



**Youth Survey 2017:  
Key and emerging issues**

**Data breakdown for  
Golden Plains Shire Council**

**Research & Evaluation, Mission Australia: (02) 9219 2022  
youthsurvey@missionaustralia.com.au**

© Mission Australia 2017

## **Background**

Now in its 16th year, the Mission Australia Youth Survey continues to be the biggest annual survey of its kind. A record 24,055 young people aged 15-19 years took part in the Youth Survey 2017. This brief report provides an overview of responses from Golden Plains Shire Council.

## **Demographic profile of respondents**

In total, 62 students from Golden Plains Shire Council aged 15 to 19 years responded to Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2017. Overall, 35 (57.4%) were female, 26 (42.6%) were male and a total of 1.6% of students from Golden Plains Shire Council identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Overall, 1.6% respondents stated that they were born overseas and 1.6% students reported speaking a language other than English at home.

## **Plans for study and training**

Respondents were asked about their future plans for education and training following school. Overall, 92.3% of students from Golden Plains Shire Council stated that they intended to complete Year 12. Students were also asked whether they were undertaking a vocational education and training (VET) course or if they had done so in the past. Of all students surveyed, 24.2% indicated that they had previously participated or were currently participating in a VET course.

When asked what they were planning to do after school, students from Golden Plains Shire Council most frequently reported that they were planning to go to university (53.2%). Many students also planned to travel or go on a gap year (22.6%) or to get a job (21%) after school, while 9.7% planned to undertake an apprenticeship and 8.1% planned to attend TAFE or college.

## **Confidence in achieving study/work goals after school**

The Youth Survey 2017 asked young people how confident they were about achieving their post-school goals for study and work and whether they perceived any barriers to the achievement of these goals.

Many respondents from Golden Plains Shire Council indicated high levels of confidence in their ability to achieve study/work goals, with 7.7% of students indicating that they were extremely confident and 38.5% indicating that they were very confident. However, not all students reported such high levels of confidence, with 11.5% being slightly confident and 3.8% not at all confident in their ability to achieve their study/work goals after school.

## **Barriers to post-school goals**

Respondents who were still at school were asked to indicate whether they felt there were any barriers which may impact on the achievement of their study/work goals after school. Overall, 51.9% of students from Golden Plains Shire Council indicated that they felt there would be barriers. Respondents who reported the presence of barriers were asked to indicate from a number of items which barriers they saw as preventing them from achieving their goals after school. At Golden Plains Shire Council, the top three barriers were transport (21%), where you live (17.7%) and academic ability (16.1%).

## **What young people value**

Respondents were asked how much they valued family relationships, financial security, friendships, getting a job, physical and mental health and school or study satisfaction. Students from Golden Plains Shire Council ranked friendships (other than family), family relationships and school or study satisfaction as the three most highly valued items. A high value was also placed on physical and mental health, financial security and getting a job.

### **Issues of personal concern**

Respondents were asked to rank how concerned they had been about a number of issues in the past year. In Golden Plains Shire Council, the top three issues of concern were coping with stress, body image and school or study problems. Following this, it was found that students from Golden Plains Shire Council were either extremely concerned or very concerned about depression and bullying/emotional abuse.

### **Probable serious mental illness**

The Youth Survey includes a measure of non-specific psychological distress, the Kessler 6 (K6). The measure is widely used and asks young people about the experience of anxiety and depressive symptoms in the last four weeks. Based on established scoring criteria, the K6 has been used to classify respondents from Golden Plains Shire Council into two groups - those with a 'probable serious mental illness' and those with 'no probable serious mental illness'. According to these criteria, 21.1% of students from Golden Plains Shire Council were classified with a 'probable serious mental illness'. If you have any concerns about this result and you would like to seek out further information and support for your young people please access ReachOut at [schools.au.reachout.com/](https://schools.au.reachout.com/), seek out the 'school support' section at [headspace.com.au](https://headspace.com.au) or check the 'community and schools' section at [blackdoginstitute.org.au/](https://blackdoginstitute.org.au/) to find relevant resources.

### **Where young people go for help with important issues**

Young people were asked to indicate from a number of sources where they would go for help with important issues in their lives. The top three sources of help for students from Golden Plains Shire Council were friend/s, parent/s and the internet (86.7%, 82% and 66.1% respectively). A majority of respondents indicated that they would go to their GP or health professional (58.6%) and relative/family friend (51.7%) for help with important issues, followed by their brother/sister or teacher (49.1% and 44.1% respectively).

### **Family's ability to get along**

The majority of students at Golden Plains Shire Council were positive about their family relationships, with 29.5% rating their family's ability to get along as excellent, and 39.3% as very good. However, some students did not have such a positive experience of family relationships, rating their family's ability to get along as either fair (11.5%) or poor (3.3%).

### **Most important issues in Australia today**

Young people were asked to write down the three issues that they considered were the most important in Australia today. The top three issues identified by students at Golden Plains Shire Council were alcohol and drugs (34%), mental health (26.4%) and equity and discrimination (18.9%).

### **Happiness and the future**

Young people were asked to rate how happy they were with their life as a whole. The majority of young people in Golden Plains Shire Council (74.2%) felt happy about their lives overall. Young people were also asked to rate how positive they felt about the future. Overall, students from Golden Plains Shire Council reported feeling positive about their future with the majority of students feeling either very positive (13.1%) or positive (42.6%) about the future. In total, 32.8% of students felt neither positive nor negative about the future, while 8.2% felt negative and 3.3% felt very negative.

This report is based on the responses of 62 students at Golden Plains Shire Council.

Note: Data were collected using a self-report questionnaire. Missing data have been excluded from the calculation of these tables.

**Table 1: Identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

|  | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|--|-----------------|-------|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander    | 1.6             | 2.2   |
| Non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander | 98.4            | 97.8  |

**Table 2: Country of birth**

|           | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----------|-----------------|-------|
| Australia | 98.4            | 85.9  |
| Other     | 1.6             | 14.1  |

**Table 3: Language background other than English**

|                             | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| English                     | 98.4            | 78.3  |
| Language other than English | 1.6             | 21.7  |

**Table 4: Plans to complete Year 12**

|     | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----|-----------------|-------|
| Yes | 92.3            | 97.3  |
| No  | 7.7             | 2.7   |

**Table 5: Currently undertaking a VET course or have done so in the past**

|     | <b>Golden Plains<br/>%</b> | <b>VIC %</b> |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------|
| Yes | 24.2                       | 14.4         |
| No  | 75.8                       | 85.6         |

**Table 6: Satisfaction with studies**

|                                    | <b>Golden Plains<br/>%</b> | <b>VIC %</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Very satisfied                     | 18.6                       | 14.4         |
| Satisfied                          | 55.9                       | 59.7         |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 23.7                       | 20.2         |
| Dissatisfied                       | 0.0                        | 4.5          |
| Very dissatisfied                  | 1.7                        | 1.1          |

**Table 7: Plans after leaving school**

|                                | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Go to university               | 53.2            | 77.3  |
| Travel/gap year                | 22.6            | 28.7  |
| Get a job                      | 21.0            | 29.4  |
| Get an apprenticeship          | 9.7             | 5.8   |
| Go to TAFE or college          | 8.1             | 7.7   |
| Other                          | 0.0             | 4.3   |
| No choices are available to me | 0.0             | 0.3   |

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

**Table 8: Confidence in achieving post-school plans**

|                      | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Extremely confident  | 7.7             | 9.7   |
| Very confident       | 38.5            | 30.9  |
| Somewhat confident   | 38.5            | 39.2  |
| Slightly confident   | 11.5            | 17.2  |
| Not at all confident | 3.8             | 3.0   |

**Table 9: Barriers to achieving post-school plans**

|     | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----|-----------------|-------|
| Yes | 51.9            | 48.1  |
| No  | 48.1            | 51.9  |

**Table 10: Barriers to achieving post-school plans**

|                            | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Transport                  | 21.0            | 5.6   |
| Where you live             | 17.7            | 6.7   |
| Academic ability           | 16.1            | 20.8  |
| Financial difficulty       | 12.9            | 12.6  |
| Lack of jobs               | 11.3            | 8.7   |
| Mental health              | 8.1             | 13.3  |
| Lack of information        | 8.1             | 6.2   |
| Other                      | 6.5             | 4.7   |
| Family responsibilities    | 3.2             | 7.4   |
| Admission/job requirements | 3.2             | 10.6  |
| Lack of school support     | 3.2             | 4.4   |
| Physical health            | 1.6             | 3.5   |
| Lack of family support     | 1.6             | 3.8   |
| Discrimination             | 1.6             | 2.6   |

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

**Table 11: What young people value**

| Golden Plains %                 | Extremely important | Very important | Somewhat important | Slightly important | Not at all important |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Friendships (other than family) | 32.3                | 48.4           | 12.9               | 6.5                | 0.0                  |
| Family relationships            | 40.3                | 37.1           | 17.7               | 4.8                | 0.0                  |
| School or study satisfaction    | 27.4                | 46.8           | 17.7               | 3.2                | 4.8                  |
| Physical and mental health      | 33.9                | 35.5           | 16.1               | 11.3               | 3.2                  |
| Financial security              | 16.4                | 34.4           | 32.8               | 8.2                | 8.2                  |
| Getting a job                   | 18.0                | 32.8           | 32.8               | 11.5               | 4.9                  |

**Table 12: Issues of concern to young people**

| Golden Plains %          | Extremely concerned | Very concerned | Somewhat concerned | Slightly concerned | Not at all concerned |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Coping with stress       | 9.8                 | 34.4           | 26.2               | 16.4               | 13.1                 |
| Body Image               | 16.1                | 19.4           | 29.0               | 21.0               | 14.5                 |
| School or study problems | 9.8                 | 18.0           | 36.1               | 16.4               | 19.7                 |
| Depression               | 9.7                 | 12.9           | 17.7               | 30.6               | 29.0                 |
| Bullying/emotional abuse | 6.5                 | 11.3           | 19.4               | 19.4               | 43.5                 |
| Family conflict          | 1.6                 | 13.1           | 26.2               | 18.0               | 41.0                 |
| Personal safety          | 3.3                 | 8.2            | 14.8               | 26.2               | 47.5                 |
| Suicide                  | 8.1                 | 3.2            | 6.5                | 17.7               | 64.5                 |
| Discrimination           | 4.9                 | 4.9            | 13.1               | 16.4               | 60.7                 |
| Drugs                    | 1.6                 | 6.6            | 18.0               | 19.7               | 54.1                 |
| Alcohol                  | 0.0                 | 8.1            | 24.2               | 21.0               | 46.8                 |
| Gambling                 | 0.0                 | 0.0            | 9.8                | 6.6                | 83.6                 |

**Table 13: Probable serious mental illness (Kessler 6)**

|                                    | Golden Plains % |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Probable serious mental illness    | 21.1            |
| No probable serious mental illness | 78.9            |

**Table 14: Where young people go for help with important issues**

|                            | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Friend/s                   | 86.7            | 86.4  |
| Parent/s                   | 82.0            | 79.5  |
| Internet                   | 66.1            | 55.1  |
| GP or health professional  | 58.6            | 44.7  |
| Relative/family friend     | 51.7            | 61.9  |
| Brother/sister             | 49.1            | 54.0  |
| Teacher                    | 44.1            | 39.8  |
| School counsellor          | 37.3            | 37.4  |
| Community agency           | 22.4            | 11.3  |
| Online counselling website | 18.6            | 20.1  |
| Telephone hotline          | 15.3            | 13.7  |
| Magazines                  | 1.8             | 6.0   |

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

**Table 15: Activities young people were involved in over the past year**

|                                    | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Sport (as a spectator)             | 68.0            | 68.2  |
| Sport (as a participant)           | 67.3            | 76.2  |
| Volunteer work                     | 53.2            | 53.8  |
| Arts/cultural/music activities     | 38.8            | 54.7  |
| Student leadership activities      | 37.5            | 42.6  |
| Youth groups and clubs             | 30.4            | 28.0  |
| Religious groups or activities     | 17.0            | 26.5  |
| Environmental groups or activities | 11.4            | 24.6  |
| Political groups or organisations  | 4.4             | 8.3   |

Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

**Table 16: Family's ability to get along**

|           | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----------|-----------------|-------|
| Excellent | 29.5            | 29.0  |
| Very good | 39.3            | 33.8  |
| Good      | 16.4            | 20.2  |
| Fair      | 11.5            | 10.8  |
| Poor      | 3.3             | 6.2   |

**Table 17: Feelings about the future**

|                               | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Very positive                 | 13.1            | 16.2  |
| Positive                      | 42.6            | 47.6  |
| Neither positive nor negative | 32.8            | 26.7  |
| Negative                      | 8.2             | 6.9   |
| Very negative                 | 3.3             | 2.7   |

**Table 18: How happy young people are**

|     | Golden Plains % | VIC % |
|-----|-----------------|-------|
| 100 | 8.1             | 10.1  |
| 90  | 12.9            | 14.3  |
| 80  | 30.6            | 23.4  |
| 70  | 22.6            | 17.5  |
| 60  | 8.1             | 10.1  |
| 50  | 6.5             | 10.3  |
| 40  | 1.6             | 5.5   |
| 30  | 4.8             | 3.5   |
| 20  | 1.6             | 2.1   |
| 10  | 1.6             | 1.2   |
| 0   | 1.6             | 1.9   |

**Table 19: Most important issues in Australia today**

|                                   | <b>Golden Plains %</b> | <b>VIC %</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Alcohol and drugs                 | 34.0                   | 29.9         |
| Mental health                     | 26.4                   | 29.7         |
| Equity and discrimination         | 18.9                   | 29.9         |
| The economy and financial matters | 18.9                   | 12.0         |
| Bullying                          | 18.9                   | 8.9          |