

GEN Z WELLBEING INDEX 2025

year 

IN COLLABORATION WITH

scape





FOUNDED IN 2011, YEAR13 IS A GEN Z PUBLISHER AND ED-TECH WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO LIVE HAPPIER, HEALTHIER AND MORE FULFILLED LIVES, AND WHOSE MISSION IS TO UPGRADE THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION.

Year13 connects with 3.5 million young people each month and all Year13 content is created by an in-house team of Gen Z creators. Year13 also owns Career Tools, Australia's largest school to work transition platform, with over 1200+ subscribing schools.



SCAPE AUSTRALIA HAS A VISION TO BE THE EARTH'S BEST LIVING COMPANY WITH A PURPOSE TO CREATE BETTER LIVING EXPERIENCES FOR PEOPLE AND THE PLANET.

Their ambition is to be the world leader in residential community design where people feel proud to live.

As Australia's largest owner and operator of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), Scape currently serves over 19,000 residents across 39 locations nationwide.

GEN Z WELLBEING INDEX 2025



IN COLLABORATION WITH





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Reference as: Walker, I, (2025). 'Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2025', Year13, Australia.
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Methodology

One national survey of Australian youth & Scape residents conducted by Year13 and Scape in May 2025.

Total responses = 3197
Australian youth = 2021
Scape residents = 1176

This survey formed the basis of this research paper and was designed to gather comprehensive information about the wellbeing of youth in Australia. One national sample of youth was surveyed as well as a national sample of Scape residents to compare their state of wellbeing. All respondents for this survey were aged 18-24 and have finished high school. This survey was conducted online and respondents were sourced via email and social media. Youth quotes featured throughout this report were sourced from extended response questions included in the survey, some of which have been edited for clarity and brevity.

A total of 2000 survey responses provides a large enough sample size to draw valid conclusions that represent Australia's youth population. With a sample size of at least $n=2021$ we can be 95% confident that the metrics are within $\pm 3\%$ of the result had we surveyed all 2,900,000 Australian youth aged 18 to 24.

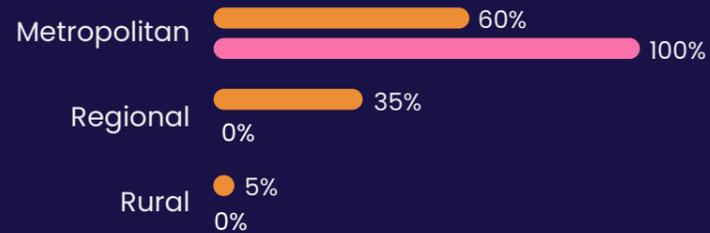
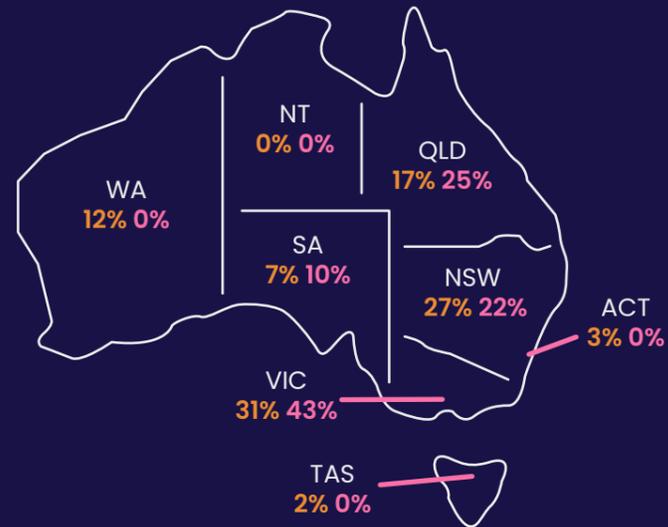
In addition to descriptive statistics for each survey question the analysis includes statistically significant differences across the following variables/groups: year on year differences between 2024 and 2025. Any relevant and significant differences amongst these variables and groups compared to the average have been highlighted.

See the next page for combined demographics of these surveys

Demographic breakdown

● National ● Scape

LOCATION BREAKDOWN



OUR RESPONDENTS

54% 93% are in university
7% 1% are in TAFE
73% 19% are working

20% 7% consider themselves to have a disability
20% 71% are from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background
14% 7% are from a low socioeconomic status (low SES) background
2% 1% are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin

GENDER BREAKDOWN

47% 48% Male
47% 48% Female
4% 2% Non-binary/non-conforming
1% 2% Prefer not to say
1% 0% Other

AGE BREAKDOWN





Introduction

Young Australians are under increasing pressure. Not from cost of living, as you might expect, but from issues which stretch from local to global in scale and which are in many ways simply beyond their control.

Climate change, geopolitical tensions, the rise of Artificial Intelligence. These sharply rising concerns sit alongside the perennial problems of youth. Figuring out their future, fatigue, burnout.

Green shoots however are emerging. Mental health rates have remained relatively stable and more young people have hobbies, are being creative in their downtime, and have a stronger sense of passion and purpose in their lives. And while young people are exercising and playing sport less than last year, they are also vaping and drinking in significantly lower numbers as well.

Now in its third year, The Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2025 captures comprehensive insights into the state of wellbeing of young Australians aged 18 to 24, surveying more than 2000 respondents from across the nation about their mental health, exercise, sleep and diet.

The report, made by Year 13 in collaboration with student accommodation provider Scape, also tracks the same factors for young people of the same age staying in Scape's student accommodation - including properties in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide - of which more than 1000 respondents were surveyed. Positively, Scape residents have been found to report stronger wellbeing compared to young people nationally on average. Their mental health is significantly better, as is their sleep and their social lives.

Their day-to-day wellbeing indicators suggest that structured, community-focused living environments like Scape can offer a protective effect by providing stability, social connection and a greater sense of independence during such a formative stage of life.

Since the initial launch of the Gen Z Wellbeing Index in 2023, Scape has introduced a range of targeted initiatives and programs focused on physical and emotional wellbeing, benefiting both its staff and residents. These include the introduction of bespoke training such as the 'Supportive Conversations' partnership with Headspace, launched in November 2024, and Mental Health First Aid, aimed at improving mental health literacy and support for residents in need.

Building on this commitment, Scape has also launched the Scape Safe Hub, a comprehensive solution that goes beyond traditional safety measures. In addition, Scape has deepened its partnership with Headspace to provide residents with exclusive digital content tailored to address Gen Z's unique sleep challenges, supporting healthier sleep habits and overall emotional wellbeing. This extended into a sponsored sleep playlist via Spotify, reaching Gen Z where they spend their time. Scape residents also benefit from nutrition-focused programs and continued education around both physical and emotional health.

Read ahead for deeper insights into the state of wellbeing for young Australians and Scape residents in 2025, including the major changes in their habits and concerns from 2024 which help to reveal the ever shifting sands of the world young people walk upon in their everyday lives from one year to the next.





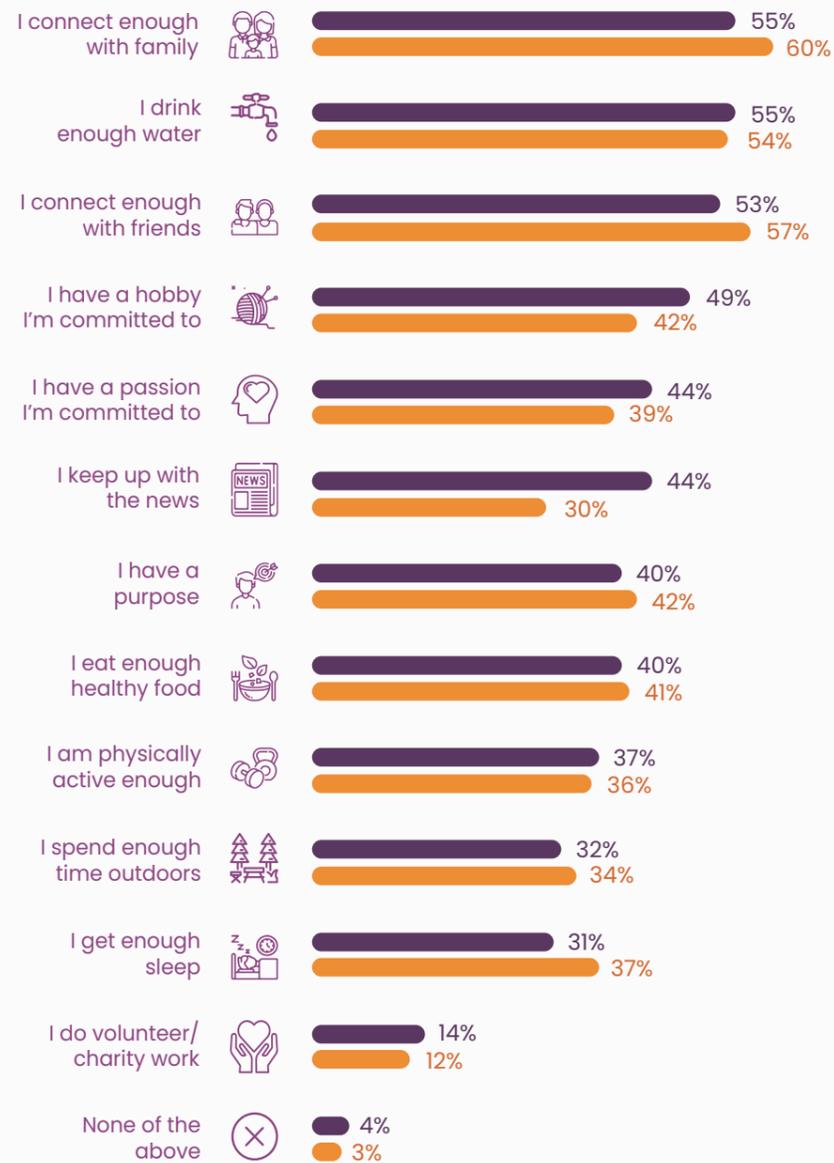
Mental health

Between 2024 and 2025 young people in Australia showed a marked shift in both internal resilience and external concern. More are reporting a strong sense of purpose, passion, and engagement in hobbies, as well as higher levels of interest in current affairs, suggesting a growing drive for direction, meaning, and awareness. Alongside this, there has been a significant increase in concern for societal and global issues such as Artificial Intelligence, climate change, political division, and inequality, with young people appearing more socially conscious yet emotionally impacted. Mental health conditions such as OCD have risen, and more youth now report education, unemployment, and politics as major wellbeing stressors. To cope with the stressors of life more are turning to activities which involve screens as well as others which don't, showing that technology's continued advance into their lives is occurring simultaneously with young people seeking respite in more traditional ways. While cost of living stress has slightly eased and figuring out their future remains the most widespread problem for young people, the overall picture reveals youth are responding to rising external pressures with a mix of concern, self-reflection and new strategies.

Key wellbeing indicators

Which of the following applies to you?
(Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

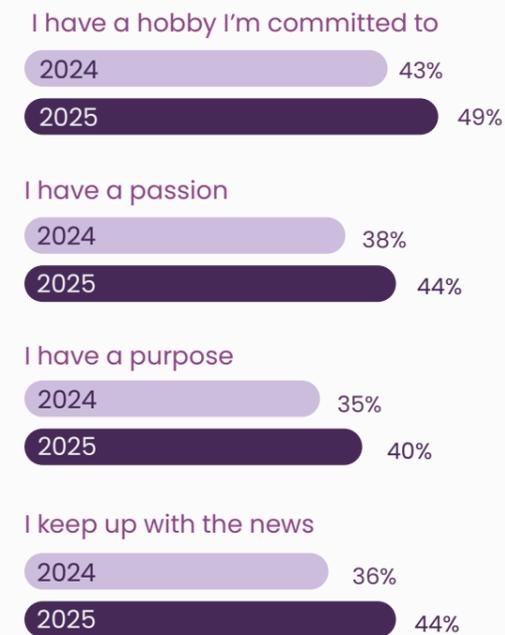


Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

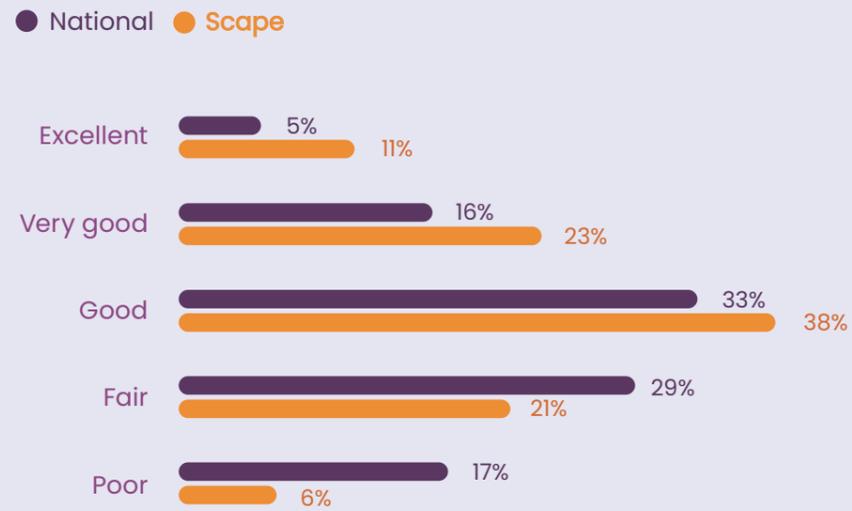
Which of the following applies to you?

A lot more young people report having a hobby, passion and sense of purpose compared to last year, helping to give them direction in life and enjoyment when not working or studying. The rise in young people keeping up with the news could reflect increasing concerns about what is in the news, with young people feeling compelled to stay up to date.

National



How is your mental health currently?



Insight:

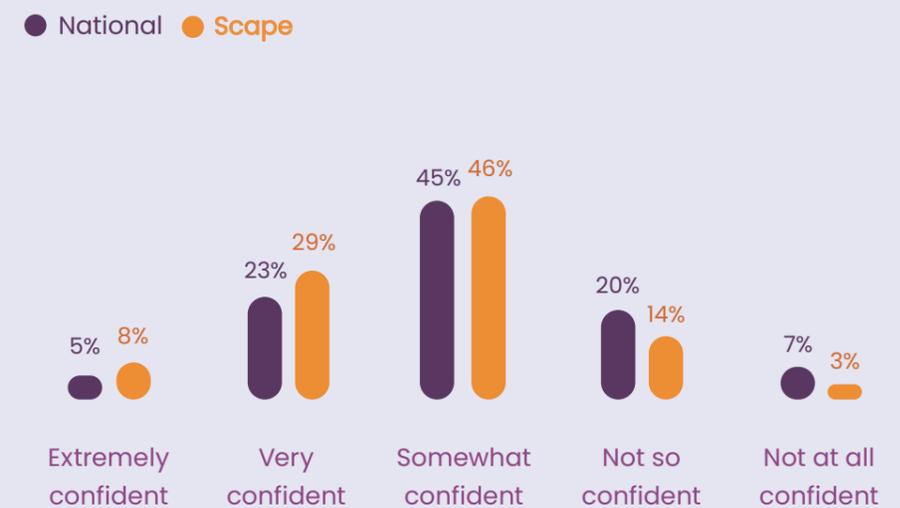
Scape residents are significantly more likely to report excellent mental health (11% vs 5%) and less likely to report poor mental health (6% vs 17%) compared to the national average.



How confident are you in your physical appearance currently?

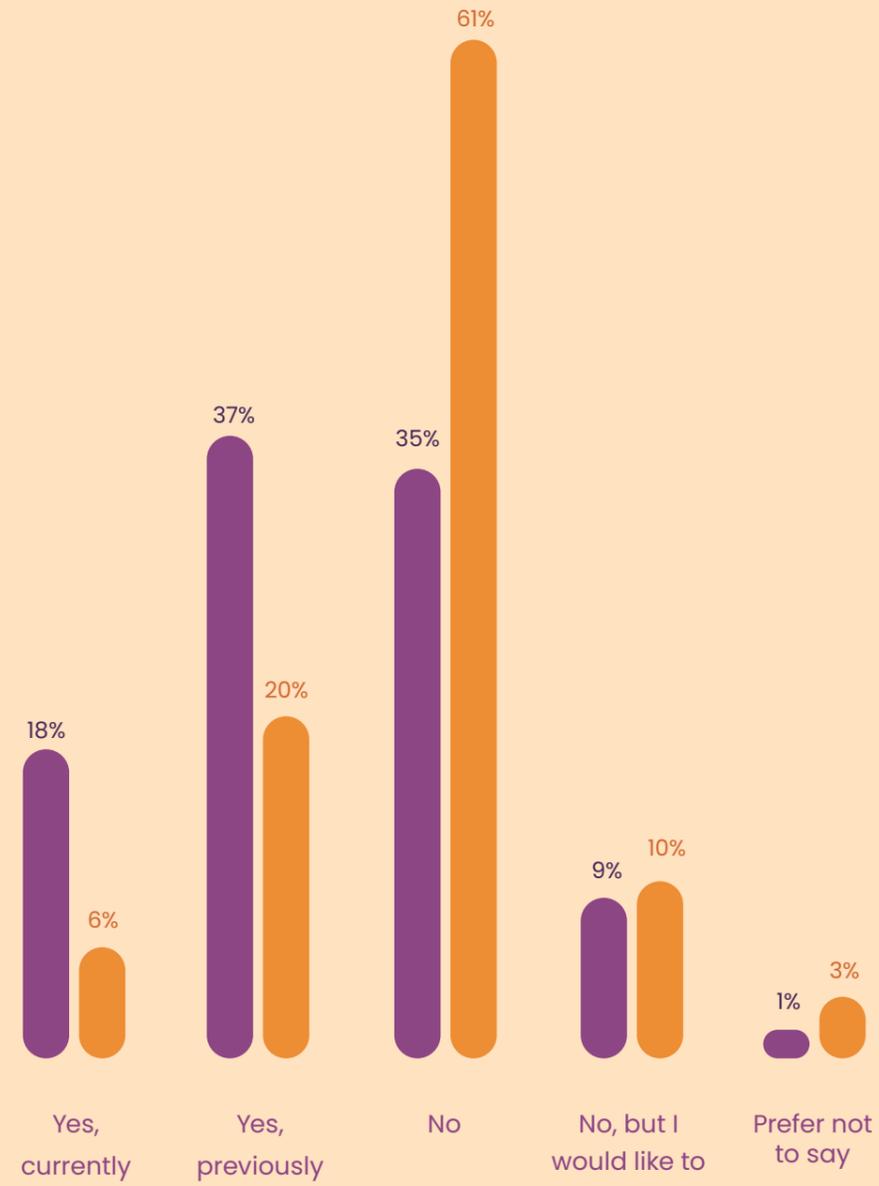


Besides physical appearance, how confident are you in yourself generally?

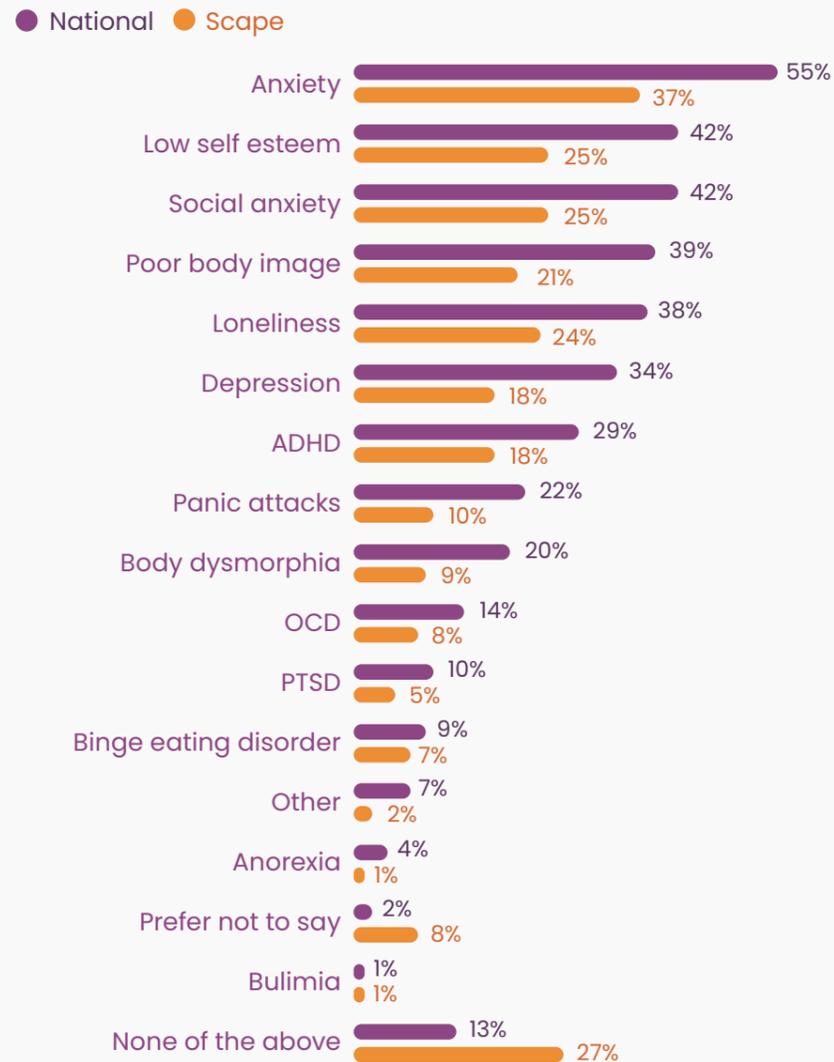


Have you had mental health therapy?

● National ● Scape



Which of the following do you experience in your life currently? (Tick all that apply)



Insight:

Scape residents have significantly lower rates of self-reported mental health struggles compared to the national average, including anxiety (37% vs 55%), depression (18% vs 34%), social anxiety (25% vs 42%), low self-esteem (25% vs 42%), poor body image (21% vs 39%) and loneliness (24% vs 38%).



Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

Which of the following do you experience in your life currently?

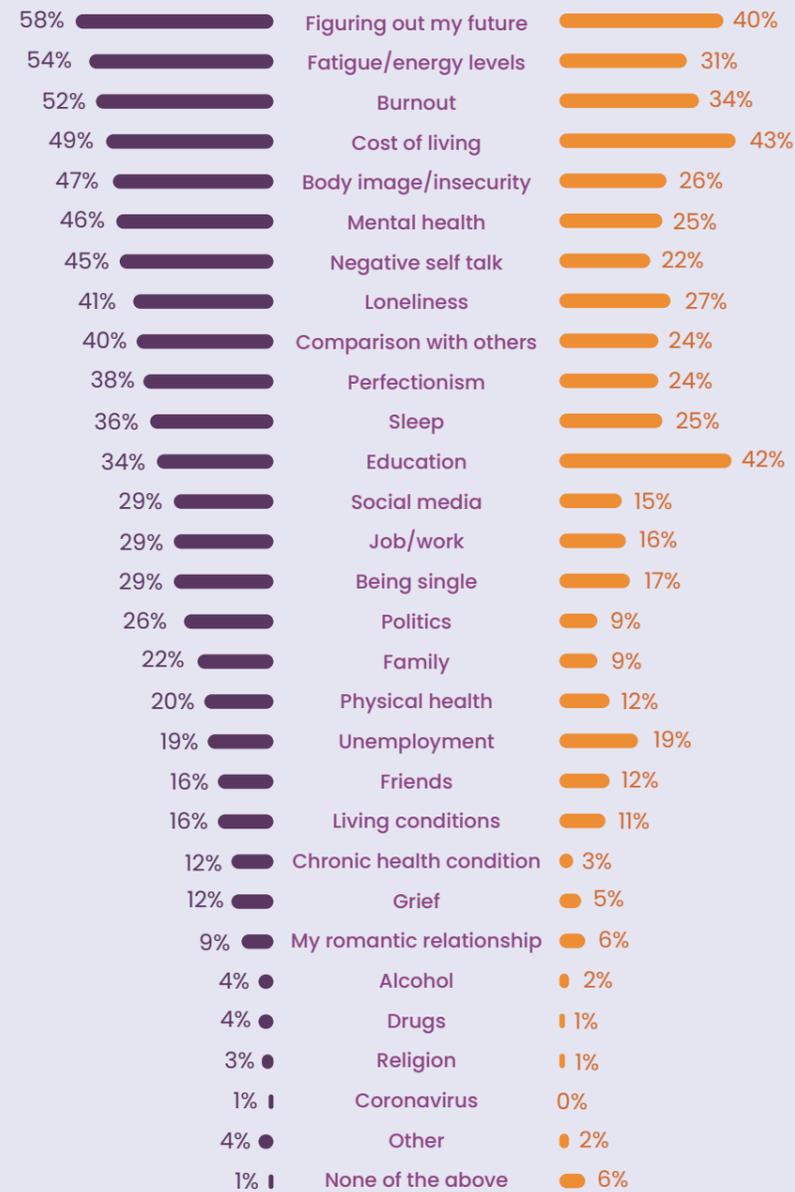
In 2025 general mental health indicators among Australian youth have remained stable compared to last year. Reports of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) however have risen significantly, potentially due to increasing stress, digital over-engagement or heightened awareness of it as an issue. Often connected to anxiety and perfectionism, the rise in OCD could reflect growing internalised pressure among young people to maintain control in uncertain times.

National



What is negatively impacting your wellbeing currently? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



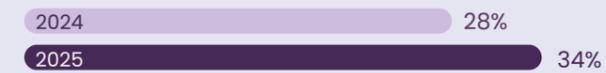
Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

What is negatively impacting your wellbeing currently?

The wellbeing impacts of education, politics, family and unemployment have risen significantly between 2024 and 2025 while cost of living concerns have started easing. In particular, politics doubled in prevalence as a wellbeing stressor while the rise in education-related stress may stem from concerns about job prospects after graduation. More young people are also reporting being negatively impacted by being unemployed, reflecting changes in the job market over the previous 12 months.

National

Education



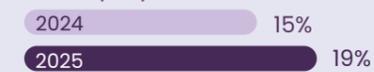
Politics



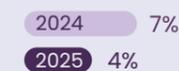
Family



Unemployment



Alcohol

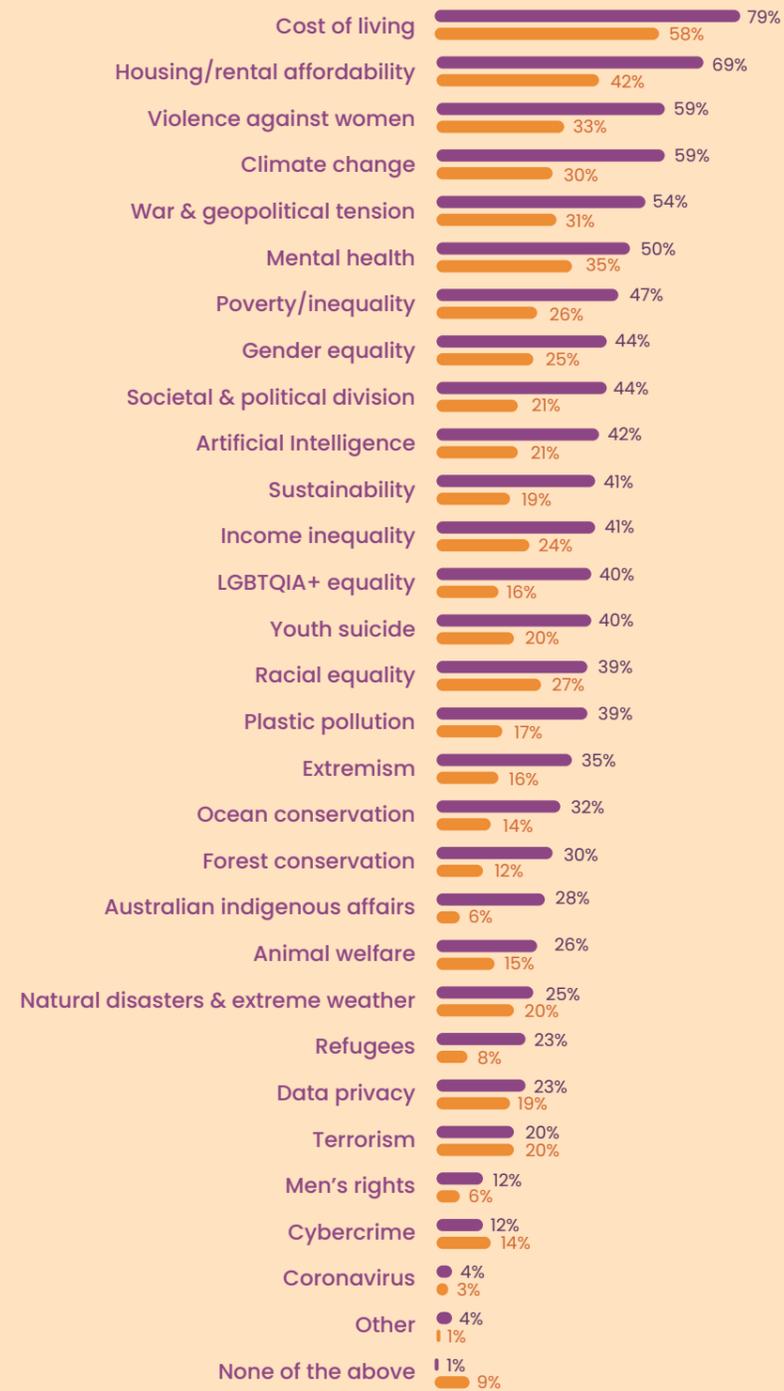


Cost of living



Which global or societal issues concern you most even if they don't affect you personally? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

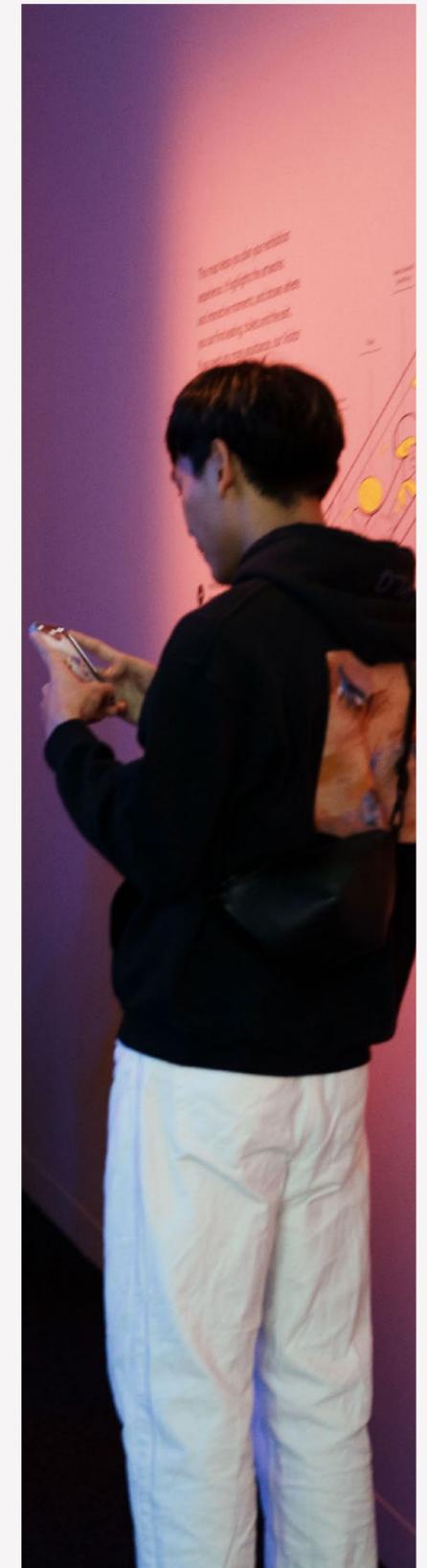
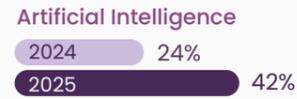
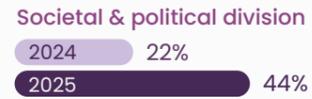


Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

Which global or societal issues concern you most?

One of the most profound shifts in the 2025 results is the dramatic rise in concern for local and global issues compared to last year. Concern about societal and political division has doubled (22% to 44%) among young people while it nearly doubled for Artificial Intelligence (24% to 42%) as well. Large rises have also been seen for climate change, war & geopolitical tension, violence against women and equality. These increases suggest that Australian youth are becoming increasingly socially conscious but also emotionally burdened by large-scale problems.

National



What helps you destress and relax? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape

Listening to music	70%	62%	Writing	18%	11%
Movies/shows/videos (Netflix, YouTube etc.)	68%	59%	Handicraft (Pottery, embroidery, sewing, quilting etc.)	17%	9%
Bath/shower	50%	39%	Healthy food	16%	19%
Gaming	47%	37%	Dancing	16%	11%
Exercise	40%	37%	Playing an instrument	16%	11%
Outdoors/nature/ beach	39%	32%	Watching sport	16%	16%
Books	34%	22%	Journaling	16%	10%
Memes	32%	23%	Therapy	13%	7%
Social media	31%	32%	Beauty regime	11%	10%
Art (Painting, sculpture, photography, drawing etc.)	29%	20%	Mindfulness	11%	9%
Junk food	24%	22%	Medication	10%	4%
Shopping	23%	32%	Drugs	9%	2%
Cooking	22%	28%	Religion	8%	8%
Cleaning	22%	22%	Meditation	7%	8%
Playing sport	22%	24%	Yoga	6%	6%
Alcohol	19%	10%	Other	7%	3%
			None of the above	0%	1%

Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

What helps you destress and relax?

More young people are turning to both screen-based and non-screen based coping mechanisms as the use of gaming, books, memes, journalling, handicraft and social media as ways to relax all increased year over year. These trends show that while technology continues to become more ingrained in young people's lives many are also finding ways to switch off outside of it.

National

Gaming



Books



Memes



Social media



Handicraft

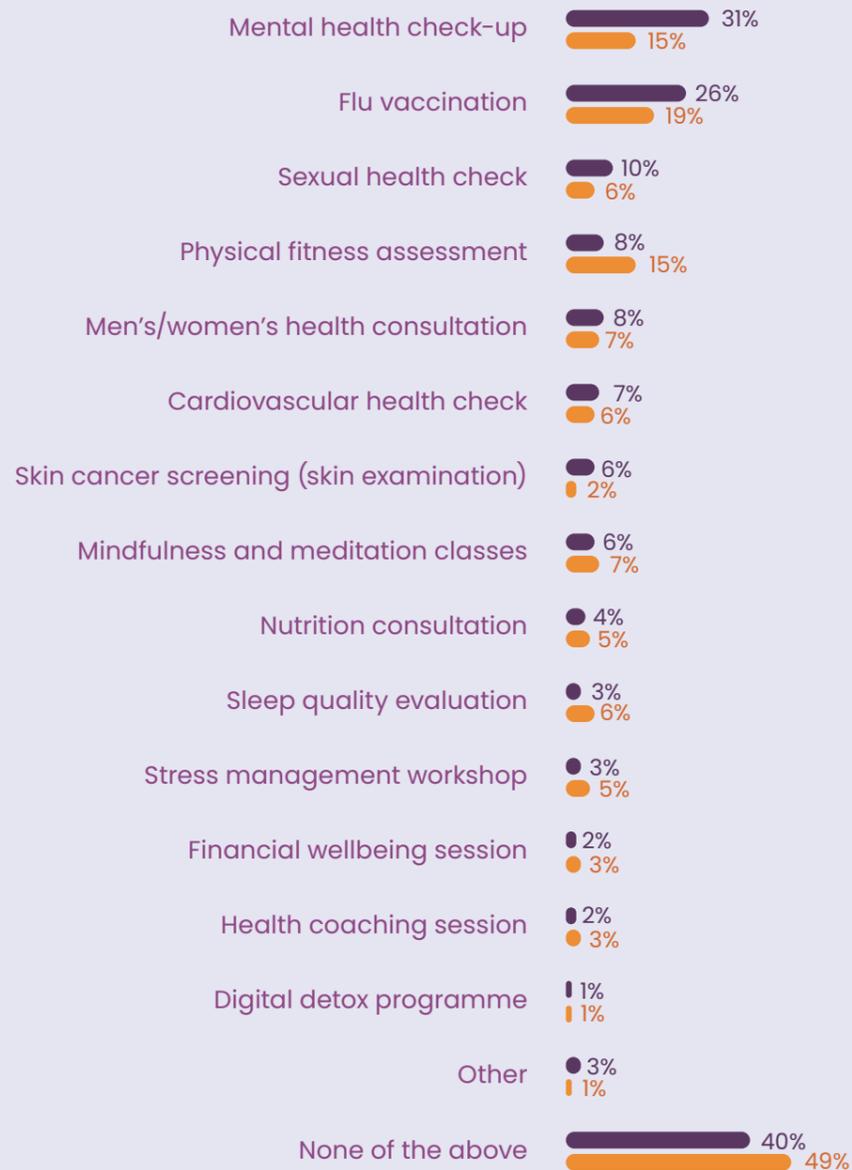


Journalling



Which of the following have you had in the past 12 months? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



How is your social health currently? (Social health is the state of someone's friendships and social connections)

● National ● Scape



Are you currently struggling to make friends?

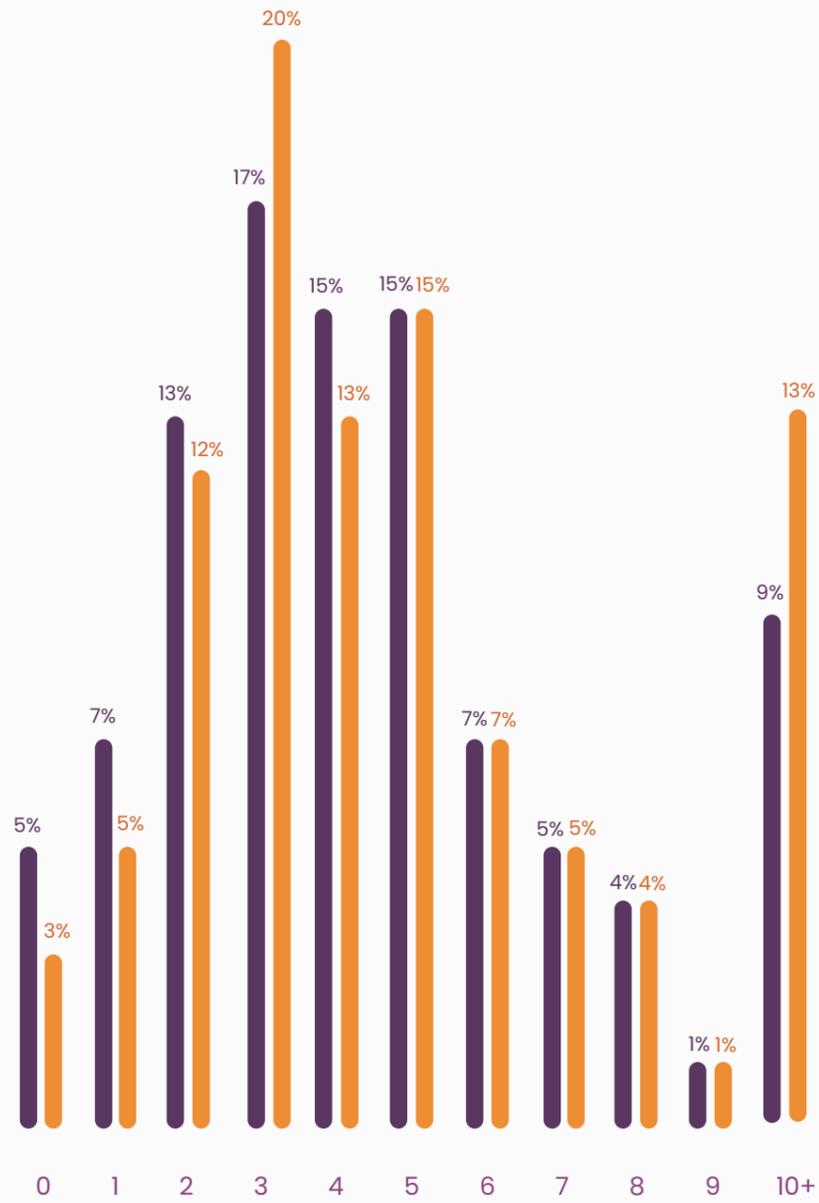
National

Scape



How many close friends do you have roughly at the moment?

● National ● Scape

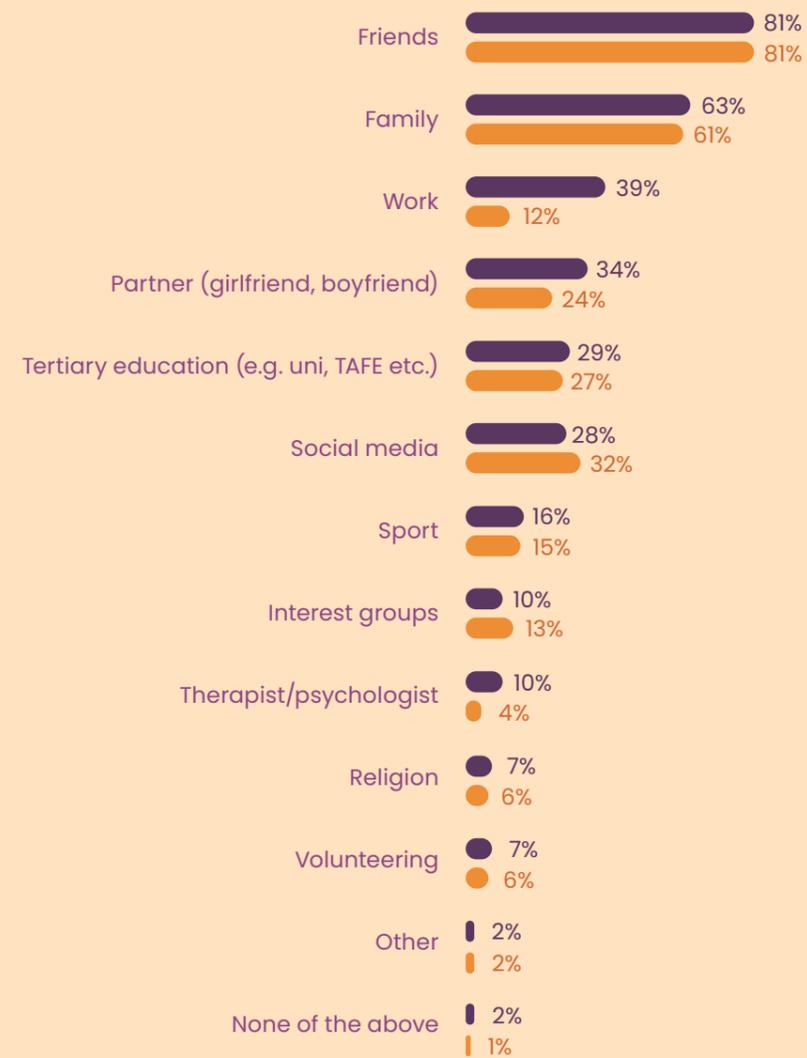


Average number of close friends - 4



Where do you have strong social connections and support networks? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

Where do you have strong social connections and support networks?

There have been subtle but meaningful shifts in young people's social fabric over the past year. Support from social media networks has risen while support from sporting circles has declined, perhaps reflecting a more digital and less physical social landscape for young people today.

National

Social media

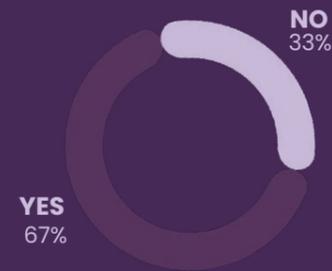


Sport

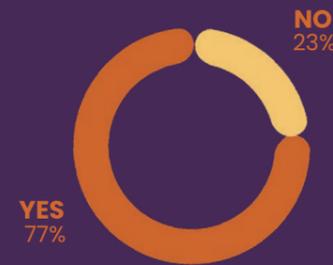


In your everyday life do you feel a general sense of inclusion and belonging?

National

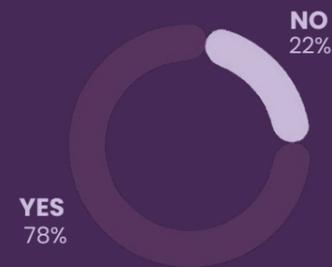


Scape

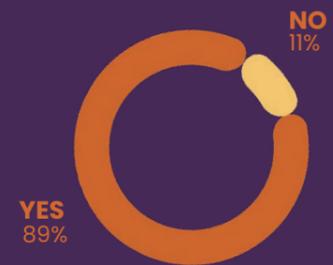


In your everyday life do you feel like diversity is embraced and respected?

National



Scape



Insight:

Scape residents are more likely to feel a sense of inclusion and belonging and that diversity is embraced and respected in their lives compared to the national average.





Exercise

Young Australians are exercising less frequently than last year while also moving away from gym and technology-based fitness habits. There has been a drop in young people who exercise daily as well as a fall in those who say they are in excellent physical health, indicating a potential decline of young people in peak physical shape. This coincides with the gym losing favour to exercising in the home and young people using fitness trackers less, revealing a potential shift towards less formal and less visible forms of physical activity. While fitness, mental health and appearance continue to be the main motivators for young people to get active, the declining preference for gyms and trackers could be due to growing fatigue with performance-driven fitness culture, financial barriers, or a preference for more flexibility and privacy.

How is your physical health currently?

● National ● Scape



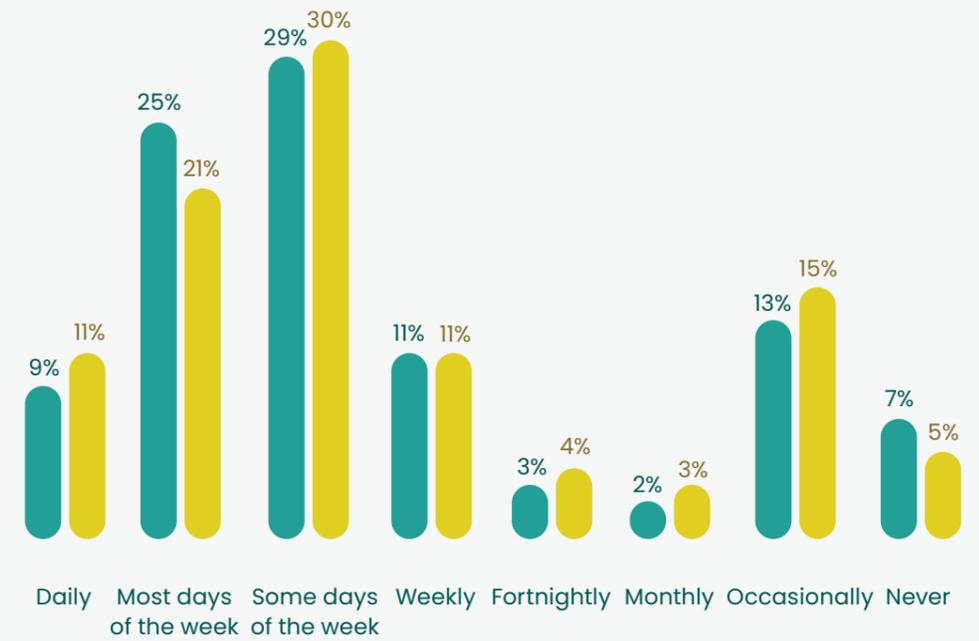
Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

National

Less young people report being in excellent physical health this year (7%) compared to last year (10%), indicating a significant decline in numbers of those in peak shape.

On average how often do you exercise/play sport?

● National ● Scape

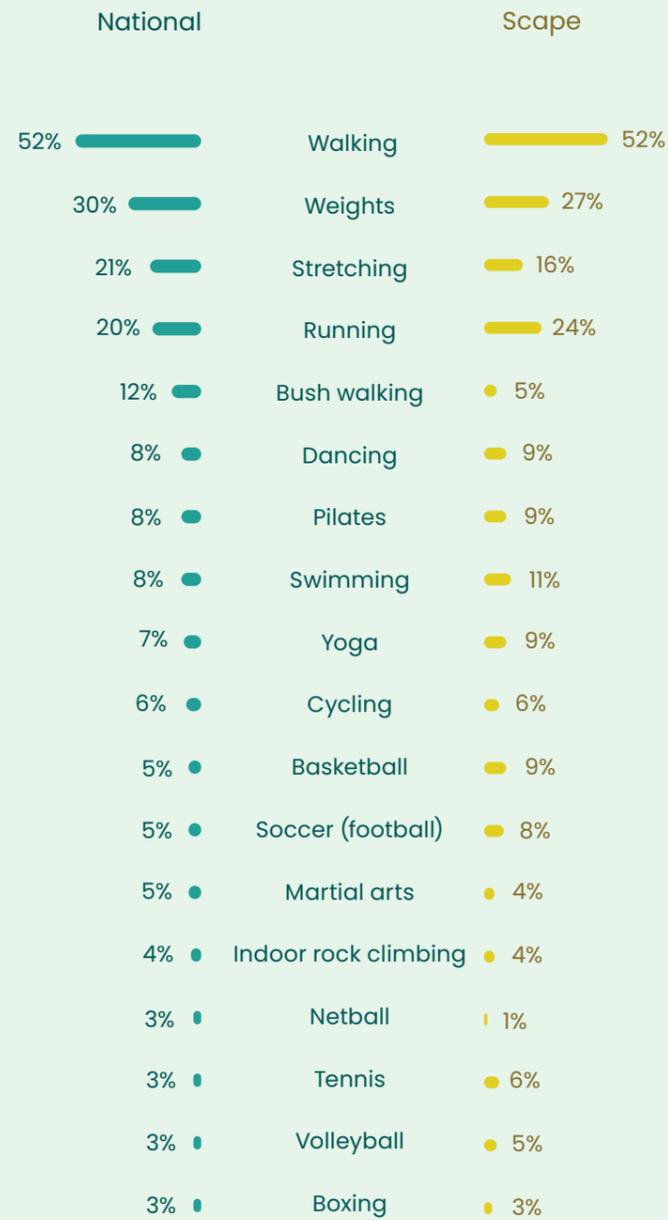


Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

National

Last year 81% of young people in total said they exercised at least weekly, but this has dropped to 74% in 2025. At the high end of the athletic spectrum there was a notable drop in the amount of Australian youth who say they exercise daily (13% to 9%).

Which of the following exercises/sports do you do? (Tick all that apply)

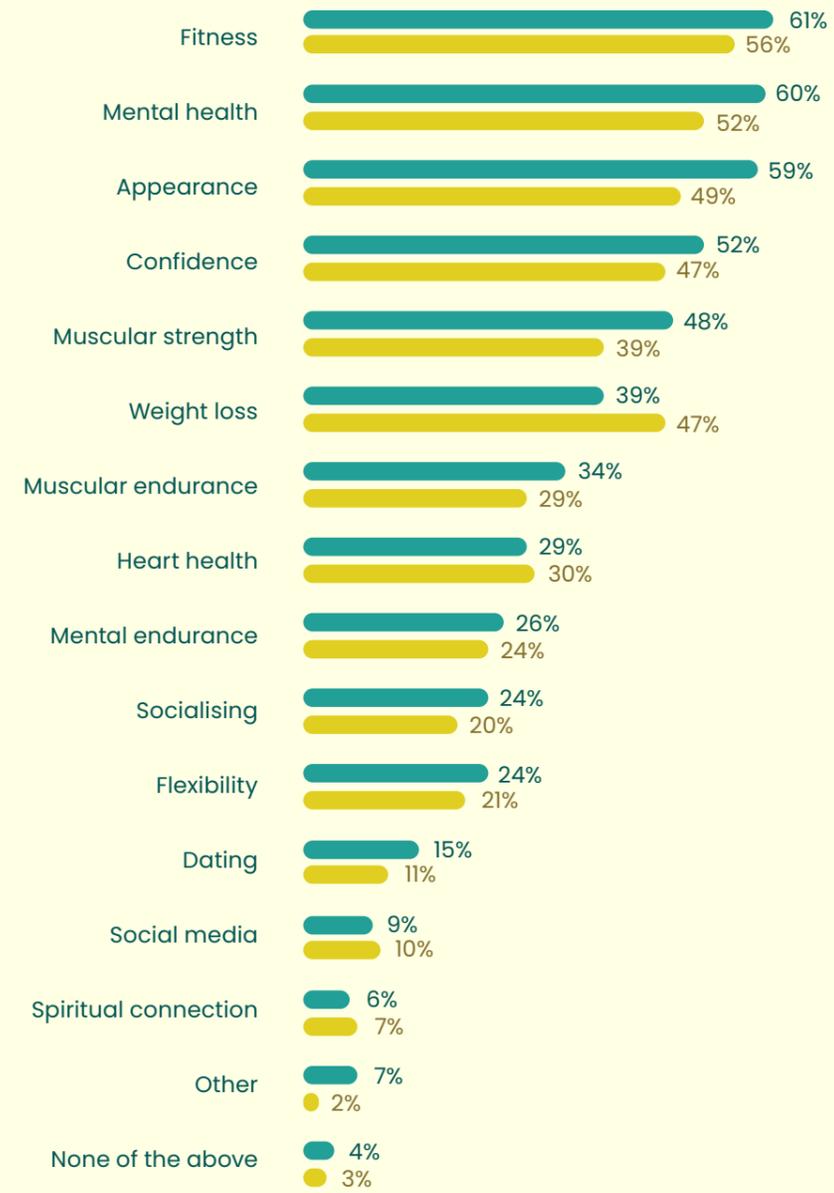


Which of the following exercises/sports do you do? (Tick all that apply)



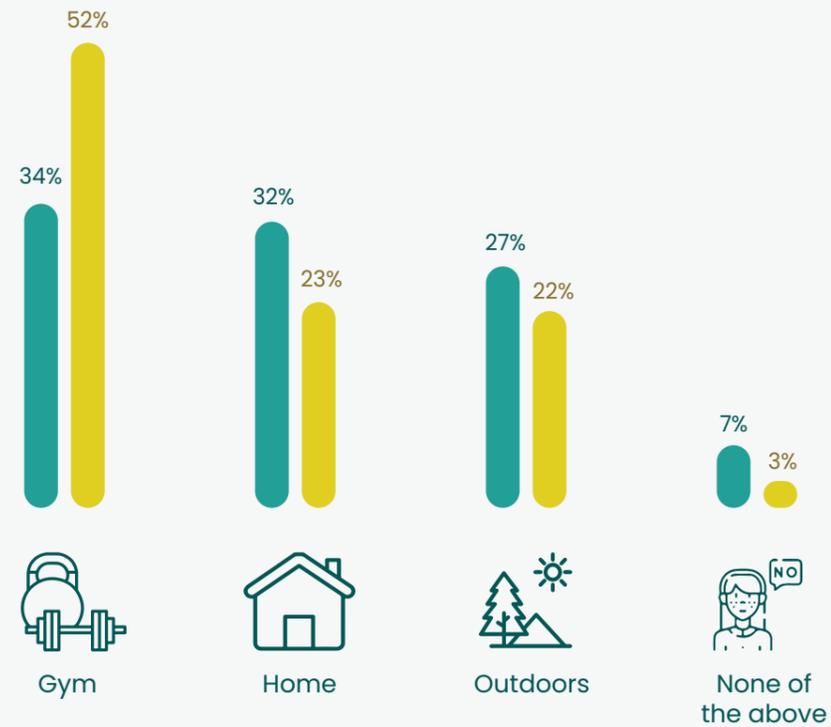
What motivates you most to exercise/play sport? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



Where do you prefer to exercise?

● National ● Scape



Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

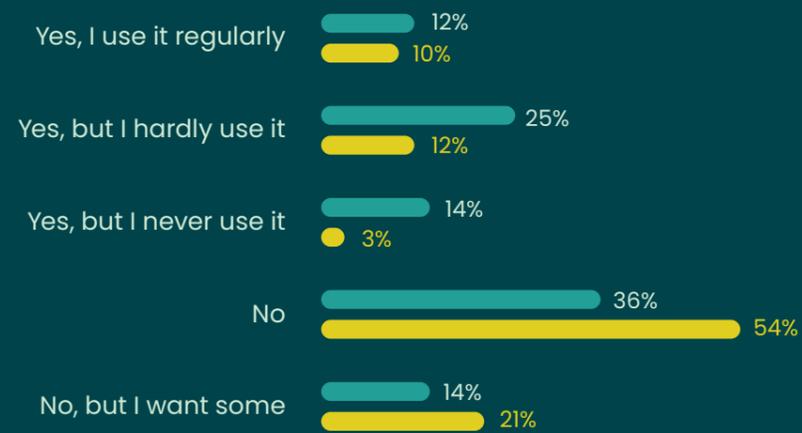
National

Gyms have seen a decline in popularity as the preferred place to exercise compared to last year (41% to 34%), with the increasing preference for exercising at home (27% to 32%) meaning it's now nearly equally favoured with the gym.



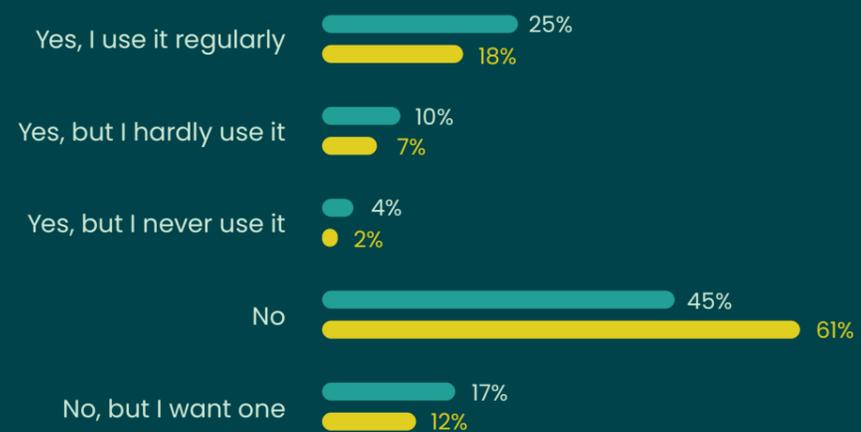
Do you have home exercise equipment?

● National ● Scape



Do you have a gym membership?

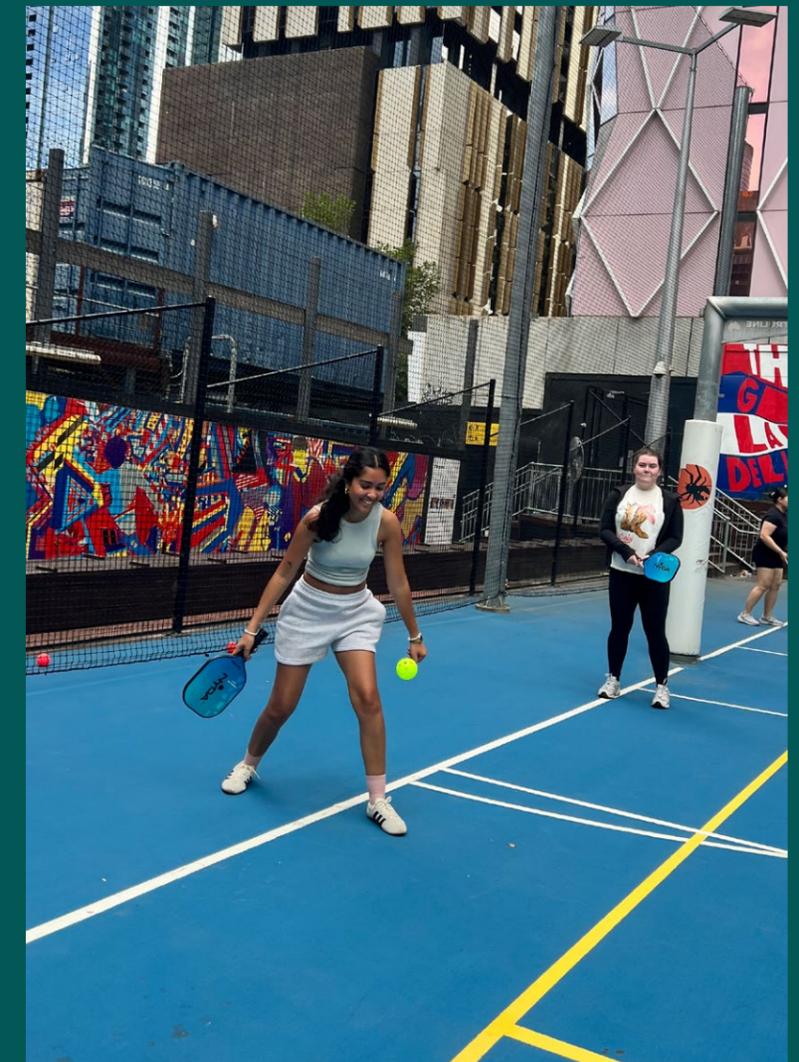
● National ● Scape



Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

National

Last year 56% of young people said they did not have a gym membership, including those without one who would like one, compared to 62% this year. This could reflect young people's increasing preference to exercise at home rather than at a gym or financial pressures.

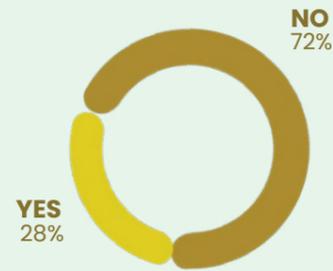


Do you use a fitness tracker?

National



Scape



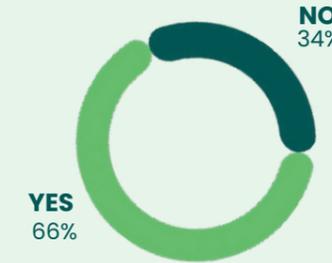
Significant changes between 2024 and 2025

National

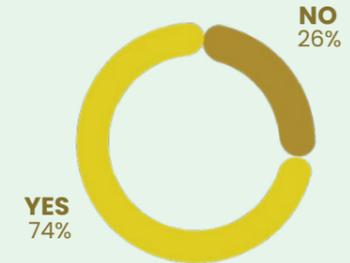
Fitness tracker usage has declined from 27% to 23% over the past year, indicating a growing disengagement from health self-monitoring tools.

Does using a fitness tracker motivate you to exercise more than you would without one?

National



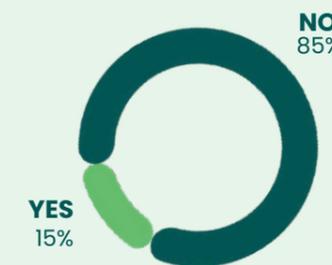
Scape



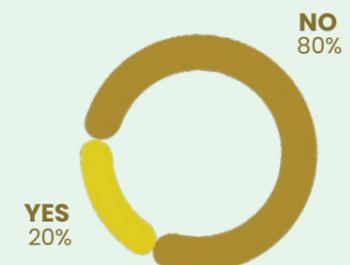
*Only answered by fitness tracker users.

Do you compete with others over your fitness tracker results? (e.g. who takes the most steps, rides the furthest etc.)

National



Scape



*Only answered by fitness tracker users.

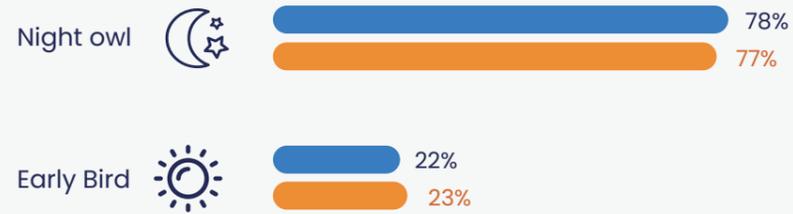


Sleep

Sleep remains a critical wellbeing factor for young Australians with little year-on-year change in how long they sleep, when they prefer to get it and what's keeping them from having enough of it. Most young people still identify as night owls while sleep disruptors like phone use, stress and anxiety remain widespread. Despite phone usage being the most common factor stopping young people from getting a good night's sleep, rates of phone usage before bed haven't dropped showing it's a problem young people are aware of but are not in a hurry to change. Even though phones are often with young people in the bedroom at night the vast majority do not use a sleep tracker, which often come in the form of a phone app, meaning the self-monitoring of sleep is not widely seen as a way to improve it.

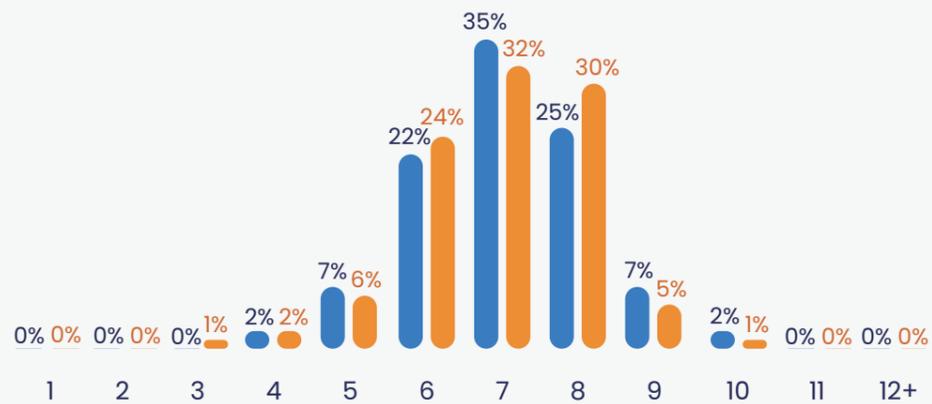
Are you an early bird or a night owl?

● National ● Scape



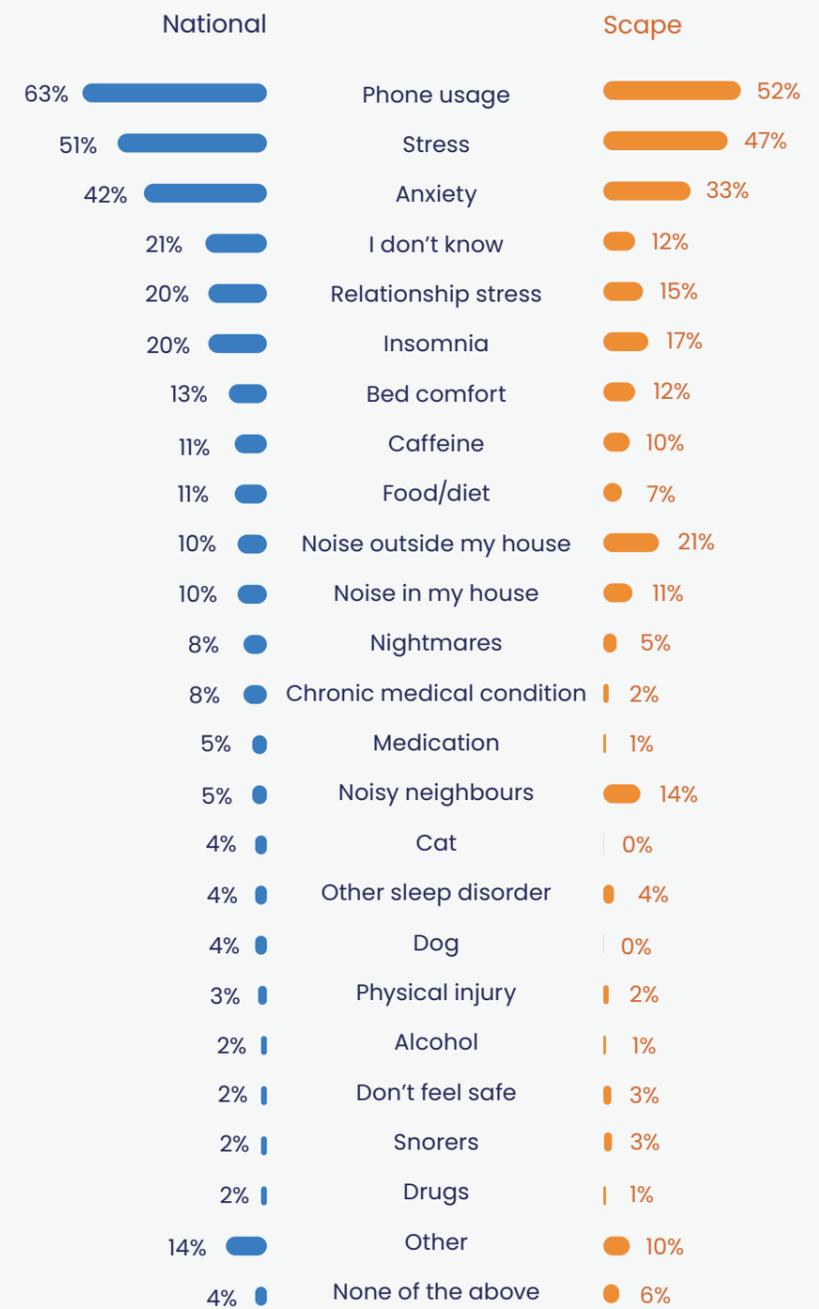
How many hours of sleep do you get per night on average?

● National ● Scape



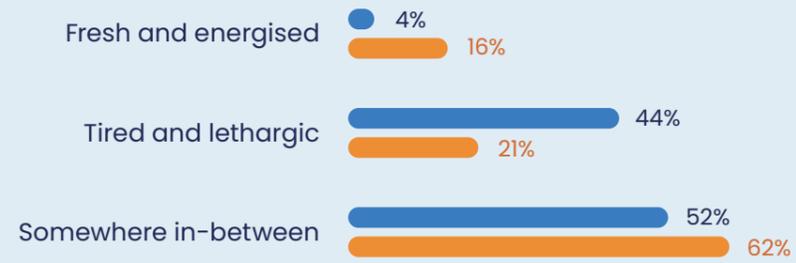
Average hours of sleep - 7 hours

What is preventing you from getting a good night's sleep currently? (Tick all that apply)



How do you usually feel when you wake up?

● National ● Scape



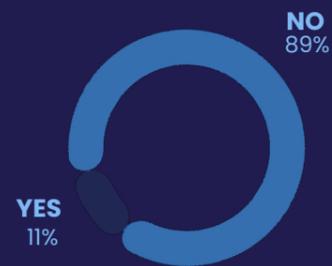
Insight:

Scape residents are significantly more likely to wake up feeling fresh and energised (16% vs 4%) and less likely to feel tired & lethargic (21% vs 44%) compared to the national average.



Do you use a sleep tracker? (i.e. a device or phone app which records your sleep patterns to monitor the quality of your sleep.)

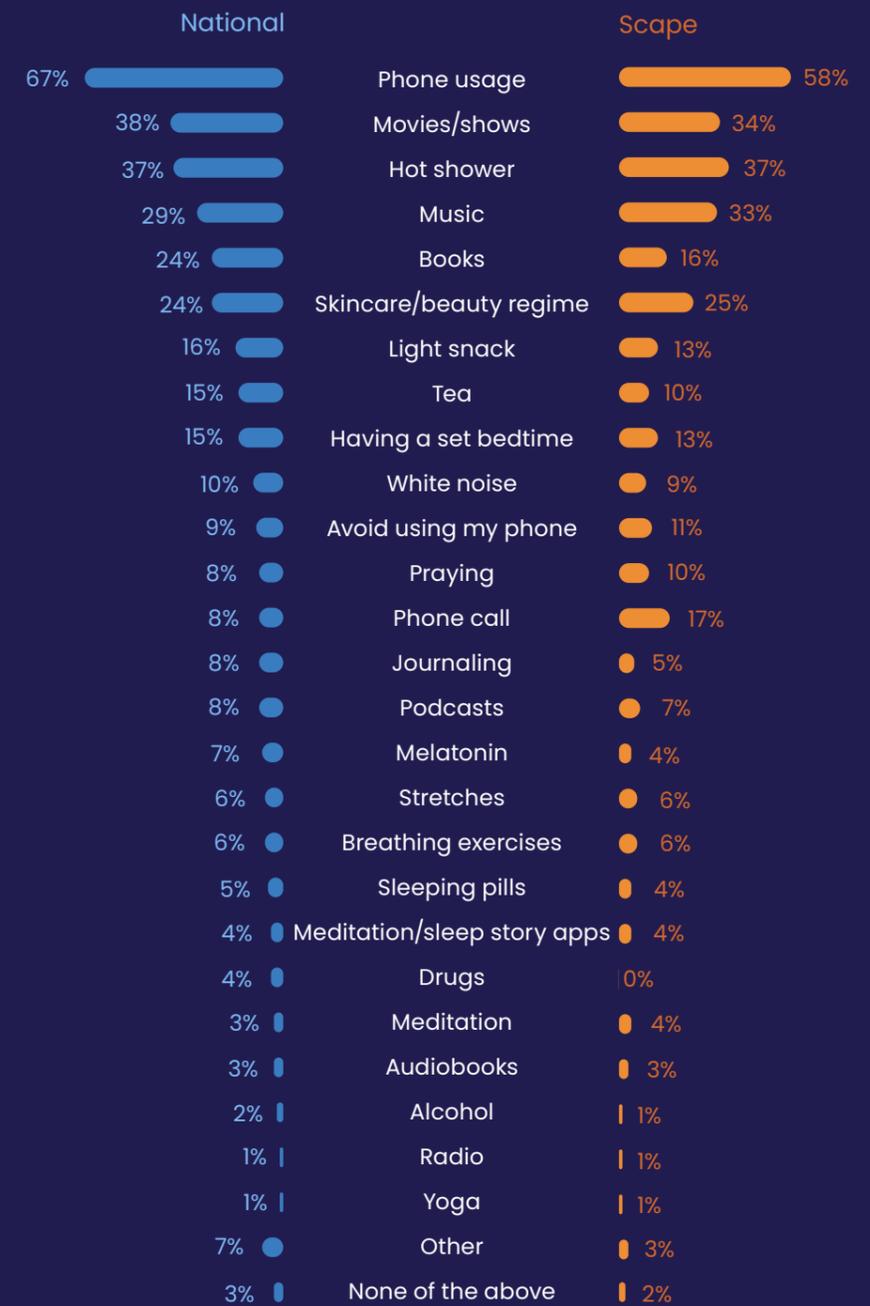
National



Scape



What is part of your nightly bedtime routine? (i.e. the activities you perform in the lead up to bed to help you sleep) (Tick all that apply)

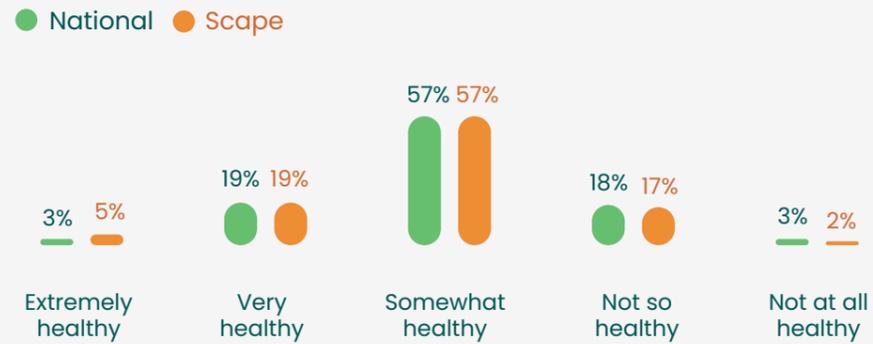




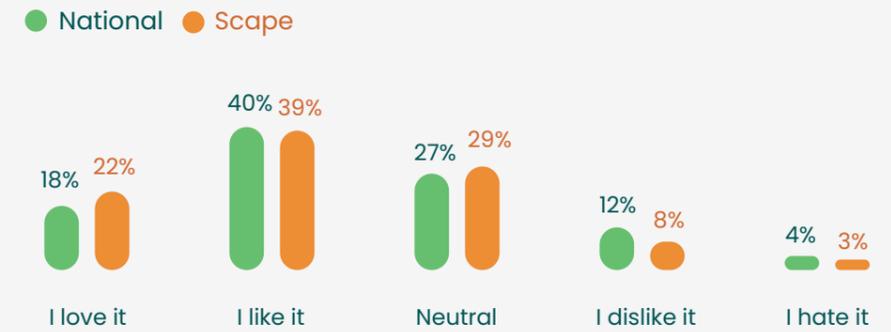
Diet

Most young Australians continue to describe their diet as being only somewhat healthy with no major changes occurring in their eating habits since last year. Most still fall short of fruit and vegetable intake guidelines while motivation, mood, time constraints and affordability remain major obstacles to healthier eating. Major change has occurred however in their drinking habits with a large upswing in the amount of young people who report they never consume alcohol, increasing from 13% last year to now numbering nearly one in four (22%) young people. Australian youth are also giving up vapes with daily vaping rates nearly halving from last year (10% to 6%) alongside a rise in those who never vape (74% to 80%). While healthy eating continues to be an area young people can improve on, it appears they have heeded the message of reducing their intake of toxic substances like vapes and alcohol.

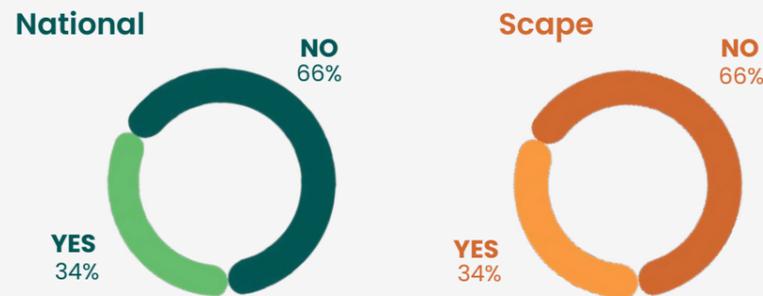
How would you describe your diet on average?



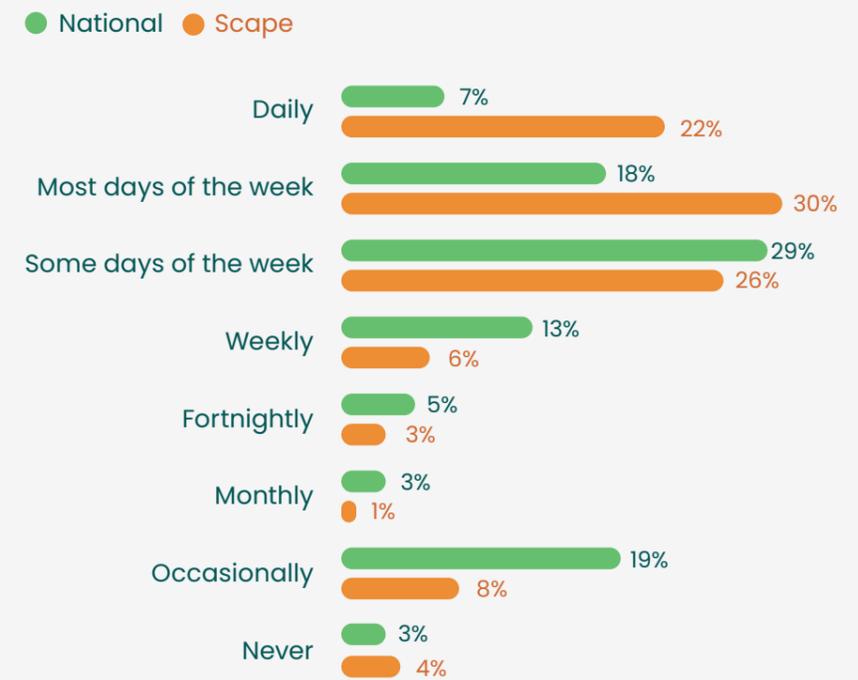
How much do you like to cook?



On average do you eat the recommended 2 serves of fruit per day?

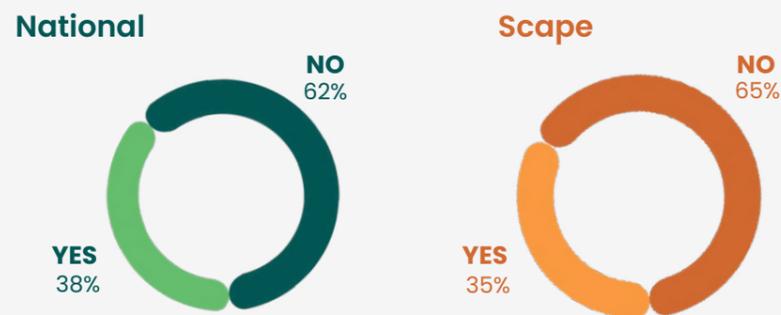


How often do you cook on average?



On average do you eat the recommended 5/6 serves of vegetables per day?

*5 for females, 6 for males



Insight:

Scape residents are significantly more likely to cook regularly compared to the national average.



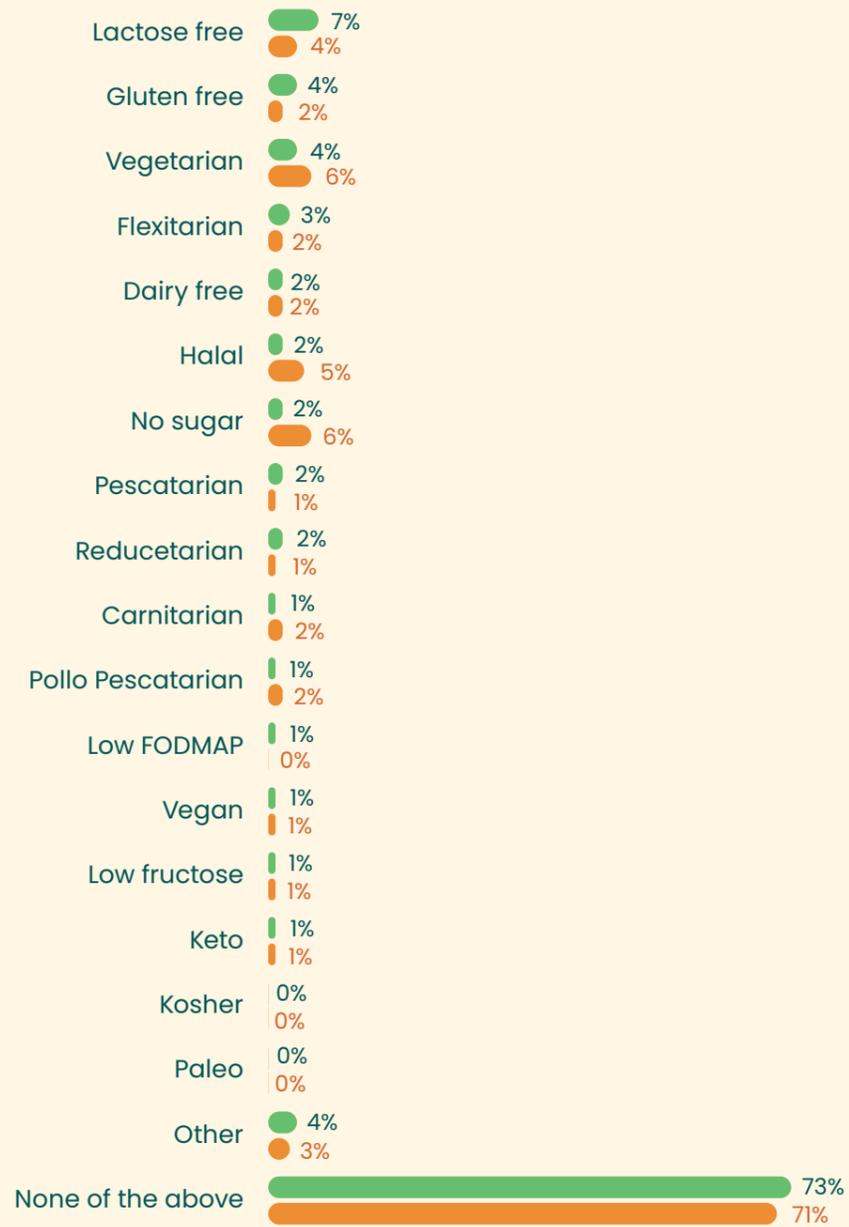
What's negatively impacting your diet? (Tick all that apply)

● National ● Scape



Do you follow any special diets? (Tick all that apply)

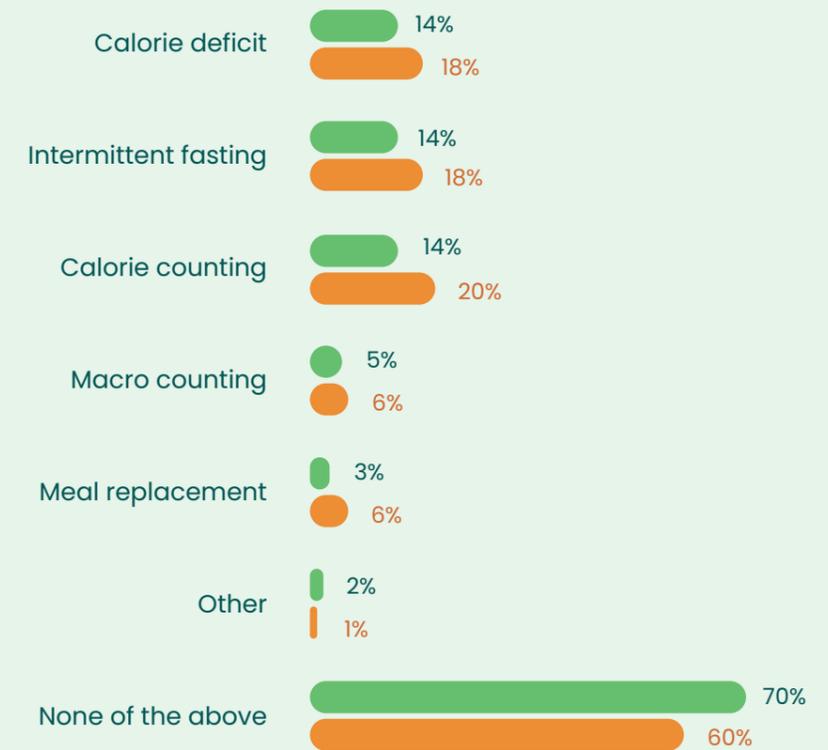
● National ● Scape





Which of the following do you do? (Tick all that apply)

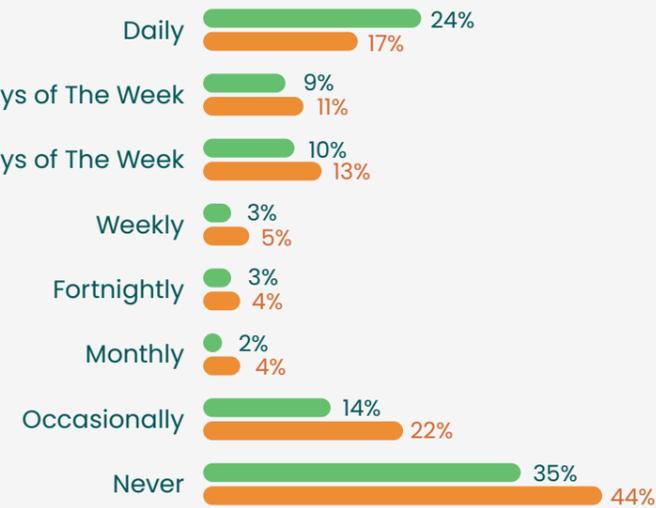
● National ● Scape



How often do you have the following?

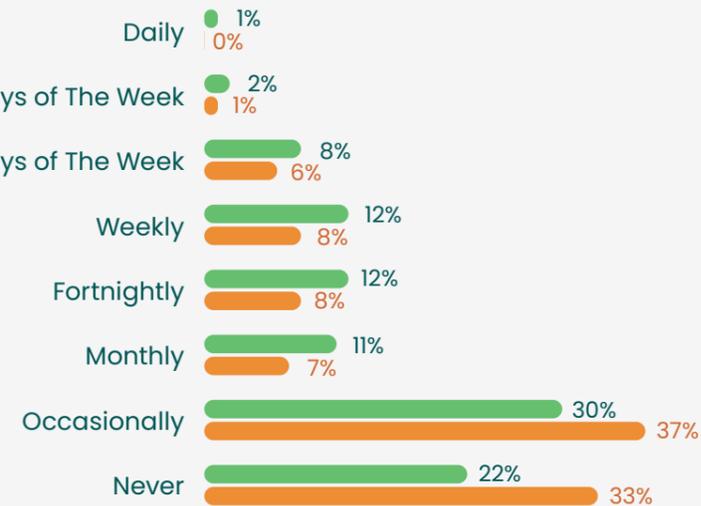
Coffee

● National ● Scape



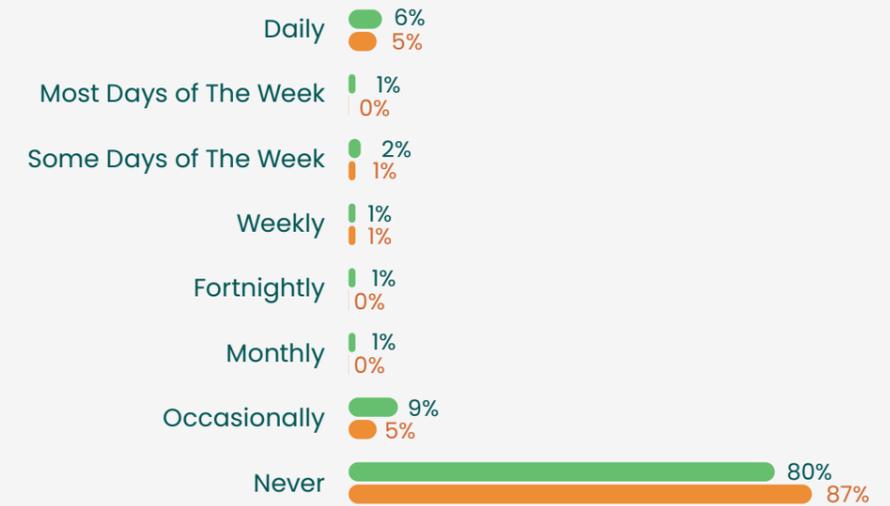
Alcohol

● National ● Scape



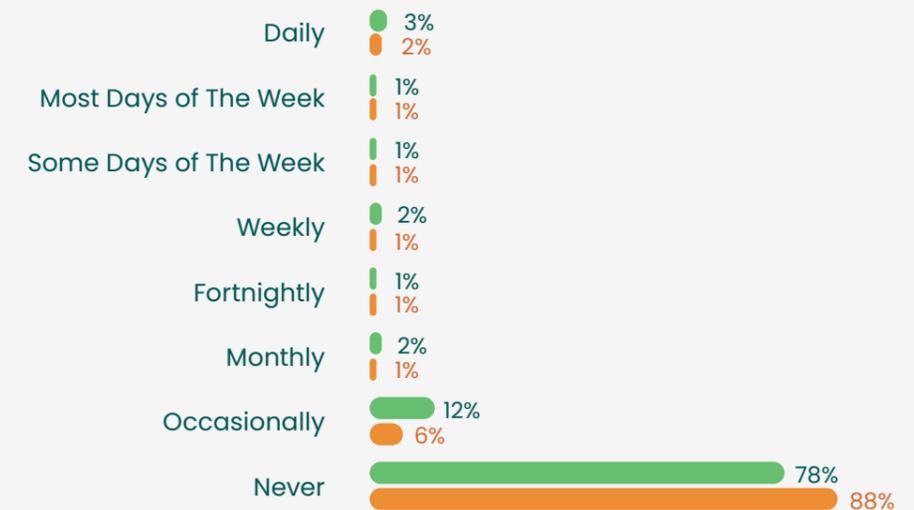
Vapes

● National ● Scape



Cigarettes

● National ● Scape







Final thoughts

How to find balance in an increasingly changing world is something on a lot of young people's minds.

As we've found in this report, more young people are concerned about a wider range of major society-shaping issues compared to when we asked them in 2024. These rises were some of the most notable changes in this year's Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2025 - now in its third year tracking youth wellbeing in Australia.

Given the scale of societal concern among Gen Zs today compared to just a year ago, policymakers, educators and business leaders should consider these issues and what avenues for meaningful engagement they can provide to help young people navigate them. This will help them shape the future they care about so much.

The significant changes in wellbeing factors this year from last are also able to provide a window into the emerging issues and forces shaping the world today. In 2025 education, politics, unemployment and family have been the major increasing stressors in young people's lives, all of which are vitally important areas in the day to day lives of most young people.

Some key wellbeing factors have remained the same over the course of the year. Young adults trying to figure out their future continues to be the most widespread factor negatively impacting their lives - this issue central to the work of Year13. Meanwhile, the cost of living, housing and renting remains the most galvanising issue this generation cares

about overall - an issue at the forefront of Scape's operations.

Gen Z health blind spots however have emerged. Rates of young people getting checked for mental and physical health issues over the previous 12 months are low, revealing a mismatch between the risks facing young people and the actions they're taking to protect themselves, prompting a need for health literacy and access for young people to improve.

Positively, there has been a rise in young people embracing hobbies and finding purpose in their lives compared to a year ago. Gaming, memes and social media on the one hand, as well as books, journalling and handicraft on the other hand, are all being turned to increasingly as ways to relax, revealing a growing mix of tech and traditional pursuits in young people's lives.

Student accommodation provider Scape has again shown they foster positive environments for young people in their buildings across Australia, offering a successful model of support, routine and social connection which they replicate in each city they are located in. In achieving this Scape has established itself as the premier destination for youth in Australia to stay as they navigate young adult life.

The latest findings from the Gen Z Wellbeing Index 2025 serve as both a wake-up call and a blueprint for change. They highlight the urgency for better health education, greater access to preventative care, and more intentional living environments - especially for a generation facing increasing complexity and pressure.

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