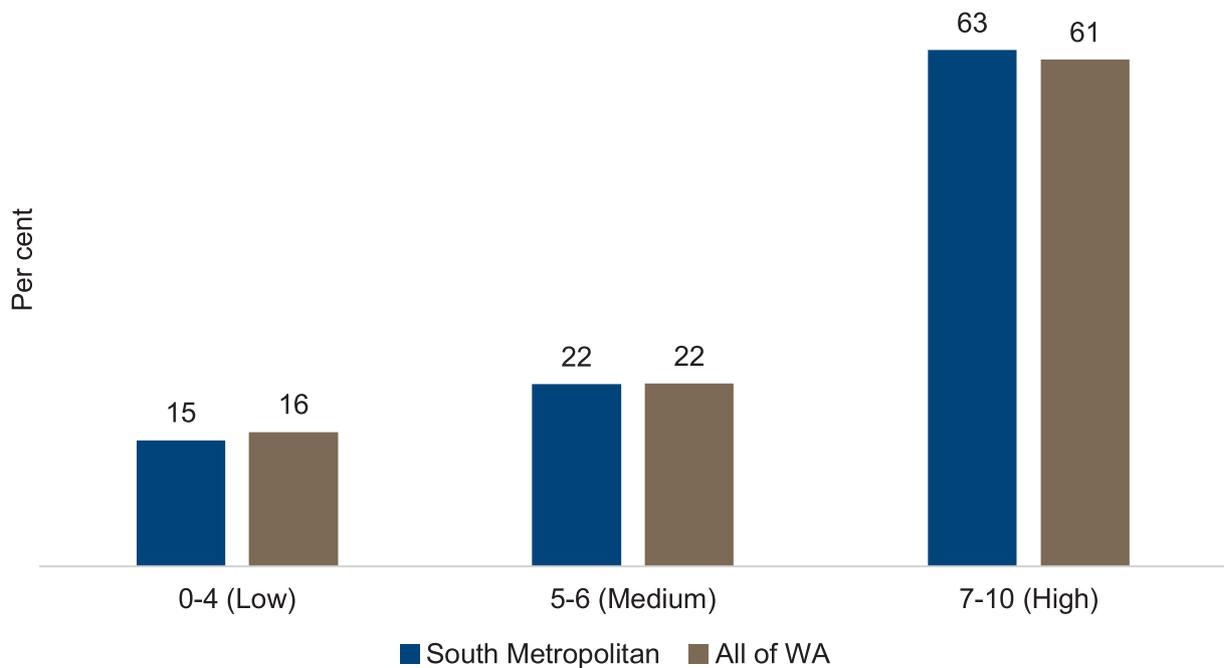
These results are consistent with the rest of the state.



I think schools in general should have a decent amount of learning about mental health problems like depression, body and eating disorders, anxiety, ADD and ADHD, etc.

(student who selected 'in another way', 13 year-old, Aboriginal)

Proportion of Year 4 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 Metropolitan region:

- 49.7 per cent agreed (Years 4–6: 45.2%; Years 7–12: 52.1%) and 28.4 per cent strongly agreed they are happy with themselves (Years 4–6: 45.8%; Years 7–12: 18.7%).
- 45.7 per cent agreed (Years 4–6: 40.7%; Years 7–12: 48.5%) and 30.0 per cent strongly agreed they feel good about themselves (Years 4–6: 49.1%; Years 7–12: 19.5%).
- 49.7 per cent of secondary students agreed and 22.3 per cent strongly agreed they can deal with things that happen in their life.
- In Years 9 to 12, 58.1 per cent reported they had felt sad, blue or depressed for two or more weeks in a row in the previous 12 months.

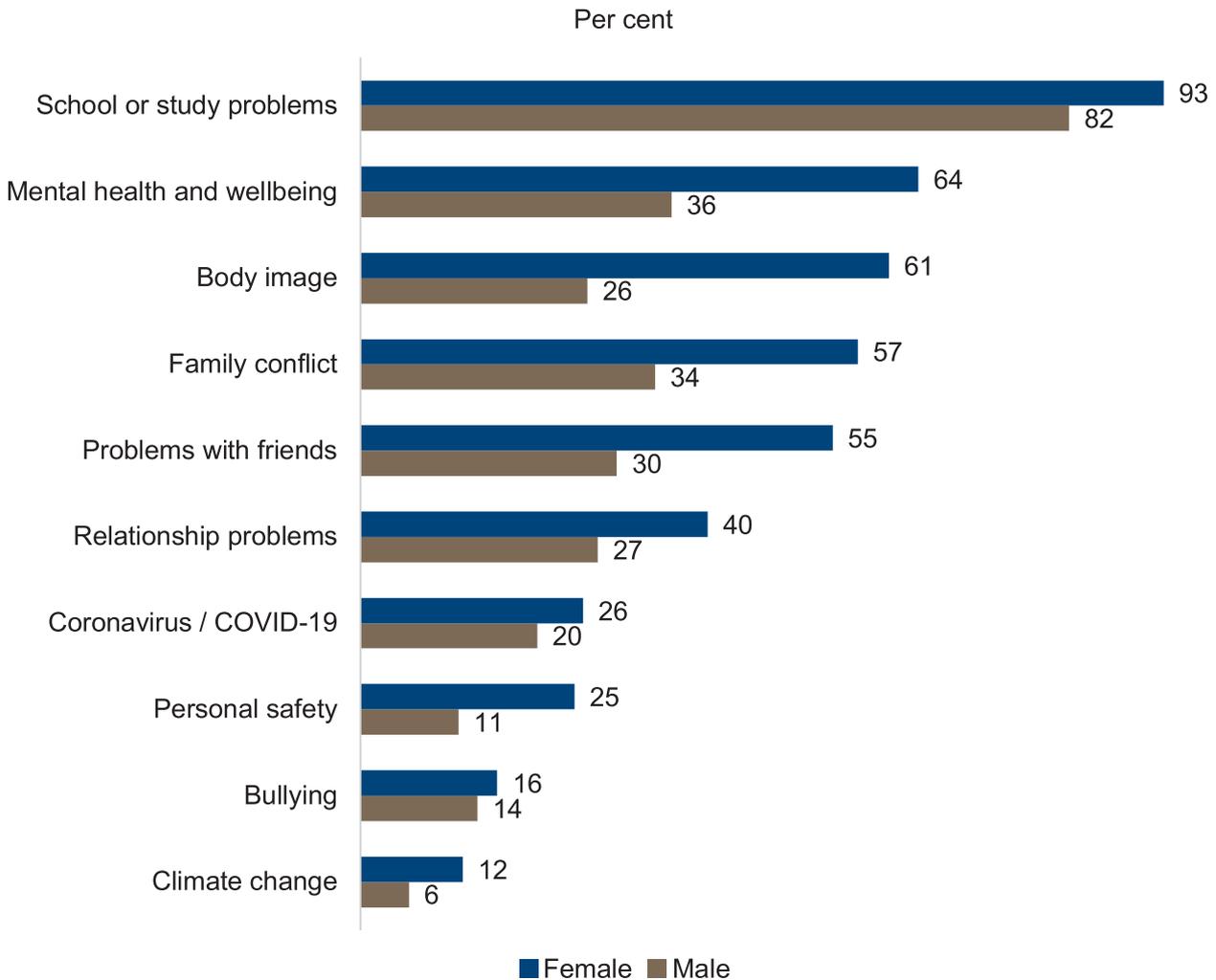
Female secondary students are much more likely than their male peers to report they are not happy with themselves (39.0% vs 19.1%), do not feel good about themselves (44.4% vs 20.3%) and that they are not able to do things as well as other people (27.8% vs 18.3%).

These results are consistent with the results for students across WA.

Year 9 to Year 12 students were also asked about sources of stress in the previous 12 months. School and study problems (87.1%) are the most commonly reported source of stress, followed by mental health and wellbeing (50.1%), family conflict (45.6%), body image (42.6%) and problems with friends (41.3%).

There are also gender differences in the responses, with greater proportions of female students reporting being affected by stress across all sources.

Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students reporting sources of stress in the last 12 months by gender



Notably, females are more than twice as likely to report body image and personal safety as stressors compared to males.

These gender differences are consistent with the results across the state.

Access to support for physical and mental health

Two-thirds (66.6%) of secondary students said they know where to get support in their school for stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries. However, only 44.8 per cent said they know where to get

support in their local area for stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries. This is the lowest response across all regions.

Almost two-fifths (38.3%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region reported they had received help for problems with stress, anxiety, depression or other emotional health worries in the previous 12 months (female: 45.3% and male: 31.6%).

One-quarter (25.0%) 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 (60.0%) of these students reported not seeing someone for their health due to feeling embarrassment or shame, while 36.7 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 Metropolitan region were parents (or someone who acts as a parent) (82.3%), friends including boyfriend or girlfriend (68.2%), other family (66.1%), school psychologist, school chaplain or school nurse (53.6%) and doctor or GP (50.3%).

Of the students who had asked for help, 84.3 per cent found friends including a boyfriend or girlfriend helpful, 79.0 per cent found their parents helpful, 77.6 per cent found their other family helpful, and 75.3 per cent found a

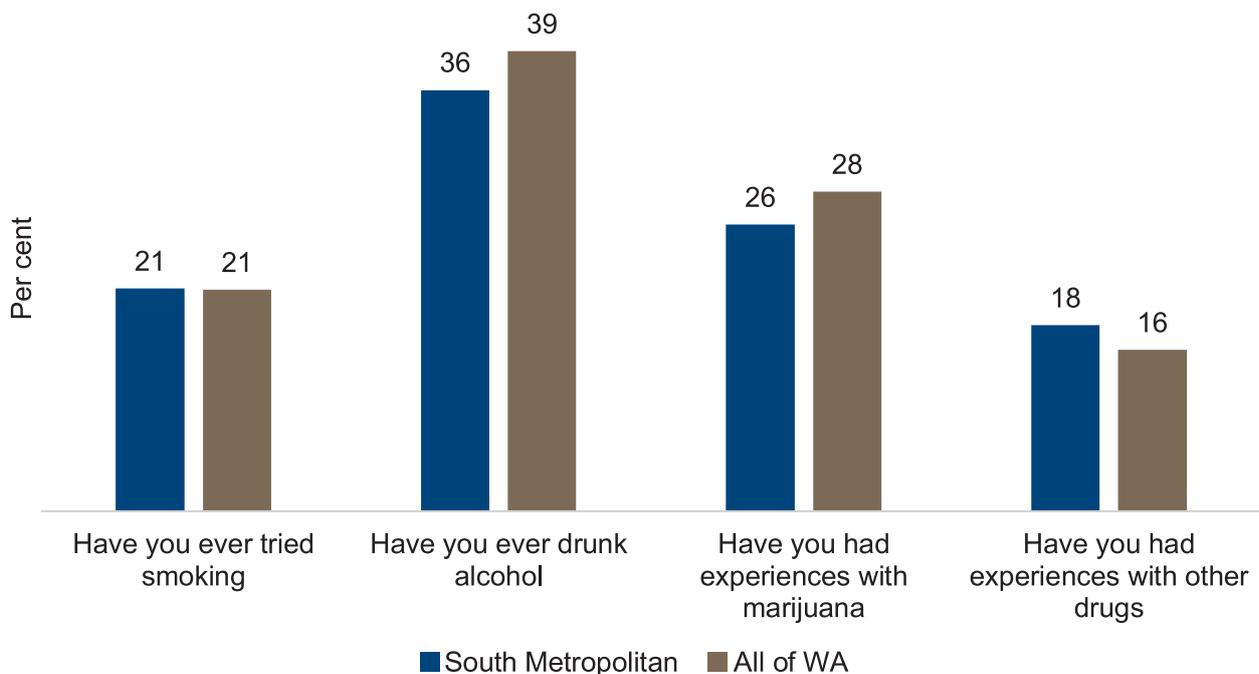
doctor or GP helpful and 62.8 per cent found a school psychologist, school chaplain or school nurse helpful.

Risk-taking and healthy behaviours

Alcohol and other drugs

One-fifth (21.0%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region reported they have tried smoking, while one-third have tried alcohol (36.2%). Year 9 to Year 12 students were also asked if they had experiences with marijuana or other drugs. Over one-quarter (25.9%) reported they had experiences with marijuana, while 18.2 per cent had experiences with other drugs.

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’.

Of the secondary students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 76.3 per cent reported having learnt 'some' or 'a lot' about alcohol and 72.4 per cent had learnt about cigarettes/smoking at school (all of WA: 73.0% and 68.5% respectively).
- 50.9 per cent said they had learnt 'some' or 'a lot' about marijuana and 55.7 per cent had learnt 'some' or 'a lot' about other drugs at school (all of WA: 50.0% and 55.0% respectively).
- 74.9 per cent thought people their age should not use any substances including cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana or other drugs (all of WA: 72.0%).

Most secondary students in the South Metropolitan region feel like they know enough about the health impacts of alcohol (88.1%) or smoking (90.3%), however fewer feel like they know enough about the health impacts of marijuana (63.6%). These results are broadly consistent with the rest of WA.

Sexual health

Just over one-half (55.5%) of secondary students reported they had learnt 'a lot' or 'some' about sexual health and ways to support their sexual health at school, while 45.6 per cent reported they had learnt 'a lot' or 'some' about pregnancy and contraception at school.

One-quarter (24.6%) of Year 7 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region said they had learnt nothing about pregnancy and contraception at school.

Female secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are less likely than their male peers to report they had learnt 'a lot' or 'some' about sexual health at school (48.0% vs 62.3%).

Consistent with the above results, almost one-

half (46.7%) of secondary students reported they feel they don't know enough about sexual health and ways to support their sexual health or they aren't sure (female: 52.1%; male: 42.9%). A similar proportion (52.9%) reported they feel they don't know enough about pregnancy and contraception or they aren't sure (female: 54.3%; male: 52.4%).

More than four in ten (43.2%) secondary students in the South Metropolitan region do not know or are unsure about where to go if they need help for something about their reproductive or sexual health (all of WA: 40.8%).

In Years 9 to 12, 53.6 per cent of female students and 31.6 per cent of male students reported they had ever been sent unwanted sexual material, such as pornographic pictures, videos or words (all of WA: 57.3% and 31.4% respectively).

Problematic behaviours and emotions related to being online

One-third (33.9%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students said they feel bothered 'fairly often' or 'very often' when they cannot be on the internet (Years 4–6: 29.8%; Years 7–12: 35.8%), while 26.4 per cent said they feel bothered 'fairly often' or 'very often' when they cannot play electronic games (Years 4–6: 31.5%; Years 7–12: 24.2%).

When it comes to mobile phone usage, one-third (33.4%) of male and 45.4 per cent of female secondary students said they feel bothered 'fairly often' or 'very often' when they cannot use their mobile phone. Further, 10.5 per cent of male and 17.4 per cent of female secondary students said they go without eating or sleeping either fairly often or very often because of their mobile phone.

These results are consistent with those across the state.

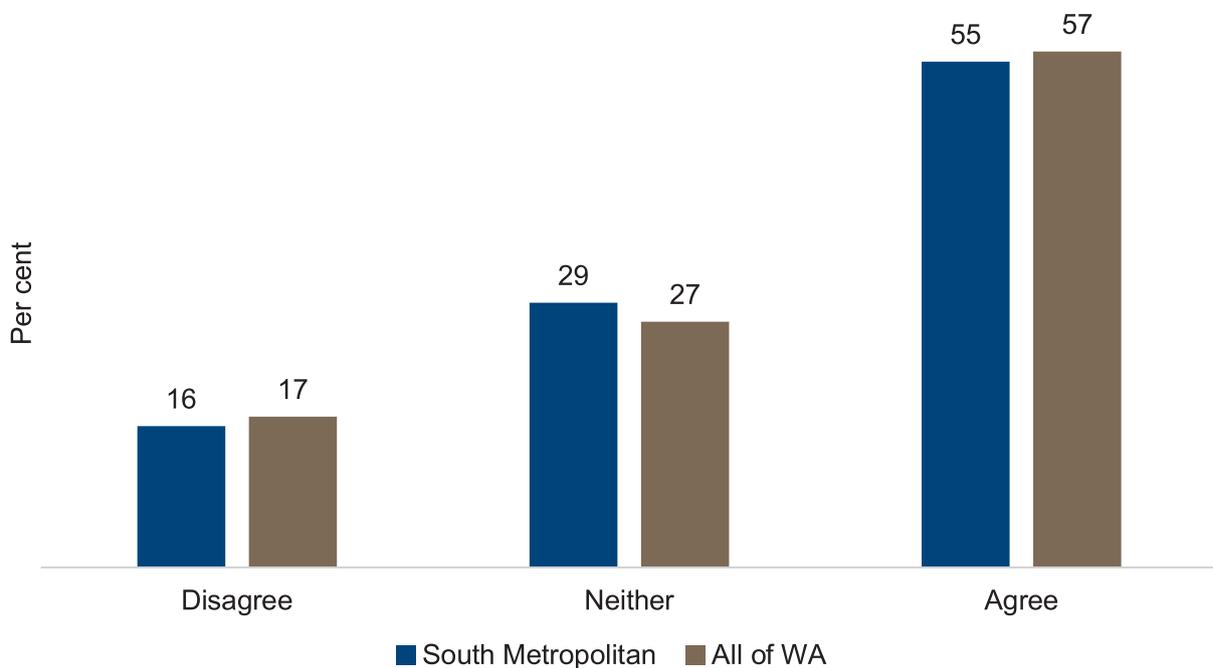
Connection to community

Most (84.9%) Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South Metropolitan region agreed they like where they live and similarly, 80.3 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed (all of WA: 86.0% and 79.3% respectively).

Almost three-quarters (72.2%) of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed they belong in their community, while 55.4 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.

These results are consistent with those across WA.

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



Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 70.2 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that their neighbours are friendly, while 63.9 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.
- 55.0 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that when they go to the shops the people there are friendly, while 64.3 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.
- 72.2 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students agreed that there are lots of fun things to do where they live, while 50.2 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.

- 85.6 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 85.1 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students agreed.

These results are consistent with the responses across all of WA.

In terms of other activities outside of school, of the students in the South Metropolitan region:

- 33.8 per cent said they spend time being active outdoors outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 37.7%; Years 7–12: 31.8%). This is the lowest result across all regions.

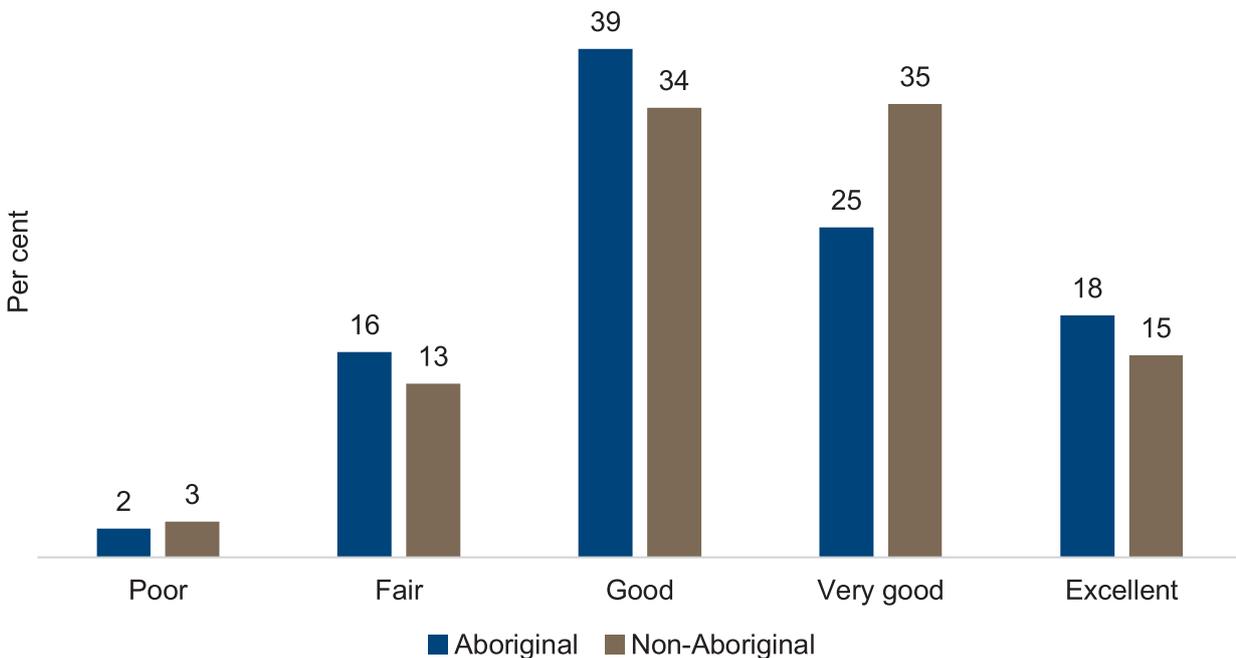
- 36.8 per cent said they spend time practising or playing a sport outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 38.9%; Years 7–12: 35.6%).
- 31.1 per cent said they spend time hanging out with friends outside of school every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 26.9%; Years 7–12: 33.4%).
- 57.6 per cent of male and 40.6 per cent of female students reported playing games on a game console, computer, or tablet every day or almost every day.

Unless otherwise stated, these results are consistent with those across the state.

Aboriginal children’s and young people’s views on feeling healthy and connected

Of the Aboriginal students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region, 43.5 per cent rated their health as very good or excellent; this is less than non-Aboriginal students (49.9%).

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



Nearly three-fifths (58.7%) of the Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region reported that physical activity, sport or exercise is ‘definitely’ an important part of their life, slightly more than non-Aboriginal students (51.0%). Further, over one-half (55.3%) reported they had done vigorous exercise three or more times in the previous

week, consistent with 60.5 per cent for non-Aboriginal students.

Three-fifths (61.1%) of Aboriginal students reported high life satisfaction, while 15.6 per cent reported a low life satisfaction. These results are consistent with those of non-Aboriginal students in the region.

Most Aboriginal students agreed with the following statements:

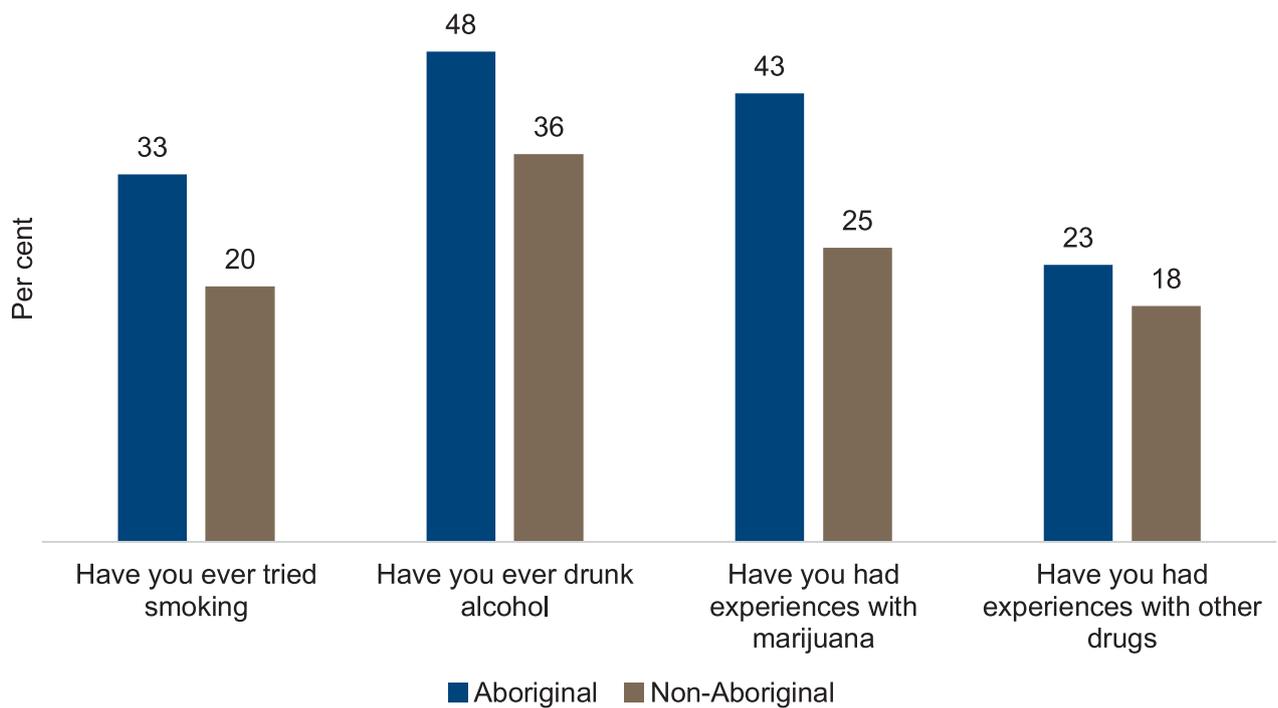
- I feel good about myself (76.6%).
- I am able to do things as well as most people (73.9%).
- I am happy with myself (80.0%).

The top three stressors reported by Aboriginal Year 9 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region are school or study problems (82.1%), family conflict (50.1%) and

mental health and wellbeing (42.5%). Notably, compared to non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students are more likely to be stressed about personal safety (28.6% vs 18.1%) and less likely to be stressed by body image (33.9% vs 42.7%).

Aboriginal secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are more likely to have tried smoking and drunk alcohol than non-Aboriginal secondary students (smoking: 33.4% vs 20.4%; alcohol: 47.7% vs 35.8%).

Proportion of students 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 than non-Aboriginal students (42.8% vs 24.9%), and are as likely to have had experiences with other drugs (22.9% vs 18.1%).

In terms of connection to culture and community, of the Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region:

- 67.4 per cent said they know their family's country (all of WA: 69.6%), and of these students 77.0 per cent said they spend time on their family's country (all of WA: 77.4%).
- 18.0 per cent said they talk Aboriginal language 'some' or 'a lot' (all of WA: 27.1%) and 40.7 per cent said they talk none (all of WA: 37.1%).
- 46.9 per cent said they do cultural or traditional activities with their family (all of WA: 47.8%).

Aboriginal children and young people in the South Metropolitan region are much more likely to report they do cultural or traditional activities with their family than those in the North Metropolitan region (46.9% vs 34.3%).

Most Aboriginal children (Years 4 to 6) in the South Metropolitan region like where they live and feel like they belong in their community (85.4% and 73.8% respectively). This is consistent with their non-Aboriginal peers (86.1% and 72.7%). A lower proportion of Aboriginal secondary students like where they live and feel like they belong in their community (77.1% and 59.1% respectively), which is consistent with their non-Aboriginal peers (80.5% and 55.1%).

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region had similar views on whether there are fun things to do in their community or outdoor places to go, like parks and skate parks, with students in Years 4 to 6 more likely to agree than secondary students.

What do children and young people in the South Metropolitan region 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

“To teach people more about mental health earlier in life, because people do get mentally ill at a young age.”

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

“They could come together like once a month and talk or just even interact with the other families and ask how we and everyone else is doing.”

(female, 12 year-old, Aboriginal)

“Understanding that mental health issues are real, and that if a child says they aren't doing so well, they should listen and help instead of dismiss them. I think people should just spread more awareness because mental illness and mental health issues are on an increase and not listening to your children can make it worse.”

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

“Just try to actually listen to us and try not to invalidate our feelings or victim-blame us in any sort of manner.”

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

“Don’t make your children feel ashamed to be feeling these emotions. Their problems may not seem big to you but things halve change and we face new problems that you may not understand. Don’t judge before you understand.”

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

“Adults in general could start talking about these topics and then students might open up and think they aren’t the alone.”

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

Feeling anxiety, depression or sadness

“I’m worried about my well-being in the future, I’ve been dealing with a lot of stress and anxiety. I’ve been having a few panic attacks too...”

(female, 11 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“I am quite sensitive to insults and criticism and I can sometimes hurt myself to rid myself of the pain.”

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

“Sometimes I feel sad... notice.”

(student who selected ‘in another way’, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

▲▲ They could be more helpful by letting me be alone when I need to, not asking me if I’m okay when they see that I’m not, not to crowd me when they see something is wrong and to let me walk out when needed. ▼▼

(female, 13 year-old, Aboriginal)

“I feel as if all the things I am experiencing are all in my head and I make excuses for them saying I’m just tired or stressed when really I think it’s more than that and i can’t tell anyone about it because I feel they won’t believe me or think I’m just being sensitive and dramatic.”

(female, 13 year-old, Aboriginal)

“I have never really had long term depression but my mind has gone through some dark places at times but I don’t reach out because I don’t want other people knowing about my pain so I put on a fake smile.”

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

“There is such a stigma around men’s mental health. If I ever admit to being sad or reach out, it is used against me and feel weak, this is painful for me. Some days I feel like I might do something I regret.”

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

Talking about getting support

“It is hard to talk to my parents about and I feel like they don’t get it. When I say I think I might have depression they shut down the idea and say something stupid like it is hormones. I am not old enough to go to a doctor and see myself so I do not know how to get the right treatment.”

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

“It’s very hard to reach out, in terms of mental health. Especially when you cannot even tell your own parents/guardians because you’re scared and ashamed of your own feelings and that you’ll be brushed off. I feel like my problems are not valid enough for someone to listen, it gets very hard when you’re out of options and there’s only yourself.”

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

“I feel like a school therapist would be nice, I know there are a lot of people in my school that struggle with mental health and anxiety and I think an actual therapist with the correct qualifications would help immense because some adults / parents don’t allow their children to get proper help.”

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

“I’ve also been to a GP and they’ve said I have ADHD but I have to go back there to get diagnosed, but my dad hasn’t been bothered to go get me diagnosed. And then I tell some of the teachers that I have ADHD so they know why I am acting this way and why I struggle with these things and the associate principle yells at me for it cause ‘if you haven’t been diagnosed, you do not have it.’”

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

“Maybe when we tell the school something and we don’t want our parents to know. You shouldn’t tell them, why? Because we trusted you with this information and it annoys us and scares us when our parents want to talk to us about what we told you!!! I’m sorry but people need to fix this situation it makes us kids scared and not want to open up about anything.”

(female, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

“Yes! There are 5 year waiting times for public mental health places and that’s on emergency by the way, and all private ones are booked out not like my mum can afford the ridiculous prices anyways, she had to work 15 hour shifts for 2 weeks straight to afford a private and we can’t find any!” (student who selected ‘in another way’,

(15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“If schools had more people that students can talk to as sometimes the waiting list to see the school psych can be more than four weeks long. For adults to be more educated on mental health and the signs of bad mental health.”

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

“...recognise that mental health comes in diff forms , introduce people that are friendly, experiences and diverse including educated people who know about mental health, stigmas around mental health, propers coping mechanisms and education and know gay and queer education.”

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

Views on their local area

In total, 564 students from the South Metropolitan region 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 this region, the top things that they would like to change in their local area were:

- More, upgraded outdoor spaces or parks.
- More fun activities to do and places to hang out.
- Would like more, closer shops, a mall, movies, greater diversity.
- People in the local area are scary, not nice or friendly.

“I would change the fact that there are not enough shops and parks nearby. Even tho there are parks nearby they are just old and not really fun.”

(female, 11 year-old, Aboriginal)

“Maybe some swings at my local park area.”

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

“I just want to have a nice park where it’s just a lake lots of trees and a few benches.”

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

“There used to be a dirt bike track near where I live, but the school next door took it down. All the local boys I know miss it and wish there was another one we could ride.”

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

“The features of the park near our house. So many people have asked for changes there for so many years, but the government has not done anything yet. For example, there are no drinking fountains there but people exercise a lot.”

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

“To have less sketchy people around so my sisters and I could walk to the park and not have to be worried someone is following us.”

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

“Facilities and more colour. It has been 2 years since I moved to my area now. I used to live around Morley, and there, everything was like, colourful and lots of community facilities for children and young adults, even when there is an event of some sort, example Christmas, there would be posters around, shops giving out calendar, and many more fun stuff. But here where I live now, we don’t even get any type of festive vibes and just feels like the place is black and white. So, I would really like that to be changed.”

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

“Stop having racist people around my place.”

(male, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

“I would add a lot more foot paths for safer and easier access for school students walking or riding their bikes to and from school.”

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

“Have more areas for teenagers . I live in Rivertown and the areas they are really good if your a young child but if your a teenager the only places you can really hangout is maccas which is unhealthy and just not fun.”

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

“I would put in a park with a massive playground for the older ages (15-19) not something small and childish for little kids to play on. And it would have a huge flying fox, and heaps of swings. And a massive treehouse, that has heaps of rooms that kids can ‘rent’ and turn into a hang out space. It would have a massive chalk board wall, with buckets of chalk beside it.”

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

“Build a hub where teenagers could get together and just hangout and chill, or study or eat.”

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

“I would help all the homeless people, provide support for them and change the supply of drugs around here I would help the town avoid smoking crack or shooting up because it’s so sad to see people that can’t control themselves or off with the fairy’s because they are high on drugs.”

(female, 15 year-old, Aboriginal)

“I’d like the park to be renovated, since my neighbourhood is close to primary and high schools, so there are lots of children who live there. I think it would be nice if they had access to a nicer playground and park to play with.”

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

“To make more leisure outdoor areas where people can chill and hang out with benches, barbecues. To also maintain the facilities that are already running.”

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

Learning and participating

▲▲ There is so much pressure on students to succeed, we are told of you fail now your entire life is decided. We are always compared and pitted against each other for the best marks. ▲▲

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

Attendance

Over one-half (56.7%) of students in the South Metropolitan region said it is very important to them to be at school every day (Years 4–6: 67.4%; Years 7–12: 50.8%), while 36.6 per cent (Years 4–6: 29.2%; Years 7–12: 40.7%) said it is somewhat important.

Just over one in ten (11.2%) students in the South Metropolitan region said that if they missed school in 2020 due to COVID-19 that it worried them a lot, while 39.8 per cent said it worried them a little.⁵

Of the secondary students surveyed, 17.6 per cent reported they had been suspended from school. This is consistent with the results in the North Metropolitan region (15.5%) but lower than most other regions across WA (excluding the South West).

A similar proportion of secondary students (17.9%) reported they had waggged school in the previous 12 months. Female secondary students are just as likely as their male peers to wag school.

Around three-fifths (58.2%) of students reported they had attended the same school since beginning primary or secondary school, while the remainder had attended multiple schools.

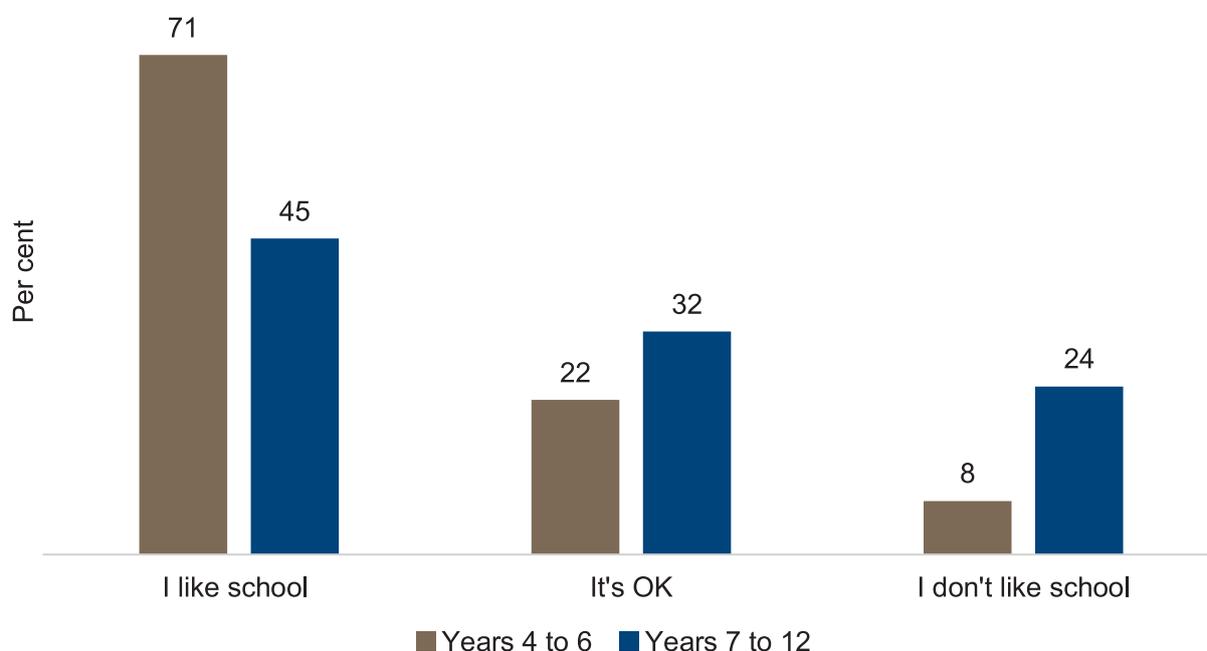
When it comes to learning activities outside of school, almost one-half (45.3%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region spend time doing homework every day or almost every day (Years 4–6: 50.6%; Years 7–12: 42.4%). These results are similar to those for the North Metropolitan region but higher than all other regions.

Liking school and sense of belonging

Most Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South Metropolitan region said they like school (70.6%), while only 44.7 per cent of secondary students said they like school.

⁵ It should be noted that in the 2021 school year when the survey was completed the State Government postponed the start of Term 1 by one week in the Perth Metropolitan area. Similarly, in 2020 there was one week where parents were encouraged to keep their children at home and do remote learning. Source: WA Department of Education, 2020-21 and 2021-22 [Annual reports](#).

Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students reporting how they feel about school



At the same time, three-quarters (73.2%) of secondary students feel like they belong at their school. One-quarter (25.5%) of male secondary students strongly agree that they feel like they belong at school, compared to 15.8 per cent of female students.

Most students (76.6%) agreed they feel happy at school (Years 4–6: 91.4%; Years 7–12: 68.4%), with a similar proportion (75.7%) agreeing they like learning at school (Years 4–6: 88.5%; Years 7–12: 68.5%).

Two-thirds (67.6%) of students said they usually get along with classmates (Years 4–6: 67.5%; Years 7–12: 67.6%), with a similar proportion (66.1%) saying they usually get along with their teachers (Years 4–6: 77.0%; Years 7–12: 60.0%).

One-third (34.5%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students reported that if needed, they almost always get help from teachers in class (Years 4–6: 46.6%; Years 7–12: 27.7%), while 48.6 per cent reported they get it sometimes (Years 4–6: 42.0%; Years 7–12: 52.3%). Around one

in seven (15.2%) secondary students said they almost never get the help that they need.

Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- Four-fifths (80.1%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students reported it is 'pretty much' or 'very much' true there is a teacher or another adult in the school who believes they will achieve good things (Years 4–6: 92.1%; Years 7–12: 73.4%).
- 70.6 per cent said it is 'pretty much' or 'very much' true that a teacher or another adult at their school really cares about them (Years 4–6: 87.4%; Years 7–12: 61.2%).
- 54.5 per cent said their parents or someone in their family often ask about schoolwork/homework (Years 4–6: 57.6%; Years 7–12: 52.8%).

These results are broadly consistent with those across the state.

Feeling safe at school

Just over one-third (35.2%) of students said they feel safe at school all the time (Years 4–6: 43.5%; Years 7–12: 30.5%), while 43.4 per cent said they feel safe at school most of the time (Years 4–6: 38.6%; Years 7–12: 46.1%). These results are consistent with those across the state.

Over one-third (34.9%) reported they had been bullied or cyberbullied (or both) by students from their school. In terms of the nature of the bullying, 22.4 per cent had been bullied, 2.7 per cent had been cyberbullied, and 9.8 per cent had been both bullied and cyberbullied.

Among students who reported having ever been bullied or cyberbullied (or both), 39.9 per cent reported this had happened in the previous three months. Of these students, 84.3 per cent had been bullied at school and 54.9 per cent had been bullied online.

One in seven (14.3%) students reported they had missed school in the past because they were afraid someone might bully them (Years 4–6: 13.7%; Years 7–12: 14.7%). Female students are more likely to report this compared to male students (17.7% vs 10.2%).

These results are consistent with those across WA.

Transition from school

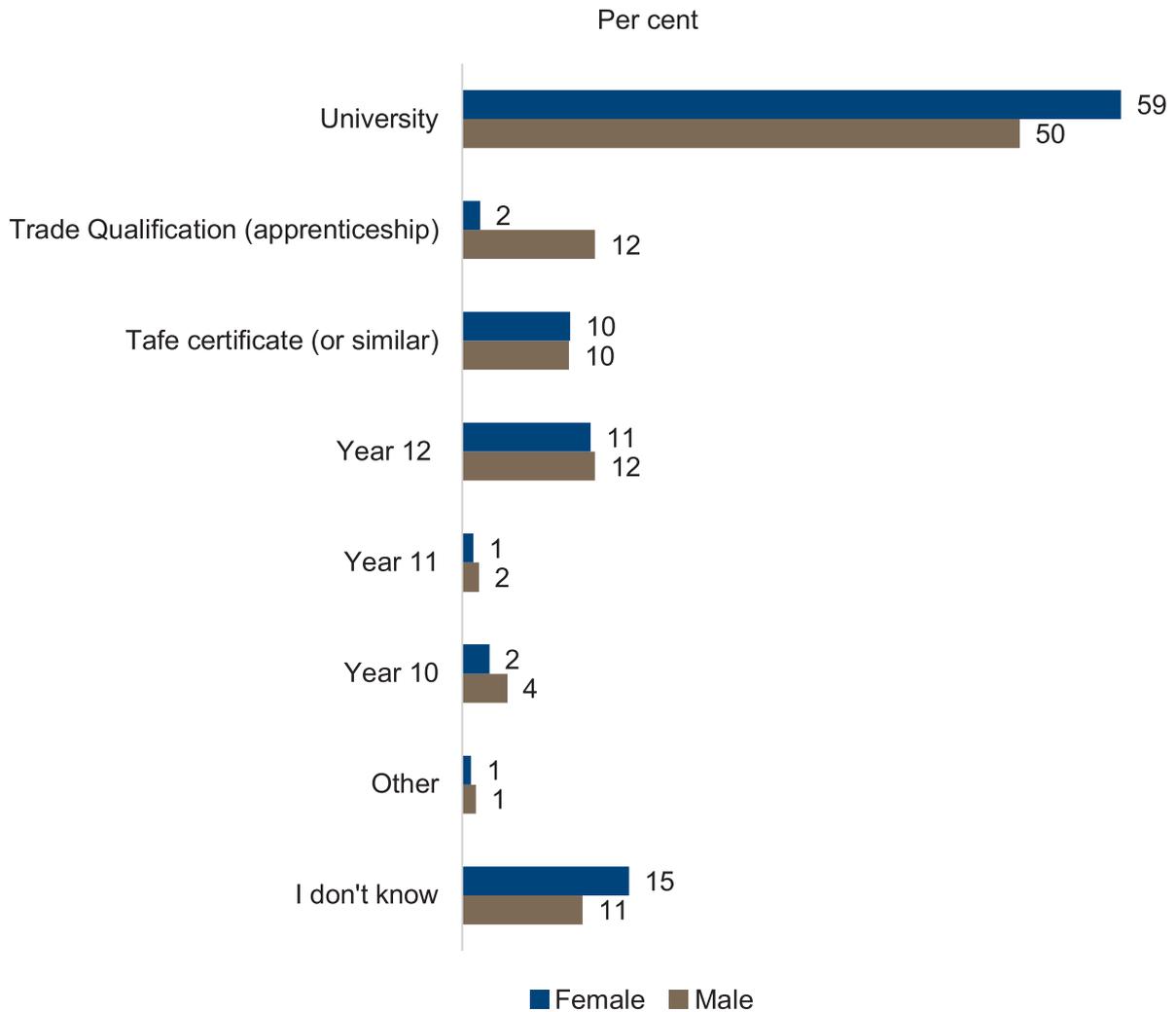
Over one-half (53.2%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region reported they want to attend university, while 16.2 per cent do not intend to go on to further study after secondary school.

Female secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are more likely than male secondary students to want to go to university, while male secondary students are much more likely to be planning to do a trade qualification.

■ ■ I would like for transperth buses to be in my suburb as there are no form of public transport at all (Oakford, Western Australia 6121) We often have power outages and the internet is horrendous and I often struggle to complete homework and assignments due to the internet failures. ■ ■

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

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



The majority of secondary students (63.5%) 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.

The majority (58.2%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region did not work for pay in the previous 12 months. This is the highest proportion across the state. Just under

one-quarter (24.3%) of secondary students in the South Metropolitan region reported having a regular part-time job. This is the lowest proportion across the state.

Most young people reported working so they could have money of their own to spend on things they want (64.4%), while 13.0 per cent said it is to get skills and experience.

Independence and autonomy

Of the Year 7 to Year 12 students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 79.5 per cent said they are allowed to go to and from school on their own.
- 73.3 per cent said they are allowed to go places other than school on their own.
- 30.3 per cent said they are allowed to go out alone at night in their local area.

Female young people in the region are less likely to be allowed to do things on their own than their male peers, including going out alone at night (21.5% vs 36.7%) or cycling on main roads without an adult (40.2% vs 58.9%).

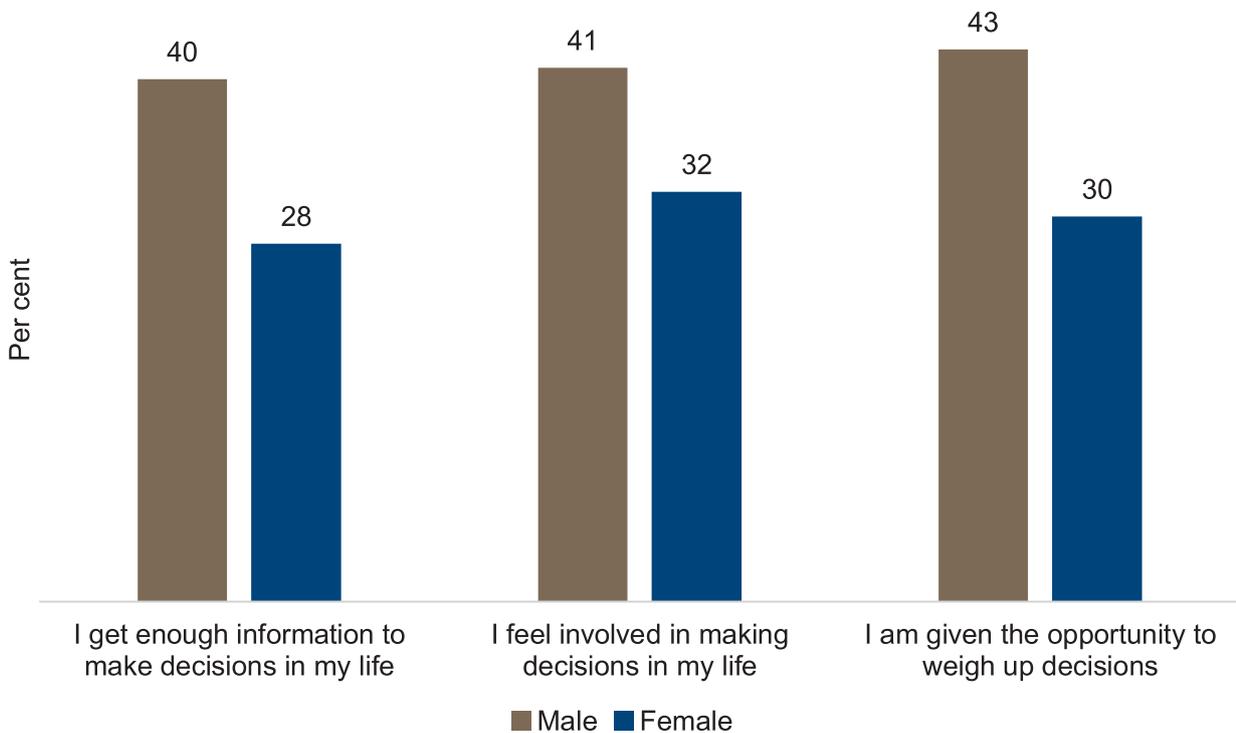
These results are similar to those across the state.

Most secondary students in the South Metropolitan region agreed that they get enough information to make decisions in their life (81.1%), feel involved in making decisions in their life (80.1%) and are given the opportunity to weigh up decisions (80.8%).

Notably, female students are less likely to strongly agree with all three statements compared to their male peers.

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

Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students reporting they strongly agree they feel involved in making decisions in their life



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

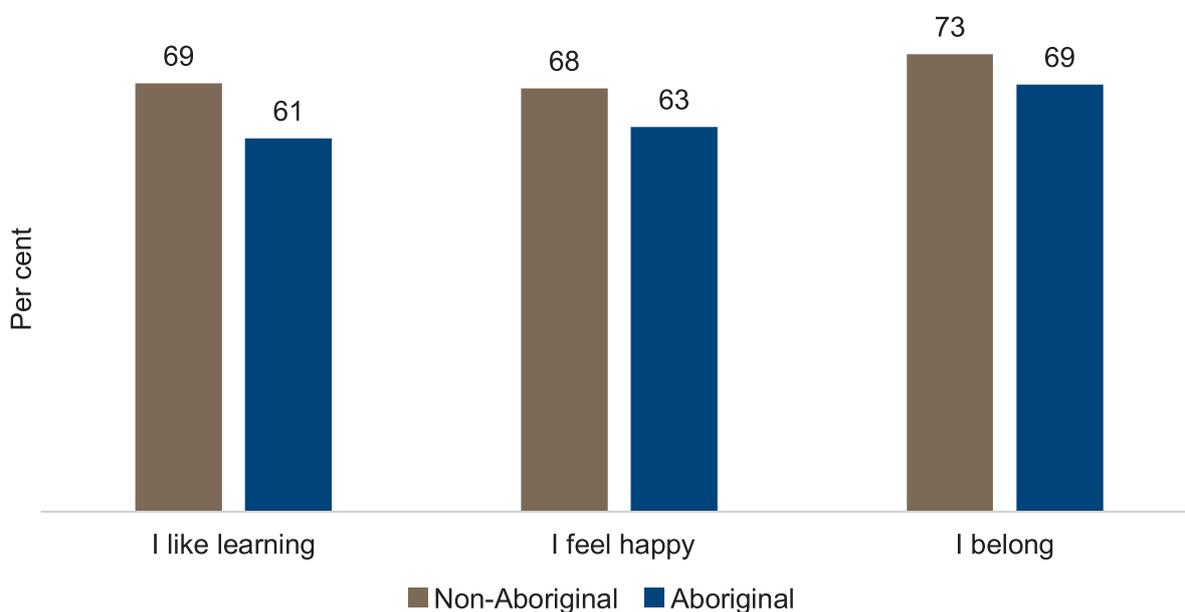
Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region are marginally less likely than their non-Aboriginal peers in the region to like school or feel happy there.

Two-thirds (67.9%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 6 students in the South Metropolitan region reported that being at school every day is very important to them, however only one in four (40.4%) Aboriginal secondary students reported this (compared to 51.4 per cent for non-Aboriginal secondary students).

Just under one-half (47.8%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students reported liking school, with 64.0 per cent of Year 4 to Year 6 students reporting this, and 38.0 per cent of Year 7 to Year 12 students.

Most Year 7 to Year 12 Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region reported they agree their school is a place where they like learning (60.9%) and where they feel happy (62.6%). However, both these proportions are lower than the proportion of non-Aboriginal students reporting the same (like learning: 69.1%; feel happy: 68.4%).

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



One in five (20.3%) Aboriginal secondary students in the South Metropolitan region strongly disagreed that school is a place where they like learning (compared to 11.6% of non-Aboriginal secondary students).

Aboriginal secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are also marginally less likely than their non-Aboriginal peers to agree

their school is a place where they belong (68.9% vs 73.4%).

Just over one-half (56.4%) of Year 4 to Year 12 Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region said they usually get along with their classmates, while 33.6 per cent said they sometimes get along with their classmates.

Most Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students felt that it was ‘very much true’ (46.4%) or ‘pretty much true’ (24.4%) that at school there is a teacher or another adult who listened to them when they had something to say. Only one-third (33.5%) reported that if they need extra help they will almost always get it from their teachers (non-Aboriginal: 34.8%).

Two-thirds (65.7%) of Aboriginal students said that their parents or someone in their family ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ asks about their schoolwork or homework (Years 4–6: 75.1%, Years 7–12: 60.0%). This is lower than the responses from non-Aboriginal students (Years 4–12: 83.7%).

Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region are more likely to have attended multiple schools since they started primary school or secondary school, with 41.0 per cent of Aboriginal students in Years 4 to 6 having three or more schools compared to 21.4 per cent of non-Aboriginal students.

More than one-third (36.1%) of Aboriginal secondary students reported they have been suspended from school (been sent

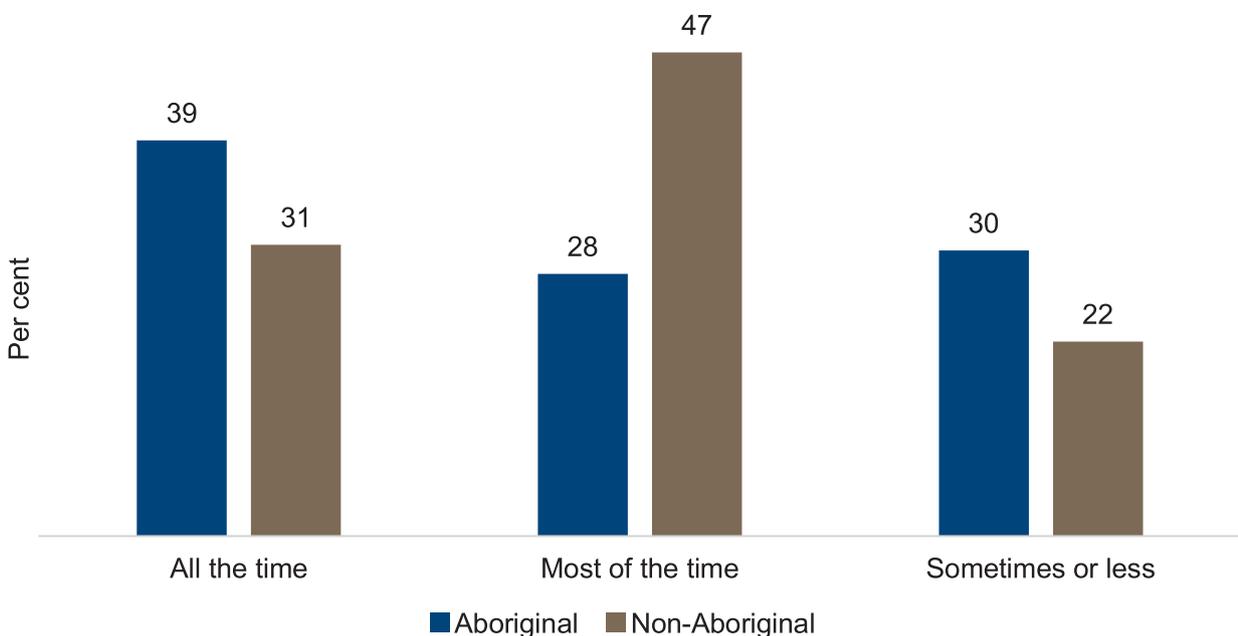
home for a few days for doing something wrong) (non-Aboriginal students: 16.4%). This difference is consistent with those across the state.

Aboriginal Year 7 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region are also 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 (34.7% compared to 16.9%).

When it comes to feeling safe at school, 70.2 per cent of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students reported feeling safe all or most of the time, lower than the proportion for non-Aboriginal students (79.8%).

A greater proportion of Aboriginal secondary students than non-Aboriginal secondary students feel safe at school all the time (39.4% vs 30.5%). At the same time, a greater proportion of Aboriginal secondary students than non-Aboriginal secondary students feel safe at school only sometimes or less (30.0% vs 22.2%).

Proportion of Year 7 to Year 12 students reporting how often they feel safe at school



Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region reported experiencing bullying, cyberbullying or both by students from their school in similar proportions to non-Aboriginal students (38.4% compared to 34.4%).

A high proportion (40.0%) of Aboriginal secondary students in the South Metropolitan region who had experienced bullying in the previous three months said they were teased about their cultural background, the colour of their skin, or their religion at least once a week. The proportion of non-Aboriginal students reporting this is 11.0 per cent.

More than one in five (22.8%) Aboriginal students in Year 4 to Year 12 have missed school because they were afraid someone might bully them (non-Aboriginal: 13.4%).

Just under one-quarter (23.6%) of Aboriginal students plan to go to university, while 41.0 per cent do not plan to study further after secondary school. Further, 22.0 per cent want to attend TAFE or pursue a trade qualification.

Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region are just as likely as their non-Aboriginal peers to have had a paid job in the previous 12 months.

What do children and young people in the South Metropolitan region say about learning and participating?

Talking about stress at school

The following statements 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?'

"Home work I get super stressed about homework. 😞"

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

"It becomes a lot to balance. Our bodies are changing and not just on the outside meaning that it's hard to keep up with our emotions and mentality. We become emotionally and physically tired and the more work you give us the more stressed we become, we have been built to think that we have to get straight As and to go to Uni and thinking about that is a lot of pressure."

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

"Because our teacher push it on us and give us more stress if we don't complete the homework."

(male, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

■ ■ I believe the main reason is because we have to balance several things at a time and ensure that it is done on time and is done to a high standard so we can make our parents proud. ■ ■

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

"Doing poorly in ATAR and thinking you won't ever get a job and might end up homeless."

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

"The super high standards of ATAR, I don't think it's healthy for students to compare themselves this much too each other. It also doesn't feel worth it, with all the bridging courses."

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

"Because some people have sports that they are very committed to and go till later at night like 8pm and are like 20 minutes away so they don't have time to do any homework if they don't want to stay up late cause then they will be more tired and get more homework."

(female, 11 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Give more time for us to sleep. Most people I know come to school really tired. I stay up late at home because I have the energy, but school doesn’t consider how ‘young people’ function in day to day life. People also don’t pay attention to as much as they maybe should, such as mental health, but also homework. When I’m at school my brain is in work mode, out of school I forget about school and my work so that I can relax after the day.”
(student who selected ‘in another way’, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Teachers don’t give us enough time and expect us to not be busy with home life. Sometimes we are going through some hard things and we can’t just drop them for work.”
(female, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

“Teachers don’t seem to realise the older we get the more school work we get given. They expect us to compete homework, have a job, maintain a social life and and try spend time with our family.”
(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

▲▲ When coming home from school, adults want to relax and do their own thing - kids are no different, but when we arrive home, we’re met with a mountain of work, not only does this destroy our free time but leaves a lingering feeling of stress and anxiety in every student and a large amount makes it harder for them to begin the work. Kids shouldn’t be feeling this all the time. ▼▼

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

“School goes for 7 hours and then we’re expected to do 2-3 hours of home work per night which is just shocking, we are kids we deserve a life and we shouldn’t have to feel this stressed at such a young age.”
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“High workload if doing sport out of school and trying to keep up with the school work as well as training as well as having pressure to do good by your parents.”
(male, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

A number of students, particularly female students, talked about feeling pressure from parents to do well.

“For parents, to not put so much pressure on us to get good grades but to also care when you achieve well (congratulate them and show you are actually proud).”
(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“I also think that parents shouldn’t be so strict about test grades and put as much pressure on their children because this causes people to have a lot of pressure during their test which causes them to freak out and preform poorly and effect their health.”
(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“In my personal experience my stress and the burden placed upon my shoulders stems from the extremely high standards/ expectations my parents have of me. It’s transcended onto me after all these years where I feel worthless or useless if my grade is not an A or a 95% and above. Many sleepless nights where spent crying over what I’m doing wrong and this leads to burnouts and further mental health issues.”
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Parents like to compare us with excelling students. There is always a limit to everyone’s academic capabilities, you can never exceed that.”

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

Other comments on school

Many students in the South Metropolitan region provided their views and experiences on other aspects of school.

“Schools need to fix their act up very fast regarding bullying and mental health. Right now in school, for example, a bully could punch you in the face. If a teacher found out, they’d most likely ask you to ‘apologise to each other’. This is absolutely the wrong thing to enforce, as it reinforces the bully’s toxic mindset that they will not get into trouble, and the victim will simply feel like telling an adult was useless.”

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

“Schools, need to control the kids who like to be disruptive and ruin our learning as some teachers ignore them and let them get away with it all the time, and when they do one thing good they get praised for it when other kids do good all the time and never get anything good out of it.”

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

■ ■ School needs to get better at supporting students needs and actually teaching, I love to learn but we aren’t taught to learn we are taught to remember for long enough that we pass a test. ■ ■

(student who selected ‘in another way’, 16 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Focus more on the students and how they learn, the nurturing factor that teachers used to have is totally gone and sometimes teachers immediately pick on and target students that have done absolutely nothing wrong. Sometimes I think it’s racism and that some teachers punish the wrong students in situations that haven’t been entirely their fault. I feel they care more about the status of the school that the students and they just pile work on us and expect us to do well without even properly making sure that the students fully understand the topic.”

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

Having a voice and developing independence

“Kids have opinions too! We shouldn’t have to keep quiet just because you have been alive longer. It isn’t right to force someone to not speak up just because of their age.”

(student who selected ‘in another way’, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“That kids have feelings and opinions and to let them have a say.”

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

“When my parents don’t let me go outside my house, I feel suffocated and lonely.”

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

Safe and Supported

▄▄ **Parents and other adults need to be more open minded. Due to current social issues being a lot different from what it used to be for them, sometimes it is hard for them to understand what we, young adults, are truly experiencing. Therefore, most of the times, it is very difficult to open up to family members, but rather it sometimes feel much better to open up to friends or other adults that is not a relative. ▄▄**

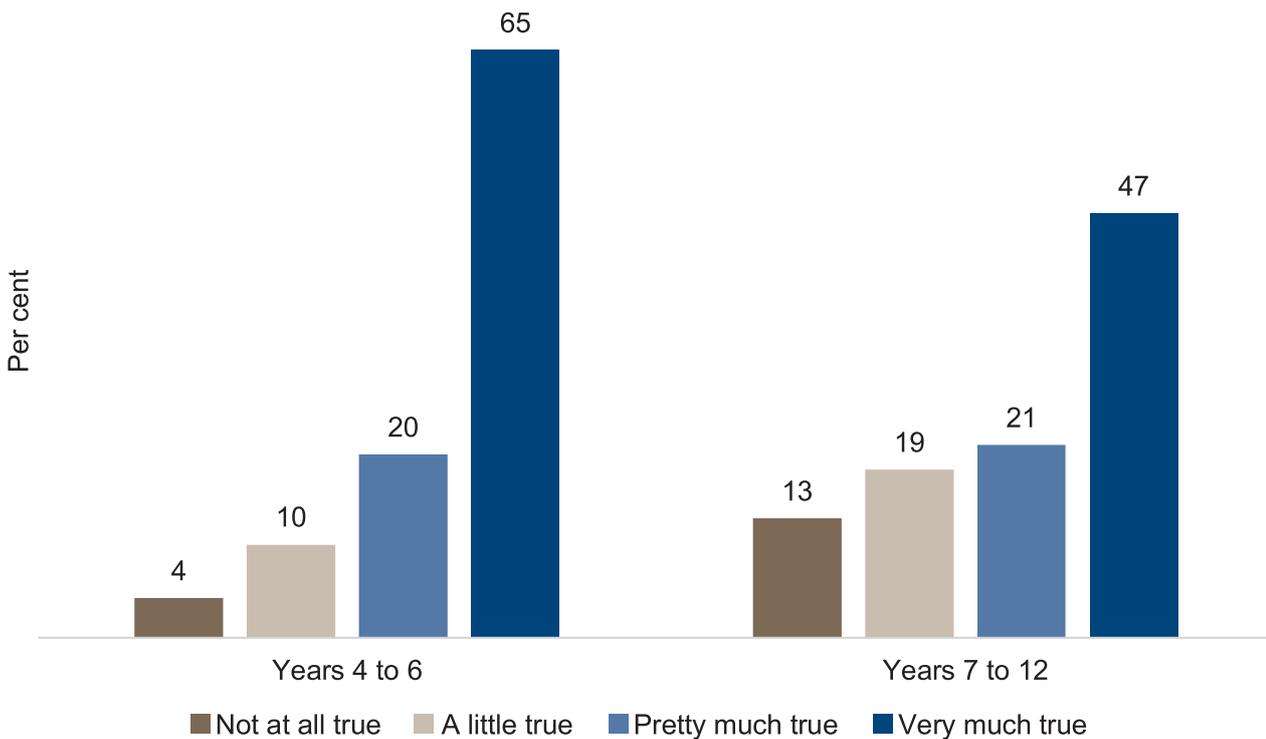
(male, 17 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

Supportive relationships

Just over one-half (53.3%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region reported it is 'very much true' they live with a parent or another adult they can talk to about their problems or worries.

Secondary students are less likely to report 'very much true' compared to Year 4 to Year 6 students (46.9% vs 65.0%), and more than twice as likely to report 'not true at all' (13.2% vs 4.4%).

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



The difference in results between primary and secondary students is consistent with rest of the state.

Just under one-half (48.5%) of students reported it is 'very much true' they live with a parent or another adult who listens when they have something to say (Years 4–6: 52.4%; Years 7–12: 46.3%), while 64.6 per cent said it is 'very much true' they live with a parent or another adult who believes they will achieve good things (Years 4–6: 69.4%; Years 7–12: 62.0%).

Female secondary students in the South Metropolitan region are less likely than male secondary students to report that it is 'very much true' or 'pretty much true' that they live with a parent or other adult who listens to them when they have something to say (68.2% vs 82.5%) or whom they can talk to about their problems or worries (60.0% vs 75.5%).

Three-quarters (75.6%) of students said their family gets along very well or well (Years 4–6: 79.8%; Years 7–12: 73.3%).

Most (79.5%) students said they live in one home and 20.5 per cent said they live in two or more homes. Of the students who reported having a second home, 38.8 per cent reported living in this home half of the time (Years 4–6: 50.2%; Years 7–12: 31.8%).

In terms of friendships, of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 53.1 per cent felt they are very good at making and keeping friends (Years 4–6: 58.7%; Years 7–12: 50.0%).
- 83.5 per cent reported they feel they have enough friends (Years 4–6: 84.6%; Years 7–12: 82.9%).
- 45.4 per cent said they feel their friends care about them a lot (Years 4–6: 53.8%; Years 7–12: 40.7%).

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

Material basics

Children and young people in the South Metropolitan region are generally less likely to be missing out on material items than other students around the state. However, there is still a significant minority of children and young people in this area who do not have access to certain material basics.

Two-thirds (67.3%) of students in the South Metropolitan region said that if they were hungry there is always enough food for them to eat at home, while 9.3 per cent said there is only sometimes or never enough food to eat at home.

Most (90.4%) students reported having enough money in their family to afford school excursions and/or camps; 87.1 per cent reported having 'the right kind of clothes' to fit in with people their age.

Of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 86.7 per cent said they have their own bedroom (Years 4–6: 79.7%; Years 7–12: 90.6%).
- 3.1 per cent reported their family does not own a car used for family transport (Years 4–6: 4.7%; Years 7–12: 2.2%).
- 96.6 per cent reported they have access to the internet at home (Years 4–6: 94.9%; Years 7–12: 97.6%).
- 91.2 per cent of secondary students reported having their own mobile phone.

Safe in the home

Two-thirds (66.5%) of students in the South Metropolitan region said they feel safe at home all the time (Years 4–6: 67.1%; Years 7–12: 66.2%), while 24.3 per cent said they feel safe at home most of the time (Years 4–6: 21.8%; Years 7–12: 25.6%).

These results are consistent with the rest of WA.

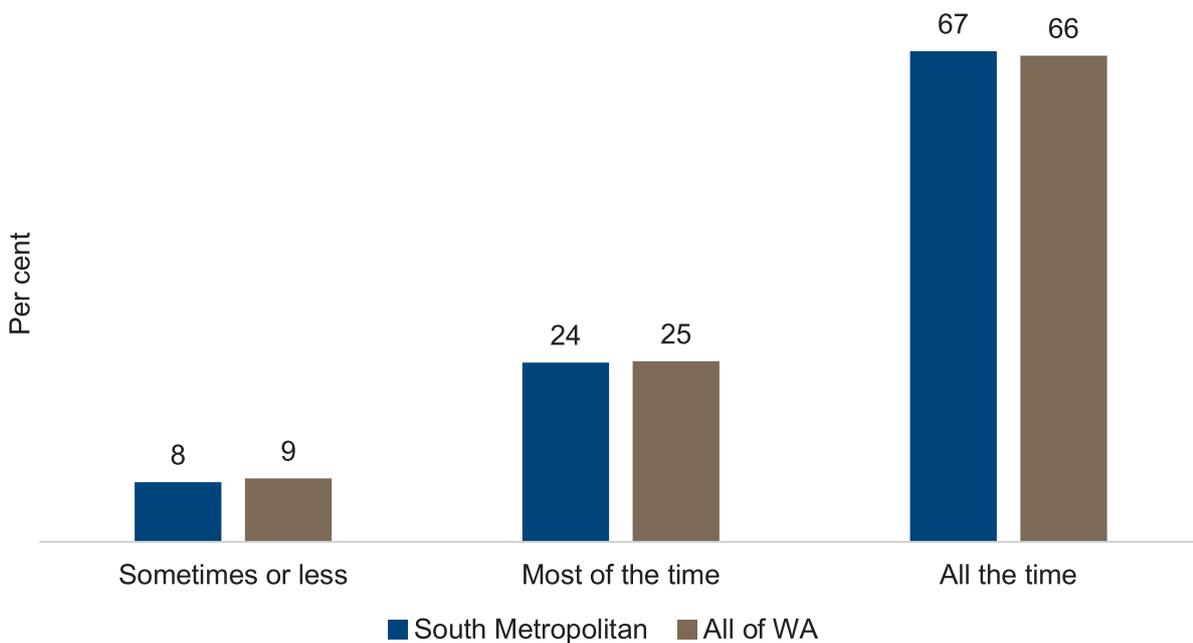
One-quarter (24.7%) said they are ‘somewhat’ or ‘a lot’ worried that someone in their home or family will be fighting, while 17.8 per cent

said they are ‘somewhat’ or ‘a lot’ worried that someone in their home or family will hurt somebody.

Female secondary students are more likely than male secondary students to be worried ‘somewhat’ or ‘a lot’ that someone in their home or family would be fighting (31.3% vs 18.0%).

Just over one-quarter (27.9%) of secondary students reported they had stayed away from home overnight because of a problem.

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



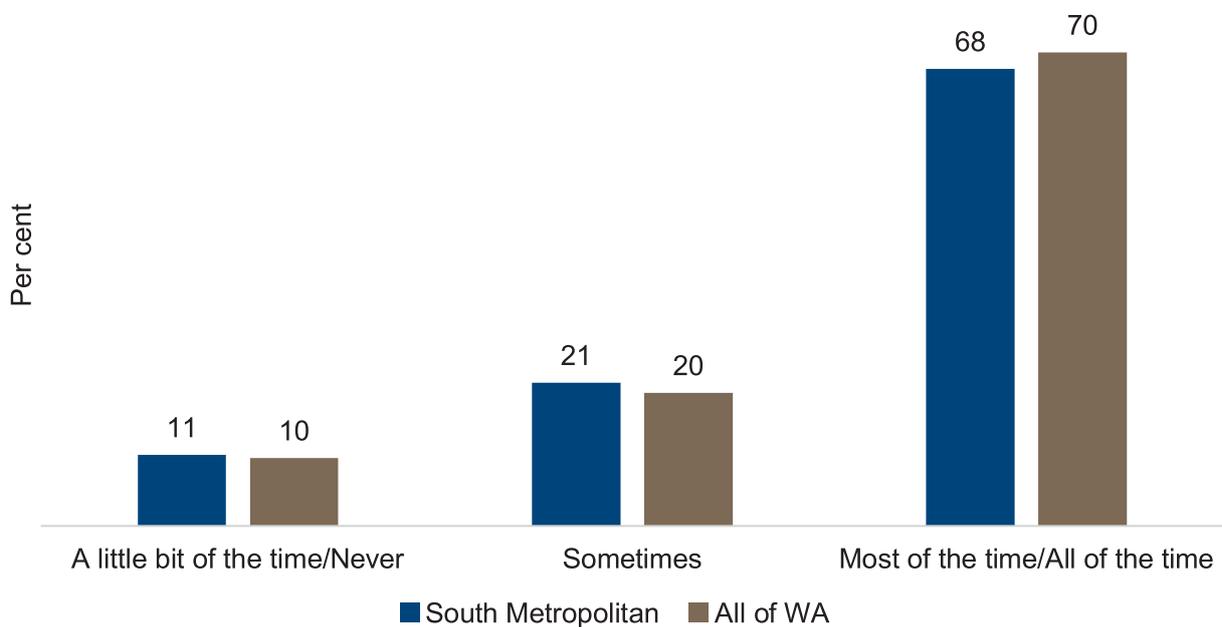
Safe in the community

Just over one-quarter (26.7%) of Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region said they feel safe in their local area all the time (Years 4–6: 25.7%; Years 7–12:

27.2%), while 39.8 per cent said they feel safe in their local area most of the time (Years 4–6: 39.0%; Years 7–12: 40.3%).

These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

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



Similar to the results across the state, female secondary students are less likely than their male peers to feel safe in their local area all the time or most of the time (62.3% vs 73.3%).

Of Year 9 to Year 12 students, 45.1 per cent reported they had ever been hit or physically harmed by someone on purpose (female: 35.7%; male: 50.9%). Of these, 58.2 per cent occurred in the previous 12 months. Students who reported being hit or physically harmed by someone on purpose in the previous 12 months were asked further questions about the nature and location of the incident.

Female students who had been hit or physically harmed are more likely to report being harmed by an adult than male students (56.5% vs 24.1%), whereas male students are more likely to report being harmed by another child or young person (80.7% vs 46.8%).

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 (57.1%), followed by at home (30.9%), whereas female students reported the incident predominantly taking place at home (71.6%), followed by at school (23.0%).

These results are consistent with those across WA.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

When asked about the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting changes to daily life, 36.6 per cent of students in the South Metropolitan region reported the pandemic affected their life in a bad way ‘a lot’ (13.4%) or ‘somewhat’ (23.2%). Further, 22.0 per cent of students responded ‘not at all’ when posed this question.

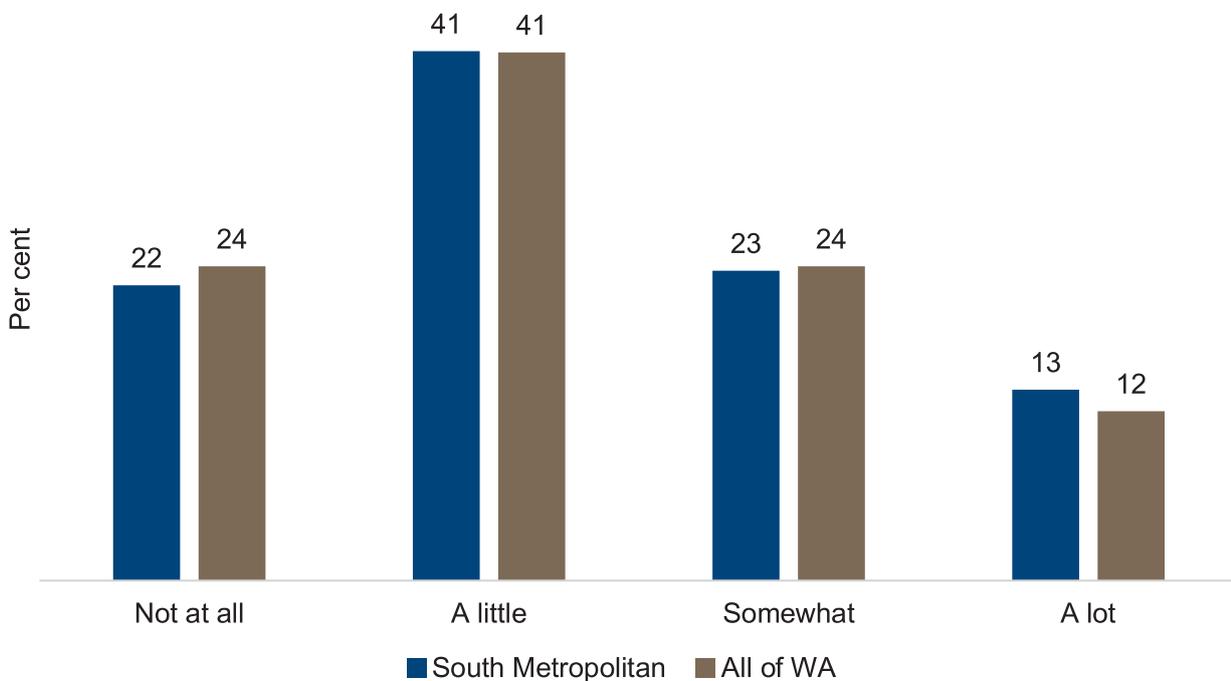
These results are consistent with the rest of the state.

Just under one-quarter (23.1%) of Year 9 to Year 12 students reported the COVID-19 pandemic had been a source of stress to them in the previous year. This is the highest proportion reporting this of all regions across the state.

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, of the students surveyed in the South Metropolitan region:

- 31.0 per cent reported feeling very or somewhat stressed/anxious, while 51.5 per cent reported feeling very or somewhat relaxed when they thought of COVID-19.
- 51.0 per cent reported feeling worried if they missed school due to COVID-19 in the previous calendar year – 2020.

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?’



Aboriginal children's and young people's views on feeling safe and supported

Supportive relationships

Most Year 4 to Year 6 Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region reported that it is 'very much true' or 'pretty much true' that where they live there is a parent or another adult who:

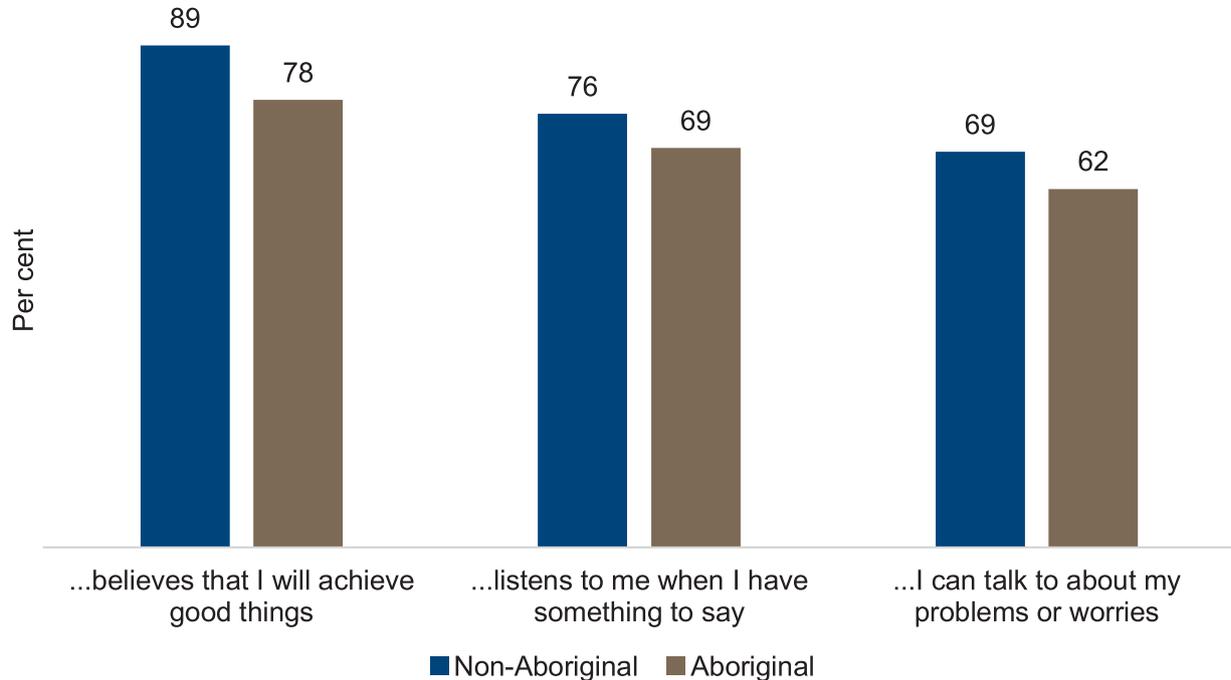
- believes they will achieve good things (91.0%).
- listens to them when they have something to say (81.9%).

- they can talk to about their problems or worries (83.0%).

These results are consistent with non-Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region.

However, the same is not true for Aboriginal secondary students who reported it is 'very much true' or 'pretty much true' in lower proportions across all three questions compared to their non-Aboriginal peers in the area.

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



In terms of family harmony, over two-thirds (71.0%) of Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region reported that their family gets along well or very well, slightly lower than the proportion of non-Aboriginal students reporting the same (76.4%).

Aboriginal secondary students are more likely than non-Aboriginal secondary students to worry 'a lot' or 'somewhat' that someone in their home or family will be fighting (Aboriginal: 30.3%, non-Aboriginal: 24.5%), will hurt somebody (Aboriginal: 27.4%, non-Aboriginal: 15.5%) or will get arrested (Aboriginal: 31.0%, non-Aboriginal: 11.7%).

Material basics

Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region are more likely to be experiencing some form of material disadvantage in comparison to their non-Aboriginal peers.

Almost one-quarter (23.9%) of Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students in the South Metropolitan region said there is only sometimes or never enough food to eat at home when they are hungry. This is much higher than non-Aboriginal children and young people in the region (8.1%) and is higher than the proportion of Aboriginal children and young people across the state (18.7%).

Aboriginal children and young people are also more likely than their non-Aboriginal peers to be missing out on many other material basics:

- Just under one in ten (7.7%) Year 4 to Year 12 Aboriginal students reported that their family does not have a car (non-Aboriginal: 2.6%).
- 18.8 per cent of Aboriginal students in Years 4 to 12 do not have enough money in their family for them to go on a school excursion or camp (non-Aboriginal: 8.7%).

- Almost one-third (33.8%) of Aboriginal secondary students do not have their own tablet, laptop or computer, compared to 14.1 per cent of non-Aboriginal students.
- Almost one in ten (8.6%) Aboriginal students in Years 4 to 12 do not have access to the internet at home (non-Aboriginal: 3.1%).

Aboriginal students in the South Metropolitan region are more than twice as likely to report living in a primary household of seven people or more (20.9%) compared to non-Aboriginal students (7.6%).

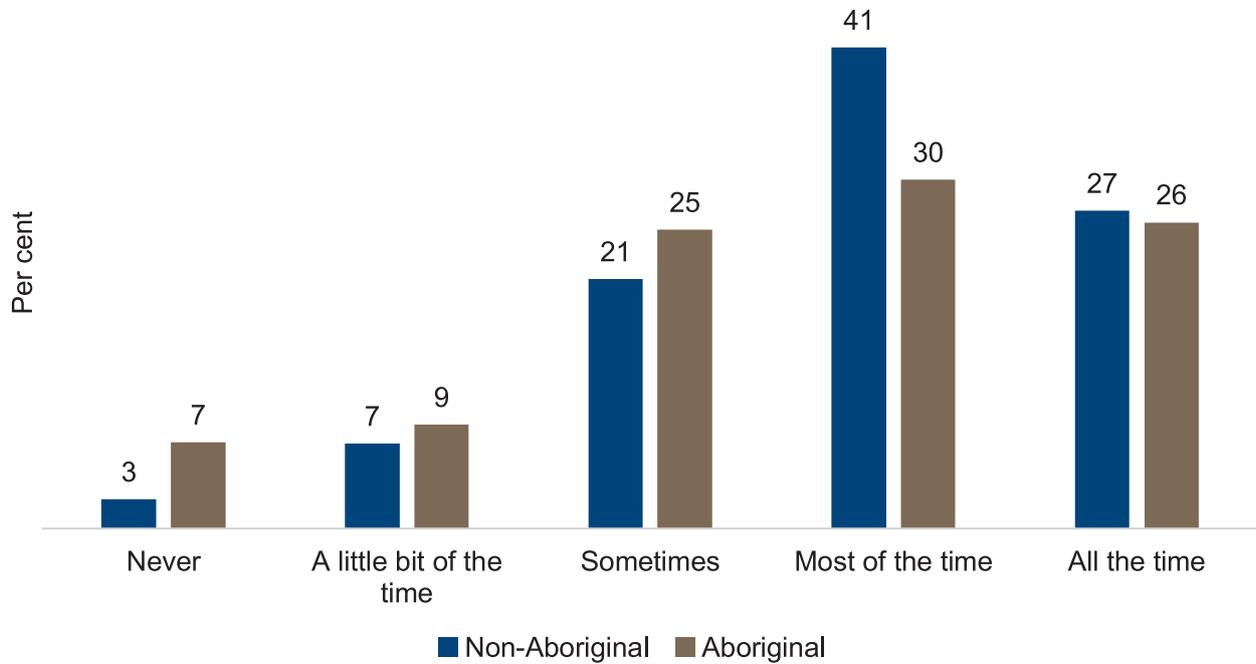
Feeling safe

Most (85.0%) Aboriginal Year 4 to Year 12 students feel safe at home most or all of the time; this is lower than the proportion of non-Aboriginal students reporting the same (91.4%).

When it comes to safety in the community, Aboriginal children and young people in the South Metropolitan region are much less likely to feel safe in their local area than non-Aboriginal children and young people.

Just over one-half (55.4%) of Aboriginal children and young people in the South Metropolitan region reported feeling safe in their local area most or all of the time (non-Aboriginal students: 67.6%). Moreover, Aboriginal students are almost three times as likely as non-Aboriginal students to report 'never' feeling safe in their local area (7.3% vs 2.5%).

Proportion of Year 4 to Year 12 students reporting how often they feel safe in their local area



What do children and young people in the South Metropolitan region say about being safe and supported?

Supportive relationships

“With family, specifically parents, it’d help if you understood us before labelling us as disrespectful moody teenagers, just because you were us doesn’t mean you’re us right now, things have changed and you probably don’t remember what it’s like to be us. Also it’d help if you loved us and accepted us no matter what, the things you say impact us, we act like we don’t care but we do.”
 (female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“To pay more attention to your students/ children because they might not be telling you things that are bothering them.”
 (male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Parents should take time out of their day to check up on their child, think about others instead of just yourself. Don’t worry if you child is t like anyone of their siblings or family members and let them be themself. Understand and listen to you child when they have got something to say instead of jumping to conclusions and missing the whole point. Support your child or friend when they’re in need of someone to talk and to.”
 (female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

“Just listen and understand.”
 (male, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

“That if your child or student looks unhappy there is something wrong even tho they tell you ever Is ok.”
 (female, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)

"I would like some families to know that you don't always have to yell at your kids to discipline them or get mad at your kid for not listening, teenager or people about need more privacy than you give them, and yelling and being rude and mad to them could also badly effect their health. This includes talking in a way they see as anger. If you don't give your child privacy or always yell at them, they will start to hide things to you thinking hit will keep them safe from being yelled at."
(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

A number of students talked about finding their friends and family supportive.

"I do not have anxiety but I have had a spike of it when there was a reason, I went to my mother for this and she helped me."
(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I can talk to my friends and family."
(female, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I spoke to my parents about my health and learning and ever since then, I've felt much better about myself and more comfortable with my health and in things I find hard." :)
(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

■ ■ Having a caring family is very important, and love and bonding is quite essential for healthy mental health. I am blessed with that, but not everyone has it, so that is what I think causes poor mental health rates to increase exponentially. That issue should be focussed on. ■ ■

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

"I get bad anxiety and sometimes I start to feel depressed so my mum got me to write in a... diary and just put down anything that comes in mind and helps me feel better."
(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"I feel very safe at school most of the time because I have a good group of friends who I like to hangout with."
(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

Feeling unsafe

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

"Some of the things that make me feel unsafe is being alone in public and hearing a family argument."
(female, 10 year-old, Aboriginal)

"Mum and dad fighting."
(male, 10 year-old, Aboriginal)

"There are people who smoke and do drugs around 150 meters from my house."
(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"When my step dad is drunk and starts yelling."
(male, 12 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

"People that are highly drunk and abusive."
(female, 12 year-old, Aboriginal)

"Men, when I'm at the shops or running by myself, there is usually always a man just staring at me or looking me up and down, and it makes me feel very unsafe and uncomfortable."
(female, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)

*“No Older Kids Doing Drugs at the park, it makes me feel unsafe.”
(male, 13 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Certain people make me feel unsafe because I am a teenager whose female.”
(female, 14 year-old, Aboriginal)*

■ ■ My local area has rapists that catch the same bus as me in the mornings and afternoons, older men stare at me and my school mates while they are driving by and we are waiting for the bus. I get followed home by older men when I’m walking with my 2 y/o sister. So I don’t feel safe what so ever ■ ■

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

*“Walking in shopping centres alone or being in public and seeing a bunch of kids acting stupid or even drunk adults make me scared.”
(male, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“When I go to Perth there are lots of people on drugs who scream and yell which makes everyone around them uneasy, since there o unpredictable. It also makes Perth an unsafe place for teens especially when catching public transport.”
(female, 14 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“I am a young girl, this means that I am automatically in danger when I am outside of my house. It doesn’t matter if I dress in a certain way, unwanted stares can always happen. Sometimes I feel unsafe in public because of the potential danger that comes with being around strangers, as a girl, I do not feel safe.”
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

*“Men looking at me for what I’m wearing even if they are with their partners. I constantly feel their eyes on my body parts (legs, stomach, bum and chest) and it makes me feel so uncomfortable.”
(female, 15 year-old, non-Aboriginal)*

