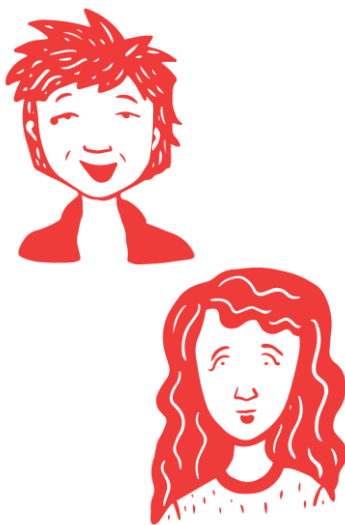


# A Youth19 Brief: Pacific Rainbow young people

## What is Youth19?

Youth19 is the latest in the Aotearoa New Zealand Youth2000 series of health and wellbeing surveys. These large scale, high quality surveys began in 2001, and involve a total of over 36 000 students. Youth19 is led by Dr Terryann Clark (University of Auckland) and Dr Terry Fleming (Victoria University of Wellington), with collaborators from around New Zealand and beyond.<sup>1</sup>



7,721 adolescents from 49 Auckland, Northland and Waikato schools and kura kaupapa Māori took part in Youth19. They completed the anonymous survey in English or te reo Māori on internet tablets with optional voice over. For more info, see [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz).

Here, we report key data about the wellbeing of Pacific Rainbow participants. For more detailed information, including other research, young people's voices and information about other areas of health and wellbeing, see our *Negotiating Multiple Identities* report.<sup>2</sup>

## Pacific Rainbow young people

'Pacific Rainbow young people' refers to Youth19 participants who reported that they had any Pacific ethnic identity and that they are sexuality or gender diverse. This includes those who are attracted to the same sex as themselves or more than one sex; those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or takatāpui; and those who are fa'afafine, gender diverse, non-binary or transgender. The survey questions used to identify these groups are shown on page 5.

In total, there were 103 Pacific Rainbow participants (about 9% of all Pacific participants). Five of these students identified with a gender diverse identity. Of Pacific Rainbow participants, 62% were female and most lived in middle or higher deprivation neighbourhoods – see our report for details.<sup>2</sup>

## Summary

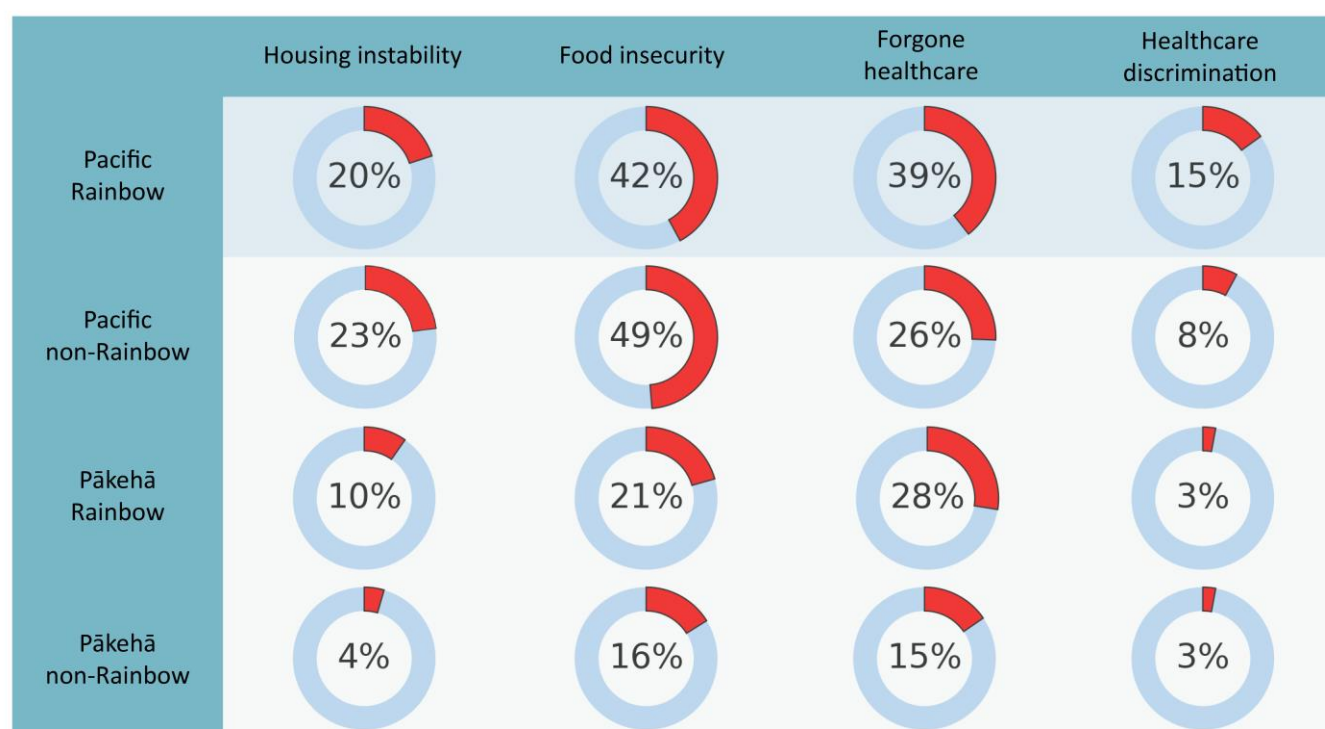
Most Pacific Rainbow young people reported positive family and school environments, high levels of volunteering and moderate or good health. However, members of this group also reported major inequities compared to others, including significantly higher food and housing insecurity, poorer healthcare access, and higher discrimination by healthcare providers than Pākehā young people and higher levels of mental health concerns than non-Rainbow young people. In total, they reported more challenges than students who were Pacific and non-Rainbow, those who were Pākehā and Rainbow, and those who were Pākehā and non-Rainbow.

We can improve wellbeing for Pacific Rainbow young people by ensuring that they are heard, welcome and included in all environments, and that they and their aiga/kopu tangata/kāinga/magafaoa/matavuvale/kāiga (family), are free from discrimination and have access to the resources they need. We also need to ensure that Pacific Rainbow young people feel safe at school and in all settings and that their health needs are met.

# Housing, food and healthcare

On this page and the following pages, we show how Pacific Rainbow young people are doing on key indicators. The last two pages of this brief detail how we measured each indicator and give extra info. Overall, we found that Pacific Rainbow young people face high housing instability (needing to sleep or live in challenging conditions due to housing costs) and high food insecurity (parents worrying about money for food). They also reported high forgone healthcare (not being able to get required healthcare) and high ethnic discrimination by healthcare providers.

Pacific Rainbow young people face significantly higher housing and food insecurity than Pākehā young people. They report significantly more forgone health care than their non-Rainbow Pākehā peers and significantly more healthcare discrimination than either Pākehā group. See our report for more info.<sup>2</sup>



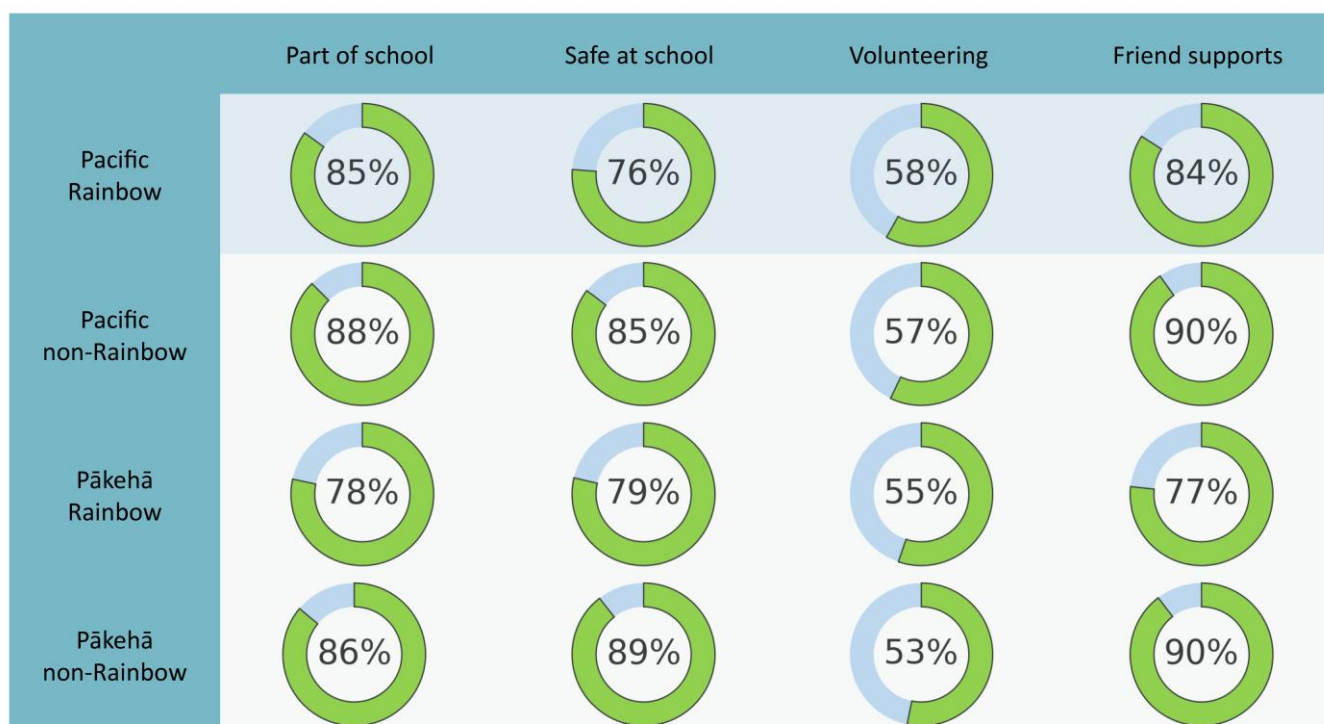
This infographic shows the estimated percentage of each indicator for each group, adjusted for age and sex differences and rounded to the nearest whole number. The table below provides the estimated percentages to one decimal place and shows the 95% confidence interval. The 95% confidence interval indicates the range between which the true percentage can be assumed to exist, 95% of the time. Where confidence intervals do not overlap, differences are considered statistically significant.

Variable name	Pacific Rainbow	Pacific non-Rainbow	Pākehā Rainbow	Pākehā non-Rainbow
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Housing instability	23.0 (13.4, 32.6)	20.0 (17.4, 22.7)	9.7 (5.1, 14.3)	4.5 (3.5, 5.4)
Food insecurity	42.1 (30.5, 53.6)	48.7 (45.2, 52.2)	20.6 (14.6, 26.6)	16.1 (14.5, 17.8)
Forgone healthcare	39.4 (26.3, 52.4)	25.6 (22.6, 28.5)	27.5 (20.6, 34.4)	15.4 (13.8, 16.9)
Health discrimination	15.1 (6.2, 24.0)	7.9 (6.1, 9.7)	2.9 (1.6, 4.2)	2.9 (2.2, 3.6)

# School, friendships and volunteering

Most Pacific Rainbow young people report positive school environments. More than 85% feel part of school and 76% feel safe at school all or part of the time. More than half volunteer to support others in their communities and 84% have at least one friend who supports them.

Pacific Rainbow young people report very similar levels of feeling part of school to non-Rainbow Pacific and Pākehā young people. They also report similar proportions of volunteering and having a friend who supports them. Almost one in four Pacific Rainbow young people do not feel safe at school. This is significantly different than for non-Rainbow Pākehā students.



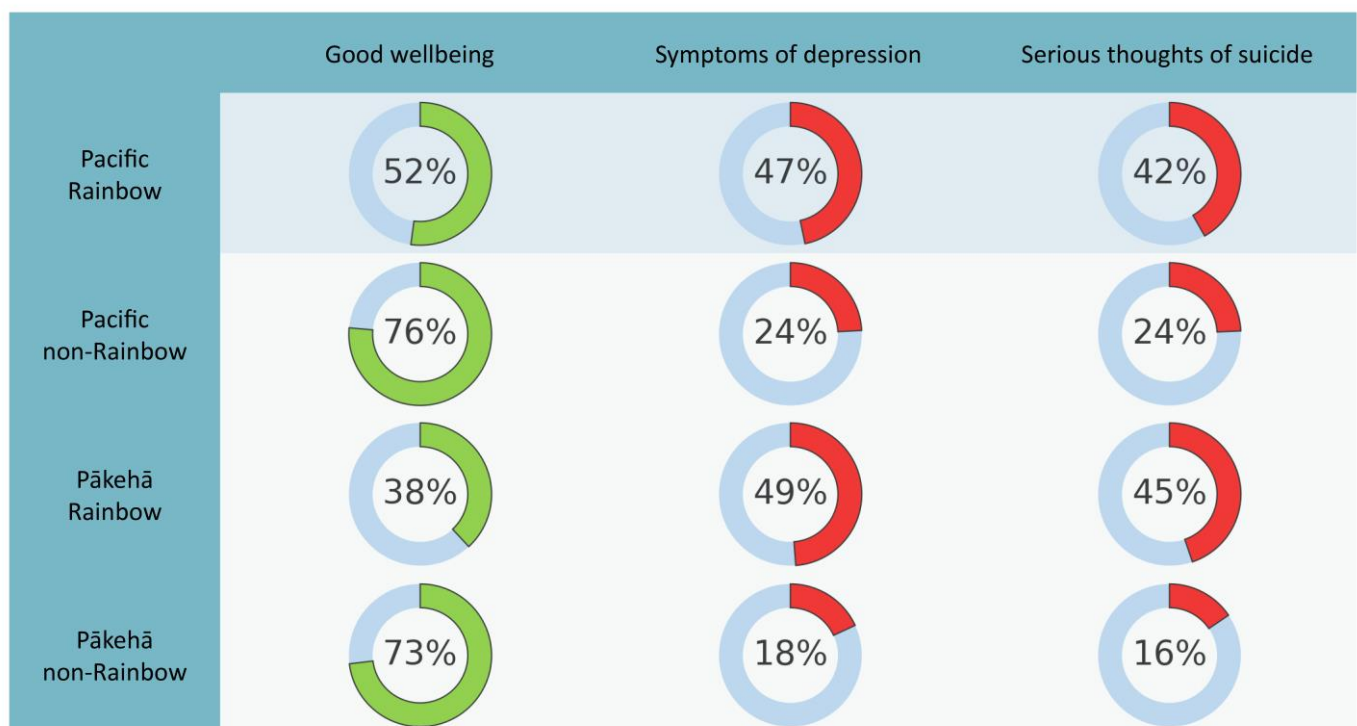
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Variable name	Pacific Rainbow	Pacific non-Rainbow	Pākehā Rainbow	Pākehā non-Rainbow
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Part of school	85.0 (77.2, 92.8)	87.5 (85.2, 89.8)	78.4 (72.9, 83.9)	86.1 (84.7, 87.6)
Safe at school	76.2 (66.3, 86.1)	85.4 (83.0, 87.7)	78.7 (72.6, 84.8)	89.4 (88.0, 90.9)
Volunteering	58.1 (46.2, 70.1)	57.1 (53.6, 60.7)	55.2 (48.0, 62.4)	53.2 (51.0, 55.4)
Friend supports	84.1 (75.9, 92.3)	90.1 (87.9, 92.2)	76.7 (70.6, 82.8)	89.6 (88.2, 91.0)

# Wellbeing and mental health

Pacific Rainbow young people face major inequities and challenges in the area of wellbeing and mental health. Only 52% of this group report good wellbeing, close to half report clinically significant symptoms of depression and over 40% report serious thoughts of suicide in the last year.

These challenges are much higher than those reported by non-Rainbow young people. Pacific and Pākehā Rainbow young people report poorer wellbeing and higher depressive symptoms than non-Rainbow young people. Reports of serious thoughts of suicide are higher among Pacific and Pākehā Rainbow young people than among Pacific non-Rainbow young people, and considerably higher than among Pākehā non-Rainbow young people.



This infographic shows the estimated percentage of each indicator for each group, adjusted for age and sex differences and rounded to the nearest whole number. The table below provides the estimated percentages to one decimal place and shows the 95% confidence interval. The 95% confidence interval indicates the range between which the true percentage can be assumed to exist, 95% of the time. Where confidence intervals do not overlap, differences are considered statistically significant.

Variable name	Pacific Rainbow	Pacific non-Rainbow	Pākehā Rainbow	Pākehā non-Rainbow
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Good wellbeing	52.1 (40.3, 63.9)	76.4 (73.7, 79.2)	38.1 (30.9, 45.2)	73.1 (71.1, 75.1)
Depressive symptoms	46.7 (35.0, 58.5)	24.2 (21.3, 27.1)	48.8 (40.9, 56.7)	18.1 (16.4, 19.8)
Suicide thoughts	41.8 (28.8, 54.7)	24.3 (21.4, 27.2)	44.8 (36.8, 52.8)	15.5 (13.9, 17.2)

# Youth19 questions and definitions

All questions in the Youth19 survey are self-reported. This means that young people answer the questions themselves, almost always by selecting a particular response option on the tablet screen. A key strength of Youth19 is the large, representative sample, which gives us an overview of a broad range of important areas for diverse groups of young people. The downside is that the survey only included students who were at the invited schools or kura on the day of the survey, and that the responses are not in-depth. For each question there are limitations and things it would be good to know more about. Other kinds of research can help to enrich our understandings alongside this big picture overview. For more about the survey, see [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz).

For this brief, **'Rainbow'** includes Youth19 participants who identified as trans, non-binary, Queen, fa'afafine, whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, genderfluid or genderqueer; those who reported that they were attracted to either "the same sex (e.g. I am a male attracted to males or I am a female attracted to females)" or "I am attracted to males and females"; and those who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, takatāpui or another diverse sexual identity. In the total Youth19 school sample, there were 123 transgender and gender diverse youth and 875 cis-gender sexual minority young people (216 males and 659 females), a total of 998 Rainbow students. We have considered these identities collectively. While there are important distinctions between many of these identities and people from sexuality and gender minorities can have very different experiences, there were too few participants who were gender diverse in the intersectional groups to allow meaningful quantitative analyses. Analyses of data from gender diverse participants in the total survey population are underway.

**Housing instability.** Students were counted as reporting housing instability if they reported needing to sleep in any of the following places in the last 12 months due to unaffordable housing or lack of space: cabin, caravan, sleep out, garage, couch, another person's bed, couching surfing, motel, hostel, marae, car or van. The question read: "For some families, it is hard to find a house that they can afford, or that has enough space for everyone to have their own bed. In the last 12 months, have you had to sleep in any of the following because it was hard for your family to afford or get a home, or there was not enough space? (Do not include holidays or sleep-overs for fun)."

**Food insecurity** was indicated by a "sometimes," "often" or "all the time" response to the question: "Do your parents, or the people who act as your parents, ever worry about not having enough money to buy food?"

**Forgone healthcare** was indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "In the last 12 months, has there been any time when you wanted or needed to see a doctor or nurse (or other healthcare worker) about your health, but you weren't able to?"

**Healthcare discrimination** was indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "Have you ever been treated unfairly (e.g. treated differently, kept waiting) by a health professional (e.g. doctor, nurse, dentist etc.) because of your ethnicity or ethnic group?"

**Part of school** was indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "Do you feel like you are part of your school, alternative education or course?"

**Safe at school** was indicated by a "yes always" or "yes most of the time" response to the question: "Do you feel safe in your school/course?"

**Volunteering** was indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "Do you give your time to help others in your school or community (e.g. as a peer supporter at school, help out on the marae or church, help coach a team or belong to a volunteer organisation)?"

**Friend supports** was indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "I have at least one friend who will stick up for me and who has 'got my back'."

**Good wellbeing** was indicated by a score of 13 or more on the WHO-5 Well-being Index. This is a widely used scale that was developed by the World Health Organization. It asks questions about feeling cheerful, calm and relaxed, active and vigorous, waking up feeling refreshed and life being full of interest. You can find out more about this and other mental health measures used in Youth19 in our *Hauora Hinengaro/Emotional and Mental Health* report, available on [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz)

**Depressive symptoms** were indicated by scoring over the clinical cut-off for significant symptoms of depression on the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale: Short Form (RADS-SF). This is an internationally validated scale that includes questions about experiences such as feeling lonely, worthless, sad and tired. Students who score over the cut-off on this measure may have depression, and their experiences are likely to be affecting their day to day home and school life.

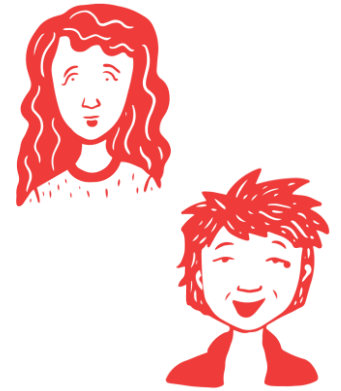
**Serious thoughts of suicide** were indicated by a "yes" response to the question: "During the last 12 months have you seriously thought about killing yourself (attempting suicide)?"

# Youth perspectives and more

Youth19 includes brief comments from participants about the biggest challenges facing young people and what could be changed to make a difference. We also invited youth advisors aged 17–24 to comment on key issues. Both groups of young people highlighted the need for welcoming, inclusive school and community environments and better health and mental health supports. Youth advisors highlighted the need for providing opportunities for diverse young people to connect with others. They identified the importance of being welcome and belonging in all aspects of life and being free from discrimination. Advisors also highlighted strengths and things that they enjoyed about their identities. For example, one advisor said:

*“I wouldn’t want it any other way. I like being part of both [Pacific and Rainbow] groups. It gives me a lot of perspective. You have strengths from different communities . . . There is so much strength and pride in particular groups . . .”*

– Pacific Rainbow Youth Advisor



You can find more info and examples in the *Negotiating Multiple Identities* report.<sup>2</sup>

## What about other areas of wellbeing and other young people?

Youth19 includes many questions. We report more data in our *Negotiating Multiple Identities* report,<sup>2</sup> including questions around home, school and community life and other areas of health such as sexual health and substance use. This information also highlights important areas of inequity and need.

Papers and reports about other health issues and diverse groups of young people are in progress and will be available through [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz)

### References

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2. Roy, R., Greaves, L. M., Peiris-John, R., Clark, T., Fenaughty, J., Sutcliffe, K., Barnett, D., Hawthorne, V., & Fleming, T. (2021). *Negotiating Multiple Identities: Intersecting identities among Māori, Pacific, Rainbow and Disabled young people*. The Youth19 Research Group, The University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.

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This brief is based on the *Negotiating Multiple Identities* report.<sup>2</sup> Illustrations by Yasmine El Orfi, [www.yasmineelorfi.com](http://www.yasmineelorfi.com). Infographics by Maria Da Rocha.

### Funding and acknowledgements

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Find out more at [www.youth19.ac.nz](http://www.youth19.ac.nz) Contact us: [youth19@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:youth19@auckland.ac.nz)