



Summary Report

# BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS



A REFLECTION OF 2021



## Introduction

It seems so long ago now, but at the start of 2021, many of us were hoping for a more “normal” transition back to routines and every day life. However, for some, this was short-lived. The events of 2021 shaped much of SchoolTV’s content which is evident in the number of Special Reports published in response to what was happening in the world and within our school communities. SchoolTV resolved to park the scheduled content and address the more pertinent current issues affecting young people and their families.

One of these issues related to the topic of sexual consent and its implications. This was brought to the forefront by the 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame and then later on by the media due the controversy surrounding former political government staffer, Brittany Higgins. These events also inspired former school girl, Chanel Contos, to launch a petition calling on schools to provide better education around sexual consent and for it to be taught at an earlier age. As a result, SchoolTV’s report entitled ‘A Conversation on Consent’, was the highest viewed topic of the year. It encouraged parents to be more proactive in talking to their sons and daughters about this important issue.

Enduring the frequent disruptions to learning, rites of passage and social interactions due to the pandemic and repeated lockdowns, culminated in many schools reporting changes to student behaviour. In Australia,

schools reported an increased uptake in vaping and in New Zealand eating disorders rose dramatically. SchoolTV responded accordingly by providing schools and their families with practical strategies on how best to navigate and support those affected by these concerns.

The future for our young people is now more hopeful, but the experts are reporting that the fallout from the last two years is yet to come. The social, economic and psychological impacts over the coming months remain uncertain and with mental health concerns on the rise, many young people may need some extra support. Parents, carers and staff will need to be more vigilant and empower themselves with information to prepare for what may come.

Many schools are reporting a shortage of accessible counsellors and psychologists. This highlights that there is an obvious need for trusted, fact-based and calm information that is capable of helping and supporting school communities to move forward positively through these difficult circumstances in the months ahead.

At the time of preparing this report, 6,697 parents provided feedback across SchoolTV surveys, polls and quiz questions. This report is a compiled summary providing a historical reflection of what parents and carers were feeling and experiencing in 2021.



# A Conversation on Consent

Published March/April 2021

Recent allegations of sexual assault covered in the media, sparked an online petition instigated by a former student from a private girl's school in the eastern suburbs of Sydney. The petition asked for former students who had experienced sexual assault whilst still at school to come forward and share their stories. The petition has since gone viral with an enormous response from thousands of young women who have either signed the petition or shared their experience.

The accounts shared by these young women are disturbing, shocking, graphic and upsetting. It has set in motion a wake-up call for many schools to reassess their curriculum around sex and life education. The clear message arising from this is that education around consent is being delivered too late, with many young women being subjected to sexual assault before they reach Year 10. The petition is calling for change to help protect young people across the nation.

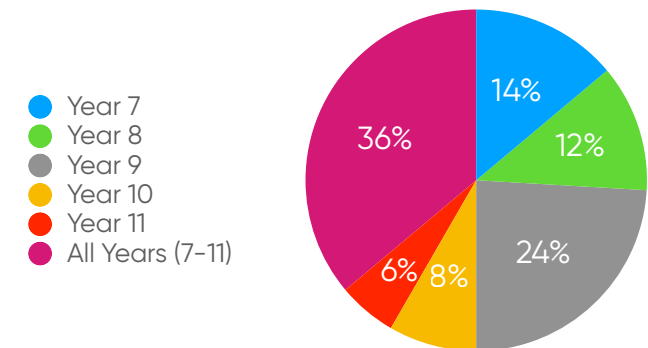
This also highlights a strong need for parents to step-up and start having conversations around consent. It is not enough to assume that your teenager knows or understands what it means and the implications surrounding it. Teenagers need to learn about boundaries, enabling them to respect themselves and their partners. Talking about consent regularly will help

normalise it and encourage your teenager to experience healthy relationships as they journey into adulthood.

The following is the poll result based on 3499 responses.

QUESTION:

**When would you like to see education around consent conducted in schools?**





## Raising Girls

Published March/April 2021

Raising girls in today's modern world can be a difficult path for parents and carers to navigate. These days, girls are transitioning to puberty a lot earlier than they used to and the physical, psychological and emotional changes they experience are challenging. As a result, by mid-adolescence, girls are twice as likely to develop mood disorders more so than boys.

Some parents and carers may feel uncertain about how best to support their daughter through the ups and downs of adolescence and how to keep the lines of communication open. With the rise of social media and technology, mental health difficulties in girls are increasing as often they are faced with online images that make it difficult to see themselves as acceptable. Ensuring a daughter's opinions are heard and her views listened to, will go a long way towards making her feel loved and supported as she tries to establish her own identity.

This edition of SchoolTV, assisted adult carers in attaining a clearer picture of what girls are wanting from them and how best to support them through adolescence.

The following is the quiz results are based on 956 responses.



# Raising Girls



QUESTION 1:

What should parents say if their daughter asks, "Am I pretty?"

Yes, you are stunningly gorgeous	8%
Instead of saying what she looks like tell her who she is – smart, loving, curious, energetic, creative, articulate, compassionate, talented	91%
No, you are actually quite ordinary	0%
That's not relevant	1%

QUESTION 3:

True or false?

Upon first hearing of young women cutting, many parents assume it has something to do with a suicide attempt or suicidal feelings. While some girls who self-cut may have suicidal thoughts and feelings, for many, self-cutting is a separate and unrelated behaviour.

TRUE	92%
FALSE	8%

QUESTION 2:

Which of the following is true of teenage girls?

They have high rates of self-harm	1%
Doubling of the suicide rate in last 10 years	1%
Huge pressures from media to be perfect	3%
Their emerging sexuality is being influenced by porn	0%
They are subject to sexualisation from a young age	1%
All of the above	94%

QUESTION 4:

What should parents do if their daughter wants to go on a diet or is restricting food?

Talk to her about how our bodies need and want food for lots of reasons, including for fuel and enjoyment	7%
By paying attention to how she feels when she eats, she can take better care of her body	0%
She should trust that her body will lead her toward choices that are good for her and that have nothing to do with her body size or shape	1%
Let her know strict diets hurt our bodies and almost never lead to sustained weight loss	1%
All of the above	91%

# Raising Girls



QUESTION 5:

Which of the following do girls need most from their parents?

Offer warm, safe, consistent relationships	5%
Hold optimism for them when they can't quite hold it for themselves	0%
Exude love and kindness	0%
All of the above	95%

QUESTION 7:

Parents should make sure that their daughters know how to:

Routine car maintenance	0%
How to stop a toilet from overflowing	0%
How to use the fuse box	0%
How to turn off the water main	1%
All of the above	99%

QUESTION 6:

True or false?

The most important message to send young women about their bodies is that her body is an instrument, not an ornament.

TRUE	96%
FALSE	4%

QUESTION 8:

True or false?

Parents shape their daughters identity about what it is to be a woman and how to expect to be treated for being one. Therefore, it is important to say positive things about women, but not put them on a pedestal.

TRUE	89%
FALSE	11%

# Raising Girls



QUESTION 9:

True or false?

It is important to teach your daughter about male sexuality without fear-mongering. Don't tell her that all boys are bad, that sex is evil and that guys only want one thing...

TRUE	99%
FALSE	1%

QUESTION 10:

True or false?

The best drug education is the message "If you try drugs, you'll die or end up homeless, or become a prostitute, etc."

TRUE	8%
FALSE	92%



# Friendship & Belonging

Published June 2021

Learning how to make new friends and keep them involves a number of skills every young person needs to understand and develop. For some these skills will come very naturally, allowing them to easily move between different friendship groups, sharing their experiences and opening up to new people. For others, this can be much harder to navigate. Belonging to a group that is like-minded with similar interests is highly beneficial to a young person's wellbeing. It gives them a sense of security helping them feel valued which in turn builds their confidence.

Positive friendships are an important part of the journey to adulthood. Adult carers can support their child or teenager by providing guidance in the many social and emotional skills required for a healthy relationship. This will help them to obtain, retain and maintain friendships. However, not all friendships are regarded as positive. Sometimes young people develop negative or toxic friendships. Therefore it is also important for them to learn how to identify, avoid or deal with such a friendship.

This edition of SchoolTV, assisted adult carers in learning how to support their young person's friendship so that they experience a sense of belonging.

The following is the quiz results are based on 214 responses.





# Friendship & Belonging



QUESTION 1:

**True or false?**

Parents often worry about whether their children have enough friends, are happy in their friendships, are getting along well with other children and so on.

TRUE	99%
FALSE	1%

QUESTION 3:

**True or false?**

A great way to help children make new friends is to involve them in one or two out-of-school activities, like sport, drama, craft or music.

TRUE	99%
FALSE	1%

QUESTION 2:

**True or false?**

Some children are happy with just a few close friends, or even one friend. Your child doesn't need to be the most popular child in the class to be happy, confident and accepted by other children.

TRUE	100%
FALSE	0%

QUESTION 4:

**True or false?**

One of the greatest predictors of wellbeing in young people, is having a rich repertoire of friends.

TRUE	91%
FALSE	9%

# Friendship & Belonging



QUESTION 5:

When children make friends, they develop which of the following important life skills.

Getting along with other people	2%
Being independent	0%
Learning how to sort out conflicts and problems	1%
All of the above	97%

QUESTION 7:

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include which of the following?

Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)	17%
Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection	0%
One-off acts of meanness or spite	1%
Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence	1%
All of the above	81%

QUESTION 6:

Teenage parties are not just fun, but they can also be a chance for your child to do which of the following:

Develop social skills, independence and confidence	1%
Make new friends	0%
Develop their planning skills, if they are hosting the party	0%
Introduce their friends to your family	0%
All of the above	99%

QUESTION 8:

Socially isolated children tend to have which of the following characteristics?

Lower subsequent educational attainment	0%
Be part of a less advantaged social class in adulthood	0%
Are more likely to be psychologically distressed in adulthood	6%
All of the above	94%



# The Wellbeing Barometer

Published September 2021

Irrespective of whether your community has experienced many lockdowns or not, the pandemic has touched all of us and impacted families everywhere in some way. Whether it is our ability to participate in special celebrations or travel to visit loved ones, it has proven to be a difficult time - for some more than others.

During this period, SchoolTV has provided families and schools with much needed guidance and information to help support young people. However, the social, economic and psychological impacts over the coming months remain uncertain. Mental health concerns are on the rise, and it is evident that many young people may need some extra support.

To assist schools, we seek participation in a short anonymous and aggregated survey. It is intended to act as a barometer on the wellbeing of young people within your community. Since the start of the pandemic, many students have faced adversities and been challenged on many levels. Some parents have reported that their child's mental health had changed or worsened due to the effects of the pandemic. However, ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of our young people is

important for many reasons, one of which is the direct impact it has on educational outcomes.

The following are the survey results based on 2,028 responses.

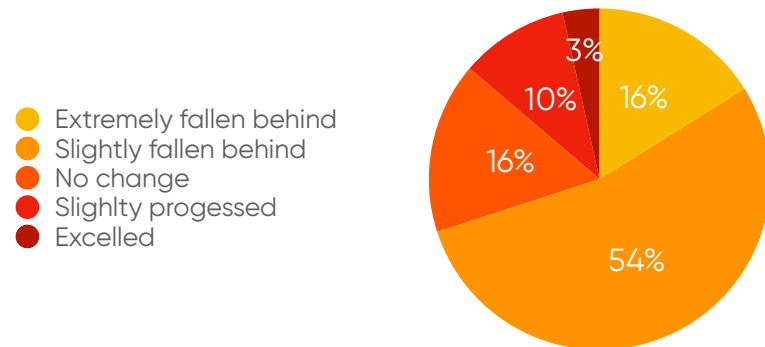


# The Wellbeing Barometer



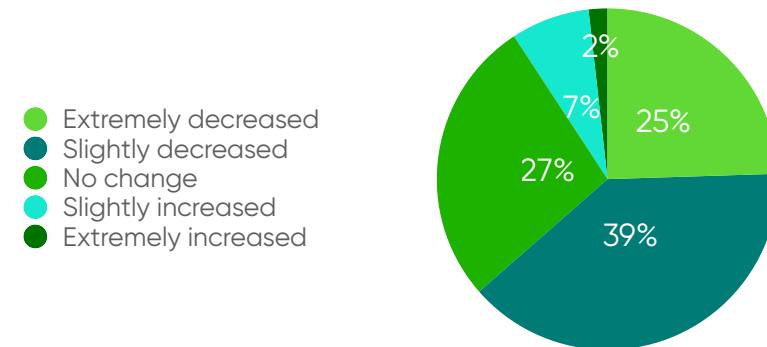
QUESTION 1:

Have your son's/daughter's studies been impacted during times of remote learning?



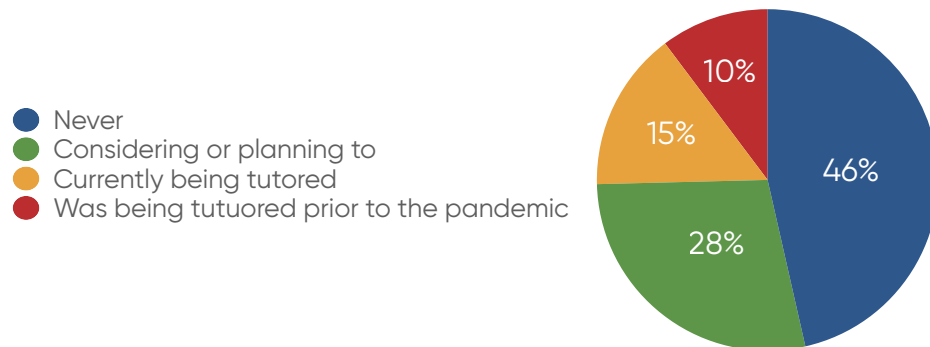
QUESTION 2:

Has your son's/daughter's motivation to study changed?



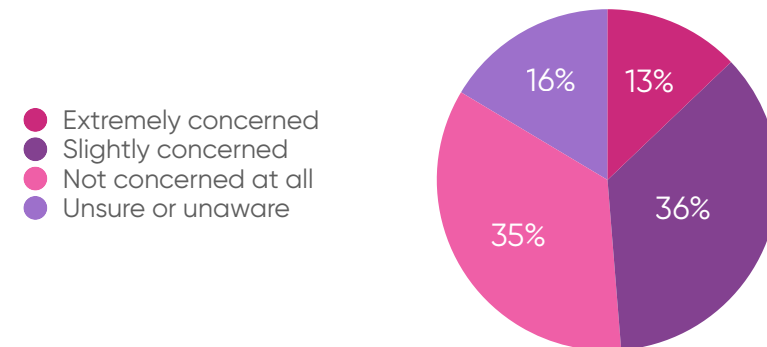
QUESTION 3:

Has your son/daughter required additional tutoring to assist with their studies?



QUESTION 4:

Has your son/daughter expressed any concerns about their future studies or career aspirations?

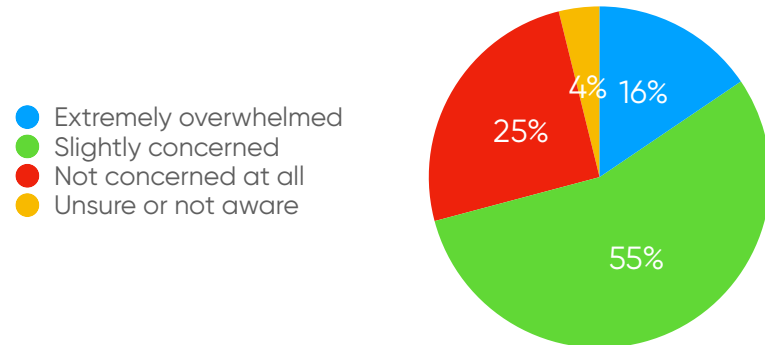


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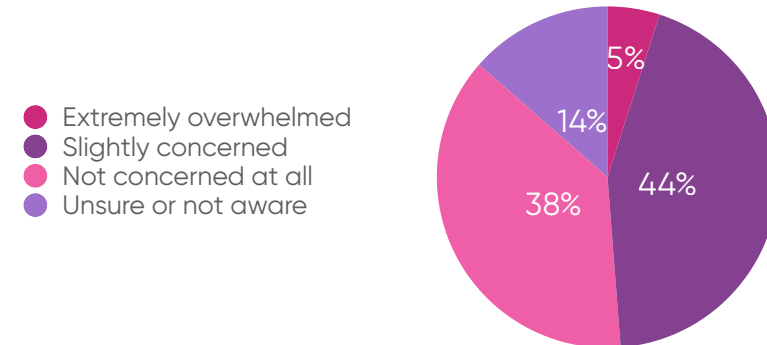
QUESTION 5:

Has your son/daughter shown signs of overwhelm or stress about the impact of the COVID pandemic?



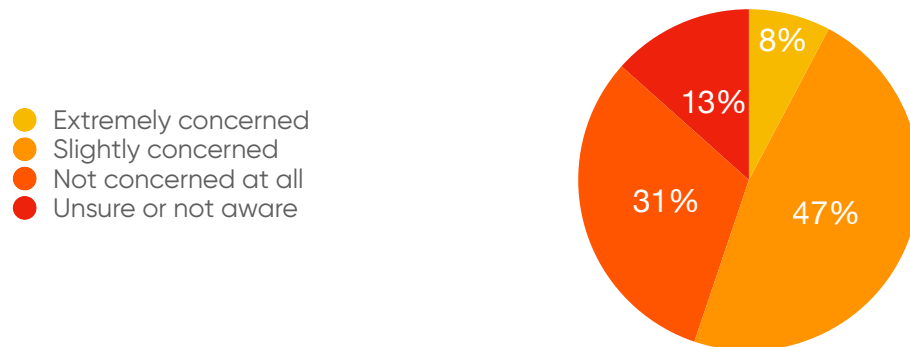
QUESTION 6:

Has your son/daughter shown signs of overwhelm or stress about the impact of global warming?



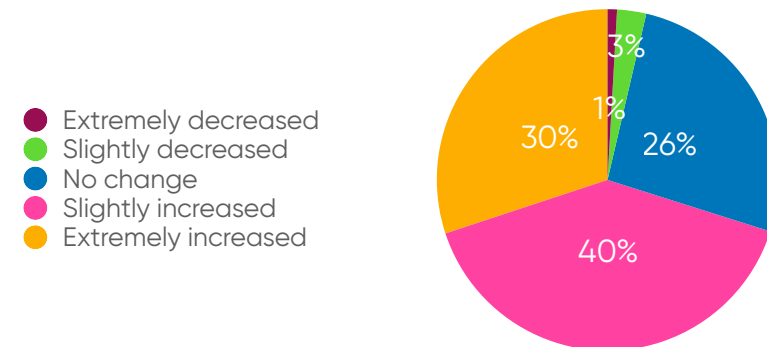
QUESTION 7:

Has your son/daughter shown signs of overwhelm or stress about the future of the world?



QUESTION 8:

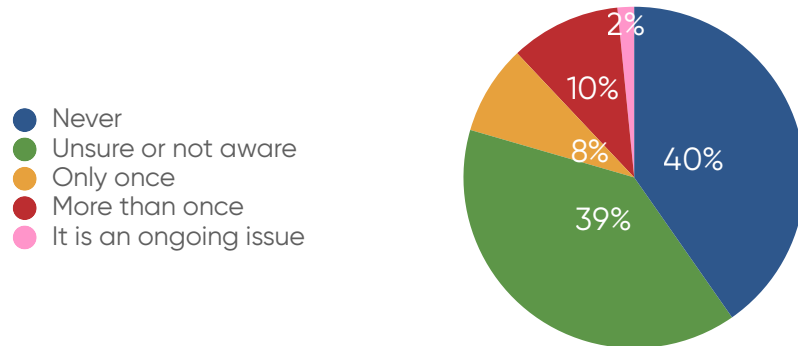
Has the amount of time your son/daughter now spends on social media changed?



# The Wellbeing Barometer

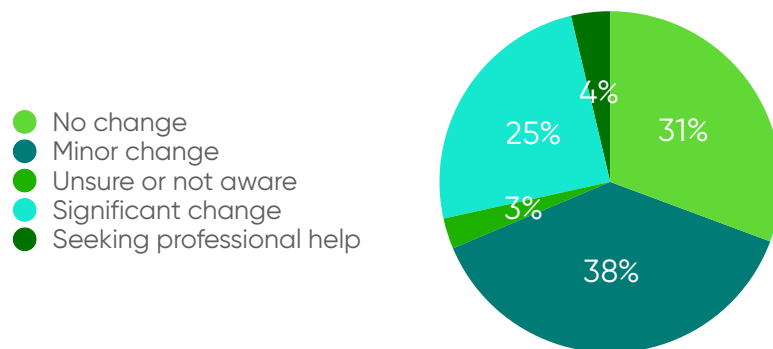
QUESTION 9:

Has your son/daughter been subjected to incidents of cyberbullying?



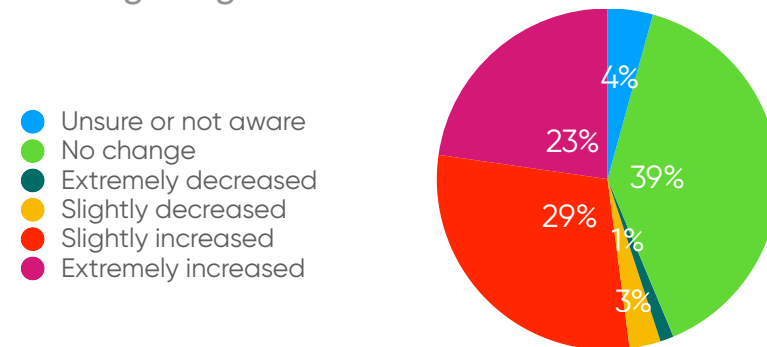
QUESTION 11:

Is there a marked shift or noticeable change to his/her sleep wake cycle?



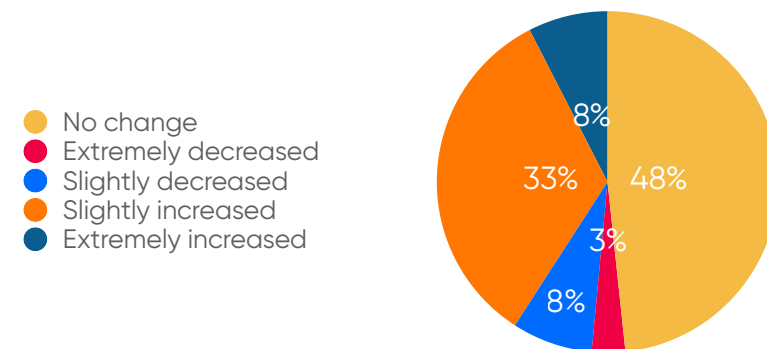
QUESTION 10:

Have you noticed a change in your son's/daughter's online gaming use?



QUESTION 12:

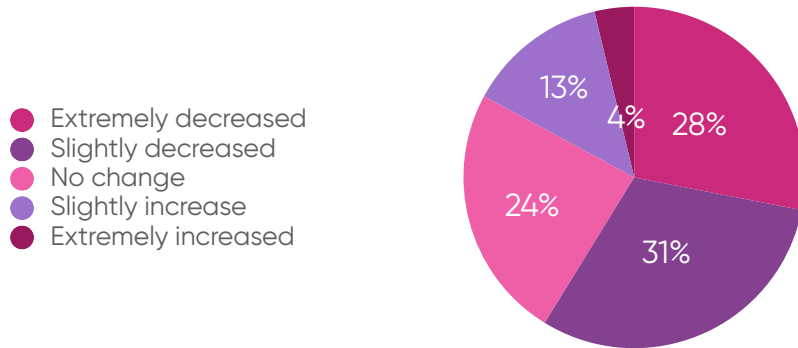
Has the amount of junk food your son/daughter eats now changed?



# The Wellbeing Barometer

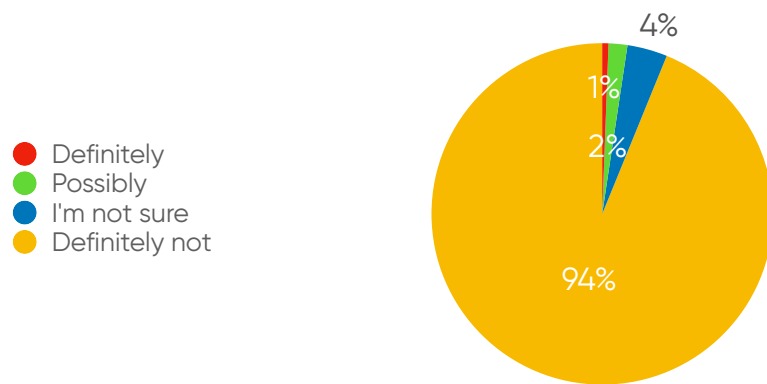
QUESTION 13:

Has the amount of exercise your son/daughter engages in now changed?



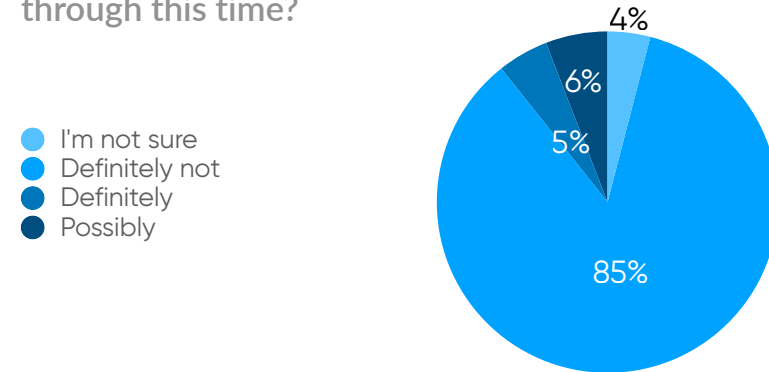
QUESTION 15:

Has your son/daughter used illicit drugs through this time?



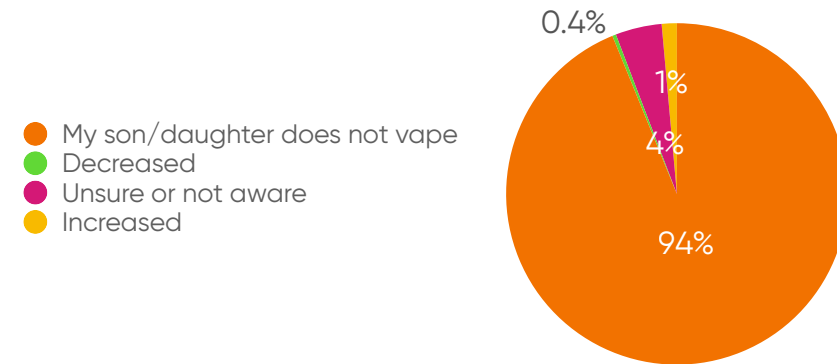
QUESTION 14:

Has your son/daughter consumed alcohol through this time?



QUESTION 16:

Have your son's/daughter's vaping habits changed throughout this time?

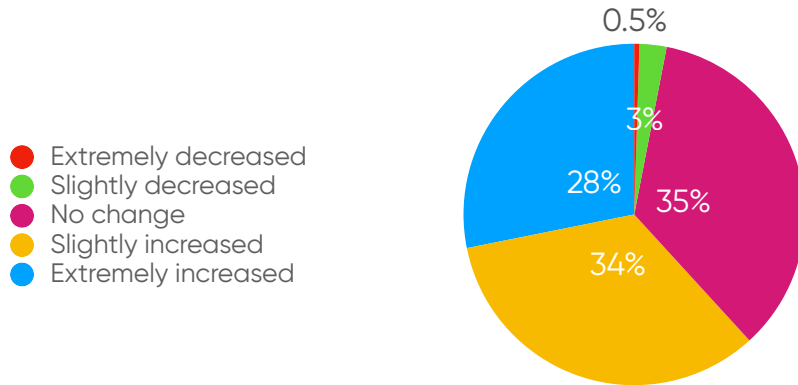


# The Wellbeing Barometer



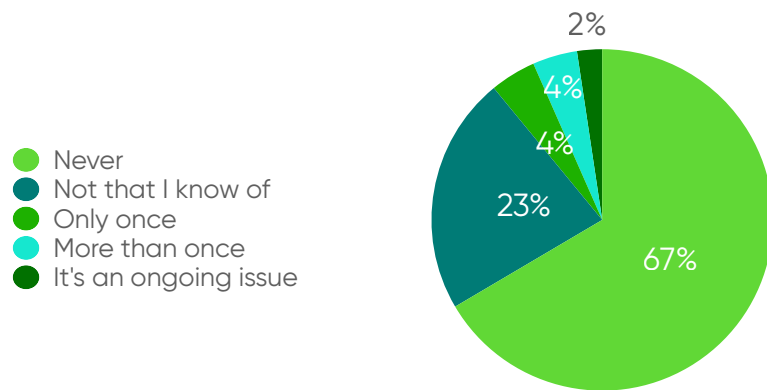
QUESTION 17:

Have you noticed the amount of time your son/daughter spends alone in their room has changed?



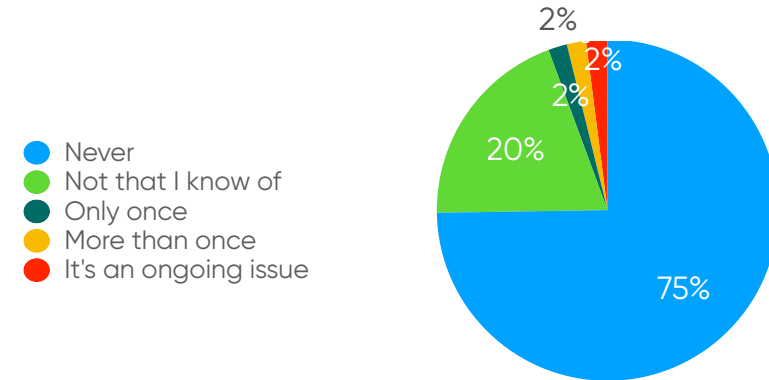
QUESTION 19:

Has your son/daughter expressed any suicidal ideation through this time?



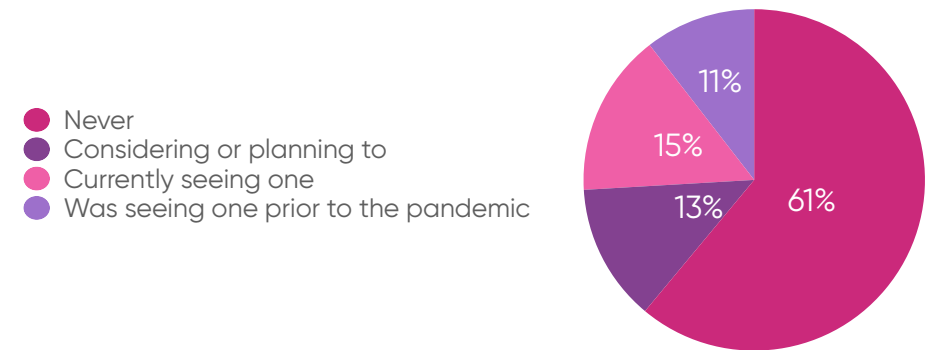
QUESTION 18:

Has your son/daughter self-harmed through this time?



QUESTION 20:

Has your son/daughter required help from a mental health professional?





# The Wellbeing Barometer

QUESTION 21:

Do you think there should be routine psychological screening of all students?

