Pacific young people in New Zealand

These findings are based on the Youth’12 health and wellbeing survey of New Zealand secondary school students undertaken in 2012.

Of the 8500 students who completed the survey, 1445 or 17.1% identified as having Pacific ethnicity.

Since 2001, there have been significant and important improvements in the health and wellbeing of Pacific youth.

For every 100 NZ young people, 17 would be Pacific.

Family relationships
Pacific young people are generally happy with their family relationships.

For every 100 Pacific young people...
- 73 are happy about how they get along with their family
- 61 say their spiritual beliefs are important to them
- 91 say their parents care about them a lot
- 82 feel very proud of being from their family’s culture

School Environment
Pacific young people enjoy their school environments and have aspirational goals.

For every 100 Pacific young people...
- 90 want to complete school compared to 78 in 2001
- 92 felt part of their school compared to 85 in 2001
- 87 feel safe at school compared to 72 in 2001

Pacific students were more likely than NZ European students to report that they felt part of their school and that an adult at school cares about them.

Economic hardship
The majority of Pacific young people are economically disadvantaged and live in environments that can be challenging to their healthy development.

71 live in poor neighbourhoods compared to 16 NZ European students.

For every 100 Pacific young people...
- 49 live in homes with household deprivation
- 24 know that their parents worry about having enough food
- 20 live in an overcrowded house

MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
**Emotional wellbeing**

For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 17 females and 9 males would have significant depressive symptoms
- 32 females and 21 males would have deliberately self-harmed
- 12 females and 4 males would have attempted suicide in the last year

**Nutrition**

For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 66% are overweight or obese
- 40 would have had 4 or more fizzy drinks in the last week
- 32 would have eaten takeaways 4 or more times in the last week

**Sexual Health**

For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 27% have had sex
- 44 would always use contraception when they had sex
- 4 would be attracted to people of the same sex or attracted to people of both sexes
- 2 would be transgender

**Substance use**

Pacific young people are less likely to use substances than they were in 2001.

For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 7 would smoke cigarettes weekly compared to 22 in 2001
- 3 would use marijuana compared to 9 in 2001
- 6 currently drink alcohol compared to 14 in 2001
- 18 would have engaged in binge drinking within the last month compared to 34 in 2001

**Safety**

Pacific young people have greater exposure to violence than other young people in NZ. For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 27 would have witnessed adults hit children at home compared with 9 NZ European students.
- 22 would have experienced sexual abuse or coercion compared with 12 NZ European students.

**Access to healthcare**

Pacific young people have greater exposure to violence than other young people in NZ. For every 100 Pacific young people...

- 25% were unable to access healthcare when required in the last year
- 16% of New Zealand Europeans

**Conclusions**

We have seen some great improvements in our Pacific young people’s well-being over the last decade, and we need to continue to foster this growth. However, we can not be complacent. Significant and persistent inequities still remain for Pacific youth.

Prioritising the wellbeing of Pacific youth will require purposeful and planned strategies that acknowledge our young people’s behaviour is influenced by their environment – family, school, churches, communities and wider political environments. Culturally relevant interventions, programmes and services for Pacific youth must address these broader contexts, as well building their individual skills. We want all Pacific young people to have the resources, support, skills and assets they need to thrive and be proud of who they are.

This factsheet was based on the Youth’12 Pacific Youth Health Wellbeing Report.

To access this report please visit: www.youthresearch.auckland.ac.nz

The images used in this fact sheet are from the Le Va Pacific Youth Health video. To access this motion graphic video please visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UObzV0bKMY