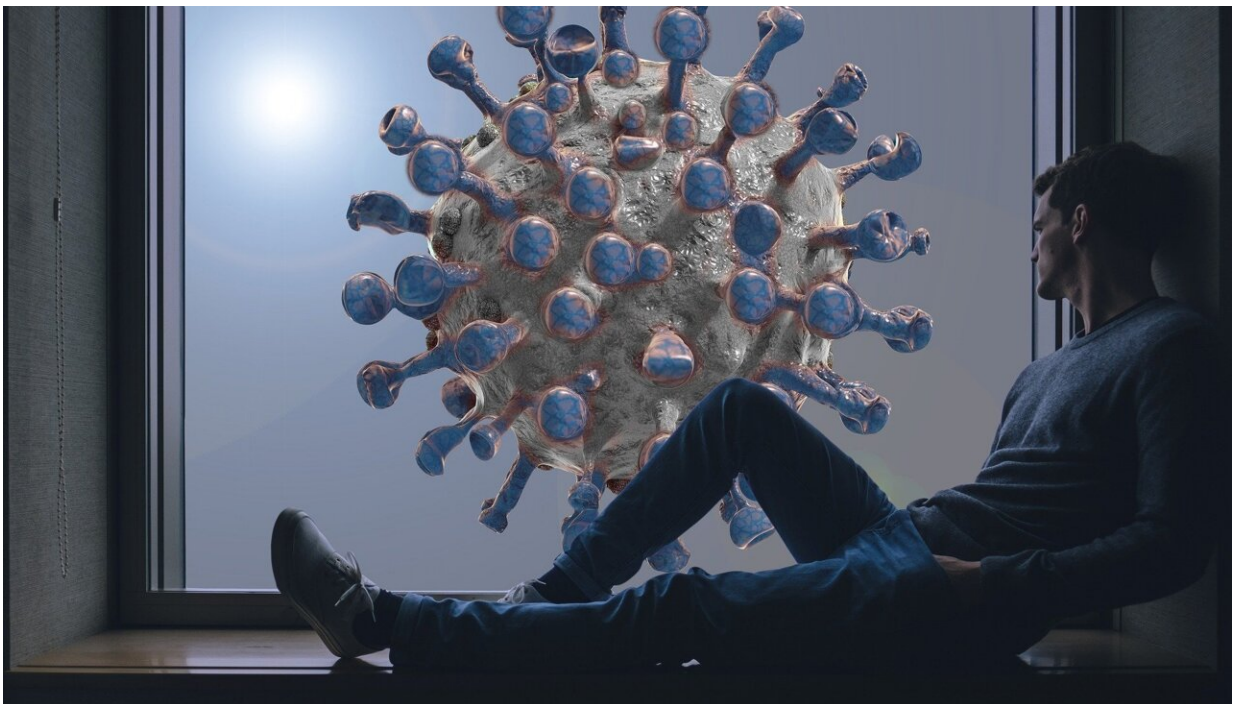


Youth in NSW and Victoria still feeling the pinch of the pandemic, study finds

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The ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to impact young people in New South Wales and Victoria, according to a new report released by Monash University.

The [report](#), published by the Center for Youth Policy and Education

Practice (CYPEP), based in the Faculty of Education at Monash University, has found that young people's social, economic, psychological and political positions are still being affected by the global pandemic.

Titled "The Pandemic Years and Their Impact on Young People in New South Wales and Victoria," the study is based on a nationally representative survey of more than 1,500 young Australians aged 18–24 and interviews with a further 90 young people, from 2021 to 2023.

The key findings of the [report](#) include:

Housing

- Increasing proportions of young people in both states think that affordable housing options for young people need immediate action, from 59.1% in 2022 to 69.6% in 2023 in NSW and from 63.6% in 2022 to 67.8% in 2023 in Victoria. Both states had a bit lower proportions than the national average of 70.1% in 2023.
- The proportion of young people who believed that there was not enough or barely enough government support for housing increased moderately from 55.9% in 2022 to 63.8% in 2023 in NSW, while it decreased slightly from 62.5% in 2022 to 59.3% in 2023 in Victoria. Both states are lower than the national average of 65.7% in 2023.

Finances

- Majority of young people surveyed experienced [financial difficulties](#) in both states over the three years. An increasing proportion of young people who experienced financial difficulties in NSW, from 75.4% in 2021 to 91.6% in 2023,

while it fluctuates in VIC: 83.7% in 2021, 95.6% in 2022, and 85.5% in 2023. The national average is 90.4% in 2023.

- An increasing proportion of young people in both states reported that young people today would be financially worse off than their parents, from 54% in 2021 to 58.3% in 2023 in NSW and from 56.2% in 2021 to 62.5% in 2023 in Victoria. The national average is 61.3% in 2023.
- An increasing proportion (55.2%) of young people in NSW believed there was not enough or barely enough [financial support](#) for young people. This is compared with a decreasing proportion in Victoria (50.6% in 2023). The national average is 56.3% in 2023.

Mental Health

- Over 20% of young people (20.7% in NSW, 31.1% in Victoria, national average of 24.3%) received mental health support in 2023, though the proportion decreased in NSW and fluctuated in Victoria.
- More than 40% of young people reported there was not enough or barely enough government support for [mental health](#). The proportion increased from 43.6% in 2022 to 45.9% in 2023 in NSW and decreased from 45.1% in 2022 to 42.5% in 2023 in Victoria, lower than the national average of 51.1% in 2023.

Relationships

From 2021 to 2023, young people in both states became less optimistic about their relationships in the future, including living in a long-term relationship (52.6% in NSW, 55.6% in Victoria, national average of 53.6% in 2023), having a child/children (46.8% in NSW, 50.1% in Victoria, and national average of 46.7% in 2023), and having a

supportive social network around them (53.2% in NSW, 60.9% in Victoria, and national average of 55.7% in 2023).

Employment

Increasing proportions of young people in both states thought that employment opportunities for young people need immediate action, from 47.4% in 2022 to 48.7% in 2023 in NSW and from 47.1% in 2022 to 48.6% in 2023 in Victoria. Both states are lower than the national average of 50.6% in 2023.

Education

The proportion of young people who often or very often felt they belonged at their school/educational institution decreased from 41.8% in 2022 to 37.4% in 2023 in NSW, while it increased from 39.3% in 2022 to 41.7% in 2023 in Victoria. Both states are higher than the national average of 36.9% in 2023.

The report was authored by Dr. Zihong Deng, Professor Lucas Walsh, Dr. Thuc Bao Huynh, and Blake Cutler. Overall, the findings highlight that many areas of young people's lives in NSW and Victoria continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with young people reporting worsening conditions in some key areas, especially financial situations.

Co-author of the report Professor Lucas Walsh said, "This report documents young lives during the pandemic, which isn't over. Aside from continuing infections, many young people living in the two states that experienced the most serious lockdowns have been affected and scarred. The ripple effect, which is social, economic, psychological and political, is likely to shape, if not transform, a generation."

Lead-author Dr. Zihong Deng said, "Young people have been directly and indirectly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In terms of direct impact, young people faced disruptions in their education and employment due to lockdowns and other control measures. But the effects, post-lockdown, continue.

"The [pandemic](#) has exacerbated young people's pre-existing concerns and interconnected challenges, across education, work, housing, finance and life in general. All these are negatively associated with young people's health and well-being. Issues in health and well-being may limit young people's opportunities for development and achievement."

More information: Monash Centre for Youth Policy and Education Practice (CYPEP) et al, The pandemic years and their impact on young people in New South Wales and Victoria: Insights from the Australian Youth Barometer, *Monash University* (2024). [DOI: 10.26180/25735479](https://doi.org/10.26180/25735479)

Provided by Monash University

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