IDENTIFY
Diversity Counts

Identify Survey

Community and Advocacy Report

www.identifysurvey.nz

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Foreword

The *Identify* survey has been developed by and for rainbow communities in Aotearoa. We are four of the signatories – Jessica, Awhi, Miia and Phoebe – on the boards of two youth-led national organisations, InsideOUT Kōaro and RainbowYOUTH, which cater to rainbow young people.

- Kia ora, ko **Awhi** au, and I'm an 18-year-old, proud takatāpui, irarere student, on the Board of InsideOUT Kōaro. I'm passionate about effecting real change for our rangatahi takatāpui, and that's why it's so important to have projects like Identify shedding light on the issues facing our communities
- My name is **Jessica Dellabarca**, I am a Pākehā, cis, queer woman and I currently live in Tāmaki. I have a deep passion and care for rainbow communities and joined the RainbowYOUTH board to help support and empower young rainbow people
- My name is **Miia** and I am a Pākehā trans-lesbian and mother of two young children, and I am on the Board of InsideOUT Kōaro. Identify is important to me because it acknowledges young people's lived experience and operates as an evidence base for the need to provide more support to rainbow rangatahi
- My name is **Phoebe Horton Andrews**, and I am a bi trans woman from Melbourne, Australia. I joined the RainbowYOUTH Board to support my community and contribute to its growth

What follows is why we think the Identify survey is important to young rainbow communities; how it will help address issues that affect rainbow communities; and our hopes for what you might take away from the survey.

The *Identify* survey is underpinned by a belief in the integrity and deservingness of rainbow young people. It presents a response to inequalities that we see every day in our rainbow communities. Unpacking the complex dynamics that underpin how rainbow marginalisation operates in education, community, home life, health and employment, the Identify survey is designed to help develop strategies to improve the lives of rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

All young people deserve to thrive and grow, to have their potential nurtured, and be offered opportunities to become the people they want to be in the world. To thrive, young people need positive and safe experiences in education, communities, homes, employment, health and other settings that help them live well.

However, the effects of cisheteronormative oppression that stigmatise our identities means that these entitlements are often denied to rainbow young people. *Identify* is part of a commitment to the wellbeing of young New Zealanders and the belief that no one deserves to face discrimination for who they are.

While we know, anecdotally, that rainbow marginalisation is pervasive, there is a dearth of research or statistics that detail issues faced by rainbow young people, particularly among younger populations. This gap in the research helps make young rainbow people invisible. Without these insights, it is difficult to accurately account for the experiences of rainbow young people, provide necessary resources, and adequately respond to their needs. Identify is designed to amplify the voices of rainbow young people around Aotearoa and ensure that they are present in the decisions that affect them, including policy development, resourcing, and support provided throughout the country.

The *Identify* survey provides a focused and extensive look at the dynamics that affect rainbow young people in education, employment, their homes, communities and families/whānau, and their health and general wellbeing. We know that not all rainbow experiences are the same: rainbow diversity is differentiated by ethnicity, indigeneity, wealth/poverty, disability, as well as the different variations of gender, sex, and sexuality. The Identify survey allows us to understand the different levels of need across different people in our communities and adequately respond to those needs.

For those of us who are marginalised in multiple areas of our lives, having our needs heard and understood has been challenging because research tends to silo our identities or frame rainbow issues as separate from other issues. The Identify survey recognises the intersectional nature of such experiences and provides a more nuanced and fine-tuned response to our communities' needs.

Furthermore, young people are often silenced or not taken seriously, which can be frustrating when they often have reduced agency to affect the changes they need in their lives. Identify takes those needs seriously and, by using power in numbers, can ensure that they are heard in spaces that can help affect the changes they need. Moreover, it provides those voices legitimacy, opening up spaces where they can lead their own change, such as youth-led organisations and hui, and allows them to collaborate with tuākana organisations to make a difference together.

This survey allows us to acknowledge those who has come before us and those who will come after. We have inherited a world that our rainbow forebears fought hard for and it is now our job to pass the torch onto the next generation. Identify presents an empirical benchmark of young people's lives, the progress we have made and the setbacks that have been faced, and

reveals the paths we might take next. It consolidates these experiences in one place, affording better access to research for rainbow communities, policy makers, and allies in our attempts to build a better Aotearoa New Zealand for rainbow young people now and in the future.

The *Identify* report demonstrates that young rainbow communities can articulate their identities better than ever, despite often receiving poor treatment by their peers, families, and institutions. Young rainbow people know who they are, are proud of who they are, and are not going anywhere.

The problem is that the institutions - the society that is supposed to support all young people - have been letting them down. Evidence of rainbow inequalities is not new. And yet, these are not rainbow issues, per se – rainbow young people simply suffer the consequences of intolerance in a society that refuses to make space for rainbow differences. We need institutions to pull your weight and we hope that this report inspires you to make that change.

If you are a policy maker, consult with rainbow communities and researchers who possess a wealth of knowledge and ideas for how you might address the issues presented in the Identify report. If you are a funding agency, consider targeted rainbow funding to uplift those who might not otherwise get a chance. If you are a community organiser, draw on models of practice that make space for rainbow people. This report demonstrates that rainbow young people are present in every aspect of our society that young people inhabit. Anyone who engages with young people should be competent to meet the needs of rainbow young people. In particular, if you are a teacher, these skills are essential because you are shaping the futures of young New Zealanders. Likewise, if you are a parent or plan to be some day, helping build a society that our rangatahi can thrive in should be a priority.

We encourage researchers to approach the *Identify* team if they are interested in providing more analyses of different groups and dynamics within the dataset. We also hope that this research will catalyse future projects that expand our capacity to engage with and support young rainbow communities. We are so excited that you are taking this step with us towards cultivating thriving young rainbow communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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- The community partner organisations, InsideOUT Kōaro and RainbowYOUTH, who helped ensure the survey was relevant to the needs of young people in Aotearoa New Zealand
- The *Identify* investigators: Dr Mohamed Alansari, Tabby Besley, Dr John Fenaughty (Principal Investigator), Alex Ker, Dr Elizabeth Kerekere, Dr Peter Saxton, Pooja Subramanian, Dr Patrick Thomsen, and Dr Jaimie Veale
- We gratefully acknowledge Dr Elizabeth Kerekere's expertise and guidance as an investigator on the conceptualisation, collection, and interpretation of data for takatāpui/Māori participants, whānau and communities
- The community members, academics, organisations and young people who attended our community hui in Te Tai Tokerau, Tāmaki Makaurau, Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Ōtautahi, and those who gave feedback on our draft surveys
- The team at Curative for developing an appropriate brand, communication strategy, and visual language, to engage participants and stakeholders
- Frances Arnes who was involved in the initial phases of the research as a co-investigator while leading RainbowYOUTH
- Special thanks to Shaneel Lal, Tycho Vandenberg, Jack Byrne and Rachel Johnson for helping us develop specific questions
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- The University of Auckland Faculty of Education and Social Work and other funders (see below) for making this study possible
- Finally, but most importantly, the survey participants – your experiences matter and have made this report possible. Thank you for your trust and for taking the time to share your experiences with us.

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How to use this report

This report is a cornerstone in a series of anticipated outputs presenting the findings from *Identify*. The report has been constructed to provide an overview of key areas of relevance for rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. The report focuses on *some* of the current issues and priorities for rainbow young people that the research team and community members have identified as requiring attention.

The focus on advocacy in this report means that we have purposefully highlighted areas where change and improvement is required, however we recognise that this can obscure the wealth of strengths that rainbow young people demonstrate. Additional analyses taking a strengths-based approach present an important focus for future research using these data.

We also recognise that reading and engaging with the findings in this report can be distressing. People reading the report, including whānau/family and friends and allies of rainbow young people, may need to access helpful supports and resources. We have provided a list of mental health supports and resources on page 131.

Unless otherwise noted, the findings represent the whole sample. The survey included additional items that are not included in this report (see www.identifysurvey.nz/for-researchers), and we invite other organisations or individuals interested in other analyses, including with sub-groups in the study, to contact us (identifysurvey@auckland.ac.nz).

The quotes in this report come from participants who shared their experiences in response to a range of specific open-text response questions throughout Identify. They are used to give more insight into some of the points made throughout the report, rather than representing the key themes across all participants' open-text responses. We have not edited these quotes, so the way they are represented here is how participants wrote them in the survey.

You can find definitions for the words that are *italicised* in the report (see the Glossary on page 132).

The words we use throughout this report

In this report, we use the term *rainbow* collectively to include *takatāpui*, *MVPFAFF+* and *LGBTQIA+* people – that is, people whose genders, sexualities, and/or variations in sex characteristics exist beyond *cisgender*, *heterosexual*, and *endosex* norms. We recognise that everyone relates to the term *rainbow* differently, and that many of the words used, including *rainbow*, throughout the survey and this report are within a Pākehā framework of understanding gender, sexuality, and sex characteristics. Although we use rainbow inclusively in the report and the survey, care must be taken to recognise the diversity that can be obscured by the use of this umbrella term. Where specific groups of young people within this umbrella term are discussed we make this explicit in the text. Along with our recognition of the diversity that is obscured by using a single term like *rainbow*, we acknowledge the many ways our participants describe their genders and sexualities (including in Figure 4 and Table 6). For definitions of some of the words used in the report, please see our glossary on page 132. The concepts and use of the words disabled and disability are discussed on page 28.

Explanation of statistical language and making sense of the stats

- **Confidence intervals** – where we state that there is a **significant** difference, this means we have calculated how confident we are about the results for each group we are comparing. The 95% confidence intervals are the band of results that would contain the mean score for a particular group 95% of the times that we took samples from that group. Where the confidence interval (or band) does not overlap with that from a comparison group, we are confident that the groups differ statistically from one another
- The **mean (M)** is the average of a sample. It is found by dividing the sum of the values for a sample, by the number of cases in the sample
- **Standard deviation (SD)** measures how spread out the sample is in relation to the mean. That is, a larger standard deviation means that there is a greater difference between the mean and the upper and lower bounds of the sample, whereas a lower standard deviation means that the values in the sample are closer together
    - 68% of the values will fall within one standard deviation of the mean, and 95% of the values will fall within two standard deviations, assuming a normal distribution
- ***N*** refers to the total number of the *Identify* sample population. Sometimes, we also use *N* to show the total number of participants who answered a particular question, in cases where we also show the smaller percentages of that number (or ***n***)
- ***n*** refers to a subset of the *Identify* sample population. The *n* is used to show the number of participants who gave a certain response, out of those who were shown the question
- **Percentages** are based on the valid responses to each question. In *Identify*, not all participants were given the opportunity to answer every question, and participants may have skipped some questions
- A **proportion** is a part (usually a number) with a size that is relative to other parts
- Please note that integers are used for simplicity, so decimal places are rounded to 0, based on Swedish rounding

Executive Summary

The Identify survey is the largest study focused on rainbow young people (aged 14-26) in Aotearoa New Zealand to date. This survey was live between February and August 2021. The research team is a diverse array of rainbow community youth organisations, leaders and researchers. The research team are united in our belief that excellent survey results can help inform ways in which we can improve rainbow lives in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond. In total, 4784 rainbow young people and 434 of their allies took part in the survey. The findings in this report are based on the survey responses of rainbow young people.

Identify was very successful at generating a wide and diverse sample of rainbow young people, including 2045 (43%) who were currently in secondary education, 1640 (34%) who were in post-secondary education, and 1099 (23%) who were not in education but were either in paid or unpaid employment, or were unemployed. There was a good spread of ethnicities reported, and at a total-response level, 12% were Māori; 4% Pacific; 9% Asian; and 71% Pākehā, NZ European, or another European identity. There were also around 1% respectively of participants who were Middle Eastern, Latin American, African, or North American. For this age bracket, this distribution is disproportionally white and underrepresents Pacific populations, which is a limitation we recognise in our recommendations.

Participants reported a wide array of gender identities and modalities. Broadly, 52% of participants were classified as cisgender women/girls (39%) or men/boys (13%), 14% as trans men/boys or trans women/girls, 30% as non-binary and 4% as questioning their gender. Similarly, a wide array of sexualities was reported. Participants with *intersex variations* or variations of sex characteristics were also registered, accounting for approximately 1% of the cohort. Just over two in five participants were identified as disabled.

Key Findings

Demographics

- Though larger cities were well-represented, participants were from all regions of Aotearoa New Zealand, demonstrating that rainbow accessibility and support is needed nationwide
- Participants' rates of material deprivation in this sample were significantly higher compared to the general population, highlighting the need to recognise the intersectionality of poverty and deprivation for rainbow young people
    - Our results mirror representative findings from Stats NZ (2022) highlighting that younger rainbow people, as well as trans and non-binary people of all ages, generally have lower incomes than older and cisgender peers

Secondary Education

- Our findings emphasise that rainbow young people are present in all types of secondary education settings. There is no school type that does not have rainbow students
- Nearly all students had disclosed their rainbow identities to someone at school, yet most also reported rainbow-based microaggressions at school and almost one third had experienced bullying
- Most schools had rainbow diversity groups or queer-straight alliances and displayed pro-rainbow messages
- However, the majority of rainbow students said that they did not feel belonging and supported at school
    - One in eight students said they felt unsafe or very unsafe at school as a rainbow young person.
- Infrastructural deficits included a lack of gender-neutral bathrooms or uniforms/dress codes, reported by half of the participants

It is promising to see that many schools are making an effort to improve the accessibility, support, and belonging of rainbow students; however, these results demonstrate that there is more to be done. Moreover, for schools that are making minimal effort, there is a clear message that they need to be more proactive in providing safe learning environments for rainbow students.

Tertiary and Post-Secondary Education

- Most tertiary and post-secondary students reported that their learning environments were fair, supportive, and inclusive
  - Almost two thirds of students had someone at their place of study that they trusted to talk to about rainbow issues
- However, one in six students reported feeling unsafe in their place of study in the last 12 months
  - Almost three in five students had experienced some form of microaggression
  - One in ten had been harassed in the last 12 months
    - Most cases were not reported because students felt it would not make a difference or make the situation worse
  - A notable number of students had been outed by a staff member without their consent

Additional support is needed to improve rainbow experiences in tertiary and post-secondary spaces, including professional development, effective harassment policies and processes, and targeted campaigns and programmes to address everyday *cisheteronormativity* in these institutions.

Employment and Work

- One in five of the *Identify* cohort were not in secondary or tertiary education
  - However, only three quarters of these participants were in paid employment, demonstrating a higher rate of unemployment than in the general populationParticipants were employed in all industry sectors, though employment was concentrated in health, service, government, and hospitality
- A majority of participants reported they could be themselves at work and that their workplace was supportive of rainbow employees
  - However, two thirds of participants reported not disclosing their rainbow identity to someone at their place of work because they were worried they would be treated unfairly
  - One in ten had been fired or forced to quit a job because of their rainbow identity
  - Almost half of participants heard derogatory expressions towards rainbow people at work

- Almost one in five reported being harassed at work in the past year
  - 30% of harassment was due to their diverse sexuality
  - 20% was due to being, or being perceived as trans or non-binary

While there is some effort to make workplaces rainbow-friendly, additional training, development and anti-discrimination mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that rainbow workers' rights are protected.

Emotional Wellbeing and Healthcare

- Three quarters of the Identify participants had poor levels of wellbeing, and in the last year:
  - Over half had engaged in self-harm
  - Almost two thirds had thought about killing themselves
  - Almost one third had made a plan to kill themselves
  - One in ten had attempted suicide
- A small but notable proportion of participants had experienced conversion therapy
- One in six participants had not been able to access healthcare when they needed it
- Almost one in ten participants had been treated unfairly by a healthcare professional because of their rainbow identity
- Two in five trans or non-binary participants had accessed at least one type of gender-affirming medication
  - Participants were overwhelmingly positive about the impacts of taking gender-affirming medication
  - Of those who wanted gender-affirming medication, a very high proportion reported not being able to access these medications

Deficits in rainbow wellbeing are alarming, with high rates of distress among rainbow young people. Problems with healthcare provision are apparent, including fair treatment and basic rainbow competency by some healthcare professionals. Recent policy changes around conversion practices are important. There is a clear indication that accessible gender-affirming care is beneficial for trans and non-binary young people and that unnecessary barriers to care exist and should be removed.

Family, Whānau, and Friends

- Four out of five participants reported someone in their family/whānau was aware of their rainbow identity
  - About three quarters of those participants said they had someone in their family/whānau who they could openly talk with about their rainbow identity
    - Seven in ten said at least one family/whānau member had expressed respect or support for them
    - A quarter had done research on how to support them or stood up for them
    - About half of trans or non-binary participants reported that at least one family/whānau member used their correct name or pronouns
  - However:
    - A quarter of participants' family/whānau members had talked about rainbow people in a negative way
    - Two in five had pretended their rainbow identity was not real
    - One in five reported a family member had rejected or distanced themselves from them
    - Two in five trans and non-binary participants had been intentionally misgendered by a family/whānau member
- Overall, participants reported a strong sense of connection to friends
  - Nine in ten had a friend they could talk to about anything
  - One in five had taken time out to support a fellow rainbow friend
  - Most participants said their friends cared about them a lot
    - Only a small minority reported their friends didn't care about them at all
  - Likewise, three in five participants thought it would be easy or somewhat easy to ask a friend or family member for a place to stay
    - Only 6% reported they would not ask anyone
- Just over one third of participants felt comfortable or very comfortable in their cultural and ethnic communities
  - One in five were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable
  - Takatāpui/Māori participants reported a range of ways they could engage with te ao Māori

While most participants had disclosed their rainbow identities to at least one person in their family/whānau, there was variation in the degree of support that was reported. However, there was a generally strong sense of connection to friends, which indicates that rainbow communities are good at building 'chosen family'. The data suggests that some family/whānau members can be better in supporting rainbow young people, and work is required to support better belonging for some rainbow young people in their ethnic and cultural communities.

Home and Living Environment

- Most participants lived with parent/s or caregiver/s and a quarter lived with flatmates
  - > Overall, there was a greater awareness of rainbow identities among flatmates, friends and partners who participants lived with than parents, grandparents, or aunts/uncles
- Three quarters of the Identify cohort felt very safe or safe in their current living situation
  - > Around one in 20 reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe
  - > One in eight had previously moved towns/cities to feel safer as a rainbow person
- One in ten participants had experienced homelessness
  - > In most situations, homelessness was experienced before the age of 18

High rates of homelessness among rainbow young people, compared to the general population, are a serious concern and require immediate attention. Moreover, the number of rainbow participants who felt unsafe or very unsafe in their living situations is concerning. Ensuring rainbow young people have safe alternatives to unsafe places to live is a priority. The data suggests that information and resources might be useful for families/whānau, so that they are more aware of rainbow issues and can better support their rangatahi.

Connection to Community

- Most participants reported a strong connection to their rainbow identity and rainbow people
- Most participants also reported that they were regularly involved in a range of activities in their communities

- One in ten participants reported they were religious
  - A quarter of religious participants reported that their religious communities respected them as a rainbow person
  - Almost two in five said that members did not respect them as a rainbow person
- Two in five participants reported they were spiritual
  - Two in five spiritual participants reported that their spiritual community respected them as a rainbow person
  - Only one in 20 said that members did not respect them as a rainbow person

Rainbow people's strong sense of community and involvement in rewarding activities, as well as their support of peers, is strongly evident. However, this is not a substitute for offering resources and support, which young people are entitled to. For rainbow people with religious or spiritual beliefs, efforts are needed to ensure their communities do not disrespect or mistreat them.

Future Hopes

- Common themes among participants' hopes for the future included:
  - Better access to rainbow-affirming healthcare and support services
  - Rainbow topics to be taught in schools
  - Equality and equity for rainbow communities
  - That rainbow communities are taken seriously
  - Intersectional approaches to equity
  - Acceptance from family/whānau
  - Safety in disclosing rainbow identity and in living environments
  - More positive media representation of rainbow identities
  - Acceptance in religious communities

In the face of often-pervasive prejudice and discrimination, rainbow young people are still optimistic for a future that supports and uplifts rainbow communities. Participants shared a range of ideas to enable these positive futures, including institutional changes in health, education, employment, and the media, as well as increased awareness and support from peers, family/whānau, their religious and ethnic communities, and broader society.

Recommendations

The recommendations presented here address *some* of the overarching themes. More comprehensive summaries and specific recommendations are presented at the conclusion of each chapter.

- The positive findings around young people's pride in their identities; their ability to find some supports in at least one key developmental context of whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare contexts; and their willingness to provide support to others, both politically, as well as interpersonally, must be celebrated and enhanced
- The challenges facing these young people must also be recognised, including the common finding that a sizeable number of young people reported harassment, aggression, and exclusion, in one or more of their key developmental contexts of whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare settings
- Coordinated planning and action by government, civil society, and the education, health, social and community sectors, is urgently required to track and improve the experiences of young people in these domains
- Takatāpui/Māori rainbow young people face additional challenges and prejudices compared to Pākehā rainbow young people; Te Tiriti o Waitangi highlights the necessity to enhance takatāpui wellbeing to fulfil all the Crown's obligations of ōritetanga and tino rangatiratanga for rangatahi Māori
- Trans, non-binary, and disabled participants reported extremely concerning disparities and any work done to address rainbow young people's wellbeing must specifically address and centre their needs
- Pacific and Asian participants were identified as facing some specific challenges compared to Pākehā and European participants, emphasising the importance of recognising ethnicity and racism in policy and practice
- Intersex young people's needs require further exploration and reflect a critical gap in the research to date
- The high levels of mental health distress that were reported reflect broad exposure to prejudice, discrimination and structural disadvantage compounded by foregone - or inadequate - healthcare provision, including *gender-affirming healthcare*
- If we are to see widescale improvement in wellbeing and thriving for rainbow young people, a comprehensive and integrated intersectional response to address the disparities young rainbow people face across family/whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare contexts is needed

Background

About *Identify*

Identify is an online survey for takatāpui, MVPFAFF+ and LGBTQIA+ (rainbow) young people and allies aged 14-26 years of age in Aotearoa New Zealand. The survey data was collected in 2021, from mid-February until the end of August. *Identify* asked about young people's experiences across a range of contexts, including education, employment, home, health, values and community. The survey included questions on factors that supported wellbeing as well as challenges in these contexts.

Identify is a collaboration between rainbow community researchers and organisations InsideOUT Kōaro and RainbowYOUTH, who work with rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our team includes principal investigator Dr John Fenaughty and co-investigators Dr Jaimie Veale, Dr Elizabeth Kerekere, Dr Patrick Thomsen, Dr Peter Saxton, Dr Mohamed Alansari, Alex Ker, Pooja Subramanian (RainbowYOUTH) and Tabby Besley (InsideOUT Kōaro).

Why we created *Identify*

General youth surveys have given us some important insights into rainbow young people's experiences and needs, but these surveys tend to only capture a surface understanding of what's going on for rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Identify* gave us a unique opportunity to hear from rainbow young people across the country and ask more in-depth questions on several aspects of rainbow young people's lives.

Young people who are rainbow, takatāpui and/or MVPFAFF+ make up a significant and growing part of Aotearoa New Zealand's youth population. Around one in seven participants in *Youth19*, the latest in the Youth2000 survey series, reported they were sexuality diverse or unsure of their sexual orientation (16%), and/or transgender or gender diverse or unsure if they were (1.6%) (Fenaughty et al., 2021; Fenaughty et al., 2022). Findings from *Youth19* demonstrate that, despite reporting positive home and family environments overall, rainbow youth fare worse in health and wellbeing indicators, such as bullying, mental distress, self-harm and suicidality than their non-rainbow (heterosexual cisgender) peers. Some of these disparities were heightened for takatāpui/Māori and Pacific rainbow young people, who belong to more than one marginalised group (Roy et al., 2021).

Transgender and non-binary young people in Aotearoa New Zealand also face distinct challenges. Findings from *Counting Ourselves* (Veale et al., 2019), Aotearoa's trans health survey, found that trans and non-binary young people aged 14-24 reported higher psychological distress than the general population. Youth participants were more likely to experience a lack of safety when entering bathrooms, particularly at school, and to avoid healthcare due to fear of being mistreated. *Identify* aims to build on this existing research, helping paint a more detailed picture of the strengths and challenges among rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand across the key domains of their lives.

Methods

The study received ethical approval from the New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committee (20/NTB/276).

Survey design

After developing the first draft of our survey questionnaire, the research team held community hui across Aotearoa New Zealand and invited feedback on the survey content, structure, branding and recruitment. The hui were attended by community members, rainbow organisation representatives, young people and academics, with the opportunity for people to give feedback via email if they were unable to attend. Nine hui were held in Te Tai Tokerau, Tāmaki Makaurau, Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Ōtautahi during January and February 2020.

Questions in the survey were either developed by the research team, often following community consultation, or were replicated or adapted from existing studies with rainbow communities (e.g., *Counting Ourselves*) or youth in general (e.g., Fleming et al., 2020; Syvertsen et al., 2021). While many new questions were necessarily developed, replication or adaptation of key measures was important for generating data that was comparable across studies.

The survey was assembled in Qualtrics

and designed so that participants were only shown questions relevant to their previous answer (e.g., only participants who reported they were at secondary school were shown questions on secondary school; see Figure 30). Early in the survey, participants were asked if they were rainbow young people or *allies* or friends of rainbow people. This question was used to branch to an 'allyship pathway' in the survey, whereby allies were asked a set of questions about being a rainbow *ally*, and a 'rainbow pathway'. Self-identified rainbow young people were asked questions relevant to their experiences as a rainbow person. These two survey branches were analysed as separate datasets. In this report, we present the initial findings from rainbow young people.

We conducted in-person recruitment at community events, including Pride festival events in the main centres, as well as nightclub events and community meetings. Posters were placed in prominent community venues, such as *queer* and trans-friendly bars and cafes, schools and tertiary institutions, and in the libraries of two large cities. Online recruitment was conducted via advertisements and posts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, and Grindr. Word of mouth, including via social media, and preliminary data 'teasers' in mainstream media stories, also advertised the survey.

The survey contained various sections addressing different areas of participants' lives, including demographics; secondary, tertiary and post-secondary education; employment and work; health; family/whānau and friends; home and living environment; and community involvement.

Participants' responses were recorded anonymously, meaning the research team could not tell who a person was by looking at their responses.

After cleaning the data, the responses of 5218 participants were included in the dataset. Of these, 92% (n=4784) self-identified as a rainbow person, and 8% (n=434) reported they were allies of rainbow communities. This report focuses on the experiences of the 4784 rainbow, takatāpui and MVPFAFF+ participants.

For a more detailed description of the methods, see Appendix A on page 114.

If you would like to find out more about any of the data, or you are interested in using the *Identify* data in your research, please feel free to contact us. We welcome collaborations on analysis and further studies that align with the values and aims of *Identify*.

Chapter 1. Demographics

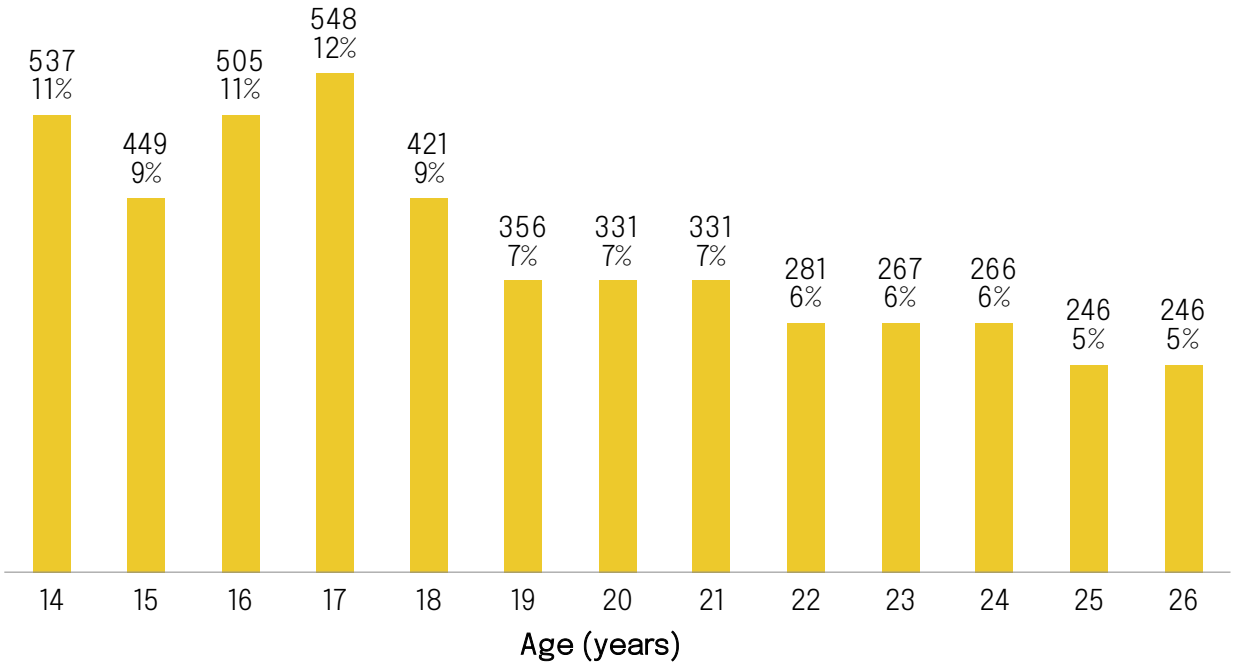
This chapter gives an overview of who Identify participants are and how they describe themselves. This includes demographics, such as age, ethnicity, gender, sex and sexuality, education or employment status, region, and disability.

1.1 Age

Participants' ages ranged from 14 and 26 years old (see Figure 1).

The average age of participants was just under 19 years old (*M*=18.9, *SD*=3.7).

Figure 1. How old are you? (N=4784; n and % represented)



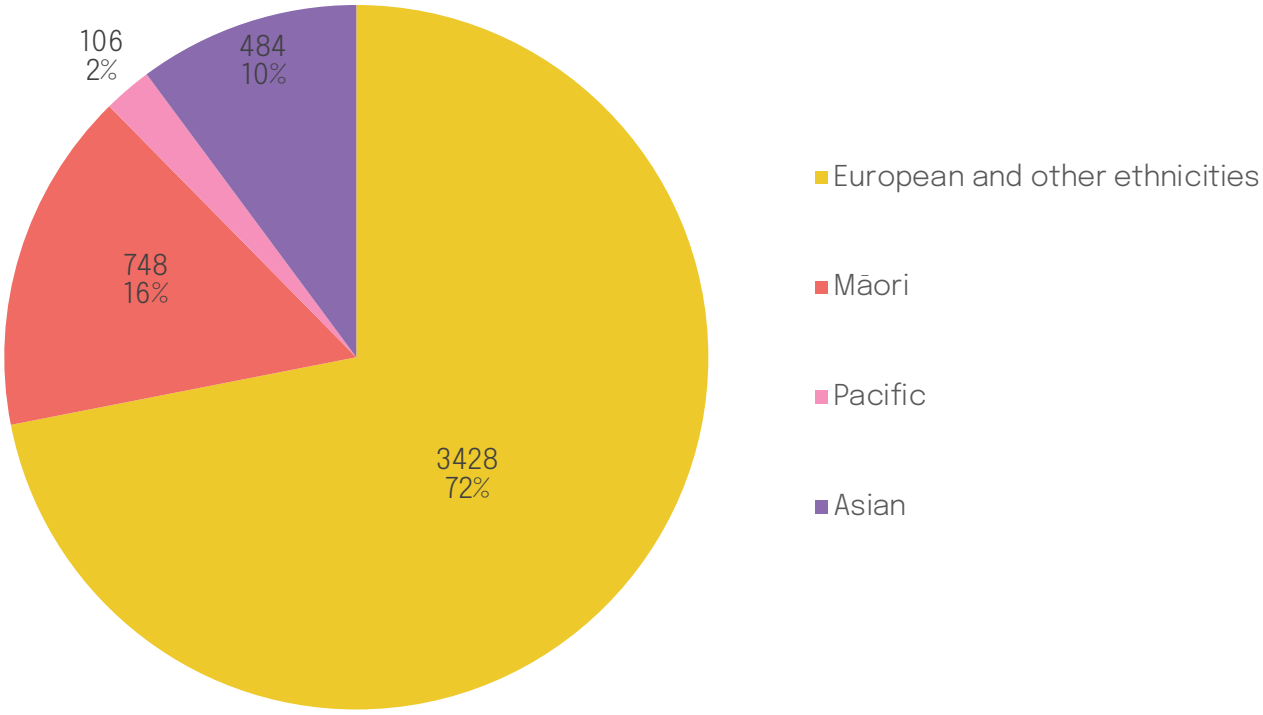
Note. Due to rounding to whole percentages this graph totals to 101%.

1.2 Ethnicity

Participants could select or write in multiple responses to the question on ethnicity,[1] with participants recording 120 unique ethnicities in total. Just under one quarter of participants selected more than one ethnicity (23%; *n*=1119). At a total response level, most selected Pākehā/NZ European (*n*=3986), followed by Another Ethnicity (*n*=823); Māori (*n*=747); Chinese (*n*=194); Indian (*n*=128); Samoan (*n*=105); Cook Islands Māori (*n*=58); Tongan (*n*=24) and Niuean (*n*=<10). For a more detailed overview of the total responses to ethnicity, see Table 5 on page 121.

We used the Statistics New Zealand protocol (Education Counts, 2021) to report participants' prioritised ethnicity, to allow comparisons to the general population (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Prioritised ethnicity groups (N=4766; n and % represented)



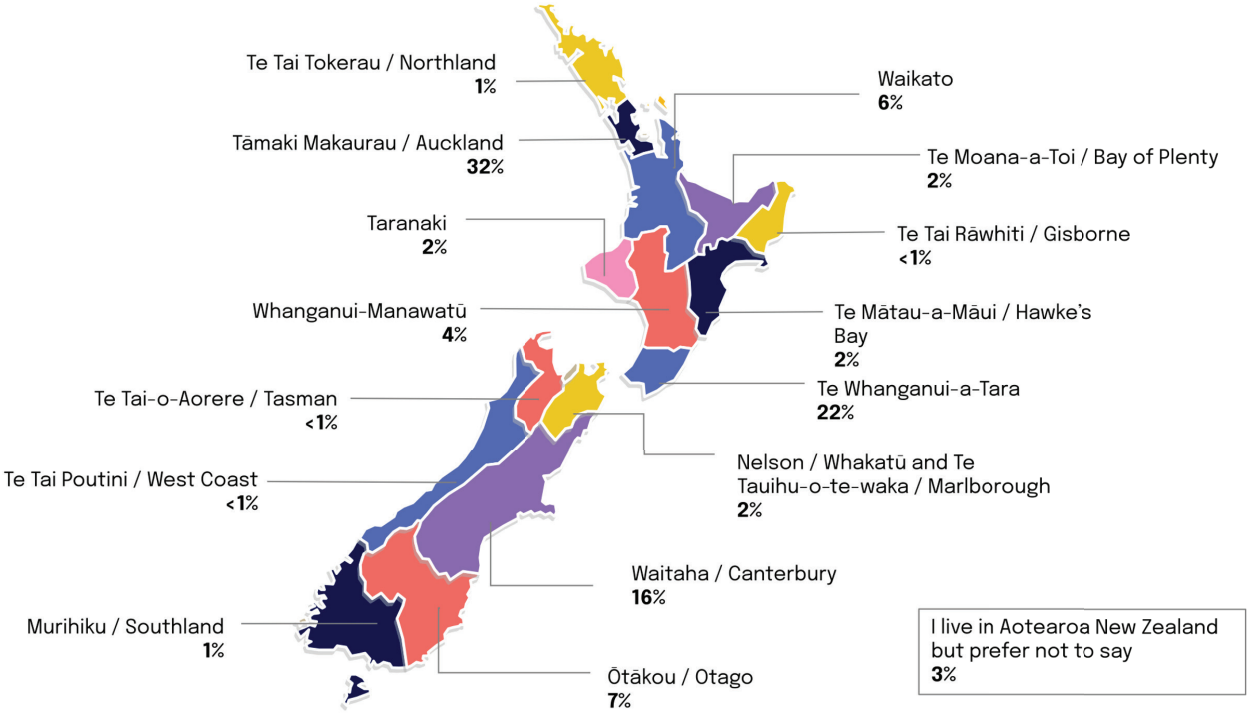
[1] In the survey we asked, "Which ethnic group or groups do you belong to? (Please select all that apply)", which is the same question used to collect ethnicity data in the New Zealand Census.

1.3 Regions where participants lived

Participants lived across all regions of Aotearoa New Zealand, with most people living in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch at the time of taking the survey (see Figure 3). Less than 1% of participants lived on the West Coast, or in Tasman and Gisborne.

For a more detailed overview of participants' regions according to where they studied or worked, see Table 4 in the Appendices on page 120.

Figure 3. Which region of Aotearoa New Zealand do you live in? (N=4784)

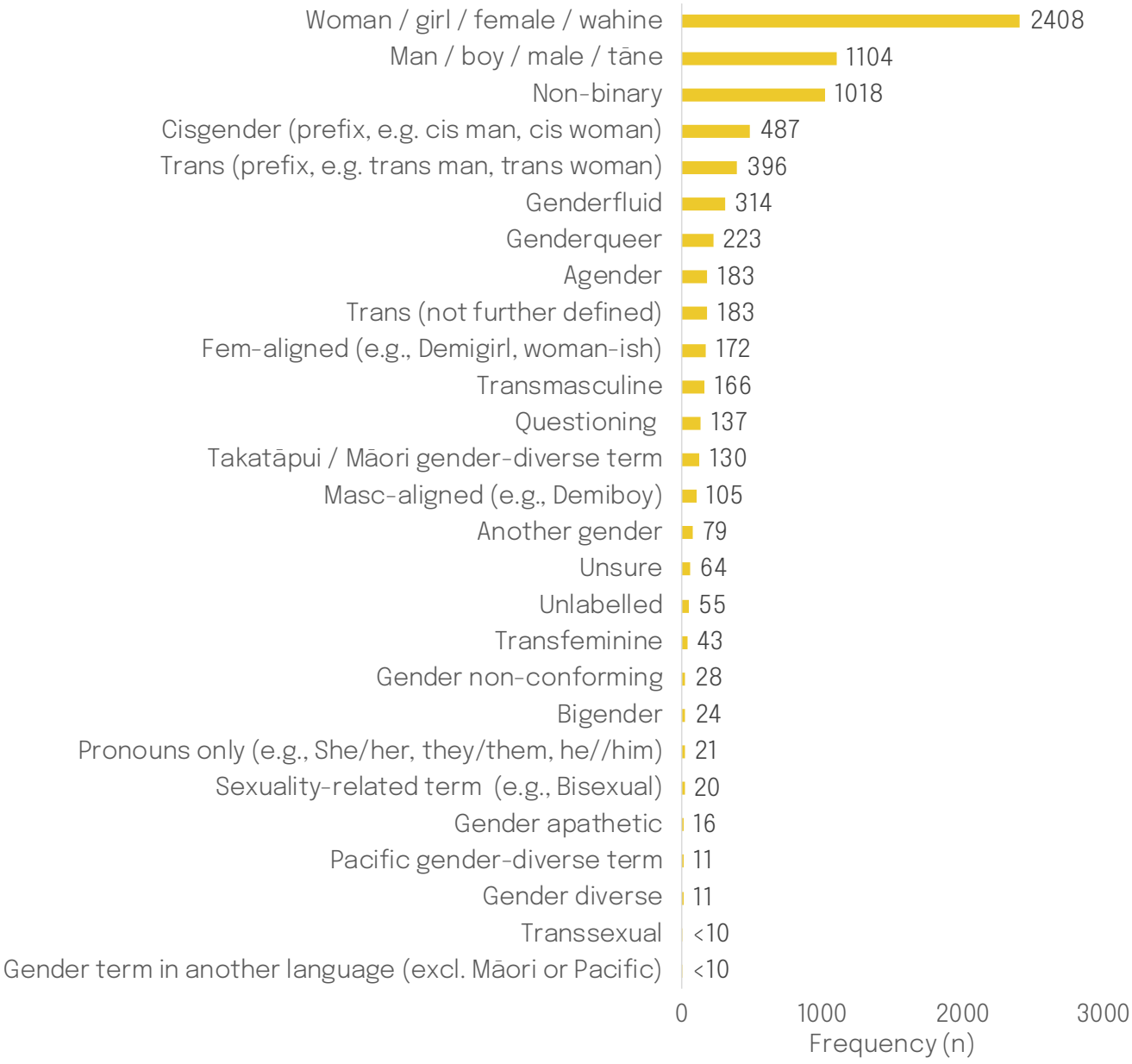


1.4 Gender

Participants described their gender in a free-text response using a diverse range of words. Figure 4 represents the terms that participants used to describe their gender. Many participants used more than one term to describe their gender.

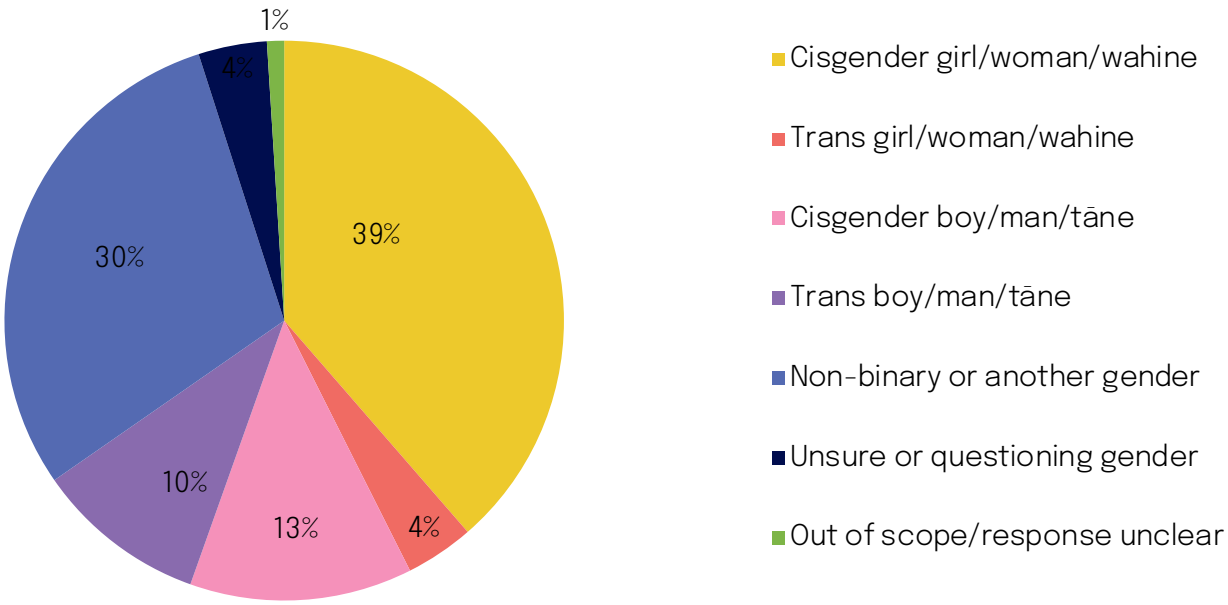
The terms listed in Figure 4 are summaries of the types of words participants that wrote, based on a content analysis of all the responses. Participants shared many more unique terms in response to this question, which are not listed here.

Figure 4. How do you describe your gender? Please write in any words you use (e.g., woman, agender, fa'afafine, tangata ira tāne, takatāpui, man and trans, Queen, etc.) (Total response) (N=4784)



We also asked in another question if participants identified as trans or non-binary. As some participants gave more than one response to this question, we created priority gender categories, listed below (see Figure 5), which are used for analysis in this report. For more details on how we developed these categories, see Figure 31 in the Appendices on page 118.

Figure 5. Prioritised gender categories (N=4784)



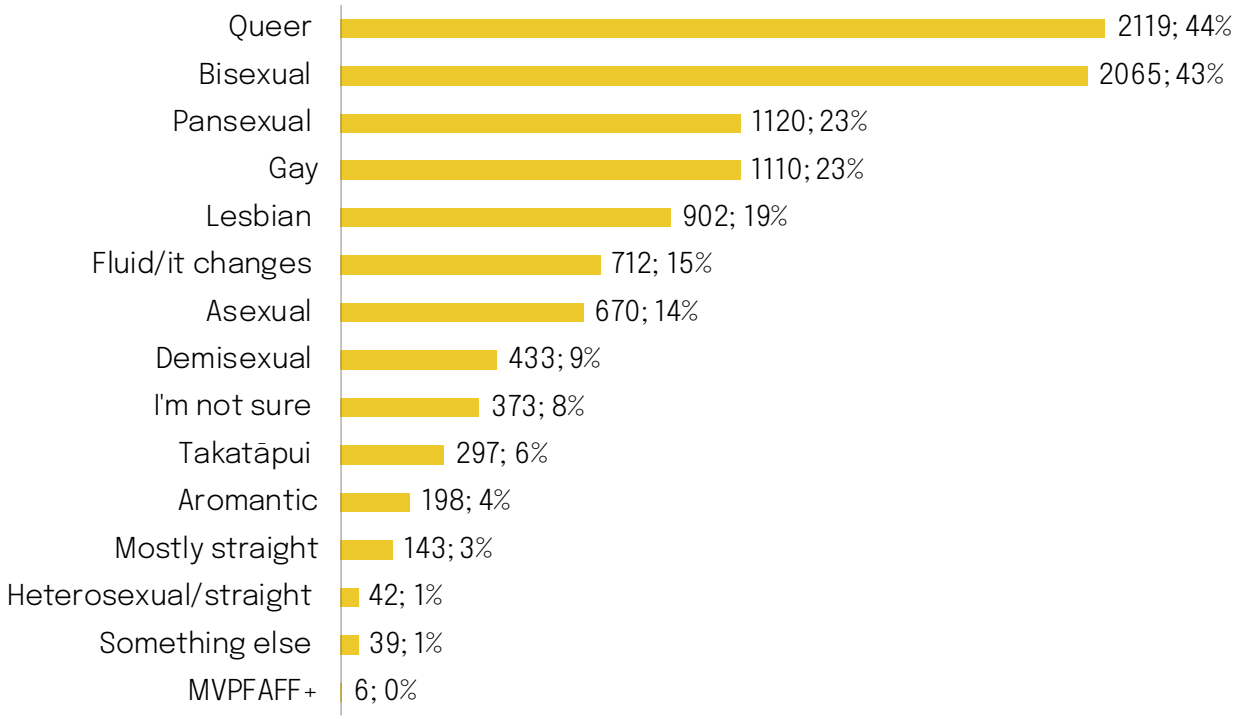
1.5 Variations in sex characteristics

Overall, 1% (n=45) of participants reported they were intersex or born with variation in sex characteristics. Almost one third (31%) of intersex participants were cisgender men or women, just over three in five (62%) were trans, non-binary or another gender, and some (7%) were unsure if they were trans or non-binary.

1.6 Sexuality

We asked participants to select from a list of terms that best describe their sexuality (see Figure 6). Participants could select more than one response, and three in five (60%) of participants chose more than one response to this question. For an analysis of sexuality by prioritised gender, see Table 6 in the Appendices on page 123.

Figure 6. Which of the following best describe your sexuality? (Please select all that apply) (N=4778; n and %)



1.7 Culturally specific identities

Just over one in 20 (6%) participants reported that they use languages specific to their culture to describe their gender and/or sexuality identity.

Participants used terms in te reo Māori, English, Pacific and Asian languages, and languages from Europe and North America.

1.8 Disability

We used the Washington Group Short Six questions (WG-SS; Washington Group, 2022) to measure if participants reported being limited from participation in everyday life by six common functional barriers. This framing of disability recognises that the environment is important in affecting what people with varying capabilities can do. Depending on the worlds they live in (e.g., the physical, social, cultural and the legislative environment around the young person) this can either enable or disable participation in everyday life. In this way, these measures focus on who reports impairment in their current contexts.

However, these are not measures of disability as an identity (identity-first measures) per se, but in recognising the socio-ecological framing of disability, these measures move away from framing disability solely as a medical issue. As such, we present

this information in this demographic section. We recognise, however, that many people reporting a functional disability will identify as disabled (identity first) and may not necessarily use person-first language to describe their identity.

In *Identify*, participants were identified as disabled if they reported having at least a lot of difficulty in at least one of the six domains the questions asked about (seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, washing, communicating). Based on their responses to these questions, two in five (42%; *n*=1715) participants were identified as disabled.

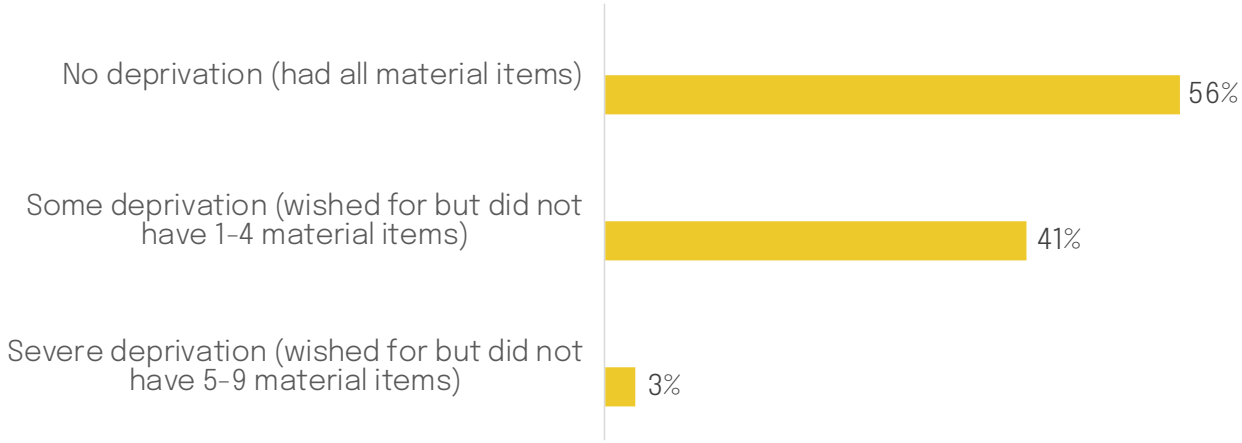
1.9 Material deprivation

To measure material deprivation,[2] we made local adaptations to a Canadian material deprivation index developed by the McCreary Centre (Smith et al., 2019). The index provided a list of resources that are crucial material wellbeing indicators for young people:

- money for myself
- smartphone
- space to hang out on my own
- money to spend on eating out
- access to transport
- equipment or clothes for extracurricular activities
- clothes that fit me
- a quiet place to sleep
- access to high-quality internet

Response options were: *Yes, I have this*; *I don't have this, but I wish I had it*; and *I don't have this, but I don't need it*. Participants were classified as having material deprivation when they responded *I don't have this, but I wish I had it* to any of the resources.

Figure 7. Level of material deprivation (N=4102)



[2] Material deprivation is defined by Statistics New Zealand (2019) as when "a person or family lack[s] essential consumption items because they cannot afford them".

1.10 Chapter summary and recommendations

- *Identify* has collected a diverse sample of young people's experiences
  - Young people are represented across all the major ethnicity groupings
  - Participants reported rainbow representation across 120 unique ethnicities
  - There is a disproportionately high representation of Pākehā and NZ European young people in the sample for this age group
  - There is a lower representation of Pacific young people relative to this age group in Aotearoa New Zealand
    - Given this white bias, the Identify sample may therefore underestimate the prevalence of racism compared to the population as a whole
    - **Future analyses within ethnicity groups are important to understand how racism and other factors affect experiences for Māori, Pacific, and ethnic minority young people**

- *Identify* demonstrates the significance of trans, non-binary, and gender-expansive identities in this age group
  - Stats NZ have recently explored identity in population studies and show that almost half (45%) of the LGBTQ+ population are between 15 and 29-years-old (Statistics New Zealand, 2022)
  - There was a noticeably lower proportion of cisgender men and boys in *Identify* compared to cisgender girls and women.
    - **Future analyses exploring cisgender rainbow experiences must consider the binary cisgender distribution in the study.**
  - I*dentify* shows that for many young people, their gender is different to how they were assigned at birth
    - **Measures and official markers of gender identity for young people need to be sensitive to the variation and diversity within this group**
    - **Further research that explores experiences within the gender categories we have identified is important to understand experiences for these groups**

- Rainbow young people are present in all the regions of Aotearoa New Zealand
  - > All local authorities need to ensure that they recognise that young rainbow people are part of their communities
    - » There are clear signs that some areas have higher concentrations than others
    - » **Further analysis should control for degree of support in the region, to investigate whether young people are more likely to feel they can explore rainbow identity in more supportive environments**

- Age distribution is a strength compared to local surveys of takatāpui, LGBTQIA+ and MVPFAFF+ communities, which are traditionally skewed to adults over 26 years of age
  - > The high proportion of secondary school-aged participants is an important opportunity to understand their experiences in detail
  - > The Youth2000 surveys and What About Me national youth surveys provide important comparative data for rainbow students compared to cisgender heterosexual students; however, this survey provides in-depth information about rainbow-specific experiences for young people that large mainstream surveys cannot address
    - » **Future research on rainbow-specific youth topics is important to explore the unique experiences for rainbow young people that mainstream surveys are unable to account for**

- *Identify* data highlights that a majority of rainbow *intersex* participants did not align with the gender they were designated at birth
  - > **Doctors should abstain from 'gender normalising' medical procedures until an intersex person has the capacity to provide informed consent**

- Approximately two in five participants in *Identify* were disabled.
  - > Disability policy, practice and services must respond to the higher proportion of takatāpui, MVPFAFF+ and LGBTQIA+ young people who are disabled
  - > This is a critical population to understand, as *Counting Ourselves* (Veale et al., 2019) has highlighted the high rates of discrimination, inaccessibility, and harm experienced by disabled trans people in Aotearoa New Zealand
    - » **Rainbow young people must be explicitly named, addressed and included in youth-focussed disability work and anti-ableist practices**

» **Future research on the experiences of disabled rainbow young people is an important priority**

- Almost half of the participants experienced at least some material deprivation, though only 3% reported severe deprivation
  - > Other research shows that rainbow people are disproportionately more likely to experience material deprivation (Veale et al., 2019; Statistics NZ, 2022)
  - > Material deprivation may affect young people's quality of life (e.g., space to be alone, a quiet place to sleep, etc.) and introduce barriers to finding and maintaining social support (e.g., digital poverty and access to transport, etc.)

» **Future research on rainbow young people's experiences of deprivation is critical, as is the need to account for this in young people's experiences**

Chapter 2. Secondary education

This chapter presents the reported views and experiences of Identify rainbow participants who attended secondary school, Wharekura or Kura Kaupapa Māori[3] (41%; n=1965) and a further 2% (n=80) who attended home school or alternative education. Detailed demographics for participants' ages, and prioritised ethnicities and gender in this section are presented in the Appendices on page 118. We report on these participants' educational experiences in four sections:

- School environments
- School policies and processes to support wellbeing
- Home-school partnerships
- Home and alternative education

Of the secondary school participants:

- Four in five (79%) attended a state or state-integrated school, followed by a private school (20%), Wharekura or Kura Kaupapa Māori (<1%)
- Just under one in five (19%) attended a faith-based school
- Around one third (31%) attended a single-gender school
- A further 1% attended another type of place of learning

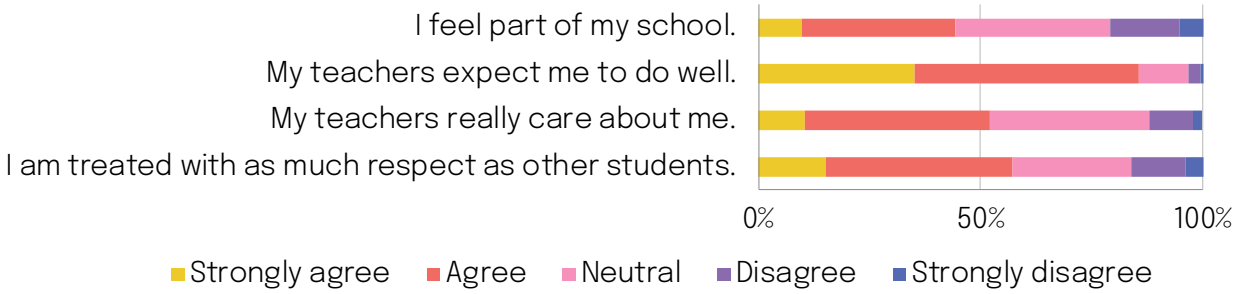
2.1 School environments

2.1.1 School belonging and support

As Figure 8 shows, participants' ratings of school belonging and support were mixed. Four in five (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers expected them to do well.

Just under half agreed or strongly agreed that they felt they were part of their school (44%), they were treated with as much respect as other students at their school (57%), or that their teachers really cared about them (52%).

Figure 8. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements [about your school or kura]? (N=1921)



We asked participants to rate how supportive they felt their schools were of rainbow students in general:

- Just under half (45%) said their school was generally supportive or very supportive
- Just under half (45%) said their school was sometimes supportive and sometimes not supportive
- One in ten (10%) participants said their school was not supportive or not at all supportive

There were differences in perceived support between different types of schools. For example, students at mixed-gender schools overall reported higher levels of support than those in single-gender schools (48% vs 34%). Additionally, the proportion of students who said that their school was unsupportive was three times higher among students at Christian or faith-based schools (21% vs 7%). See Table 7 in the Appendices on page 127 for more details.

Just over half of all secondary school participants (53%) said that there was a staff member at school who they could trust to talk to, one-on-one, about any issues they might have as a rainbow person.

[3] Because the number of participants who attended Kura Kaupapa Māori is less than 10, we have combined the English- and Māori-medium school participants in this section to maintain participants' anonymity. We will provide a more detailed analysis in our forthcoming report on takatāpui and rainbow rangatahi Māori.

"my current school is incredibly supportive and caring towards me and rainbow people" (Pacific, 14 years old, Kura Kaupapa Māori)

"My school has 0 support for rainbow communities and the thought of actually coming out is scary." (Māori, 17 years old, private mixed-gender school)

2.1.2 Rainbow diversity groups

Most (86%) secondary school participants reported that they had a *rainbow diversity group* or *queer-straight alliance* (QSA) at their school. As groups have different roles at school, some schools' groups may function as a support network for students or as an advocacy group. For safety reasons, some groups may not have a public profile at the school.

The majority (64%) of participants who had a group at their school said they thought their group had been helpful or very helpful in making the school a better place for rainbow students.

"The school system is very accepting and welcoming to rainbow students, however, there are a lot of students who are homophobic and show hatefulness towards queer people. I wish the school would be better at handling it but one of our rainbow groups has an amazing leader who has made it clear that if slurs are thrown around or homophobic actions, we can come to them and talk to them, they'll try and report it and get it under control which is really comforting." (Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old, public mixed-gender school)

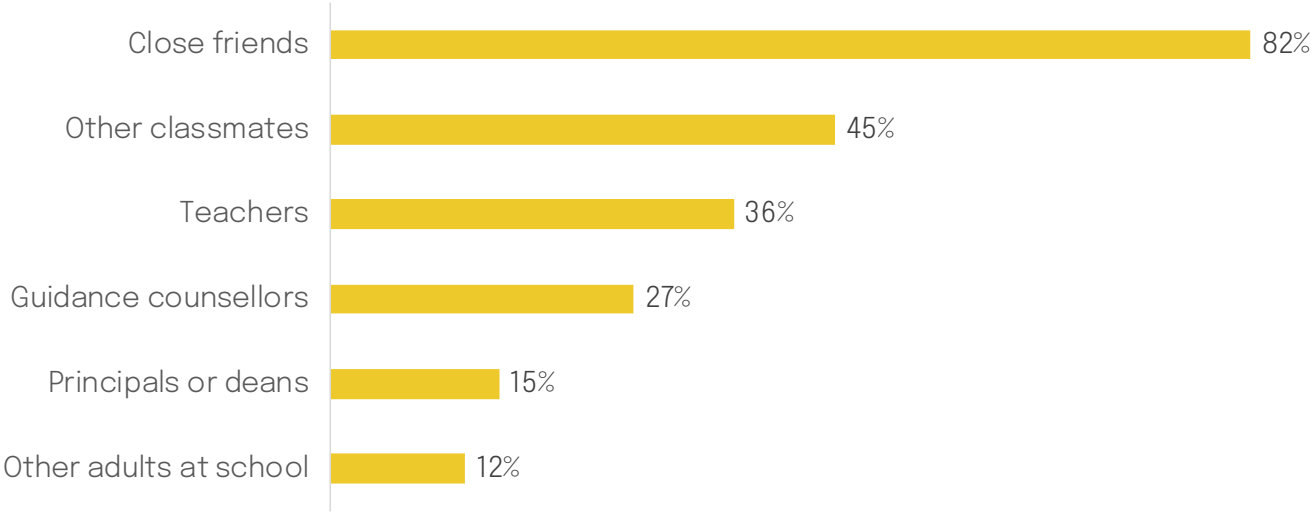
"I'm lucky to have found multiple rainbow community students at my school. Also one of our vice-rectors is planning to host a rainbow community club with other Catholic secondary schools in [city]" (Asian, 15 years old, single-gender public school)

2.1.3 Disclosure and safety

Almost all (97%) school participants had told someone at school about their rainbow identity. Participants of all ages[4] had told a range of people at school about their rainbow identities, as shown in Figure 9.

[4] The proportion of participants who had told adults at school about their rainbow identities did not change significantly according to age.

Figure 9. Which of the following people at school have you told about your rainbow identity? (Please select all that apply) (N=1870)

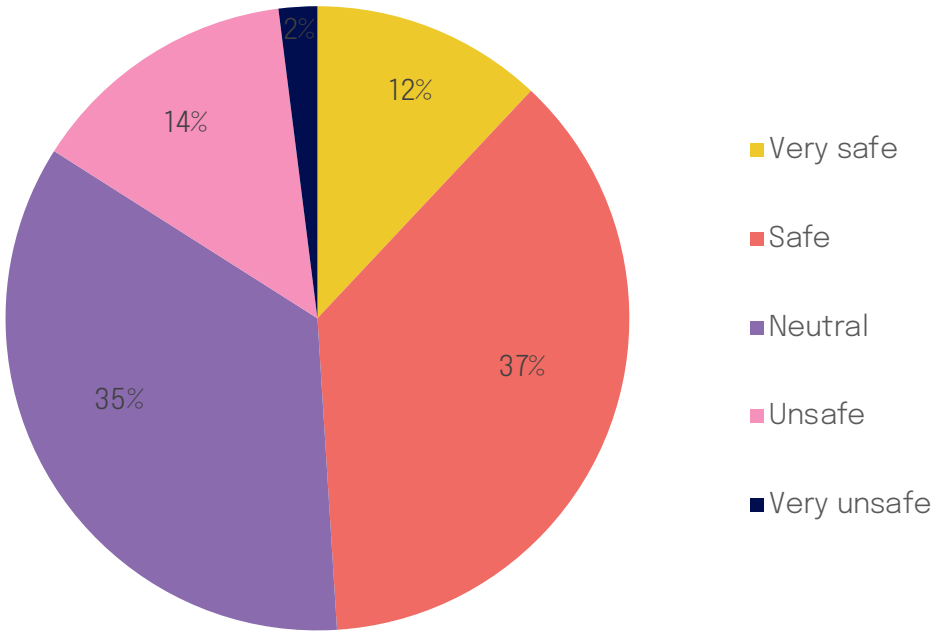


Around one in six (16%) secondary school participants reported that a teacher or staff member had told someone else about their rainbow identity without their permission. Just under half (45%) reported that this had not happened to them, and just over a third (37%) said they did not know if a teacher or staff member had done this.

In terms of safety, Figure 10 shows about half of participants (49%) reported feeling safe or very safe at their school as a rainbow person. Just over one third (35%) said they felt neutral about this, and one in six (16%) felt unsafe or very unsafe. There were no significant differences in reported safety levels across ethnicity groups. The proportion of trans and non-binary students who reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe was larger than for cisgender students (21% vs 11% respectively), and larger for disabled students than for non-disabled students (21% vs 11%).

Of the 294 participants who felt unsafe or very unsafe at school, the most common places they felt unsafe in were classrooms (80%), bathrooms or changing areas (72%), corridors and stairwells (52%), at a school event or function (48%), or getting to and from school (45%).

Figure 10. Overall, how safe do you feel at your current school as a rainbow person? (N=1843)



2.1.4 Bullying at school

We asked participants if they were comfortable answering questions about their experiences of bullying[5] at school (if any). Almost all (96%; *n*=1749) chose to answer these questions, though 4% (*n*=74) said that they would find these questions upsetting to answer and skipped this section. We report below only on the experiences of those who chose to respond to this set of questions but are mindful that those who said that they find these questions upsetting may currently be experiencing, or had, bullying experiences, and a more accurate prevalence of bullying may include this 4% of participants as well.

Over a third (37%; *n*=568) said that they had experienced bullying at school at least once in the past 12 months. The proportion of trans and non-binary students who had been bullied was significantly larger than cisgender students who had been (46% vs 27%).

[5] We defined bullying in the survey as, "when a person or a group of people does one or more of the following things, over and over again, online or offline, to someone who finds it hard to stop it from happening: makes fun of someone in a mean and hurtful way; tells lies or spreads nasty rumours about someone; leaves someone out on purpose; physically hurts someone; damages or steals someone else's things; threatens or makes someone feel afraid of getting hurt. It is NOT bullying when teasing is done in a friendly way, or two people who are as strong as each other argue or fight."

We asked those participants about the different types of bullying that they had experienced, and how often this happened. On a weekly basis or more:

- Two in five (42%) were teased or called nasty names
- Just under one third (31%) were hurt by being excluded from groups or not being talked to
- Just under one quarter (23%) said other students spread lies, secrets or rumours about them
- One in six (18%) were threatened by what someone said they would do to them
- Around one in 12 (8%) were physically hurt on purpose

"There is very little done for us, and very little protection against homophobia"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, public mixed-gender school)

"There is a lot of homophobia from the students around. Being openly rainbow in the school leads to rumours and bullying, so most students have to be closeted for their own safety"
(Asian, 15 years old, public mixed-gender school)

"There is a lot of homophobia and transphobia in my school. I get asked inappropriate question from peers about my sexuality and gender. They also make rude and insulting comments about gender identities purely to frustrate me"
(Māori, 16 years old, Kura Kaupapa Māori)

We also asked these participants the reason(s) that they thought or knew was behind being bullied the last time it happened. Participants could choose more than one response to this question:

- Three in five (60%) said this bullying was based on their perceived or actual sexuality diversity
- Two in five (38%) said this bullying was based on being trans or non-binary (or someone thinking they were trans or non-binary)
- Two in five (40%) intersex participants who had been bullied reported that this bullying was based on their variations in sex characteristics[6]

Other reported reasons for bullying included weight or size (38%), disability or chronic illness (19%), ethnicity (9%), or another reason (46%). One quarter (24%) of participants said they did not know the reasons for being bullied.

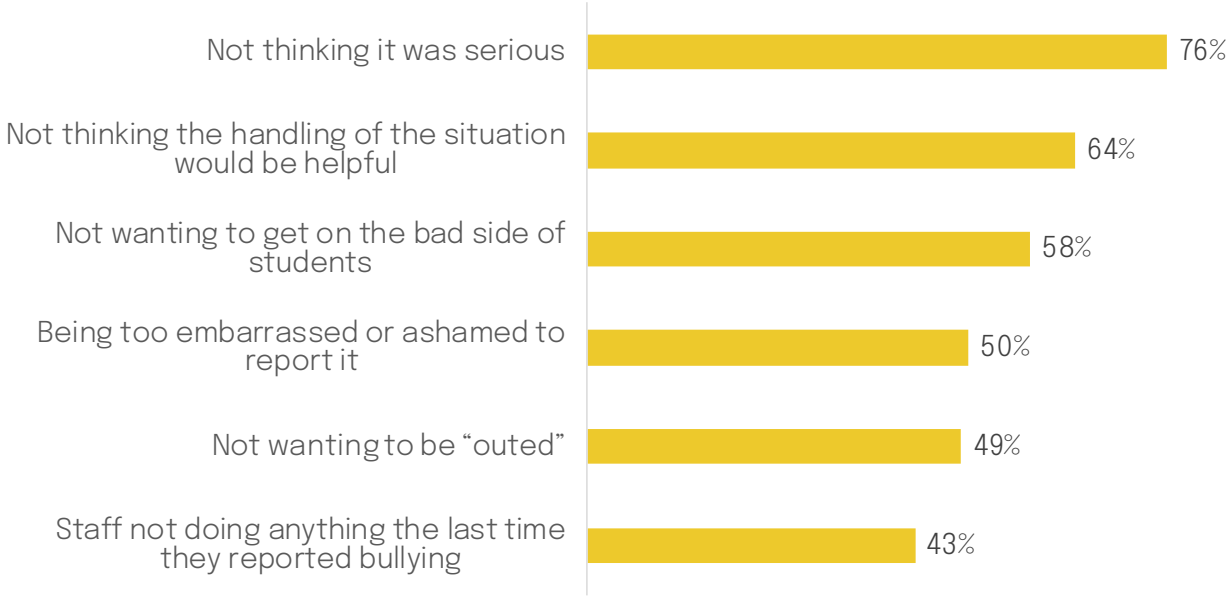
[6] Given the small sample size of intersex participants, we caution against making generalisations with this figure.

2.1.4.1 Experiences of rainbow-focused bullying

In this subsection, we focus on participants' experiences of rainbow-focused bullying, which we define as a type of bullying that participants report experiencing based on their rainbow identities. Among participants who reported rainbow-focused bullying to a school staff member (*N*=115), one third (34%) said the school's response made things a bit better or a lot better, and just over half (54%) of participants reported that the school's response to the bullying made no difference. Just over a tenth said their school's response made things a bit worse or a lot worse (12%).

Around one in eight (*n*=76) participants who had experienced rainbow-focused bullying **did not** report the bullying to school staff the last time it happened. We listed the following reasons why participants did not report this bullying in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Have any of these things ever prevented you from reporting being bullied to school staff? (Please select all that apply) (N=76)



"My school is mostly indifferent, few teachers complain about events during pride week, but little to no action is taken against homophobic bullying. The schools rainbow group has a few supportive teachers and older students (myself as an older student) who resolve homophobia, bullying and and other issues for the younger students."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 17 years old, public mixed-gender school)

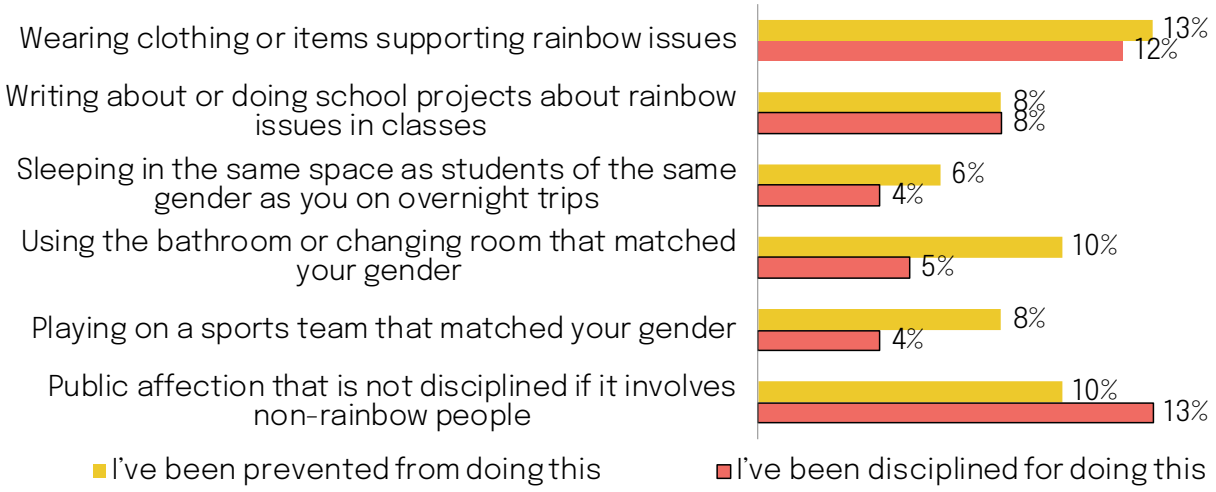
"A lot of bullying that needs to be sorted out and teachers need to be taught properly how to deal with it and not just say, 'oh just ignore it'"
(Māori, 15 years old, public mixed-gender school)

2.1.5 Discrimination at school

We asked students whether they had been treated unfairly at school because of their rainbow identity. Of students who responded (*N*=1478), one in six (16%) said that they had been treated unfairly by a teacher at their school based on their rainbow identity; three in five (60%) said they had not been; and one in four (25%) said they did not know if they had been.

We also asked if participants had been disciplined for, or prevented from, doing a range of activities and behaviours related to their rainbow identity. Students who said they were prevented from or disciplined for doing at least one of the things (shown in Figure 12 below) are identified as having been discriminated against based on their rainbow identity.

Figure 12. Which of the following things have you ever been told off for or prevented from doing at your current school? (Please select all that apply) (N=1748)



2.1.6 Microaggressions at school

We asked school participants if they had ever experienced any of the following microaggressions at their current school. Out of 1507 participants:

- Almost all (96%) heard the term 'that's so gay!' to describe someone or something in a bad way
- Three quarters (76%) experienced someone at school saying or doing something that showed they thought they were heterosexual or cisgender
- Almost two thirds (64%) had heard someone at school say that rainbow identities are 'just a phase' or don't exist
- For two in five (41%) participants, someone had asked them to educate others about rainbow issues, when they didn't volunteer to
- Just over one in five (23%) had a friend stop talking to or hanging out with them after they told them about their rainbow identity
- Further, for half (50%; *n*=10) of intersex participants who answered this question, someone at school had said or done something that assumed they were not intersex.

"You can't go a day at my school without someone using the term "gay" incorrectly, or talking about how something LGBTQ related is stupid or weird. People do not understand the importance of having Rainbow spaces and clubs."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old, public mixed-gender school)

I.7 School sports

e asked all secondary school par-
ipants about their involvement in
hool sports. About a quarter (26%)
id they played on a school sports
am. Of the remaining participants
ıo answered these questions, 60%
id they were not interested in play-
g sports, and 14% said they do not play, but would like to.

Participants who would have liked to be involved in school sports, but were not (N=239), reported a range of reasons for not being involved. These included:

- being too busy with other activities (54%)
- not feeling accepted on the team as a rainbow person (29%)
- not feeling safe playing sports at school (26%)
- an injury or disability (21%)
- just over one third (36%) of trans and non-binary participants who did not play a sport, despite wanting to, attributed this to not being able to use a changing room that matches their gender

"Me and lots of my rainbow friends have bad experience[s] with the PE teachers and things because they put us in girls and boys groups."
(Māori, 14 years old, public mixed-gender school)

2.1.7.1 Trans and non-binary inclusion in PE and sports

We asked participants about their schools' inclusion of trans and non-binary students in sports and physical education:

- 12% said their school provided gender-neutral changing areas, and 78% said theirs did not (10% of participants said this did not apply to them)
- 34% of trans and non-binary participants said trans and non-binary people could play on a social sports team that matched their gender, while 31% said these students could not (35% of participants said this did not apply to them)
- 28% of trans and non-binary participants said trans and non-binary students could play competitive sport at school without having to be on hormones or puberty blockers, while 40% said they could not (33% of participants said this did not apply to them)

2.2 School policies and processes to support wellbeing

2.2.1 Rainbow-inclusive representation and curriculum

Rainbow identities, topics and histories are increasingly integrated into learning environments in many ways. We asked participants about the different ways that rainbow-inclusive topics were represented in their schools:

- Over two thirds (70%) said they saw messages around their school in support of rainbow students in the past 12 months, such as posters or pride flags.
- Most said they knew either a teacher or staff members (82%) or other students (99.5%) who were part of rainbow communities.
- About a third (32%) said they had learnt positive or helpful things about rainbow people, histories or issues, whereas 16% said they had learnt negative or unhelpful things

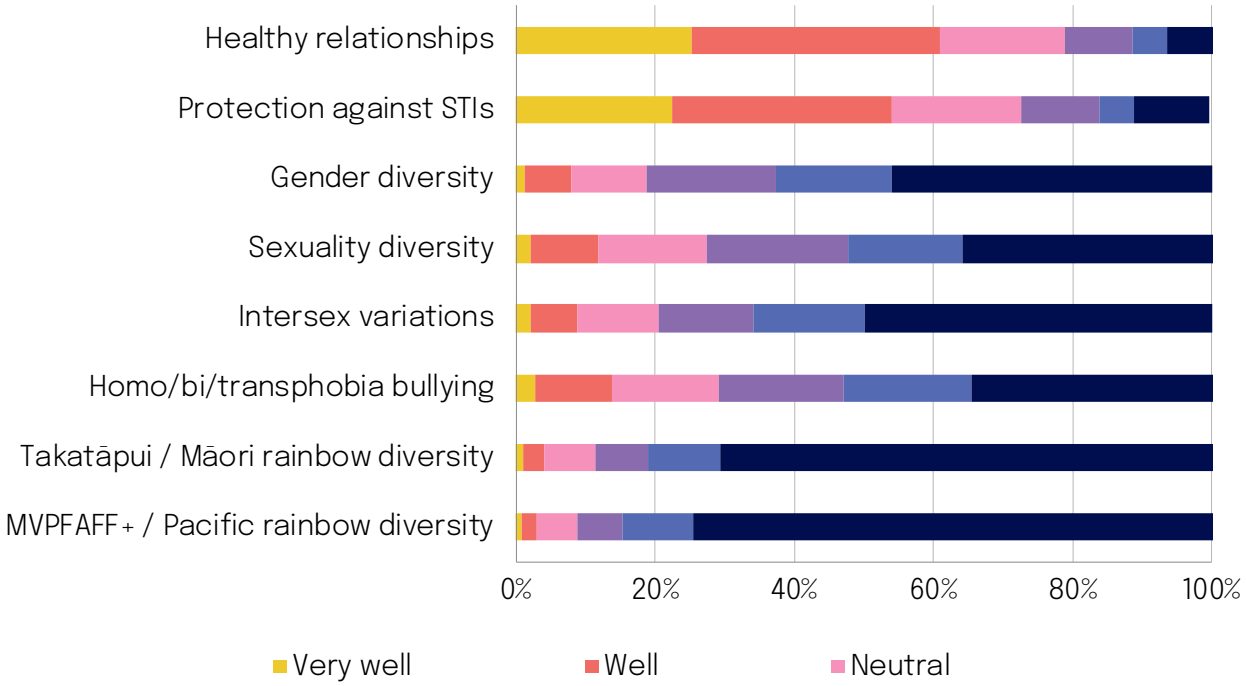
"I wish they'd teach us different gender identities and sexes in health class. I'm struggling to put a name to the gender I feel, and I think it would've been helpful to learn the differences between identities somewhere like school, where facts feel real the first time around compared to the internet. it took me external learning to know sex and gender were different things, and I wish i t was something I'd learned earlier to save some of the struggle I've had."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, public mixed-gender school)

"I would love if school taught more rainbow diverse lessons in school, like the LGBTQ+ it would feel more inclusive to learn more about who i am and so as everyone else experimenting themselves"
(Pacific, 14 years old, public mixed gender school)

"We're not really taught anything about the rainbow community at all, and I wish we were. It would be awesome if there was an official course in college where we could study LGBTQIA+ history, culture, and like the issues we face today, it would be a good way to spread awareness of our issues and for people of the rainbow community to study something new and more "in the now" and be able to get secondary qualifications for it, and who knows, maybe it might help us learn more about our identities along the way"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, public mixed-gender school)

We also asked participants how well they thought a range of rainbow-related issues had been taught at school, or if they had been taught at all. As Figure 13 shows, more than half of participants (61%) thought healthy relationships and safer sex had been taught well or very well at their school. In contrast, the topics least taught as well as least taught well or very well are those on culturally specific rainbow identities in school curricula (3 - 4% said these were taught well or very well, while 81- 85% said these were not taught at all to them).

Figure 13. In your opinion, how well have the following topics been taught in your classes at school? (N=1699)



2.2.2 Facilities, policies and uniforms

We asked participants if their schools offered a range of facilities and policies to support rainbow students. Out of the 1602 participants who answered these questions:

- Most (82%) said that students could change their name or gender marker on school records, but 17% reported students could not do this
- About two-fifths (43%) said their school provided gender-neutral bathrooms, while half (50%) reported their school did not provide them
- Just under half (45%) said that their school offered a gender-neutral option for uniforms and dress codes, with 47% reporting they did not (8% said this did not apply to their school)
- Just under half (47%) said that students could choose to wear the boys' or girls' uniform at their school, whereas one quarter (26%) said that students could not do this (27% said this did not apply to their school)

Further, for one third (33%; n=210) of trans and non-binary participants, someone had made them feel they were in the wrong bathroom or changing area because of their gender.

> *"Not much help for trans-masculine students (as I am at an all-female school). Uniform is very feminine which gives many students dysphoria or makes students that aren't very feminine uncomfortable"*
> (Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, private single-gender school)

"There is nothing really for nonbinary people like me (who use they/them pronouns) and it's hard because I'm too scared to come out about my gender more than my sexuality. I always feel awkward in the girls bathrooms/ changing rooms and I wished there was a bathroom for people like me."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 14 years old, public mixed-gender school)

"*Since it's an all girls school, there isn't any gender neutral bathrooms or sports teams or clubs. They were trying to get neutral bathrooms and stuff but some of the homophobic staff had the new policy shut down"*
(Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, private single-gender school)

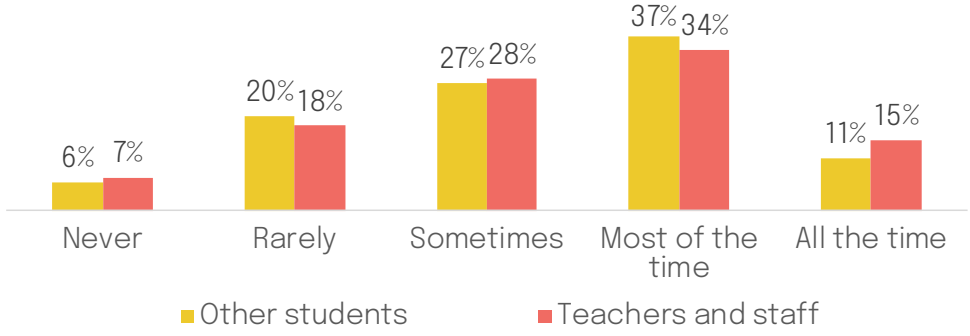
"A lot of my trans friends are scared to use the toilets at school" (Māori, 18 years old, public mixed-gender school)

"I am comfortable with my identity and name at school, but I am afraid to use the gender neutral bathrooms at my school because they are disgusting and no one cleans them and one of my friends was hate crimed in them. I am also afraid to use the correct uniform options for myself as some people at my school call people freaks for not wearing 'correct' uniform."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 16 years old, public mixed-gender school)

2.2.3 Name and pronoun usage

We asked trans and non-binary students who had told people about their self-determined names and/ or pronouns at school about how often these people used their name and/or pronouns. As Figure 14 shows, around half of students who had disclosed their name and/or pronouns reported that teachers and staff or other students use them all or most of the time, while one quarter reported respectively that teachers or students rarely or never use them.

Figure 14. Pronoun usage at school, out of participants who have disclosed their pronouns to other students (N=734) or teachers and staff (N=483)



2.3 Home-school partnerships

We asked participants about how involved they thought their parents or caregivers were in their education. Overall, half or more of the participants suggested their parents or caregivers were engaged in their education:

- Just under two thirds (62%) said at least one of their parents or caregivers talked to them always or often about what they're doing at school
- Almost half (47%) said at least one parent or caregiver always or often went to meetings or events at school, such as whānau-teacher conferences or prizegiving
  - Just over a quarter of participants (26%) said their parents or caregivers rarely or never attended school events

2.4 Home and alternative education

Overall, 2% (n=80) participants learnt through home education or attended an alternative secondary education (AltEd), such as a health school or correspondence school/Kura. Participants could select multiple options for the reason(s) they attended home or AltEd.

- Most (80%) attended home education or AltEd for health reasons
- Just over a third (35%) said the reason for attending home or AltEd was due to experiencing bullying at their previous school
- One in five (21%) said their parents or caregivers thought it would be better for them

In addition, three in five (60%) of the same participant group said that they had a trusted adult, at home or their education provider, that they could talk one-on-one with about anything related to their rainbow identity. A similar proportion (61%) of participants also said their overall experience of home or alternative education was positive or very positive.

2.5 Chapter summary and recommendations

- The majority of *Identify* secondary students were at state or state-integrated schools, though a substantial minority were at private schools, and some were at Wharekura or Kura Kaupapa Māori. Some also reported other places of learning including home and alternative education. One in five were at faith-based schools
  - > Our findings emphasise that rainbow young people are present in all school-types. There is no school type that does not have rainbow students
    - » **All schools, including faith-based schools must ensure that they respond to the needs of rainbow students**
    - » **A minority of rainbow young people report home-schooling, emphasising the needs for these educational contexts to support their identities**

- Nearly all students had disclosed their identities to someone at school, yet most also reported rainbow-based microaggressions at school
- Furthermore, over one third had experienced bullying at school
- One in eight students said they felt unsafe or very unsafe at school
  - > Bullying remains a serious issue for rainbow students in Aotearoa New Zealand
  - > Trans and non-binary students were significantly more likely to report being unsafe and bullied at school
  - > Disabled rainbow students were also more likely to report being unsafe at school
  - > Participants report that school responses to bullying are often ineffective or make the bullying worse
    - » **Continued work in schools and education is critical to address the non-inclusive school climates that enable the microaggressions and bullying towards rainbow students**
    - » **Additional work and resources are required to address intersectional discrimination, such as transphobic and ableist bullying in schools**
    - » **The findings indicate the school processes around responding to rainbow-based bullying need to be improved to prevent further harm**

- Over half of all secondary students reported that support for rainbow students was variable or non-existent at their school
  - One in six reported they had been treated unfairly by a teacher based on their rainbow identity
  - Some students had been disciplined for, or prevented from, doing a range of activities and behaviours related to their rainbow identity
  - Some participants reported not playing sports because they did not feel accepted as a rainbow person or feel safe playing sports at school
  - Conversely, around half also reported having at least one adult at school who they could trust to go to for support
    - **All adults in schools need to be upskilled and supported to provide supportive and inclusive experiences for all students, including rainbow students**
    - **Coaches and other adults involved with school sports represent another opportunity to provide support to some rainbow young people's inclusion and participation, and they too require support and upskilling on producing safe, inclusive and supportive experiences for rainbow young people in sport**

- Over two thirds of participants had seen messages that were supportive of rainbow students around their schools in the last year
  - Most students (86%) reported that they had a rainbow group/queer-straight alliance at their school
  - Most reported they knew a teacher or staff member (82%) or other students (99.5%) who were part of rainbow communities
  - Rainbow young people demonstrate a strong ability to identify peers and rainbow supports, despite the overall prevalence of hostile environments
    - **Programmes that improve the abilities of peers to provide effective support to rainbow young people are valuable**

- The presence of *rainbow diversity groups* or *queer-straight alliances* at school was relatively common, however not sufficient in and of itself for students to feel supported or belonging at school
  - **The quality of rainbow diversity groups or queer-straight alliances, alongside the support and agency they have in the school, are likely to be critical factors to their success**

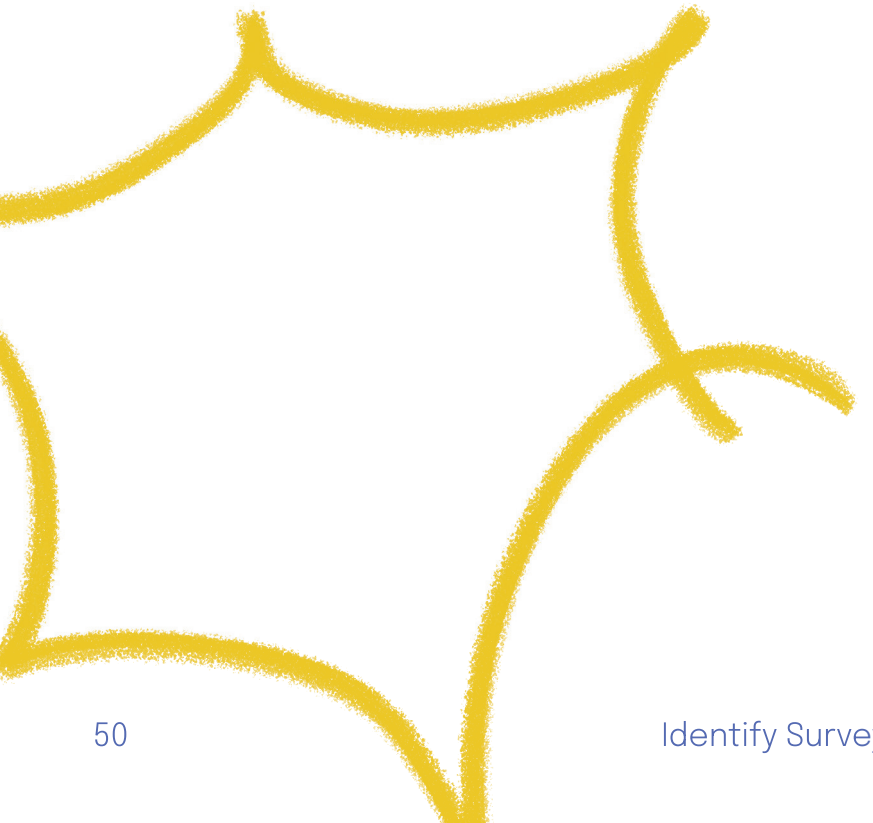
- **Additional to having these groups, whole-school approaches that specifically focus on rainbow inclusion and belonging are vital**

- While 16% of participants reported that they had learnt negative or unhelpful things about rainbow people, histories or issues, twice as many had learnt positive or helpful things (32%)
  - Two out of three rainbow students reported negative or invisible representation in secondary school education
    - **Positive cross-curricular rainbow inclusion is a critical priority for rainbow young people's inclusion**
  - Unfortunately, when it came to relationships and sexuality education, rainbow issues were markedly less well taught, with many important topics often not taught at all
    - **The well-documented concerns about the quality of comprehensive sexuality education for rainbow students continue and clearly require urgent measures**

- Trans and non-binary students face additional structural barriers and prejudice
  - Around half of students reported that their schools did not provide gender neutral bathrooms, gender-neutral uniforms or dress codes, and a quarter could not wear the boys' or girls' uniform
  - One third of trans and non-binary participants reported that someone had made them feel like they were in the 'wrong' bathroom or changing area
    - **Structural barriers to trans and non-binary students' participation at school, including uniform policies that are low-cost to resolve, must be urgently addressed**
  - Around half of students who had disclosed their pronouns had their pronouns used most or all the time by peer and teachers and staff
    - **Professional learning on working with trans and non-binary students is a priority for teachers, including the importance of using correct names and pronouns**
  - The accessibility of sports for trans and non-binary students was low, with fewer than half of schools providing gender-neutral changing areas (12%), allowing participation (34%), or not requiring students to be on blockers or hormones (28%)

    - » **Work is required to resolve barriers to trans and non-binary students' access to school facilities and opportunities, including sports and overnight activities**

- Reasons for attending home-schooling or alternative secondary education included health, previous-bullying experiences, and/or because parent/s or caregiver/s thought it would be better for them
    - > The majority in home-schooling and alternative education reported that they had a trusted adult they could talk to privately about their rainbow identity
    - » **There is an important minority of young people in alternative education contexts who need additional supports**
    - » **Further work exploring how to provide supports for young people in these contexts is required**



Chapter 3. Tertiary and post-secondary education

This chapter describes the views and experiences of Identify rainbow participants who were currently in tertiary and post-secondary education (34%; n=1640). This includes those who were studying at a university (86%), polytechnic (10%) and whare wānanga (<1%). A further 4% described attending other places of study such as tourism schools, performing arts schools, outdoor education, and design schools.

Overall, rainbow tertiary and post-secondary students in Identify were working towards a bachelor's degree (64%) or a certificate or diploma (10%). One quarter (25%) were studying towards a postgraduate qualification such as an honours degree, graduate diploma or certificate, master's or doctorate, and 1% were studying towards another qualification. Detailed demographics for participants' ages, prioritised ethnicities and gender in this section are presented in the Appendices on page 114.

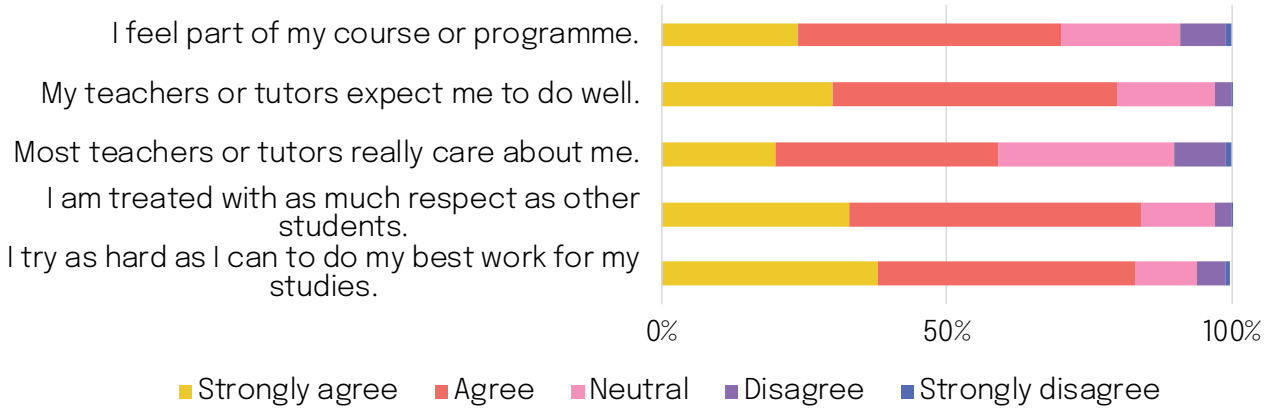
In this chapter, the views and experiences of the rainbow tertiary students are reported in three sections:

- Sense of belonging and support
- Disclosure and safety
- Harassment, discrimination and microaggressions

3.1 Sense of belonging and support

Figure 15 below shows that many participants agreed or strongly agreed that their learning environments are fair, supportive, and inclusive. Participants reported the least agreement on whether teachers or tutors really cared about them (59% agreed or strongly agreed with this).

Figure 15. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements [about your place of study]? (N=1613)



Overall, participants who attended tertiary or post-secondary education reported relatively high levels of support for rainbow people from their places of study. As most of the participants who answered these questions went to a university in one of the major cities in Aotearoa New Zealand, the responses are more likely reflective of the bigger tertiary institutions. We asked participants to indicate which of these types of support their place of study offered.

Of those who responded:

- 93% (*n*=1209) knew of a group or club for rainbow students
- 92% (*n*=847) knew of anti-discrimination policies for rainbow students
- 89% (*n*=603) knew that students can change their gender marker or pronouns on student records
- 88% (*n*=1179) knew of posters and symbols around campus that support rainbow communities
- 78% (*n*=548) knew of a rainbow representative or equity officer in a paid role
- 66%(*n*=712) knew of gender-neutral bathrooms

"Being at [university] as a rainbow person is really good, especially compared to high school. It was the first place I could be openly queer around other people and make friends with other queer people."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old, university student)

"Any support appears very performative. The University claims to have gender neutral bathrooms, but these are often just accessible bathrooms than many rainbow students don't feel comfortable taking up from disabled students. Also, it is in the school code that tutors should ask for pronouns in the first sessions of a course but this has never happened in a class I have been in."
(Māori, 20 years old, university student)

"I often feel like the things that are being done are to tick a box. However, my supervisor is amazing and part of the LGBTQIA community."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 23 years old, university student)

"I study Performing Arts so being a rainbow person is very much accepted and celebrated, fortunately"
(Asian, 20 years old, polytechnic student)

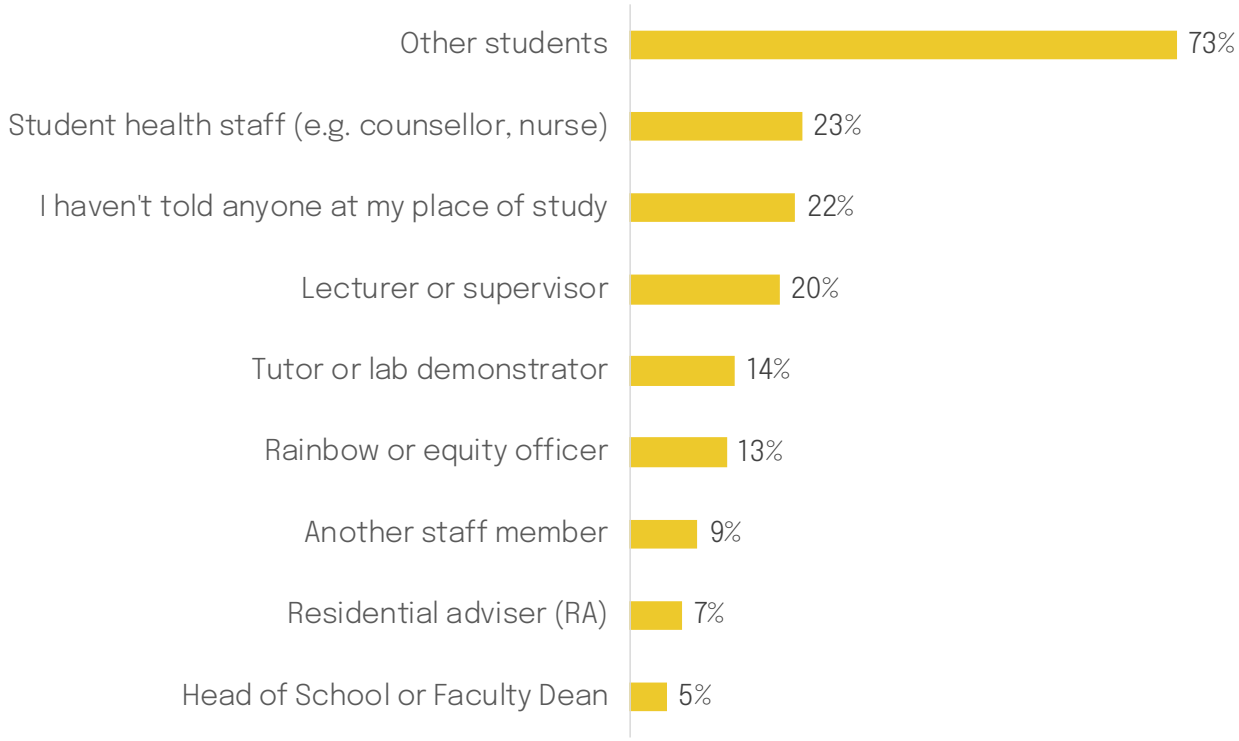
"Overall, my place of study is welcoming. One thing I would note is that many of the programmes to support rainbow students are run by other students. I don't really feel like lecturers or university management engage with the rainbow community beyond having the odd poster up in the hallway. Perhaps they're worried about saying the wrong thing, but I want lecturers and management to know that its better to say something and at least try to engage with rainbow students, than avoid the topic all together."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 21 years old, university student)

3.2 Disclosure and safety

Tertiary and post-secondary participants reported having told a range of people in their place of study about their rainbow identity.

The groups of people who participants had told about their rainbow identity are shown in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16. Which of the following people at your current place of study have you told about your rainbow identity? (Please select all that apply) (N=1640)



Just under two thirds (64%) of participants indicated there was someone at their place of study who they felt safe talking to about issues relating to their rainbow identity. Most (76%) of the staff that participants felt safe talking to at their place of study were part of rainbow communities themselves.

Around one in six (17%; *n*=266) tertiary and post-secondary students reported feeling unsafe at their place of study as a rainbow person in the past 12 months. Of these, almost half (47%) felt safe in classrooms or lecture theatres; two in five (42%) felt unsafe in bathrooms; and just over one third (37%) felt unsafe in the main hub at campus.

In addition, 6% of all participants reported that a staff member at their place of study had outed them as a rainbow person without their permission.

"I feel safe as a rainbow person" (Pacific, 18 years old, university student)

"I am often told I am in the wrong bathroom when in the science, engineering or business building. I am not as frequently misgendered or made to feel unsafe when in social science or arts related buildings. My own faculty is very supportive and inclusive, I find other areas of the University very unsafe for me." (Pākehā/NZ European, 23 years old, university student)

"*There is a lot of straight people and I don't know many other LGBT people there, I do not know how they feel about LGBT people or how well educated they are. i feel uncomfortable and anxious about other people. i don't know how accepting the people around me are"* (Pākehā/NZ European, 18 years old, another education provider)

"It's generally okay, but I can't change my name for my graduation certificate; and they frequently forget my pronouns" (Pākehā/NZ European, 22 years old, polytechnic student)

"Very little accommodations are made to include trans students unless you actively approach someone about it which is very uncomfortable for a lot of us" (Pākehā/NZ European, 20 years old, university student)

"University has been a safe place for me in my lectures but because I'm only 17 and staying at home I'm not exposed to hall environments or clubs. Either way University is a lot more supportive for rainbow students, in my experience, than high school." (Māori, 17 years old, university student)

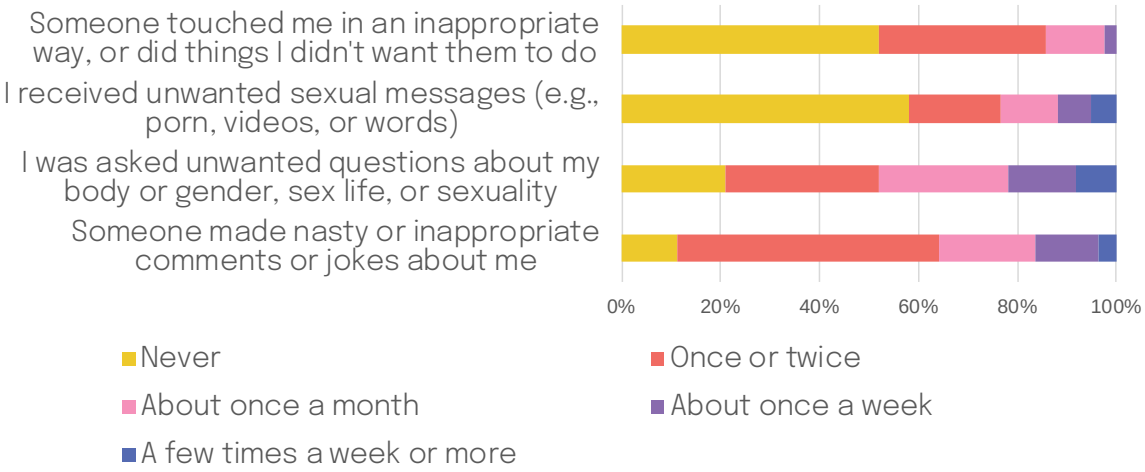
3.3 Harassment and microaggressions

3.3.1 Harassment in place of study

Of participants who were comfortable answering questions on harassment (*N*=1485),[7] almost one in ten (9%; *n*=135) tertiary students reported that they had been harassed at their place of study during the past 12 months. Figure 17 below shows the prevalence of four types of harassment that we subsequently asked about:

- Receiving unwanted sexual messages (12% said at least weekly)
- Being touched in an inappropriate way, or having unwanted things done to them (2% said at least weekly)
- Being asked unwanted questions about their body or gender, sex life, or sexuality (22% said at least weekly)
- Someone making nasty or inappropriate comments or jokes about them (16% said at least weekly)

Figure 17. In the past 12 months, how often have you experienced the following types of harassment at your current place of study? (N=134)



Of participants who experienced harassment (*n*=135), almost half (47%) were harassed on the grounds of being, or being perceived as being, sexuality diverse, and three in ten (30%) for being, or being perceived as being, trans or non-binary. We refer to this type of harassment as rainbow-focused harassment.

7 In *Identify*, we defined harassment as "unwelcome behaviour that is offensive, humiliating or intimidating to another person. It can be based on many things, including sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, religion, physical characteristics, or mental ability. It can be verbal, non-verbal, physical, or sexual. Harassment can be done again and again, or it can be one-off. It has harmful effects on the person who is harassed, their wellbeing, and their ability to study or work."

Most (82%; *n*=66) who experienced rainbow-focused harassment did not lay a complaint the last time it happened. The main reasons for not laying a complaint included not thinking it was serious (61%), or that staff handling would not be helpful (50%).

Of participants who made a complaint (*n*=15), almost half (46%) reported that their place of study's response to their complaint resolved the issue or made things a bit better. Other participants said it made no difference (39%) or it made things a bit worse (15%).

> *"On the whole I think I would be supported at my wānanga if I was to come out, however, am still reluctant to as a number of 'comedic skits' etc. created by classmates often use two male love interests as the punchline etc. I do feel I would be supported more so at Wānanga though than I would be at University. Have recently found a number of students at my university are baiting other male students in order to out them to others etc. Where I feel like something like that occurring at Wānanga would not be tolerated. I think on the whole microagressions like calling something 'gay' are far more accepted at university than they are at Wānanga."* (Pacific, 22 years old, whare wānanga and university student)

3.3.2 Microaggressions

We asked participants which of the following *microaggressions* they had experienced at their current place of study. Participants' responses (n=1640) indicate that cisheteronormativity is common in tertiary and post-secondary education environments in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- Almost three in five (57%) said someone at their place of study said or did something which showed that they thought they were cisgender or heterosexual
- Almost half (46%) heard phrases like "That's so gay!" in a bad way, or someone being called names such as "f**", "d***" or "t*****"
- One in five (20%) were told they did not conform to stereotypes of rainbow people
- One in seven (14%) said that someone made comments about the clothing they wore because it did not conform to gender norms
- One in seven (14%) heard students claim that rainbow identities are "just a phase" or don't exist
- Some (3%) heard lecturers or tutors claim that rainbow identities are "just a phase" or don't exist

3.4 Chapter summary and recommendations

- Almost one third of the *Identify* sample attended tertiary or post-secondary education, including universities, polytechnics, whare wānanga, and a range of vocational training. Qualifications included bachelor's degrees, certificates or diplomas, and postgraduate qualifications
- Four in five students had told someone in their post-secondary education setting about their rainbow identity
  - > A small but notable number of students reported that a staff member had outed them without their consent
    - » **More work is required to ensure staff do not out students on purpose or accidentally**
  - > Almost two thirds of students reported they had someone at their place of study that they felt safe talking to about rainbow issues
  - > Of those staff who they felt comfortable talking to, most were also members of the rainbow community
    - » **Staff who are part of rainbow communities are likely to need additional support and recognition for their support of rainbow students in post-secondary education**

- Most tertiary and post-secondary students in *Identify* agreed or strongly agreed that their learning environments were fair, supportive, and inclusive.
  - > Types of support ranged from rainbow student groups and anti-discrimination policies, which were almost ubiquitous, to gender-neutral bathrooms and paid rainbow equity roles, which were less common but still prevalent
    - » **Existing rainbow-inclusive policy and support work in institutions is important and must continue to be resourced effectively**
    - » **Our findings are skewed to larger metropolitan areas, and additional work is required to understand regional and rural post-secondary experiences**
  - > A large proportion of students were "neutral" as to whether their institutions were fair, supportive and inclusive
    - » **Additional efforts are required of post-secondary education organisations to ensure that the majority of rainbow students agree that these places are fair, supportive and inclusive**

- One in six students reported feeling unsafe at their place of study in the last 12 months
  - **Unsafe spaces included lecture theatres/classrooms, bathrooms, and student hubs**

- One in ten students reported being harassed at their place of study over the last 12 months
  - Types of harassment included inappropriate questions, jokes or comments; unwanted sexual messages; and inappropriate touching
  - Rainbow-focused harassment accounted for high amounts of the harassment that was reported
    - **The high proportion of rainbow students reporting being unsafe or harassed in the past year in post-secondary education is a serious cause for concern and further investigation**
    - **Policies and processes on safety and harassment must ensure that rainbow-specific harassment, including sexual harassment and violence, is explicitly named, recorded and appropriately addressed**
  - Most students who experienced rainbow-focused harassment did not lay a complaint
  - Of those who did report, over half found that reporting the issue did not resolve it or make it better
  - A considerable minority of those that reported felt that it made the issue worse
    - **Policies and processes responding to reports of rainbow student safety concerns and harassment are in urgent need of review**

- At least some form of microaggressions was reported by almost three in five students
  - Cisheteronormativity is common in tertiary and post-secondary spaces
    - **Targeted work and programmes addressing everyday cisheteronormativity are required at post-secondary institutions**
    - **Curriculum inclusion of rainbow identities and experiences is an obvious opportunity to disrupt cisheterosexism in post-secondary educational contexts**

Chapter 4. Employment and work

In this chapter, we report on the employment and work experiences of participants who were not currently in secondary or tertiary education. In order to reduce the time-burden of the survey, we did not ask current secondary or tertiary students about their work experiences, so this is an undercount of current work and employment experiences. Detailed demographics for participants' ages, and prioritised ethnicities and gender in this section are presented in the Appendices on page 114. We report these experiences in five sections:

- Paid employment
- Support and belonging
- Harassment, discrimination and microaggressions
- Unemployment and job seeking
- Sources of income

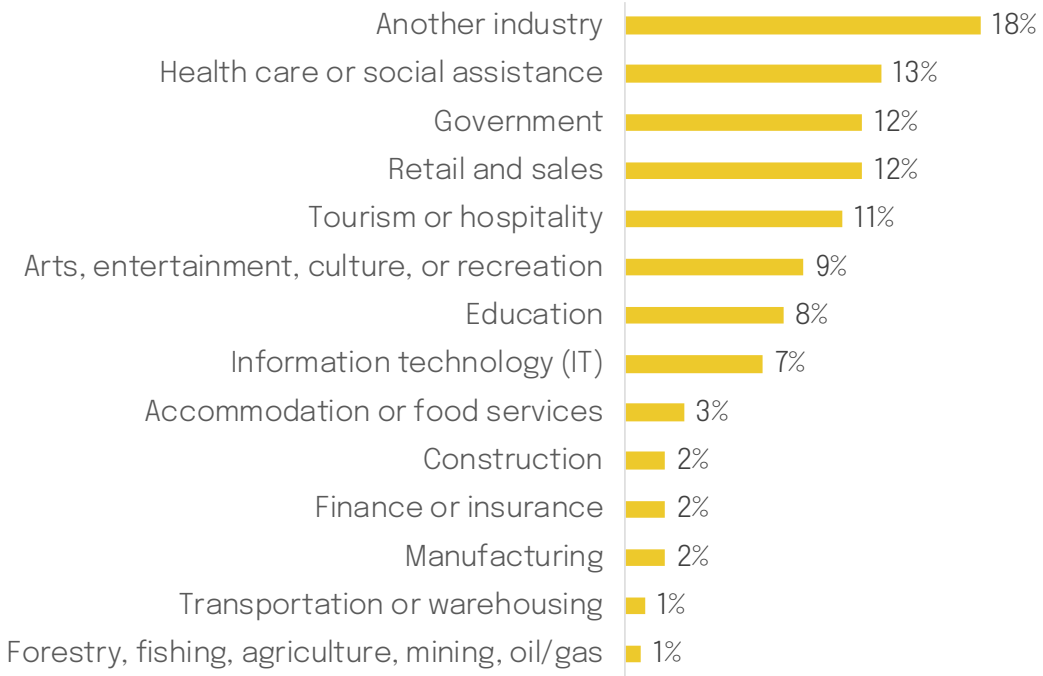
4.1 Paid employment

We asked participants who were not currently in secondary or tertiary education (*N*=1099), whether they had a paid job or employed. One quarter (75%; *n*=827) of participants reported they were in paid employment.[8]

- Almost half (49%) of employed participants had been working at their current job for the past 12 months or longer.
- Just over one in five (23%) said that they had worked more than one paid job in the past four weeks
- Seven in ten (72%) were on a permanent contract; one in five (20%) were on a fixed-term or casual contract; and one in 20 (5%) were self-employed. A further 4% were not on a contract, or did not know if they were
- One in six (15%) worked 20 hours or less per week; three in five (59%) worked between 21 and 40 hours; and one quarter (26%) worked 41 hours or more of paid work

As Figure 18 shows, participants worked in a range of industries. The most common industries participants worked in were health care or social assistance, government and retail and sales. One in five (18%) reported they worked in another industry not listed.

F igure 18. Which one of the following industries most closely matches the one in which you are employed in your main job? (This is the one you work the most hours at during the week.) (N=765)



[8] Having a paid job was defined in *Identify* as "part / full-time paid employment, self-employment, paid apprenticeship, internship, etc.".

4.2 Belongingness and support

Participants reported varying levels of comfort and belongingness at work. For example, three in five (59%; *n*=489) employed participants agreed or strongly agreed that they could be themselves at work, while one in three (32%; *n*=268) participants were neutral about, disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

The proportion of trans and non-binary participants who reported that they could not be themselves at work, or that they did not feel valued or respected by co-workers, was higher than the proportion of cisgender participants who reported this (see Table 8 in the Appendices).

Only 4% of participants had not disclosed their rainbow identity to someone at work. The types of people participants (*N*=602) had disclosed their rainbow identity to included co-workers and colleagues (65%); managers and bosses 58%); another person at work (35%); and clients or customers (21%).

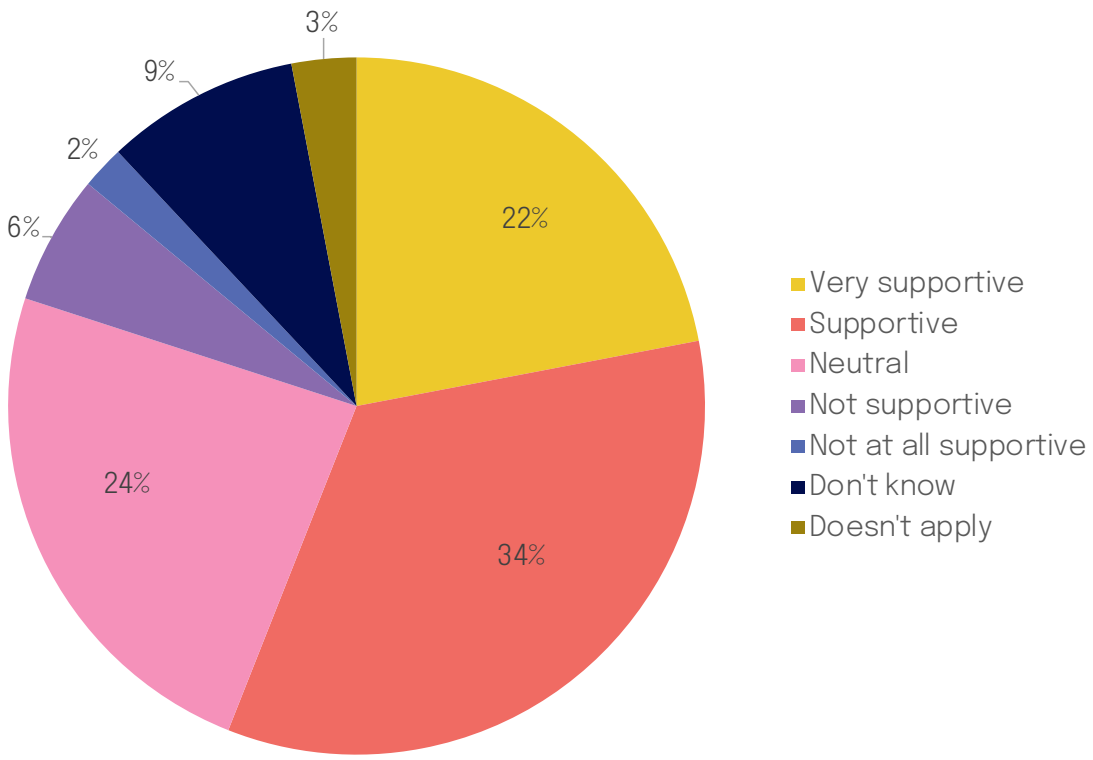
"The older I've gotten, the more my workplace(s) have respected my identity and transition"
(Māori, 22 years old)

"My workplace is largely very supportive of my rainbow identity. I am free and encouraged to be who I am. People do comment on my clothes in a way they don't about others but it's always in a positive way. There are some micro aggressions which occur but I see these as part and parcel of everyday life as a queer person - straight men talking over me (they only do this to the women in the office and me), the odd off colour comment. Usually I get asked a lot of questions about what it means to be queer or comments on queer culture but it's from a place of curiosity and I enjoy sharing that with my colleagues."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

4.2.1 Support for rainbow employees

We asked participants how supportive their workplace was of rainbow employees in general. As Figure 19 shows, just over half (56%) of participants reported their workplace was supportive or very supportive of rainbow employees. One quarter (24%) reported their workplace was neutral, and almost one in ten (8%) reported their workplace was not supportive or not at all supportive.

Figure 19. In general, how supportive would you say your current main workplace is of rainbow employees? (N=762)



We asked participants (*N*=762) about the different ways their workplace supported rainbow employees:

- One in five (19%) of participants reported that their workplace holds inclusion training for staff, and almost one quarter (23%) said their workplace provides a safe space to connect with other rainbow employees, such as a rainbow staff network
- Two in five (41%) reported that their current workplace provides gender-neutral bathrooms, and a similar proportion (40%) reported that their workplace allows trans and non-binary people to change their name or gender marker on employment records or reports
- Just over two in five (42%) said that their workplace takes complaints about discrimination against rainbow employees seriously
- Around one in six (17%; *n*=34) trans and non-binary participants said they had transitioned at work with the support of their colleagues

"My coworkers are supportive and understanding. My boss is older and simply doesn't understand, and explaining to him becomes confusing. Misgendering and using my old name is not from a place of hate and I don't take it personally."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 25 years old)

"My workplace is performatively supportive but takes no action or educational drive to improve conditions or advocate for queer safety"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

4.2.2 Union membership

Of participants who responded (*N*=711), one in five (22%) belonged to a union at work . Just over half (54%) of these participants reported they would feel comfortable or very comfortable talking to their union representative about issues related to rainbow identities. One in five (20%) said they would feel neutral about this, and one in six (15%) said they would feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable talking to their union representative about this.

4.3 Harassment, discrimination and microaggressions

4.3.1 Discrimination at work

Almost half (47%) of participants (*N*=609) reported they had not told someone at work about their rainbow identity because they were worried they would be treated unfairly. Almost one in ten participants reported they had quit a job because of how they were treated as a rainbow person (7%), or that they had been fired or forced to resign because of their rainbow identity (2%).

Among trans and non-binary employees (*N*=198):

- Around one third (32%) delayed their transition because they were worried about being discriminated against as a rainbow person
- One in six (17%) said that their boss or co-worker had misgendered them on purpose
- Just over one in eight (13%) said that their boss or co-worker shared information about them or their transition when they shouldn't have
- Just over one in eight (13%) said they were expected to wear a uniform that did not align with their gender identity or expression
- Just over one in 20 (6%) said they were prevented from using the bathroom at work that matched their gender

4.3.2 Harassment at work

Of participants who chose to answer questions on workplace harassment (*N*=728), almost one in five (18%) reported having been harassed at work in the past year.

Around three in ten (29%) participants who reported harassment at their place of work said that they were harassed due to their actual or perceived diverse sexuality, and one in six (17%) reported this was due to them being trans or non-binary, or because someone thought they were. Co-workers were the most common people who had initiated these types of harassment (55%), followed by customers or clients (43%) and a manager or boss (36%).

Around three in five (62%; *n*=66) participants who had been harassed based on their diverse gender, sexuality, or variation in sex characteristics, said they had not reported or laid a complaint about the harassment the last time it happened. The main reasons for not reporting this harassment included not thinking that the employer's handling of the situation would be helpful (67%) or feeling too embarrassed or ashamed to report it (49%). One in five (21%) of participants did not report harassment because they perceived their employers to be homo/bi/transphobic.

> *"I will not come out at work, because I fear I will be harassed and my co-workers will stop respecting me"*
> (Māori, 20 years old)

4.3.3 Microaggressions at work

We asked employed participants (N=729) about experiencing *microaggressions* at work. In the past year:

- Just under half (44%) heard phrases like "That's so gay!" at work
- Just over one quarter (28%) heard someone at work using names (such as "f**", "d***" or "t*****") in a bad way
- Three in five (61%) said someone at work said or did something that showed that they thought they were heterosexual or cisgender
- Almost one in five (18%) were told they do not conform to stereotypes of rainbow people
- For around one in six (17%) participants, people at work made comments about the clothing they wore because it did not conform to gender norms

> *"Others in workplaces tend to talk about rainbow people as if they don't know any, they default everyone around them as cis-het. Makes it feel unsafe to come out to them."*
> (Māori, 22 years old)

"My boss has made comments about "not believing in pronouns" after I asked her to include them in her signature - especially as I had just added gender diverse pronouns to my signature"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 23 years old)

4.4 Unemployment and job-seeking

One quarter (25%; *n*=272) of participants who were not currently in education said they were not working in a paid job. Rates of unemployment were significantly higher among disabled participants compared to non-disabled participants (41% vs. 17%), and higher among trans and non-binary participants compared to cisgender participants (39% vs 14%). See Table 9 in the Appendices on page 128 for more details.

We asked participants who were currently unemployed, but who had previously been employed (*N*=177), their reasons for leaving their last job. Just over one in five (18%) participants had left because they were bullied or treated unfairly at work. Just over one in ten (11%) left because they did not feel welcome as a rainbow person. Two in five (40%) were unhappy with their working conditions, and a similar proportion left for personal or health reasons (41%).

4.5 Sources of income

Of employed participants who responded (*N*=740), in the past 12 months:

- Almost all (96%) received money from wages or salaries, while the remainder were self-employed
- Just under one in five (18%) received income from self-employment or their own business
- Around three in ten (29%) received financial aid from family members
- Just over one in five (22%) received a benefit or income support from the Government

4.5.1 Experiences of Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ)

We asked participants who were not currently in secondary or post-secondary education about their experiences with Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) for government-aided financial support.

Just over two in five (43%; *n*=312) employed participants and just over four in five (86%; *n*=179) unemployed participants had ever accessed WINZ. One in nine (12%; *n*=84) employed participants, and one in seven (14%; *n*=208) unemployed participants, had not accessed WINZ, but had wanted or needed to.

Of the 491 participants who had accessed WINZ:

- Two in five (41%) had difficulty filling out forms
- For over one third (37%), staff did not give them correct information about a grant, benefit or allowance
- For just under one third (32%) of trans and non-binary participants, staff did not use their correct name or pronouns
- One quarter (25%) were worried about WINZ finding out about a partner and having their benefit cancelled

We asked participants if they wanted to share more about their experiences of WINZ (selected quotes are shared):

"Refused to change my title to Mx on correspondence."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 24 years old)

"inaccessibility to me as an autistic person"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"I told my case manager that I was transgender and had a lot of anxiety issues which made it beyond difficult for me to find work and she replies to me that "she isn't a counselor" which was offensive as I was just answering a question she had previously asked which was "Why haven't you been able to find a job"
(Māori, 21 years old)

"Choosing between honesty & broke or fraud & able to afford to live"
(Māori, 24 years old)

"Contact with winz was hard and made me more unwell as it caused me so much stress"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 21 years old)

4.6 Chapter summary and recommendations

- Respondents who were not in secondary or tertiary education accounted for one in five of the total cohort
- Around three quarters of them were in paid employment
- The majority worked between 21 and 40 hours a week, though the distribution was skewed towards more weekly work hours, with a quarter working more than full-time
- Despite areas of particular concentration, including the health, service, government and hospitality categories, rainbow young people were present in all of the main industry categories
  - > There is no industry category that does not include rainbow young people
    - » **All industry bodies need to ensure that work and employment policies and processes are responsive to the rights and needs of rainbow young people**

- Almost half of participants had maintained their present job for 12 months or longer
  - > Three quarters were in stable employment (e.g., permanent contracts)
  - > But the other quarter had precarious employment (e.g., casual contracts)
  - > Just over one in five reported having worked multiple jobs in the last month

- Almost all participants had disclosed their rainbow identity to someone at work
- Almost half of participants reported they had not disclosed their rainbow identity to someone because they were worried they would be treated unfairly
- Two thirds of participants reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that they could be themselves at work
  - > Just over half of participants reported their workplace was supportive of rainbow employees
    - » **Additional work is required to enable all workplaces to be places of belonging and respect for rainbow young people**

- Almost one in ten reported they had quit because of how they were treated as a rainbow person or had been fired or forced to resign because of their rainbow identity
  - **Additional work is required to address the large proportion of young workers who have had their employment terminated based on their identity**
- Almost half of respondents heard derogatory gender and sexuality phrases at work
  - **Inclusion training must address inappropriate language, as well as other microaggressions, that can make these settings unwelcoming and unsafe for rainbow young people**

- Trans and non-binary participants were more likely than cisgender participants to report that they could not be themselves at work or were not valued or respected by co-workers
- Trans and non-binary employees reported a range of forms of discrimination, from misgendering and violation of confidentiality to being prevented from wearing a uniform or using the bathroom that aligned with their gender
  - **Employers need to prioritise and resource safe and inclusive working environments for trans and non-binary young employees**
  - **Further work is required to understand what barriers exist to employers providing these supports**

- One in five employees were union members
  - Yet one in six of these union members stated they would not feel comfortable talking to their union representatives about rainbow issues
    - **Union organisations must ensure that they are welcoming to all members, and additional work is required to explore the minority of young rainbow people who do not feel comfortable talking about rainbow issues with union representatives**

- Almost one in five reported being harassed at work in the past year
  - Almost 30% of those who reported being harassed said it was due to their actual or perceived diverse sexuality
  - Almost 20% said it was due to them being (or perceived as) trans or non-binary

- The majority did not report the harassment because they assumed the response would be unhelpful, they were embarrassed or ashamed, or because they perceived their employer to be homo/bi/transphobic
  - **Employment harassment policies and processes must name, measure and address rainbow-related harassment effectively**
  - **Such policies must recognise customer-related harassment as well as co-worker and managerial harassment**
  - **The reports of managers or bosses as instigating harassment is very concerning; Rainbow young people must be well supported and informed about external agencies that can support them effectively in these situations (e.g., the Human Rights Commission)**

- One quarter of the participants not in education were not working in paid roles
  - Unemployment was significantly higher among disabled participants, compared to non-disabled participants, and among trans or non-binary participants, compared to cisgender participants
- Reasons for leaving past employment included:
  - Being unhappy with work conditions
  - Personal or health reasons
  - Bullying or unfair treatment at work
  - Not feeling welcome as a rainbow person
    - **Workplace bullying policy and process must ensure that rainbow-related bullying is recognised and effectively addressed**

- Over three in five participants not in education had accessed WINZ at some point
  - A small but notable minority had not accessed WINZ but had wanted or needed to
    - **WINZ must improve responsiveness to rainbow young people, including policy and process barriers, as well as staffing performance**
    - **WINZ must ensure staff do not expose young people to harassment and microaggressions that may result in young people avoiding eligible WINZ services**

Chapter 5. Emotional wellbeing and health care

In this chapter, we report on the emotional wellbeing and health care experiences of Identify participants. All participants, regardless of education or employment, were asked these questions.

We report these findings in three sections:

- Emotional wellbeing
- Access to general health care
- Access to gender-affirming health care

5.1 Emotional wellbeing

We used the WHO-5 wellbeing index to measure participants' emotional wellbeing, which asked participants how they had been feeling in the past two weeks.[9]

Based on their responses to these questions, one quarter (24%) of participants were identified as having good wellbeing, and three quarters (76%) having poor wellbeing.

[9] The original WHO-5 wellbeing index uses a 6-item scale. Due to a scale conflation in our survey, a 5-point scale was used, meaning that participants' scores (the sum of their responses to all 5 items) are not directly comparable to most other uses of the index. Participants' total scores were translated into a 100-point scale, and used the cut-off of 50% or less to signal poor wellbeing, and 51% or above to indicate good wellbeing.

5.1.1 Self-harm and suicide

If you need support or want to talk to someone, or know someone who needs support, you can reach out to these free confidential support lines:

- **OutLine** - 0800 688 5463 from 6pm - 9pm every night
- **Free call or text 1737** to talk to a trained counsellor any time
- **Lifeline** - 0800 543 354 or text 4357.

Before asking questions about self-harm and suicide, we asked if participants were comfortable asking these questions. Almost all (96%; *n*=3953) of participants who were shown this said that they were comfortable answering these questions, though some (4%; *n*=158) said that they found these questions upsetting and skipped this section.

- Over half (56%; *n*=2235) of all participants who responded said they had hurt themselves on purpose once or twice (26%), or three or more times (30%) in the past 12 months. Just over two in five (44%; *n*=1728) participants said they had never hurt themselves on purpose in the past 12 months.
- Almost two thirds (64%; *n*=2513) of participants had thought about killing themselves in the past 12 months. Just over one quarter (29%; *n*=1128) had made a plan about how they would kill themselves, and one in ten (10%; *n*=391) had tried to kill themselves (attempted suicide). Among participants who had attempted suicide, just over one third (36%; *n*=139) reported that these attempts resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse.

A further analysis identified significantly higher rates of mental health harm for trans and non-binary participants, compared to cisgender participants in relation to: having hurt themselves on purpose in the past 12 months (70% vs 44%); thinking about killing themselves in the past 12 months (75% vs 54%); making a plan about how they would kill themselves (38% vs 20%) and reporting at least one suicide attempt in the past 12 months (14% vs 6%) (see Table 10 in the Appendices).

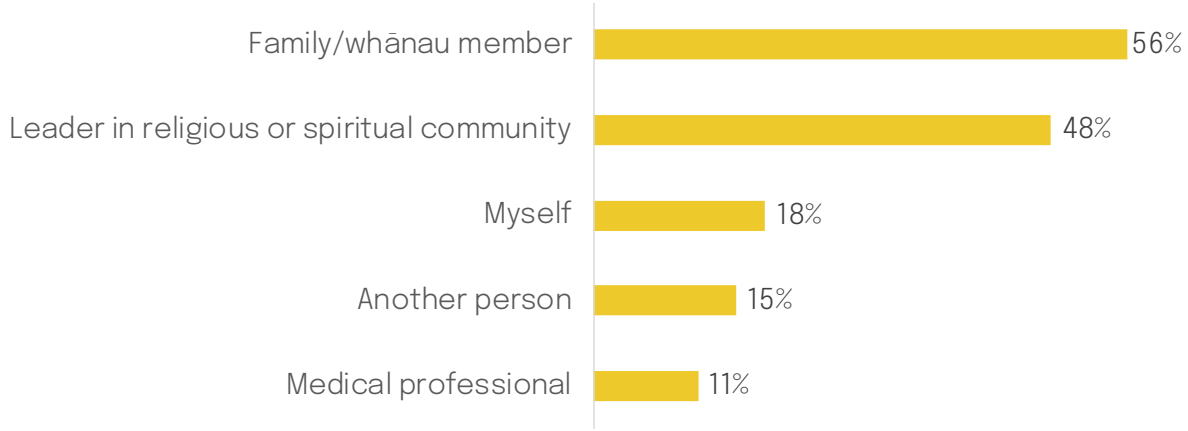
5.1.2 Conversion "therapy"

Before asking questions on conversion "therapy",[10] we asked if participants were comfortable with answering these questions. Almost all (97%; *n*=3986) said they were comfortable, though some (3.1%; *n*=129) said they found the topic upsetting and skipped the

10 In the survey we defined conversion "therapy" as "a practice or treatment that tries to change a person's sexual orientation or gender, or stop them from expressing their rainbow identity. It is sometimes known as reparative therapy, ex-gay therapy, and healing sexual brokenness. It can also happen in prayer sessions."

questions. Of the participants who were comfortable, 3% (*n*=124) said they had experienced conversion "therapy", and 1% (*n*=41) said they would prefer not to say. Figure 20 shows the categories of people who suggested conversion therapy to young people, highlighting the role of family and whānau, as well as religious and spiritual leaders in suggesting conversion therapy to young people. Experiences of conversion "therapy" reported in *Identify* have been explored in depth in a peer-reviewed article, which demonstrates the association of conversion therapy with negative mental health outcomes, as well as greater prevalence among young people who were trans and non-binary, or who had experience of homelessness, or statutory care service experience (Fenaughty et al., 2022).

Figure 20. Which of the following people suggested "conversion therapy" to you? (Please select all that apply) (N=124)



We asked participants if they wanted to share anything else about their experiences of conversion "therapy" (select quotes are shared):

"was religiously motivated as i imagine it probably all is, and extremely difficult. i fought the idea that there was something wrong with me but i still deeply struggle with invasive thoughts about god and my gender despite the four years it's been since i last had a "prayer group"/ conversion therapy session"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 16 years old)

"It was unhealthy for my mental health, and had a significant poor influence on my self image and emotional health"
(Māori, 22 years old)

"traumatic and confusing to my future-adult self"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 22 years old)

"Medical conversion of intersexed body to heteronormative female body"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 26 years old)

"Lots of people have basically told me that the route of previous mental health problems (e.g. I have diagnosed anxiety) have been because of being trans and that it's a mental illness- a lot of people suggest therapy to try and "cure" that. It's been less of an issue now that I'm quite assertive/sure about my identity but it's definitely been an ongoing issue since I came out."
(NZ European/Pākehā, 22 years old)

"CT [Conversion Therapy] is so much more prolific than most kiwis think. It's everywhere, especially in smaller cities and rural areas. We need help"
(Māori, 21 years old)

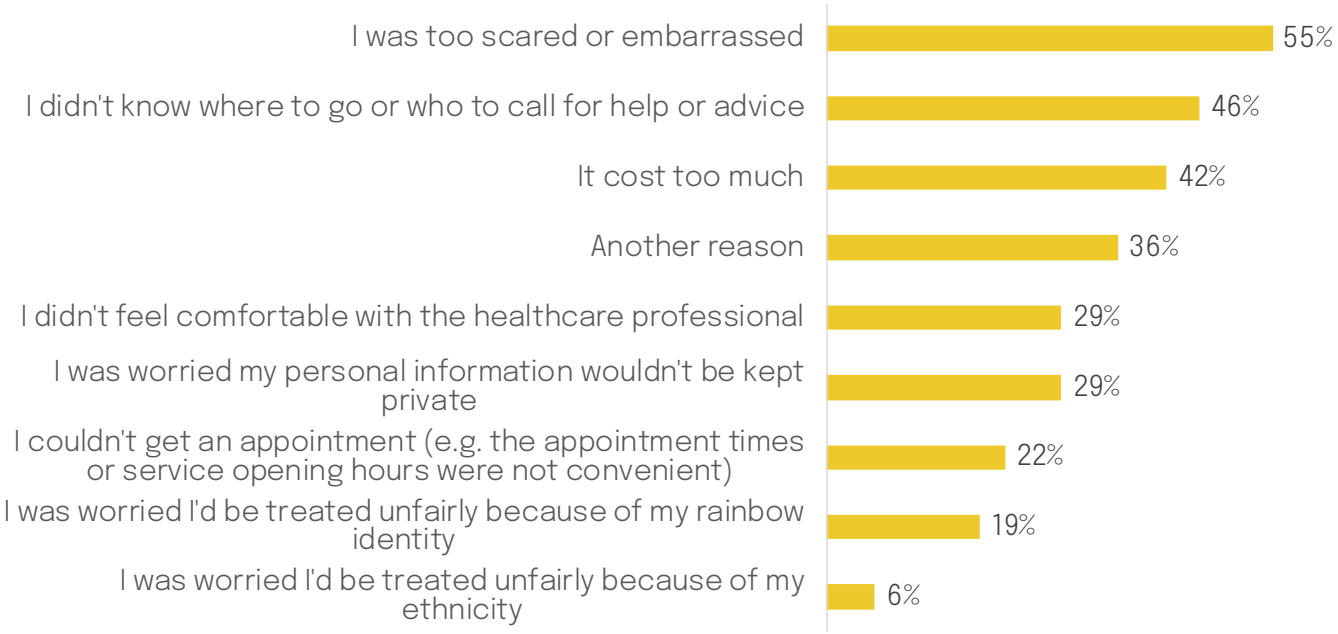
5.2 Access to general health care

We asked participants (N=4169) if they had accessed health care[11] in the past 12 months. Seven in ten (70%) participants reported they had accessed health care, and one in eight (13%) reported that they had not needed to access health care. Around one in six (17%) reported that they had not but had needed to – reasons for not accessing care, as outlined in the graph below. We describe this here as foregone health care.

There was a larger proportion of Pacific (26%), Asian (23%), and disabled (21%) participants reporting foregone health care than Māori (18%), European/Other (16%) and non-disabled (15%) participants (see Table 11 in the Appendices on page 73). Those who reported foregone health care selected were asked to select from a list of reasons why they might not have seen a healthcare professional when they needed to. The reasons selected for foregone healthcare are presented in Figure 21.

[11] We asked, "In the past 12 months, have you gone to a healthcare professional or expert because of a health issue? (This could be general, mental, sexual or spiritual health e.g., GP, counsellor, nurse, tohunga)". This question is from the Youth2000 survey series, so that we could compare *Identify* responses to the general youth population.

Figure 21. In the past 12 months, what are some of the reasons you have not seen a healthcare professional when you needed to? (Please select all that apply) (*N*=715)



Participants who were in secondary or tertiary education (*N*=2984) reported varying levels of comfort about talking to a health professional at their school or place of study, such as a nurse or school guidance counsellor, about issues related to their rainbow identity. Just over one third reported they would feel either comfortable (25%) or very comfortable (12%) talking with a healthcare professional at their place of learning. Two in five participants said they would feel uncomfortable (28%) or very uncomfortable (13%) doing so, and one in five (21%) said they felt neutral about this or didn't know (2%).

5.2.1 Discrimination in health care settings

Overall, almost one in ten (8%; *n*=244) participants said that they had been treated unfairly by a healthcare professional because of their rainbow identity. The proportion of disabled participants (11%) who reported they were treated unfairly in healthcare encounters because of their rainbow identity was almost twice as large as non-disabled participants (6%). The proportion of trans and non-binary participants (14%) who reported being treated unfairly by healthcare professionals was 3.5 times larger than cisgender participants (4%). There were no significant differences between ethnicity groups.

Just over one third (35%) of intersex participants reported that they had been made to see a healthcare professional, without their consent, because of their variations in sex characteristics.

5.2.2 Access to gender-affirming medication

We asked trans and non-binary participants (*N*=1633) if they had ever taken hormones or puberty blockers to affirm their gender. Table 1 presents the data about use of, and preferences for, gender-affirming hormones, puberty blockers, and medication to stop menstruation.

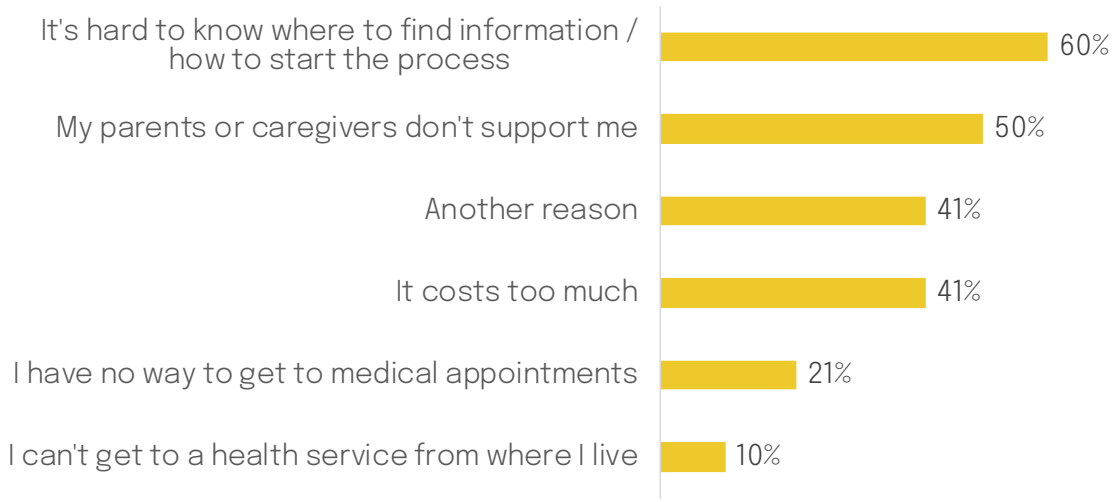
Overall, two in five (39%; *n*=644) trans or non-binary participants had accessed at least one type of gender-affirming medication listed in Table 1 (further analysis of use of, and desire for, gender-affirming medication by gender modality are presented in Table 12 and Table 13 in the Appendices).

Table 1. Use of, and desire for, gender-affirming medications among trans and non-binary participants (N=1633)

Type of gender-affirming medication	% n					
	Yes	No, I want but cannot get this	No, I want this in the future but not yet	No, I don't want this	Not sure	Doesn't apply
Gender-affirming hormones	19% 309	16% 260	16% 266	19% 308	23% 373	7% 117
Puberty blockers	7% 115	13% 214	4% 59	30% 482	15% 248	31% 509
Medication to stop menstrual cycle	26% 420	16% 261	10% 162	13% 206	10% 165	26% 417

We asked participants who indicated that they wanted gender-affirming medication but could not access it (28%; *n*=462) to select responses that explained why they were unable to access this healthcare. As shown in Figure 22, the most common reasons for participants' unmet need for gender-affirming medication were not knowing where to find information, and lack of parental or caregiver support.

Figure 22. What are the reasons why you cannot access gender-affirming medication? (Please select all that apply) (N=462)



5.2.3 Impacts of gender-affirming medication

We asked participants who had accessed gender-affirming medication what the impacts of this healthcare had been on their lives (selected quotes are shared):

"Every time I see people who I haven't seen in a while they comment that I seem happier and more myself. I feel optimistic every day, no matter how hard things are getting. I love my body and its changes, even the stressful ones, because they are now all my choice and a reflection of my affirmed gender. I am getting gendered correctly by strangers more and more often. I am happy in my own skin. I feel like my body loves me back too"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 17 years old)

"While gender-affirming medication didn't have an immediate impact on my life, it has made me a lot more comfortable in my body, and has helped others to see me the way I see myself. It has had a tremendous positive impact on my mental health."
(NZ European/Pākehā, 22 years old)

"Testosterone was a gradual change, which was important to me while I was still coming to terms with my identity and other people were still getting used to it too. But it helped give me confidence generally, and I was also more comfortable talking about my identity and about trans issues when I no longer faced so much dysphoria in my day to day life."
(Asian, 25 years old)

"The pill made it easier to cope with the dysphoria but still I struggle. But it did help a bit"
(Māori, 17 years old)

"It's literally completely changed my life. I definitely would have ended my life if I wasn't able to fully transition and pass as a male. I live completely stealth and that would never have been possible without medical treatment. Before medically transitioning I hated every part of my life and couldn't even attend school. I now have graduated school, university and have a very successful career."
(NZ European/Pākehā, 21 years old)

"It has been the single best decision I have ever made for my mental health"
(Asian, 19 years old)

"Life changing, I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for gender-affirming medication. It's give me the confidence to be okay with my body as a gender diverse person"
(Pacific, 16 years old)

"Puberty blockers [have] given me the opportunity to be with my thoughts, rather than the terrifying (to me) onslaught of puberty. It had given me time to think about my future, and what that might look like for me"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 15 years old)

"I am much more comfortable in my body. every change that happens feels like something I chose for myself. I love my acne, my weight gain, my voice cracks, my coarse hair, because they are all part of my trans pride. people tell me I seem happier, brighter, more at ease, more myself. I feel more happy and safe in my own skin every day and my mental health is consistently more positive than its ever been even though I still have a ways to go"
(NZ European/Pākehā, 17 years old)

"My life is literally 100x better overall since I've started to feel more confident in myself as a result of hormones"
(Māori, 21 years old)

5.2 Chapter summary and recommendations

- In the past 12 months, most participants had accessed healthcare, but one in six experienced foregone healthcare
  - > But one in six experienced foregone healthcare
  - > Of those who forewent healthcare, significantly higher rates were observed for Pacific and Asian participants, and disabled participants
  - > Reasons for foregoing healthcare ranged from embarrassment, not knowing where to go, and the cost of healthcare to no available appointments and fear of being treated unfairly because of rainbow or ethnic identity
  - > Of the participants in secondary or tertiary education, over 40% reported that they would feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable talking about rainbow issues with a health professional at the place of study
  - > The level of foregone healthcare is concerning, especially given the high numbers of participants in educational contexts that may have student health or school-based health services
    - » **School-based health services and post-secondary health services are key opportunities for health provision for this group, yet additional rainbow-responsive training and support is clearly needed for these services**
    - » **Financial barriers to rainbow young people's healthcare need to be further investigated, especially given the overall limited financial resources of this population**

- General health workforce development is also required to ensure that young people do not feel embarrassed or fearful they will be treated unfairly based on their rainbow, disabled, and ethnic identities
- Almost one in ten participants had experienced unfair treatment by a healthcare provider because of their rainbow identity
  - > This rate for disabled participants was almost double double of the rate for non-disabled participants
  - > The rate for trans and non-binary participants was over triple of the rate for cisgender participants
    - » **Our findings again highlight the intersectional approach necessary for improving policy and process, focusing on cisnormativity and ableism, alongside racism, in healthcare provision and practice for young people**

- Just over one third of intersex participants had been made to see a health professional, without their consent, because of their variations in sex characteristics
  - **Whānau and professionals supporting rainbow young people who are intersex need urgent support and guidance around ethical guidelines for treatment and practice**
  - **Further work is urgently required to address the concerning lack of medical consents reported by intersex participants**

- Two in five trans and non-binary participants have accessed gender-affirming hormones, puberty blockers, or medication to stop menstruation
  - Those who had accessed gender-affirming medication overwhelmingly reported positive effects on their mental health, wellbeing and/or relationship to their body
    - **The provision of gender-affirming medication for young people is important for some trans and non-binary young people's health and wellbeing and must be available to all who want and need it**
    - **Efforts to address the concerning mental health findings reported for trans and non-binary young people must address barriers to gender-affirming healthcare**

- One in seven trans and non-binary participants wanted gender-affirming medications, especially puberty blockers and medication to stop menstruation, but were unable to access these
  - Of those who currently wanted gender-affirming hormones (*n*=569), nearly half (45%) were unable to access these
  - Of those who currently wanted puberty blockers (*n*=329), seven out of ten (69%) were unable to access these
  - Of those who currently wanted medication to stop their menstrual cycle (*n*=681), four out of ten (38%) were unable to access this
    - **There is a pressing need to improve access to gender-affirming medications for young people who want and need them**
    - **Additional education and resourcing for healthcare providers to provide gender-affirming medications are urgently required**

- The main reasons for the unmet need for gender-affirming medications were a lack of information and non-supportive parents or caregivers
  - **Additional support and education for parents and caregivers of trans and non-binary young people about the important health and wellbeing benefits of gender-affirming medication is required**
  - **Efforts to improve trans and non-binary young people's health and wellbeing must include making information about gender-affirming medications, including where and how these can be accessed, available for young people to make informed decisions**
  - **Other barriers to accessing gender-affirming medication exist and further work is required to explore solutions to these issues**

- Not all trans and non-binary young people access, or want to access, gender-affirming medications
  - Despite evidence of the positive impacts of provision of gender-affirming medications, findings indicate that gender-affirming medications are not necessarily desired by some young people
    - **It is important to recognise that there are many ways of being trans and non-binary, and medically transitioning is just one of many ways that trans and non-binary people affirm their gender**
    - **Disinformation that the increasing proportions of young people identifying as trans and non-binary will necessarily result in a wide-scale uptake of gender-affirming medications needs to be addressed**
    - **Further work understanding who wishes to access, and who faces barriers in accessing, gender-affirming medications is required, as there may be differences by gender-modality and ethnicity**

- Using the WHO-5 wellbeing index, based on the previous two weeks, only one quarter of *Identify* participants reported 'good wellbeing'
- More than half of the participants had self-harmed in the past 12 months
- Almost two thirds of participants reported suicidal thoughts in the past year
  - One in ten had attempted suicide
- Trans and non-binary young people were significantly more likely to report self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and an attempted suicide in the past year

- Compared to the representative Youth19 sample of rainbow secondary school students, these rates are broadly similar, and show a similar pattern of increased distress for trans and non-binary young people (Fenaughty et al., 2021)
- These findings underscore the continued severe mental health challenges reported by rainbow young people before and during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Trans and non-binary young people's mental health and wellbeing are a severely pressing and urgent issue, and this report reflects the higher levels of stigma and structural disadvantage these young people face
  - **Our findings demonstrate concerning levels of foregone health care, combined with widely reported mental health issues, which amplifies the need for effective health care, including mental health, provision for rainbow young people, especially trans and non-binary young people**
  - **Other marginalised groups in this population will also face barriers to healthcare provision and effective service, and further work is required to map and address these intersectional issues**

Chapter 6. Family, whānau and friends

In this chapter, we report findings about family/whānau and friends in four sections:

- Responses from family/whānau
- Involvement with Oranga Tamariki
- Friends' support
- Cultural connectedness

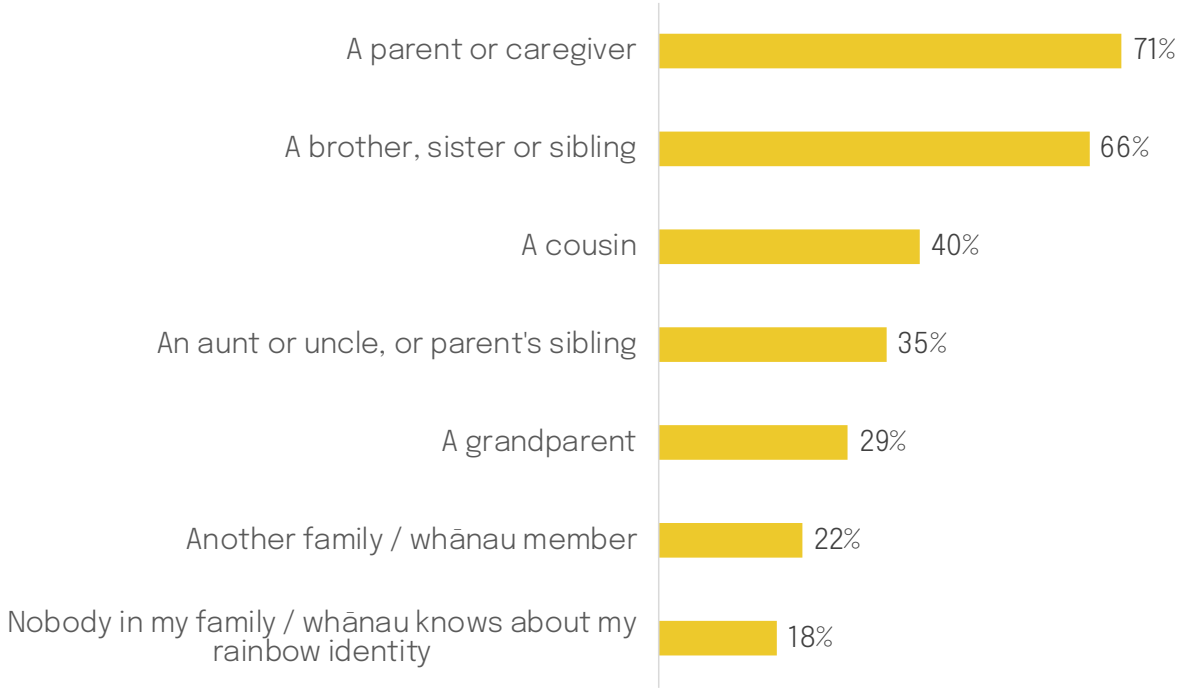
6.1 Responses from family/whānau to rainbow identity

6.1.1 Family awareness and support

We asked participants which of their family/whānau members were aware, or had been told, about their rainbow identity (see Figure 23). Overall, four in five (82%) participants reported that someone in their family/whānau were aware of their rainbow identity.

Almost three quarters (72%) of these participants, whose family/whānau were aware of their rainbow identity, said they had someone in their family/whānau who they could talk to openly about their rainbow identity.

Figure 23. Which of the following people have you told (or do you think know) about your rainbow identity? (Please select all that apply) (N=4074)



We also asked participants about the quality of their relationship with their parents (see Table 2). Around three quarters of participants reported positive relationship aspects with their parents or caregivers.

Table 2. Proportion of participants reporting positive relationship aspects with parents or caregivers (N=3837)

Response	% n
At least one parent or caregiver gives support when needed	73% 1784
Gets along well with at least one parent or caregiver	79% 2046
Has lots of good conversations with at least one parent or caregiver	68% 1614

6.1.2 Family/whānau acceptance

We asked about a range of positive responses that family/whānau (that they grew up with) had in response to their rainbow identity.

- Seven in ten (69%) participants said that at least one family/whānau member have told them that they respect or support them
- One quarter (25%) said at least one family/whānau member did research to learn how best to support them, and a similar proportion (26%) stood up for hem with other family/whānau members or friends
- Just under half (48%; *n*=675) of trans and non-binary participants reported that at least one family/whānau member used their correct name, and half (50%; *n*=709) said at least one family/whānau member used their correct pronouns

Participants also wrote about other things their family/whānau have done to support them as a rainbow person (select quotes are shared):

"Asking questions and having difficult conversations"
(Māori, 16 years old)

"Bought me a pride flag"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 14 years old)

"Contributed resources for support through websites and online support groups"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 17 years old)

"Having meetings with my school with me and emailing teachers in support of my identity as a trans person"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old)

"My parents use gender-neutral terms when asking about my love life"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"helped me find a place to live away from unsupportive family"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"My whānau was generally unphased due to the fact we have other members of the takatāpui community within the whānau"
(Māori, 19 years old)

"My sister is the mediator between my homophobic parents and I. She has taken on the role to look after my parents for me ever since I was estranged from my parents."
(Asian, 26 years old)

6.1.3 Negative responses from family/whānau

Participants reported a range of ways that family/whānau members rejected or responded negatively to their rainbow identity. For example:

- One in four (26%) participants had experienced family members they grew up with saying negative things about rainbow people
- Two in five (43%) participants said a family member had pretended their rainbow identity was not real
- One in five (20%) participants said a family member had rejected or distanced themselves from them
- For trans and non-binary participants, two in five (41%; *n*=549) had been misgendered on purpose by a family member

Participants also wrote about other negative things their family/whānau have done to them because of their rainbow identity (select quotes are shared):

"Said that I was "too young to know""
(Māori, 15 years old)

"Outed me to others in my family who I wasn't comfortable knowing"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old)

"Acted like my coming out was a joke and continued to insult me and joke about it."
(Māori, 16 years old)

"My extended family have threatened violence against me if I were ever rainbow so I haven't told them"
(Asian, 22 years old)

"Forced me to misgender myself on forms and not allow siblings to use my name/pronouns."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 25 years old)

"Prayed for me so I'd 'turn back', told me I'm going to go to hell if I 'practice' homosexuality, told me my life is sad and going down the drain."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 17 years old)

"Stepmother told me she thought I would change my mind one day and also outed me to others"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 22 years old)

"Refused to let me change my name, even on the school roll, let me take hormones or puberty blockers or wear a binder. Also got angry with me for cutting my hair."
(Māori, 14 years old)

"Tried to kick me out"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 14 years old)

6.2 Involvement with Oranga Tamariki

One in ten (10%, *n*=419) participants reported ever having been involved with Oranga Tamariki (OT). The proportion of Māori participants who had been involved with OT was twice as high as Pākehā/NZ European participants (18% vs. 9% respectively), and a higher proportion of trans boys and trans men (16%) and non-binary people (12%) reported having ever been involved than participants of other gender modalities (9% cisgender girls/women; 9% trans women; 5% cisgender boys/men). Some (2%) of these participants were currently involved with OT.

6.3 Friends' support

Overall, participants reported a strong sense of connection to friends.

- Nine in ten (90%; *n*=3669) participants reported having a friend they can talk to about anything
- Just over one in five (22%; *n*=885) participants said that they had taken at least a day off school or work in the past 12 months to look after a friend, who is also a rainbow person, who was feeling down or having a hard time
- Around seven in ten participants (69%; *n*=2822) said their friends care about them "a lot", and three in ten (28%; *n*=1143) said their friends care about them "a bit"). Only 3% (*n*=108) said that their friends did not care about them at all

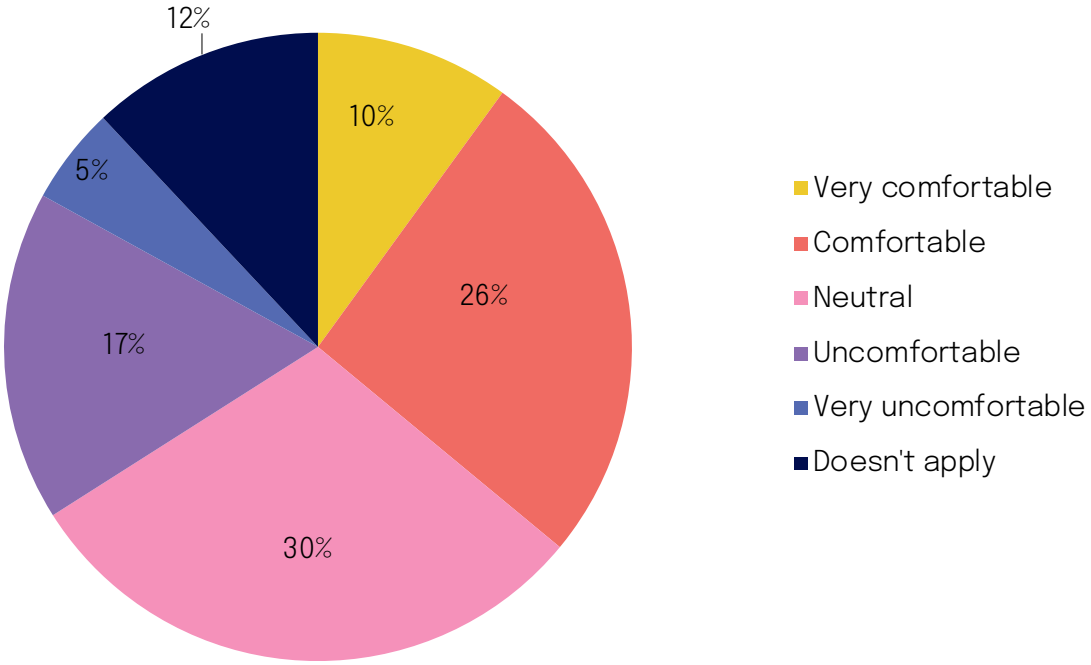
Almost three in five (58%; *n*=2349) participants said that it would be easy or somewhat easy to ask a friend or family member to stay with them if they needed a place to stay.

Just over one in four (27%; *n*=1075) said it would sometimes be easy and sometimes hard, and just under one in ten (10%; *n*=391) said that they would find it hard or very hard. Some (6%; *n*=235) said they would not ask to stay with anyone.

6.4 Cultural connectedness

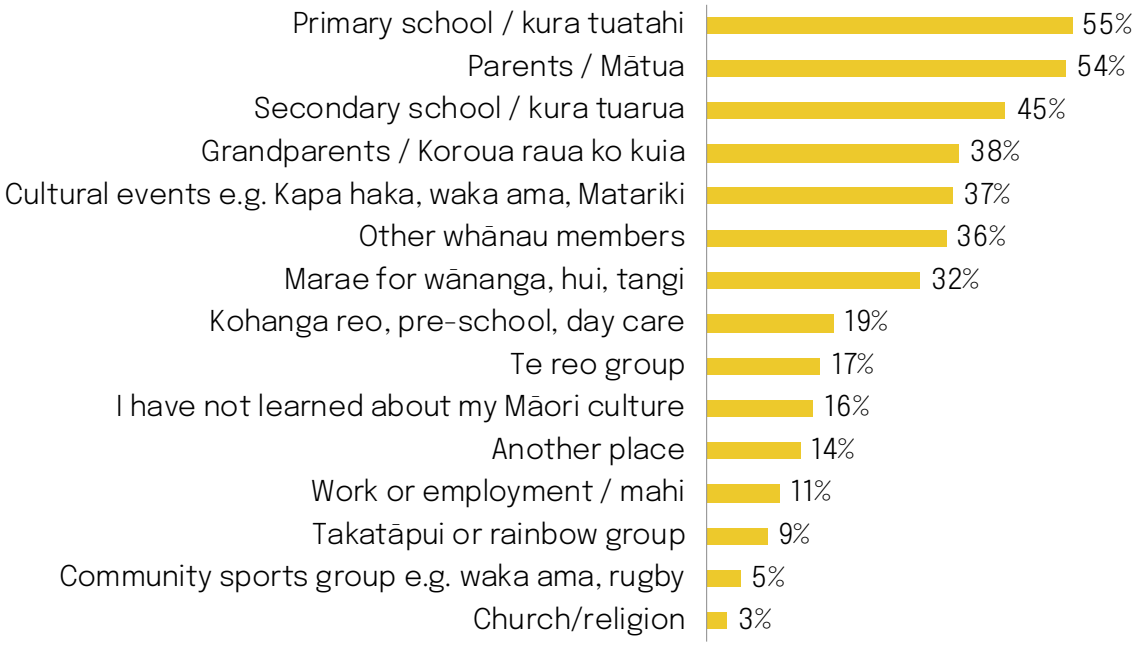
We asked a few questions to better understand how rainbow young people feel in their cultural and ethnic communities. As Figure 24 shows, just over one third (36%; *n*=1470) reported feeling comfortable or very comfortable in their cultural community as a rainbow person, and one in five (22%; *n*=906) said they felt uncomfortable or very uncomfortable. Three in ten (30%; *n*=1208) reported feeling neutral about this.

Figure 24. Overall, how comfortable do you feel as a rainbow person in your ethnic or cultural communities? (e.g. weddings, funerals, other cultural events) (N=4053)



We asked Māori participants a question on where they had learnt about Māori culture, as shown in Figure 25 below. The question was adapted from the *Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey*.

Figure 25. Where have you learned about your Māori culture, such as language, songs, cultural practices or family ancestry? (Please select all that apply) (N=584)



6.5 Chapter summary and recommendations

- Over four out of five participants reported that someone in their family/whānau was aware of their rainbow identity
  - Almost three quarters of that group said they had someone in their family/whānau who they could openly talk to about their rainbow identity
  - Around three quarters of participants had a good relationship with their parents or caregivers
  - While it is positive that many young rainbow people have a supportive person in their family/whānau, and many are supported by a parent or caregiver, one quarter were still not supported in this key domain of their lives
    - **A quarter of young people are missing out on parental support, and further work is needed to respond to this, including education and support groups for parents and family/whānau**
    - **Additional work is required to explore whether levels of family/whānau support alter by key demographic groups, and if specific resources for family/whānau from young people in these groups may be required**
  - Positive responses from family/whānau included being told they are respected or supported, doing research to develop a better understand how to support them, standing up for them, and using their correct names and pronouns
  - Negative responses included making derogatory comments about rainbow people, pretending the participant's rainbow identity was not real, rejecting them, or purposely misgendering them (in the case of trans and non-binary participants)
    - **Work with families and whānau to support young people can focus on both small and large things that they can do to show support**
    - **Providing family/whanau whānau with easy-to-understand information about rainbow young people, the legitimacy of their identities, and the importance of using correct names and pronouns is an important opportunity to increase the proportion of young people who receive this important support**
    - **Providing people with examples and guidance on how to safely stand up for rainbow young people is another important opportunity to improve young people's safety and support**

- A relatively high proportion of participants had ever been involved with Oranga Tamariki
  - > Māori participants were more likely to be involved in Oranga Tamariki.
    - » **Ensuring that Oranga Tamariki is effective for rainbow young people, and especially for takatāpui and Māori rainbow young people is a priority identified by this research**
  - > Transmasculine and non-binary people were significantly more likely to report Oranga Tamariki involvement than participants of other genders
    - » **Specific attention to policy and practice supporting trans and non-binary, and other gender-expansive young people, is an additional priority for a rainbow-inclusive and effective Oranga Tamariki service**

- Overall, participants' connection to friends was very strong, with most participants having a friend they could talk to about anything or who cared about them a lot
- Participants were generous and cared about their friends, and one in five had taken time off from work or studies to support a rainbow friend in the past year
  - > Given the significant proportion of young people who said they did not have parental or whānau support, peers have become a key source of support
    - » **Noting the high levels of stigma and structural discrimination reported in Identify, and the high levels of ensuing mental health challenges that have been reported, peers may benefit from resources and services that help them to provide effective support to their friends**
  - > Over half reported they could easily find a place to stay with a friend or family member, if they needed to
  - > Only a small proportion reported that it would be hard, very hard, or that they would not ask to stay with anyone
    - » **There is a small but important group of young rainbow people who report having limited support from peers. These young people may nonetheless require support, and for those who are not well supported by family/whānau, the provision of free support services for this group are critical**

- Māori participants largely learnt about their own culture through school or whānau, though there were several other spaces that offered learning opportunities
  - > **Kura Kaupapa Māori must be well supported and resourced with appropriate learning materials and professional learning to recognise and embrace takatāpui and Māori rainbow young people**
  - > **English-medium schools must ensure that takatāpui and Māori rainbow young people are effectively taught about their identities, language and histories, and that they are supported to achieve as takatāpui and Māori rainbow young people**

- Over one third of participants reported feeling comfortable or very comfortable in their cultural communities as a rainbow person
  - > **Further work is required to understand the factors that promote comfort in cultural settings, so all cultural communities can ensure that all young people can belong and feel comfortable**

Chapter 7. Home and living environment

All Identify participants were asked questions about their home and living environments. We report these findings in three sections:

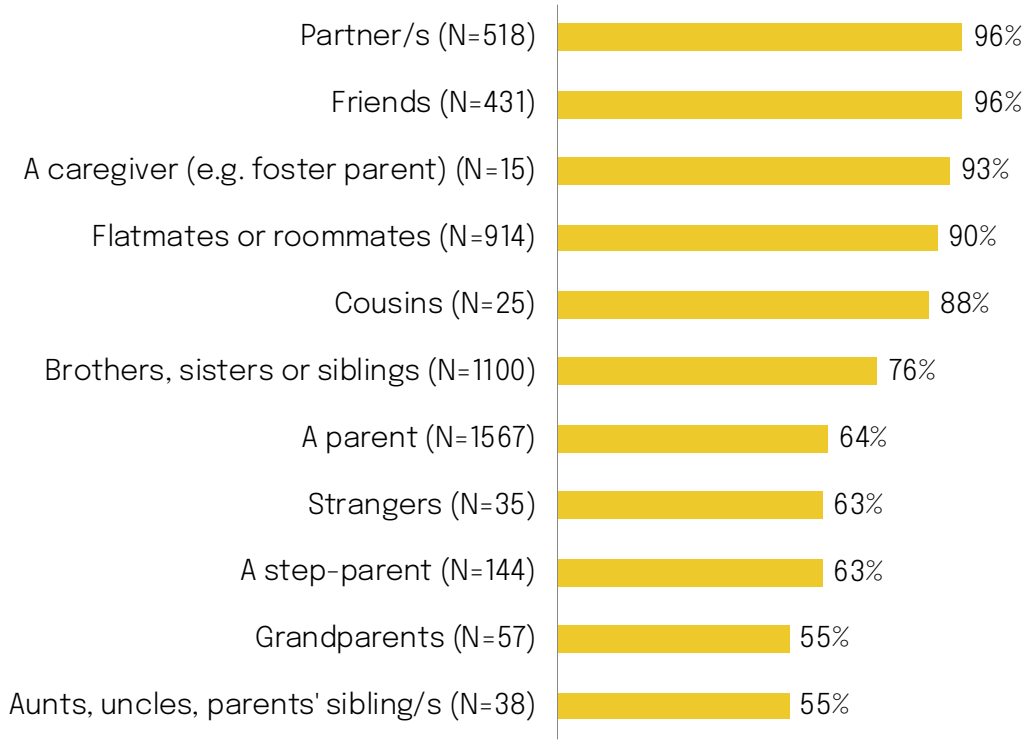
- Support from people participants live with
- Safety in living environment
- Homelessness and housing security

7.1 Support in home environment

Around two thirds of participants lived with at least one parent (59%), step-parent (6%) or caregiver (<1%). Two in five (41%) participants lived with at least one sibling, and one quarter (27%) of participants lived with flatmates or roommates. Participants also lived with partners (13%), friends (11%), grandparents (3%), aunts or uncles (2%), cousins (1%), strangers (2%), or by themselves (3%). Participants also described a wide range of housing and living situations including living in halls of residence, with partners' parents, with pets, at boarding school, or other family members.

Overall, there was greater awareness of participants' rainbow identity among flatmates, friends and partners with whom participants were living with, than parents, grandparents, and aunts and uncles. Around two thirds of participants who lived with parents or caregivers, who knew about their rainbow identity, reported that their parents or caregivers were supportive of them as a rainbow person (see Figure 26).

Figure 26. Support of rainbow identity from people who participants live with (of those who are aware of participants' identity; total N varies).



7.2 Safety in home environment

Three quarters of participants (76%) reported they felt very safe or safe in their current living situation. One in five (20%) participants reported they sometimes felt safe and sometimes unsafe, and around one in 20 (5%) participants reported feeling unsafe or very unsafe. Non-disabled (84%) and cisgender (84%) participants reported feeling safe or very safe at higher rates than disabled (64%) and trans and non-binary (67%) participants. The proportion of Asian participants reporting feeling safe in their living environments was smaller than other ethnicity groups, and significantly lower than European and other ethnicities (54% vs 65%).

One in eight (12%) participants had previously moved towns or cities to feel safer as a rainbow person.

We asked participants who felt unsafe, what would help you to feel safer in your current living situation (select quotes shared):

"Being more accepting of my sexuality if I told them. I hear blatant homophobia constantly."
(Māori, 17 years old)

"They are really nice to me and I think that they're doing their best to make me feel safe and comfortable in the environment already."
(Asian, 15 years old)

"Sometimes my parents say homo/transphobic things, I don't think they mean to, but it makes me uncomfortable and sort of hide my rainbow identity" (Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old)

"Accepting parents/family and unconditional love" (Asian, 14 years old)

"If [the people I live with] didn't argue and dismiss me when I try to educate them on the LGBTQ+ community" (Pacific, 16 years old)

"More willingness to understand and accept my cultural stance" (Māori, 23 years old)

"Lower rent prices (higher financial stability), more rental protections (particularly for rainbow people)" (Māori, 21 years old)

"I feel safe in my current living situation, I'm in a very privileged position! My household is trying to get used to using my name and pronouns at the moment :)" (Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old)

"Nothing, they're so supportive. When I had top surgery, they all looked out for me and in general" (Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

"When my mum found out I was queer, she told me "you don't even know what that is". So maybe if she was more supportive." (Pacific, 14 years old)

"Not having a homophobic parent and being reliant on my parents for care due to my disability" (Pākehā/NZ European and Asian, 15 years old)

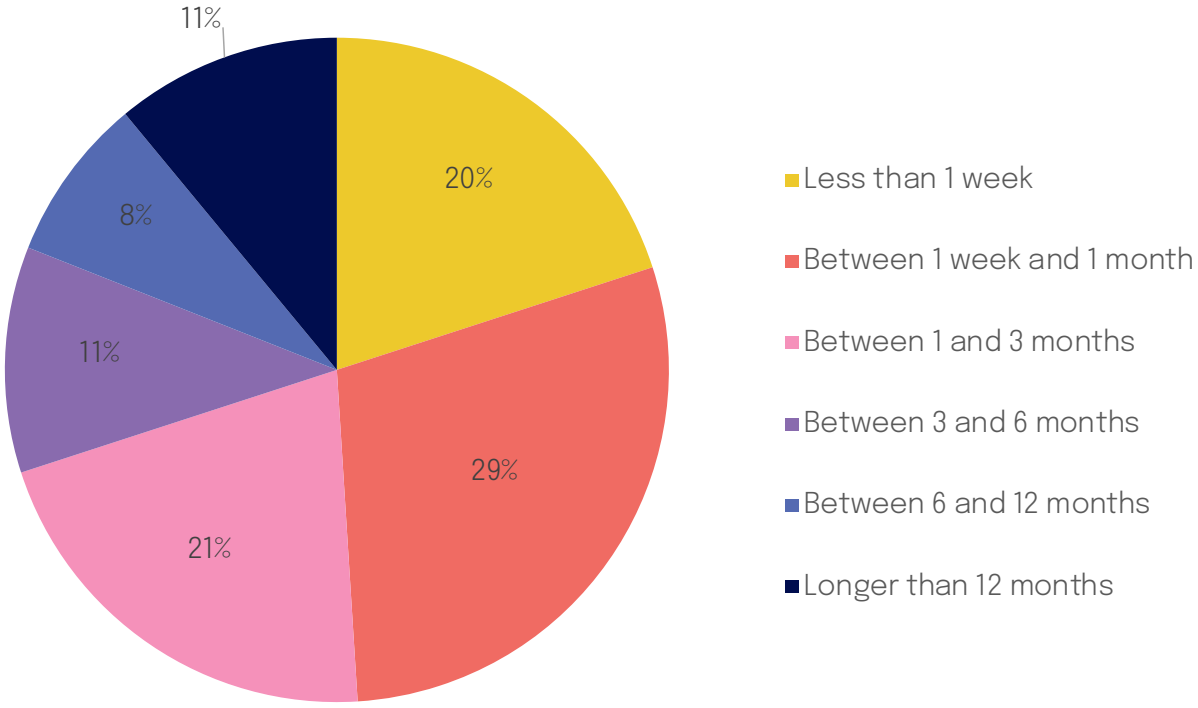
7.3 Homelessness and housing insecurity

One in ten (10%; *n*=394) *Identify* rainbow participants reported they had experienced homelessness[12] at some point in their lifetime. Of these, one in five (20%) participants had experienced homelessness for the first time at 12 years or younger; just over two in five (43%) experienced it first between 13 and 17 years old; just over one third (35%) at 18 years or older; and 2% could not remember.

Four out of five participants who reported ever being homeless said that they had been homeless for more than one week (see Figure 27).

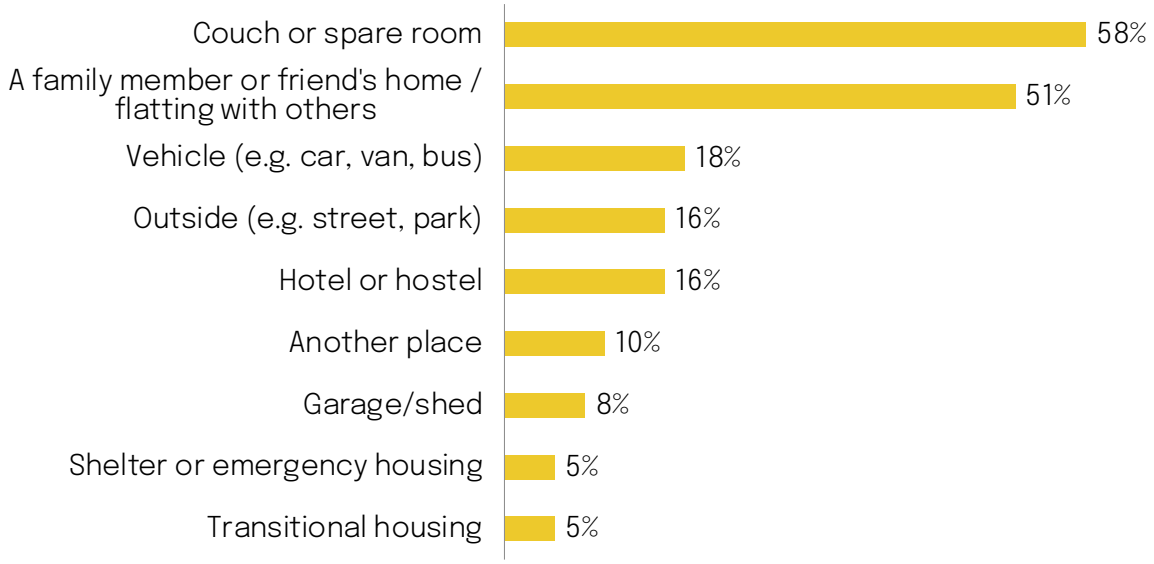
[12] In *Identify*, we defined homelessness as "when a person is unable to safely live with a family / whānau member, friend, or flatmate, and has no other safe place to live. It can include: sleeping without a roof over your head, living between homeless shelters, couch surfing at friends' homes, renting out accommodation like a motel, sharing a living space with friends or family, even when it's unsafe to do so."

Figure 27. What is the longest time that you have ever been homeless for (including at this time)? (N=391)



During an experience of homelessness, the majority of participants reported sleeping in the spare room or couch surfing, often at a family member or friend's home (see Figure 28). Nearly one in five said they mainly slept in a vehicle during times they were homeless, and only a minority said they used a shelter, emergency housing, or transitional housing.

Figure 28. Where did you mainly sleep during these times [when you experienced homelessness]? (Please select all that apply) (N=394)



Participants also shared experiences of homelessness in their responses to the question, "What role, if any, has being a rainbow person played in your experience of being homeless?" (select quotes shared):

"Primarily, it was being seen as a "bad influence" to around by the peers or family of those that I had to support me. For instance, being unable to couch surf because in many of the houses I would crash in would have people that thought that my "queer lifestyle" influenced my being homeless and not wanting their friend/family members be influenced and turn to homosexuality/sin/perceived promiscuity, because they would then end up without a home and no one to support them."
(Māori, 26 years old)

"My parents made it very clear they did not like or respect my identity as a non-binary individual, and would make hurtful and sometimes threatening comments to the point I only felt safe in my room (this went on for three months after I came out to them and took place over lockdown). After lockdown they gave me an ultimatum that I could change my choice to be non-binary or find a new place to live so I moved out. They quickly revoked their ultimatum but I chose to live separately for my safety and mental health." (Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"It's cos my parents kicked me out cos I'm gay"
(Māori, 18 years old)

"Other Takātapui took me in and gave me space until I found my feet again. This is where I found the community I love so much and feel safe with now. The level of support from takātapui changed my life."
(Māori, 26 years old)

"Partly - relationship breakdown with conservative/ religious parents."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 22 years old)

"It didn't cause it, but fear of judgement/discrimination prevented me from accessing support services"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

"It's very important to find housing where I can be safely open with no fear that I will have to hide any or all parts of myself. It makes it harder to find safe accommodation, sometimes that meant finding accommodation where I had to completely hide who I am."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 25 years old)

"When I first was coming out, my family was already putting lots of pressure on me for other things. I was going through a break up and was coming out. didn't feel safe. I was judged for not having a stable home or job. I also think its harder to find safe places to flat when you are queer."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

7.4 Chapter Summary and Recommendations

- Participants reported a wide range of living arrangements
  - The majority reported living with other people, often parents, siblings, or flatmates and roommates

- There was greater awareness of participants' rainbow identity among flatmates, friends, and partners with whom participants were living with than parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles
  - Around two thirds who lived with parents or caregivers reported that they were supportive of them as a rainbow person
  - Whānau and family members are a key part of young people's worlds and can be important sources of support
  - While whānau and family members are generally doing a good job supporting young people, one third of young people are not getting the support they need from them
    - **Work is required to assist family/whānau members who are unsupportive to be more supportive. Education programmes, support groups, and other initiatives are required to help family/whānau better support rainbow young people at home**
    - **The barriers trans and non-binary people report in accessing gender-affirming health care due to unsupportive parents and caregivers emphasise the need to ensure family/whānau and parental support programmes focus on the needs of trans and non-binary young people**

- One in eight participants had previously moved towns or cities to feel safer as a rainbow person
  - The strong representation of participants from larger cities and urban areas in *Identify*, noted in Chapter 2, likely represents the impact of a variety of push (away from stigma, harassment, and structural barriers) and pull (towards visible communities and spaces, healthcare, and increased opportunities to find belonging and partners) factors
    - **Rainbow young people are likely to be more concentrated in larger cities and urban areas, making it imperative that these regions and councils ensure youth-focused policy and processes, including advisory processes, addressing the needs of rainbow young people and including them as key stakeholder groups**

» **These findings equally emphasise that smaller and regional localities, as well as larger and urban areas, must address the needs of rainbow young people, and urgently assess and address the factors that may be responsible for them being pushed out of their towns and cities**

- Three quarters of participants reported feeling safe or very safe in their current living situation, while only 5% felt unsafe or very unsafe; however:
  - > Disabled participants were significantly more likely to feel unsafe than non-disabled participants
  - > Trans and non-binary participants were significantly more likely to feel unsafe than cisgender participants
  - > Asian participants were significantly more likely to feel unsafe than any other ethnic group

» **An intersectional lens on housing safety is required that addresses ableism and cisnormativity in living situations for rainbow young people**

» **Additional groups of rainbow young people, including those categorised as Asian in this analysis, require specific attention focussing on safety in their living situations**

- One in ten participants reported they had experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Of those who had:
  - > One in five had experienced it for the first time at the age of 12 or younger
  - > Over 40% had experienced it in between the age of 13 and 17
  - > Over one third had experienced it at 18 years of age or older

» **Homelessness policy, practice and service provision must recognise, and effectively address, the needs of rainbow young people, who are likely to be disproportionately affected by homelessness**

» **The low rates of accessing shelters, emergency and transitional housing, suggest further improvements to these services may enable more rainbow young people to access more stable housing when they experience homelessness**

» **The rates of homelessness reported by young people aged 17 and under emphasise the importance of rainbow-responsive practice from statutory care providers and Oranga Tamariki**

- Duration of homelessness varied between less than one week and longer than a year, with most cases being more than one week
  - > Participants had various sleeping arrangements during these periods, though most slept on a couch or in a spare room or at a family member or friend's home
    - » **Ensuring peers and whānau are educated on supporting homeless rainbow young people is important**
  - > Participants' rainbow identity played a role in many participants' experiences of homelessness, but not all of them
    - » **Structural factors leading to homelessness for cisgender and heterosexual young people also apply to rainbow young people, who nonetheless face additional challenges related to stigma and structural disadvantages due to their identities.**
    - » **Urgent work is required to understand how to prevent the factors that increase homelessness for rainbow young people**

Chapter 8. Connection to community

In this chapter, we report on participants' responses to questions about involvement in their communities. We report on these in three sections:

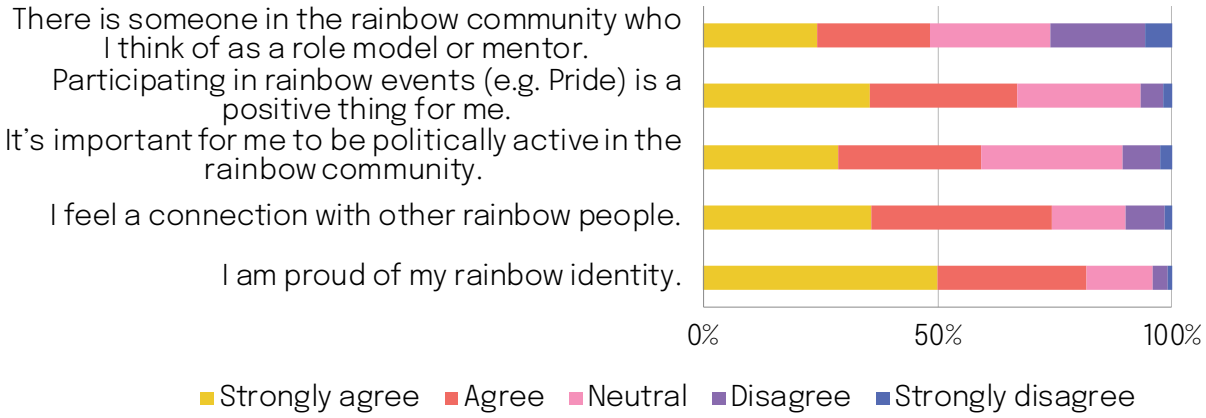
- Connectedness to rainbow communities
- Extracurricular activities
- Religion and spirituality

8.1 Connectedness to rainbow communities

Overall, most participants reported feeling a strong connection to their rainbow identity and other rainbow people. We asked participants how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about feeling connected to other rainbow people and communities, as shown in Figure 29.

- High levels of pride in rainbow identities were reported by around eight in ten participants
- Around seven in ten participants also reported feeling a connection with other rainbow people
- Approximately three in five participants said that it is important for them to be politically active in the rainbow community
- Two thirds said participating in rainbow events is a positive thing for them; however, only around half of young people reported that there was someone in the community whom they thought of as a role model or mentor

Figure 29. Participants' reports of connectedness to rainbow communities through five measures (N=4187)



8.2 Extracurricular activities

Out of 4214 participants, most said they were regularly involved in a range of activities in their communities. On a weekly basis:

- Just over two in five (43%) practised or took art, music, drama or dance lessons
- Three in ten (30%) participated in clubs or organisations other than sports
- Just over one in five (22%) volunteered or gave their time to help other people
- One in five (21%) attended a rainbow social or support group
- One in six (17%) played in or helped with a sports team
- One in 14 (7%) went to a religious or spiritual programme, group or service
- Just over 1% helped or learnt on a Marae

8.3 Religion and spirituality

One in ten (10%) participants said they were religious (*n*=385). One quarter (26%; *n*=99) of these participants said that, in general, people in their religious communities respected them as a rainbow person, while almost two in five (38%; *n*=148) said that members did not respect them as a rainbow person and the remainder (36%; *n*=138) did not know or were not part of a religious community per se.

Just under two in five (38%; *n*=1411) participants said they were spiritual. Of these, almost two in five (37%; *n*=520) said that people in their spiritual community respect them as a rainbow person. One in 20 (5%; *n*=76) participants said that members did not respect them, and the remainder (58%; *n*=809) did not know or were not part of a spiritual community.

8.4 Chapter summary and recommendations

- There is a high level of pride in rainbow identities as well as a sense of connection to other rainbow people by participants in the study
  - > Despite high levels of positivity and activism, a significant proportion of participants reported that they did not always experience Pride events as a positive thing, and many reported not having a rainbow role model or mentor
    - » **Further support and resourcing for Pride events and activities is required to ensure that these are positive and inclusive events**
    - » **Additional work is required to understand whether there are key groups or young people that are excluded from Pride events or activities**

- Most participants were engaged in some form of extracurricular activity
  - > Combined with the high proportions that are involved in activism, this is a highly engaged group of young people
    - » **Further resourcing of rainbow friendly extracurricular activities is likely to be welcomed by these young people**
    - » **Supporting rainbow young people to grow and continue their activism safely is a key strength that organisations and family and whānau can support**

- One in ten participants reported they were religious, and almost two in five said they were spiritual
  - Rainbow young people are participating in a range of religious and spiritual activities and communities
    - However, many reported that there were people who did not respect them as a rainbow person in their religious and spiritual contexts
  - A high proportional of rainbow young people may no longer identify as religious, given their previous experience, and may now identify as either non-religious or spiritual instead. There was a greater rate of acceptance of rainbow people among spiritual groups and a markedly lower level of rainbow disrespect, when compared to religious settings
  - Religious and spiritual resources and contexts can be important supports for young people, and these settings are an important opportunity to foster young people's inclusion and participation, if these settings can be welcoming and non-judgemental
    - **The findings emphasise the work required by religious organisations to improve their inclusion of rainbow young people**
    - **Further work is required to explore whether particular groups of rainbow young people are more or less likely to report identifying as religious or spiritual, to help target resources to improve inclusion in religious and spiritual contexts**

Chapter 9. Hopes for the future

To finish the survey, we asked participants, "What are your hopes for rainbow young people in Aotearoa NZ in the future?" The selected quotes below show some of the common themes among participants' (n=1625) responses such as:

- Better access to rainbow-affirming healthcare and support services
- For rainbow topics to be taught in schools
- Equality and equity of rainbow communities
- That rainbow communities are taken seriously
- Intersectional approaches to equity, particularly for Māori, Pacific, and intersex young people
- Acceptance from family and whānau
- Safety in disclosing rainbow identity and in living environments
- More positive media representation of rainbow identities
- Acceptance in religious communities

"I want my Takatāpui whanau to be widely accepted and advocated for in the Educations system. LGBTphobia grows heavily in the education sector, through casual phobia, and the normalisation of queer folk being quiet and in the shadows."
(Māori, 18 years old)

"I hope that finally one day it becomes just as normal to be queer as it is to be straight, i hope people will finally feel safe and accepted, I hope people will no longer have to come out because being queer is fabulous but no queer person owes anyone an explanation most of all"
(Pacific, 17 years old)

"I want being queer to be normalised so people don't look at us and think we're abnormal and they're just like ok cool ur queer. I want every queer person to feel and be safe and loved."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 17 years old)

"I hope that access to trans related mental health services will become more available and accessible :)"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 18 years old)

"Intersex liberation equal to the uplifting of trans issues"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

"To be able to express rainbow identities without fear of being discriminated. Ethnic-minority rainbow young people experience additional discriminations due to their ethnicity and there's a strong need to acknowledge this!"
(Asian, 26 years old)

"I want everyone to feel safe. I wish I could have been safe in my transness as a child. Imagine the joy of a new generation of people who were safe and supported from day one regardless of their identity."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"I mean, I hope we get equal care? Equal sexual health care, gender affirming care (funded and not behind barriers & waitlists), that we feel safe to come out to those around us and be confident in our pronouns. That the intersectionality between e.g. race, disability, and queer/ rainbow identity is recognised and that the inequities within our own communities are acknowledged & righted."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 25 years old)

"Wayyyyyy more education needed. Online can be helpful but isolating. I just really want to see Rainbow people in Aotearoa flourish in the real world."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 18 years old)

"That Pākehā members of the rainbow community learn to accept indigenous identities"
(Māori, 15 years old)

"I hope that it will be possible to face no discrimination or bullying and that lgbt+ education will be taught in schools"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 15 years old)

"Young rainbow people can be accepted by family and community all across the country, without having to move to a big city"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 23 years old)

"I would love to see health education becoming more inclusive and comprehensive, and teaching about rainbow identities starting from a younger age. In addition to that, I would hope that access to healthcare improves with wider access and shorter waiting times."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 19 years old)

"I really hope that church and Christianity can be a safe space for rainbow people. Rainbow people deserve the right to explore faith and Christianity safely."
(Pākehā/NZ European, 26 years old)

"That they may see themselves represented within all fields- sciences arts professionals and trade. That they will be supported, will have access to safe affirming medical and psychosocial and spiritual support and intervention, that they will be able to experience and express their identity in any way and feel safe. That their rainbow identity will be important but/and not the only important thing they have"
(Māori, 15 years old)

"I hope in the near future, young rainbow people get the love, respect and support they deserve, both legally and in the community. acceptance is so, so important. Right now they aren't, and it hurts to see a lot of my peers suffer because they aren't being accepted by their family/ friends/community."
(Asian, 22 years old)

"My hope is that one day we don't need labels so much, that our gender, our sexuality will just be an inherent part of who we are. I also hope that, for Māori in particular, we look back and acknowledge how wonderfully our ancestors treated gender and sexually diverse individuals (pre-colonization) and carry that on for future generations."
(Māori, 17 years old)

"*That there will be more education and awareness at schools and other places of learning. That gender affirming healthcare will be free for all, and have less of a wait list (and less of an exhausting journey to get it). More representation of rainbow identities in mainstream media*"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 21 years old)

"I'd like for employers to be more accepting. They are on paper but still have biases"
(Asian, 23 years old)

"That more support services were in place to provide financial and emotional support to rainbow youth that are kicked out or otherwise ostracised from their families as a result of their sexuality"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 20 years old)

"That there is a health system that is made to support rainbow young people to feel safe, get proper rainbow education in school and have access to gender-neutral facilities"
(Pākehā/NZ European, 21 years old)

"That we can live without hearing jokes with us as the punchline."
(Asian, 15 years old)

"I want equality for not only the rainbow community but for all Māori too! There's a long way to go within Aotearoa being more inclusive. I hope that as a nation we can all come together and make the change that is needed to ensure that all of the rainbow youth feel accepted, wanted and comfortable with being/ expressing themselves. Seeing the changes so far from when I was at secondary school I can see that there is some progress, however this is just the start to ensuring the safety of all gender diverse, trans, non-binary and intersex individuals have the same respect and life as a cis straight person does."
(Māori, 21 years old)

"I hope that rainbow young people, particularly BIPOC rainbow people can feel overwhelming safe, supported and proud of themselves. I hope that we mandate rainbow education in schools to further a society that truly embraces rainbow people. I hope rainbow young people can be simply - very happy in Aotearoa."
(Asian, 22 years old)

Chapter 10. General summary

Specific and detailed summaries and recommendations are presented in each chapter above. The summary presented here addresses selected overarching themes and is designed to be read alongside specific chapter summaries and recommendations presented earlier.

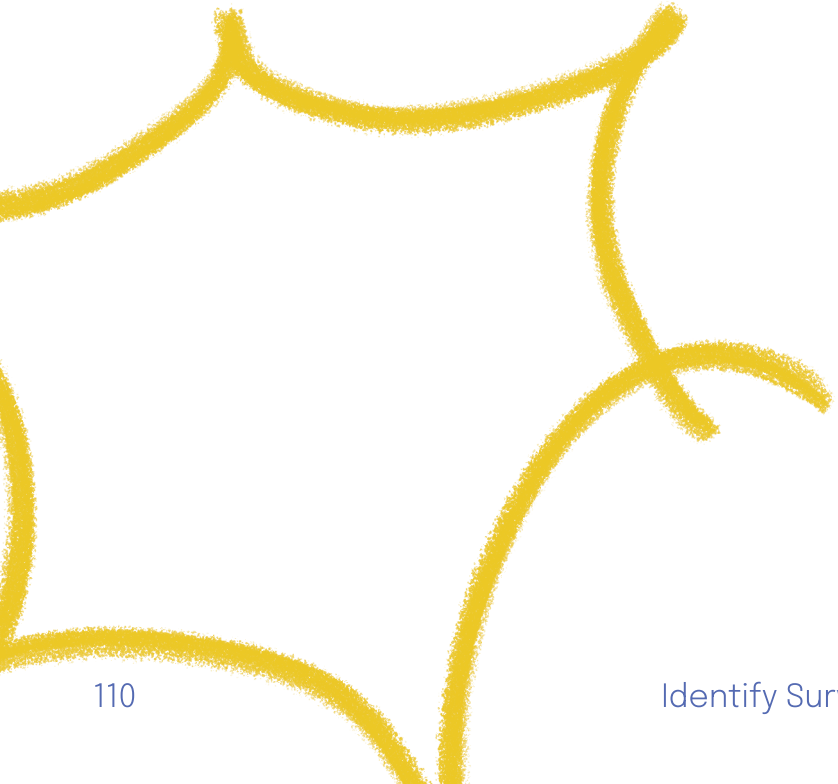
- The first national survey dedicated to rainbow young people was widely shared and resulted in
  4807 valid responses with participants representing 120 ethnicities, multiple genders and sexualities. A small proportion identified as intersex or as having variations in sex characteristics.
  A large proportion of the sample was disabled
  - The survey over-represents Pākehā and European young people, and markedly under-represents Pacific young people. As such, we caution that the intersectional barriers produced by racism will be undercounted in this sample, meaning that these data may be more positive than would be the case in a less white sample
- The ages of participants skewed slightly younger, however, there were large proportions who responded to the three exclusive blocks of the survey (secondary education, post-secondary education, and young people not currently in education)
- Across the sections on **education and employment** there were common themes:
  - A high proportion, often the majority, of participants reported experiencing safe and supportive education and employment contexts
  - Most participants were out about their rainbow identities to someone, often peers, in these contexts
  - Despite these positive findings, in general, most young people reported that these environments were neither supportive nor unsupportive of their identities
  - Wide-spread exposure to microaggressions was commonly reported by participants across all these settings
  - A marked proportion of young people reported harassment in these contexts and said that they felt unsafe in their education and employment settings

- Disparities were clear for disabled and trans and non-binary participants, who reported higher rates of stigma and structural barriers, than cisgender and non-disabled young rainbow people

- Across the sections on **family, whānau and friends, home and living environment, and connection to community** there were also common themes:
  - The majority of participants reported positive relationships with family/whānau, including parents and caregivers
  - The majority were out about their rainbow identity to someone in their living environment and reported that their rainbow identity was supported by someone they live with
  - Participants reported high levels of pride in their rainbow identities, and a majority who felt connected to other rainbow people said that participating in rainbow events was a positive thing
  - The support from friends was nearly universal among the participants, and vital for young people who experienced homelessness
  - Despite these positives, a significant minority report being unsupported by parents, caregivers and other family/whānau members
  - One quarter of participants reported they did not *always* feel safe in their living environment
  - Relatively high proportions of participants reported involvement with Oranga Tamariki, or an experience of homelessness
  - A majority of religious participants said they were not part of a religious community or were not supported by their religious communities
  - Disparities were clear for disabled and trans and non-binary participants, who reported higher rates of stigma and structural barriers, than cisgender and non-disabled young rainbow people
  - Additional and specific disparities were also identified for Māori participants, including more Oranga Tamariki involvement

- Across the section on **health**, some similar common themes were also identified:
  - The majority of participants had accessed health care in the past year
  - The majority had not experienced unfair treatment from a health care provider due to their rainbow identity
  - Two out of five trans and non-binary participants reported having accessed at least one gender-affirming medication
  - Despite these positives, a sizable minority had forgone healthcare when they needed it, and one in ten participants had experienced unfair treatment due to their rainbow identity

- Many, often a majority, of trans and non-binary participants who wanted gender-affirming medication reported not being able to access this
- The barriers to healthcare are particularly concerning given that most participants reported poor wellbeing, as well as self-harm in the past 12 months
- The mental distress reported in *Identify* is a severe concern, and the high levels of suicidal thoughts and attempts are alarming
- Disparities in health were also clear for disabled and trans and non-binary participants, who reported higher rates of stigma and structural barriers, than cisgender and non-disabled young rainbow people



Chapter 11. General recommendations

The recommendations presented here address selected overarching themes and are designed to be read alongside specific chapter summaries and recommendations presented earlier.

- The positive findings around young people's pride in their identities; their ability to find some supports in at least one key developmental context of family and whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare; and their willingness to provide support to others, both politically, as well as interpersonally, must be celebrated and enhanced
- However, the challenges facing these young people must also be recognised, including the common finding that a Sizeable number of young people reported harassment, aggression, and exclusion, in one or more of their key developmental contexts of family and whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare settings
- All these key developmental settings must be places where all young rainbow people can be supported to develop, grow and thrive
- Dedicated actions and evaluation by government, civil society, and the education, health, social and community sectors are urgently required to track and improve the experiences of young people in these domains, as our findings highlight important challenges that cannot be ignored
- The reports of harassment, aggression, and exclusion highlight a need to review and improve professional learning and policy across these domains
- Family and whānau, peers, and the general public who engage with rainbow young people in schools, post-secondary education, workplaces, and neighbourhoods also require effective education about rainbow identities to mitigate prejudice and the harmful discrimination that results from it

- Takatāpui/Māori rainbow young people face additional challenges and prejudices compared to Pākehā rainbow young people. These findings highlight the necessity of enhancing takatāpui wellbeing to fulfil the Crown's obligations, as stated in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, of ōritetanga and tino rangatiratanga for rangatahi Māori
- Trans, non-binary, and disabled participants reported extremely concerning disparities and any work done to address rainbow young people's wellbeing must specifically address and centre their needs
- Pacific and Asian participants were identified as facing some specific challenges, compared to Pākehā and European participants, emphasising the importance of recognising ethnicity and racism in policy and practice
- Intersex young people's needs require further exploration and reflect a critical gap in the research to date
- The high levels of mental health distress that were reported reflect wide exposure to prejudice, discrimination and structural disadvantage compounded by foregone - or inadequate - healthcare provision, including gender-affirming healthcare
- It is important to improve healthcare and healthcare access, especially for trans and non-binary young people and marginalised groups within rainbow communities
- However, it is important to recognise the limitations of health care to address the harm produced by young people's exposure to prejudice, discrimination, and structural disadvantage in the family and whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare contexts
- If we are to see widescale improvement in wellbeing and thriving for rainbow young people, a comprehensive joined-up response to address the disparities young rainbow people face across family/whānau, home, education, employment, community and healthcare contexts is needed
- Such a response must address the intersectional experiences of Māori and trans, non-binary, disabled, and other minoritised young people

Chapter 12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A. Detailed methods

12.1.1 The survey, recruitment and ethical approval

The *Identify* survey focused on young people's experiences across various contexts, including education, employment, home, and the community. The survey included questions on protective aspects and challenges in these contexts. A section also collected health and wellbeing data, including measures of suicide ideation and attempts. The study received ethical approval from the New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committee (20/NTB/276).

The survey was a collaboration between two national youth Community organisations and researchers who represented a range of genders, sexualities, ethnicities, and ages. The survey content, structure, recruitment, and branding were informed by nine in-person regional community consultations in 2020. Questions in this study were either developed by the research team, often following community consultation, or were replicated from existing Aotearoa New Zealand studies with transgender and gender-diverse people (Veale et al., 2021) and general youth populations (Fleming et al., 2020).

The survey was constructed in Qualtrics and supported smart logic, so that participants were only shown questions relevant to their previous answers (see Figure 30 for the main logic branching routes). In-person recruitment was conducted at community events, including Pride festival events in main cities, existing nightclub events and community meetings. Posters were placed in prominent community venues (e.g., queer- and trans-friendly bars and cafes), schools and tertiary institutions, and in the libraries of two large cities. Online recruitment was conducted via advertisements and posts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, and Grindr. Word of mouth, including via social media and preliminary data "teasers" in mainstream media stories, also advertised the survey.

12.1.2 Data preparation, participation rates and analysis

The survey received 6712 initial responses. After filtering responses that were flagged by Qualtrics as spam (*n*=86) or that did not provide consent (*n*=39); did not meet age requirements (*n*=511); were not living in Aotearoa New Zealand (*n*=33); were duplicates (*n*=35); were illogical, including homophobic and transphobic responses (*n*=19); or did not complete more than five questions after the branching question on current educational or employment status (*n*=771), the sample consisted of 5218 valid responses.

Data was analysed using SPSS 27 and percentages were rounded to whole numbers. Where the sub-sample was less than 10, and these data are reported, they are noted as <10 to help protect anonymity. When a participant did not respond to a question, actively declined to answer it (where applicable) or indicated that a question was not relevant (e.g., 'this does not apply to me'), these participants were treated as missing for these questions and were not counted in the denominator that was used to calculate percentages for these items. We constructed 95% confidence intervals for the mean score for selected results using SPSS to identify significant differences between groups in the study. Where the confidence intervals do not overlap, we identify this as a significant difference.

12.1.3 Strengths and limitations

The key strengths of the study were the high levels of participation from communities that can be difficult to identify and recruit. With sufficient numbers, we have produced large enough sub-sample sizes to facilitate intersectional analyses based on a range of identity dimensions, including ethnicity (including most level 2 and some level 3 categories – see Table 5), gender modality (including all of our prioritised gender categories), disability, Oranga Tamariki experience, homelessness experience, sexual orientation and gender identity change effort-experience, rural/urban-location and many regional experiences, alongside other sub-groups in each of the three exclusive education or employment sections of the report. As an anonymous and confidential online survey, participants were not required to disclose sensitive information to an interviewer or have their data attached to their name, which can reduce social desirability biases (where people prefer to not disclose difficult, negative, potentially shaming or distressing information), meaning the data may be more accurate than if they were not anonymous.

The main limitation of these data is the fact that the data were produced from a self-selected non-probability group from the population of interest. This means that we are unable to tell how the young people in this study compare to the overall population of rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. Factors that promoted

some young people to participate, over those who did not, may therefore introduce bias into our results. For instance, our study required young people to have online access to participate, which means that it may over-represent young people who have access to online resources, and therefore online support, who may be more supported and connected than rainbow young people who do not have this access and support. This would mean that we may be oversampling a more connected and supported group of young people compared to the general population of rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Recruitment for the study relied on the internet and social media, as well as regional libraries, mass media stories, and posters in schools and tertiary education providers. The call to participate in the research was also widely shared through rainbow community networks and media. Young people connected to rainbow communities and media may therefore have been more likely to see the call to participate. Such young people may differ from those not connected to rainbow communities and media, as they may have more rainbow-friendly social connections and supports, which may operate as protective factors. The potentially greater concentration of more-connected participants in the study means the data may underestimate the effects of negative experiences because it cannot account for those who have fewer connections and, therefore, fewer supports, resulting in a potential underestimation of the challenges that may be operating.

In contrast, more young people with negative experiences may have been particularly motivated to participate in this research, so they could share their stories and experiences to help produce change. If this was the case, it would result in an over-estimation of challenges and negative outcomes relative to the general population of rainbow young people. However, widespread findings, based on representative samples in Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g., Fenaughty et al., 2021; Statistics NZ, 2022) and internationally, highlight acute levels of mental health challenges, including depression and suicidality, for rainbow young people. It is more likely that the prevalence of these mental health outcomes recorded in the general population of rainbow young people will have prevented young people affected by these challenges from being able to participate in the study. In this situation, the study may under-estimate levels of challenge and negative experiences relative to the general population of rainbow young people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

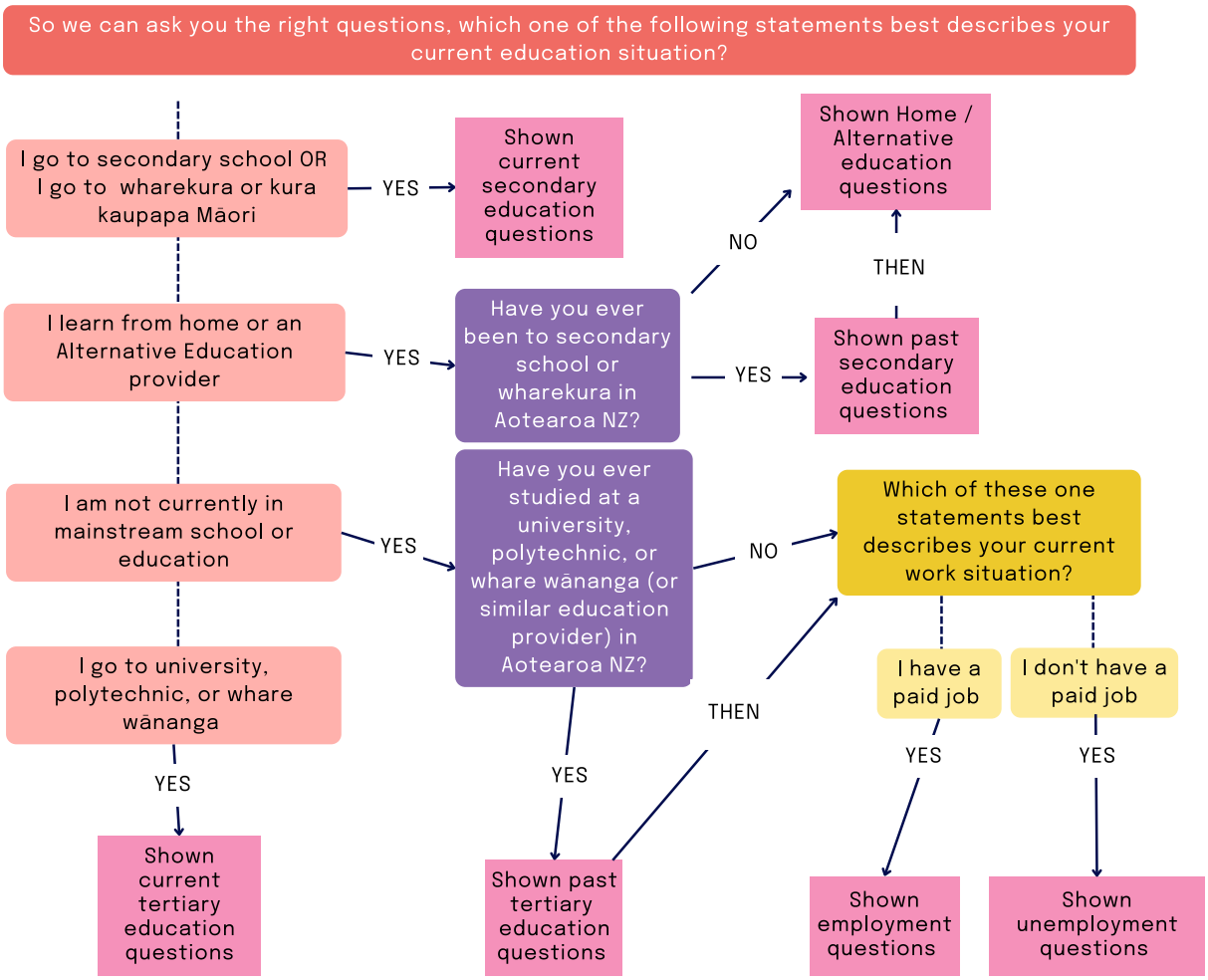
Finally, a key limitation that we acknowledged earlier in the report was the under-representation of Pacific, Māori, and Asian young people, and an over-representation of Pākehā and European young people compared to the general youth population in Aotearoa New Zealand. While a range of recruitment strategies were engaged to bolster recruitment from young people with these ethnicities, the under-representation of young people from these groups means that experiences and effects of racism will most likely be under-estimated in our results,

potentially painting a more positive picture of rainbow young people in general than is the reality.

For these various reasons, further research, including qualitative research on the issues identified in this study, is important. Additionally, analyses that compare groups *within* the study population avoid the confounding challenges of self-selection bias and offer another way to explore the factors that can support rainbow young people's wellbeing (e.g., Fenaughty et al., 2022). Nonetheless, despite the unavoidable challenges of self-selection bias in bespoke rainbow survey research, the high numbers of participants in this study provide a strong base for advocacy for rainbow young people, even if it was only to address the situation for the nearly 5000 young people included in this report.

12.1.4 Logic of education/employment branching questions

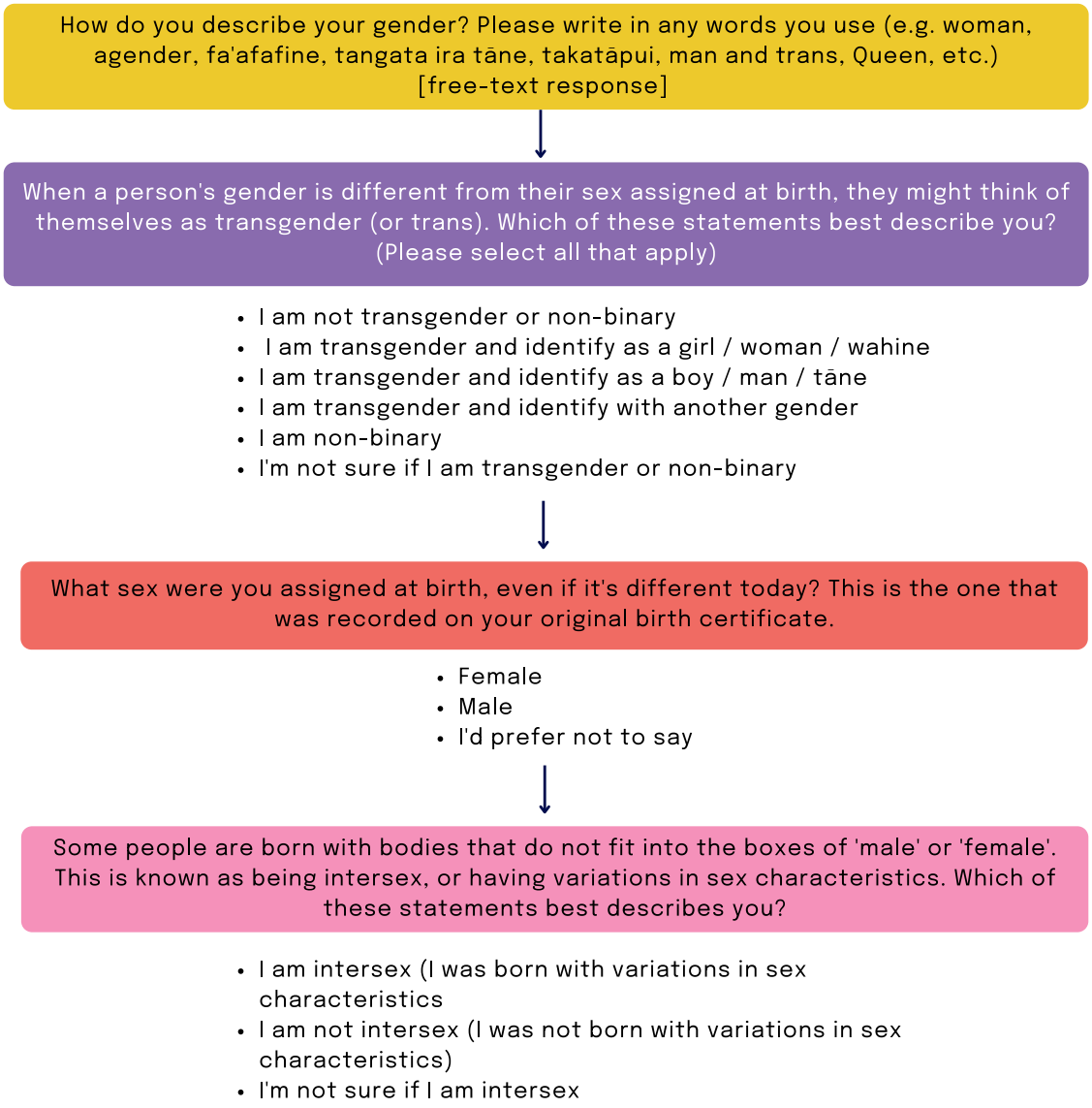
Figure 30. Education and employment sections branching logic



12.1.5 Measuring gender, sex, and sex assigned at birth

We asked three questions to measure gender, sex, and sex assigned at birth, as shown in Figure 31 below.

Figure 31. Questions measuring gender, sex, and sex assigned at birth



The total responses to the question on self-identifying as trans or non-binary are presented in Table 3. Participants who selected 'Not transgender or non-binary' were categorised as being cisgender, unless they stated elsewhere that they were not cisgender (i.e., in the free-text response, "How do you describe your gender?", in which case they were recorded in line with their free-text response).

Table 3. When a person's gender is different from their sex assigned at birth, they might think of themselves as transgender (or trans). Which of these statements best describe you? (Please select all that apply) (N=4772)

Response options	% n
Not transgender or non-binary	48% 2275
Transgender and identify as a girl / woman / wahine	5% 220
Transgender and identify as a boy / man / tāne	10% 475
Transgender and identify with another gender	11% 500
Non-binary	26% 1246
Unsure	13% 630

To facilitate comparisons between gender groups, we then used the responses from the three questions on gender and sex assigned at birth to code each participant's gender. Some participants gave multiple responses and the responses of some did not match up (e.g., selected 'transgender man' and 'assigned male at birth').

We coded responses based on the following prioritisation:

- Transgender man OR transgender woman
- Non-binary
- Another gender (not cisgender)
- Not transgender (i.e., cisgender)
- Unsure

For the analysis of this report, we developed the following prioritised gender groups based on this coding:

- Trans boy/man/tāne
- Trans girl/woman/wahine
- Cis boy/man/tāne
- Cis girl/woman/wahine
- Non-binary or another gender
- Unsure or questioning gender

12.2 Appendix B. Detailed tables and figures

Table 4. Regions where participants lived by education or employment status (N=4784)

Region	% n Total participants (N = 4784)	% n Secondary education* (N = 2045)	% n Tertiary and post-secondary education (N = 1640)	% n Employed (N = 827)	% n Not in employment or education (N = 272)
Northland / Te Tai Tokerau	1% 59	2% 39	– <10	<1% 10	– <10
Auckland / Tāmaki-Makaurau	32% 1508	28% 578	35% 571	34% 281	29% 78
Bay of Plenty / Te Moana-a-Toi	2% 113	3% 65	2% 25	2% 20	– <10
Waikato	6% 265	6% 127	5% 76	5% 42	7% 20
Gisborne / Te Tai Rāwhiti	– 19	– <10	– <10	– <10	– <10
Taranaki	2% 73	2% 37	1% 16	1% 11	– <10
Hawke's Bay / Te Mātua-a-Maui	2% 74	2% 47	<1% 11	2% 12	– <10
Manawatu-Whanganui	4% 173	4% 81	3% 51	4% 30	4% 11
Wellington / Te Whanganui-a-Tara	22% 1047	15% 313	25% 410	31% 257	25% 67
Nelson / Whakatū and Marlborough / Te Tauihu-o-te-waka	2% 94	3% 66	– 10	– <10	– <10
Tasman / Te Tai-o-Aorere	– 17	– 11	– <10	– <10	– <10
West Coast / Te Tai Poutini	– 18	– 11	– <10	– <10	– <10
Canterbury / Waitaha	16% 761	19% 385	15% 242	11% 93	15% 41
Otago / Ōtākou	7% 343	5% 109	11% 178	5% 38	7% 18
Southland / Murihiku	1% 60	2% 37	1% 18	– <10	– <10
I live in Aotearoa but would prefer not to say where	3% 160	6% 129	1% 18	– <10	2% 4

*Includes home-based education and Kura Kaupapa Māori.

Table 5. Total responses (including free-text responses) to "Which ethnic group or groups do you belong to?" (N=4766)

Ethnicity group*	n	%	Ethnicity group cont.	n	%
Māori	**749**	**12%**	**MELAA**	**89**	**1%**
Pacific	**231**	**4%**	**African**	16	<1%
Niuean	<10	<1%	**Middle Eastern**	46	<1%
Tokelauan	<10	<1%	**Latin American**	27	<1%
Tongan	24	<1%	**European**	**4419**	**72%**
Cook Islands Maori	58	1%	**Dutch**	71	1%
Fijian	19	<1%	**Australian**	21	<1%
Samoan	103	2%	**German**	35	<1%
Other Pacific Peoples	14	<1%	**Greek**	<10	<1%
Asian	**574**	**9%**	**Italian**	<10	<1%
Vietnamese	14	<1%	**Polish**	<10	<1%
Japanese	23	<1%	**Other European**	134	2%
Korean	19	<1%	**South Slav**	13	<1%
Cambodian	<10	<1%	**English and Irish**	173	3%
Filipino	78	1%	**New Zealand European**	**3975**	**64%**
Indian	142	2%			
Other Southeast Asian	45	<1%	**Other ethnicity**	53	<1%
Sri Lankan	10	<1%	**Refused to answer**	18	<1%
Chinese	219	4%	**Response outside scope**	<10	<1%
Other Asian	20	<1%	**Total responses**	6191	

* *Per Ministry of Health Level 3 ethnicity classifications.*

Figure 32. Comparison of ethnicity groups (total response) between Identify participants and 15 - 29-year-olds in NZ Census 2018

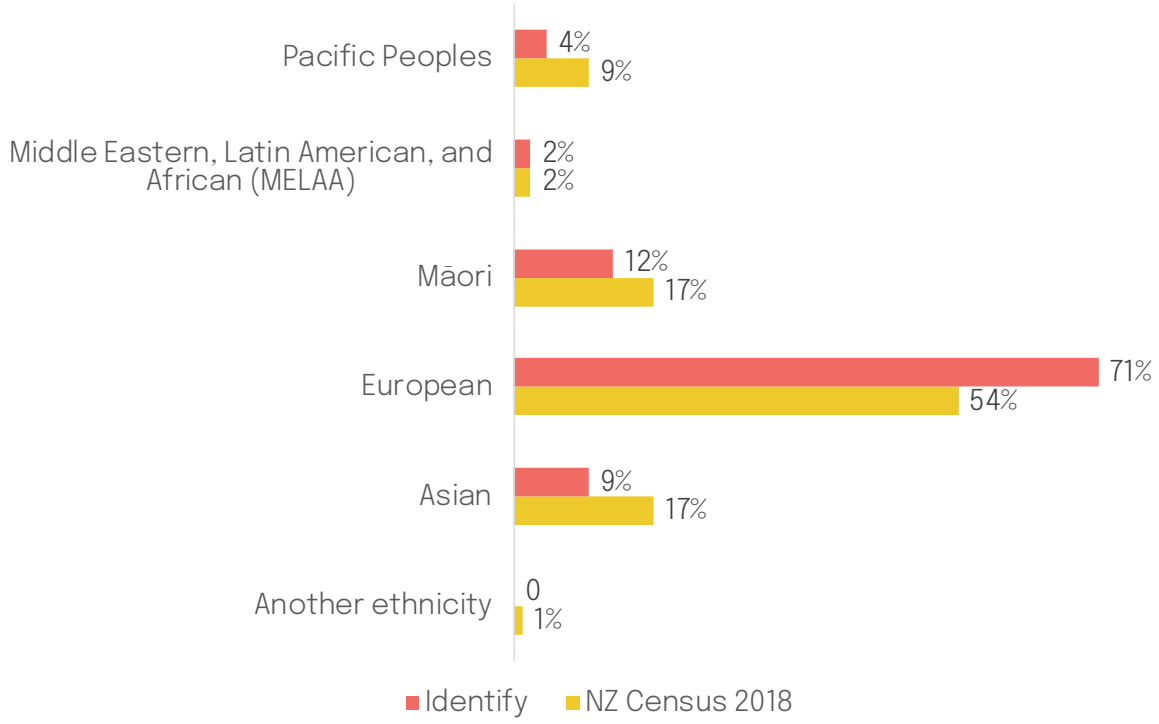
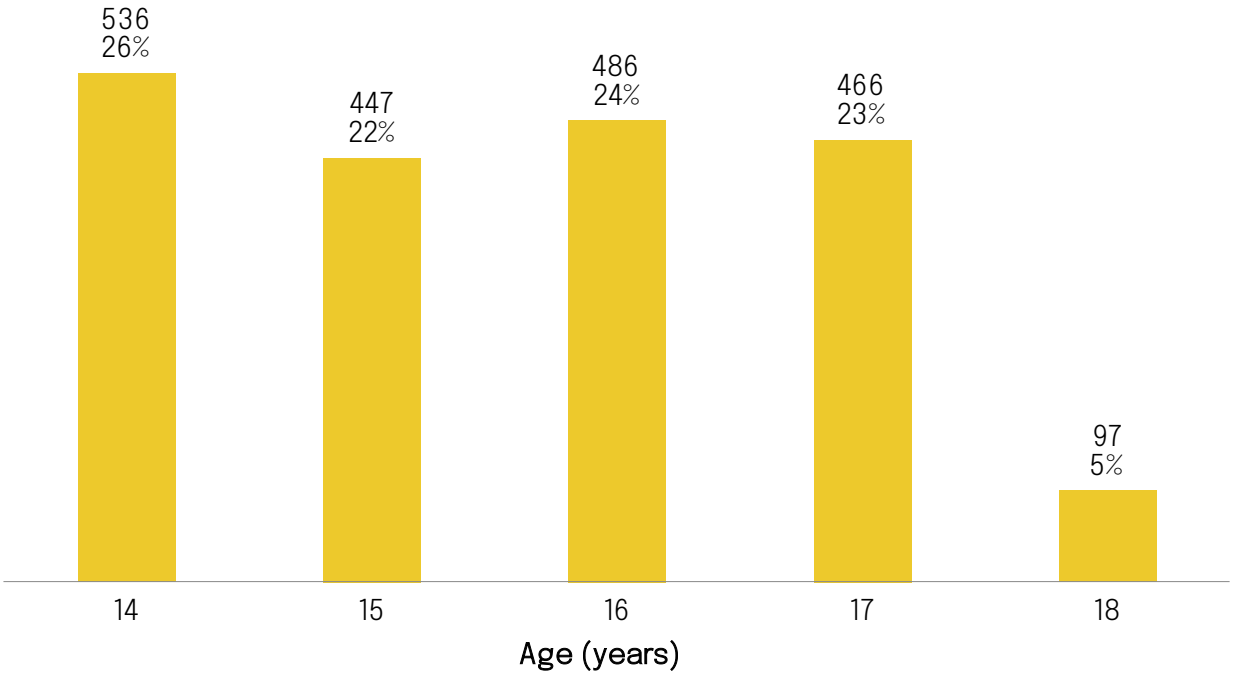


Figure 33. Ages of participants in the secondary education section (N=2045*; n and % represented)



Note. Fields where there are under 10 participants have not been reported.

Table 6. Frequency of self-selected sexuality (total response) and gender categories (prioritised response) (N=4778)

The total percentage represents the proportion of participants who selected this response item, out of the total number who responded to the question, "Which of the following best describe your sexuality? (Please select all that apply)" (N=4778)

		Cis woman	Trans woman	Cis man	Trans man	Non-binary	Unsure	Out of scope	Total*
Takatāpui	n	119	10	40	22	100	5	1	297
	%	7	5	6	5	7	3	3	6
Queer	n	723	82	180	222	813	84	15	2119
	%	39	41	28	48	57	49	46	44
Gay	n	231	24	398	147	271	34	5	1110
	%	13	12	63	32	19	20	15	23
Lesbian	n	496	78	1	9	274	40	4	902
	%	27	39	<1	2	19	24	12	19
Bisexual	n	990	76	219	195	504	75	6	2065
	%	54	38	34	42	35	44	18	43
Pansexual	n	402	52	77	101	437	41	11	1120
	%	22	26	12	22	31	24	33	24
MVPFAFF+	n	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	5
	%	<1	0	<1	0	<1	0	0	<1
Heterosexual / straight	n	14	7	6	8	6	1	0	42
	%	1	4	1	2	<1	1	0	1
Mostly straight	n	82	4	22	12	14	8	1	143
	%	4	2	3	3	1	5	3	3
Asexual	n	180	29	29	104	293	29	3	667
	%	10	15	5	23	21	17	9	14
Aromantic	n	53	8	15	32	82	7	1	198
	%	3	4	2	7	6	4	3	4
Demisexual	n	147	21	26	35	188	14	2	433
	%	8	11	4	8	13	8	6	9
Fluid / it changes	n	264	28	42	58	279	34	7	712
	%	14	14	7	13	19	20	21	15
Something else	n	10	2	4	5	16	2	0	39
	%	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
I'm not sure	n	168	10	22	35	105	25	7	372
	%	9	5	3	8	7	15	21	8

Figure 34. Prioritised ethnicity groups in the secondary education section (N=2045; n and % represented)

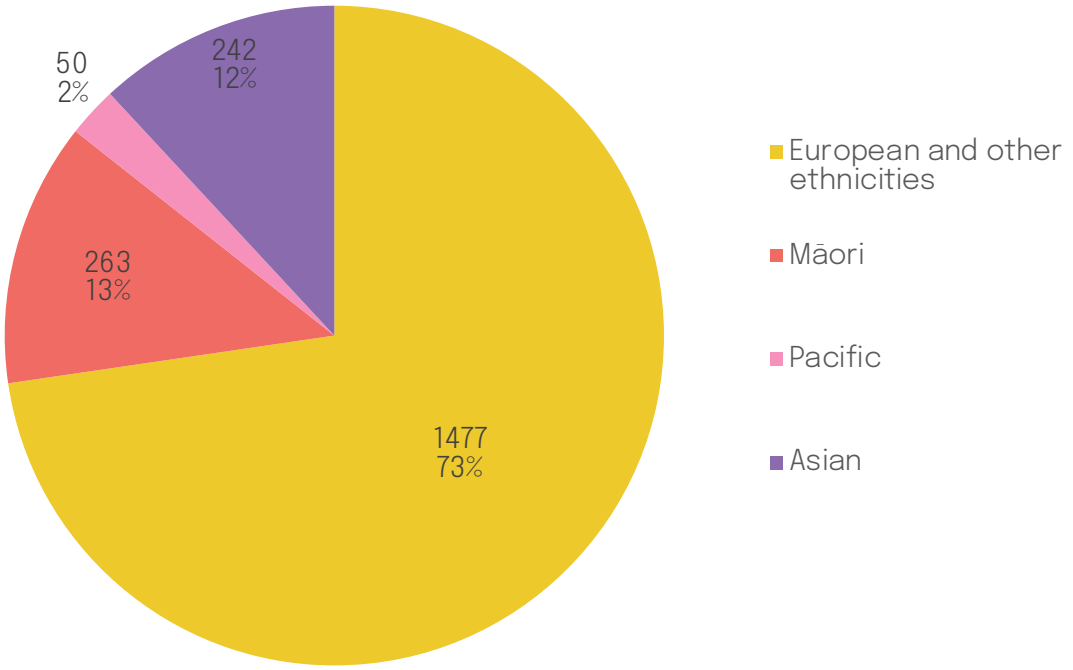


Figure 35. Prioritised gender categories in the secondary education section (N=2045)

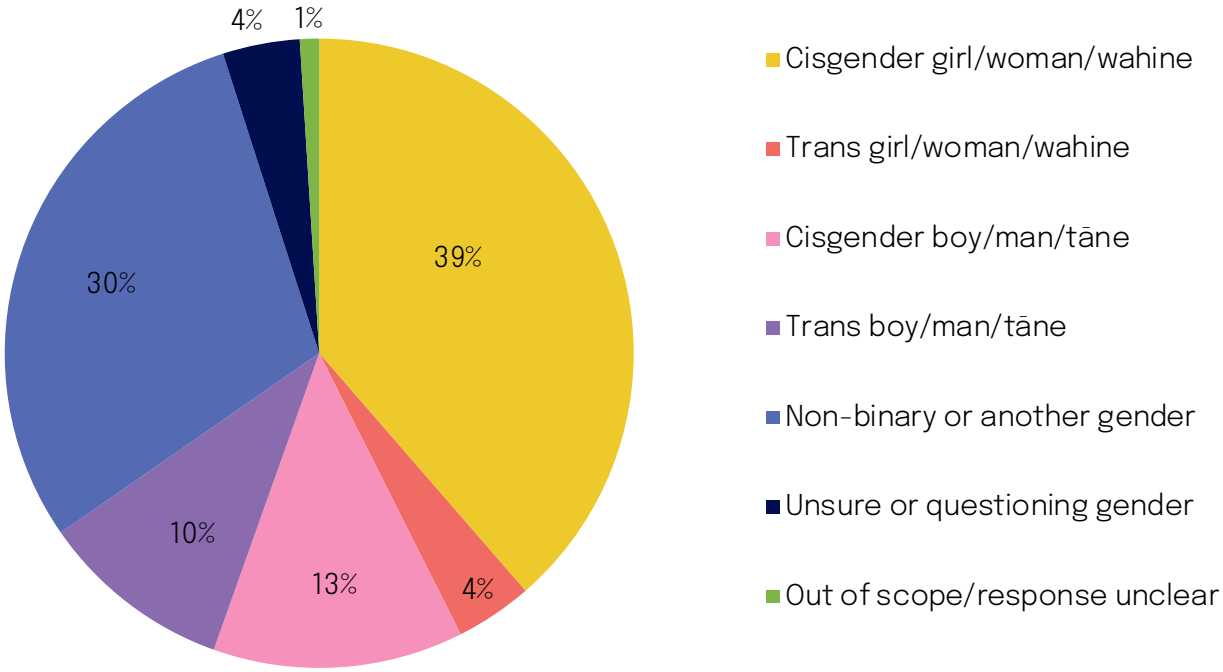
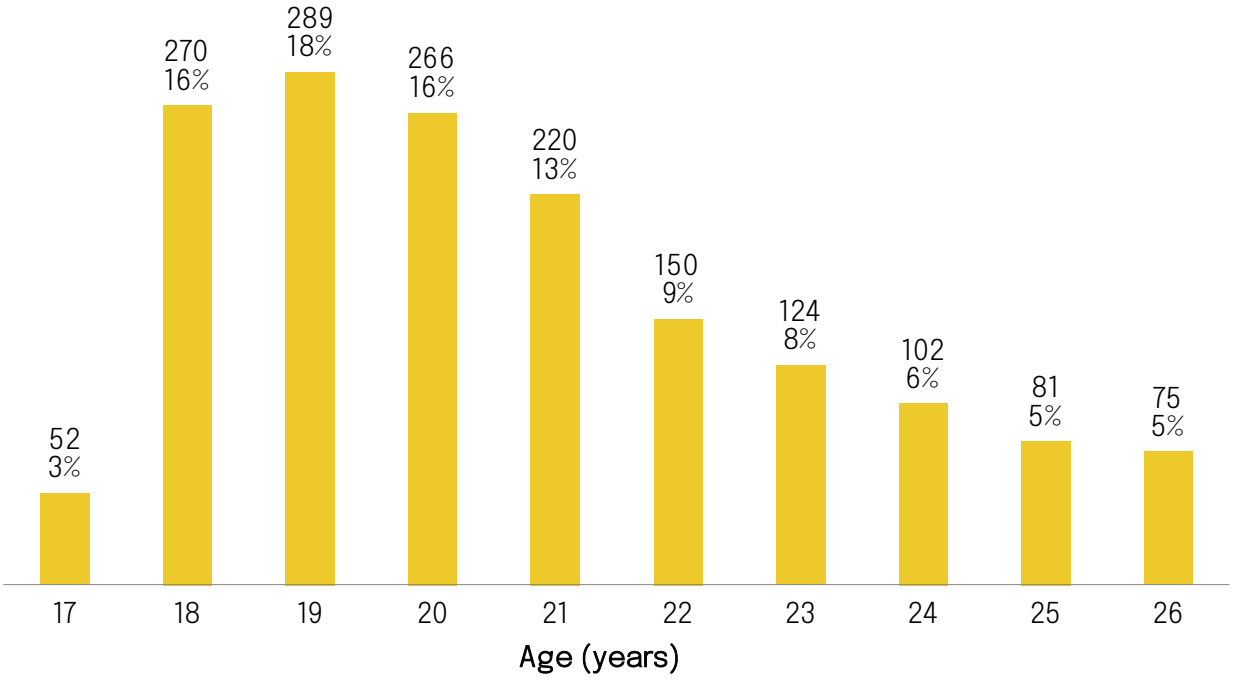


Figure 36. Ages of participants in the tertiary and post-secondary education section (N=1640*; n and % represented)



Note. Fields where there are under 10 participants have not been reported.

Figure 37. Prioritised ethnicity groups in the tertiary and post-secondary education section (N=1640; n and % represented)

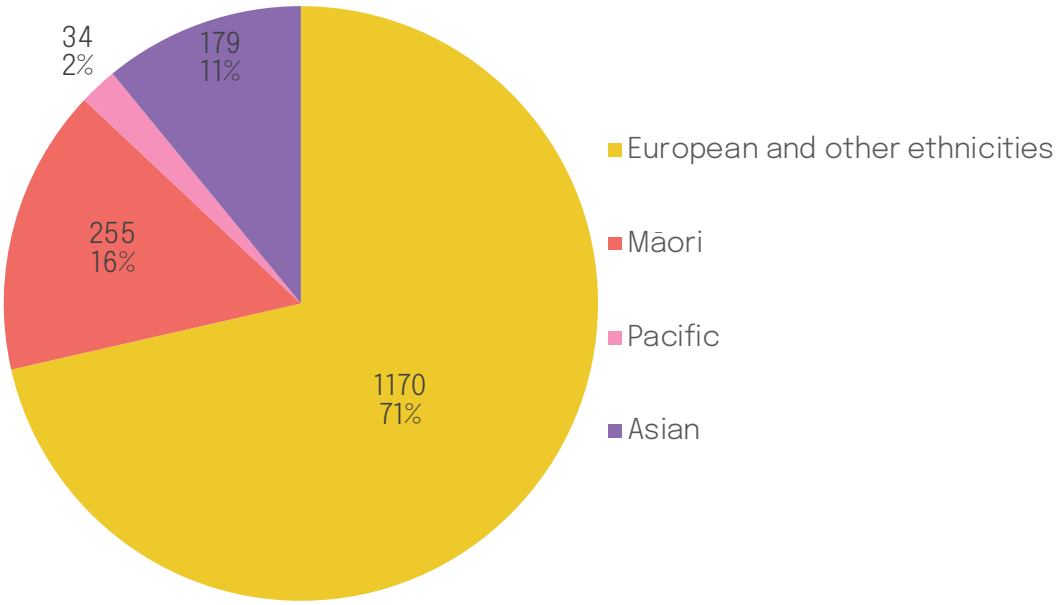


Figure 38. Prioritised gender categories in the tertiary and post-secondary section (N=1640)

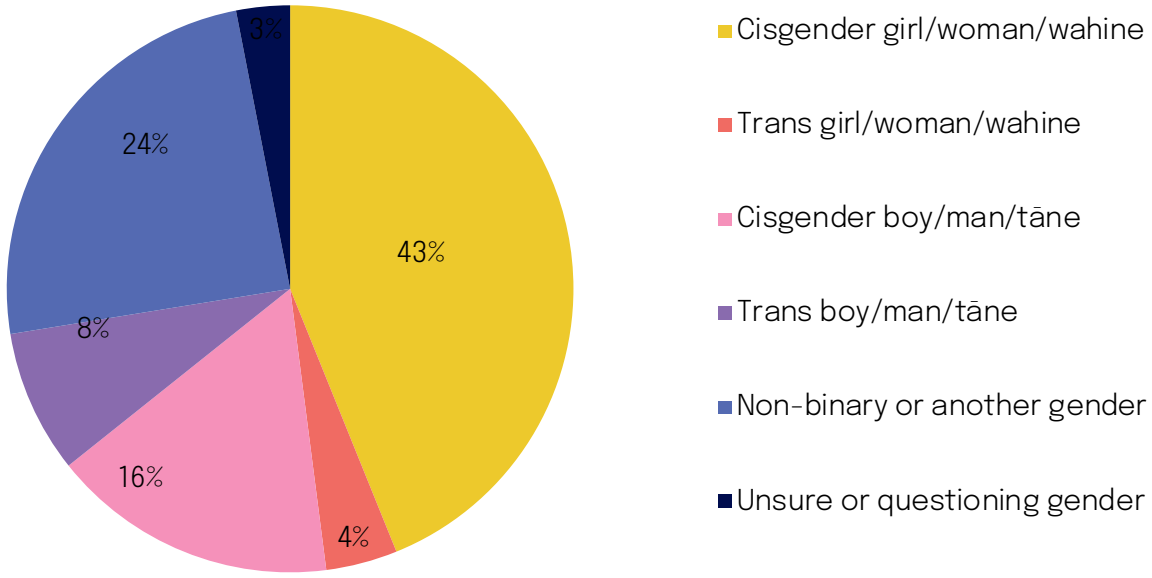


Figure 39. Ages of participants in the employment and work section (N=1099; n and % represented)

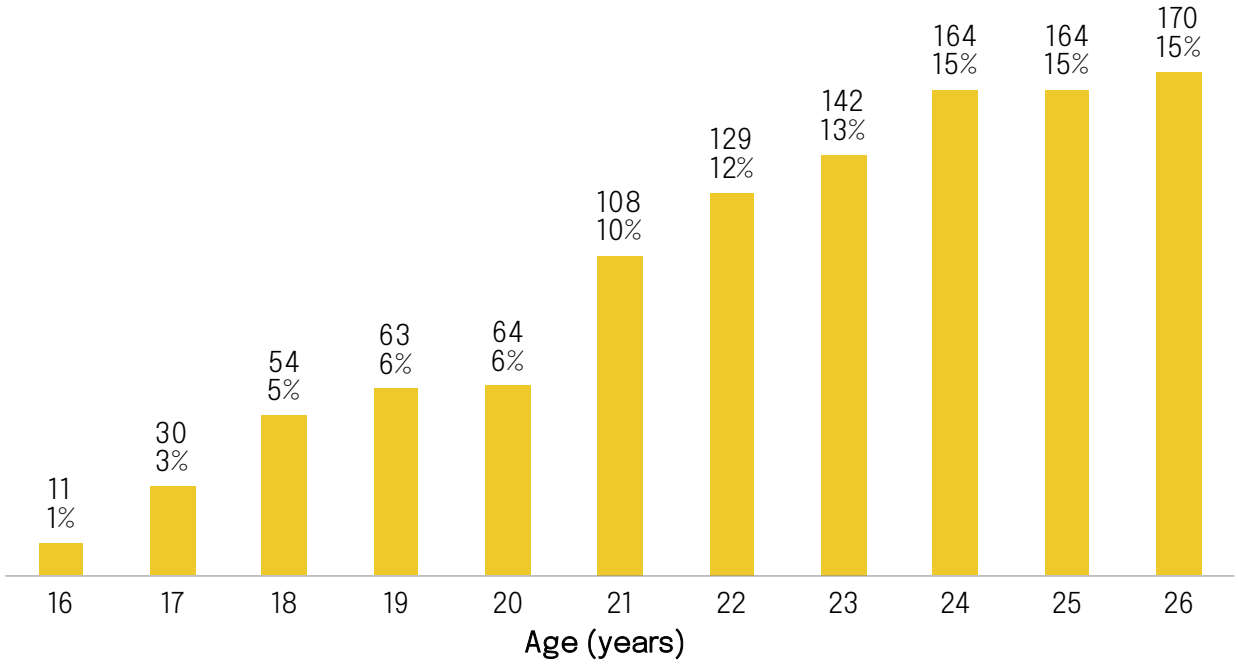


Figure 41. Prioritised gender categories in the employment and work section (N=1099)

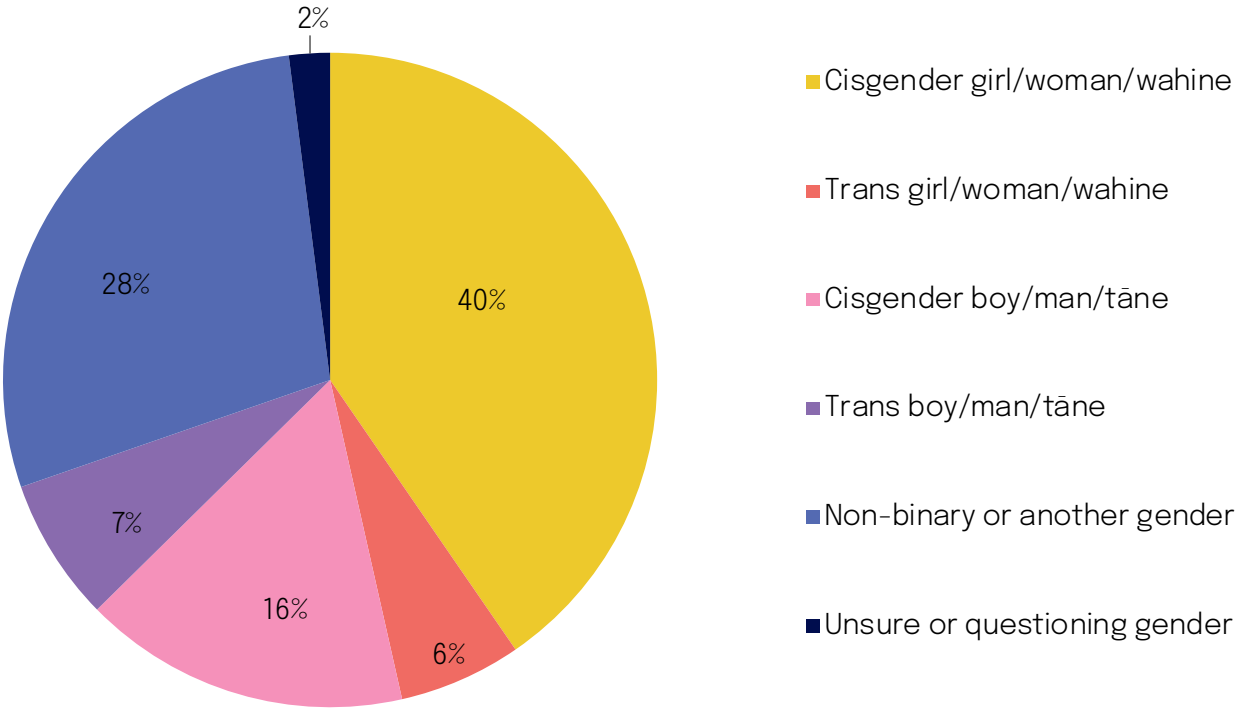


Table 7. Differences in perceived support between types of secondary schools

Measure	School is supportive or very supportive		School is unsupportive or very unsupportive	
	n (N)	% [95% CI]	n (N)	% [95% CI]
Type of school				
Religious or faith-based	95 (359)	26% [21.3-30.4]	78 (359)	21% [17.0-25.6]
Secular (not religious or faith-based)	742 (1485)	48% [45.7-50.7]	102 (1485)	7% [5.4-8.0]
Mixed-gender	645 (1300)	48% [45.1-50.5]	104 (1300)	8% [6.3-9.3]
Single-gender	209 (591)	34% [30.4-38.1]	82 (591)	13% [10.8-16.4]

Note. The percentages do not add up to 100% as we have excluded the responses 'sometimes supportive, sometimes unsupportive' and 'don't know' for this analysis.

Table 8. Belongingness at work by gender modality

Measure	Gender modality			
	Trans and non-binary		Cisgender	
	n (N)	% [95% CI]	n (N)	% [95% CI]
Can be oneself at work	141 (279)	51% [44.5-56.6]	337 (529)	64% [59.4-67.8]
Feels valued and respected by co-workers	180 (260)	69% [63.2-74.8]	391 (483)	81% [77.2-84.4]

Table 9. Employment rates by gender modality, disability and prioritised ethnicity

	Employed		Unemployed	
	n (N)	**% [95% CI]**	**n (N)**	**% [95% CI]**
Gender modality				
Trans and non-binary	279 (456)	61% [56.5-65.7]	177 (456)	39% [34.3-43.5]
Cisgender	529 (615)	86% [83.0-88.7]	86 (615)	14% [11.3-17.0]
Disability				
Disabled	196 (334)	59% [53.2-64.0]	138 (334)	41% [36.0-46.8]
Non-disabled	530 (638)	83% [79.9-85.9]	108 (638)	17% [14.1-20.1]
Ethnicity				
Māori	157 (230)	68% [61.8-74.2]	73 (230)	32% [25.8-38.2]
European and other ethnicities	601 (781)	77% [73.8-79.9]	180 (781)	23% [20.1-26.2]
Pacific	17 (22)	77% [54.6-92.2]	5 (22)	23% [7.8-45.4]
Asian	51 (63)	81% [69.1-89.8]	12 (63)	19% [10.2-30.9]

Table 10. Non-suicidal self-injury and suicidality in past 12 months by gender modality (of participants who selected 'yes' to the following items)

Item	Gender modality			
	Cisgender		Trans and non-binary	
	n (N)	% [95% CI]	n (N)	% [95% CI]
Had initiated non-suicidal self-injury	896 (2045)	44% [41.6-46.0]	1227 (1745)	70% [68.1-72.5]
Had suicidal thoughts	1096 (2041)	54% [51.5-55.9]	1298 (1740)	75% [72.5-76.6]
Made suicide plan	416 (2041)	20% [18.7-22.2]	652 (1740)	38% [35.2-39.8]
Attempted suicide	130 (2041)	6% [5.3-7.5]	245 (1740)	14% [12.5-15.8]

Table 11. Foregone healthcare in past 12 months by prioritised ethnicity and disability.

	n (N)	% [95% CI]
Ethnicity*		
Māori	111 (622)	18% [14.9-21.1]
European and other ethnicities	483 (3026)	16% [14.7-17.3]
Pacific	21 (82)	26% [16.6-36.4]
Asian	99 (424)	23% [19.4-27.7]
Disability		
Disabled	351 (1715)	21% [18.6-22.5]
Non-disabled	353 (2396)	15% [13.3-16.2]

* Of participants who selected 'No, but I have needed to' to 'In the past 12 months, have you gone to a healthcare professional or expert because of a health issue? (This could be general, mental, sexual or spiritual health e.g., GP, counsellor, nurse, tohunga)'

Table 12. Use of gender-affirming hormones by prioritised gender (N=1633)

	Ever taken gender-affirming hormones % n					
Gender	**Yes**	**No, I want but cannot get this**	**No, I want this in the future but not yet**	**No, I don't want this**	**I'm not sure if I want this**	**Doesn't apply**
Trans woman	52% 93	23% 41	21% 37	2% <10	2% <10	1% <10
Trans man	43% 170	34% 134	20% 77	<1% <10	3% 11	<1% <10
Non-binary	4% 46	8% 85	14% 152	29% 301	34% 357	11% 111
Total	19% 309	16% 260	16% 266	19% 308	23% 373	7% 117

Table 13. Use of puberty blockers by prioritised gender (N=1633)

	Ever taken puberty blockers % n					
Gender	**Yes**	**No, I want but cannot get this**	**No, I want this in the future but not yet**	**No, I don't want this**	**I'm not sure if I want this**	**Doesn't apply**
Trans woman	17% 30	18% 31	9% 15	9% 16	3% <10	45% 79
Trans man	16% 64	25% 99	4% 14	17% 67	10% 39	28% 111
Non-binary	2% 21	8% 83	3% 30	38% 398	19% 203	30% 315
Total	7% 115	13% 214	4% 59	30% 482	15% 248	31% 509

12.3 Appendix C. Further resources and support

12.3.1 Community and mental health support

12.3.1.1. Helplines

OutLine
0800 688 5463
https://outline.org.nz

1737 - Need to talk?
Mental health helpline
https://1737.org.nz/

Lifeline
0800 543 354 or text 4357
https://www.lifeline.org.nz

12.3.1.2 Rainbow community organisations

InsideOUT Kōaro
hello@insideout.org

RainbowYOUTH
https://ry.org.nz

Te Ngākau Kahukura
https://www.tengakaukahukura.nz

Gender Minorities Aotearoa
https://genderminorities.com

Intersex Youth Aotearoa
https://intersexyouthaotearoa.wordpress.com

12.3.1.3 Takatāpui/Māori

Tīwhanawhana
http://www.tiwhanawhana.com

Takatāpui: A resource hub
https://takatapui.nz

12.3.1.4 Pacific rainbow / MVPFAFF+

F'INE
https://finepasifika.org.nz

Manalagi Project
https://www.manalagi.org

12.4 Glossary

This is a list of some of the words we have used throughout this report and their common definitions.

Ally: A person who actively supports or stands in solidarity with members of marginalised communities.

Cisgender: an adjective describing someone whose gender aligns with that associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cisheteronormativity: The system of beliefs, practices and structures that construct heterosexual cisgender identities as the norm, and frame takatāpui, MVPFAFF+, LGBTQIA+ and rainbow identities as immoral, unnatural, and pathological.

Gender-affirming health care: various forms of medical or health care that many, but not all, trans and non-binary people access to affirm their gender. This includes (but is not limited to) gender-affirming hormones, puberty blockers, laser hair removal, chest reconstruction (top) surgeries, genital reconstruction (bottom) surgeries, voice therapy, and psychosocial support.

Gender dysphoria: the discomfort or distress that arises from the disconnect between a person's gender and the gender associated with their sex assigned at birth. On the other hand, **gender euphoria** describes the positive feelings that arise from the alignment between a person's gender, expression and body.

Heterosexual: Describes someone who is exclusively attracted to a gender different from their own.

Intersex: Describes a person born with variations of sex characteristics such as chromosomes, reproductive anatomy, genitals, and hormones. People are sometimes born with these variations, or they may develop during puberty. There are up to 40 different intersex variations. Though the word intersex describes a range of natural body variations, many people will not identify with, or know, this term or related terms. In medical environments, variations in sex characteristics are known as 'differences in sex development' (DSD), though this terminology is widely critiqued by intersex activists for pathologising natural bodily development.

LGBTQIA+: An acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and more diverse sexualities, genders, and sex characteristics. It is used in a similar way to 'rainbow', but is often critiqued for centring Western understandings of gender, sex and sexuality.

Microaggression: An indirect or subtle form of discrimination, such as a comment or action, which typically concerns members of a marginalised group such as ethnic, gender, or sexuality minorities. Microaggressions are usually unintentional but can still cause harm or reinforce hurtful stereotypes.

Misgendering: Referring to a person, often through language, as a gender they are not. Misgendering can be unintentional (e.g. accidentally using a person's birth name or incorrect pronouns), or it can be done on purpose to cause harm to someone. Regardless of intention, misgendering can have detrimental effects on a person's wellbeing, particularly for trans and non-binary people, as it signals they are not being seen or respected as who they know themselves to be.

MVPFAFF+: An acronym used to encompass the diverse gender and sexuality expressions and roles across Pacific cultures. The acronym stands for mahu, vakasalewa, palopa, fa'afafine, akavai'ne, fakaleiti (leiti), fakafifine, and more. Their meanings are best understood within their cultural context and may mean something different to each person.

Queer: A reclaimed word that is often used as an umbrella term encompassing diverse sexualities and genders. It can also be used as an individual identity by someone who is either not cisgender or not heterosexual, and is often preferred by people who describe their gender or sexuality more fluidly.

Queer Straight Alliance (QSA) See *Rainbow diversity group*.

Rainbow: An umbrella term, considered more inclusive than LGBTQIA+, describing people of diverse sexualities, genders, and variations of sex characteristics. It is most commonly used in an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Rainbow diversity group: A peer-led group or club at school for rainbow young people and allies to connect, provide support, and advocate for rainbow inclusivity at their schools and wider communities. Sometimes called a Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA).

Takatāpui: A traditional Māori word that traditionally means 'intimate friend of the same sex'. It has since been embraced to encompass all Māori who identify with diverse genders, sexualities or variations of sex characteristics. Takatāpui denotes a spiritual and cultural connection to the past. It is best understood within its cultural context and may mean something different to each person.

Top surgery: A type of surgery that some transmasculine and non-binary people assigned female at birth have to achieve a flat chest.

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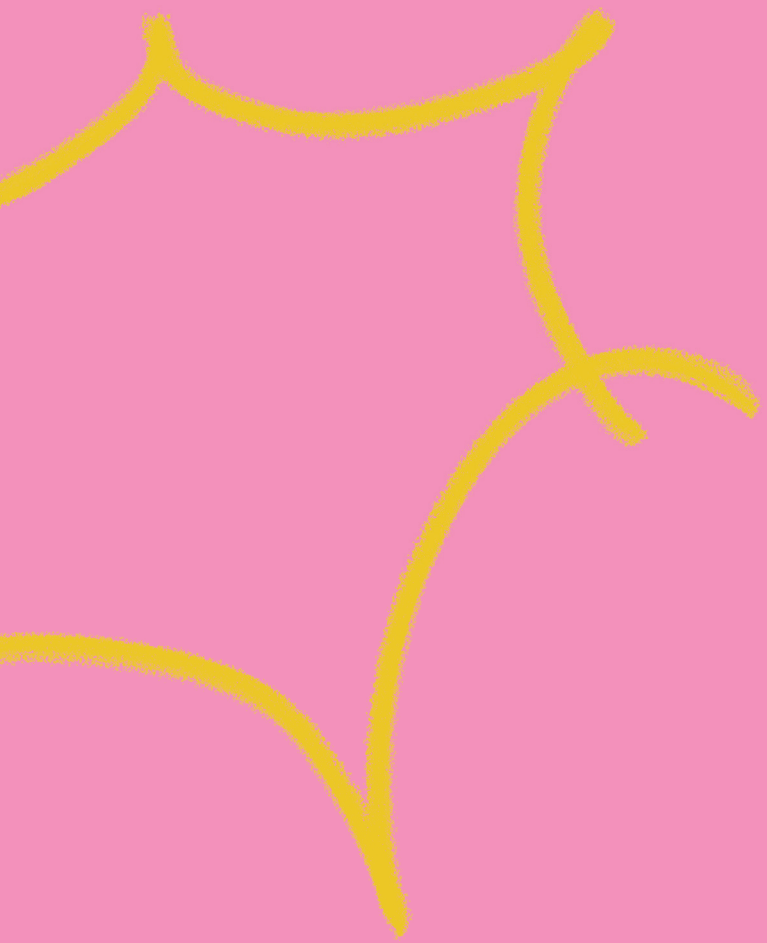
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