

# Research in Action: Boys help seeking behaviour

- yourtown's research



In 2021, we conducted a survey as part of our research work with Swinburne University students, to explore how young males (aged 12-18) seek support for their mental health and wellbeing. We received just over 2,500 responses, with young males telling us that the most common issues they were concerned about are:

92%  
Coping with stress

90%  
School or study problems

85%  
Depression

80%  
Body issues

Boys help seeking snap shot:

- Before reaching out to a mental health professional more than 50% of young males spoke to a friend or their parent, and 36% to a partner
- Of those young males who sought help, almost 50% took longer than 4 months to reach out
- 83% of young males listened to music when they were not feeling their best

55%

sought help for personal or emotional problems

89%

would have a conversation to support their friends

ONLY  
6.7%

sought help immediately

When we asked young males about help seeking, they told us:

- stigma around mental health is a major barrier for them,
- when asking for help they often feel that they are being judged and are perceived as being weak or embarrassed,
- they feel the issues they face are not taken seriously, and
- there is a lack of mental health literacy, particularly around what wellbeing means and where they can seek help/resources from.

There's something about asking for help that subconsciously tells me that they see me as weak, and that's not how I want my parents to see me.

I see myself as weak, useless, annoying, and worthless. Others don't believe me and my story because of my gender or feel that I am looking for attention. They likely encourage me or hope that I continue and one day leave and never come back.

When it gets so bad you can no longer brush it off and hide it... and you have nobody to turn to help you because you can't deal with it yourself anymore so you're forced to go to a professional.

If I can't deal with it on my own then I'll ask for help but most of the time I can do it myself.

I don't really think to seek help. Its more my friends notice something is not incredibly right and convince me to seek help

