

YOUTH SURVEY 2025

NEW SOUTH WALES RESULTS



MISSION
AUSTRALIA

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

This is the **New South Wales (NSW)** sub-report of the Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2025. It is based on the responses of 4,027 young people in **NSW** who completed the Youth Survey 2025.

The Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2025 presents key findings based on national level data and can be found [here](#). It contains the methodology, national executive summary, national key findings, and findings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The report also includes commentary on the national findings that may assist in the interpretation of the data found within this sub-report.

This **NSW** sub-report is a state-based overview of the key findings from the Youth Survey 2025. The report includes detailed data tables comparing state-level findings against the national data. All state and national data in this report, including demographic information and base sizes, has been **weighted** by state/territory, gender and socio-economic advantage/disadvantage by area. Please see the 'About the survey' section of the Youth Survey Report 2025 for more information regarding our weighting method.

Care needs to be taken when interpreting and generalising some results, particularly state-based gender breakdowns, due to variations in base sizes for different survey items. **NSW** gender breakdowns are included where weighted base size allows. Review charts with extreme caution when the number of responses are less than 30 and take care when interpreting results with base sizes under 100.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of lands throughout Australia, and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continual relationship with the land and we recognise the importance of the young people who are our future leaders.

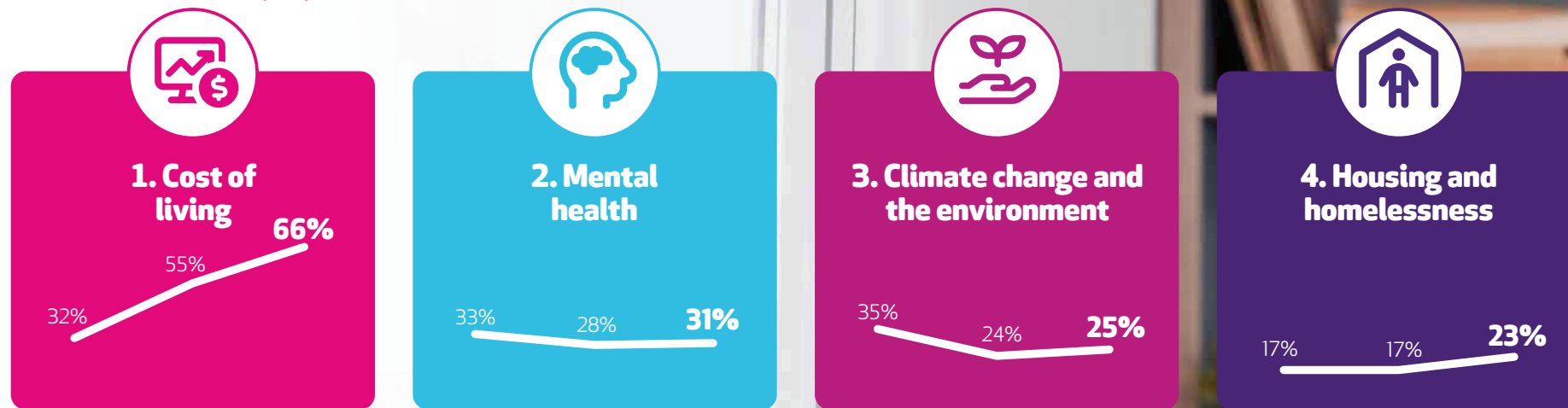
A special thank you to the young people who shared with us in the 2025 Youth Survey. We appreciate the views they shared on current issues and personal concerns, as well as their responses to questions relating to housing and finance, education and employment, community and supports, and mental health and wellbeing.

This report may be cited as: McHale, R., Brennan, N., Freeburn, T., Richardson, E., Rossetto, A. & Carmody, M. (2025). *Youth Survey Report 2025: New South Wales sub-report*. Sydney, NSW: Mission Australia

New South Wales KEY FINDINGS



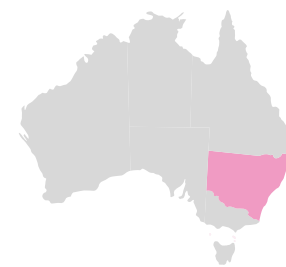
Young people were asked to list the three most important issues in Australia today. The charts show the proportion who mentioned each issue in 2023, 2024 and 2025.



While 58% of young people say they feel positive about the future, 98% articulated at least one of their biggest hopes, with the top themes being:



New South Wales KEY FINDINGS



Young people shared what life looks like for them now...

Money, wealth and owning a home

18% agreed *my family are often stressed about money*

7.5% couldn't afford to participate in activities, hobbies or groups

3.0% felt stressed in the past year about *having somewhere to live*



Family, relationships and connections

32% felt stressed about *problems with friends and 28%* about *problems with family* in the past year

17% felt *lonely all or most of the time*

36% felt connected to others in their neighbourhood



Employment and career

45% were currently working

Top reasons for working:

- To save up money
- To pay for my own things



Education and learning

Around six in 10 (58%) students agreed *I like my school*

60% felt stressed about *school / study problems* in the past year

27% faced barriers to achieving study or work goals—most commonly *not feeling motivated*



Lifestyle and experiences

32% experienced unfair treatment or discrimination in the past year

Participation in the past year:

- **52%** team sport
- **37%** individual sport



Purpose, values and big dreams

66% agreed *I can achieve my goals even if they are hard*

Participation in the past year:

- **35%** volunteer work
- **24%** church or other faith groups



Physical and mental health

Young people felt stress in the past year about:

- **Mental health 39%**
- **Body image 35%**
- **Physical health 21%**

21% experienced high psychological distress – expressing feelings of anxiety, depression or being overwhelmed



NSW

Total completed surveys (unweighted)

4,027

NSW

17,155

National

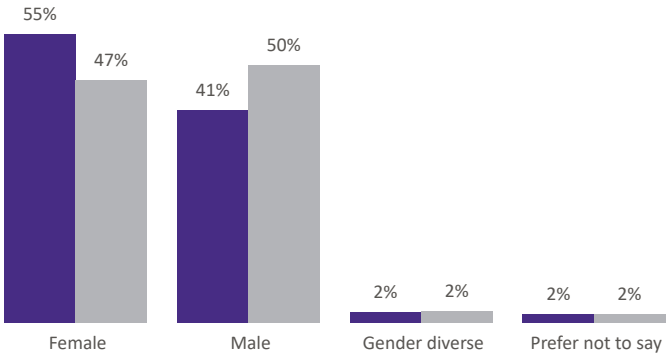
- Notes:**
- National and state/territory data has been weighted to make the sample representative of 14-to 19-year-olds by gender, location (state/territory), and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) developed Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).
 - Data was collected using a self-report questionnaire.
 - Missing data has been excluded from the calculation of these charts.
 - View charts with caution when # of responses is less than 30.

Gender

● NSW ● National

NSW n = 5,209
National n = 17,120

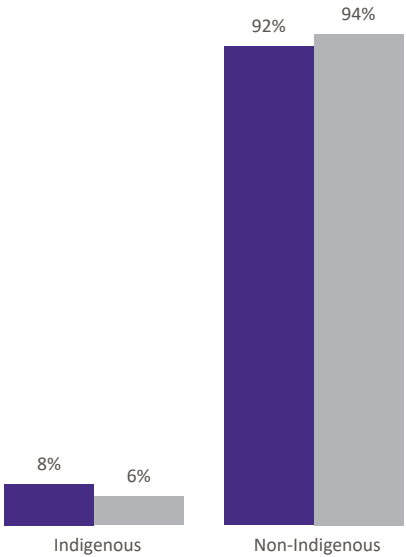
Note: A-gender/non-gendered, non-binary gender, transgender, intersex and other are combined under the gender diverse reporting category.



Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status

● NSW ● National

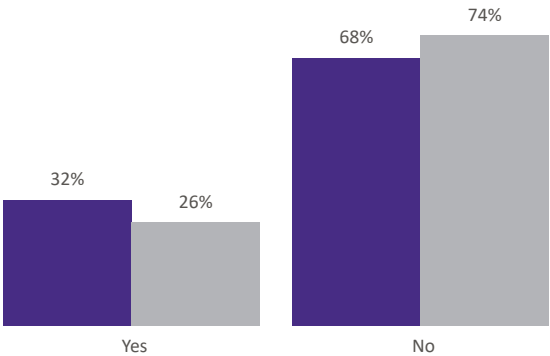
NSW n = 4,928
National n = 16,337



Speak a language other than English

● NSW ● National

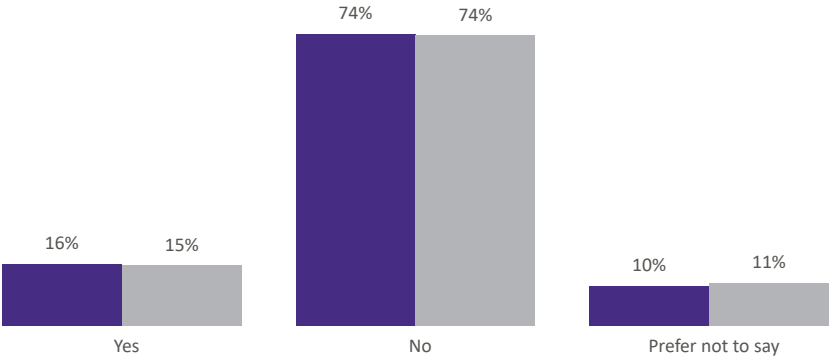
NSW n = 4,841
National n = 16,083



Identify as a person with a mental health condition

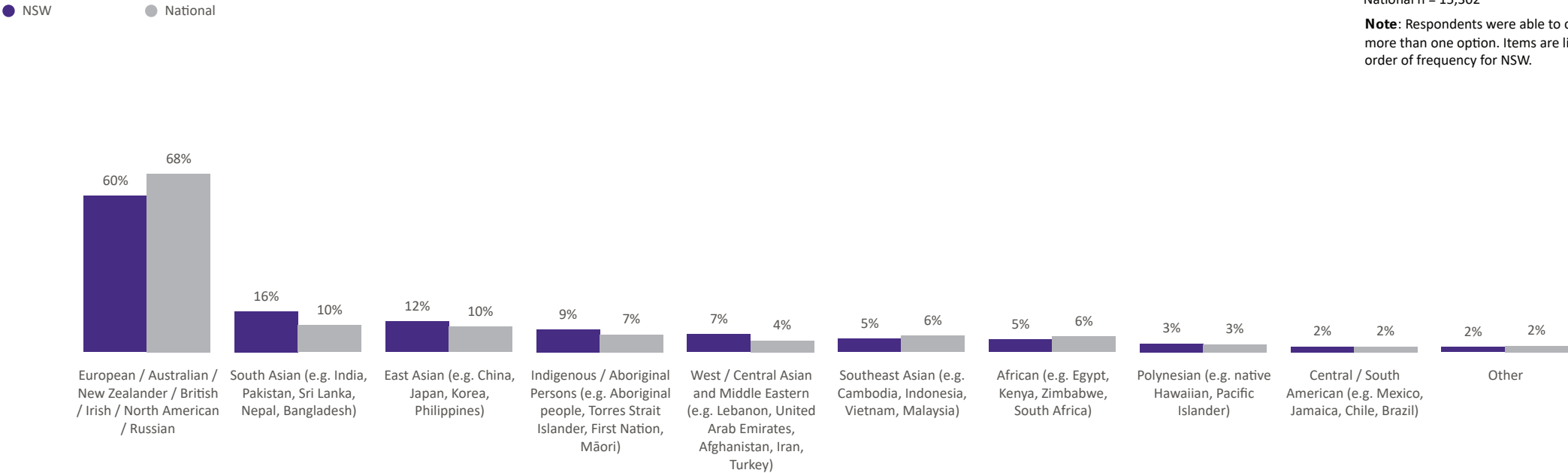
● NSW ● National

NSW n = 4,827
National n = 16,042

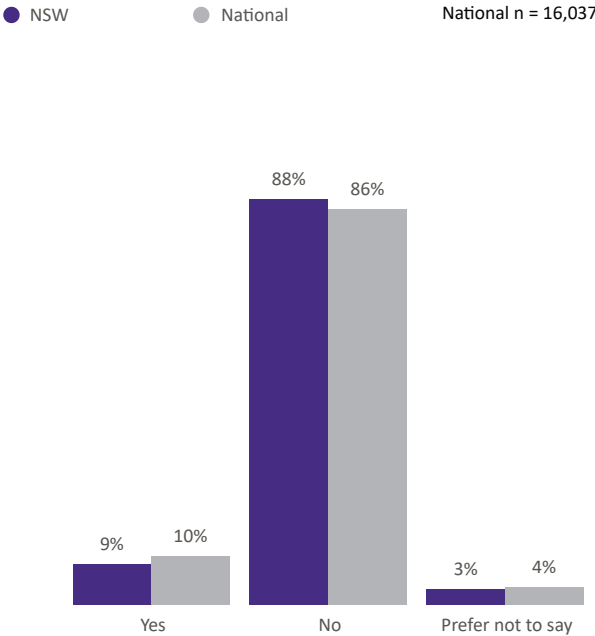


NSW

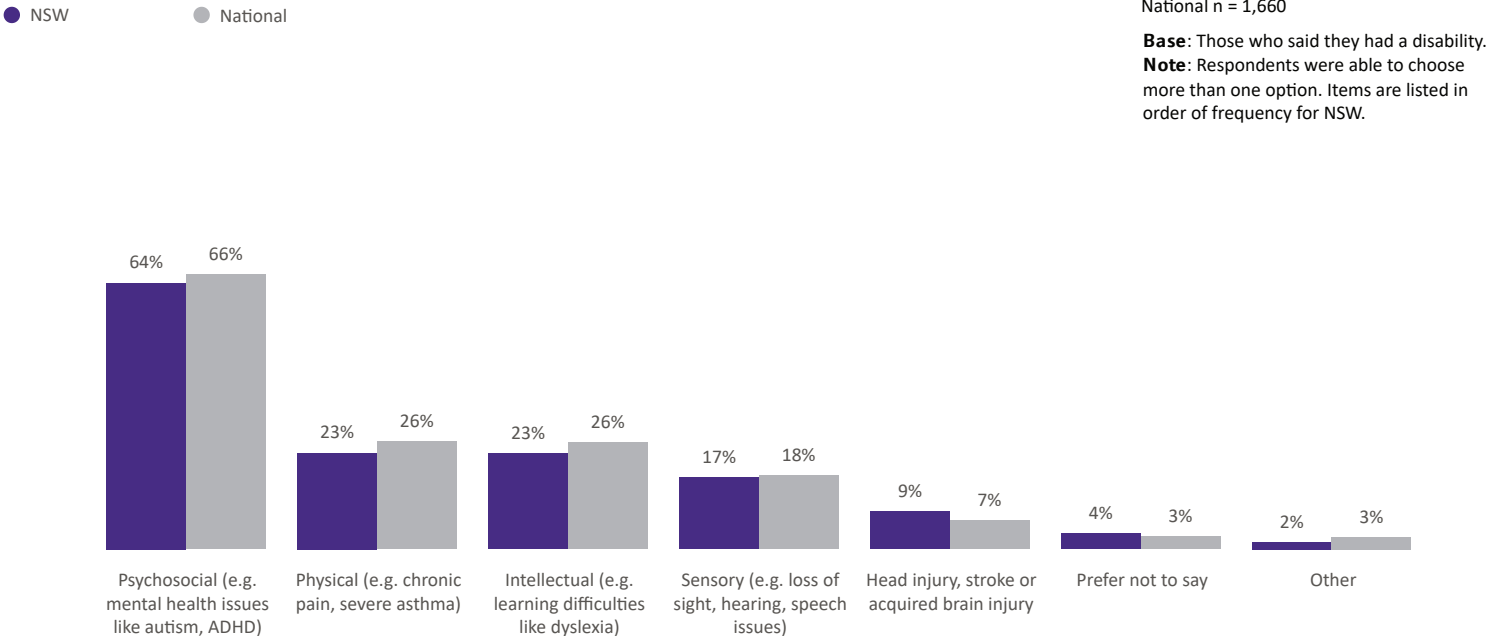
Cultural heritage/ethnic background



Identify as a person with disability

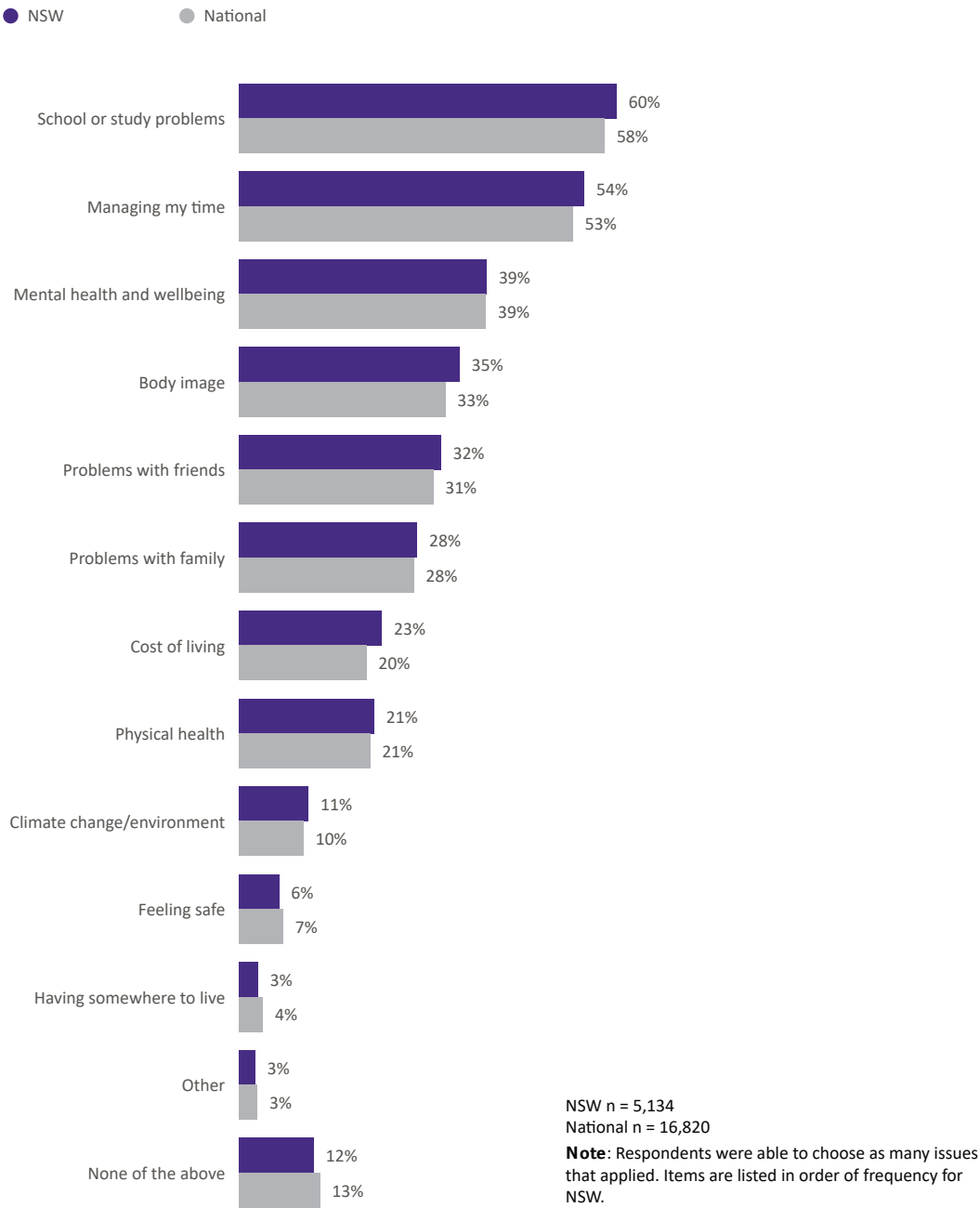


Type of disability

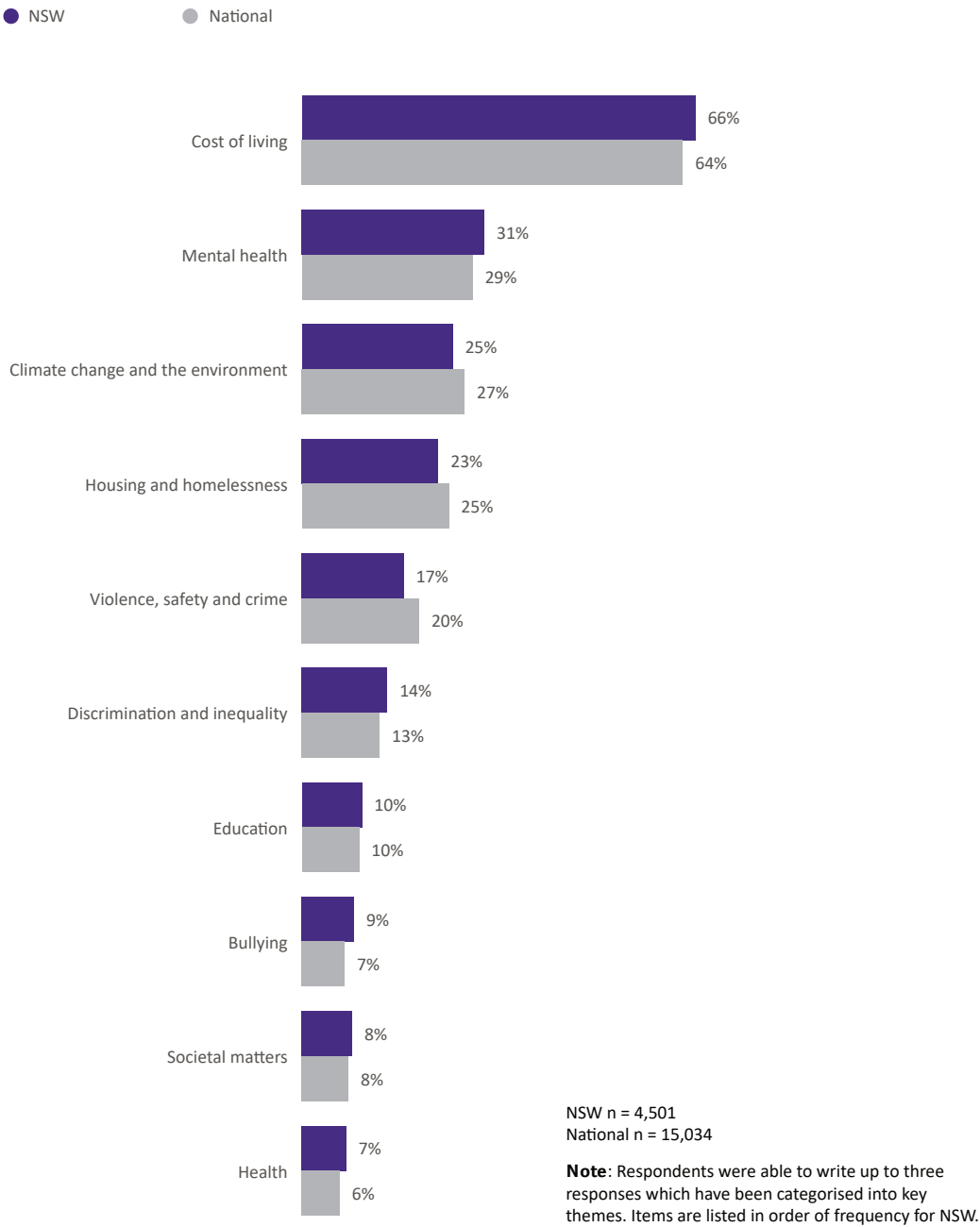


NSW

Issues that made young people feel stressed in the past year

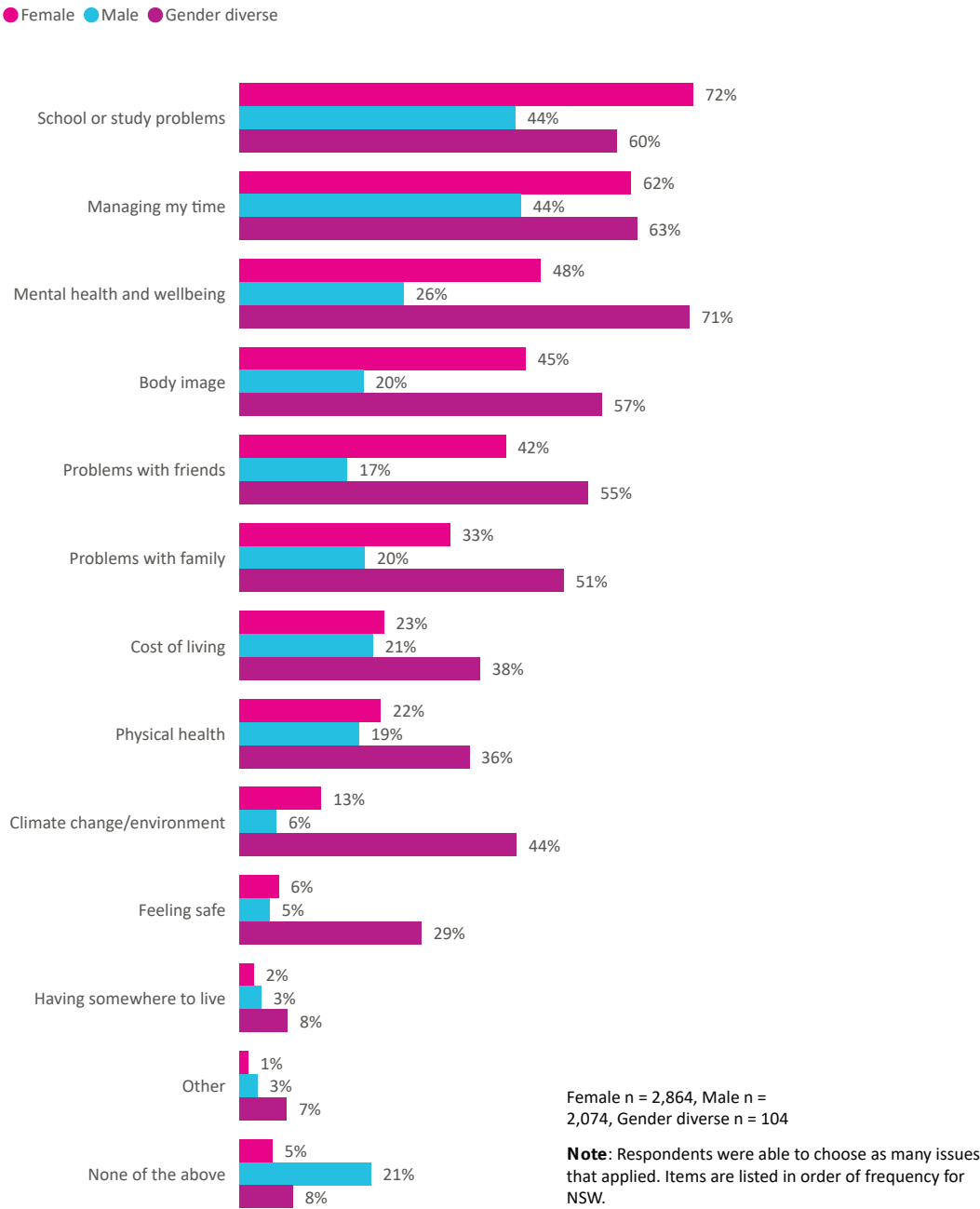


Top 10 most important issues in Australia today

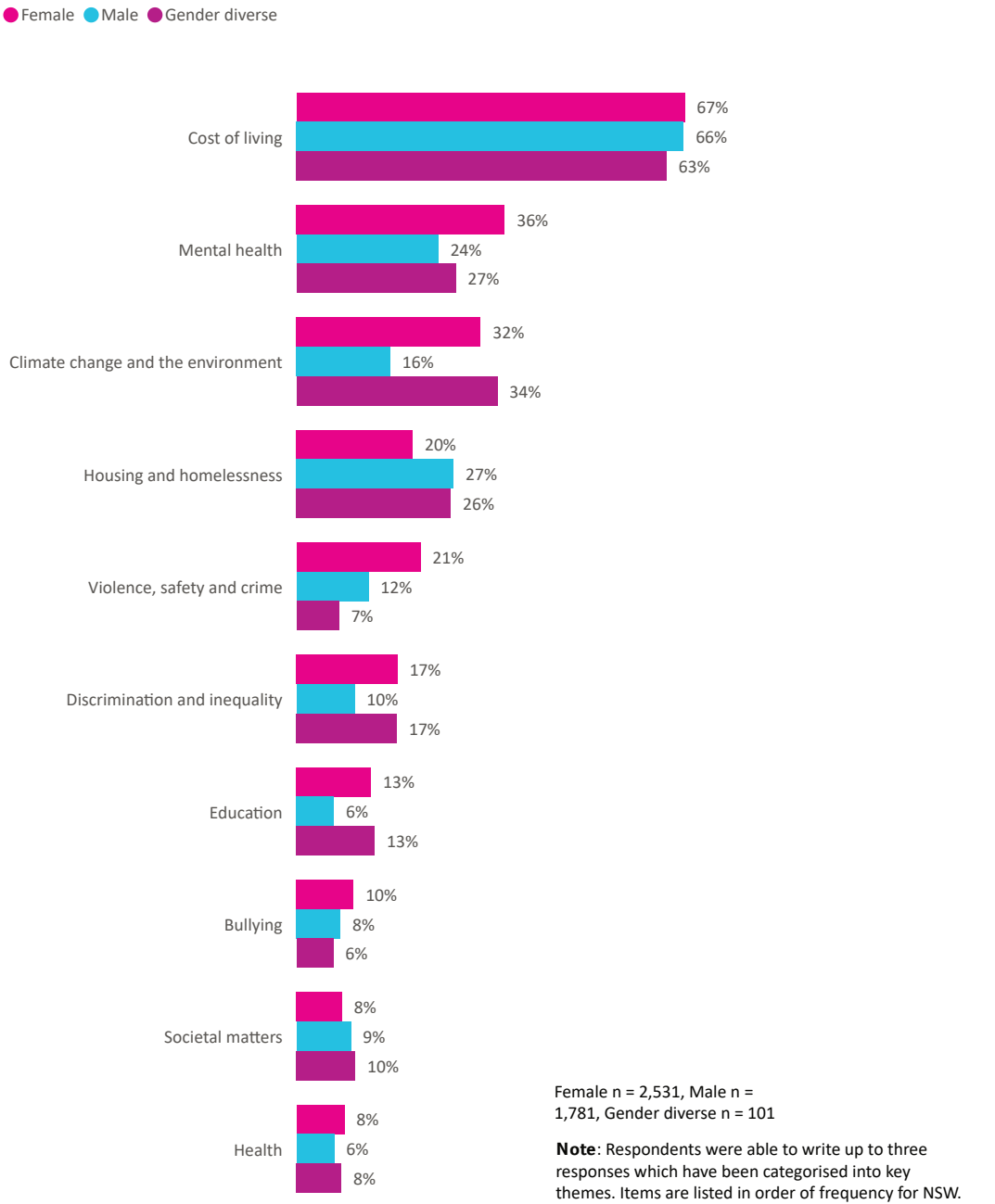


NSW

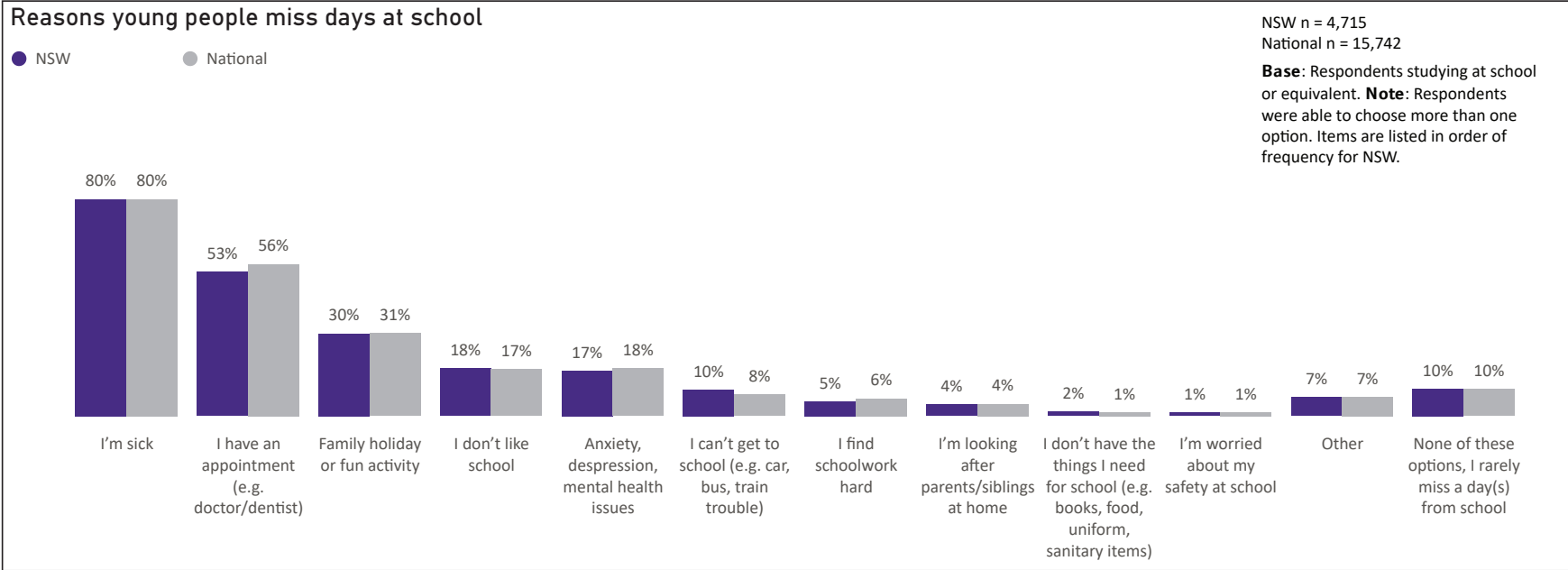
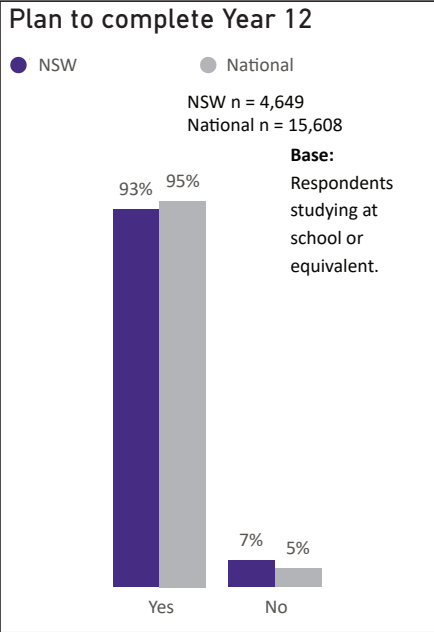
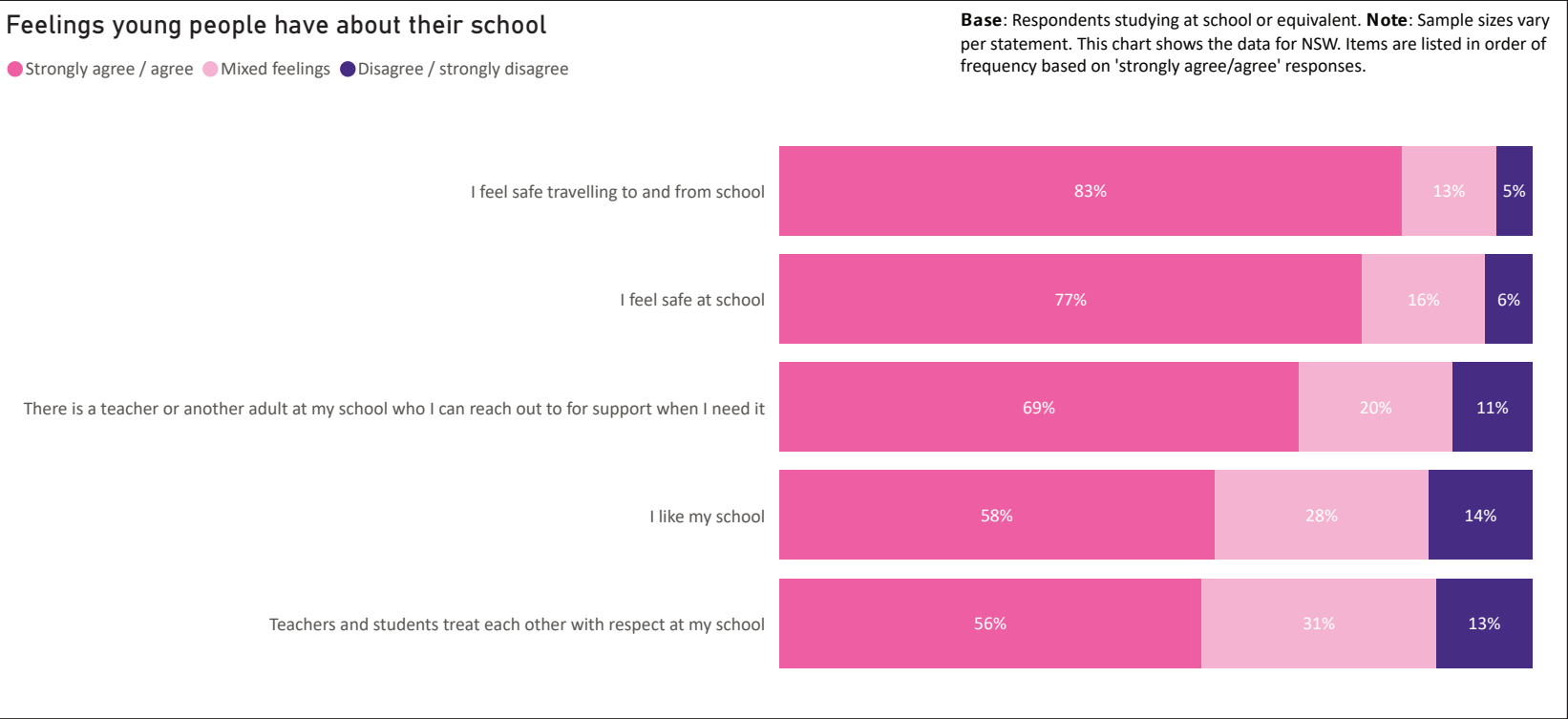
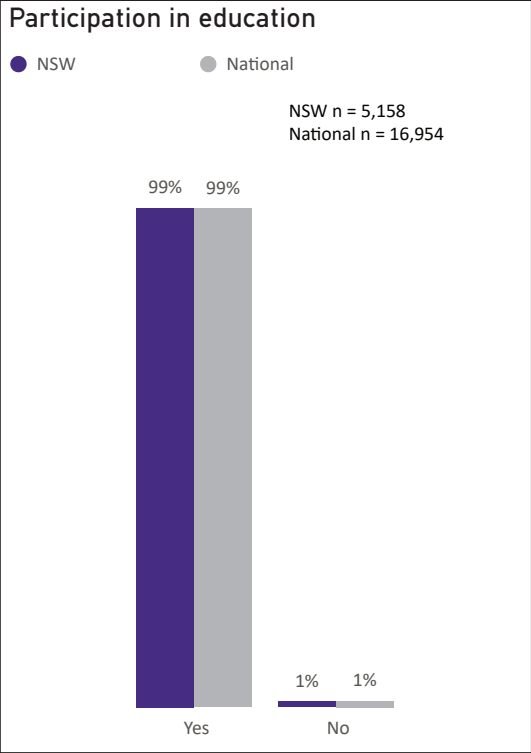
Issues that made young people feel stressed in the past year



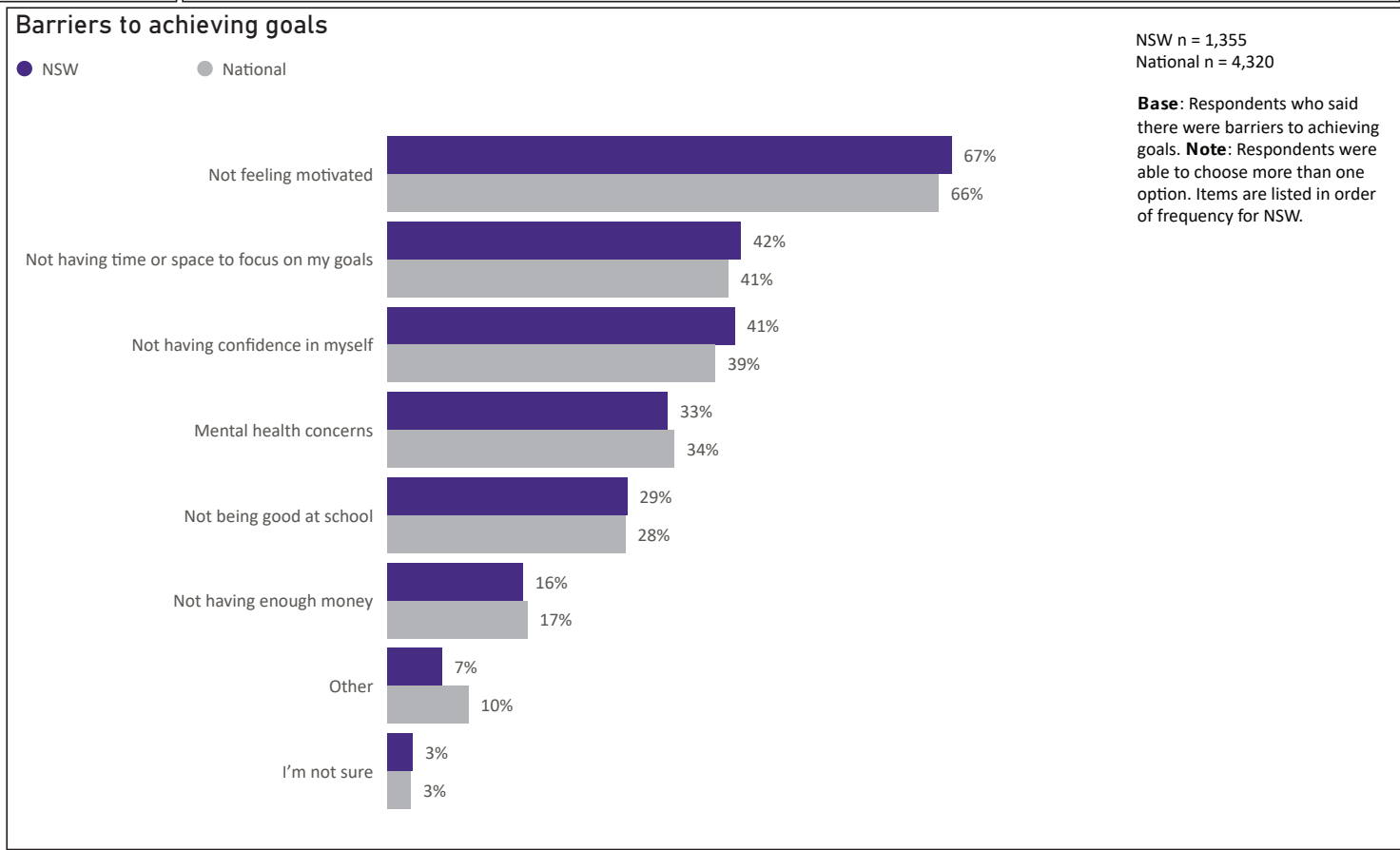
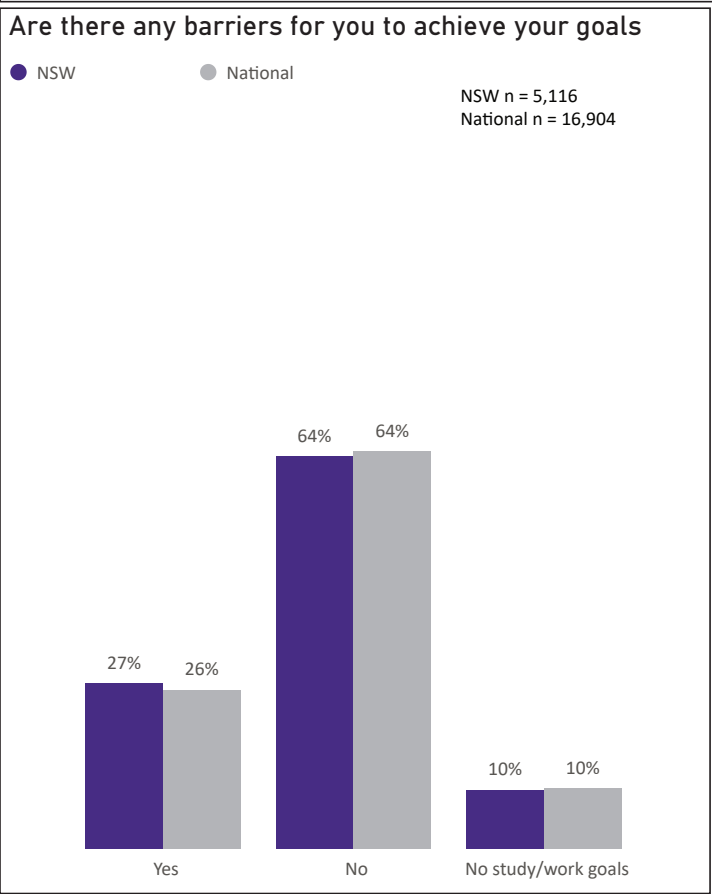
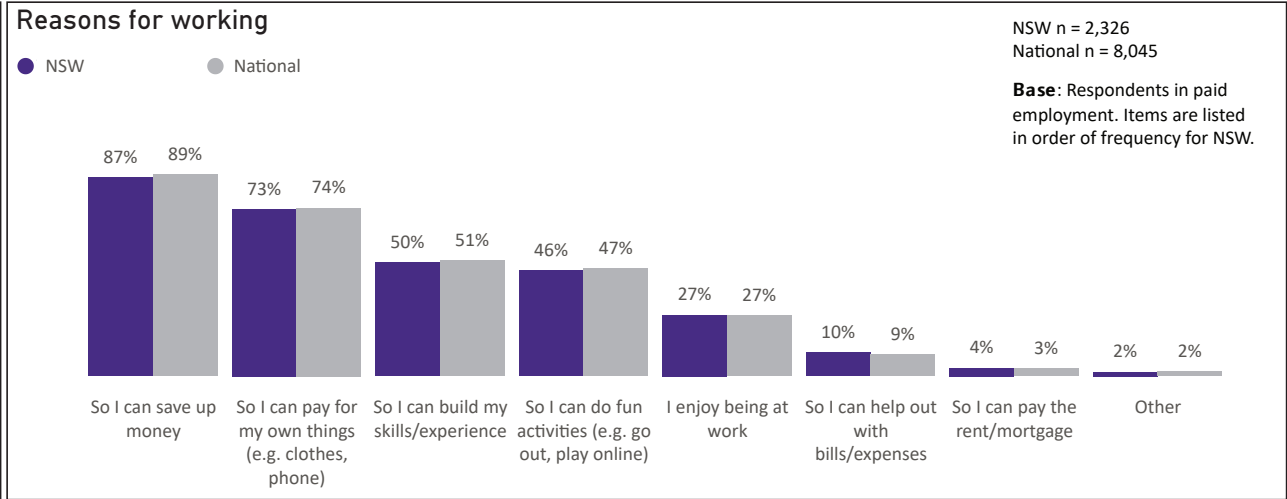
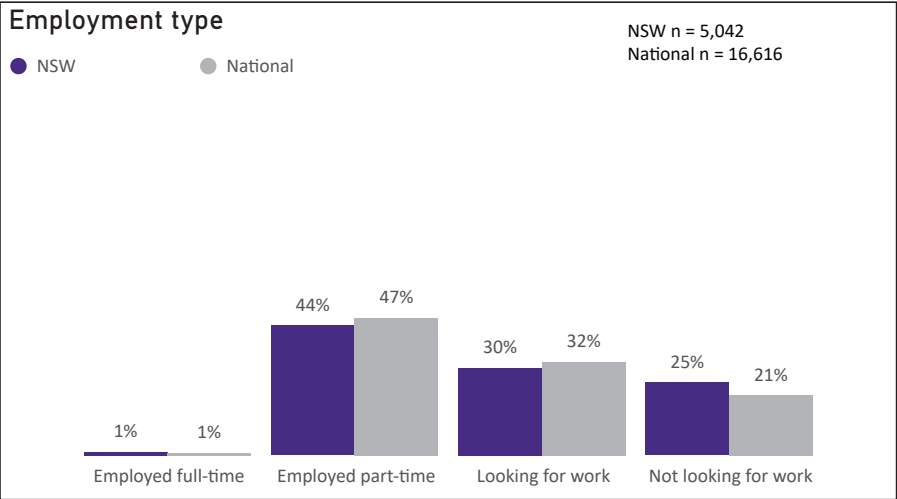
Top 10 most important issues in Australia today



NSW

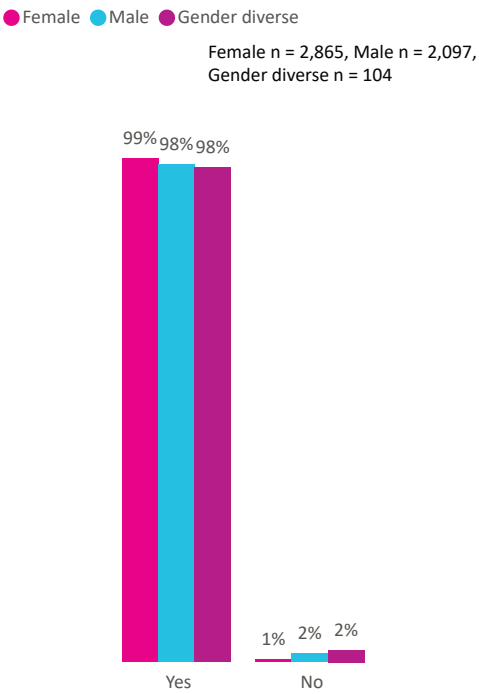


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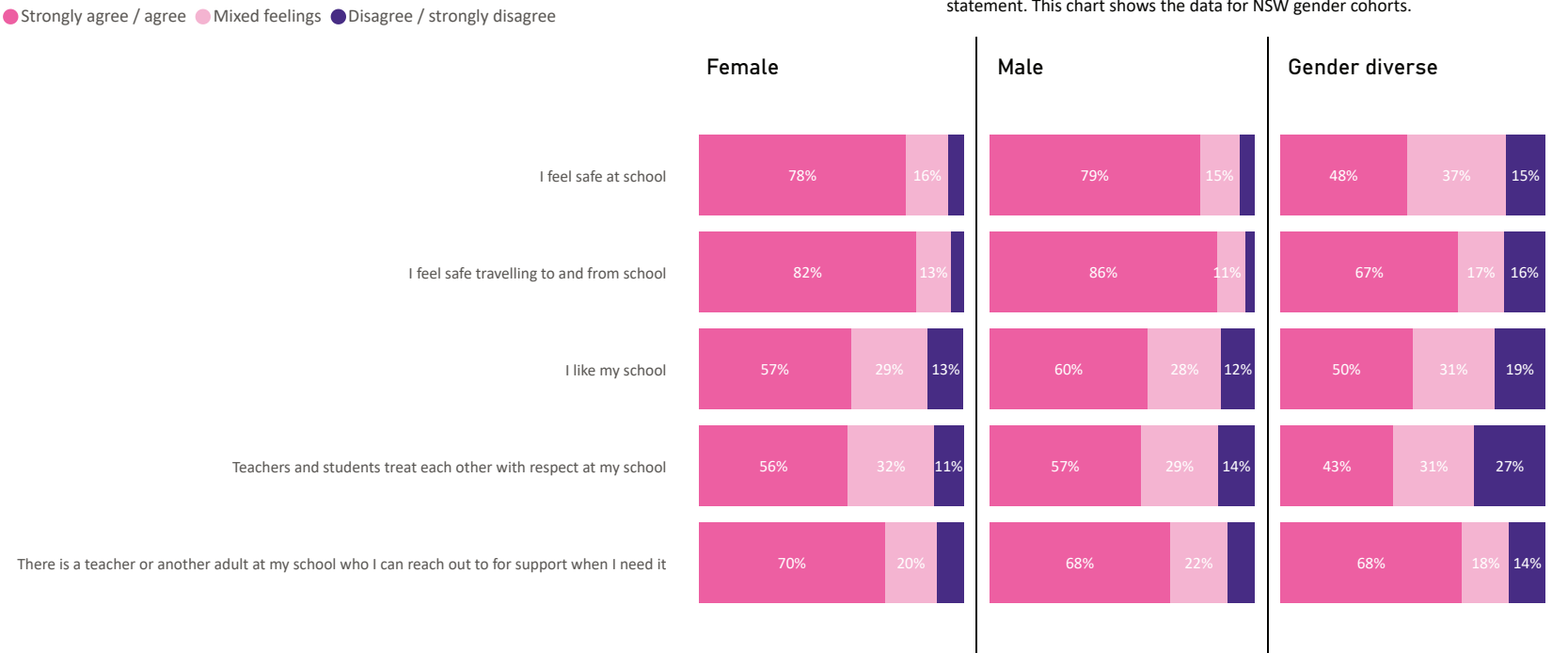


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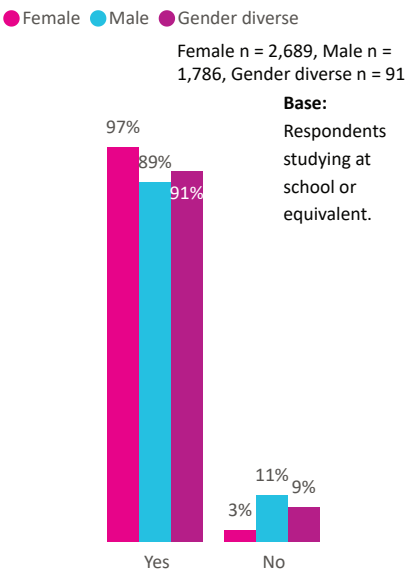
Participation in education



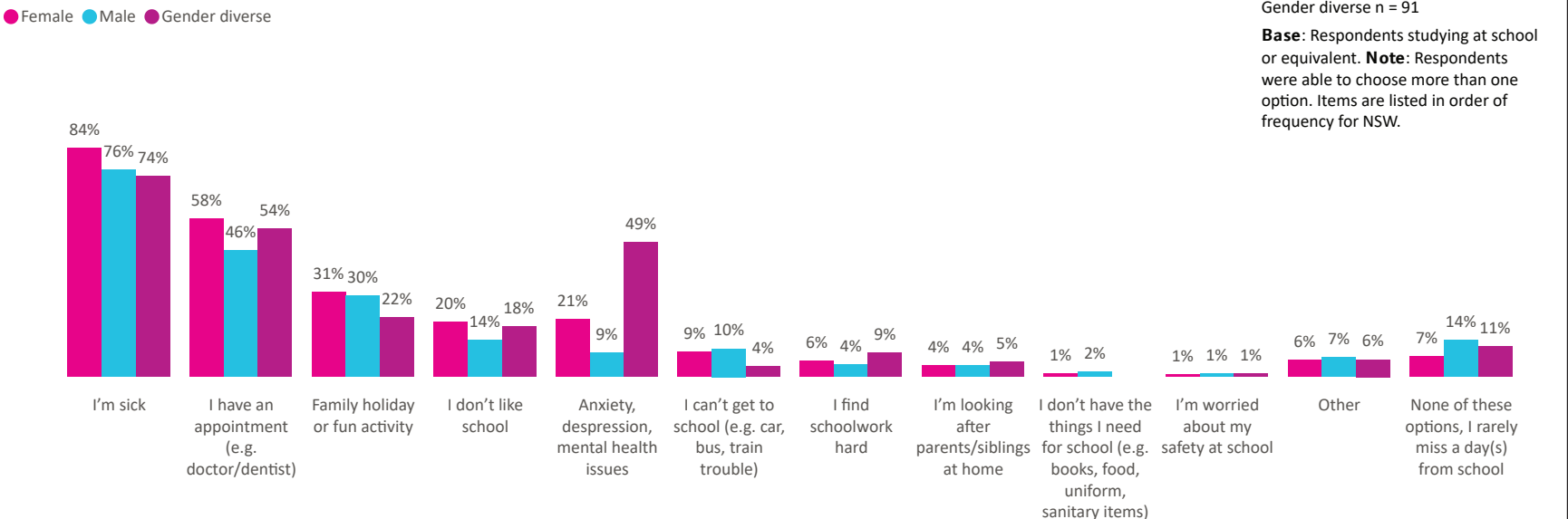
Feelings young people have about their school



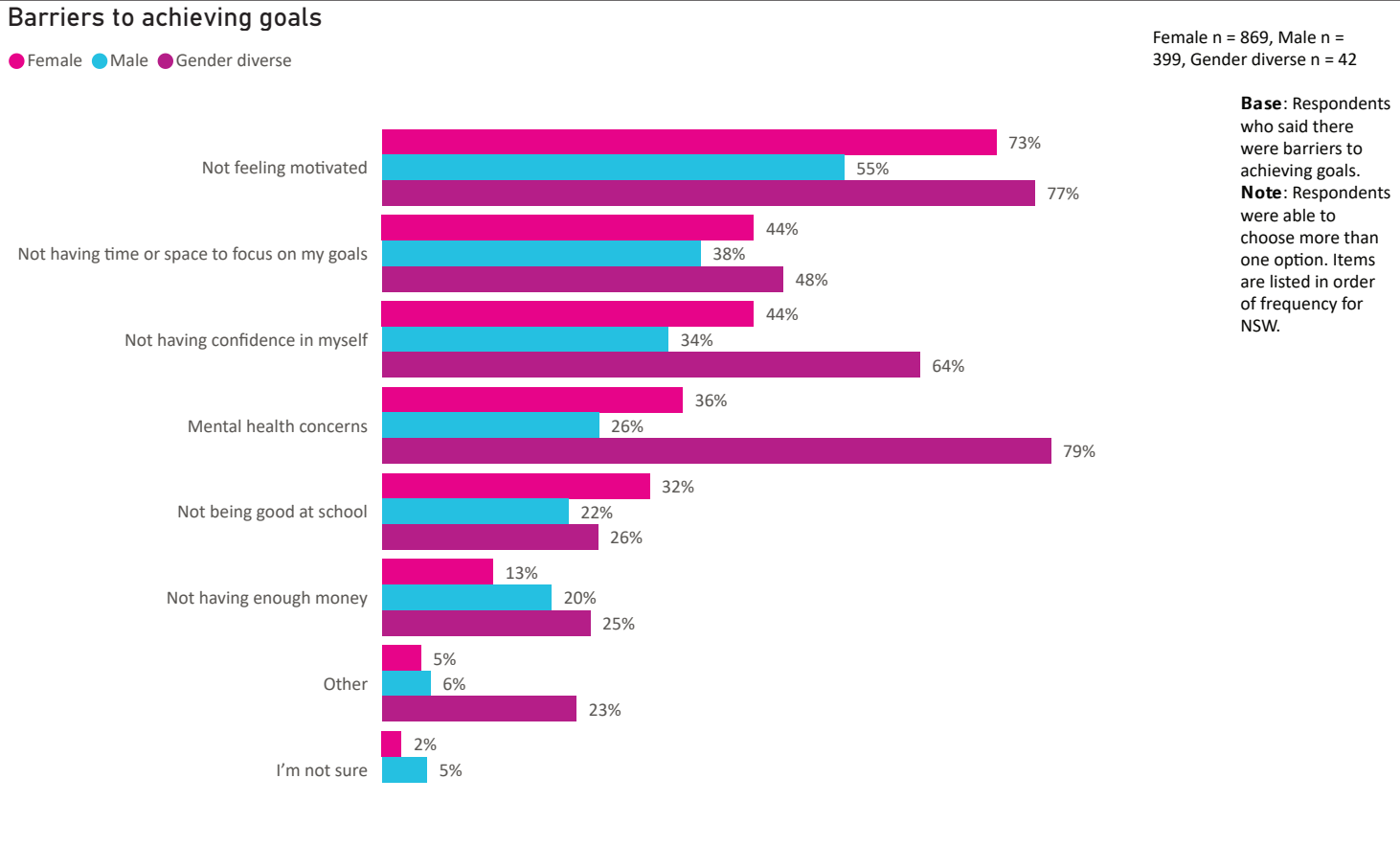
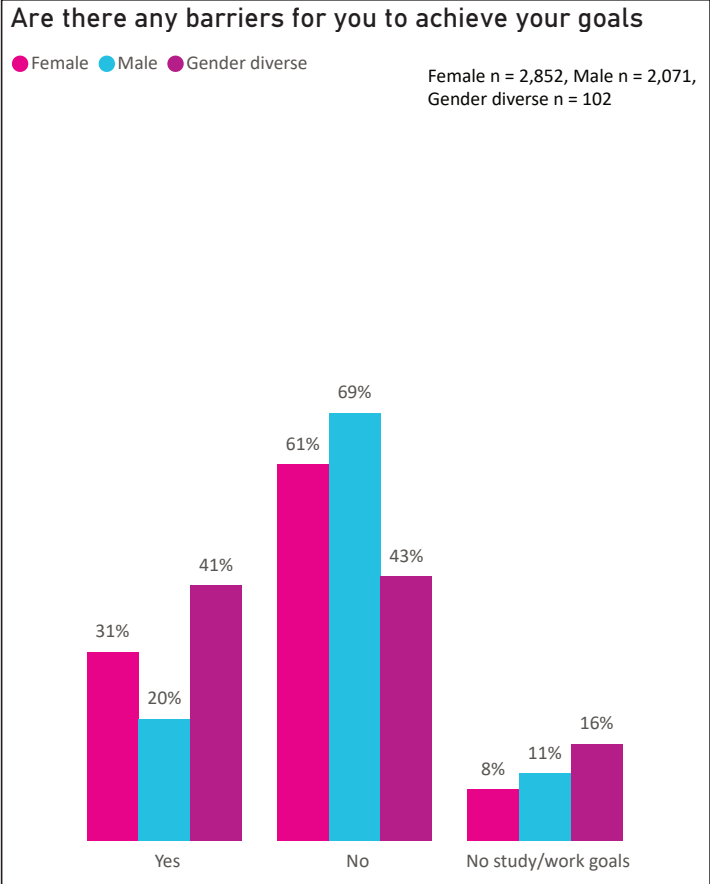
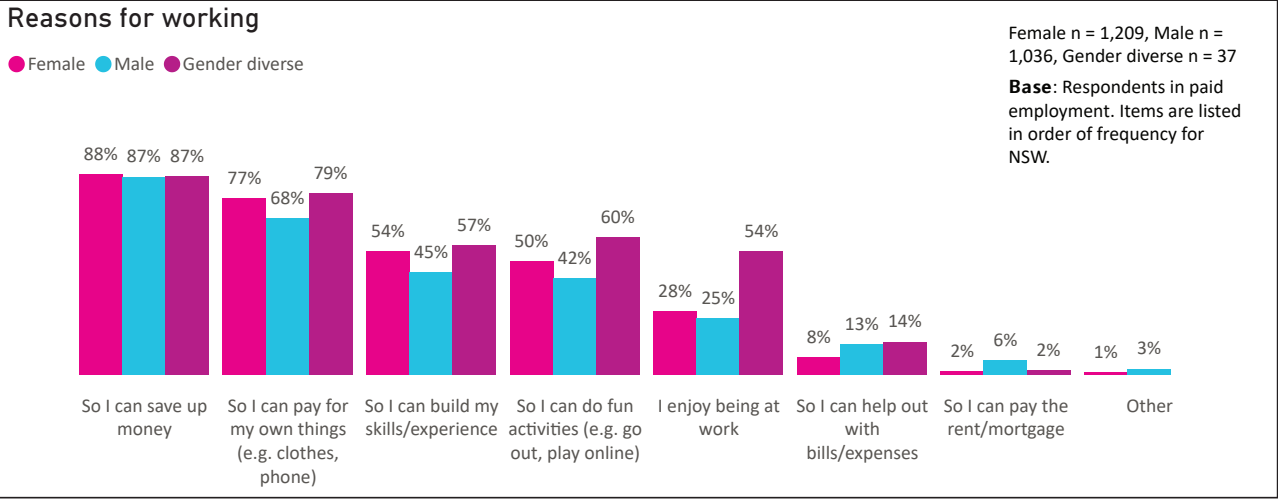
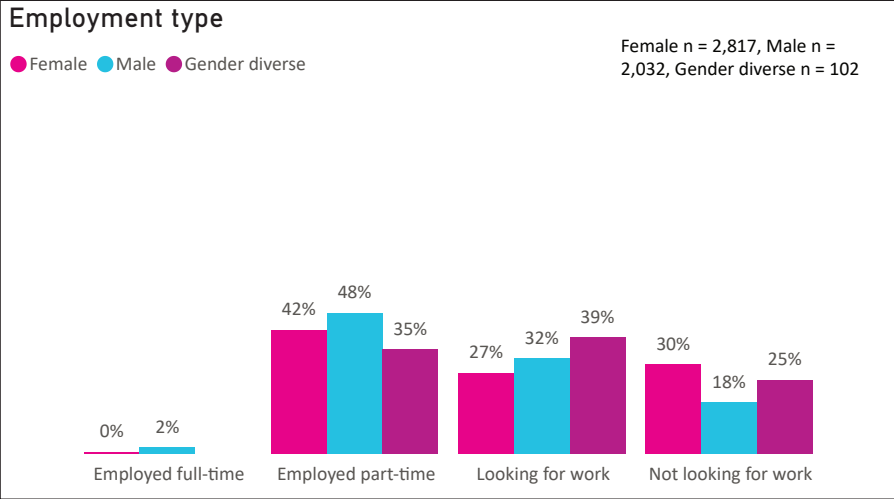
Plan to complete Year 12



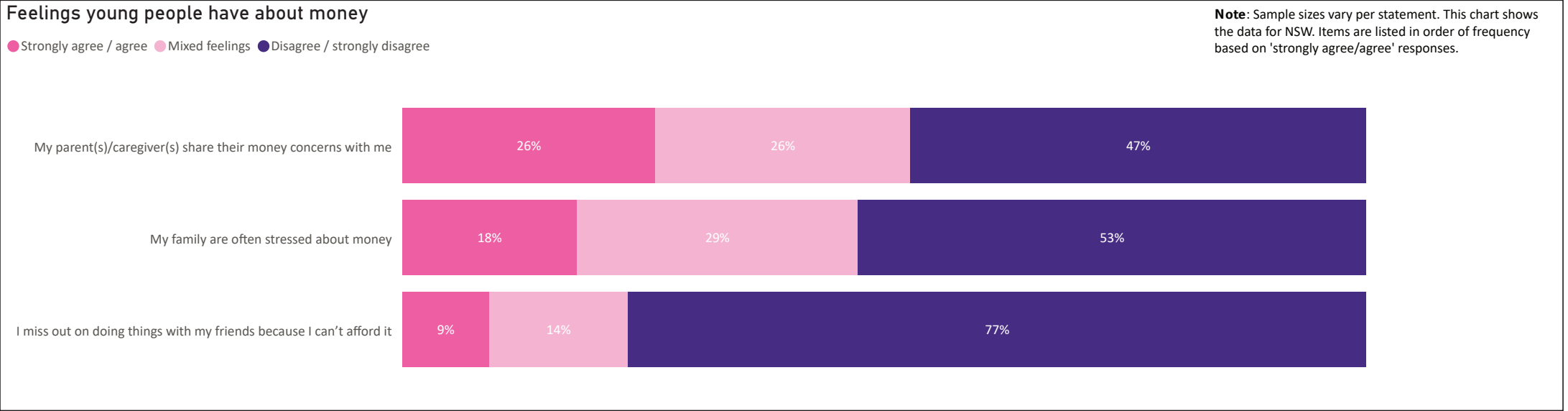
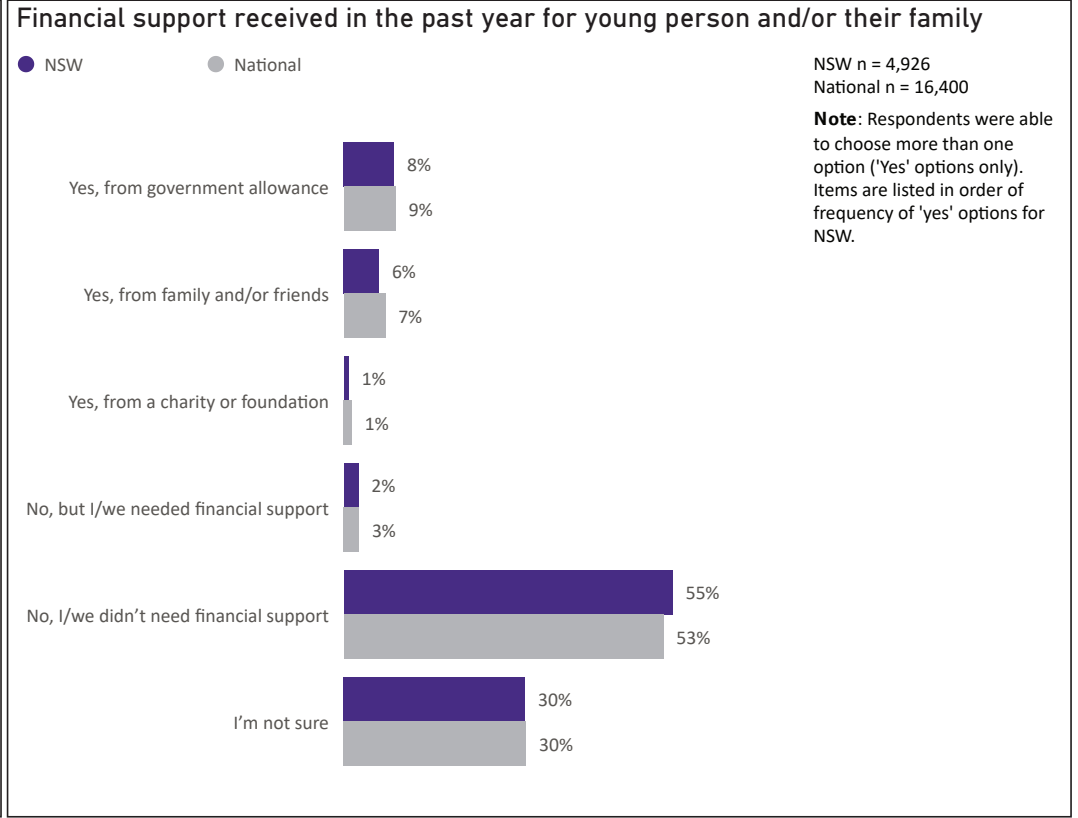
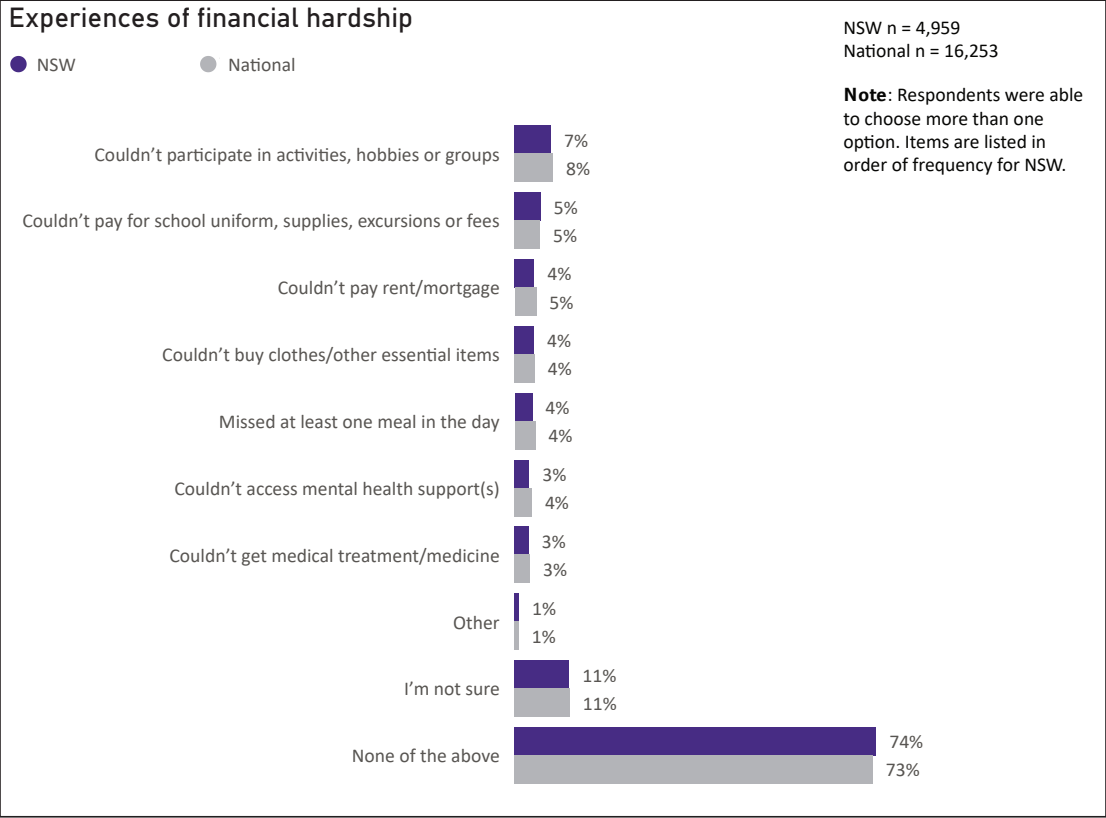
Reasons young people miss days at school



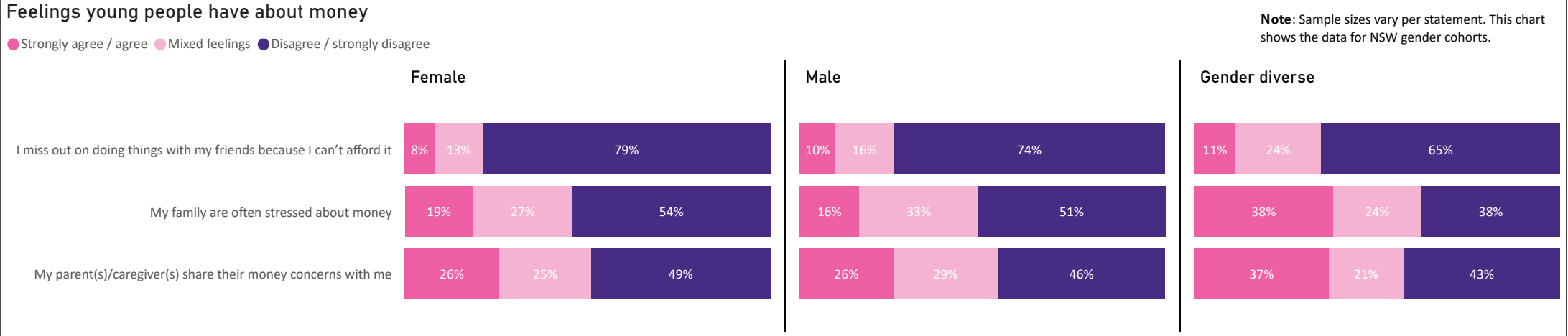
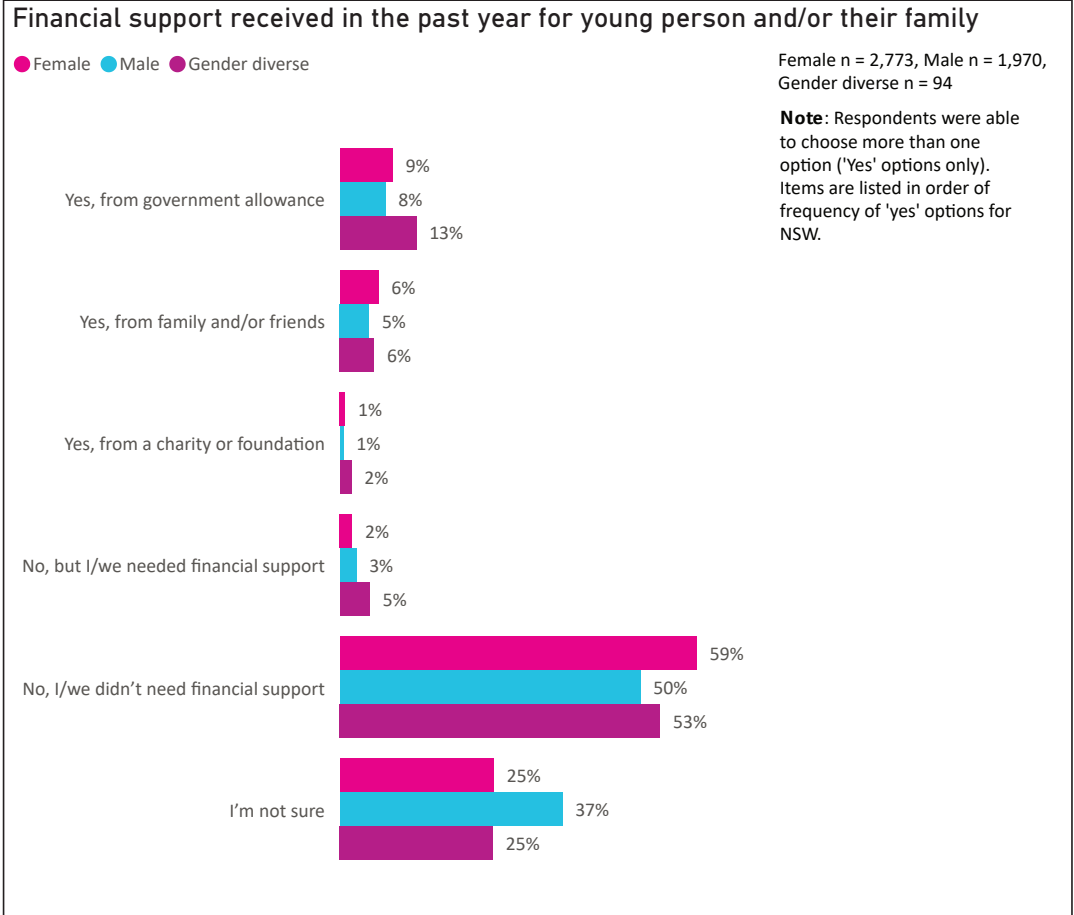
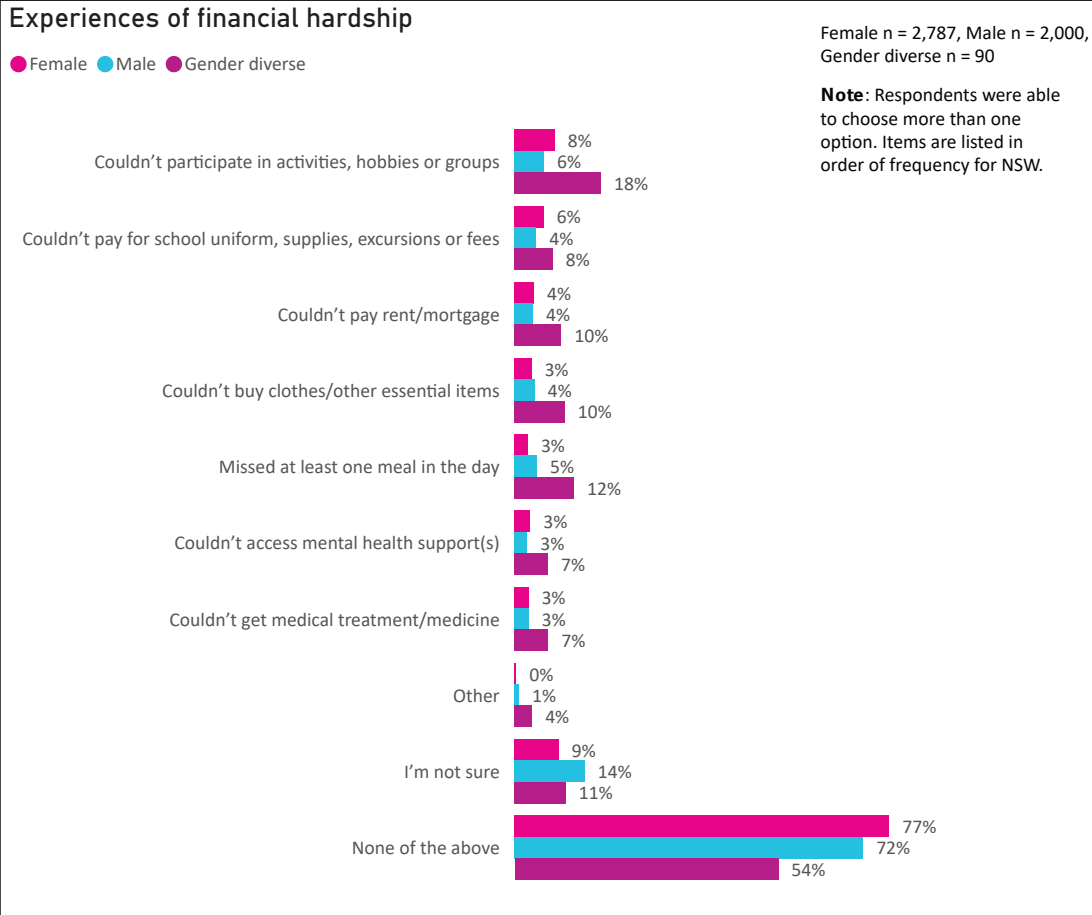
NSW



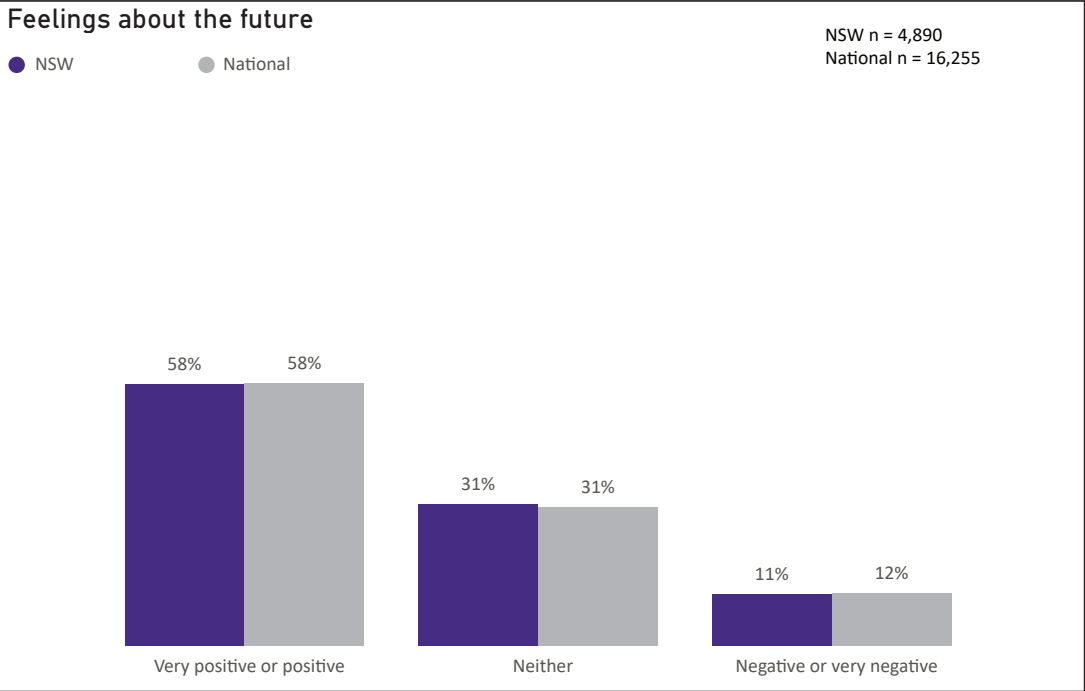
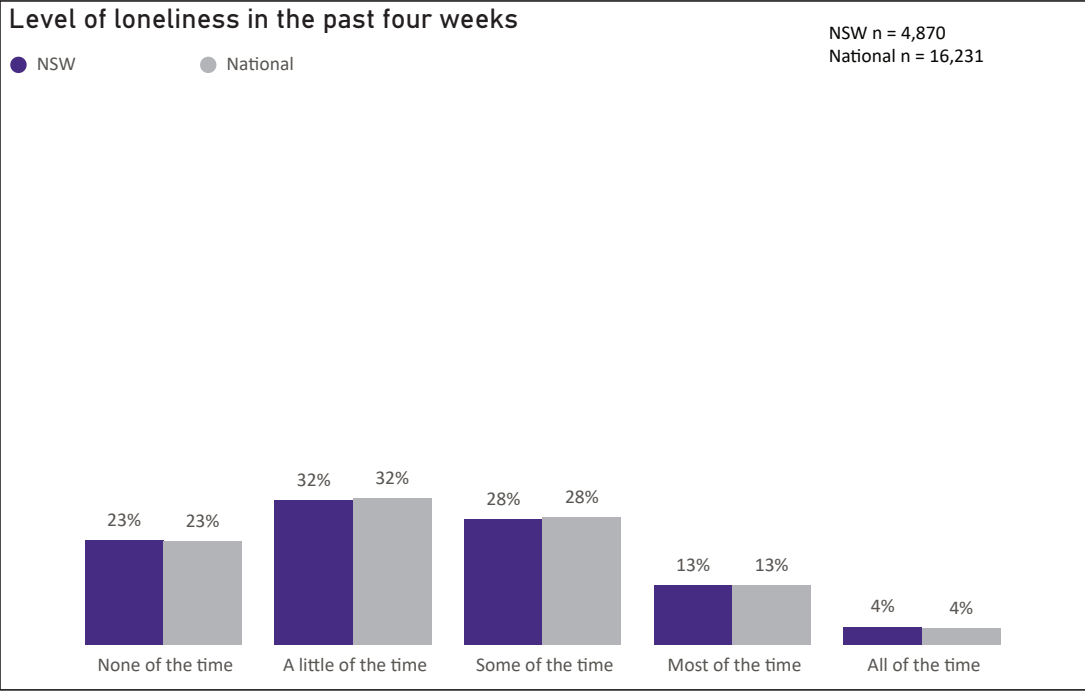
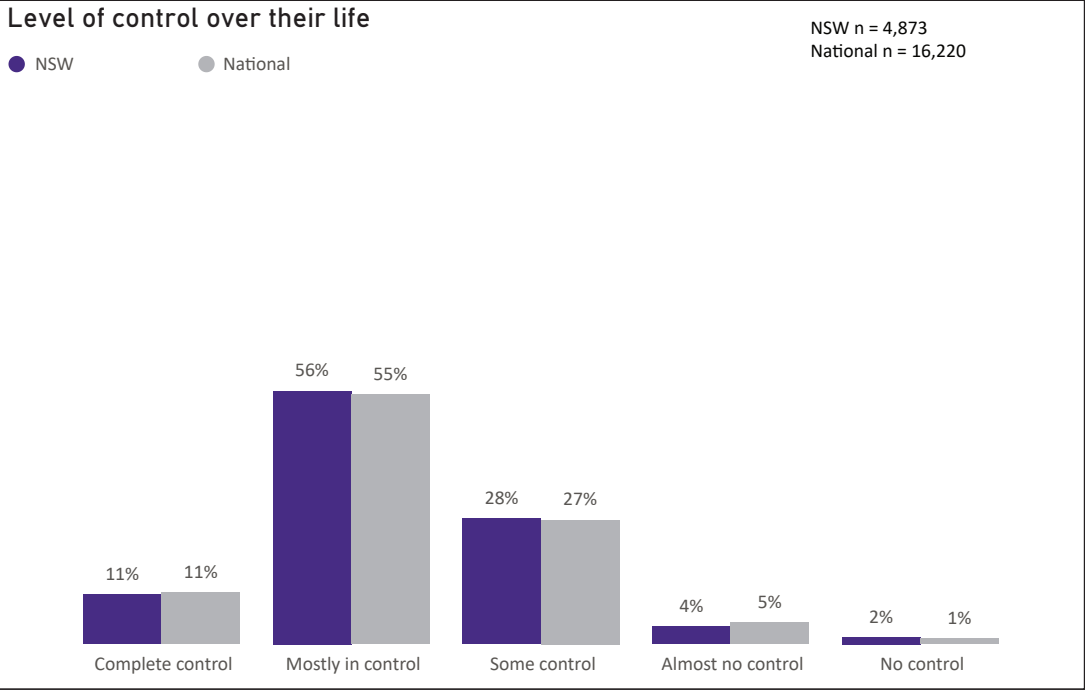
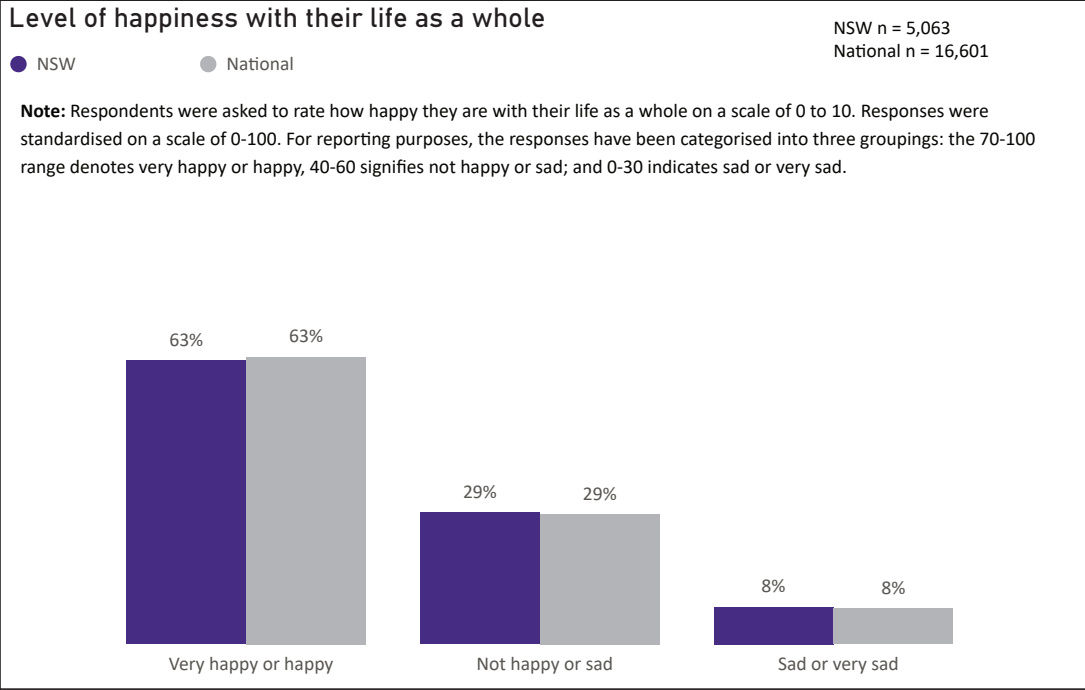
NSW



NSW



NSW

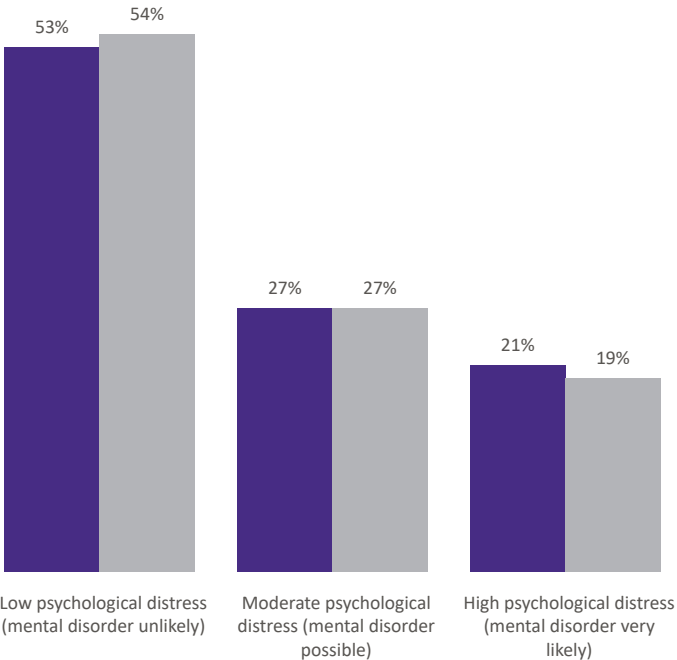


NSW

Level of psychological distress

NSW n = 4,737
National n = 15,761

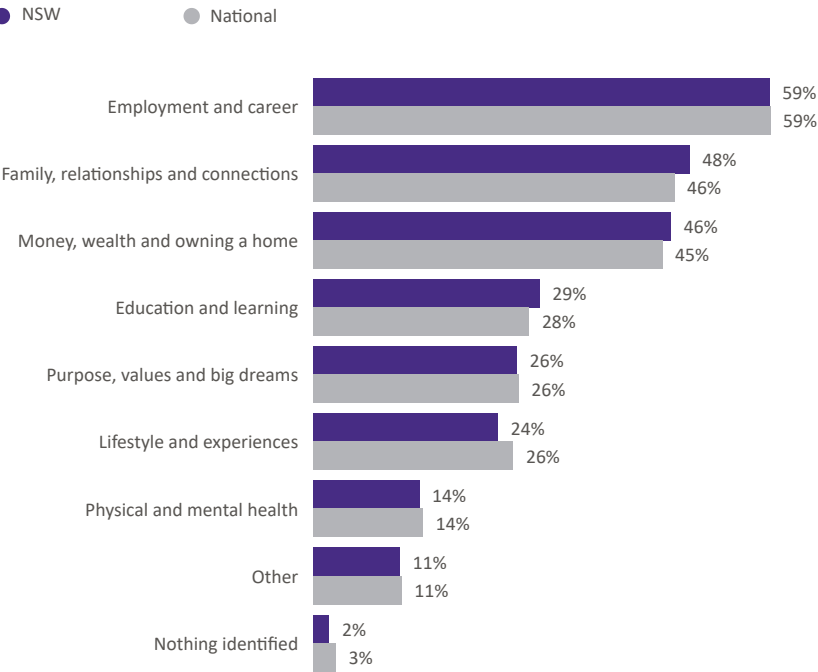
Note: The Kessler 6 (K6) is a measure of non-specific psychological distress (Kessler et al., 2002). It includes a six-item scale that asks respondents how frequently in the past four weeks they have felt: 1) nervous; 2) hopeless; 3) restless or fidgety; 4) so sad that nothing could cheer them up; 5) that everything was an effort; and 6) worthless. Based on scoring criteria used by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Rioseco, Warren & Daraganova, 2020), the K6 has been used to classify respondents into the following three groups: low psychological distress (mental disorder unlikely), medium psychological distress (mental disorder possible) and high psychological distress (mental disorder very likely). Cut-off scores for categories of psychological distress are as follows: low = 0 to 7, moderate = 8 to 12 and high = 13 to 24 (Hilton et al., 2008).



Biggest hopes for the future

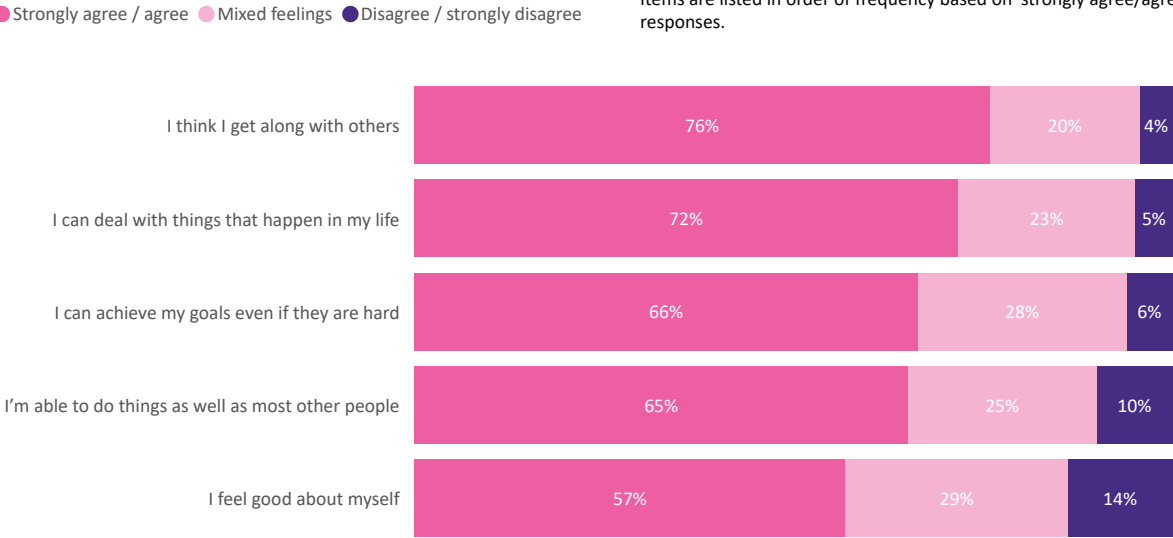
NSW n = 4,668
National n = 15,433

Note: Respondents were able to write up to three responses which have been categorised into key themes. Items are listed in order of frequency for NSW.

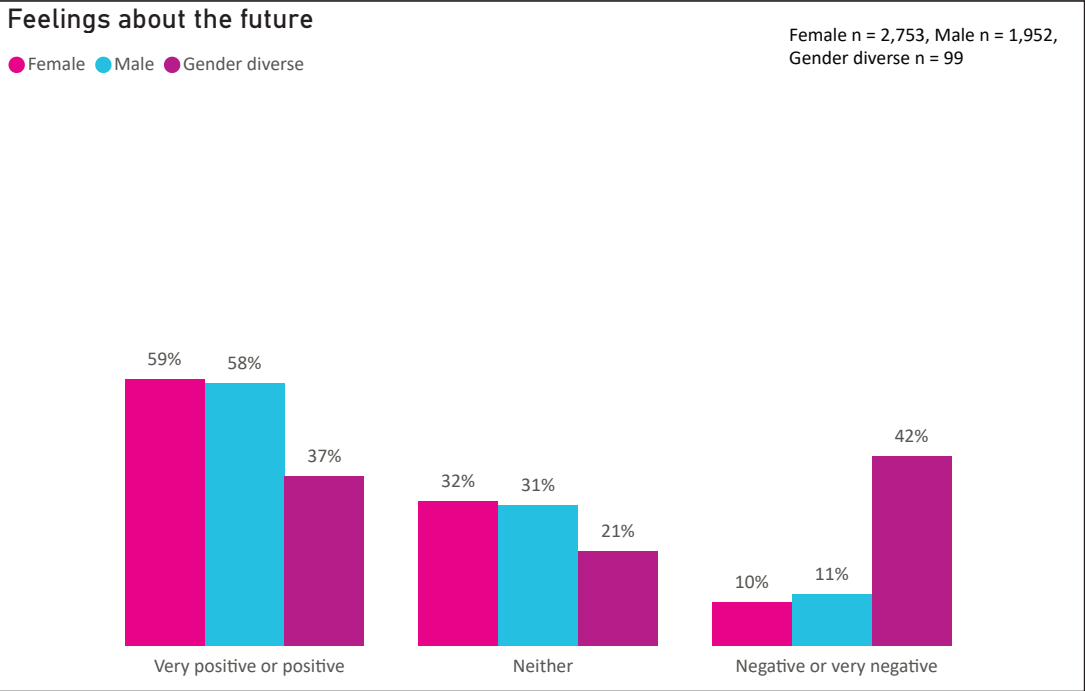
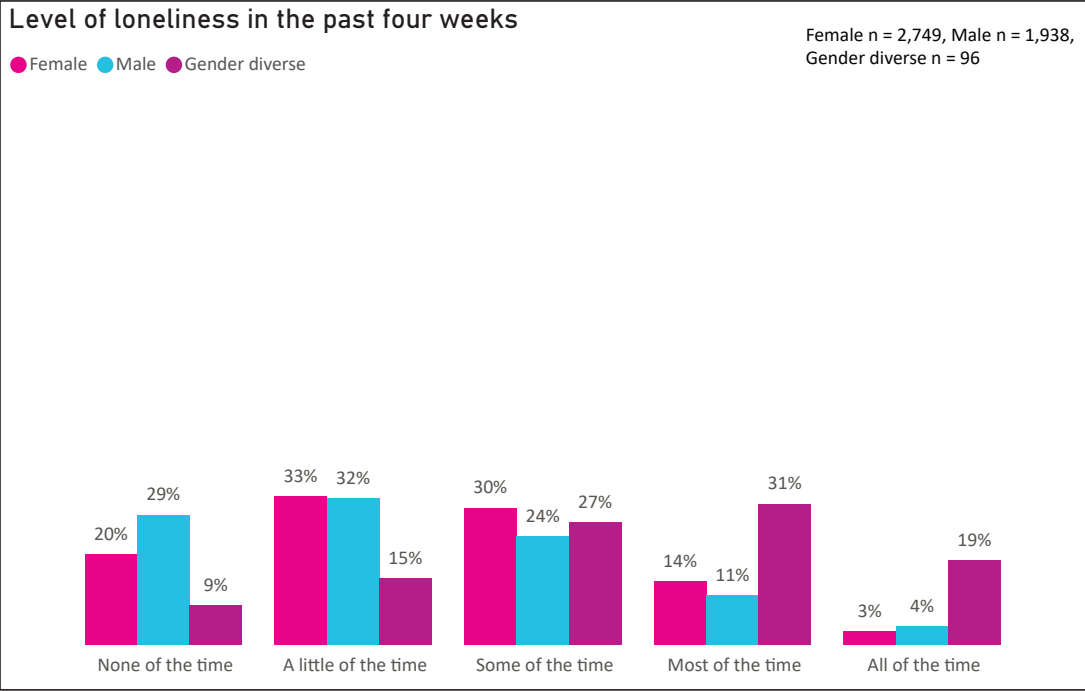
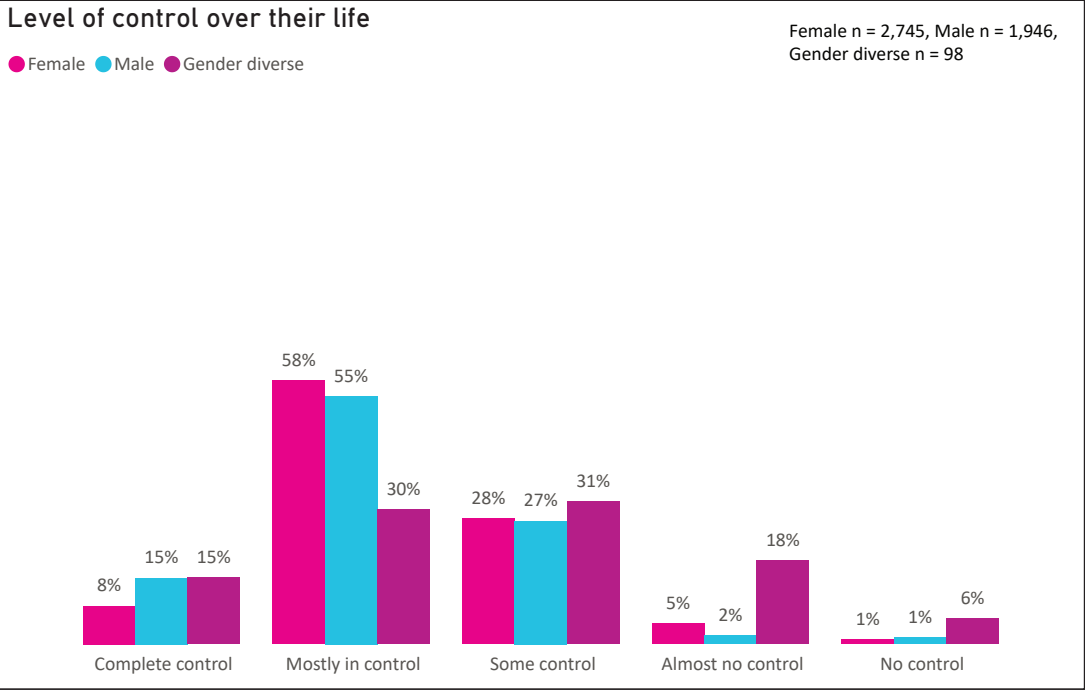
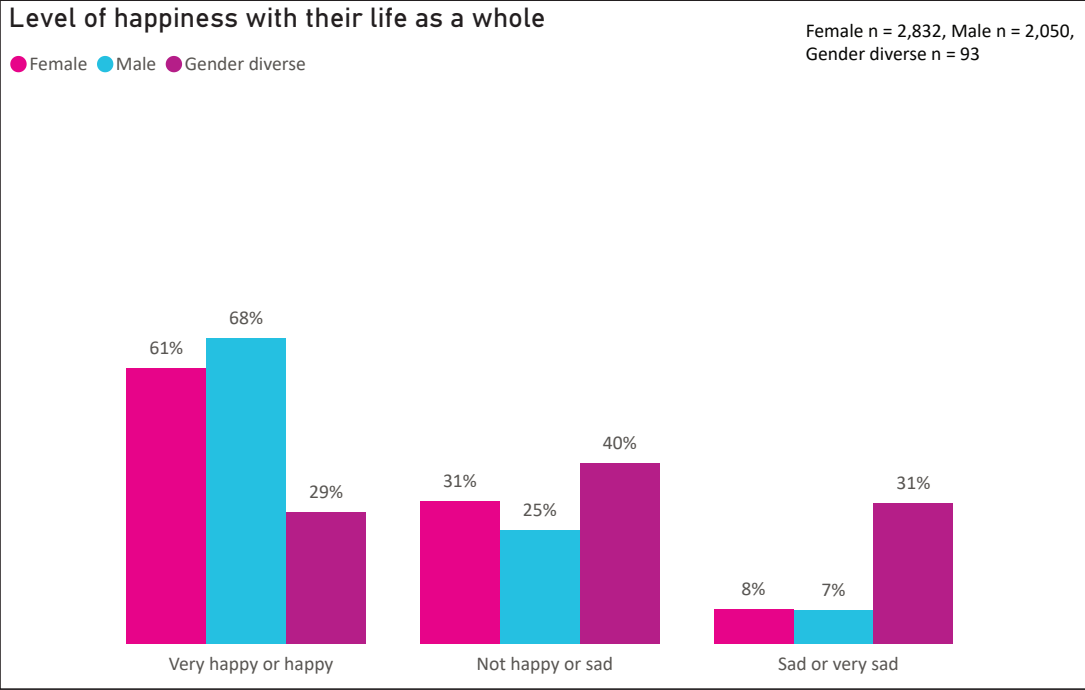


Feelings young people have about themselves

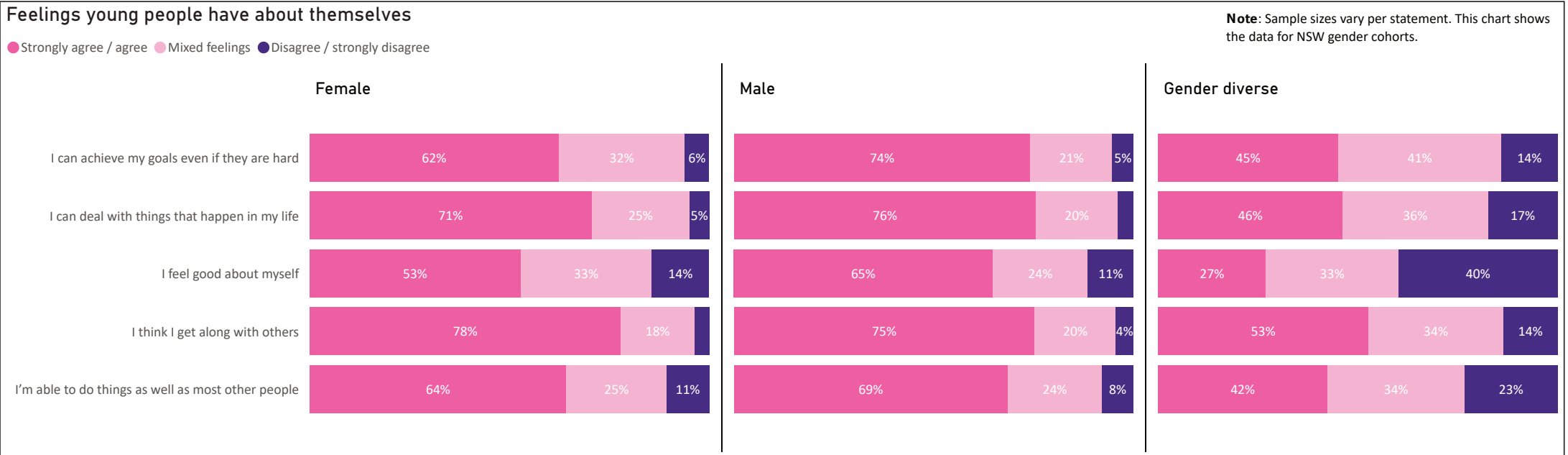
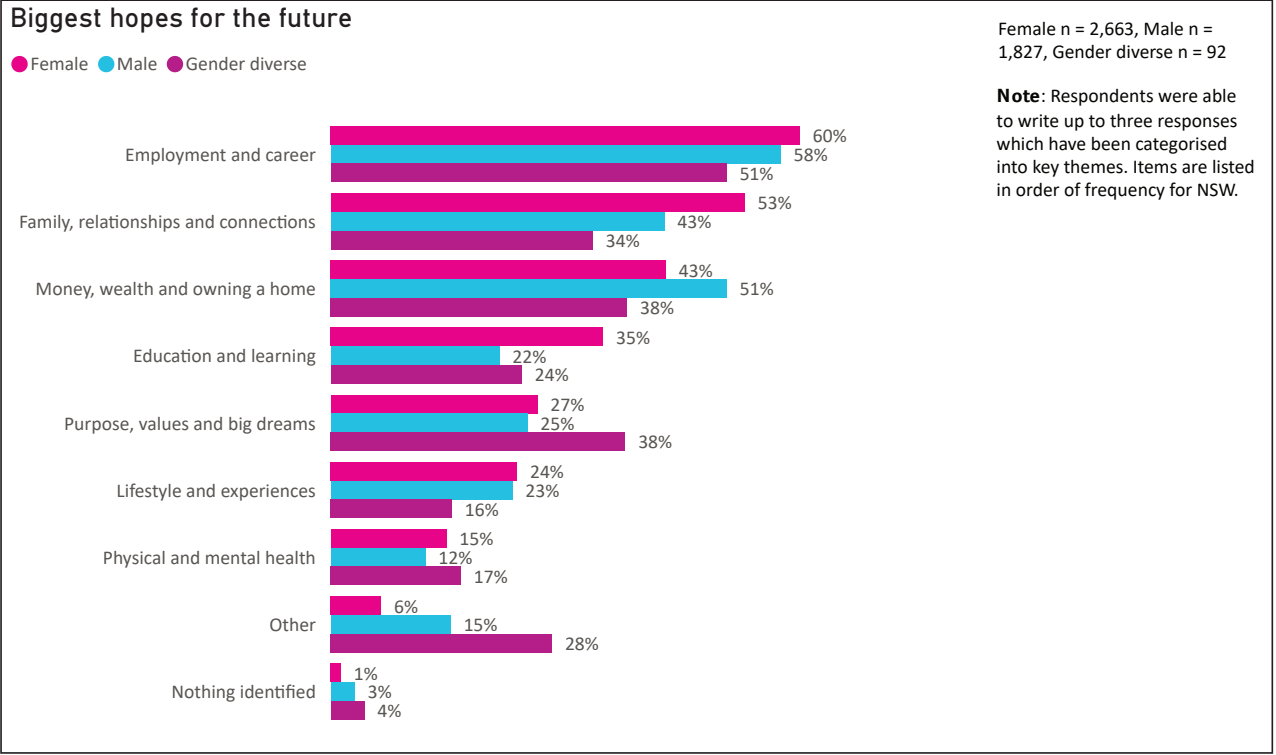
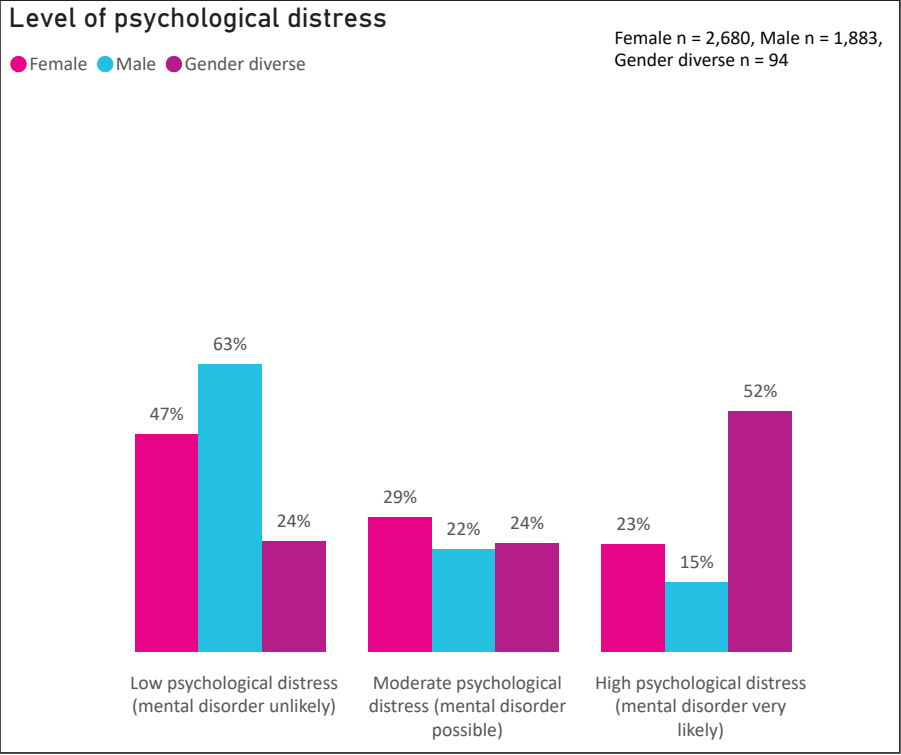
Note: Sample sizes vary per statement. This chart shows the data for NSW. Items are listed in order of frequency based on 'strongly agree/agree' responses.



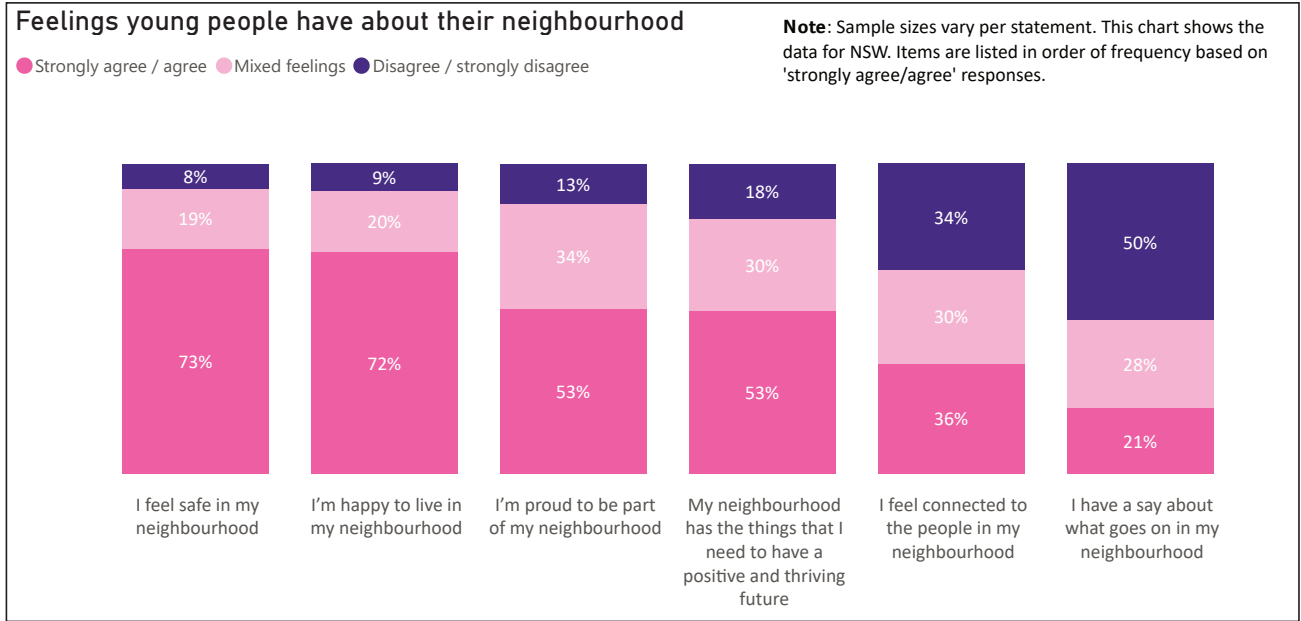
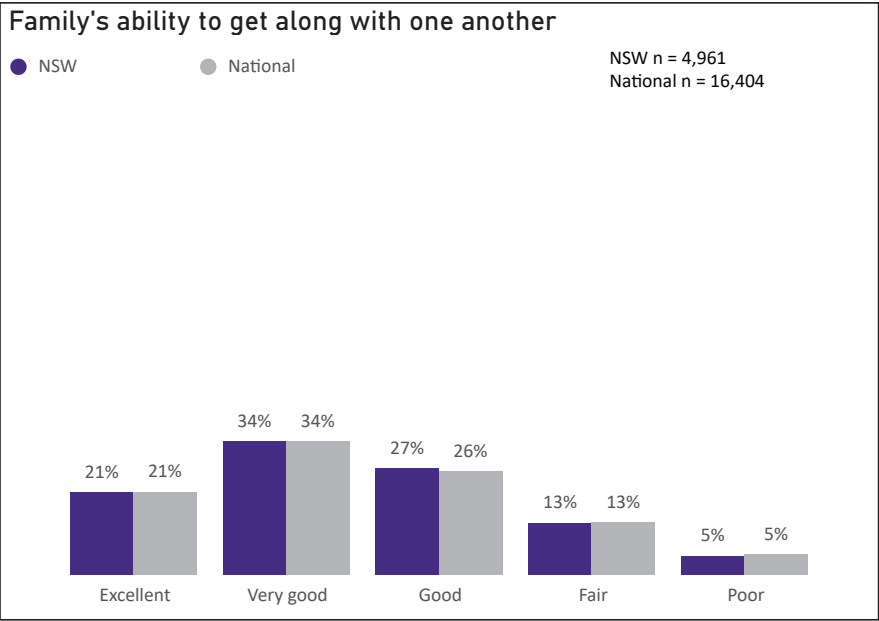
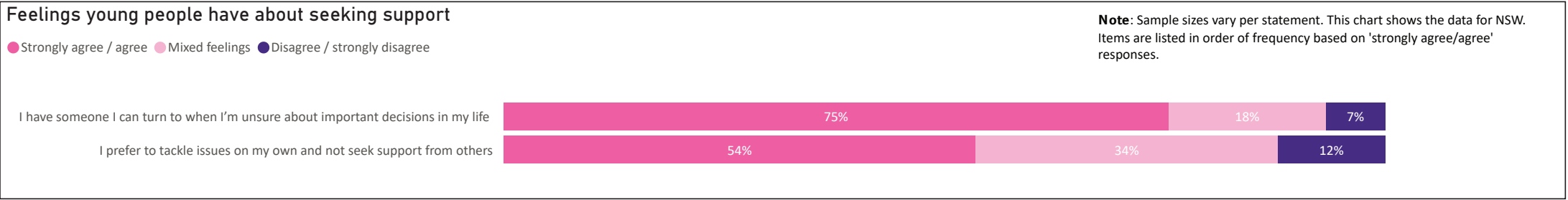
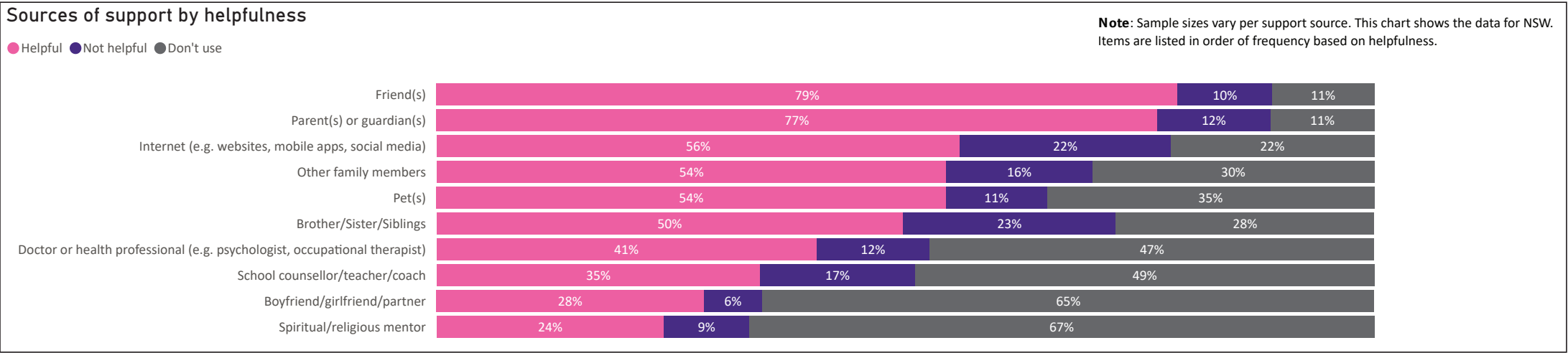
NSW



NSW



NSW



NSW

Sources of support by helpfulness

● Helpful ● Not helpful ● Don't use

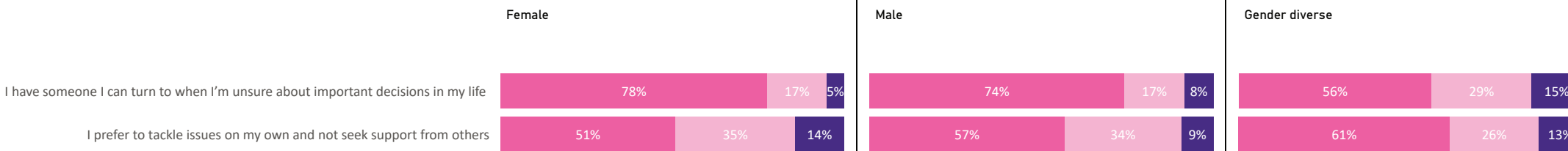
Note: Sample sizes vary per support source. This chart shows the data for NSW gender cohorts.



Feelings young people have about seeking support

● Strongly agree / agree ● Mixed feelings ● Disagree / strongly disagree

Note: Sample sizes vary per statement. This chart shows the data for NSW gender cohorts.

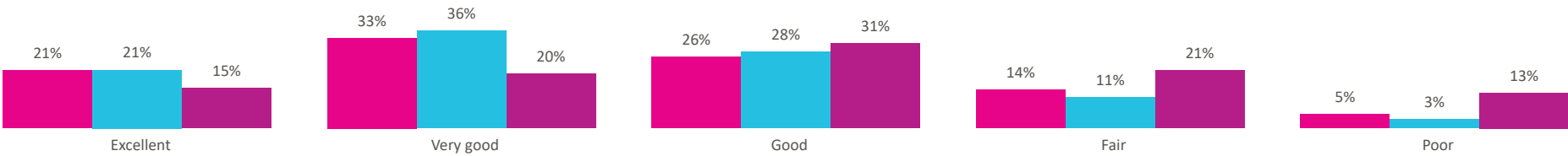


NSW

Family's ability to get along with one another

Female n = 2,808, Male n = 1,975, Gender diverse n = 96

Female Male Gender diverse



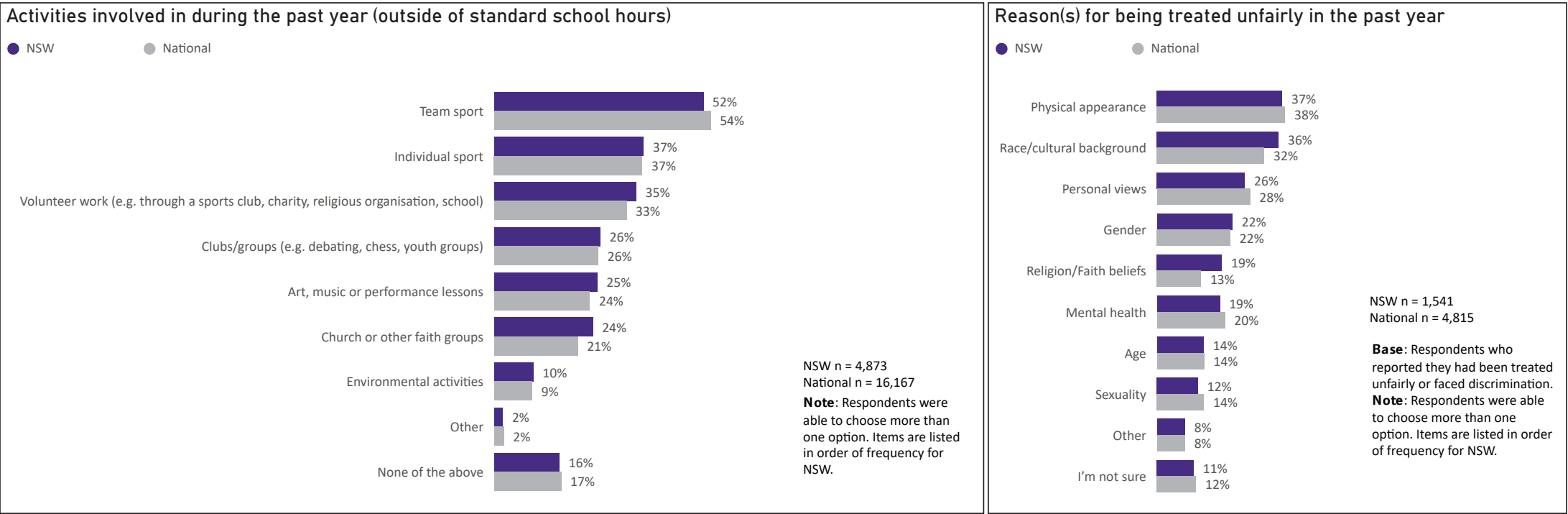
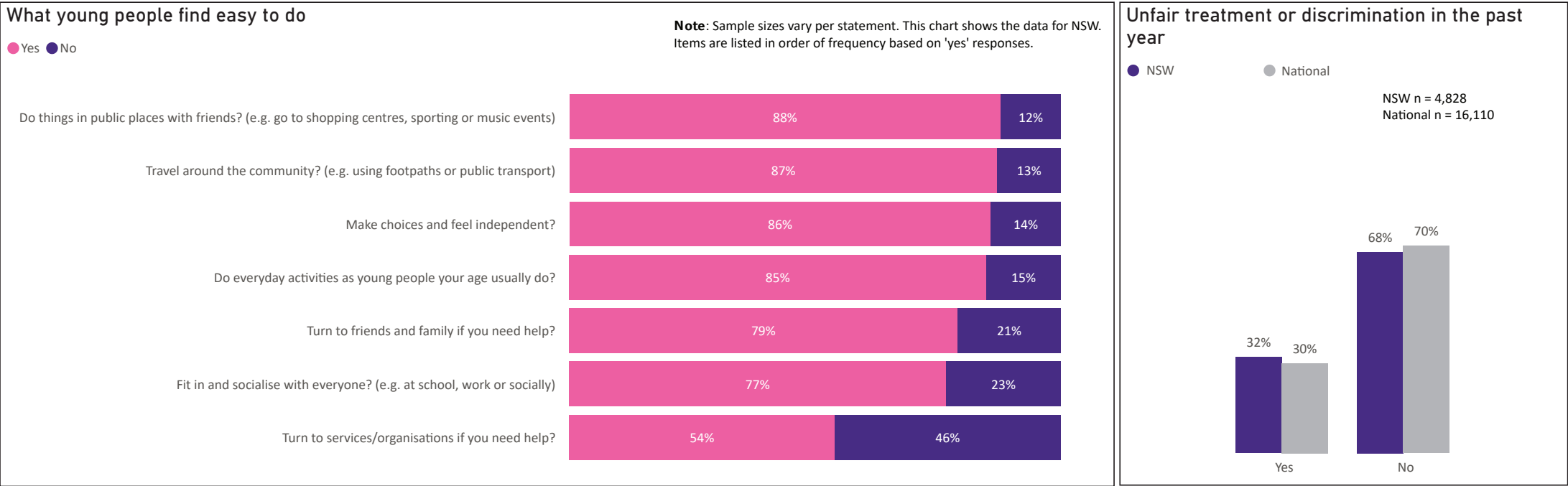
Feelings young people have about their neighbourhood

Note: Sample sizes vary per statement. This chart shows the data for NSW gender cohorts.

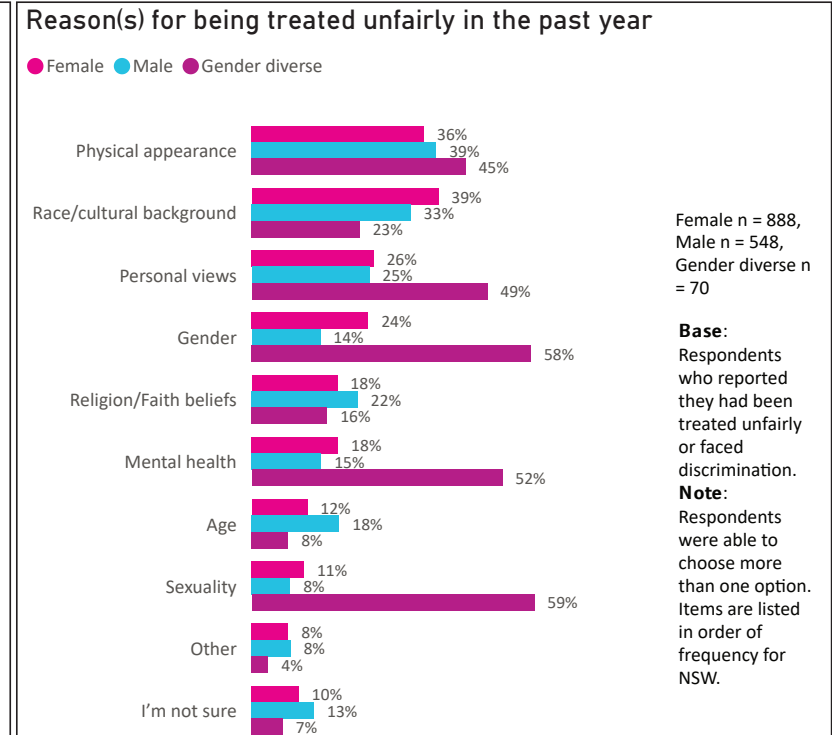
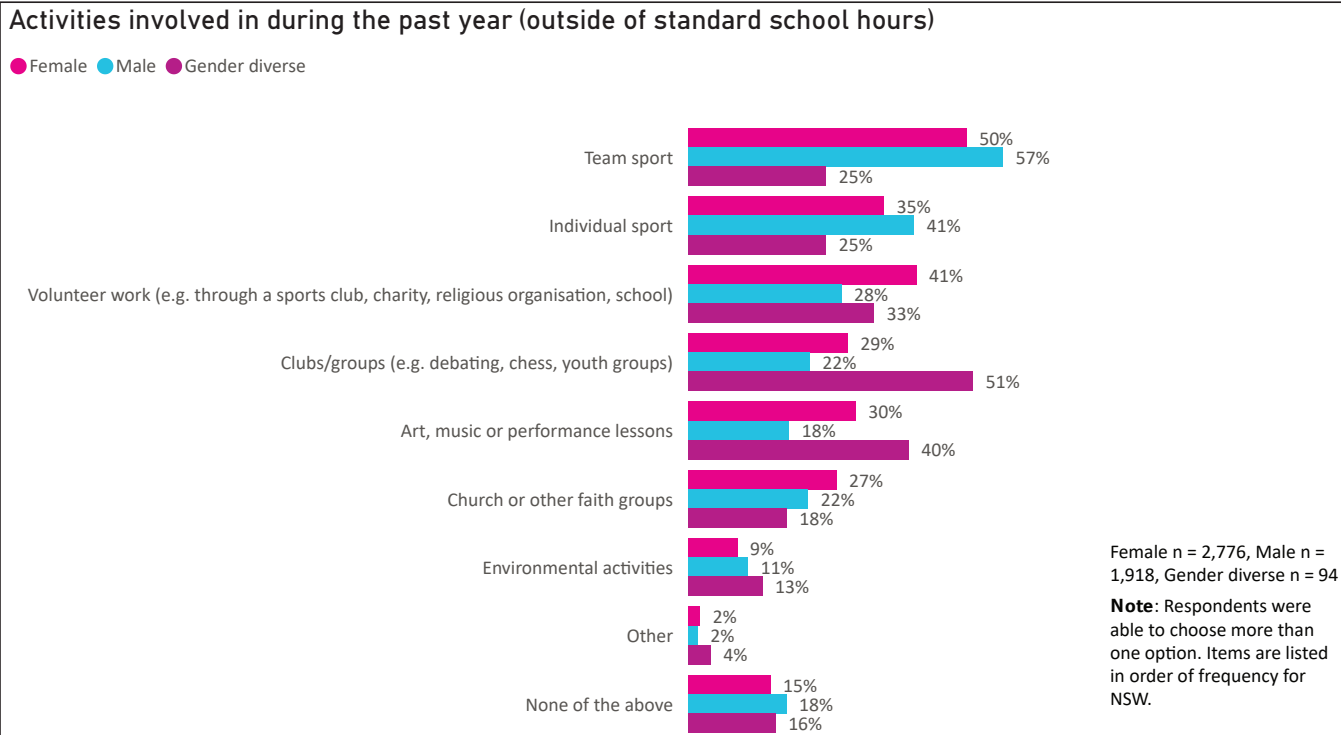
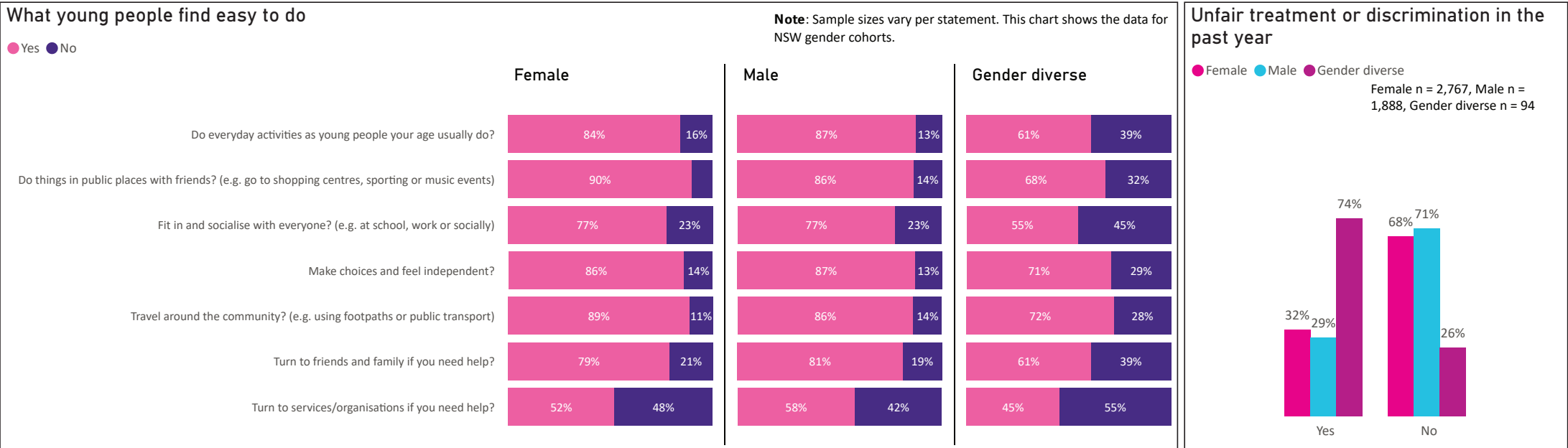
Strongly agree / agree Mixed feelings Disagree / strongly disagree



NSW



NSW



Thank you

This publication would not have been possible without the 17,155 young people who completed the *Youth Survey* in 2025. We extend our deepest gratitude to them, as well as to the staff of Mission Australia and the many schools and organisations that supported their involvement.

Amplifying the voices of young people ensures that decisions and solutions reflect their realities. When their perspectives are valued, governments, communities and organisations become more inclusive, responsive and better positioned to support them to thrive.

For further information about this report please contact

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Who is Mission Australia?

Mission Australia has more than 165 years of experience meeting human need and is one of the largest and most trusted for-purpose community service and housing providers in the country.

As a national non-denominational Christian charity, Mission Australia's values of respect, compassion, integrity, perseverance and celebration are at the heart of everything they do.

Every day, Mission Australia delivers homelessness services, provides social and affordable housing, helps families, children and young people thrive, improves mental health and wellbeing, supports people with disability, provides pathways to employment and financial stability, strengthens communities, offers alcohol and other drug support, and more.

Backed by supporters, partners, funders and collaborators, Mission Australia welcomes and works alongside people and communities of all backgrounds, ages and beliefs who seek the charity's support, providing excellent services and safe, secure homes that offer hope and lasting impact.

With Mission Australia's evidence and courageous voice, the charity advocates for a fairer nation and better outcomes for the people and communities they serve.

Guided by a bold Strategy 2030, Mission Australia is focused on delivering more safe, secure homes, expanding its impact and strengthening its organisation to meet the growing needs of people across Australia.

Together, Mission Australia is building hope and possibility for all.

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

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Mission Australia NT

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Darwin NT 0800
Tel: (08) 8935 0900

Mission Australia QLD

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Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: (07) 3394 8100

Mission Australia SA

80 Richmond Road
Kenswick SA 5035
Tel: (08) 8218 2800

Mission Australia TAS

27 Bligh Street
Rosny Park TAS 7018
Tel: (03) 6225 8200

Mission Australia VIC

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Dandenong VIC 3175
Tel: (03) 9213 2500

Mission Australia WA

275 Abernethy Road
Cloverdale WA 6105
Tel: (08) 9225 0400

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AUSTRALIA** | together
we stand

