

YOUTH.sg:

The State of Youth in Singapore

2021

Youth and Their Diverse Priorities

NYC

NATIONAL
YOUTH
COUNCIL
SINGAPORE



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WE HEAR **Y**OUTH
HERE FOR **Y**OUTH

At NYC, we believe in a world where young people are respected and heard, and have the ability to influence and make a difference to the world. Together with our partners, we develop future-ready youth who are committed to Singapore by instilling in them a heart for service, resilience and an enterprising spirit.

■ Our Vision

Thriving youth who are **Future-Ready** and **Committed to Singapore**

▲ Our Mission

Create **Opportunities for All Youths in Singapore**

To be **heard**, to be **empowered** and to be **the change**

● Our Background

NYC was set up by the Singapore Government on 1 November 1989 as the national co-ordinating body for youth affairs in Singapore and the focal point of international youth affairs.

On 1 January 2015, NYC began its operations as an autonomous agency under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and housed two key institutions: Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) and Youth Corps Singapore (YCS). Together, the agency drives youth development and broadens outreach to young Singaporeans and youth sector organisations.

Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Law is the Chairperson of the 16th Council. The Council comprises members from diverse backgrounds such as the youth, media, arts, sports, corporate and government sectors.



Preface

The National Youth Survey (NYS) studies the major concerns and issues of schooling and working youths in Singapore. It is a time-series survey that tracks and provides updated analyses of national youth statistics and outcomes to inform policy and practice. To date, NYS has been conducted in 2002, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2016, and 2019. Findings and analyses from each cycle of NYS are subsequently published as YOUTH.sg: The State of Youth in Singapore (YOUTH.sg).

This edition of YOUTH.sg consists of six separate issues covering the topics of



**Values &
Attitudes**



**Education &
Employment**



**Social
Support**



**Social
Cohesion**



Wellbeing



**COVID-19
(Special Edition)**

Each issue features youth statistics and insights from the NYS. Complementing the NYS insights are relevant studies and in-depth analyses by practitioners in youth research and development to provide readers with an overview of the state of youth in Singapore.

Contributors comprise NYS' academic collaborators (A/Ps Ho Kong Chong, Ho Kong Weng, and Irene Ng), NYC, Youth STEPS' academic collaborators (Dr Chew Han Ei, A/P Vincent Chua, and Dr Alex Tan) and other contributors (Ministry of Manpower, National Arts Council, National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, and Sport Singapore). Together, the YOUTH.sg intends to shed light on and explore specific emergent trends and issues of youths.

**This publication has been put together by the Research team at the
National Youth Council.**

Notation

NA Not Available

Notes

Percentages may not total up to 100% due to rounding.
Survey figures may vary slightly due to sample weighting.

Values & Attitudes

Youths are not afraid to stand up for ideals that they resonate with and lead the change. The value orientations of youths towards the world around them reflect the essence of who they are as individuals and what they find to be important. These values inform the decisions that youths will make in their daily lives and at key points of transition. Their values and attitudes offer insights into the life youths envision for themselves and opportunities for advancement as individuals, communities, and as a nation.



Values & Attitudes

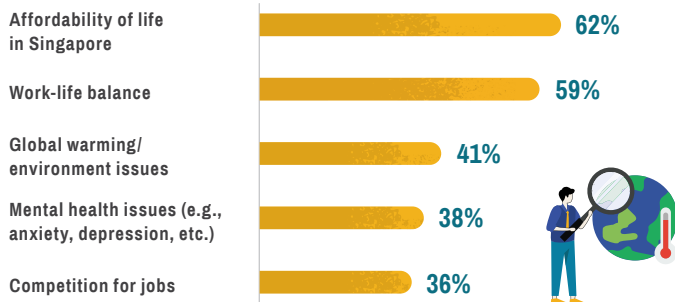
In the fast-changing world, youths have not lost sight of what is important to them. Holding their own views on issues, youths are willing to listen, express themselves, and take action. Their priorities reflect the changes that they want for themselves and the world around them.

Family values consistently come first for our youths. They aspire the most to maintain strong family ties and have a place of their own. With many youths being early in their careers, it is unsurprising that career achievements and financial independence continue to be key goals, and are viewed as important stepping stones for further aspirations, such as marriage and parenthood. Though top aspirations have remained largely unchanged in the past decade, youths' values are shifting in acceptance of greater diversity and concern for the world.

Youth aspirations *have remained consistent* over the past decade.



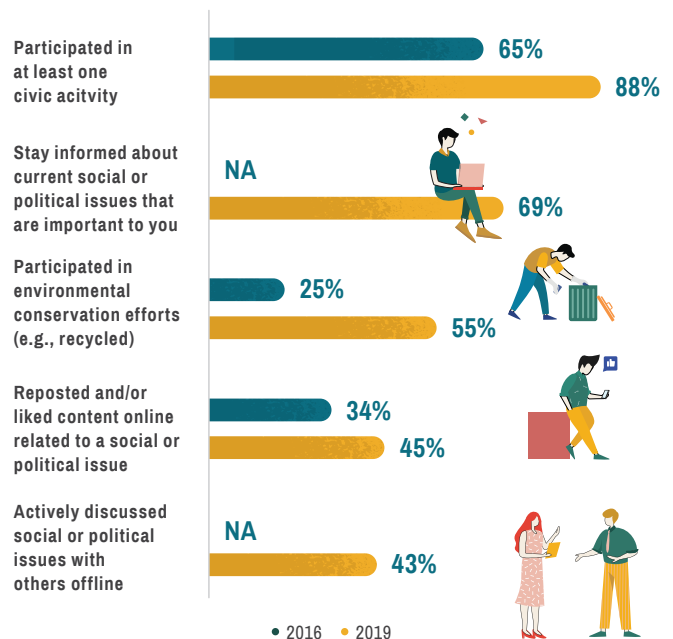
Youths are *concerned about bread-and-butter*, environmental, as well as mental health issues.



Youths have grown more socially conscious. They are looking out for the people around them and placing greater emphasis on staying attuned to current affairs. More aware of issues and civically minded, youths are taking greater action to engage in active discussions and participate in environmental conservation efforts. With civic engagement shifting online, we also see youths being open to the exchange of views on social media and rallying their social networks to champion issues that are important to them.

In understanding the values and attitudes of young people, their evolving priorities and perspectives remind us of the importance to recognise youth voices and harness their energies for a better Singapore.

Levels of *civic participation have risen*, with youths participating in a range of civic activities.



Part A: Life Goals



Section A1: Life Goals Youths' important life goals have remained largely unchanged since 2013 (**Table A1**). Across age groups, youths continue to prioritise having strong family relationships, home ownership, and acquiring new skills and knowledge (**Table A2**). It is heartening to note that close to 9 in 10 youths regard helping the less fortunate and contributing to society as somewhat and very important life goals (**Table A3**).

Question: How important are the following aspirations or life goals in your life?

TABLE A1: YOUTHS' "VERY IMPORTANT" LIFE GOALS OVER TIME

	2010 (n=1,268)	2013 (n=2,843)	2016 (n=3,531)	2019 (n=3,392)
To maintain strong family relationships	71%	74%	70%	68%
To have a place of my own ^a	NA	70%	70%	65%
To acquire new skills and knowledge	57%	65%	62%	53%
To have a successful career	66%	61%	59%	51%
To travel the world ^b	NA	NA	NA	41%
To earn lots of money	48%	46%	45%	36%
To help the less fortunate ^a	NA	41%	41%	34%
To have a good personal spiritual/religious life	27%	36%	31%	33%
To contribute to society ^a	NA	39%	40%	30%
To get married	35%	39%	36%	29%
To have children	34%	37%	35%	27%
To be actively involved in sports	17%	18%	18%	21%
To discover, design or invent something new	13%	17%	17%	16%
To start my own business	19%	22%	21%	14%
To be actively involved in the arts	8%	13%	12%	11%
To be actively involved in local volunteer work	4%	12%	10%	10%
To migrate to another country	5%	10%	11%	9%
To be actively involved in overseas volunteer work	4%	9%	8%	6%
To be famous	7%	6%	6%	4%

Notes

a. Items are new to NYS 2013.

b. Item is new to NYS 2019.

TABLE A2: YOUTHS' "VERY IMPORTANT" LIFE GOALS BY AGE

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
To maintain strong family relationships	71%	68%	67%	68%	68%
To have a place of my own	62%	69%	63%	65%	65%
To acquire new skills and knowledge	58%	57%	52%	45%	53%
To have a successful career	64%	58%	48%	40%	51%
To travel the world ^a	38%	44%	42%	39%	41%
To earn lots of money	38%	39%	36%	32%	36%
To help the less fortunate	43%	36%	32%	25%	34%
To have a good personal spiritual/religious life	34%	33%	31%	35%	33%
To contribute to society	36%	33%	27%	27%	30%
To get married	28%	32%	27%	30%	29%
To have children	23%	27%	25%	31%	27%
To be actively involved in sports	26%	20%	19%	18%	21%
To discover, design or invent something new	17%	19%	15%	15%	16%
To start my own business	13%	14%	13%	15%	14%
To be actively involved in the arts	15%	14%	9%	7%	11%
To be actively involved in local volunteer work	14%	11%	9%	8%	10%
To migrate to another country	9%	10%	7%	9%	9%
To be actively involved in overseas volunteer work	9%	7%	6%	4%	6%
To be famous	6%	4%	3%	2%	4%

Notes

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.

a. Item is new to NYS 2019.



TABLE A3: YOUTHS' LIFE GOALS

	Not important at all	Somewhat unimportant	Somewhat important	Very important
(n=3,392)				
To maintain strong family relationships	1%	3%	28%	68%
To have a place of my own	1%	4%	30%	65%
To acquire new skills and knowledge	1%	3%	43%	53%
To have a successful career	1%	6%	42%	51%
To travel the world ^a	4%	13%	42%	41%
To earn lots of money	3%	11%	50%	36%
To help the less fortunate	2%	9%	55%	34%
To have a good personal spiritual/religious life	13%	18%	37%	33%
To contribute to society	2%	11%	57%	30%
To get married	9%	18%	44%	29%
To have children	12%	19%	43%	27%
To be actively involved in sports	10%	23%	47%	21%
To discover, design or invent something new	14%	30%	40%	16%
To start my own business	23%	33%	31%	14%
To be actively involved in the arts	21%	37%	31%	11%
To be actively involved in local volunteer work	10%	32%	47%	10%
To migrate to another country	29%	38%	24%	9%
To be actively involved in overseas volunteer work	27%	39%	28%	6%
To be famous	52%	33%	12%	4%

Note

a. Item is new to NYS 2019.



Part B: Attitudes Towards Family & Relationships



Section B1: Attitudes Towards Parental Care

Youths value the importance of a strong and stable family unit, with 8 in 10 youths reporting that they would care for their parents in old age regardless of the circumstances (**Table B1**).

Question: Which statement best describes your belief towards caring for your parents?

◀ **TABLE B1: YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARENTAL CARE OVER TIME**

	2010 (n=1,268)	2013 (n=2,843)	2016 (n=3,531)	2019 (n=3,392)
I would take care of my parents in their old age, regardless of the circumstances	81%	86%	85%	80%
I would take care of my parents in their old age, if my circumstances allow	18%	13%	14%	18%
I would leave matters to my parents or to the government	1%	1%	1%	2%

◀ **TABLE B2: YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARENTAL CARE BY AGE**

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
I would take care of my parents in their old age, regardless of the circumstances	82%	84%	80%	76%	80%
I would take care of my parents in their old age, if my circumstances allow	17%	16%	18%	22%	18%
I would leave matters to my parents or to the government	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%



**Section B2:
Attitudes Towards
Marriage**

In the face of competing priorities, together with a greater acceptance of singlehood and cohabitation (Tan & Goh, 2020), the perceived necessity of marriage has declined in the past decade (**Table B3**). This is consistent amongst youths across all age groups (**Table B4**).

Question: Which statement best describes your belief towards marriage?
TABLE B3: YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE OVER TIME

	2010 (n=1,268)	2013 (n=2,843)	2016 (n=3,531)	2019 (n=3,392)
One should marry	47%	39%	30%	23%
It is better to marry	35%	35%	38%	34%
It is not necessary to marry	17%	25%	31%	41%
It is better not to marry	1%	2%	2%	2%

TABLE B4: YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE BY AGE

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
One should marry	20%	23%	23%	26%	23%
It is better to marry	39%	34%	32%	33%	34%
It is not necessary to marry	38%	42%	43%	39%	41%
It is better not to marry	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%

TABLE B5: YOUTHS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE BY MARITAL STATUS

	Unmarried Youths (n=2,500)	Married Youths (n=851)
One should marry	20%	33%
It is better to marry	34%	34%
It is not necessary to marry	44%	31%
It is better not to marry	2%	1%

**Section B3:
Readiness For
Dating & Marriage**

Youths are likely to hold more pragmatic views towards dating and marriage. Those who are single prefer to wait for the right person and date with the intention of marriage (Table B6), while those in a relationship find marriage to be stressful, as they hold expectations of attaining necessary prerequisites such as financial stability and personal milestones prior to settling down (Table B7).

Question: The following are statements relating to romantic relationships in Singapore. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

(Based on a 7-pt scale where 7="strongly agree", 4="neither agree nor disagree", & 1="strongly disagree".)

TABLE B6: SINGLE YOUTHS' READINESS AND BARRIERS FOR DATING BY GENDER

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Male (n=1,021)	Female (n=914)	Overall (n=1,936)
I have not met the right person yet	5.47 (1.31)	5.72 (1.24)	5.59 (1.28)
I prefer to date with the intention of marriage	5.22 (1.54)	5.37 (1.43)	5.29 (1.49)
I have more important priorities now (e.g., job, studies, self-discovery) compared to dating	5.16 (1.44)	5.34 (1.40)	5.24 (1.42)
Dating in Singapore is stressful (e.g., expensive, high expectations)	4.85 (1.48)	4.63 (1.45)	4.74 (1.47)
I do not have the resources (e.g., time, money) to date	4.53 (1.62)	4.33 (1.66)	4.43 (1.64)
I do not feel ready to be in a relationship	4.20 (1.60)	4.39 (1.56)	4.29 (1.58)
I do not believe that dating someone is essential for me to lead a fulfilling life	3.94 (1.67)	4.56 (1.61)	4.23 (1.67)
I am open to using a dating app or go online to meet potential romantic partners	4.23 (1.69)	3.74 (1.63)	4.00 (1.68)
There are no opportunities to meet a potential partner in Singapore	3.79 (1.53)	4.08 (1.50)	3.93 (1.52)
My past experiences deter me from dating	3.55 (1.60)	3.62 (1.69)	3.59 (1.64)
I face pressure from family and friends to find a partner	3.26 (1.62)	3.40 (1.73)	3.33 (1.67)
Given a choice, I would choose to remain single	3.06 (1.66)	3.44 (1.68)	3.23 (1.68)
People around me (e.g., parents, friends) do not approve of me dating	2.38 (1.30)	2.56 (1.39)	2.47 (1.35)

Note

The overall unmarried, single youth survey population figures are reflected in this table.

Source: Youth STEPS (National Youth Council & IPS Social Lab, 2019).

Question: The following are statements regarding marriage. To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Based on a 7-pt scale where 7="strongly agree", 4="neither agree nor disagree", & 1="strongly disagree").

TABLE B7: DATING YOUTHS' READINESS AND BARRIERS FOR MARRIAGE BY GENDER

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	Male	Female	Overall
	(n=448)	(n=622)	(n=1,070)
Marriage in Singapore is stressful (e.g., expensive, high expectations)	5.50 (1.33)	5.74 (1.25)	5.64 (1.29)
I have more important priorities now than marriage	5.35 (1.56)	5.19 (1.61)	5.26 (1.59)
I do not have the resources (e.g., time, money) to take up the responsibilities of marriage	5.06 (1.57)	5.04 (1.62)	5.05 (1.60)
My partner has more important priorities than marriage	5.02 (1.61)	4.99 (1.59)	5.00 (1.60)
I do not feel ready for marriage	4.55 (1.80)	4.36 (1.87)	4.44 (1.84)
There are no opportunities for me to have the married life I want in Singapore (e.g., unable to buy a flat)	3.84 (1.71)	3.91 (1.61)	3.88 (1.65)
I do not believe that being married is essential for me to lead a fulfilling life	3.83 (1.75)	3.93 (1.74)	3.88 (1.74)
I have not met the right person yet	2.46 (1.53)	2.41 (1.34)	2.43 (1.42)
People around me (e.g., parents, friends) do not approve of me getting married	2.47 (1.57)	2.33 (1.38)	2.39 (1.46)

Note

The overall unmarried, dating youth survey population figures are reflected in this table.

Source: Youth STEPS (National Youth Council & IPS Social Lab, 2019). ↗

Part C: Civic Engagement

Section C1: Civic Engagement

Youths are increasingly civically conscious and active, with close to 9 in 10 youths reporting participation in at least one form of civic activity (**Table C1**). With social media platforms being increasingly used to share information and champion causes (Pew Research Centre, 2018), this has empowered greater civic engagement and a pervasive sense of civic responsibility. Youths across all age bands (**Table C2**) are participating civically within their personal capacity, such as staying on top of current affairs, being environmentally conscious, actively discussing issues, and reposting/liking online content.

Question: Have you done any of the following civic activities in the past 12 months?

TABLE C1: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

	2016	2019
	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
At least one civic activity^a	65%	88%
Stay informed about current social or political issues that are important to you ^b	NA	69%
Participated in environmental conservation efforts (e.g., recycled)	25%	55%
Reposted and/or liked content online related to a social or political issue	34%	45%
Actively discussed social or political issues with others offline ^b	NA	43%
Deliberately avoided or bought products for ethical, environmental or political reasons	18%	37%
Supported a social cause through monetary donations (e.g., donated to a crowdfunding campaign)	33%	35%
Followed elected officials, candidates for office, or other public figures on social media	20%	29%
Signed a petition	11%	27%
Attended an event in support of a social or political issue (e.g., Earth Hour) ^b	NA	20%
Joined an online group (e.g., Facebook groups, Telegram channel) dealing with social or political issues ^b	NA	17%
Commented on an online news story or blog post to express an opinion about a social or political issue	13%	15%
Worked with fellow citizens to solve a problem in your community (e.g., organising a fundraising event, an awareness campaign) ^b	4%	12%
Created and posted original content online related to a social or political issue	6%	10%
Attended a discussion on social affairs (e.g., Youth Conversations) ^b	7%	10%
Contacted a government official about a social issue that is important to you (e.g., Meet-the-People Session, email, etc.) ^b	3%	9%
Attended a political rally or speech (e.g., election speech)	4%	4%
Sent a "letter to the editor" to a newspaper or magazine	1%	3%

Notes

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table

a. Percentages of overall level of civic participation are calculated based on all 13 items in NYS 2016 and 17 items in NYS 2019.

b. Items are new/refined in NYS 2019.

• **TABLE C2: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ACTIVITIES BY AGE**

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
At least one civic activity^a	91%	90%	86%	88%	88%
Stay informed about current social or political issues that are important to you ^b	69%	69%	67%	70%	69%
Participated in environmental conservation efforts (e.g., recycled)	61%	56%	51%	55%	55%
Reposted and/or liked content online related to a social or political issue	53%	51%	40%	37%	45%
Actively discussed social or political issues with others offline ^b	45%	47%	42%	39%	43%
Deliberately avoided or bought products for ethical, environmental or political reasons	42%	39%	34%	34%	37%
Supported a social cause through monetary donations (e.g., donated to a crowdfunding campaign)	35%	35%	34%	37%	35%
Followed elected officials, candidates for office, or other public figures on social media	30%	26%	28%	32%	29%
Signed a petition	36%	33%	25%	19%	27%
Attended an event in support of a social or political issue (e.g., Earth Hour) ^b	25%	22%	16%	18%	20%
Joined an online group (e.g., Facebook groups, Telegram channel) dealing with social or political issues ^b	17%	18%	16%	18%	17%
Commented on an online news story or blog post to express an opinion about a social or political issue	18%	15%	13%	14%	15%
Worked with fellow citizens to solve a problem in your community (e.g., organising a fundraising event, an awareness campaign) ^b	17%	12%	11%	10%	12%
Created and posted original content online related to a social or political issue	15%	10%	8%	9%	10%
Attended a discussion on social affairs (e.g., Youth Conversations) ^b	15%	9%	9%	7%	10%
Contacted a government official about a social issue that is important to you (e.g., Meet-the-People Session, email, etc.) ^b	7%	7%	9%	12%	9%
Attended a political rally or speech (e.g., election speech)	6%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Sent a "letter to the editor" to a newspaper or magazine	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%

Notes

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.

a. Percentages of overall level of civic participation are calculated based on all 17 items in NYS 2019.

b. Items are new/refined in NYS 2019.



Section C2: Important Youth Issues

Youths are interested in a range of social issues related to the environment, society, and the government. Interest in issues may be driven by life stage, with older youths being more interested in bread-and-butter issues such as affordability and work-life balance, and younger youths being more interested in societal issues such as bullying and racism (Table C3).

Question: Which of the following social issues are important to you? Please pick up to 5 items.

◀ **TABLE C3: YOUTHS' IMPORTANT SOCIAL ISSUES BY AGE**

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
Affordability of life in Singapore	48%	61%	66%	71%	62%
Work-life balance	38%	56%	68%	70%	59%
Global warming/environmental issues	51%	40%	37%	39%	41%
Mental health issues (e.g., anxiety, depression, etc.)	40%	41%	38%	33%	38%
Competition for jobs	33%	38%	36%	37%	36%
Racism and discrimination	42%	37%	29%	29%	34%
Social inequality (e.g., income gap)	27%	29%	34%	36%	32%
Government transparency and accountability	18%	27%	29%	36%	28%
Data privacy	21%	19%	21%	19%	20%
Bullying and cyberbullying	26%	18%	17%	19%	20%
Lack of career-preparedness	15%	20%	18%	16%	17%
Fake news	17%	13%	15%	15%	15%
Gender inequality	22%	17%	12%	10%	15%
Unrealistic beauty standards	17%	10%	7%	7%	10%
Acceptance of non-traditional careers	8%	10%	9%	8%	9%
Negative stereotypes of youths	19%	10%	5%	5%	9%
Lack of youth representation on public issues	11%	6%	5%	4%	6%
None	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Notes

This is a new question introduced in NYS 2019.

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.

**Section C3:
Attitudes Towards
Justifiability
Of Actions**

Youths continue to show increasing tolerance for a range of actions, with greater acceptance of divorce, sex before marriage, euthanasia, and cosmetic surgery (**Table C4**). Younger youths generally expressed less conservative attitudes compared to older youths (**Table C5**). Compared to youths in other countries, youths in Singapore maintain slightly more conservative views (World Values Survey Association, 2020).



Question: The following are some topics that people have differing views on. To what extent do you think each of the following is justifiable (i.e., right or acceptable)?

(Based on a 10-pt scale, where 10="always justifiable" & 1="never justifiable".)

◀ **TABLE C4: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES OVER TIME**

(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	2013	2016	2019
	(n=2,843)	(n=3,531)	(n=3,392)
Divorce	4.44 (2.86)	4.58 (2.93)	5.62 (2.68)
Sex before marriage	4.32 (3.04)	4.66 (3.11)	5.51 (3.07)
Cosmetic/aesthetic surgery ^a	NA	NA	5.39 (2.61)
Euthanasia (i.e., intentionally ending a life to relieve pain)	4.09 (3.08)	4.20 (3.17)	5.11 (3.09)
Abortion	3.59 (2.81)	3.83 (2.95)	4.75 (3.00)
Online vigilantism (i.e., exposing information of a person who committed a misdeed) ^a	NA	NA	4.13 (2.53)
Prostitution	2.89 (2.48)	3.02 (2.50)	3.68 (2.58)
Suicide	2.26 (2.22)	2.60 (2.38)	3.04 (2.42)
Using drugs for recreation ^a	NA	NA	2.33 (2.12)

Note

a. Items are new to NYS 2019.

• **TABLE C5: MEAN RATINGS OF YOUTHS' ATTITUDES BY AGE**
(with standard deviations in parentheses)

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
Divorce	5.55 (2.69)	5.97 (2.68)	5.63 (2.71)	5.38 (2.63)	5.62 (2.68)
Sex before marriage	4.98 (3.06)	5.86 (3.10)	5.71 (3.06)	5.41 (3.00)	5.51 (3.07)
Cosmetic/aesthetic surgery ^a	5.16 (2.72)	5.83 (2.65)	5.40 (2.54)	5.19 (2.51)	5.39 (2.61)
Euthanasia (i.e., intentionally ending a life to relieve pain)	4.83 (3.04)	5.46 (3.13)	5.17 (3.12)	4.97 (3.03)	5.11 (3.09)
Abortion	4.86 (2.99)	5.28 (3.07)	4.57 (3.02)	4.39 (2.85)	4.75 (3.00)
Online vigilantism (i.e., exposing information of a person who committed a misdeed) ^a	4.31 (2.59)	4.33 (2.57)	3.99 (2.49)	3.94 (2.49)	4.13 (2.53)
Prostitution	3.65 (2.59)	4.10 (2.62)	3.64 (2.56)	3.37 (2.49)	3.68 (2.58)
Suicide	3.25 (2.53)	3.43 (2.57)	2.94 (2.36)	2.65 (2.19)	3.04 (2.42)
Using drugs for recreation ^a	2.39 (2.18)	2.60 (2.25)	2.23 (2.07)	2.13 (2.00)	2.33 (2.12)

Note

a. Items are new to NYS 2019.

Part D: Online Use

Section D1: Online Use The growth of smart devices and mobile applications has afforded many a tailored online experience with greater convenience, productivity, and flexibility. Youths frequently go online to stay connected with their social groups, for entertainment, and browse out of habit. Nearly 1 in 2 go online daily to obtain information (**Table D1**). Compared to older youths, younger youths are more likely to go online to maintain or expand their social network (**Table D2**).

Question: How often do you go online (on smartphones, computers, and other devices) for the following?

TABLE D1: FREQUENCY OF ONLINE USE

	Never	Every few weeks or less	Several times a week	About once a day	Several times a day
(n=3,392)					
Communicate with friends and family (e.g., using social messaging apps, social media, etc.)	2%	5%	10%	10%	74%
For entertainment and leisure (e.g., watching videos, listening to music, reading)	1%	4%	11%	16%	68%
Browse out of habit	5%	9%	12%	17%	57%
Search for information that is not for school or work	4%	9%	20%	19%	47%
Get news or information on current affairs	7%	13%	18%	24%	38%
To follow the lives of others (e.g., friends, celebrities, etc.)	13%	17%	17%	19%	34%
Play games	19%	18%	13%	16%	34%
For convenience of daily tasks (e.g., food deliveries, banking and finance, etc.)	7%	21%	32%	17%	23%
Connect or network with new friends (e.g., make new contacts, online dating)	40%	27%	11%	7%	15%
Post updates about yourself/your life (e.g., Insta-story, Snapchats, statuses, tweets)	20%	35%	20%	11%	14%
Learn new skills/hobbies (e.g., learn a new language)	24%	41%	16%	8%	10%
Create and post original content (e.g., articles, pictures, videos, etc.)	38%	34%	14%	6%	9%
Buy things online	11%	54%	21%	6%	9%
Sell things online	46%	37%	8%	3%	6%

Note
Question is refined in NYS 2019.

• **TABLE D2: DAILY ONLINE USE BY AGE**

	15-19 (n=716)	20-24 (n=804)	25-29 (n=926)	30-34 (n=946)	Overall (n=3,392)
Communicate with friends and family (e.g., using social messaging apps, social media, etc.)	90%	87%	82%	80%	84%
For entertainment and leisure (e.g., watching videos, listening to music, reading)	90%	89%	81%	77%	84%
Browse out of habit	73%	77%	74%	72%	74%
Search for information that is not for school or work	71%	69%	65%	63%	67%
Get news or information on current affairs	54%	59%	66%	68%	62%
To follow the lives of others (e.g., friends, celebrities, etc.)	59%	58%	51%	47%	53%
Play games	59%	53%	48%	44%	50%
For convenience of daily tasks (e.g., food deliveries, banking and finance, etc.)	30%	45%	43%	42%	40%
Connect or network with new friends (e.g., make new contacts, online dating)	27%	24%	23%	18%	23%
Post updates about yourself/your life (e.g., Insta-story, Snapchats, statuses, tweets)	36%	29%	21%	17%	25%
Learn new skills/hobbies (e.g., learn a new language)	23%	21%	18%	14%	19%
Create and post original content (e.g., articles, pictures, videos, etc.)	19%	14%	13%	12%	14%
Buy things online	12%	14%	15%	17%	15%
Sell things online	10%	7%	8%	10%	9%

Notes

Question is refined in NYS 2019.

The upper-bound survey population figures are reflected in this table.



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About the National Youth Survey

The NYS represents a milestone in Singapore’s youth research with its resource-based approach that focuses on the support youths require for societal engagement (social capital) and individual development (human capital).

The National Youth Indicators Framework (NYIF) (Ho & Yip, 2003) was formulated to provide a comprehensive, systematic, and theoretically-grounded assessment of youths in Singapore. The NYIF draws from the existing research literature, policy-relevant indicators, and youth development models. It spans six domains of social and human capital. **Table I** summarises the framework.

• **TABLE I: NATIONAL YOUTH INDICATORS FRAMEWORK**

	Social Capital (Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2002; Putnam, 2000)	Human Capital (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2001; World Economic Forum, 2017)
Definition	Social capital refers to the relationships within and between groups, and the shared norms and trust that govern these interactions.	Human capital refers to the skills, competencies, and attitudes of individuals, which in turn create personal, social, and economic wellbeing.
Domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social support • Social participation • Values & attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Employment • Wellbeing
Focus	The power of relationships	The human potential of young people

NYS 2019 adopted a random (i.e., probability-based) sampling method to ensure responses are representative of the resident youth population aged 15 to 34 years old.

The fieldwork period spanned September to November 2019. A total of 3,392 youths were successfully surveyed, of which 227 were surveyed at their households. Demographic proportions of NYS respondents adhered closely to the youth population.

Table II presents the profile of respondents from NYS 2002, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2016, and 2019. Figures referenced in all tables in the publication (with the exception of figures from NYS 2002^a) were weighted according to interlocking matrices of age, gender, and race of the respective youth populations.

Note

a. Figures from NYS 2002 were not weighted due to the non-standard age bands used.



• TABLE II: PROFILE OF NYS RESPONDENTS

		NYS 2002 (n=1,504)	NYS 2005 (n=1,504)	NYS 2010 (n=1,268)	NYS 2013 (n=2,843)	NYS 2016 (n=3,531)	NYS 2019 (n=3,392)	Latest Youth Population ^a
Age	15-19	NYS 2002 utilised non-standard age bands	33%	24%	24%	23%	21%	21%
	20-24		31%	23%	25%	25%	24%	24%
	25-29		36%	25%	24%	25%	27%	27%
	30-34 ^b		NA	NA	28%	28%	27%	28%
Gender	Male	50%	50%	49%	49%	49%	50%	50%
	Female	50%	50%	51%	51%	51%	50%	50%
Race	Chinese	77%	75%	72%	72%	72%	72%	72%
	Malay	15%	15%	15%	16%	16%	17%	17%
	Indian	7%	9%	10%	10%	9%	9%	9%
	Others	1%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Nationality	Singaporean	93%	90%	86%	91%	94%	93%	86%
	Permanent Resident	7%	10%	14%	10%	6%	7%	14%
Marital Status	Single	83%	85%	74%	74%	74%	74%	74%
	Married	17%	14%	25%	25%	26%	25%	25%
	Divorced/Separated/Widowed	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religion	Buddhism	35%	32%	36%	25%	24%	22%	28%
	Islam	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%	21%	18%
	Christianity	16%	16%	15%	19%	19%	20%	18%
	Hinduism	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%
	Taoism/Traditional Chinese Beliefs	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%	5%	7%
	Other Religions	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%
	No Religion	21%	21%	15%	23%	25%	27%	23%
Dwelling	HDB 1-2 rooms	5%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%
	HDB 3 rooms	26%	24%	24%	14%	14%	14%	12%
	HDB 4 rooms	33%	43%	34%	37%	38%	35%	35%
	HDB 5 rooms, executive, & above	24%	19%	26%	31%	29%	30%	29%
	Private flat & condominium	12%	11%	3%	10%	9%	12%	13%
	Private house & bungalow			9%	6%	4%	4%	6%
	Others	0%	NA	NA	0%	0%	1%	0%

Notes

a. Latest youth population refers to the most recent available data from the Department of Statistics (DOS) at the time of fieldwork – age, gender, race, and dwelling (DOS, 2019a) as well as nationality (DOS, 2019b), marital status, and religion (DOS, 2016).

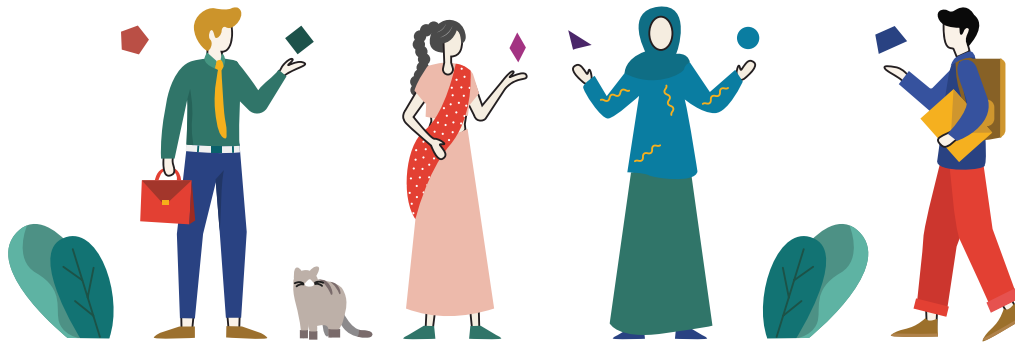
b. The 30-34 age band was included from NYS 2010.

Youth Studies

Youth Study on Transitions and Evolving Pathways in Singapore (Youth STEPS)

NYC and the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Social Lab have partnered to embark on the first national-level longitudinal study of youths in Singapore to better understand young people's experiences as they live, study, work, and play in Singapore. Between 2017 and 2022, the Youth STEPS will explore youths' evolving life aspirations, values and attitudes, and achievements and mobility as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

A nationally-representative youth panel of 17- to 24-year-old youths were recruited in 2017. Annual survey fieldwork and data analysis are undertaken by IPS Social Lab. To date, three waves of the study have been completed. In the third wave, a total of 3,178 youths aged 19 to 26 were surveyed in 2019.



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