Resilience & Wellbeing

Research Report

October 2019

Report prepared by Blue Mountains City Council for the Stronger Families Alliance

Contents

Contents..... 2

Acknowledgement of Ngurra..... 4

Report highlights..... 5

Introduction..... 8

Mental wellbeing..... 9

Resilience..... 10

Methodology..... 11

Participant demographics..... 13

Overall Results..... 16

Global Life Satisfaction..... 16

Personal Wellbeing Index 19

Resilience 22

Age, Wellbeing and Resilience..... 23

Gender, Wellbeing and Resilience..... 27

Residence, Wellbeing, and Resilience 30

Summary Wellbeing and Resilience 32

Perceived social support in the Blue Mountains 33

Community Connection / Getting help from friends, family or neighbours..... 33

Age and Getting help from friends, family or neighbours..... 35

Gender and Getting help from friends, family or neighbours..... 36

Residence and Getting help from friends, family or neighbours..... 37

Loneliness and age, gender, and residence 38

Loneliness, Wellbeing and Resilience 41

Stress and age, gender, and residence 43

Stress, Wellbeing and Resilience ……. 46

Anxiety and age, gender, and residence ……..…… 47

Anxiety, Wellbeing and Resilience ……... 50

General discussion…… 52

Study limitations and reflections…… 59

Conclusions…….. 62

References …… 64

Appendices…….. 66

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NGURRA (COUNTRY)

The City of the Blue Mountains is located within the Country of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples. Stronger Families Alliance recognises that Darug and Gundungurra Traditional Owners have a continuous and deep connection to their Country and that this is of great cultural significance to Aboriginal people, both locally and in the region. For Darug and Gundungurra People, Ngurra* (Country) takes in everything within the physical, cultural and spiritual landscape - landforms, waters, air, trees, rocks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, minerals, stories and special places. It includes cultural practice, kinship, knowledge, songs, stories and art, as well as spiritual beings, and people: past, present and future. Stronger Families Alliance pays respect to Elders past and present while recognising the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Blue Mountains region.

Report Highlights

- Over 2500 completed the Survey of Resilience and Wellbeing
- Results were very different for Cohort 1: young people aged 12-19 and Cohort 2: people aged 20 and over.
- Being **connected to community** was a strong predictor of both positive wellbeing and resilience.
- Participants who reported low levels of loneliness, and access to social support reported above average wellbeing and resilience scores.
- For young people, above average wellbeing and resilience scores had a strong correlation with participating in sport/recreation and feeling connected to their community.

  - Young people (12-19 years) scored higher average Wellbeing scores than Community members aged 20 and over.
  - Those aged 20 and over rated their *Overall Satisfaction with Life* 4 points higher than young people.
  - Community members aged 20 and over scored higher Resilience scores than young people aged 12-19

Figure 1 shows average scores on Life Satisfaction, Wellbeing, and Resilience for 12-19, and 20 years and over. Each score is out of 100.

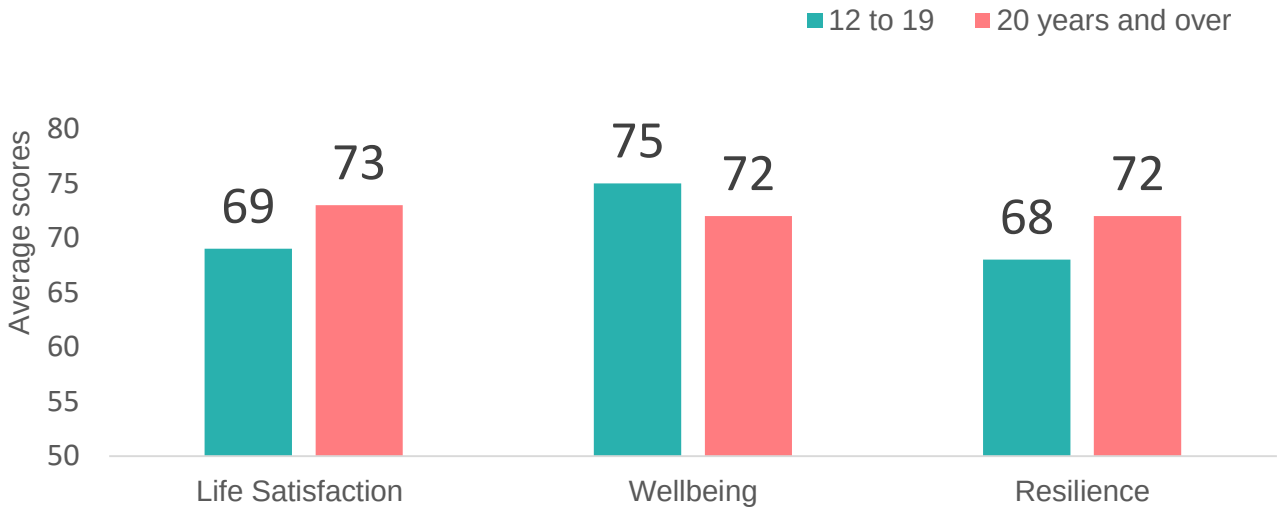


Figure 1 Average scores on Life Satisfaction, Wellbeing, and Resilience for cohort 12-19, and cohort 20 years and over

Loneliness

Loneliness has a stronger impact on wellbeing and resilience scores than stress or anxiety. Participants who are less lonely are more resilient.
A quarter of participants reported experiencing high rates of loneliness. Rates of loneliness increase as age increases up until 35, it then drops, stays relatively steady at between 20-30% (of the population experiencing high rates of loneliness) and increases again to 40% at 80 years and over.

Social and community connection

- Participants residing in Upper Mountains reported feeling more connected to their friends, family and neighbours than those in the Lower Mountains
- Females reported feeling feel more connected to their friends, family and neighbours than males – however young females reported experiencing higher rates of loneliness than males

At risk populations

Key sub-groups scored concerning results, which may place them at higher risk for low mental wellbeing and low resilience. These include:

- Young people gender identifying as non-binary and female
- Young people aged 14-19 years
- People who are experiencing high rates of loneliness
- People who are experiencing high rates of stress, pressure and perceived failure

Wellbeing

Participants aged 12-19		**Participants aged 20 +**	
Strengths	*Areas of vulnerability*	*Strengths*	*Areas of vulnerability*
Safety	Achieving in Life	Safety	Achieving in Life
Community Connection	Future Security	Standard of Living	Future security
Standard of Living	Health	Personal Relationships	Health
Subgroups that reported lower wellbeing scores			
Participants aged 12-19		**Participants aged 20 +**	
Participants who reside in Upper Mountains		Participants who reside in Lower Mountains	
Participants who gender identified as 'Female' and 'Other'		Participants aged 36-40	
Participants aged 14-15		Participants aged 46-50	

Resilience

Participants aged 12-19		**Participants aged 20 +**	
Strengths	*Areas of vulnerability*	*Strengths*	*Areas of vulnerability*
Seeing the humorous side of things	Coping with stress	Seeing the humorous side of things	Discouraged by failure
Adapting to change	Focusing under pressure	Seeing themselves as a strong person	Coping with stress
Achieving goals	Discouraged by Failure	Ability to adapt to change	
Subgroups that reported lower resilience scores			
Participants aged 12-19		**Participants aged 20 +**	
Participants who reside in Lower Mountains		Participants who reside in Lower Mountains	
Participants who gender identified as 'Female' and 'Other'		Participants aged 36-40	
Participants aged 16-19		Participants aged 46-50	

Introduction

The Stronger Families Alliance is a collective of Government, community members and service providers in the Blue Mountains who are committed to making the Blue Mountains a great place for children and young people to live, go to school, and work. Blue Mountains City Council is provides backbone support to Stronger Families Alliance.

Our ultimate goal is to promote the wellbeing & resilience of children and young people in the Blue Mountains.

The Stronger Families Alliance is in the process of developing a strategy (2019-2024) to continue supporting children and young people in the Blue Mountains. The findings from The Survey of Resilience and Wellbeing will contribute to the Alliance strategy and outcomes.

The study

The Survey of Resilience and Wellbeing was developed in order to measure the perceived resilience and wellbeing levels of the Blue Mountains Community, providing a baseline measure to which future action can be planned and measured.

The survey

The survey is a replication of the VicHealth study (2015), using two validated instruments to measure wellbeing and resilience of the Blue Mountains community: The Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) and a shortened version of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC10). The survey also asks questions on loneliness, stress, and anxiety, and social support.

The survey was undertaken from August – November 2018.

The survey respondents predominately consisted of young people aged 12-19 (n= 2089). This was primarily due to the support from the Department Of Education, Katoomba High School, Winmalee High School, TAFE, Blue Mountains Grammar School, St Columba's School, Blue Mountains City Council and other Stronger Families Alliance members.

There was a total of 491 participants aged 20-96 who completed the survey.

This report is a compilation of results from both 12-19, and 20 years and over. Results are presented by each cohort due to higher representation in cohort 12-19 years. There is a

detailed report on the findings from the Survey of Resilience and Wellbeing: Young people 12-19 also available on the Stronger Families Alliance website.

The findings from the study will be shared with Blue Mountains City Council, and Stronger Families Alliance member organisations. Data has been presented to contributing agencies throughout 2019 including Secondary Schools in the Blue Mountains, TAFE Blue Mountains, BLUE PEN network, Department of Education, and Stronger Families Alliance main members meeting.

The findings will be available on the Stronger Families Alliance Website from 2019.

The survey is longitudinal and will be undertaken again in 2021.

Mental Wellbeing

Positive mental health or wellbeing is a dynamic state of internal equilibrium in which people enjoy life, are able to realise and develop their own potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships and can contribute to their community (Adapted from VicHealth 2015, WHO 2014, Cloninger 2006, Reachout 2019).

Subjective Wellbeing

Subjective wellbeing provides an indication of how people feel, think and report about their own lives and personal circumstances. The term subjective wellbeing was first introduced by Diener (1984) as a means of identifying the field of psychology that attempts to understand people's evaluations of their quality of life (Proctor, 2014). Throughout this report the term Personal Wellbeing is used.

Governments, Schools, Community organisations and other agencies nationally and internationally are increasingly acknowledging the importance of looking beyond traditional measures of successful communities such as the GDP. Measures of subjective wellbeing provide key information about quality of life, and how individuals feel about the society that they live. Governments are also increasingly using this tool to develop, measure and evaluate programs.

The Department of Education is committed to wellbeing framework with students in the Blue Mountains.

Measurement of subjective wellbeing

In this survey, subjective wellbeing was measured using a scientifically validated instrument known as the Personal Wellbeing Index. Two versions of this instrument were used: The Personal Wellbeing Index –Adult (PWI-A), and the Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (PWI-SC). The PWI scale contains seven items of satisfaction, each one corresponding to a quality of life domain: standard of living, health, achieving in life, relationships, safety, community-connectedness, and future security. The adult normative range for subjective personal wellbeing is between 73.9 and 76.7 points. The average Personal Wellbeing Index score nationwide is 75.7.

Based on similar reports using the Personal Wellbeing Index (Cummins et al 2014, VicHealth 2015) it is deduced that:

1. Wellbeing scores at or above 70 points reflect a normally functioning homeostatic system (wellbeing category Normal)
2. Wellbeing scores equal to or below 50 points represent homeostatic failure (wellbeing category High Risk)
3. Wellbeing scores between 51 and 69 points cannot be unequivocally interpreted. Any score within this range may represent the homeostatic failure of a high set-point or homeostatic normality of a low set-point (Wellbeing category Challenged).

This scale has been used successfully by a number of Government, and other agencies including VicHealth, City of Sydney Council, Department of Family and Community Services and NSW Health. The instrument is recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OEDC) as a reliable tool to measure wellbeing as a specific outcome, as opposed to inferring wellbeing from the absence of mental illness (VicHealth 2015, WHO 2014).

Resilience

Resilience can be defined as coping in the face of adversity. It is the capacity to work through and recover from negative events. It is a dynamic quality that develops over time through the interaction between people and their environment.

The measurement of resilience is not as well advanced as the measurement of wellbeing. By most definitions, resilience can only be demonstrated in the face of adversity. This makes the ethical exploration of resilience problematic. Instead, measures usually approximate actual resilience by capturing ‘perceived resilience’, or by having participants rate their level of agreement with statements that typically describe resilient people (VicHealth 2015).

Measurement of Resilience

In this survey, perceived resilience was measured using a shortened version of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) (Connor-Davidson, 2003). The brief CD-RISC 10 developed by Campbell-Sills and Stein (2007) is recognised as a reliable and valid scale for a young adult audience and is designed to measure the ability to cope with stress. This scale has been used by a number of agencies including VicHealth (2015), Universities, Health Services across the world, and the Australian Cricket Team (Gucciardi et al, 2011).

Methodology

The study was approved by the Department of Education Ethics Committee which is accountable to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

The study was undertaken by Stronger Families Alliance. The project was led by Blue Mountains City Council Social Researcher, Community Development with generous collaboration from the Department of Education, Mountains Community Resource Network, Blue Mountains City Council and Stronger Families Alliance member organisations.

In total 2595 participants aged 12 years and over completed the survey. Of these 80.5% (n=2089) were aged 12-19 years. The Survey was undertaken from August – November 2018. It was conducted in four Secondary Schools across the Blue Mountains (a mix of location, public and private) and at TAFE Blue Mountains Campus. The survey was also available online via Blue Mountains Have Your Say Platform, and was available in hard copy at a number of locations across the Blue Mountains including libraries, neighbourhood centres, and other community centres. Data entry was provided by Mountains Community Resource Network and was funded by Blue Mountains City Council.

Data cleaning, de-identification, aggregation and analysis was completed by Social Researcher, Blue Mountains City Council.

Personal Wellbeing Index and Resilience Scores are the average sum of scores in each question in the scale. Participants were given opportunity to choose ‘I don’t now’ or ‘I don’t understand’ as an answer. If either ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I don’t understand’ was chosen more than three times, the total Wellbeing/Resilience score was omitted.

Significance testing: Data was analysed at the significance level of $p<0.05$, unless otherwise stated.

Standardisation: All PWI data have been converted to a percentage of scale maximum (%SM) score which transforms the 0-10 scale response data into standardised 0-100 percentage point scale. The PWI user manual (IWG 2013) offers the following formula for calculating the %SM statistic:

$$\frac{X - k^{min}}{k^{max} - k^{min}} \times 100$$

X	=	the score or mean to be converted
k^{min}	=	the minimum score possible on the scale
k^{max}	=	the maximum score possible on the scale

Throughout the report, comparisons with national data is available. The average Personal Wellbeing Index data is nationwide and not age specific. The Average Resilience data is from Victorian youths aged 16-25. With this in mind caution should be taken when comparing Blue Mountains average scores with national wellbeing scores, and Victorian resilience scores.

This report will be presenting results from participants aged 12-19 years, and those aged 20 years and over. Sample characteristics are presented in Table 1 (Participants aged 12-19) and Table 2 (Participants aged 20 and over).

Table 1: Participants aged 12-19

Variable		N	%
Gender	Male	991	47.4

	Female	1015	48.5
	Other	65	3.1
	Blank	20	1.0
Indigenous descent	Yes	105	5.0
	No	1959	93.8
	Blank	25	1.2
Age	12	228	10.9
	13	428	20.5
	14	396	19.0
	15	352	16.9
	16	267	12.8
	17	261	12.5
	18	107	5.1
	19	5	0.2
	Blank	27	1.3
	Other	18	0.9
Year Level	7	453	21.7
	8	439	21.0
	9	345	16.5
	10	355	17.0
	11	220	10.5
	12	244	11.7
	Blank	33	1.6
Work Status	*Not working*	1244	59.6
	Part Time	289	13.8
	Casual	443	21.2
	Blank	113	5.4
Household Composition	*Lives with one or more of parents*	1861	89.1
	With one or more adults who are not partner or parents	70	3.4
	Other	137	6.6
	Blank	21	1.0
Region	*Upper Mountains*	566	27.1
	Mid Mountains	540	25.8
	Lower Mountains	610	29.2
	Outside of the Blue Mountains	139	6.7
	Location not specified	234	11.2
Social Group	*Sport or physical recreation group*	1196	57.3
	Religious or other spiritual group or organisation	188	9.0

	Special Interest of Hobby group	452	21.6
	Ethnic or multicultural club	30	1.4
	Social club or group through school / Uni / TAFE	157	7.5
	Online group or community	329	15.7
	Not involved in an organised group	431	20.6
Wellbeing category	High Risk (0-50)	140	6.7
	Challenged (51-69)	469	22.5
	Normal (70+)	1464	70.1
	Nil score	16	0.8

Table 2: Participants aged 20 and over

Variable		N	%
Gender	Male	130	26.5
	Female	354	72.2
	Other	4	0.8
	Blank	2	0.4
	Total	490	100
Indigenous descent	Yes	11	2.2
	No	475	96.9
	Blank	4	0.8
Age	20-25	15	3.1
	26-30	20	4.1
	31-35	30	6.1
	36-40	62	12.7
	41-45	59	12
	46-50	65	13.3
	51-55	57	11.6
	56-60	69	14.1
	61-65	35	7.1
	66-70	30	6.1
	71-80	22	4.5
	81+	10	2.0
	Blank	15	3.1
Studying	TAFE	66	13.5
	University	26	5.3
	Distance Education	5	1.0
	Not studying	385	78.6
	Blank	8	1.6
Work Status	*Full time*	167	34.1

	Part time	122	24.9
	Casual	58	11.8
	Not in paid work	133	27.1
	Blank	10	2.0
Household Composition	*Lives with partner*	151	30.8
	Lives with partner and children	124	25.3
	Lives with one or more children	89	18.2
	Lives alone	73	14.9
	Lives with adults who are not partner or parents	19	3.9
	Lives with parents	15	3.1
Region	*Upper Mountains*	199	40.6
	Mid Mountains	101	20.6
	Lower Mountains	141	28.8
	Outside of the Blue Mountains	19	3.9
	Location not specified	28	5.7
Social Group	*Sport or physical recreation group*	157	32.0
	Religious or other spiritual group or organisation	62	12.7
	Special Interest of Hobby group	150	30.6
	Ethnic or multicultural club	3	0.6
	Social club or group through school / Uni / TAFE	25	5.1
	Online group or community	100	20.4
	Other organised social group	108	22.0
	Not involved in an organised group	133	27.1
Wellbeing category	High Risk (0-50)	51	10.4
	Challenged (51-69)	96	19.6
	Normal (70+)	337	68.8
	Nil score	5	1.0

Results

Overall Life Satisfaction

The first question in the Wellbeing scale is the Global Life Satisfaction (GLS) Tool: “How happy/satisfied are you with your life as a whole?” participants were asked to rate their happiness/satisfaction with life as a whole on a scale of 0-10 (0=very sad / not at all satisfied and 10 = very happy/ very satisfied) The average score was 69.3 out of 100 for secondary students (95% CI 6.7 to 7), and 73 out of 100 for participants aged 20 and over. The average score nationwide is 73 (OECD 2017). Note that national data is not age specific, so comparison should be approached with caution for younger participants.

How happy / Satisfied are you with your life as a whole?	
Participants aged 12-19	Participants aged 20 and over
69.3%	72%

Overall Life satisfaction: Gender

There was no significant difference in the overall life satisfaction scores of participants who gender identified as *Male*, *Female* or *Other* in the 20 years and over category. Participants who gender identified as *Other* and who left their gender as blank, had very low life satisfaction scores (38 and 65 respectively), however low representation (n=4 and n=2) resulted in no significant difference.

For participants aged 12-19, results were significantly different. Participants aged 12-19 who gender identified as ‘*Other’* had lowest average GLS scores (52.6), followed by participants identifying as *‘Female’* (67.7). Participants who identified as *‘Male’* scored an average of (72). The findings indicate that gender has an influence on overall happiness with life much more for young people. The difference in scores between three options were highly significant ($p<0.001$).

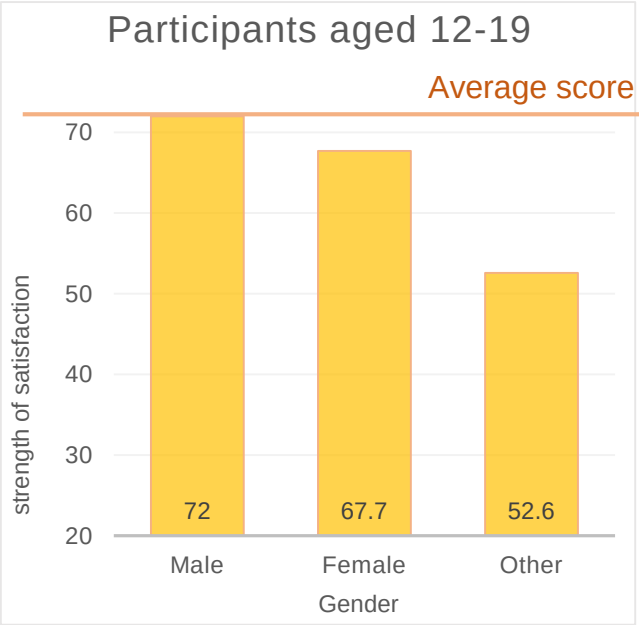


Figure 2 Cohort 12-19 Average scores for Overall Life Satisfaction for each Gender

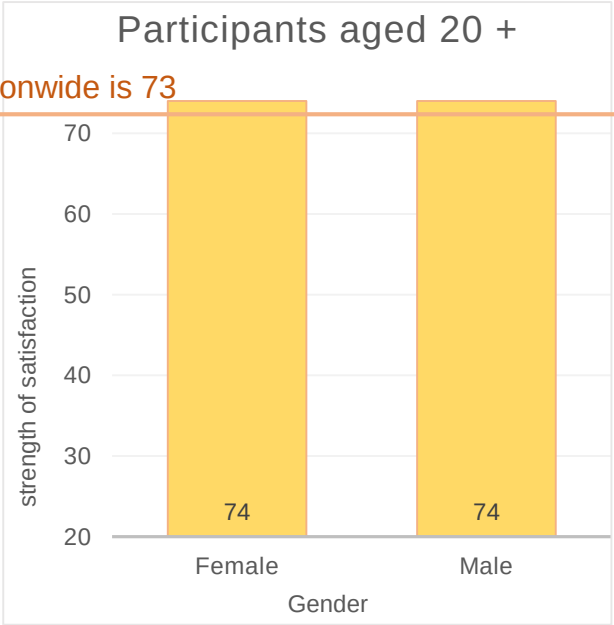


Figure 3 Cohort 20 years + Average scores for Overall Life Satisfaction for each gender

Overall Life satisfaction: Residence

Participants residing in Mid-Mountains scored the highest average score for overall life satisfaction (72 points for participants aged 12-19, and 76 points for participants aged 20+). Figure 4 and 5 presents average scores for Upper, Mid, and Lower Blue Mountains.

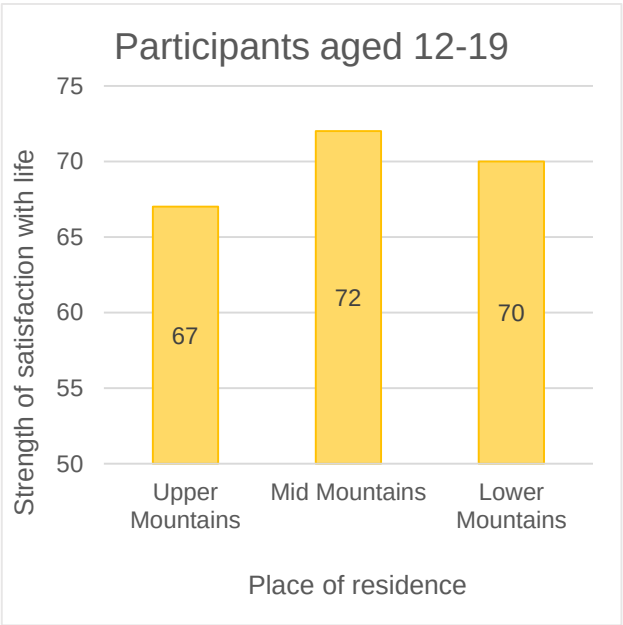


Figure 4 Cohort 12-19 Average scores for Overall Life Satisfaction for Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains

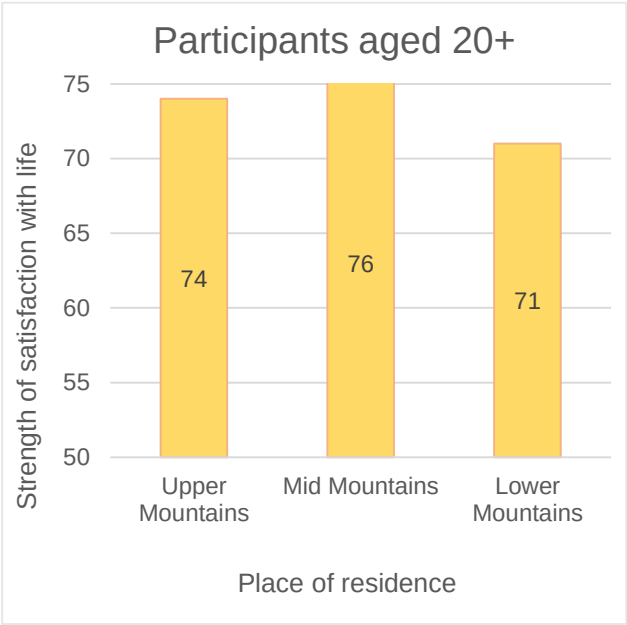


Figure 5 Figure 6 Cohort 20 years + Average scores for Overall Life Satisfaction for Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains

Overall Life Satisfaction: Age

For the younger cohort, participants aged 12-13 reported the highest average life satisfaction score (74 points). This was 1 point above the national average. For this cohort Overall Life Satisfaction appears to decline as age increases. For the cohort 20 and over, highest Life Satisfaction scores were for people aged 61-65 (83 points). Figure 6 and 7 presents average Life Satisfaction scores for each age group.

How Happy / Satisfied are you with your life?

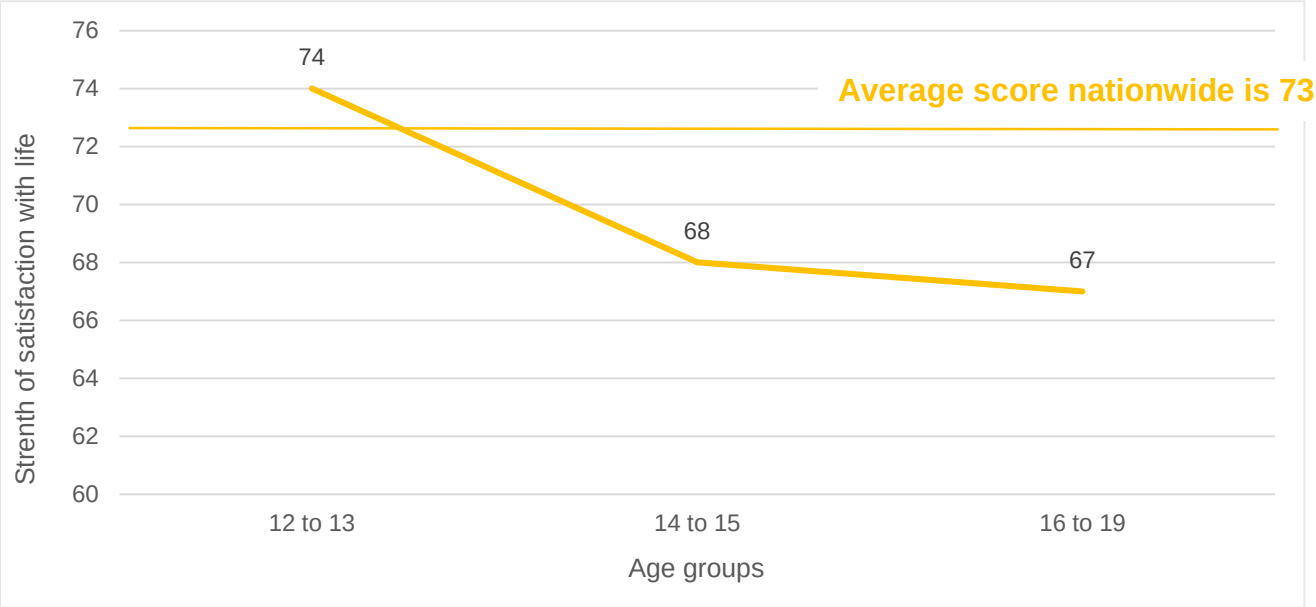


Figure 6 Cohort 12-19 Average Overall Life Satisfaction for each age group

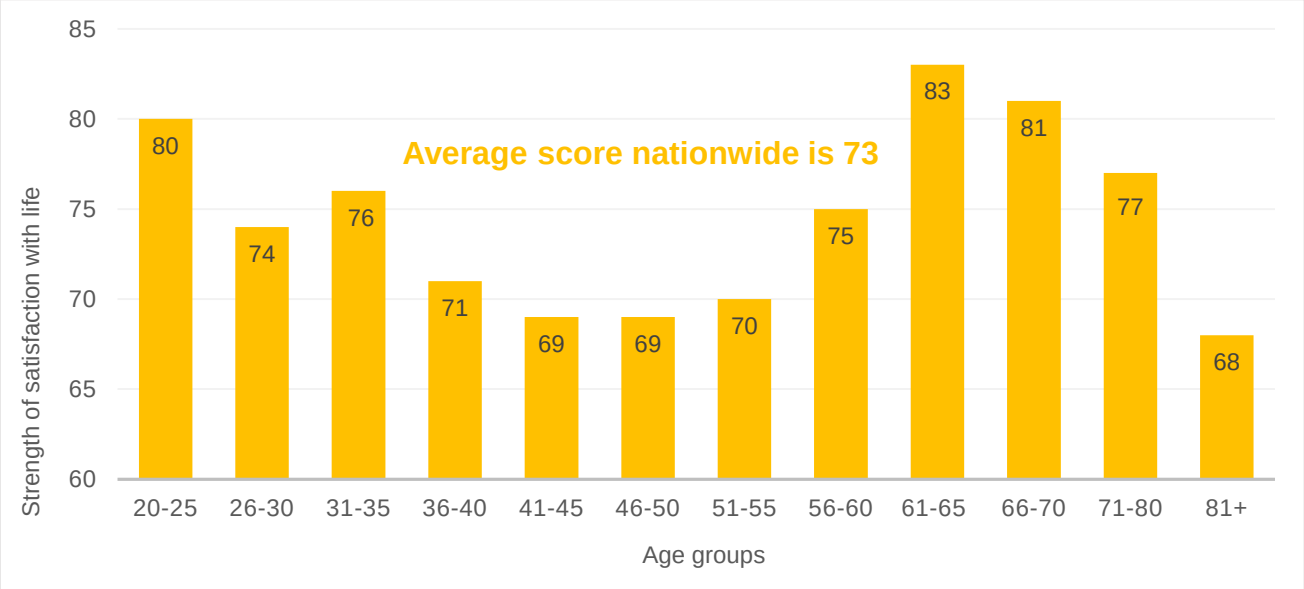


Figure 7 Cohort 20 years + Average Overall Life Satisfaction Results for each age group

Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI)

The Personal Wellbeing Index questions asked participants to nominate how satisfied / happy they felt with particular aspects of their life on a scale of 0 – 10 (0= very sad / not satisfied at all and 10= very happy/satisfied). These scores have been converted to a percentage of scale maximum (%SM) score which transforms the 0-10 scale response data into standardised 0-100 percentage point scale (Personal Wellbeing Index Score). The PWI measures seven key areas: standard of living, health, achieving in life, relationships, safety, community connection and future security. The Questions in this index are:

	Personal Wellbeing Index – Adult	Personal Wellbeing Index – School Children (SC)
1.	How satisfied are you with your standard of living	How happy are you about the things you have, like the money you have and the things you own?
2.	How satisfied are you with your health	How happy are you with your health?
3.	How satisfied are you with what you are currently achieving in life	How happy are you with the things you want to be good at?
4.	How satisfied are you with your personal relationships	How happy are you about getting on with the people you know?
5.	How satisfied are you about how safe you feel	How happy are you with how safe you feel?
6.	How satisfied are you with feeling part of the community	How happy are you doing things away from home?
7.	How satisfied are you with your future security	How happy are you with what may happen to you later on in life?

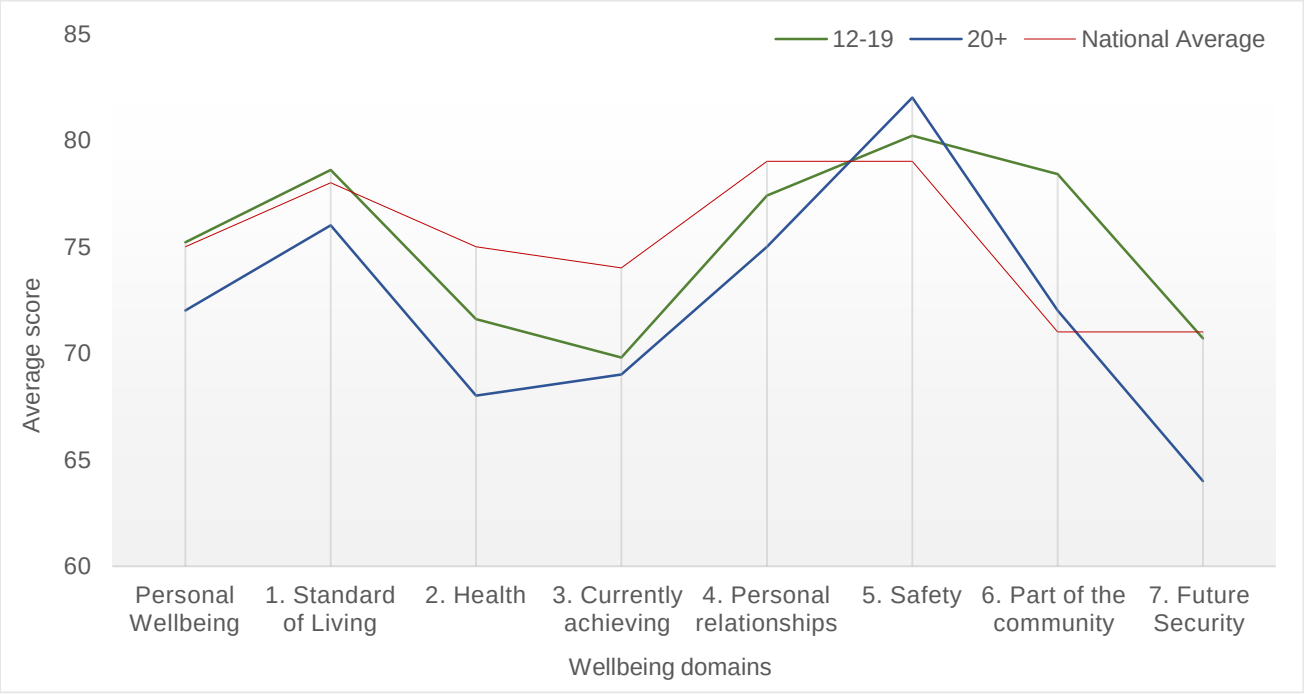


Figure 8 Average scores for Person Wellbeing and for each Wellbeing Domain

Figure 8 presents average personal wellbeing and average scores on each of the domains (represented in the questions above) that make up the Personal Wellbeing Index. The green line is average scores for cohort 12-19, the blue line is average scores for cohort 20+ and red line represent average scores for Australian adults (VicHealth 2015).

Wellbeing scores for young people aged 12-19 is in the normal range for the general population of Australia (between 73.9 and 76.7 points). Average wellbeing scores for community members aged 20 and over was 72 (slightly lower than the national average). Both participant groups scored a higher than average score on safety, and being part of the community. Both participant groups scored lower than average scores on health, currently achieving, and personal relationships.

The low scores for '*Achieving in Life'*, '*Future security*', and *'Health'* highlight potential areas of vulnerability amongst the community of the Blue Mountains, and could indicate a level of anxiety within the population about the future. This could be as a result of issues such as climate change, job insecurity, house prices and other economic pressures. Further research may be useful to explore what area of '*Health'* participants were not happy with.

Wellbeing Categories

Based on similar reports using the Personal Wellbeing Index (Cummins et al 2014, VicHealth 2015) it is deduced that:

1. Wellbeing scores at or above 70 points reflect a normally functioning homeostatic system (wellbeing category Normal)
2. Wellbeing scores equal to or below 50 points represent homeostatic failure (wellbeing category High Risk)
3. Wellbeing scores between 51 and 69 points cannot be unequivocally interpreted. Any score within this range may represent the homeostatic failure of a high set-point or homeostatic normality of a low set-point (Wellbeing category Challenged).

Percentage of participants in each Wellbeing Index Category

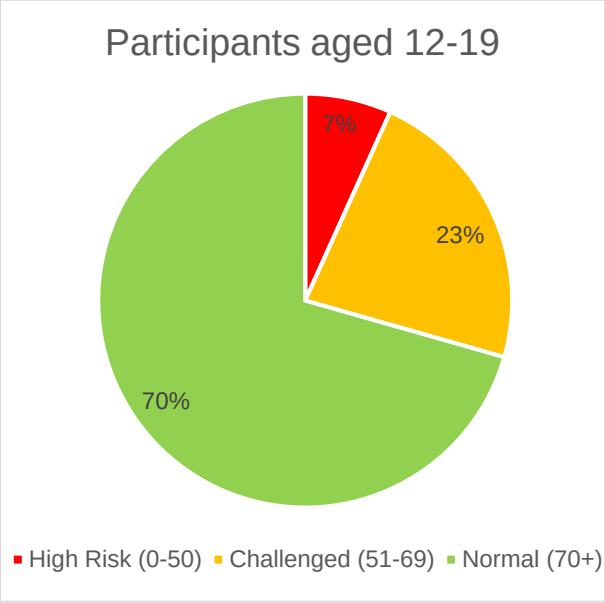


Figure 9 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants in each Wellbeing Index Category

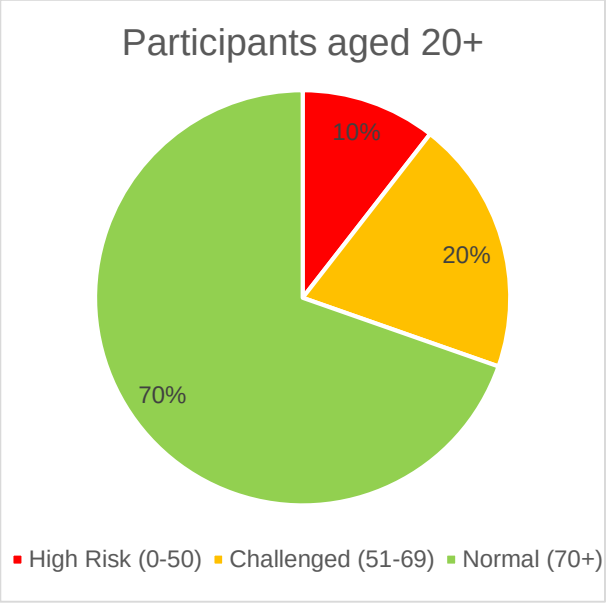


Figure 10 Cohort 20 years + Percentage of participants in each Wellbeing Index Category

Representation in each Wellbeing Index Category is similar for both Cohorts. Cohort 20 years and over have a higher portion of participants in the HIGH RISK category than cohort 12-19. Cohort 12-19 have a higher portion of participants in the CHALLENGED category than cohort 20 years and over. 70 % of both cohort 12-19, and cohort 20 years and over are in the NORMAL category for Wellbeing. This means that they have functioning homeostatic system and are on track for positive, healthy wellbeing. This is presented in Figures 9 and 10.

Measuring Resilience:

Using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10.

The next scale that was presented to participants was the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10 (CD RISC 10). This asks participants to answer “how true” the statements of capacity were for them on an 11-point scale (0=not true at all, 10=extremely true).

Scores on each of these questions contribute to the CD-RISC 10, a recognised, reliable and valid scale to measure the ability to cope with stress and adversity. Figure 11 displays average scores for each item on the CD-RISC 10 scale.

The questions on this scale are in table below:

Connor Davidson Resilience Scale	
1.	I am able to adapt to change
2.	I can deal with whatever comes
3.	I can see the humorous side of things
4.	Coping with stress can strengthen me
5.	I tend to bounce back after illness or hardship
6.	I can achieve goals despite obstacles or things that might block my way
7.	I can stay focused under pressure
8.	I am not easily discouraged by failure
9.	I think of myself as a strong person
10	I can handle unpleasant feelings

The average score for the CD-RISC 10 amongst cohort 12-19 years was 68 points and for cohort 20 years and over 72 points. Although there is no comparable resilience data nationally, both cohorts in the Blue Mountains have scored lower scores than young people in Victoria aged 16-25 (75.42) (VicHealth 2015). A strong relationship was found between Personal Wellbeing Index scores and Resilience scores ($p<0.001$).

Figure 11 presents average scores for each Resilience Domain. The green line represents average scores on Resilience domains for cohort 12-19 and the blue line represents average scores on Resilience domains for cohort 20 years and over. There is no national average on this resilience scale at the time of this report.

The highest average score for the CD-RISC 10 was item 3 '*I can see the humorous side of things'* (79.7% true for cohort 12-19 and 78% true for cohort 20 years+), followed by item 1 *'I am able to adapt to change'* for cohort 12-19 (73.2% true) and item 9 *'I think of myself as a strong person'* for cohort 20 years+ (76% true). For young people *achieving goals* was also a strength (70.4% true).

The lowest average score for cohort 12-19 was item 4 '*Coping with stress can strengthen me'* (58.3% true), and for cohort 20 years + item 8 *'I am not easily discouraged by failure'* (67% true).

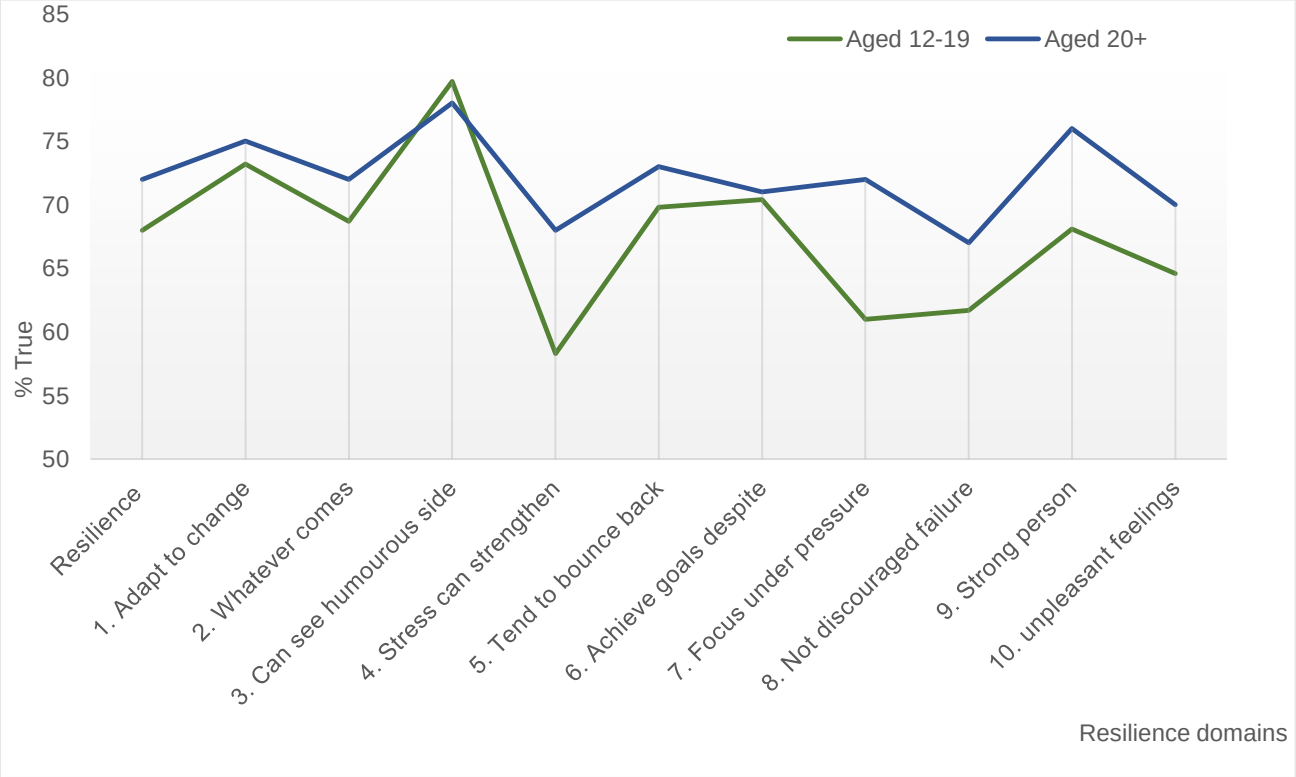


Figure 11 Average scores for Resilience, and each Resilience Domain for cohort 12-19 and cohort 20 years +

Other areas of concern included:

- For cohort 12-19: *Staying focused under pressure* and *being discouraged by failure*
- For cohort 20 years +: *Stress,* and *handling unpleasant feelings*.

Wellbeing and Resilience: age

The relationship between age and wellbeing scores, and age and resilience scores was statistically significant *(p<0.001).* Figure 12 presents average wellbeing and average resilience scores for young people in the Blue Mountains, in three age groups (12-13, 14-15, 16-19). Figure 13 presents average wellbeing and average resilience scores for

community members living in the Blue Mountains aged 20 years and over, categorised in age groups. Figure 12 and 13 presents percentages of each age group in wellbeing categories Normal (scores of 70 and over) Challenged (scores between 51-69), and High risk (scores between 0-50).

Young people aged 12-19

For the cohort of young people 12-19, Average wellbeing scores were highest for participants aged 12 and 13 (78.8). Average wellbeing scores for participants aged 14 and over reduced to 73.7 and 73.9 respectively. Average resilience increased for participants aged 14 and 15, and dropped again for participants aged 16 to 19.

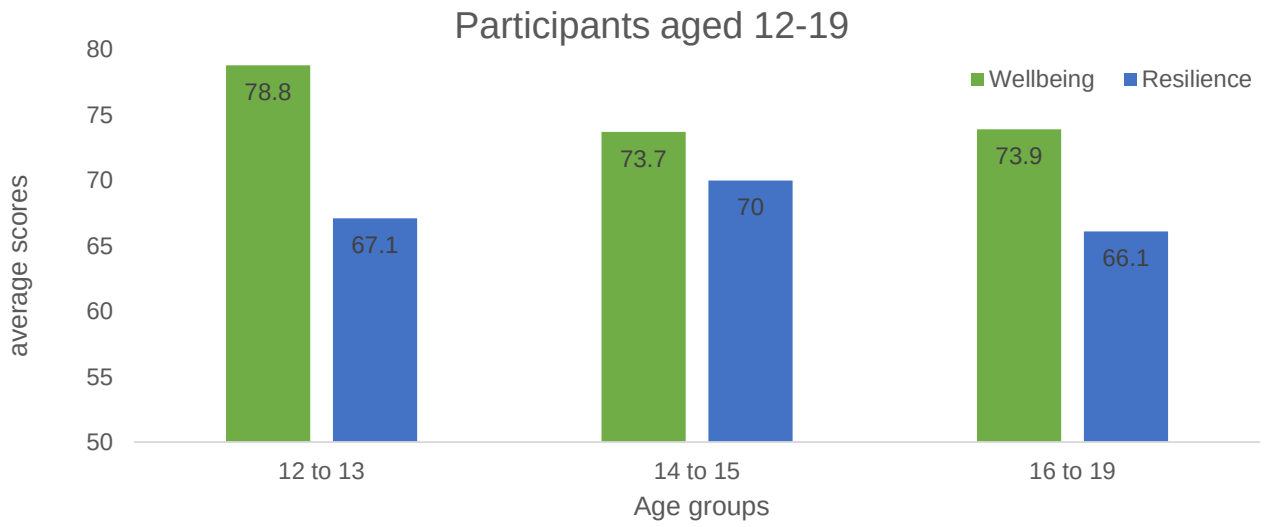
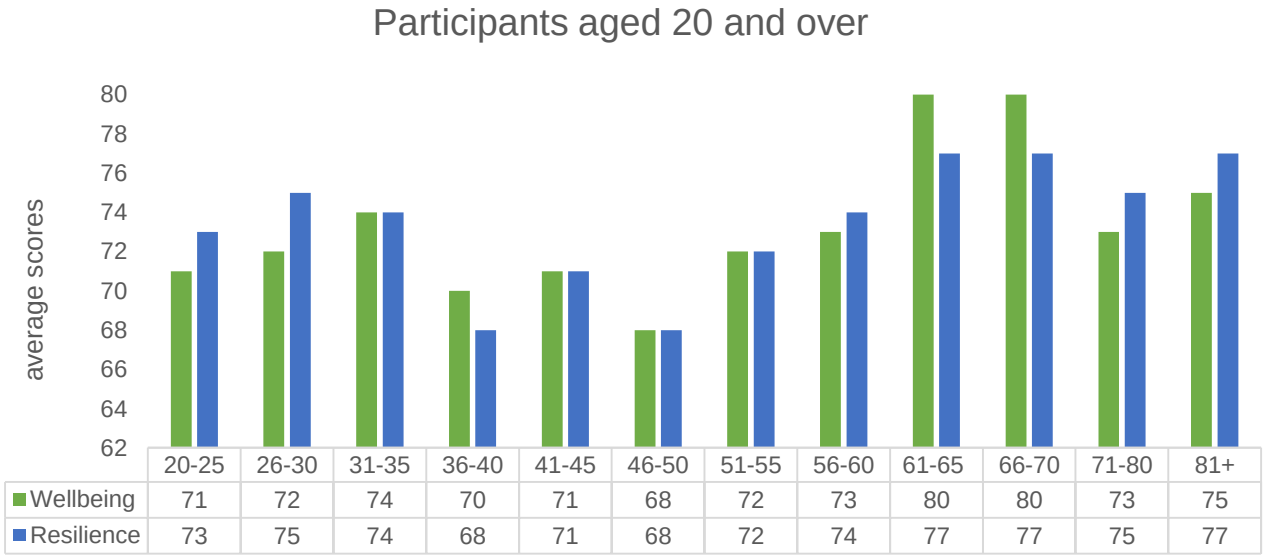


Figure 12 Cohort 12-19 Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience scores for each age group



	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-80	81+
Wellbeing	71	72	74	70	71	68	72	73	80	80	73	75
Resilience	73	75	74	68	71	68	72	74	77	77	75	77

Figure 13 Cohort 20 years+ Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience scores for each age group

Community members aged 20+

Average scores for both Resilience and Wellbeing were reported highest in ages 61-70. Average scores for Wellbeing were lowest in age group 46-50 and average scores for Resilience were lowest in age groups 36-40 and 46-50.

Overall Resilience levels were higher for adults than young people (with the exception of age group 14-15 which scored higher resilience scores than age group 36-40 and 46-50)

Overall Wellbeing levels were similar in both cohorts with the exception of age groups 36-40 and 46-50 who scored significantly lower Wellbeing scores than other participants, and age groups 61-70 who scored significantly higher wellbeing scores than other participants (and national averages).

Wellbeing Categories

The sum of Wellbeing Domain scores was divided by the number of domains to produce a final Wellbeing Index scores which places participants in one of three categories: Normal, Challenged, High Risk.

1. Wellbeing scores at or above 70 points reflect a normally functioning homeostatic system (wellbeing category Normal)
2. Wellbeing scores equal to or below 50 points represent homeostatic failure (wellbeing category High Risk)
3. Wellbeing scores between 51 and 69 points cannot be unequivocally interpreted. Any score within this range may represent the homeostatic failure of a high set-point or homeostatic normality of a low set-point (Wellbeing category Challenged).

Figure 14 displays the proportion of young people (Cohort 12-19) in each age group categorised into the normal, challenged or high risk wellbeing category, based on their overall PWI score.

The data shows that young people aged 12-13 have the highest portion of people in the wellbeing category ‘Normal’. 78.7% of young people aged 12-13 are on track for positive and healthy wellbeing.

Young people aged 14 to 15, are more likely to be at risk of low mental wellbeing and depression than peers aged 12-13 or 16-19. 8% of people aged 14-15 are at High Risk of low wellbeing, and psychological distress.

For cohort 20 years and over, those that scored positive wellbeing results were aged 61-70 years (see figure 15).

Participants aged 46-50, and 56-60 had highest representation in the High Risk Wellbeing categories of all participants (including young people). 16.9% of participants aged 46-50 and 14.5% of participants aged 56-60 were categorised as High Risk of psychological distress, and homeostatic failure.

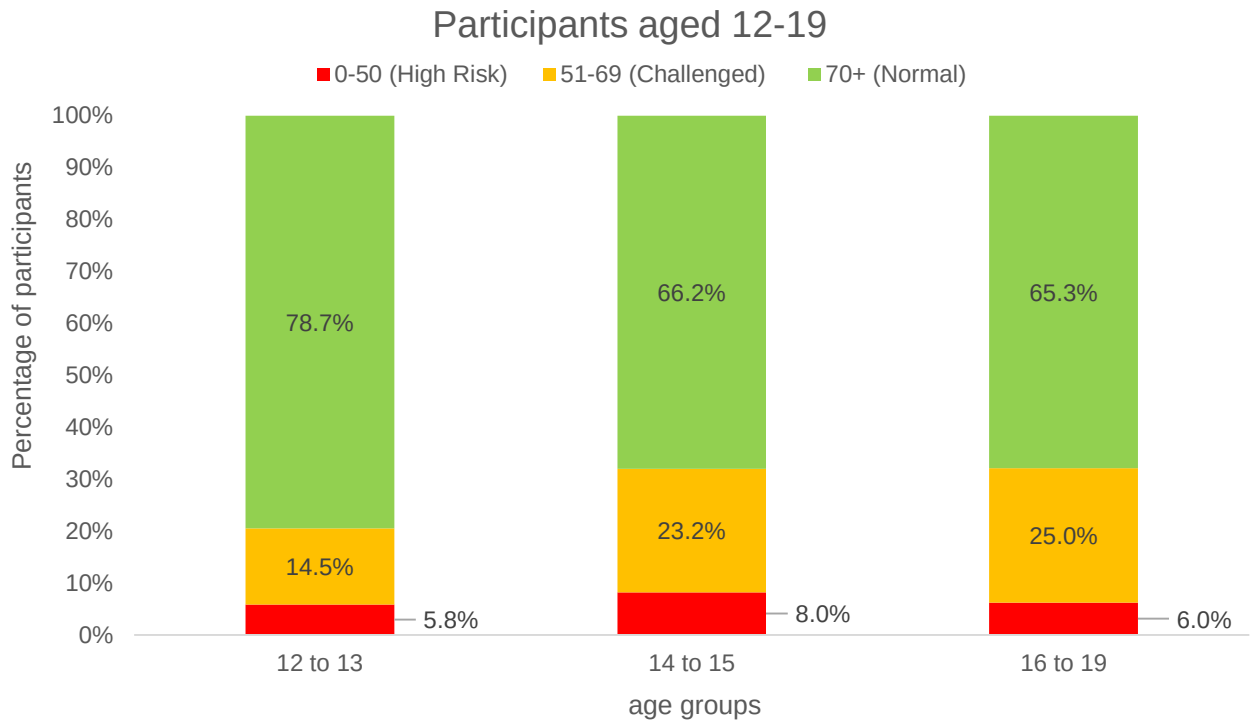


Figure 14 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of age group in each Wellbeing Index category

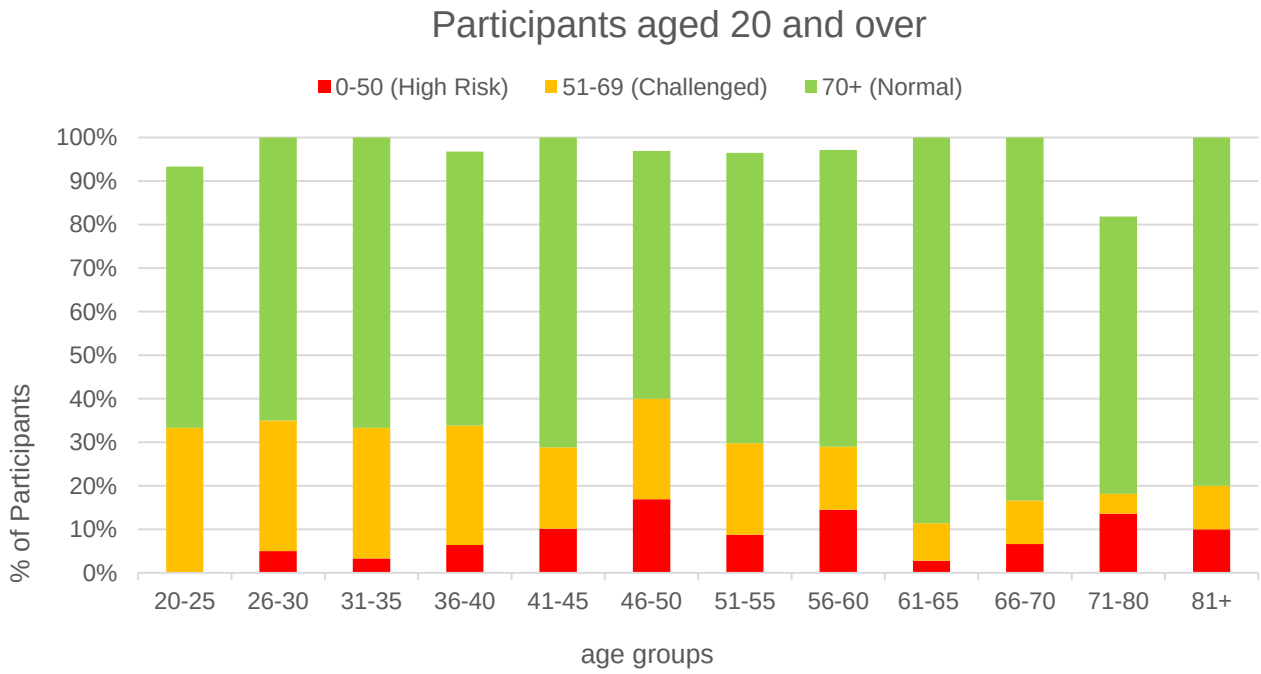


Figure 15 Cohort 20 years+ Percentage of age group in each Wellbeing Index Category

Wellbeing and Resilience: gender

There is a strong association between Gender, Personal Wellbeing Index scores and Resilience scores *(p<0.001, d= 0.68).* The data shows that both scores on personal wellbeing and resilience differs between participants who gender identified as '*male*', '*female*' and '*other*'. Figures 16 and 17 presents average wellbeing and average resilience scores for community members living in the Blue Mountains aged 12-19 and 20 years and over, categorised by gender.

Figure 18 and 19 presents percentages of each gender in wellbeing categories Normal (scores of 70 and over) Challenged (scores of between 51-69), and High risk (scores between 0-50).

For cohort 12-19 years, participants who gender identified as *'male'* scored significantly higher levels of both personal wellbeing and resilience (77.2 points and 71.2 points respectively).

Young people gender identifying as *'female'* scored an average wellbeing score of 73.9 points and an average resilience score of 65.5 points. Both young people gender identifying as *'male'* and *'female'* scored within the normal Wellbeing range for the nationwide adult population (between 73.9 and 76.7 points). Both scores are below the 2015 Victorian State average for Connor-Davidson Resilience measure (75.42).

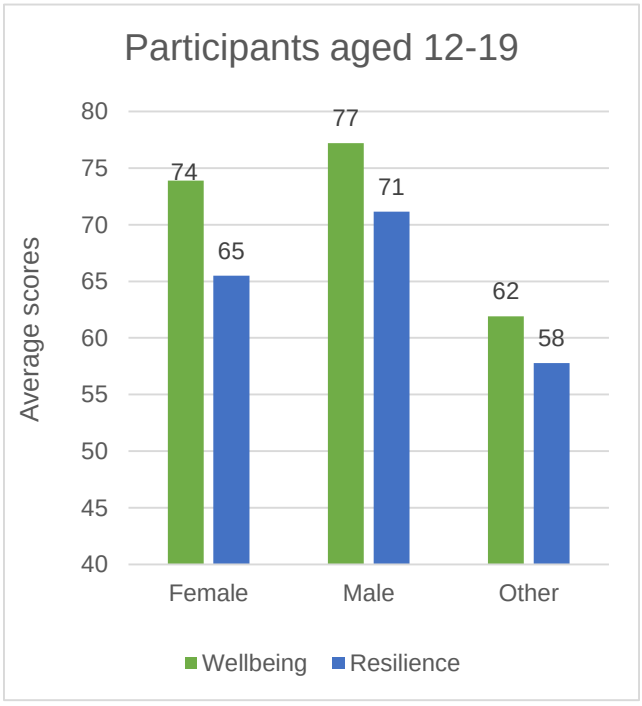


Figure 16 Cohort 12-19 Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience Scores for each gender

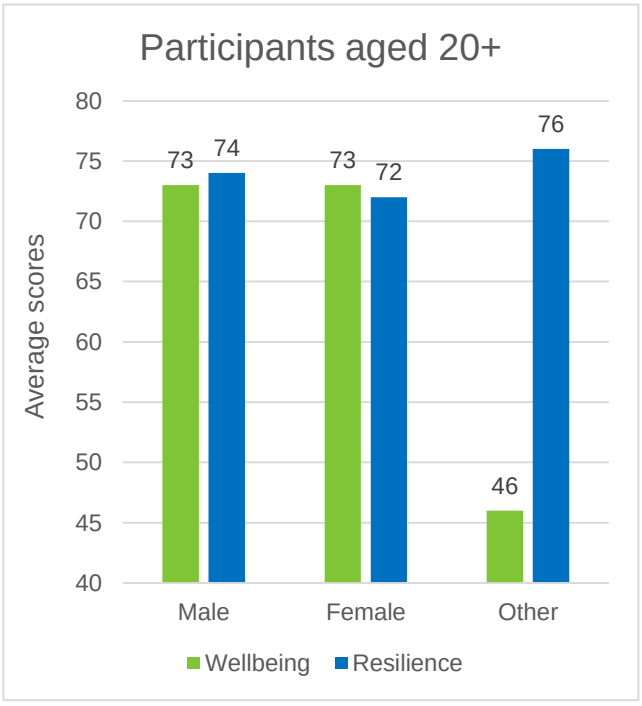


Figure 17 Cohort 20 years+ Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience scores for each gender

Young people gender identifying as *'other'* scored an average wellbeing score of 61.9 points and an average resilience score of 57.8 points (significantly lower than their male and female peers, the national wellbeing average and the Victorian State resilience average).

Figure 17 shows that scores for cohort 20 years and over, participants who identified as '*male*' and '*female*' are very similar. Both scores are within the normal Wellbeing range for the nationwide adult population (between 73.9 and 76.7 points). Both scores are below the Victorian State average for Connor-Davidson Resilience measure (75.42).

Average scores for participants who identified their gender as '*other*' are much lower than the nationwide average for wellbeing, however slightly above the national average for Resilience. Only 4 people nominated 'other' as their gender. Therefore, the above findings need to be approached with caution.

Personal wellbeing categories and gender

Personal wellbeing categories: High risk (scores between 0-50), Challenged (scores between 51-69), and Normal range (scores 70+) were correlated with gender and were found to be highly significant (*p<0.001).* Figure 18 and 19 displays the proportion of participants who gender identify as *Male*, *Female* and *Other* categorised into the normal, challenged or high-risk group, based on their overall PWI score.

For cohort 12-19 the results vary significantly between genders. 76.7 percent of those aged 12-19 who gender identified as *'male'* scored in the normal range for subjective wellbeing, compared to 65.4 percent of *'female'*, and 52.4 percent of those who gender identified as *'other'*.

For young people aged 12-19, The findings show that participants identifying as *Female* were almost 50 percent more likely than those identifying as *'male'* to be at 'high risk' of depression. Those who identified as '*Other'* were 5 times more likely than those who identified as *'male'* to be at 'high risk' of depression. These findings suggest a greater vulnerability among young people in the Blue Mountains who identify as *'female'* and '*other'*.

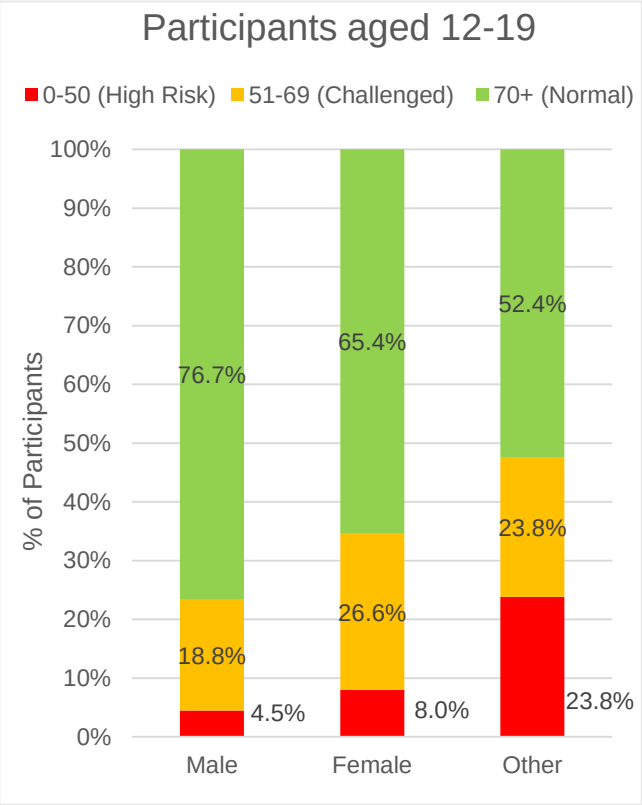


Figure 18 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of Gender in each Wellbeing Index category

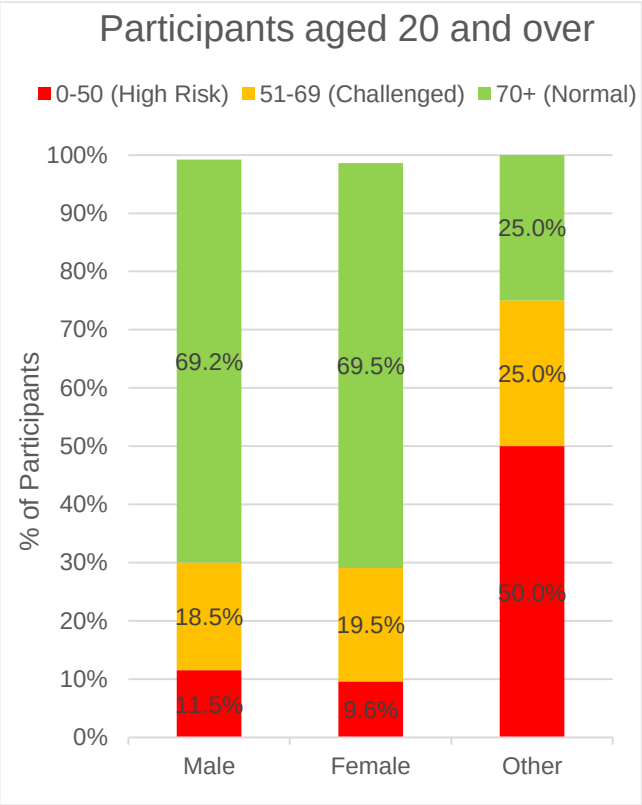


Figure 193 Cohort 20 years + Percentage of gender in each Personal Wellbeing Index category

For cohort 20 years and over there was no significant variance in scores across gender. Despite the concerning scores of participants identifying their gender as *'other'* in cohort 20 years and over, as a result of such low representation (n=4) this is not representative and should be approached with caution.

For cohort 12-19, representation of participants that gender identified as *'other'* is 3% and representational.

This does not mean that young people identifying as Male are in the clear.

Looking beyond this research, there is evidence to suggest that self-reporting is inconsistent with health statistics for young males in Australia. (Gwyther et al, 2019) (Lynch et al, 2016), (Telford et al, 2016). In Australia, young men are 3 times more likely to die of suicide than young women. In 2017, suicide remained the leading cause of death of children/ young people between 5 and 17 years of age- a 10.1% increase in deaths from 2016. This was substantially higher for males (ABS, 2017)

Wellbeing and Resilience: residence

Both wellbeing and Resilience scores varied from Upper- Lower Blue Mountains.

For Cohort 12-19, Upper Mountains has a significant lower average scores for wellbeing (73.7%) compared to Mid Mountains (77.4%) and Lower Mountains (76.3%). Mid and Lower Mountains scored within the national average range for wellbeing (between 73.9 and 76.7 points).

Average scores for resilience are significantly higher in the Upper Mountains (74.4%) compared to Mid Mountains (67.6%) and Lower Mountains (65.7%). This is despite scoring lower wellbeing scores.

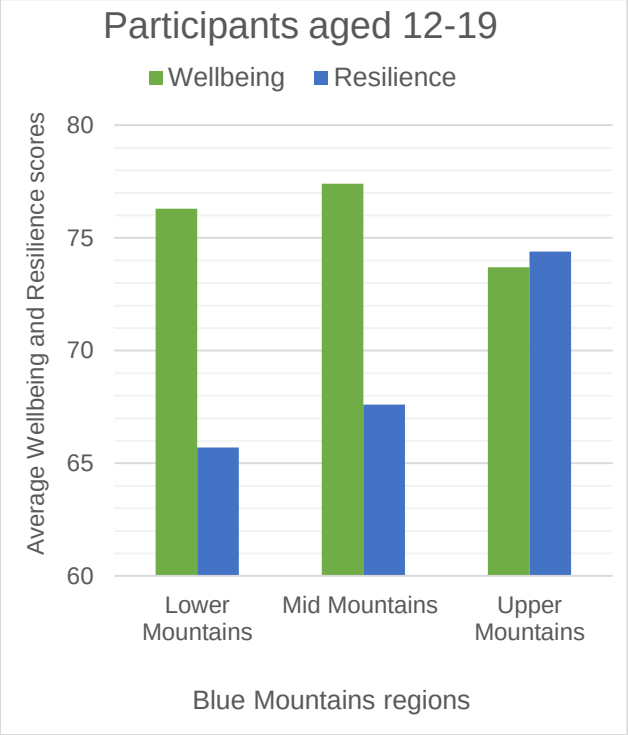


Figure 20 Cohort 12-19 Average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores for Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains

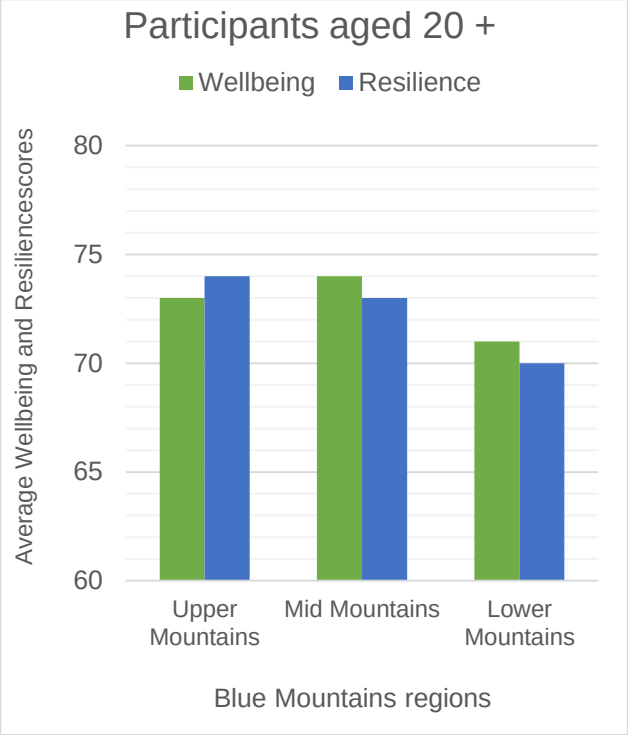


Figure 21 Cohort 20 years+ Average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores for Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains

For cohort 20 years and over, the data shows similarity in average scores per region of the Blue Mountains. Mid Mountains was the only region that scored in the national average range for wellbeing (between 73.9 and 76.7 points). Both Lower Mountains and Upper Mountains scored below the national average for Wellbeing. Upper Mountains average score for resilience was slightly higher than Mid Mountains and 4 point higher than Lower Mountains.

In both cohorts all three regions of the Blue Mountains' scores were below Victorian State average for the Connor-Davidson Resilience measure (75.42).

Figure 20 and 21 presents the portion of Upper, Mid and Lower Mountains categorised into the normal, challenged or high risk group, based on their overall PWI score. For cohort 12-19 years, those who resided in the Upper Mountains are twice as likely to be at *High Risk* of low mental wellbeing and psychological distress than those residing in the Mid Mountains.

Participants who reside in Mid-Mountains have the highest average scores in the Normal (70+) range

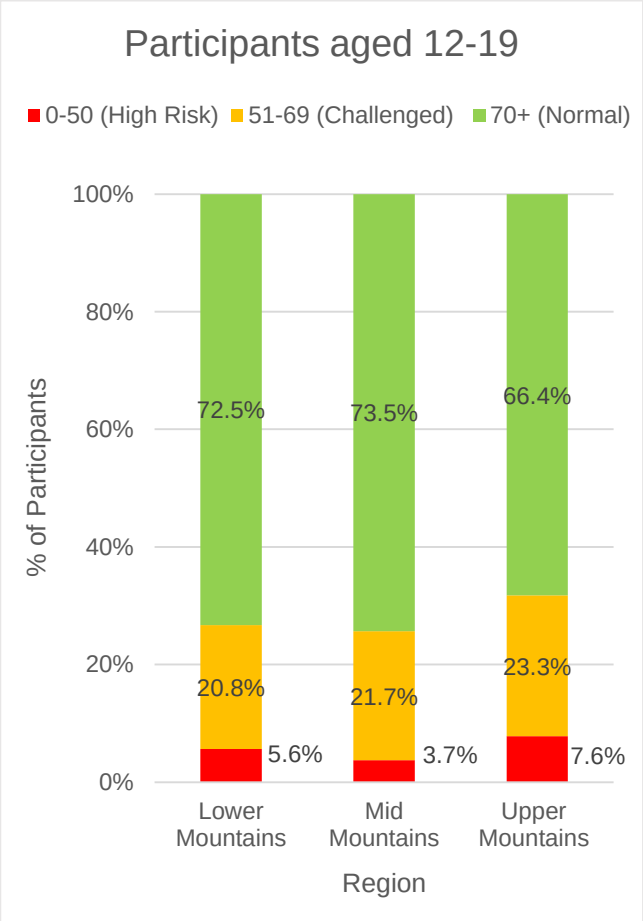


Figure 22 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains in each Wellbeing Index category

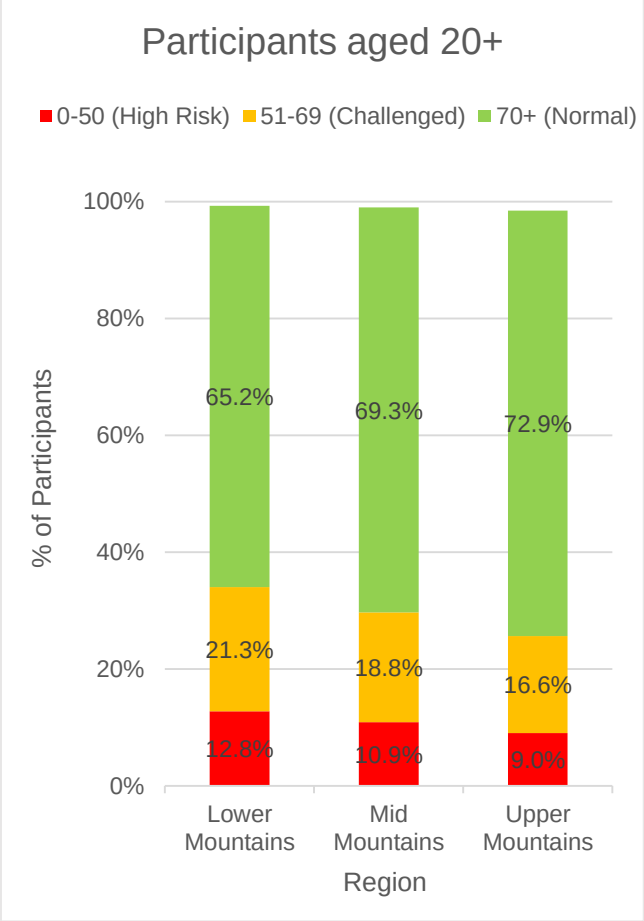


Figure 23 Cohort 20 years+ Percentage of Upper, Mid, Lower Mountains in each Wellbeing Index category

For cohort 20 + Participants residing in the Upper Mountains had highest representation in the *Normal* wellbeing category (72.9%) and lowest representation in the *High Risk* category. This is contrasted to cohort 12-19 years.

For cohort 20 years + Lower Mountains had highest representation in High Risk Categories.

Wellbeing and Resilience: summary

Wellbeing

Wellbeing for young people in the Blue Mountains is in the normative range for Australian adult population. For community members 20 and over Wellbeing is 1.4 points below the national average. Within both cohorts there are key groups that reported vulnerability to low mental wellbeing.

For cohort 12-19 these include:

- Participants who gender identify as ‘Female’ and ‘Other’
- Participants who reside in Upper Blue Mountains, and
- Participants aged 14-15

For cohort 20 years +, these include:

- Participants aged 36-40
- Participants aged 46-50
- Participants living in Lower Mountains

The key areas of vulnerability on the Wellbeing Scale reported by participants were:

- Achieving in Life / Things that participants want to be good at
- Future Security, and
- Health

Resilience

Reported scores using the Resilience Measure (CD-RISC 10) were lower than the State Victorian average as reported by Victoria Health (2015). The average Resilience Score across cohort 12-19 was 68 and cohort 20 years and over was 72. The Victorian average was 75.

Subgroups in cohort 12-19 years that reported lower resilience scores were:

- Participants who gender identified as ‘Female’ and ‘Other’
- Participants who reside in Lower Mountains, and
- Participants aged 16-19

Subgroups in cohort 20 years and over that reported lower resilience scores were:

- Participants who reside in Lower Mountains
- Participants aged 36-40
- Participants aged 46-50

The key areas of vulnerability on the Resilience Scale reported by participants were:

- Coping with stress
- Focusing under pressure
- Discouraged by failure

Perceived social support: Getting help from friends, family and neighbours

The Survey of Resilience and Wellbeing asked participants about the support they had around them.

The first question was: “Can you get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed?” Sixty percent of people in the Blue Mountains responded “yes definitely” to this question. Result were very similar across both cohorts.

Can you get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed?

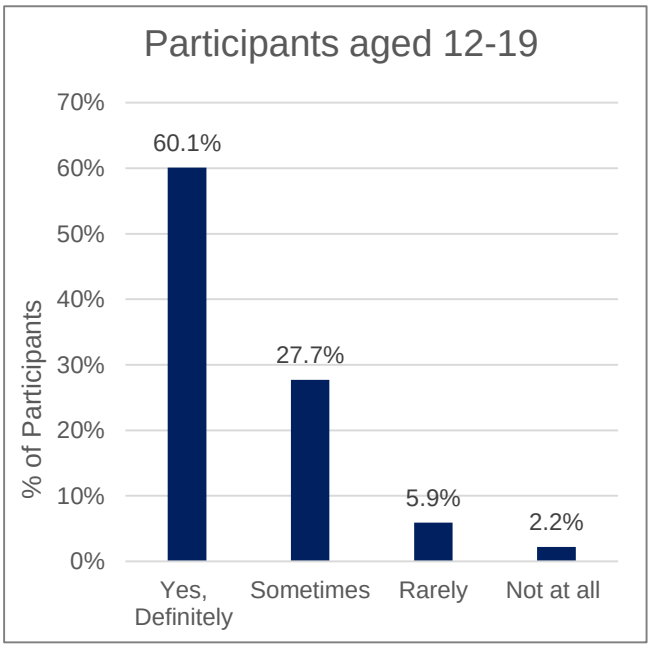


Figure 24 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants who can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

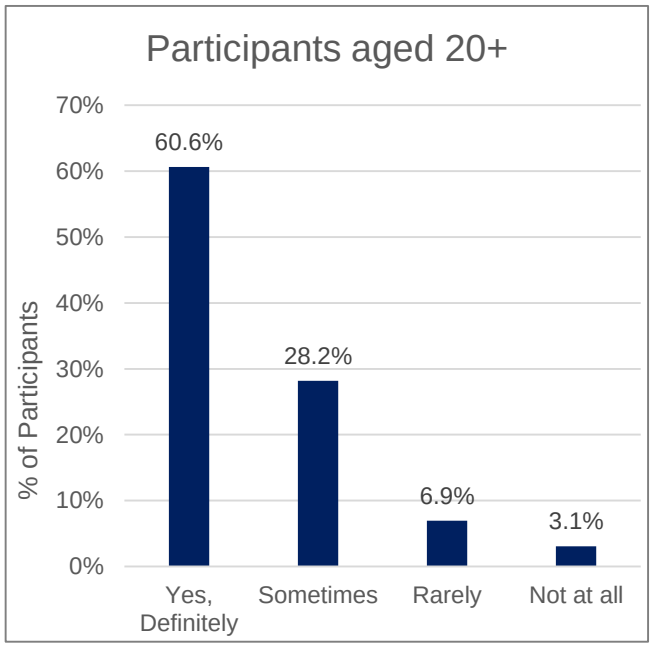


Figure 25 Cohort 20 years+ percentage of participants who can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

The data found that average wellbeing and resilience scores decrease the less likely participants can get help from their networks. This highlights vulnerability amongst people who have limited access to social supports.

Figures 24 and 25 presents average wellbeing scores for people in the Blue Mountains according to their perception that they can get help from family, friends or neighbours when in need.

Figure 27 shows that resilience scores are higher than wellbeing scores for adults aged 20 and over who either *rarely* or *not at all* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed. Even so, both wellbeing and resilience scores are lower when individuals cannot

get help from their networks, and both resilience and wellbeing scores are above average when individuals can *yes definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed (see figure 26 and 27).

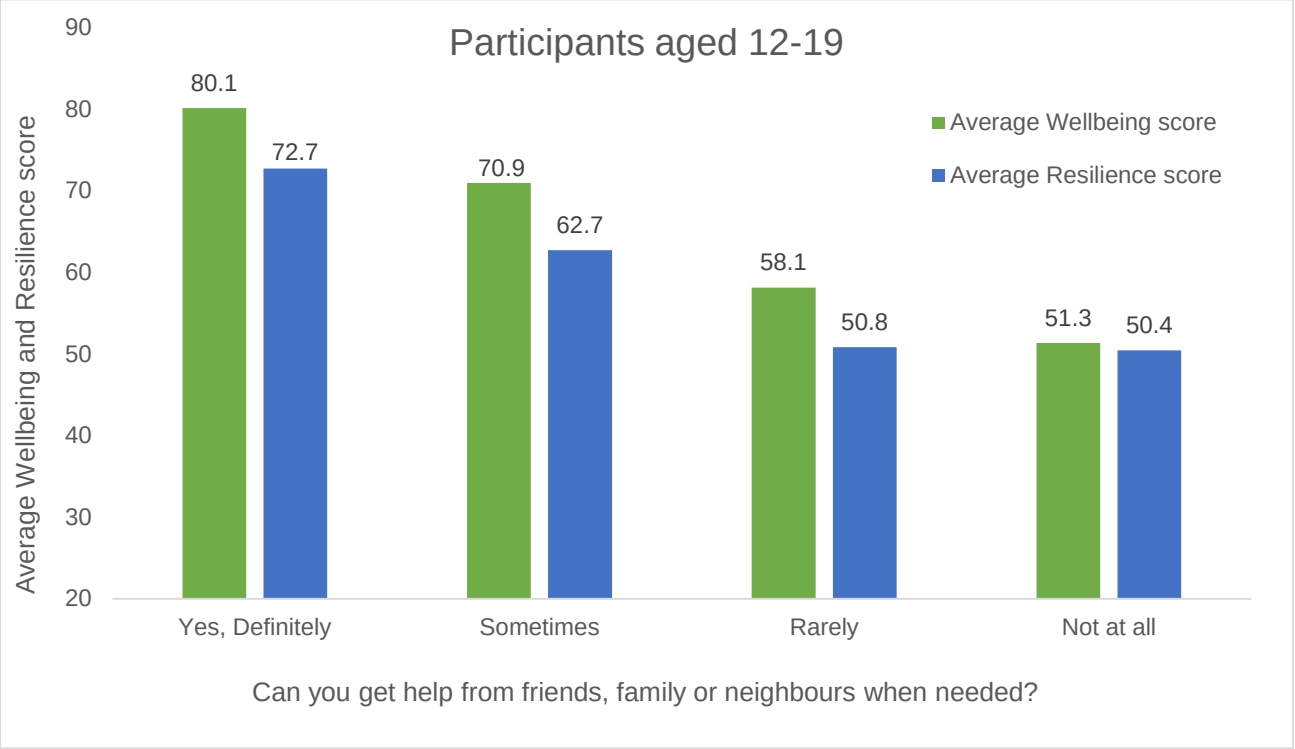


Figure 26 Cohort 12-19 Reported social support correlated with Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience scores

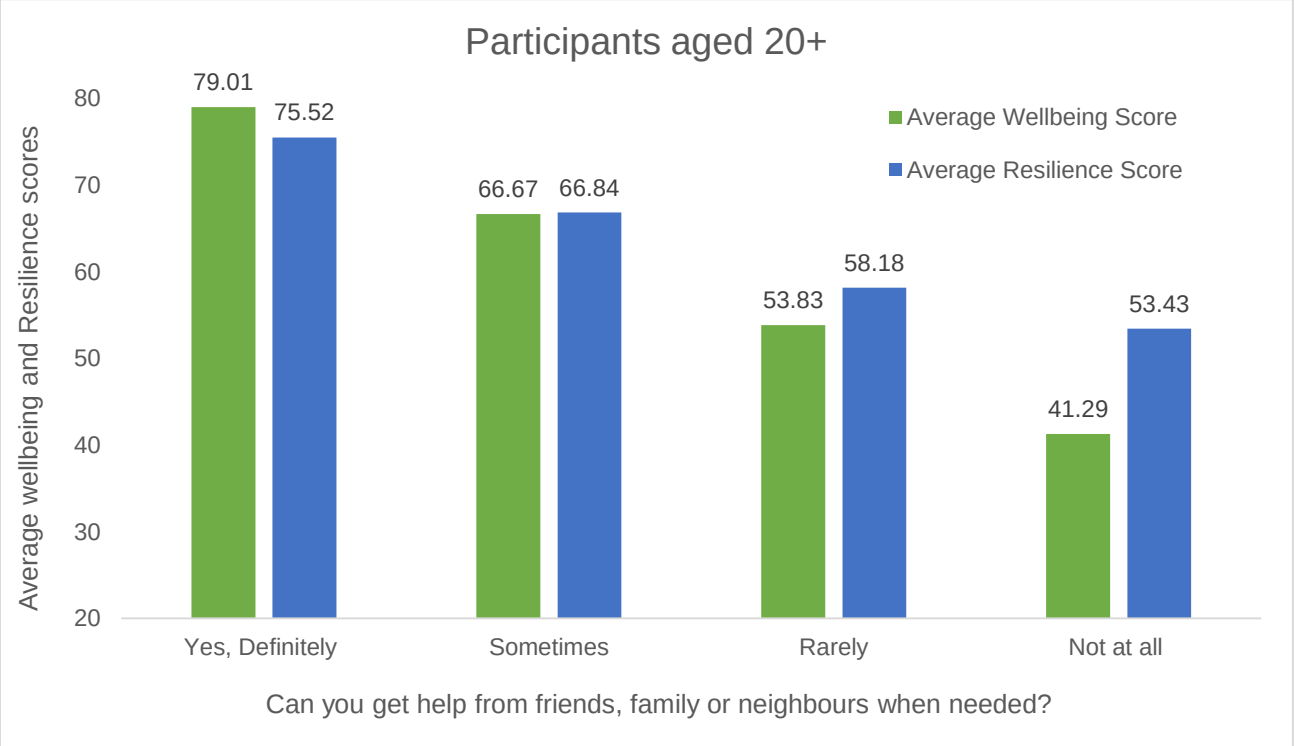


Figure 27 Cohort 20 years + Reported social support correlated with Average Wellbeing and Average Resilience scores

Getting help from friends, family and neighbours: Age

In Cohort 12-19, 65% of young people aged 12-13 said they could *Yes, Definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed. This dropped to 57.2% of participants aged 14-15 and then rose again to 60.2% of young people aged 16-19.

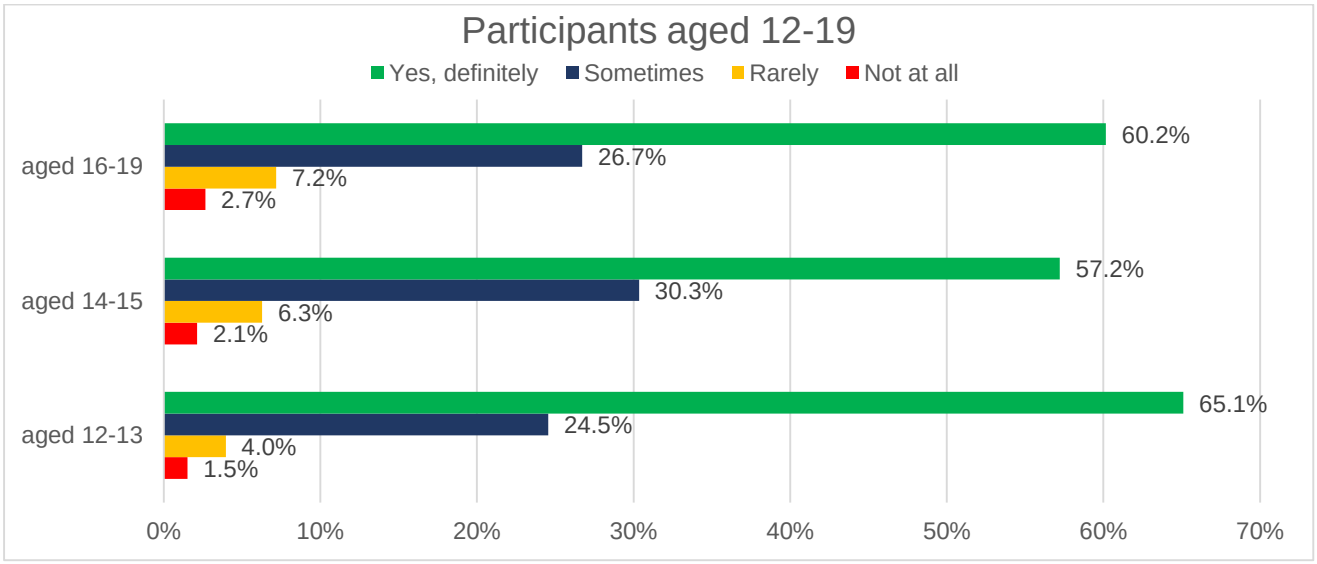


Figure 28 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of Participants in each age group who can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

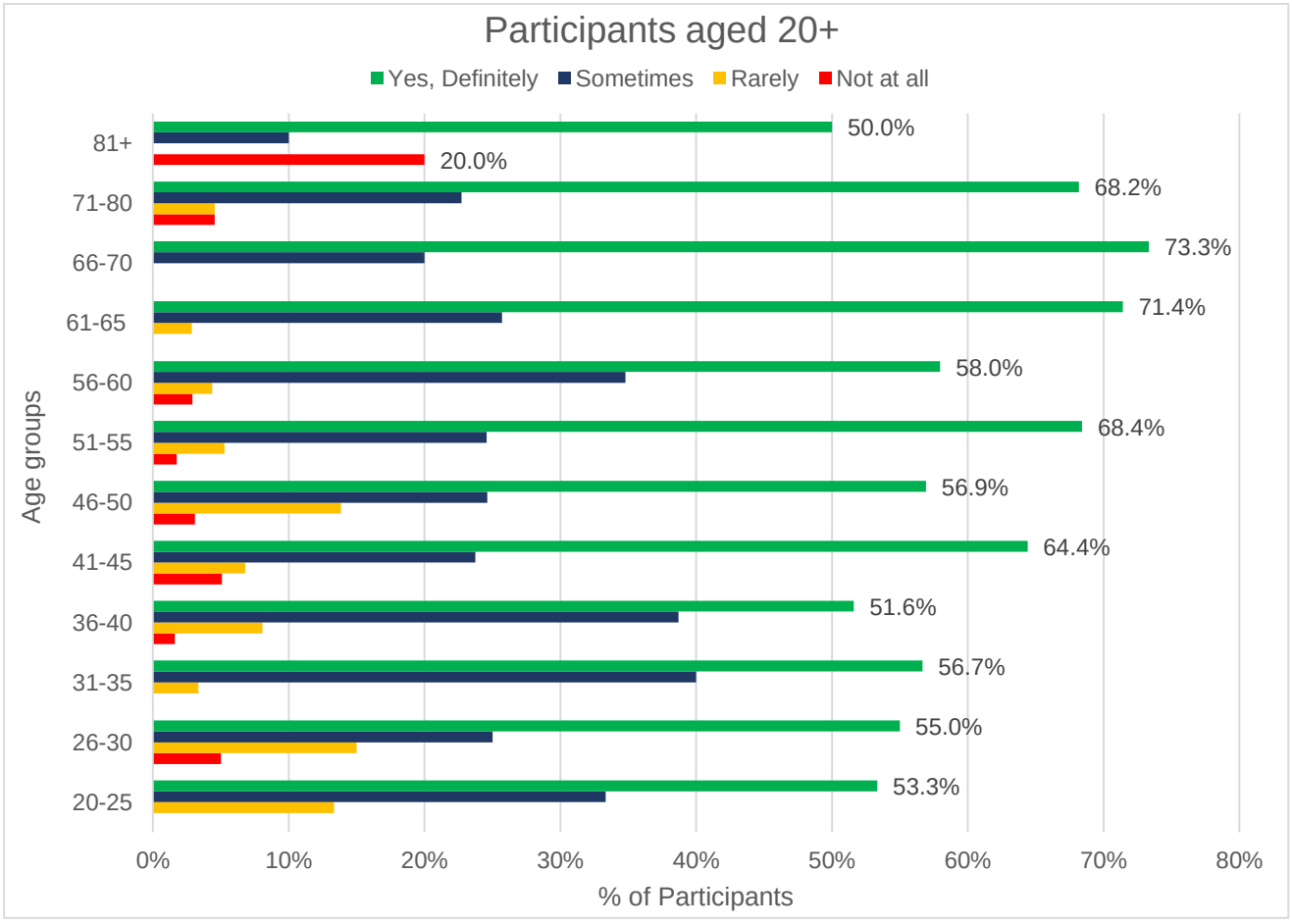


Figure 29 Cohort 20 years + Percentage of participants in each age group who can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

In Cohort 20 years and over, Participants aged 61-70 were *most able* to get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed, and those aged 81 and over were *least able* to get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed. 20% of participants aged 81 and over were *not at all able* to get help when needed.

Getting help from friends, family and neighbours: Gender

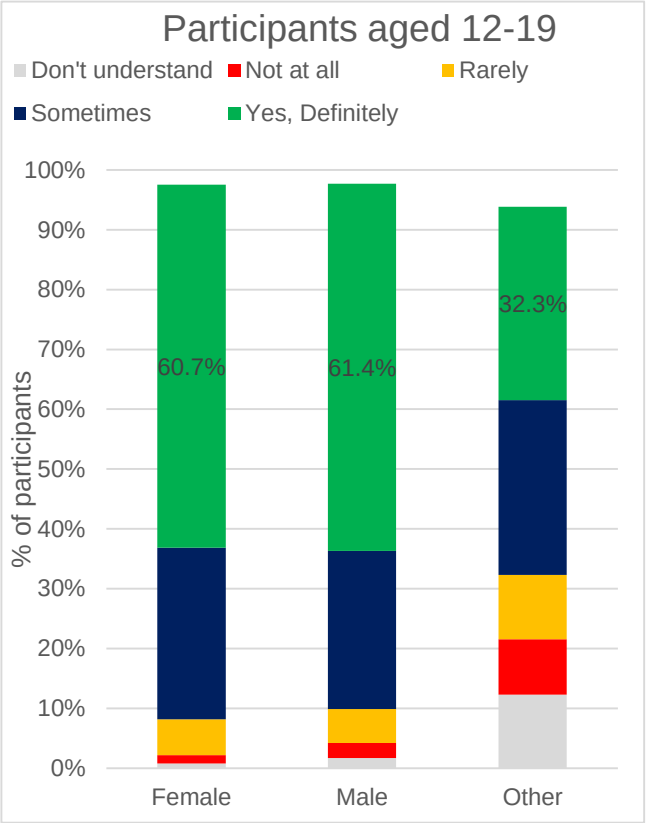


Figure 30 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of each gender that can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

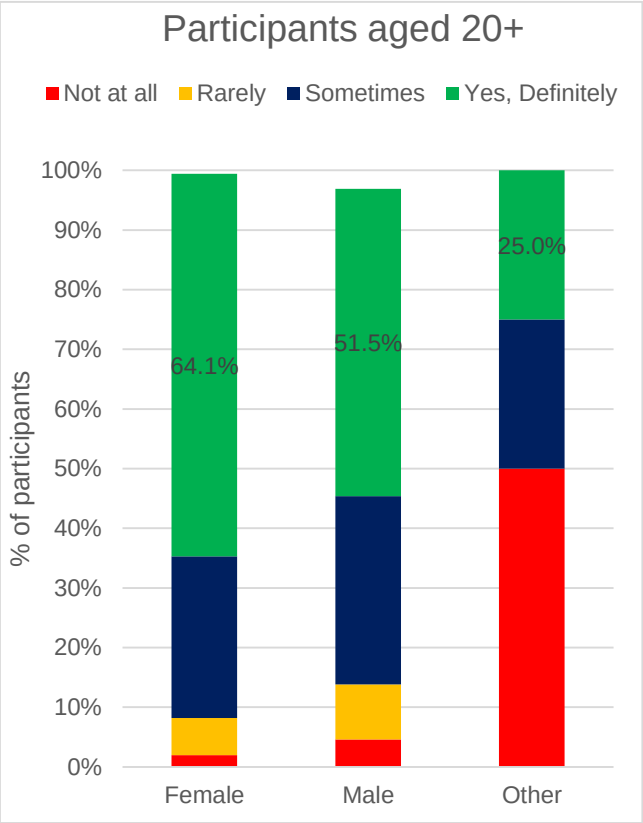


Figure 31 Cohort 20 years+ Percentage of each gender that can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed

For young people, the variance in '*male*' and *'female'* reporting that they can get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed is small. 60.7% of females, and 61.4% of *'males'* said they can *Yes, Definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed.

For those young people who gender identified as *'other'*, the situation is different. Only 32.3% of young people gender identifying as 'other' are *Yes, Definitely* able to get help from their friends, family or neighbours when needed. 12% of young people who identified as *'other'* said that they did not understand the question.

For participants aged 20 and over females were more likely to be able to get help from their friends, family or neighbours when needed. 64.1% of '*females'* said that they can *Yes, Definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed. This is higher than '*males'* of the same cohort. 51.5% of *'males'* said they could *Yes, Definitely* get help

from friends, family or neighbours when needed. Participants who identified their gender as *'other'* were mostly not able to get help when needed, however these results are not significant as the sample size was too small (n=4).

Getting help from friends, family and neighbours: Residence

More young people aged 12-19 living in Lower Mountains have said they can *Yes, Definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed then those living in Mid or Upper Mountains (63.9% compared with 61.9% and 56.4%). This is contrasted for participants aged 20 and over who are more likely to state they can *Yes, Definitely* get help from friends, family or neighbours if they live in Upper Mountains, and less likely if they live in Lower Mountains.

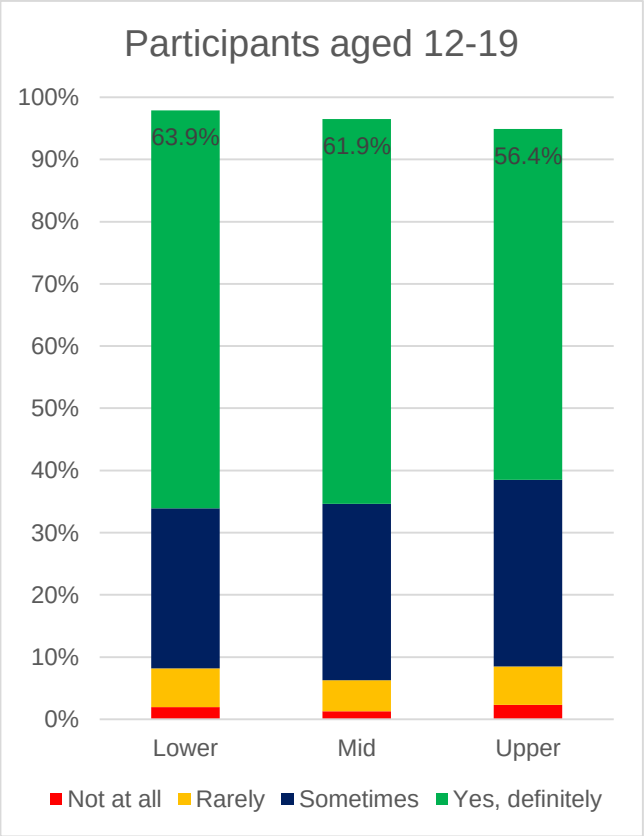


Figure 32 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants in Upper, Mid, and Lower Mountains in each Wellbeing Index category

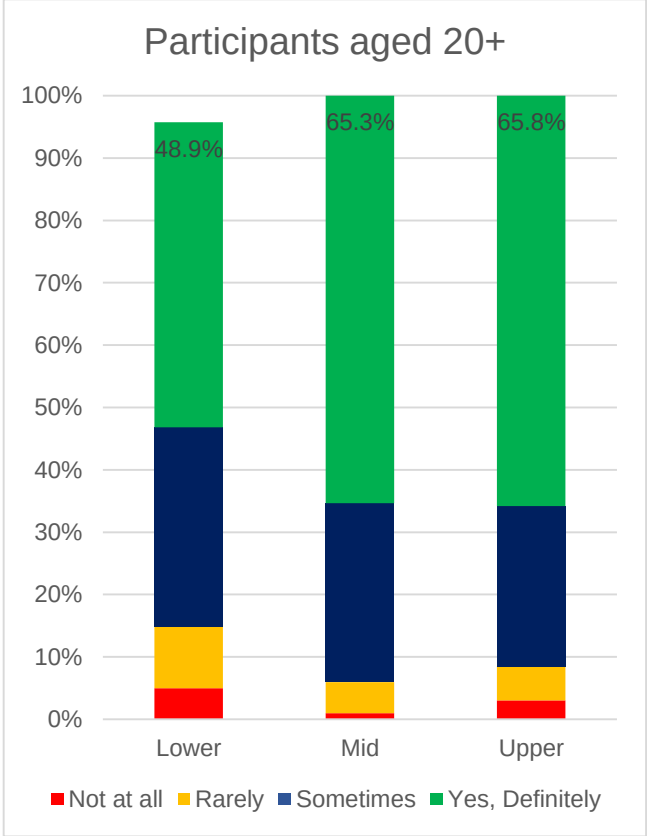


Figure 33 Cohort 20 years+ Percentage of participants in Upper, Mid, and Lower Mountains in each Wellbeing Index category

Loneliness, stress and anxiety

Participants were asked three questions about how lonely, stressed and anxious they generally feel using an 11 point, end defined scale ranging from 0 (Not at all) to 10 (Extremely). These scores were grouped together (0-3, 4-6, and 7-10). The questions were:

- **How lonely do you generally feel? (0-10)**
- **How stressed do you generally feel? (0-10)**
- **How anxious do you generally feel? (0-10)**

Loneliness

The Data shows that 42% of young participants aged 12-19 and 53.3 % of participants aged 20+ reported low levels of loneliness (between 0-3) whilst 27.4% of participants aged 12-19 and 24.9 % of participants aged 20+ scored high levels of loneliness (between 7 and 10).

How lonely do you generally feel? (0 = Not at all, 10 = Extremely)

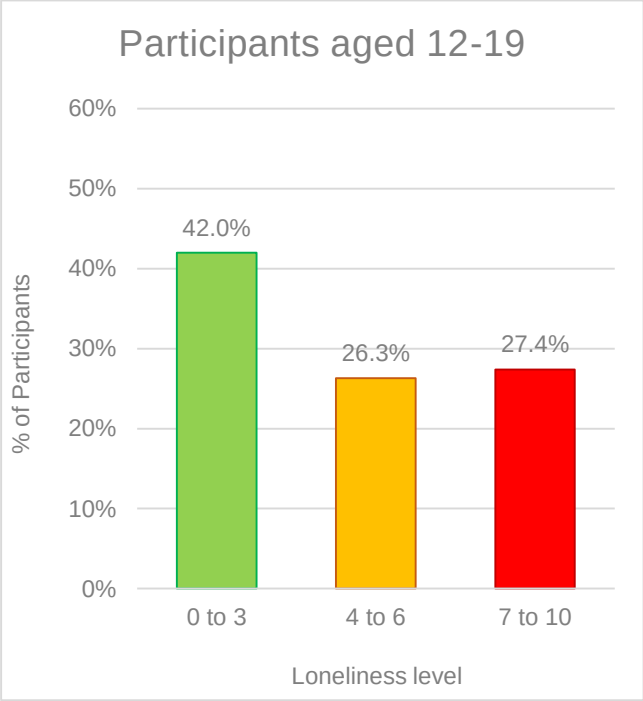


Figure 34 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants in each loneliness category

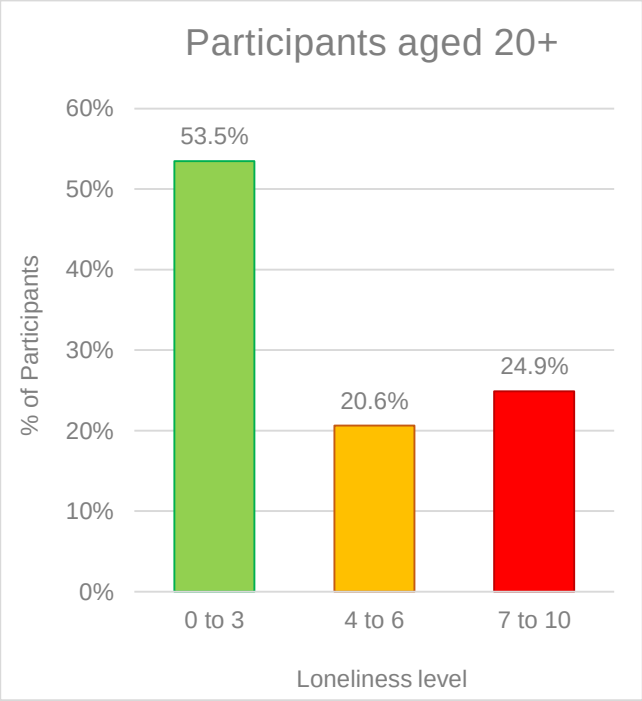
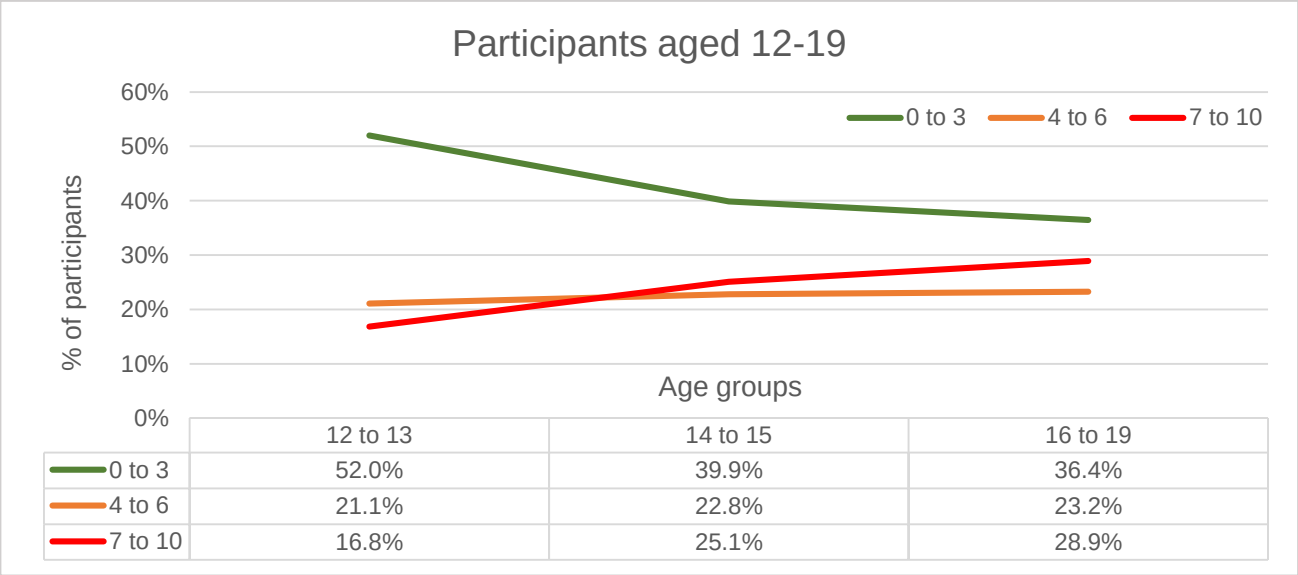


Figure 35 Cohort 20 years + Percentage of participants in each loneliness category

Loneliness: Age

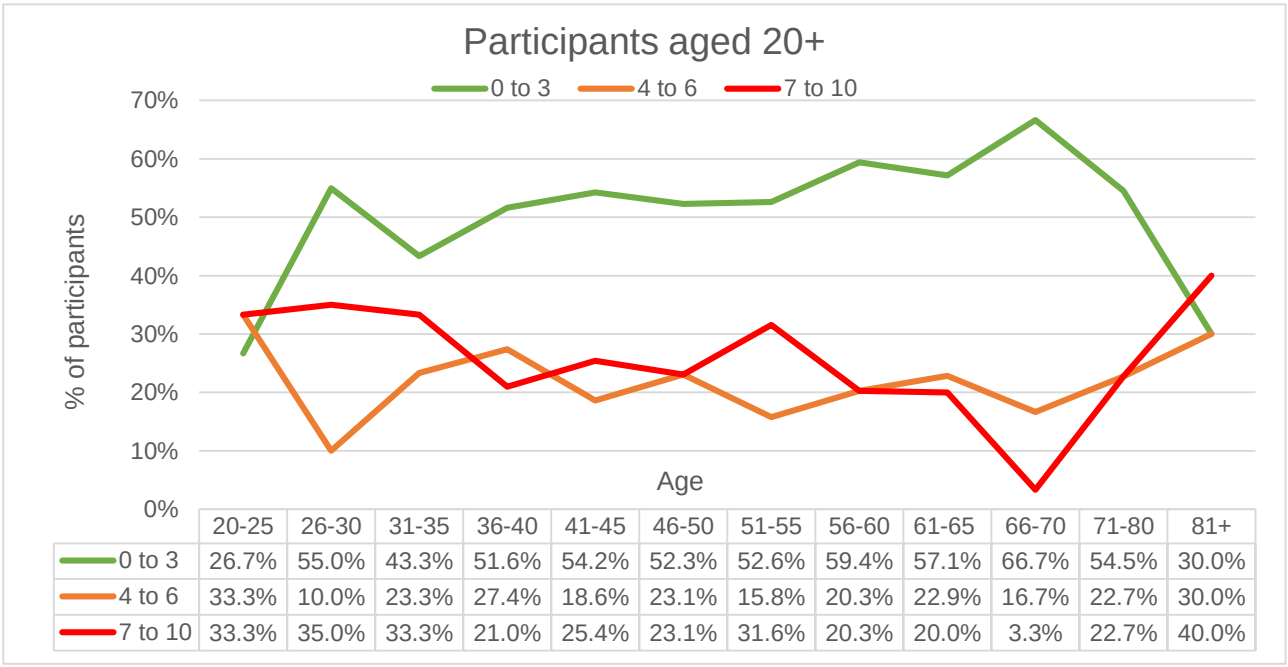
In cohort 12-19 years, over half of young people aged 12-13 reported experiencing little or no loneliness. Loneliness increased for young people aged 14-15, and again for young people aged 16-19. Loneliness was reported at highest rate for young people aged 16-19 at almost 1 in 3 people reporting experiencing high rates of loneliness.

For participants aged 20 years and over, loneliness was most reported by those aged 81 years and over. 40% of participants aged 81 and over reported loneliness levels of between 7 and 10 out of 10. Participants aged 66-70 reported lowest rates of loneliness of any age group included in the survey.



	12 to 13	14 to 15	16 to 19
0 to 3	52.0%	39.9%	36.4%
4 to 6	21.1%	22.8%	23.2%
7 to 10	16.8%	25.1%	28.9%

Figure 36 Cohort 12-19 Reported loneliness levels by age group



	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-80	81+
0 to 3	26.7%	55.0%	43.3%	51.6%	54.2%	52.3%	52.6%	59.4%	57.1%	66.7%	54.5%	30.0%
4 to 6	33.3%	10.0%	23.3%	27.4%	18.6%	23.1%	15.8%	20.3%	22.9%	16.7%	22.7%	30.0%
7 to 10	33.3%	35.0%	33.3%	21.0%	25.4%	23.1%	31.6%	20.3%	20.0%	3.3%	22.7%	40.0%

Figure 37 Cohort 20 years + Reported loneliness levels by age group

Loneliness: gender

For young people aged 12-19, participants who identified as *'female'* and *'other'* scored higher levels of loneliness than those who identified as *'male'*. 43% of participants that gender identified as *'other'* reported very high rates of loneliness. 1 in 3 participants gender identifying as *'female'* reported very high rates of loneliness.

How lonely do you generally feel? (0 = Not at all, 10 = Extremely)

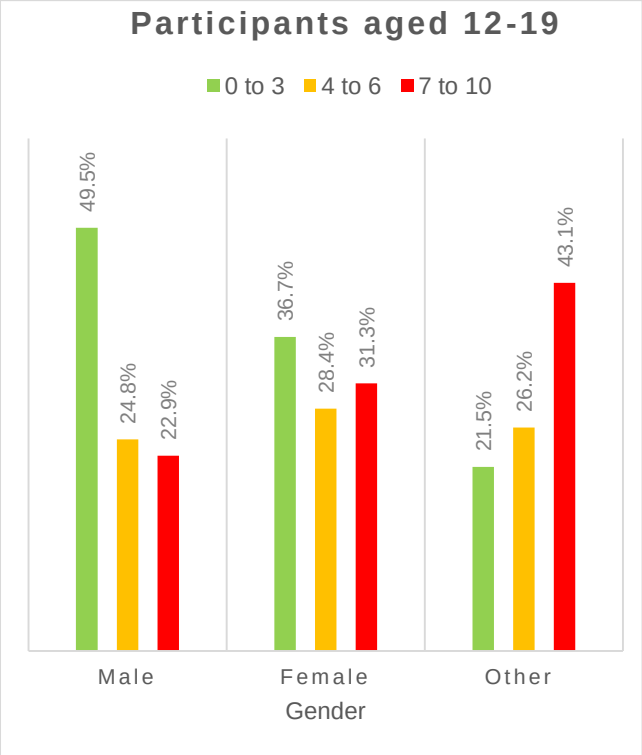


Figure 4 Cohort 12-19 Reported loneliness levels by gender

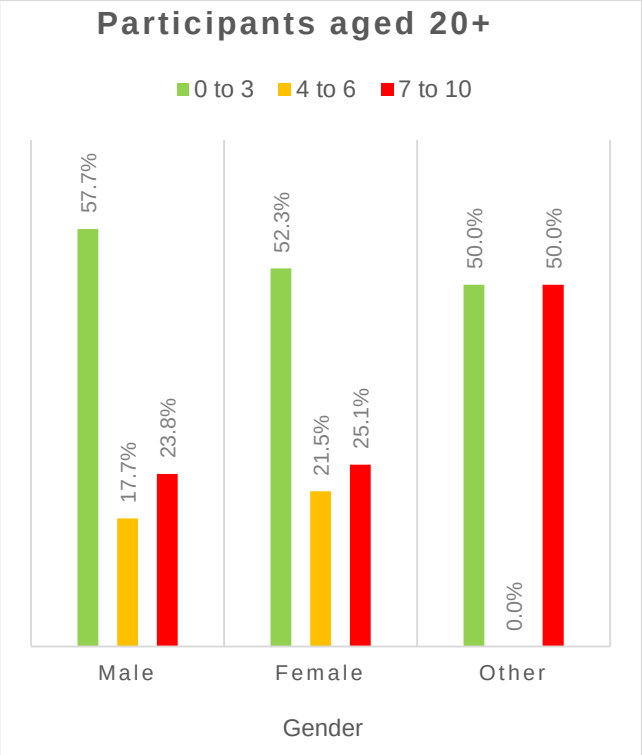


Figure 5 Cohort 20 years+ Reported loneliness levels by gender

Participants in the cohort 20 years and over, *'females'* reported slightly higher rates of loneliness than '*males*'. Participants who gender identified as *'other'* scored mixed results. Half reported little to no loneliness, and half reported high rates of loneliness. This finding is not significant due to the low response rate of participants identifying as *'other'* in this cohort.

Loneliness: residence

Community members are reporting loneliness across all regions of the Blue Mountains. Figure 38 and 39 present the spread of loneliness in Upper, Mid, and Lower Blue Mountains. For young people aged 12-19, in all three regions, between 1 in 3, and 1 in 4 are currently experiencing high rates of loneliness. Young people living in Mid- Mountains

report the lowest rates of loneliness. For participants aged 20+, those living in Lower Mountains are reporting higher rates of loneliness than those residing in Mid or Upper Mountains.

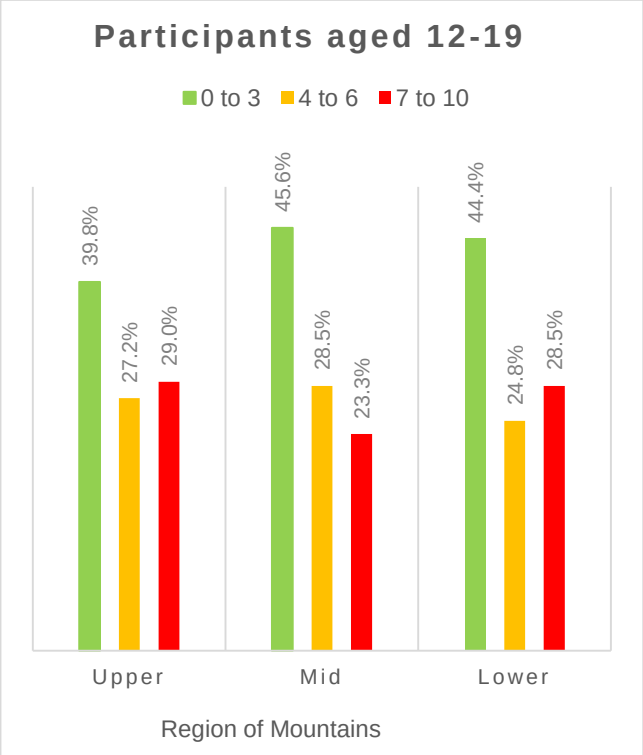


Figure 38 Cohort 12-19 Reported levels of loneliness by region of Blue Mountains

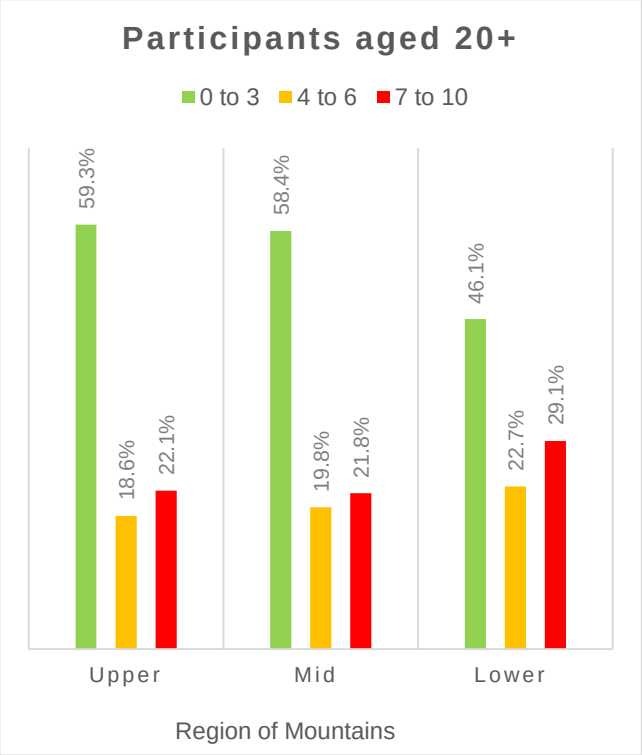


Figure 39 Cohort 20 years+ Reported levels of loneliness by region of Blue Mountains

Loneliness, Resilience and Wellbeing

There is a strong relationship loneliness and wellbeing. Figure 40 and 41 presents average personal wellbeing scores (represented on the vertical axis) for each corresponding loneliness category score (represented on the horizontal axis).

Figure 40 and 41 show that both age group cohorts who reported loneliness scores between 0 and 3, scored high average wellbeing and resilience scores (82 and 74.4 and cohort 12-19 and 78.6 and 75.7 for cohort 20 years+). This decreases as participants report higher levels of loneliness. For participants who reported loneliness scores of between 7 and 10, their average personal wellbeing score drops to 67.1 for 12-19 and 63.3 for those aged 20 and over. The results indicate that individuals who express higher levels of loneliness are at a much higher risk of vulnerability to low mental wellbeing and depression.

How lonely do you generally feel? (0=Not at all, 10 = Extremely)

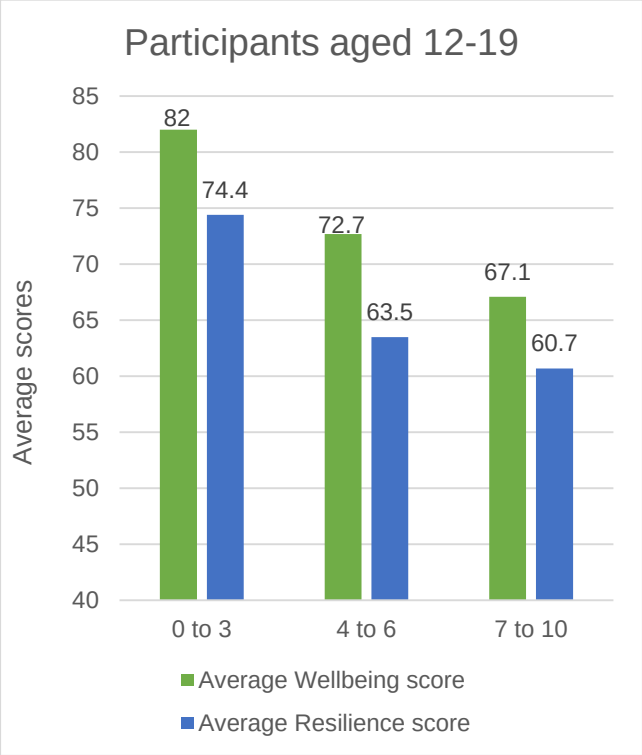


Figure 40 Cohort 12-19 Loneliness scores correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

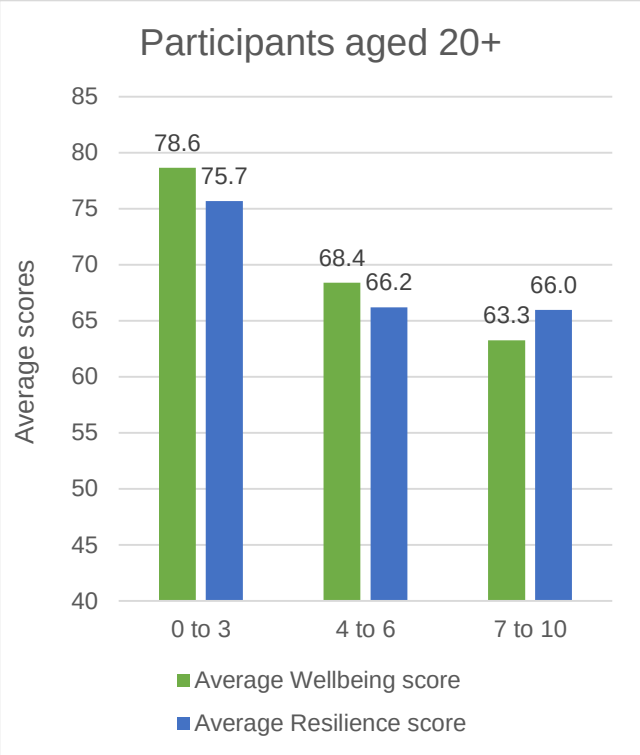


Figure 41 Cohort 20 years+ Loneliness scores correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

Over a quarter of participants reported high rates of loneliness (between 7-10). Those reporting highest rates of loneliness are:

- Young people who identify their gender as *'female'* and *'other'*
- Young people who reside in Upper Mountains
- Community members aged over 20 who reside in Lower Mountains
- Community members aged over 81

Stress

Almost 40% of community members who participated in this study reported high levels of stress (between 7 and 10). Figure 42 and 43 present portion of participants who rate their stress levels between 0-3, 4-6, and 7-10. Reported stress levels is very similar across both cohorts.

How stressed do you generally feel? (0=Not at all, 10= Extremely)

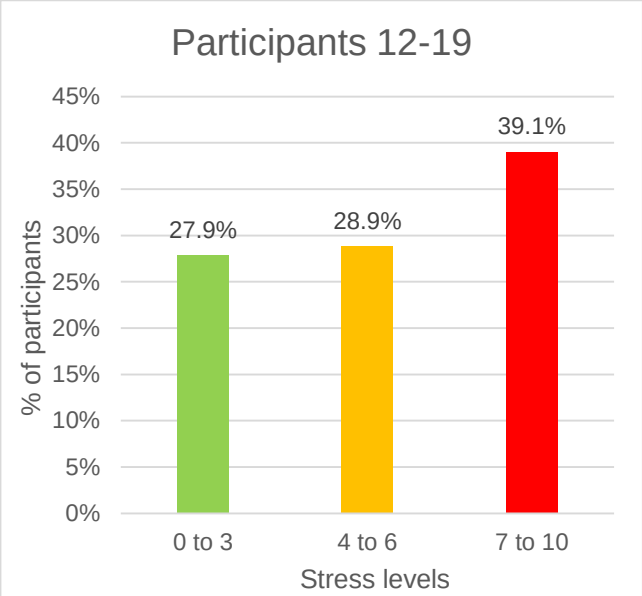


Figure 42 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants in each stress category

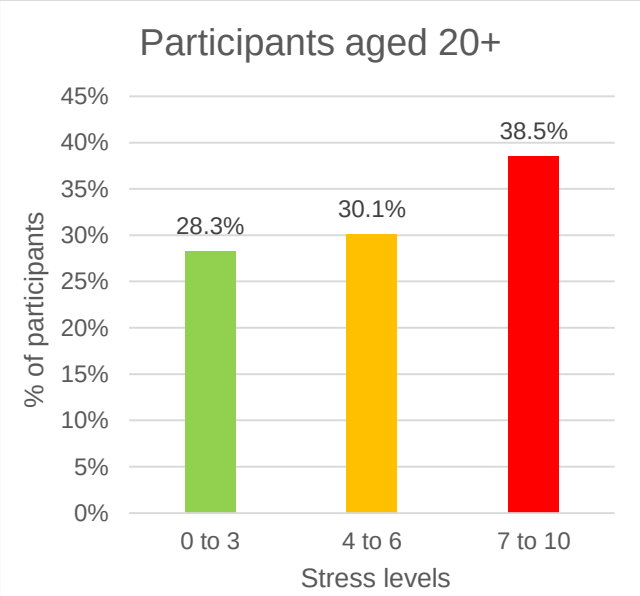


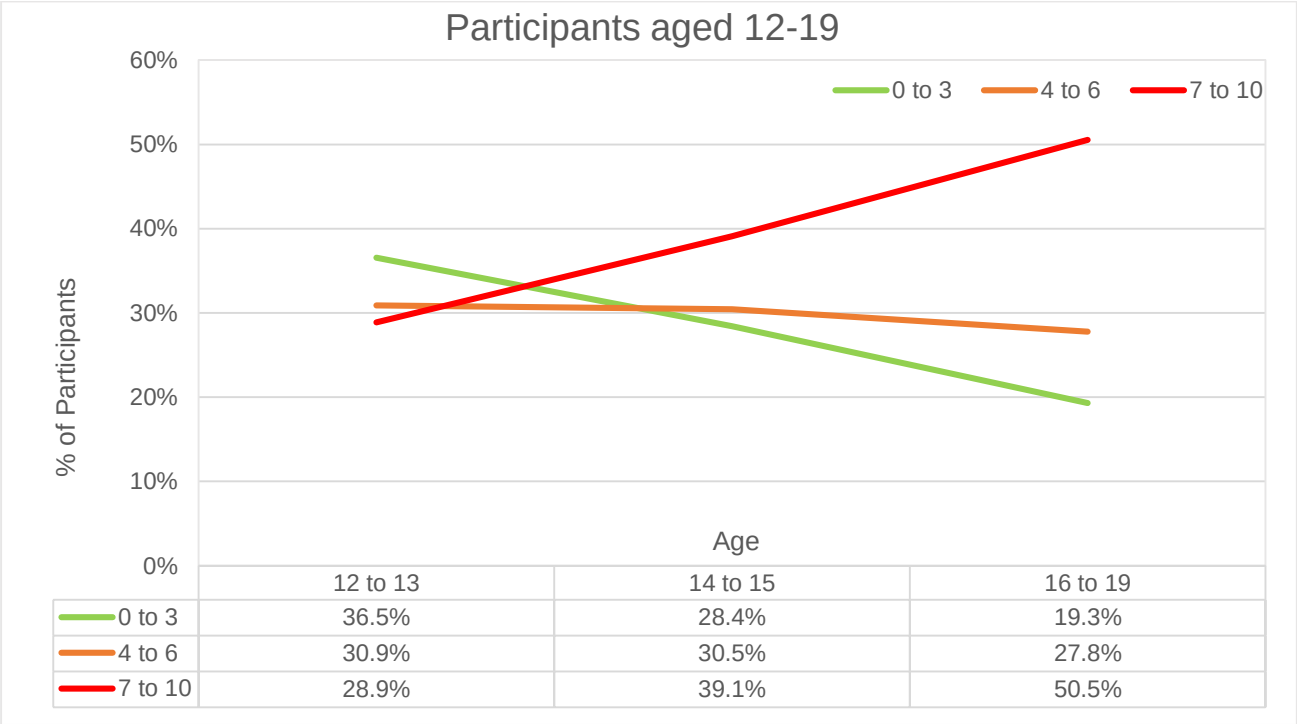
Figure 436 Cohort 20 years + percentage of participants in each stress category

Stress: age

For young people aged 12-19, stress increases significantly as age increases. Those aged 12-13 report much lower levels of stress than those aged 16-19. Despite this, stress is still reported by younger people with just under a third of those aged 12-13 reporting stress levels of between 7 and 10.

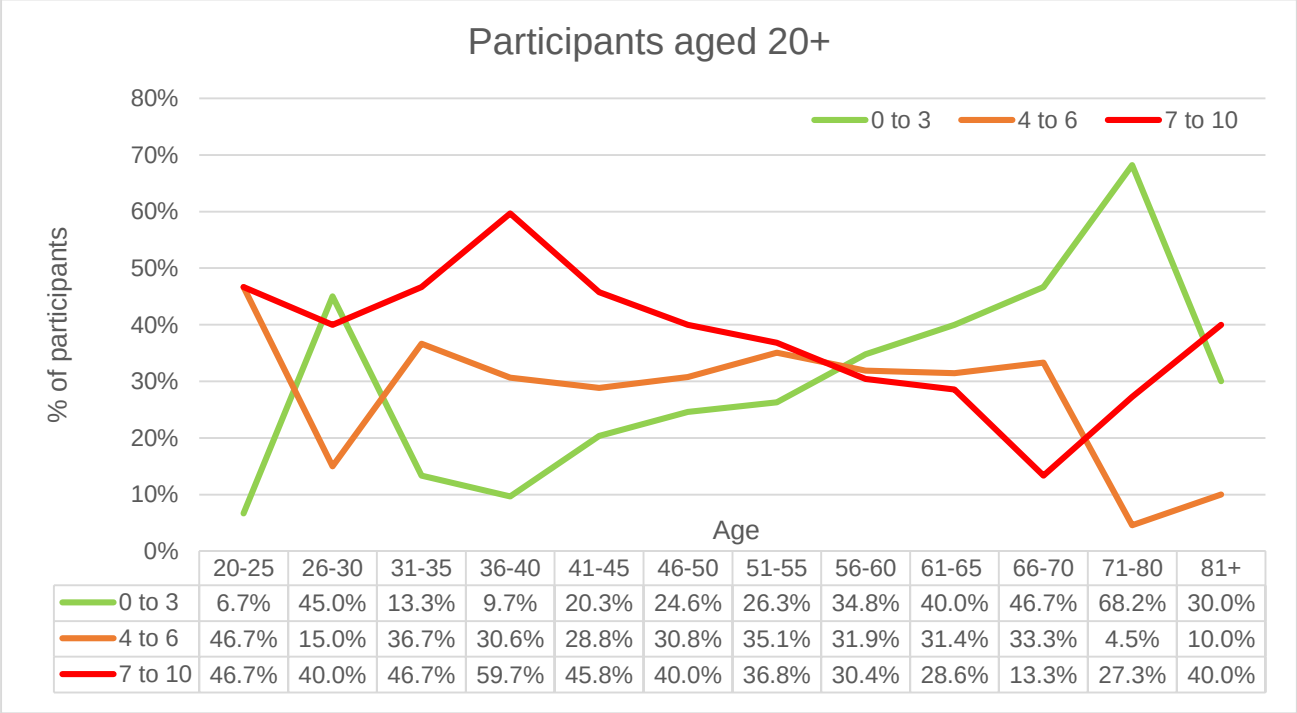
For participants aged 20 and over, stress levels vary. Participants aged 36-40 reported highest stress levels. Almost 60% of participants in this age group reported stress levels of between 7 and 10. Participants aged 71-80 reported lowest levels of stress. 68% of this age group reported their overall stress levels between 0 and 3. Stress appears to peak at ages 36-40, decline gradually and then rise again from 71 years and up.

Figure 44 and 45 present reported stress levels across age groups.



	12 to 13	14 to 15	16 to 19
0 to 3	36.5%	28.4%	19.3%
4 to 6	30.9%	30.5%	27.8%
7 to 10	28.9%	39.1%	50.5%

Figure 44 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress levels by age group



	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-80	81+
0 to 3	6.7%	45.0%	13.3%	9.7%	20.3%	24.6%	26.3%	34.8%	40.0%	46.7%	68.2%	30.0%
4 to 6	46.7%	15.0%	36.7%	30.6%	28.8%	30.8%	35.1%	31.9%	31.4%	33.3%	4.5%	10.0%
7 to 10	46.7%	40.0%	46.7%	59.7%	45.8%	40.0%	36.8%	30.4%	28.6%	13.3%	27.3%	40.0%

Figure 45 Cohort 20 years + Reported Stress levels by age group

Stress: gender

Across both cohorts, participants gender identifying as '*female'* reported higher levels of stress than those identifying as '*male'*. In cohort 12-19 48.7% of *'females'* reported stress levels of between 7-10. In cohort 20 years + 41% of *'females'* reported stress levels of between 7-10. Participants who nominated other as their gender reported concerning

levels of stress. For cohort 20 years and over this is not significant due to the small sample size (n=4). For young people however, this result is highly significant. Almost 1 in 2 young people gender identifying as *'other'* are currently experiencing high rates of stress (scores of between 7 and 10).

How stressed do you generally feel? (0= Not at all, 10= Extremely)

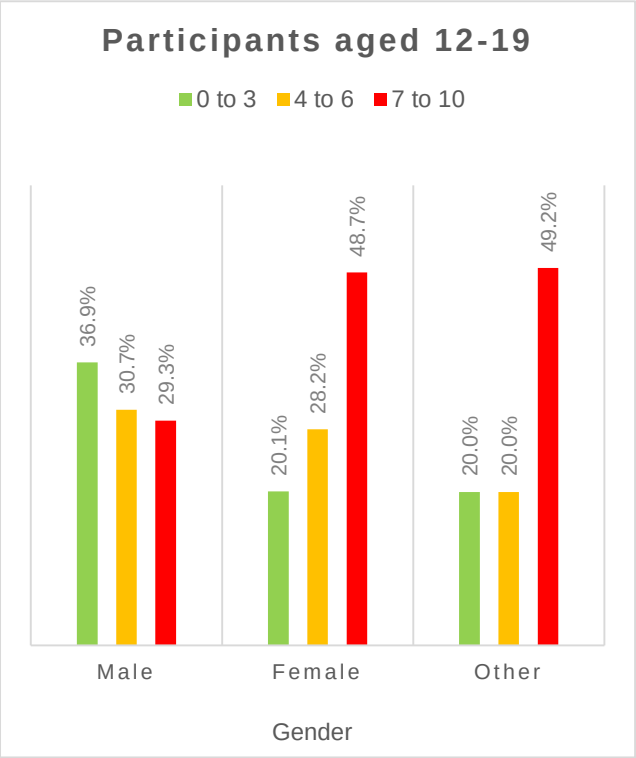


Figure 467 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress levels by gender

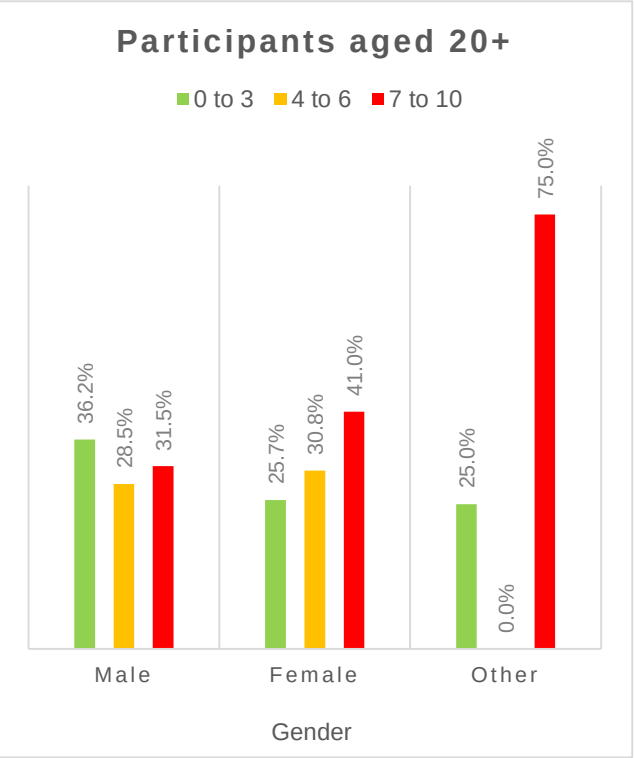


Figure 47 Cohort 20 years + Reported Stress levels by gender

Stress: residence

A large portion of people (between 36-41%) in all regions of the Mountains are reporting high rates of stress (scores between 7 and 10). 41% of young people aged 12-19, living in the Upper Mountains report high levels of stress, and 40% of people aged 20 and over living in the Lower Mountains are reporting high rates of stress. The data has shown that young people living in Upper Mountains are reporting higher rates of stress than those aged 20 and over who are also living in the Upper Mountains. Figure 48 and 49 present this trend.

Figure 48 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress levels by region of Blue Mountains

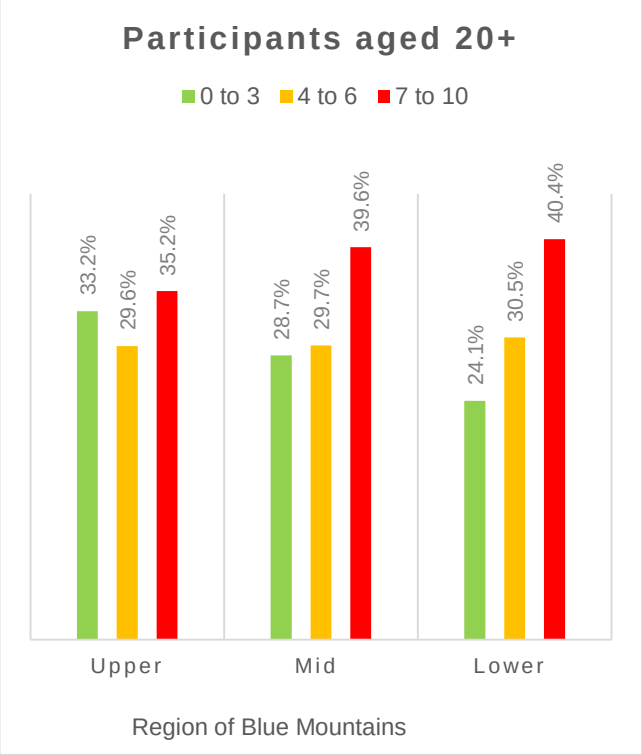


Figure 49 Cohort 20 years + Reported Stress levels by region of Blue Mountains

Stress, Resilience and Wellbeing

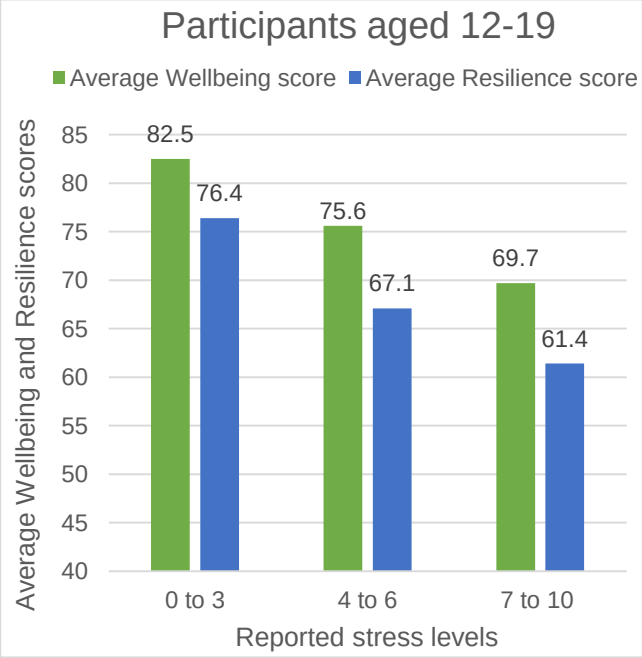


Figure 50 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress scores correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

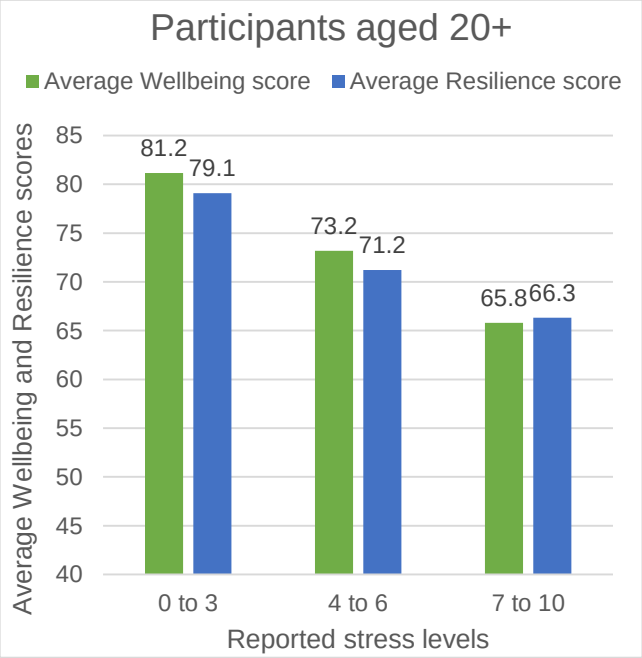


Figure 51 Cohort 20 years + Reported Stress scores correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

The data indicates that people experiencing high rates of stress are at risk of low mental wellbeing, and low resilience as seen in Figure 50 and 51. At stress scores of between 0 and 3, wellbeing scores are within the national average. At reported stress scores of

between 4 and 10, wellbeing and resilience scores drop below both the national wellbeing average and the Victorian state resilience average.

Almost 40% of participants reported high rates of stress (between 7-10). Those reporting highest rates of stress were:

- Young people aged 16-19
- Participants aged 36-40
- Females across both cohorts
- Young people in Upper Mountains
- Participants in both cohorts who reside in Lower Mountains

Anxiety

Just over 36% of young people reported experiencing high rates of anxiety (scores between 7 and 10). This was lower for cohort 20 years and over. 29.3% of participants aged 20 and over reported experiencing high rates of anxiety (scores between 7 and 10).

How anxious do you generally feel? (0= Not at all, 10 = Extremely)

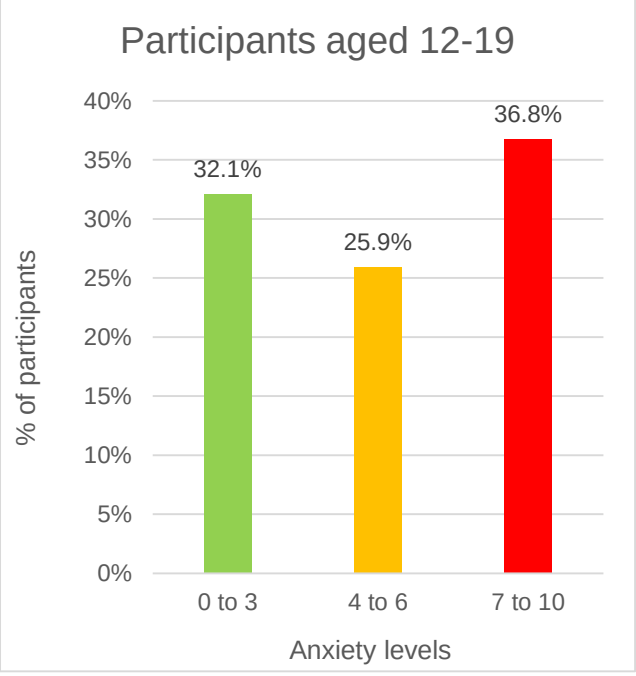


Figure 52 Cohort 12-19 Percentage of participants in each anxiety category

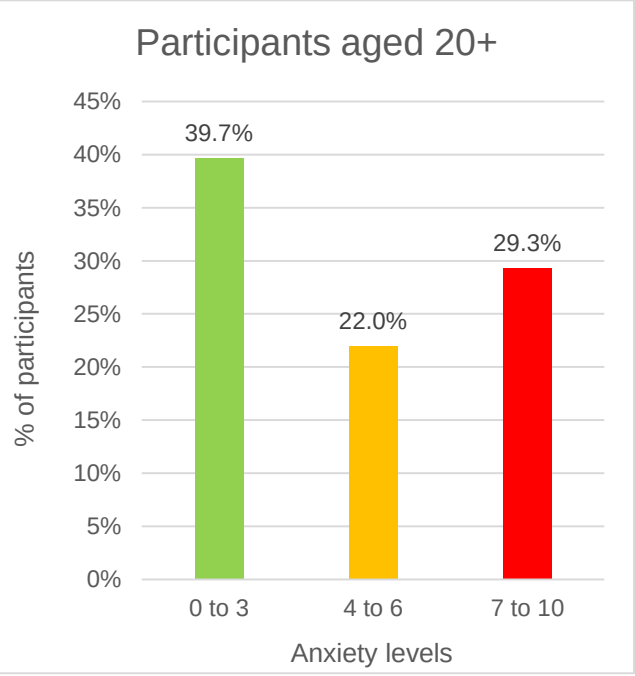
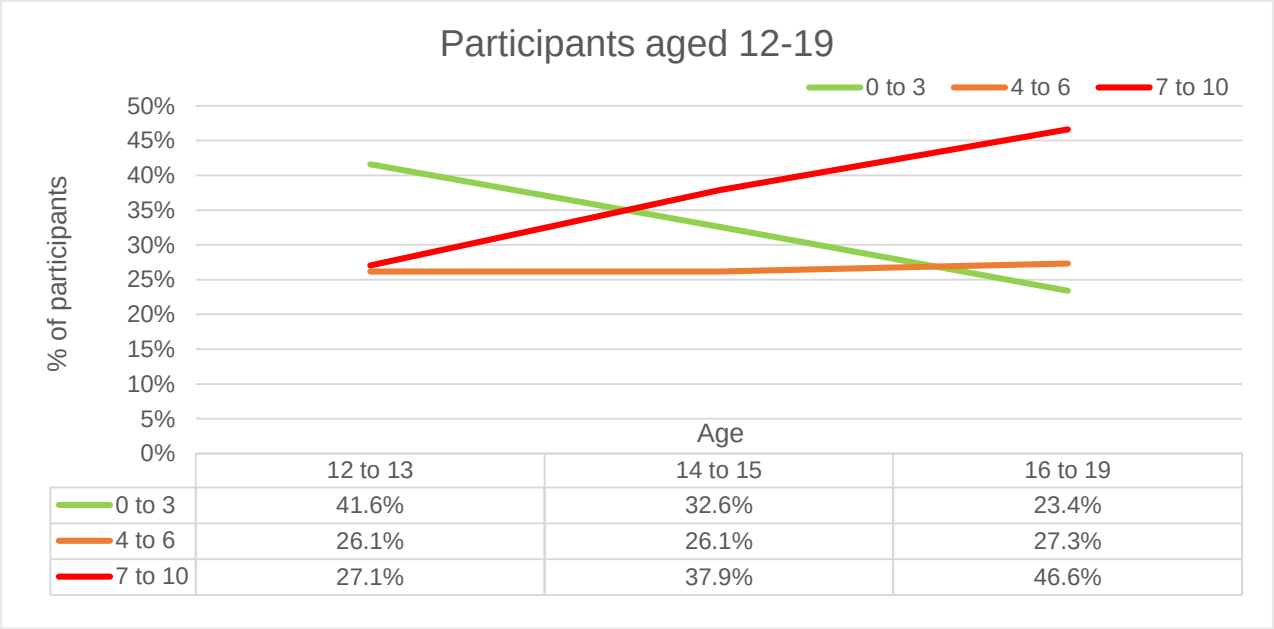


Figure 53 Percentage of participants in each anxiety category

Anxiety: age

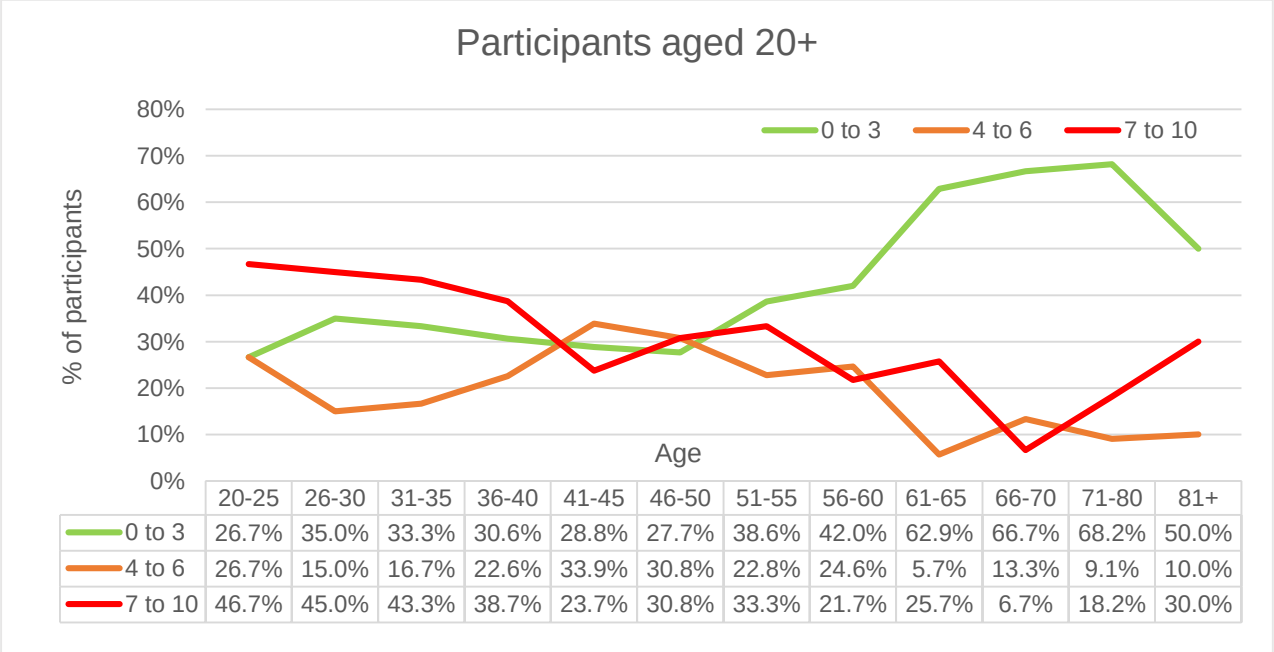
For young people, reported rates of anxiety increases as age increases, see figure 54 and 55. 41.6% of young people aged 12-13 report experiencing very little or no anxiety whilst 46.6% of young people aged 16-19 report experiencing high rates of anxiety. The data shows in general that reported levels of anxiety decrease gradually from ages 26 to 70. However, there are upward spikes at ages 51-55 and 61-65. Reported anxiety begins to increase at ages 80+ with 30% of participants reporting high rates of anxiety (levels between 7 and 10) – see Figure 55.

Participants reporting lowest rates of anxiety were aged 66-80.



	12 to 13	14 to 15	16 to 19
0 to 3	41.6%	32.6%	23.4%
4 to 6	26.1%	26.1%	27.3%
7 to 10	27.1%	37.9%	46.6%

Figure 54 Cohort 12-19 Reported anxiety level by age



	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-80	81+
0 to 3	26.7%	35.0%	33.3%	30.6%	28.8%	27.7%	38.6%	42.0%	62.9%	66.7%	68.2%	50.0%
4 to 6	26.7%	15.0%	16.7%	22.6%	33.9%	30.8%	22.8%	24.6%	5.7%	13.3%	9.1%	10.0%
7 to 10	46.7%	45.0%	43.3%	38.7%	23.7%	30.8%	33.3%	21.7%	25.7%	6.7%	18.2%	30.0%

Figure 55 Cohort 20 years + Reported anxiety level by age

Anxiety: residence

Participants are reporting high average rates of anxiety across all regions of the Blue Mountains, particularly Upper Mountains, where 40.5% of young people are reporting that they are highly anxious.

For young people, reports of anxiety are very high regardless of geographical region. Young people report higher instances of overall anxiety in Upper Mountains than Mid or Lower Mountains. For adults, high rates of anxiety are reported more in Lower Mountains than Mid or Upper Mountains.

In the cohort 20 and over, lower rates of anxiety were reported more than higher rates of anxiety in all regions.

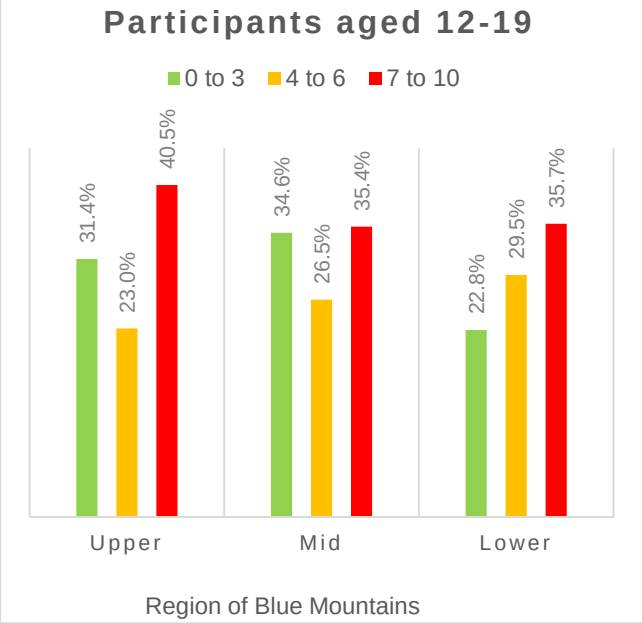


Figure 56 Cohort 12-19 Reported anxiety levels by region of the Blue Mountains

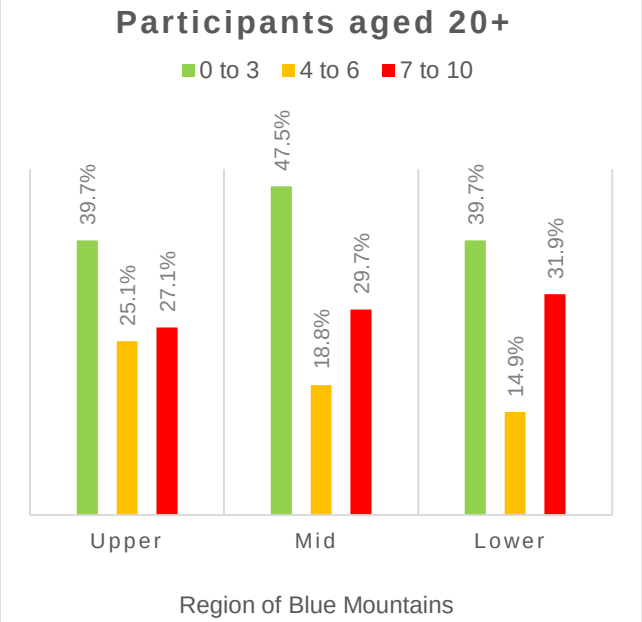


Figure 57 Cohort 20 years + Reported anxiety levels by region of the Blue Mountains

Anxiety: gender

Reported rates on anxiety differed between the two survey cohorts. Across all ages however, *'females'* are reporting higher rates of anxiety than males. Young *'females'* are almost twice as likely to report experiencing high rates of anxiety than young *'males'* (47.2% compared to 25.6%).

How anxious do you generally feel (0=Not at all, 10= Extremely)

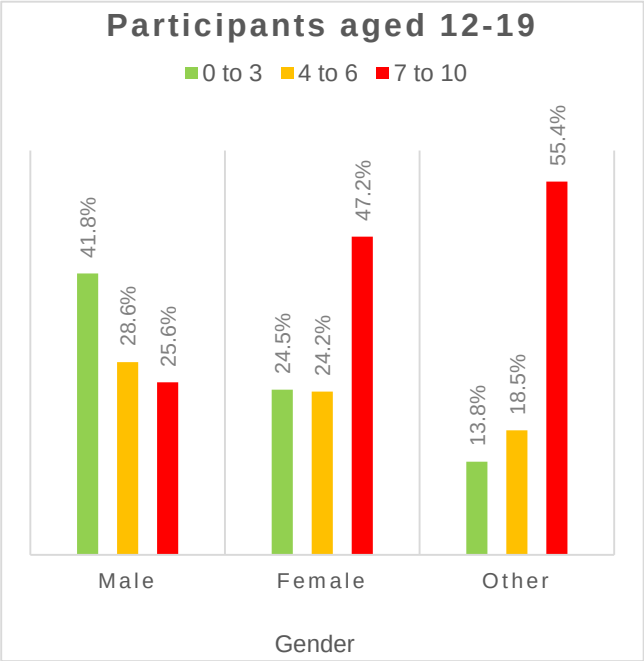


Figure 58 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress levels by gender

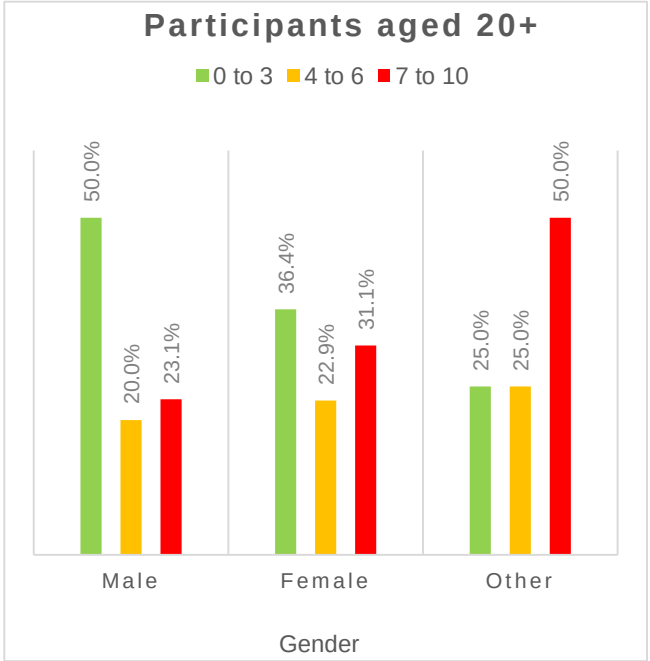


Figure 598 Cohort 12-19 Reported Stress levels by gender

For community members gender identifying as *'other'* anxiety rates are very high, with over 50% reporting that they experience high rates of anxiety (scores between 7 and 10 out of 10)

Young people across all genders reported higher instances of anxiety than participants aged 20 and over. 1 in 2 '*males*', and 36% of *'females'* over 20 report experiencing little or no anxiety.

Anxiety, Resilience and Wellbeing

Similarly to loneliness and stress, high levels of anxiety can contribute to low wellbeing and resilience. Figure 60 and 61 presents average subjective wellbeing and resilience scores for each corresponding anxiety category score.

At anxiety scores between 0 and 6 for young people, and anxiety scores between 0-4 for participants aged 20 and over, average wellbeing scores are within the normative range for Australian adults (between 73.9 and 76.7 points).

Scores of between 7 and 10 correspond with lower levels of both wellbeing and resilience. Once the general feelings of anxiety reach 7, average wellbeing falls into the 'challenged' range, placing the 37 percent of young people and the 20% of people aged 20 and over who scored between 7 and 10 points at an increased risk of low wellbeing and low resilience.

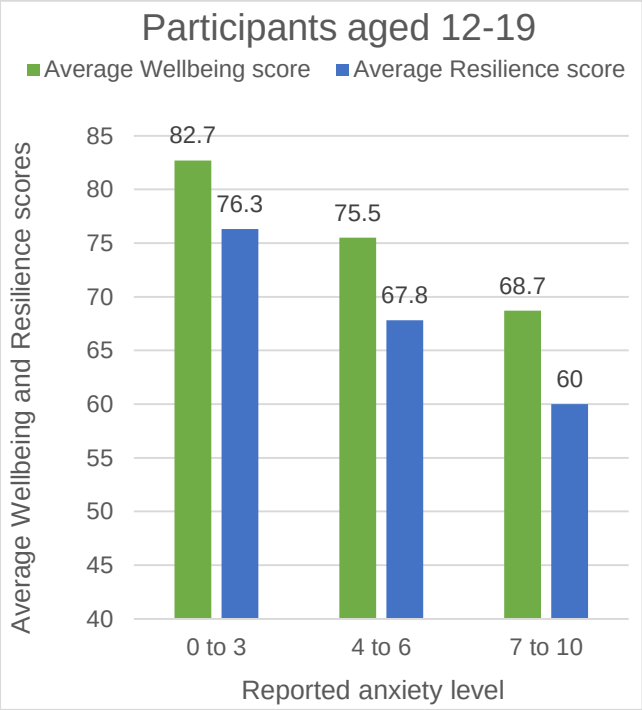


Figure 60 Cohort 12-19 Reported anxiety score correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

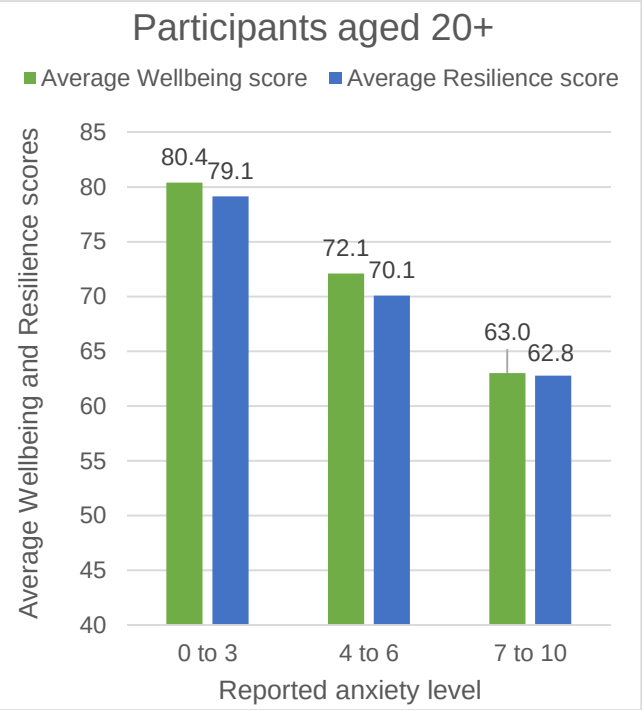


Figure 61 Cohort 20 years + Reported anxiety correlated with average Wellbeing and average Resilience scores

A total of 37% of people from cohort 12-19 and 29% of people from cohort 20 years + reported high rates of anxiety (between 7-10). Those reporting highest rates of anxiety were:

- Participants aged 16-35
- Females across all ages
- Young people gender identifying as other
- Young people living in Upper mountains
- People aged 20 and over living in Lower Mountains

General Discussion

Study aims

- To provide Stronger Families Alliance with a baseline measure of the prevalence of resilience and mental wellbeing amongst community of The Blue Mountains.
- To provide Stronger Families Alliance (including Blue Mountains City Council, The Department of Education, and other Alliance members) with data on the resilience and wellbeing of people in the Blue Mountains, in order to plan for future action, resource and strategy.

Overall results for subjective wellbeing

- The results suggest that the present sample of people in the Blue Mountains can be considered a 'normal' sample, experiencing levels of personal wellbeing comparable to those of Australia's mainstream adult population.
- 70% of young people scored in the normal wellbeing category (70+ points).
- 69% of participants aged 20 and over scored in the normal wellbeing category (70+ points).
- 23% of young people and 20% of people aged 20 and over scored in the 'challenged' range for personal wellbeing
- 7% of young people and 10% of people aged 20 and over scored in the 'high risk' ranges for personal wellbeing.

These findings suggest that 30% of both cohorts are likely to be more vulnerable to depression low mental wellbeing and homeostatic failure.

Wellbeing domains: Strengths and areas of concern

Strengths

Young people aged 12-19 scored strongest on the wellbeing domains of

- Safety
- Community Connection and
- Standard of Living

Community members aged 20 and over scored strongest on wellbeing domains of:

- Safety
- Standard of Living and
- Personal Relationships

Areas of concern

Young people aged 12-19 scored weakest on the wellbeing domains of

- Achieving in life
- Future security and
- Health

Community members aged 20 and over scored weakest on wellbeing domains of:

- Achieving in Life
- Future security and
- Health

Overall results for resilience using The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale –10 (CD-RISC 10)

- Average scores for Resilience for young people in the Blue Mountains using the CD-RISC 10 were below the average for their peers in Victoria (68 points compared with 75 points in Victoria).
- Average scores for Resilience for people aged 20 and over in the Blue Mountains using the CD-RISC 10 was 72. This was also below the Victorian State average (68 points).

Strengths

Young people aged 12-19 scored strongest on the Resilience domains of

- Seeing the humorous side of things
- Adapting to change and
- Achieving goals despite obstacles

Community members aged 20 and over scored strongest on resilience domains of:

- Seeing the humorous side of things
- Seeing themselves as a strong person and
- Ability to adapt to change

Areas of concern

Young people aged 12-19 scored weakest on the resilience domains of

- Coping with stress
- Staying focused under pressure and
- Being discouraged by failure

Community members aged 20 and over scored weakest on resilience domains of:

- Being discouraged by failure and
- Coping with stress

Demographic and other subgroup analyses

Gender

The findings from this study highlight that reported experiences of stress, loneliness, anxiety and subjective wellbeing differ between genders.

Wellbeing and Resilience

Cohort 12-19 years

- The data reveals that participant's gender identifying as 'male' scored much higher levels of both personal wellbeing and resilience.
- Young people who gender identified as 'Other' had lower levels of wellbeing, with 24% at 'high risk' of low mental wellbeing and homeostatic failure. Those who identified as 'other' represented 3% of all participants in cohort 12-19.
- For cohort 12-19 Participants who identified as 'Female' were almost twice as likely to score 'high risk' levels of subjective wellbeing than participants who identified as 'male' (8% compared with 4.5%).
- Average resilience scores were much higher for young people who gender identified as Male (71.2) than those who gender identified as 'Female" (65.5) and those who gender identified as 'other' (57.8). The average resilience across all genders was below the Victorian average.

Cohort 20 years and over

- There was no significant difference in average wellbeing and average resilience scores for each gender
- 11.5% of Males and 9.6% of Females scored in the 'high risk' wellbeing category. Cohort 20 and over had higher representation in this category than males and females from cohort 12-19.
- 18.5% of males and 19.5% of females scores in the 'challenged' wellbeing category. Cohort 20 years and over had lower representation in this category than males and females in the cohort 12-19.

Loneliness, stress, and anxiety

- In Cohort 12-19 Participants who identified their gender as ‘Other’ scored high levels of loneliness, stress and anxiety. Between 40 and 50% of people who identified as ‘other’ scored between 70-100% in loneliness, stress and anxiety levels.
- The data suggests that participants who identified as ‘female’ and ‘other’ reported higher rates of loneliness, stress and anxiety than their male peers.

Geography

The findings from this study show differences in wellbeing and resilience levels, loneliness, stress, and anxiety, per region of the Blue Mountains

Wellbeing and Resilience

- Participants living in the Lower Blue Mountains showed lowest rates of resilience (65.7 for cohort 12-19 and 70 for cohort 20 years and over). 34% of cohort 20 years and over and 26% of cohort 12-19 who reside in Lower Mountains showed vulnerability to low mental wellbeing.
- For cohort 12-19, Participants residing in the Upper Mountains showed lowest levels of personal wellbeing (average score 73.7) but highest rates of resilience (average score 74.4). 31% of cohort 12-19 and 26% of cohort 20 years and over living in the Upper Mountains showed vulnerability to low mental wellbeing.
- Participants residing in Mid Mountains showed highest scores in personal wellbeing, and mid-range score for resilience. 25% of cohort 12-19 and 30% of cohort 20 years and over living in Mid Mountains are vulnerable to low mental wellbeing and depression.

Loneliness, Stress and Anxiety

For young people, living in the Upper Mountains brought highest rates of loneliness, stress, and anxiety.

For participants aged 20 and over, those who resided in Lower Mountains reported highest instances of loneliness, stress and anxiety.

Loneliness

- For cohort 12-19 Participants residing in Upper Mountains reported slightly higher instances of loneliness (29.0%) compared to Lower Mountains (28.5%). Participants residing in Mid-Mountains reported lowest rates of loneliness (23.3%).

- For cohort 20 years and over participants residing in Lower Mountains reported highest rates of loneliness (29.1%) compared with Upper Mountains (22.1%). Participants residing in Mid-Mountains reported lowest rates of loneliness (21.8%)

Stress

- For cohort 12-19 Participants residing in Upper Mountains experienced slightly higher instances of stress (41.3%) than those residing in the Lower Mountains (40.2). Participants residing in Mid-Mountains reported lowest rates of stress (36.9)
- For cohort 20 years and over participants residing in Lower Mountains reported highest rates of stress (40.4%) than those residing in the Upper Mountains (35.2%).

Anxiety

- For young people, reports of anxiety are very high regardless of geographical region. Young people report higher instances of overall anxiety in Upper Mountains (40.5% reported high rates of anxiety) than Mid (35.4%) or Lower Mountains (35.7%).
- For adults, high rates of anxiety are reported more in Lower Mountains (31.9% reported high rates of anxiety) than Mid (29.7%) or Upper Mountains (27.1%)

Age

Wellbeing

For young people 12-19, Average wellbeing scores were highest for participants aged 12 and 13 (78.8 points). young people aged 12-13 have the highest portion of people in the wellbeing category ‘Normal’. 78.7% of young people aged 12-13 are on track for positive and healthy wellbeing.

- For participants 20 and over Average scores for Wellbeing were reported highest in ages 61-70 (80 points) Participants 61-65 had the highest portion in the Normal wellbeing category, 88.6% of this age group are reporting positive wellbeing.
- Overall Wellbeing levels were similar in both cohorts with the exception of age groups 36-40 and 46-50 who scored significantly lower Wellbeing scores than other participants, and age groups 61-70 who scored significantly higher wellbeing scores than other participants (and national averages)

Resilience

- Overall Resilience levels were higher for adults than young people (with the exception of age group 14-15 which scored higher resilience scores than age group 36-40 and 46-50
- For participants 20 and over Average Resilience scores were reported highest in ages 61-70 (80 points)

Loneliness, stress and anxiety

Loneliness

- 42% of young participants aged 12-19 and 53.3 % of participants aged 20+ reported low levels of loneliness (between 0-3) whilst 27.4% of participants aged 12-19 and 24.9 % of participants aged 20+ scored high levels of loneliness (between 7 and 10).
- In cohort 12-19 years, over half of young people aged 12-13 reported experiencing little or no loneliness
- Loneliness was reported at highest rate for young people aged 16-19 at almost 1 in 3 people reporting experiencing high rates of loneliness (scores of between 7 and 10 out of 10).
- For participants aged 20 years and over, loneliness was most reported by those aged 81 years and over. 40% of participants aged 81 and over reported loneliness levels of between 7 and 10 out of 10. Participants aged 66-70 reported lowest rates of loneliness of any age group included in the survey.

Stress

- For young people aged 12-19, stress increases significantly as age increases. Those aged 12-13 report much lower levels of stress (36.5% reported little of no stress, and 28.9% reported experiencing high rates of stress) than those aged 16-19 (19.3% reported little or no stress, and 50.5% reported high rates of stress).
- For participants aged 20 stress levels vary. Participants aged 36-40 reported highest stress levels. 59.7% of participants in this age group reported stress levels of between 7 and 10
- Participants aged 71-80 reported lowest levels of stress. 68% of this age group reported their overall stress levels between 0 and 3.

Anxiety

- For young people, reported rates of anxiety increases as age increases. 41.6% of young people aged 12-13 report experiencing very little or no anxiety whilst 46.6% of young people aged 16-19 report experiencing high rates of anxiety.
- reported levels of anxiety decrease gradually from age 26 (with a few upward spikes at ages 51-55 and 61-65) right down to ages 66-70. 45% of participants aged 26-30 report experiencing high rates of anxiety compared with 6.7% of participants aged 66-70.
- Reported anxiety begins to increase again with 30% of participants aged 81 and over reporting high rates of anxiety (levels between 7 and 10).

Social Supports and connection

The findings from this study highlight social support, for example from family and friends, as highly important to the wellbeing of people in the Blue Mountains, with people who feel that they can “Yes definitely “access support from another person when in need reporting above average personal wellbeing.

In contrast, those that have limited access to social support report lower levels of subjective wellbeing and resilience.

Being a member of a sporting or recreation group was found to associate with higher levels of subjective wellbeing and resilience.

Wellbeing, stress, anxiety and loneliness

Participants regardless of age, gender and residence reported experiencing high rates of stress, anxiety and loneliness. All three factors had a strong negative influence on both resilience and wellbeing scores.

General feelings of loneliness were found to have the strongest negative influence on personal wellbeing.

Approximately 1 in 4 people in the Blue Mountains reported a very high level of loneliness (a score of 70 or above). This score was highest for participants over 80 years (40% reported high rates of loneliness).

1 in 3 participants aged 16-19 reported high levels of loneliness. For young people This also increased depending on the gender of the participant. Almost 1 in 2 participants who gender identified as 'Other' reported high rates of loneliness.

Limitations, reflections

Understanding the questions

Young people answered 'I don't know' or 'I don't understand' to many of the questions. For example, 4% of participants (n=84) answered 'I don't know', 'I don't understand' or left their answer blank to the question: *How happy are you about what may happen to you later on in your life.* If participants answered 'I don't know' or 'I don't understand' more than 3 times per scale, they were not eligible for a total wellbeing or resilience score.

This indicates a level of misunderstanding, or confusion about the questions and the way they are asked. This is the scale, so there isn't a way to change the question. However, thought could be given to the way the survey is delivered, giving young people an option to ask what the question might mean if they wanted to.

This was not a significant issue for cohort 20 years and over.

Further exploration of key topics

The nature of a qualitative survey allows for a large sample to be surveyed. The limitations of this is that complex topics can't be understood with a yes / no or a scaled answer. It is recommended that further exploration be undertaken on key themes in the Wellbeing and Resilience scales such as:

- Achievement
- Health
- Future security
- Loneliness and community connectedness

Self-reporting

There has been a lot of conversation in wider research, and within Stronger Families Alliance about the limits of self-reporting. Although the wellbeing and resilience scales have given us detailed longitudinal data about a large sample of the population, there may be some elements that could have been missed or misinterpreted.

The results from the Resilience and Wellbeing survey show that young males reported higher wellbeing and resilience scores. However, for young males nationally, there is inconsistency in self-reported wellbeing and health statistics. Young males report that they are ok, however they are 3 times more likely to die of suicide than young women, (Gwyther et al, 2019) (Lynch et al, 2016), (Telford et al, 2016) and in 2017 suicide was the leading cause of death for both young males, and young females (ABS, 2017).

Non-Binary experience

The survey gave three options for gender: Male, Female, Other. In the Cohort 12-19 three percent of participants (n=65) answered 'other' and 1% of participants (n=20) left blank.

The National LGBTI Health Alliance highlight that significant knowledge gaps remain and mental health outcomes among LGBTI people. They attribute this to lack of inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status in population research and data collection in mental health services.

The findings from the Blue Mountains Resilience and Wellbeing Survey show that for young people who chose 'other' as their gender:

- Average life satisfaction is significantly lower 5/10
- Resilience scores much lower
- Almost 25% at HIGH RISK of low wellbeing / depression, and almost 25% at moderate risk of low mental wellbeing and depression
- Almost half felt reported high rates of loneliness and stress
- Over half reported high rates of anxiety

These findings are consistent with those from LGBTI Health Alliance (2017).

For future research, it is recommended that participants be given more options for gender on survey forms, or that the question can be answered qualitatively. This would allow increased understanding of the experiences of people who do not identify as Cis-Male or Cis-Female.

Loneliness

Lonely, community connection and apparent social isolation is a significant experience within our community. These results have showed us that a large portion of our community are experiencing loneliness, cannot get help when they need it and may be at risk of social isolation. There is a wide breadth of research being released at present about the

devastating impacts of loneliness – some of these include decreased mental and physical health, decreased life expectancy, risk of other illness and disease.

It is recommended that further research be conducted in regards to loneliness in the Blue Mountains with recommendations on how to improve connectedness and decrease risk of social isolation for our community.

Reponses rate

This was the first of a longitudinal study. The response rate from young people aged 12-19 was highly positive and representative. This was due to the collaboration with the Department of Education, and Secondary Schools in the Blue Mountains. It is recommended that this be acknowledged and that further collaboration be supported in the future.

Just under 500 people aged 20 and over participated in this survey. The survey was available in community centres, and online. The response rate was positive. There was a higher representation of participants who gender identify as female, who reside in the Upper Mountains, and higher portion of participants aged 46-60. It is recommended that more people are reached in Mid and Lower Mountains, who identify as male, and from age groups 20-35, and 71 and over, in the next version of this survey.

A recommendation to increase participation from community members is to design an online survey that gives participants some of their scores in real time.

Conclusions

Wellbeing

The Community of the Blue Mountains have a level of personal wellbeing that reflects the normative range for the Australian Adult population (between 73.9 and 76.7 points). For those 20 and over, overall wellbeing is 1.4 points lower than the normative Australian adult range.

Despite the generally high levels of subjective wellbeing, there are certain subgroups who scored lower levels of personal wellbeing.

For cohort 12-19, groups that scored lower levels of personal wellbeing were:

- Participants who gender identify as ‘Female’ and ‘Other’
- Participants who reside in Upper Blue Mountains, and
- Participants aged 14-15

For cohort 20 years +, groups that scored lower levels of personal wellbeing were:

- Participants aged 36-40
- Participants aged 46-50
- Participants living in Lower Mountains

The key areas of vulnerability on the Wellbeing Scale reported by participants were:

- Achieving in Life / Things that participants want to be good at
- Future Security, and
- Health

Resilience

Reported scores using the Resilience Measure (CD-RISC 10) were lower than the State Victorian average as reported by Victoria Health (2015). The average Resilience Score across cohort 12-19 was 68 and cohort 20 years and over was 72. The Victorian average was 75.

Subgroups in cohort 12-19 years that reported lower resilience scores were:

- Participants who gender identified as ‘Female’ and ‘Other’
- Participants who reside in Lower Mountains, and
- Participants aged 16-19

Subgroups in cohort 20 years and over that reported lower resilience scores were:

- Participants who reside in Lower Mountains
- Participants aged 36-40
- Participants aged 46-50

The key areas of vulnerability on the Resilience Scale reported by participants were:

- Coping with stress
- Focusing under pressure
- Discouraged by failure

There was a strong theme throughout the study of community connectedness, with participants scoring very high scores on this domain of the Personal Wellbeing Index, and using words such as ‘supportive’ ‘loving’ and ‘caring’ to describe their friends, family and community. The vast majority of participants could get help from friends, family or neighbours when they needed.

Average satisfaction with support from ‘friends’ and ‘family’ was relatively high. To the contrary, satisfaction with support from ‘neighbours’ was low. This is similar to the findings in Victoria and is likely to reflect contemporary societal trends where neighbours are considered as ‘geographically proximal others’ (VicHealth, 2015). For those without strong social networks, both subjective wellbeing and resilience levels dropped.

Participants regardless of age, gender and residence reported experiencing high rates of stress, anxiety and loneliness. All three factors had a strong negative influence on both resilience and wellbeing scores. The strongest predictor of low person wellbeing scores, and low resilience scores was loneliness.

This report highlights the importance of other factors relating to personal wellbeing and resilience such as supportive relationships, gender, age, and social and community connectedness, and will provides baseline data that will serve to guide the Stronger Families Alliance future actions and measurement.

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SURVEY
School Survey of Wellbeing and Resilience

This survey is being undertaken by the Stronger Families Alliance. We are a group of community members and service providers in the Blue Mountains who are committed to making the Blue Mountains a great place for children and young people to live, go to school and work.

We are asking children, young people and community members across the Blue Mountains how they feel about their lives and the community they live in.

It would be great if you could take a few minutes to complete this survey to let us know how you feel about your life in the Blue Mountains and the Blue Mountains Community.

Anything you tell us will be grouped with what other people tell us so no one will be able to identify what you have said.

If you have any questions about the survey or how we will use it, please ask. You can do that by talking to the Stronger Families Alliance person who is distributing this survey or by contacting Rhiannon Walker at Blue Mountains City Council: rwalker@bmcc.nsw.gov.au | 024780 5726.

Let's get started

These first few questions will help us understand a little bit about you.

1. Which of the following best describes your gender:
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Other

2. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander:
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

3. How old are you: _____

4. What year level are you in:
   - ☐ Year 7
   - ☐ Year 8
   - ☐ Year 9
   - ☐ Year 10
   - ☐ Year 11
   - ☐ Year 12

5. If you are in year 11 or 12, are you studying for:
   - ☐ A Higher School Certificate (HSC)
   - ☐ Vocational Education Training (VET)
   - ☐ Don't know

6. Are you involved in paid work:
   - ☐ Not in paid work
   - ☐ In part time work
   - ☐ In casual work

7. If you are involved in paid work, are you working:
   - ☐ In the Blue Mountains
   - ☐ Somewhere else

8. If you chose somewhere else, what suburb do you work in:

9. Are you looking for more work:
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

10. Do you live:
   - ☐ With one or more of your parents
   - ☐ With one or more adults who are not your partner or your parents
   - ☐ Other

11. What suburb do you live in:

The next set of questions asks you how happy you feel about aspects of your life on a scale of 0 to 10.

0 means you are very sad. 10 means that you are very happy. The middle of the scale 5 means you are not happy or sad.

12. How happy are you with your life as a whole:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

13. How happy are you about the thing you have, like the money you have and the things you own:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

14. How happy are you with your health:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

15. How happy are you with the things you want to be good at:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

16. How happy are you about getting on with the people you know:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

17. How happy are you about how safe you feel:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

18. How happy are you doing things away from home:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

19. How happy are you about what may happen to you later on in your life:

0 means very sad 10 means very happy

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

The next few questions ask you about how easy you find it to cope with things that happen in your life. Please rate the extent to which each item is true for you. 0 means it is **not true at all** and 10 means it is **extremely true**. The middle of the scale is 5.

20. I am able to adapt to change

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

21. I can deal with whatever comes:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

22. I can see the humorous side of things

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

23. Coping with stress can strengthen me:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

24. I tend to bounce back after illness or hardship:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

25. I can achieve my goals despite obstacles or things that might block my way:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

26. I can stay focused under pressure:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

27. I am not easily discouraged by failure:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

28. I think of myself as a strong person:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

29. I can handle unpleasant feelings:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

The next few questions are about different feelings that we might all experience at one time or another. They ask you about **how often** you generally experience each feeling. 0 means **not at all**. 10 means **extremely**. The middle of the scale is 5.

30. How lonely do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

31. How stressed do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

32. How anxious do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

You are almost done! We just have a few questions about the support you have around you.

33. Can you get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed:
    - ☐ Yes, definitely
    - ☐ Sometimes
    - ☐ Rarely
    - ☐ Not at all
    - ☐ Don't understand

(If you chose 'Not at all for question 33, please skip to question 37)

34. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your friends:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

35. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your family:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

36. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your neighbours:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

37. Are you currently involved in any of the following sorts of social, sporting or recreational groups: (you can choose more than one answer)
    - ☐ Sport or physical recreation group
    - ☐ Religious or other spiritual group or organisation
    - ☐ Special interest or hobby group
    - ☐ Ethnic or multicultural club
    - ☐ Social club or group through school / University / TAFE
    - ☐ Other organised social group
    - ☐ Online group or community
    - ☐ Not involved in an organised group

38. Finally, what are 3 words you would use to describe:
Your family:

Your friends:

Your community:

Thank you for helping us with this survey

If you are feeling distressed by this survey, or would like to talk to someone about any of the topics covered in this survey, please let a teacher, or one of the Stronger Families Alliance members know. You can also visit:

https://headspace.org.au/ https://www.beyondblue.org.au/

https://www.lifeline.org.au/ https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/

SURVEY
Community Survey of Wellbeing and Resilience

This survey is about wellbeing and resilience

This survey is being undertaken by the Stronger Families Alliance. We are a group of community members and service providers in the Blue Mountains who are committed to making the Blue Mountains a great place for children, young people and families to live, go to school and work.

We recognise that families are part of a larger community where we all look out for one another. Families come in all shapes and sizes and we value your input.

We would like everyone to be involved in this survey.

We are asking community members across the Blue Mountains how they feel about their lives and the community they live in. We want to better understand the prevalence of resilience and wellbeing among the

wider Blue Mountains community. This will help build local knowledge that will shape future action, funding, infrastructure and policy.

It would be great if you could take a few minutes to complete this survey. We appreciate your time and as much information as you can give.

Anything you tell us will be grouped with what other people tell us so no one will be able to identify what you have said.

If you have any questions about the survey or how we will use it please ask. You can do that by talking to the Stronger Families Alliance person who is distributing this survey or by contacting Rhiannon Walker at Blue Mountains City Council: rwalker@bmcc.nsw.gov.au | 024780 5726.

Let's get started

These first few questions will help us understand a little bit about you.

39. Which of the following best describes your gender:
    - ☐ Female
    - ☐ Male
    - ☐ Other

40. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander:
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

41. How old are you: _____

42. Are you studying:
    - ☐ At school
    - ☐ Doing distance education
    - ☐ Doing home schooling
    - ☐ At university
    - ☐ At TAFE
    - ☐ Not studying

43. If at school what year level are you in:
    - ☐ Year 7
    - ☐ Year 8
    - ☐ Year 9
    - ☐ Year 10
    - ☐ Year 11
    - ☐ Year 12

44. If you are in year 11 or 12, are you studying for:
    - ☐ A Higher School Certificate (HSC)
    - ☐ Vocational Education Training (VET)
    - ☐ Don't know

45. If studying at University of TAFE do you study:
    - ☐ Full time
    - ☐ Part time

46. Are you involved in paid work:
    - ☐ Not in paid work

- ☐ In full time work
- ☐ In part time work
- ☐ In casual work

47. If you are involved in paid work, are you working:
    - ☐ In the Blue Mountains
    - ☐ Somewhere else

48. If you chose somewhere else, what suburb do you work in:

49. Are you looking for more work:
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

50. Do you live:
    - ☐ By yourself
    - ☐ With your partner
    - ☐ With one or more children
    - ☐ With one or more of your parents
    - ☐ With one or more adults who are not your partner or your parents
    - ☐ Other

51. What suburb do you live in:

The next set of questions asks you how satisfied you feel about aspects of your life on a scale of 0 to 10.

0 means you are **not at all satisfied.** 10 means that you are **completely satisfied**. The middle of the scale 5.

52. How satisfied are you with your life as a whole:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

53. How satisfied are you with your standard of living:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

54. How satisfied are you with your health:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

55. How satisfied are you with what you are currently achieving in life:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

56. How satisfied are you with your personal relationships:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

57. How satisfied are you about how safe you feel:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

58. How satisfied are you with feeling part of the community:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

59. How satisfied are you with your future security:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means very satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

The next few questions ask you about how easy you find it to cope with things that happen in your life. Please rate the extent to which each item is true for you. 0 means it is **not true at all** and 10 means it is **extremely true**. The middle of the scale is 5.

60. I am able to adapt to change:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

61. I can deal with whatever comes:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

62. I can see the humorous side of things:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

63. Coping with stress can strengthen me:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

64. I tend to bounce back after illness or hardship:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

65. I can achieve my goals despite obstacles or things that might block my way:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

66. I can stay focused under pressure:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

67. I am not easily discouraged by failure:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

68. I think of myself as a strong person:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

69. I can handle unpleasant feelings:

0 means not at all true 10 means extremely true

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

The next few questions are about different feelings that we might all experience at one time or another. They ask you about **how often** you generally experience each feeling. 0 means **not at all**. 10 means **extremely**. The middle of the scale is 5.

70. How lonely do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

71. How stressed do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

72. How anxious do you generally feel:

0 means not at all 10 means extremely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

You are almost done! We just have a few questions about the support you have around you.

73. Can you get help from friends, family or neighbours when needed:

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Don't understand

(If you chose 'Not at all for question 33, please skip to question 37)

74. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your friends:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

75. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your family:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

76. How satisfied are you with the support that you receive from your neighbours:

0 means not at all satisfied 10 means satisfied

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know	Don't understand

77. Are you currently involved in any of the following sorts of social, sporting or recreational groups: (you can choose more than one answer)
    - ☐ Sport or physical recreation group
    - ☐ Religious or other spiritual group or organisation
    - ☐ Special interest or hobby group
    - ☐ Ethnic or multicultural club
    - ☐ Social club or group through school / University / TAFE
    - ☐ Other organised social group
    - ☐ Online group or community
    - ☐ Not involved in an organised group

78. Finally, what are 3 words you would use to describe:

Your family:

Your friends:

Your community:

Thank you for helping us with this survey

The results of this survey will be available on the Stronger Families Alliance website towards the end of 2018.
www.strongerfamilies.net.au

If you have any questions about this study, or would like to discuss some of the topics in more detail, please contact

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If the content of this survey has caused you distress, there is support available. You can visit the Stronger Families Alliance directory of support in the Blue Mountains: http://www.strongerfamilies.net.au/information-for-parents-carers/directories/

You can also call or visit:

Lifeline 13 11 14 | https://www.lifeline.org.au/
Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 | https://www.beyondblue.org.au/
Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511