

AUTISM SNAPSHOT 2024

Butterfly Foundation's third BodyKind Youth Survey was conducted in 2024 to continue to understand the body image experience of young Australians aged 12 to 18 years. In total, 1,648 young people responded.

What do Autistic young people have to say?

Who are they?

181 (8.1%) of survey respondents reported an autism diagnosis.

The majority (79.5%) of those were aged 15-18 years (M = 15.73 years).

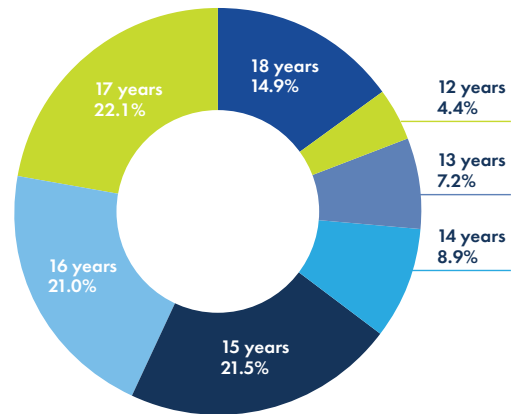


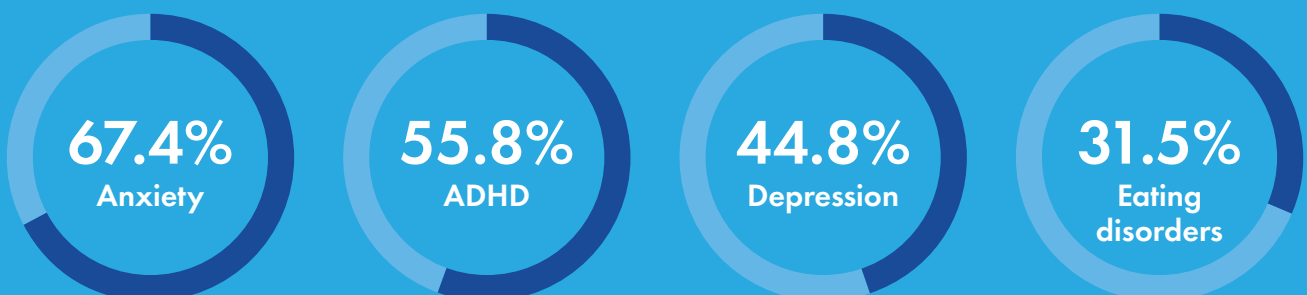
Figure 1. Age distribution of autistic young people

The sample comprised 64.6% of young people who identified as female, 11.0% male and 22.1% as trans and gender diverse.

Respondents most frequently identified as:




Respondents also reported rates of:




Their body image

Two thirds 
reported some level of
body dissatisfaction.

48.2% 
reported a **high level of concern**
about their body image.

45.4% 
reported a **high level**
of body dissatisfaction.

81.0% 
desired to be **thinner/leaner**,
while 64.9% desired to be
more **muscular** and 58.3%
desired to be **taller**.

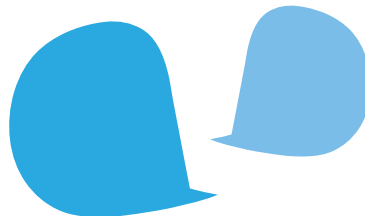
The proportion of **high body dissatisfaction** in Autistic young people is greater than the total sample proportion (37.5%).

How much do Autistic young people appreciate their body?

Autistic young people infrequently reported high levels of body appreciation.

28.5%
never or rarely respect
their body.

50.3%
never or rarely feel
good about
their body.



57.9%
never or rarely
are comfortable
in their body.

25.5%
never or rarely
feel their body
has at least some
good qualities.

*Note: based on responses from 165 young people

Are they BodyKind?

63.7% **never or rarely** speak
positively about their body.

50.4% **never or rarely** feel grateful for
what their body allows them to do.

66.7% **never or rarely** talk to
someone if they're not
feeling good about their
body or appearance.

74.9% **often or always** try to value people
for their personality and who they are
rather than how they look, yet 47.4%
never or rarely spend less time
focusing on their appearance to have
more time for other things they enjoy.

*Note: based on responses from 135 young people

Autistic young people most frequently compare their bodies to



Has body image ever stopped young people from doing certain activities?

Greater life disengagement was reported by Autistic young people compared with total sample proportions.



60.5%

reported a high level of disengagement from going to the beach.



41.6%

reported a high level of disengagement from going to a social event, party or gathering.



50.7%

reported a high level of disengagement from going clothes shopping.



56.4%

reported a high level of disengagement from doing a physical activity/sport.



45.7%

of young people reported a high level of disengagement from giving an opinion or standing up for themselves.



Nearly half

reported a high level of disengagement from raising their hand in the classroom, and around a third from focusing at school and going to school.

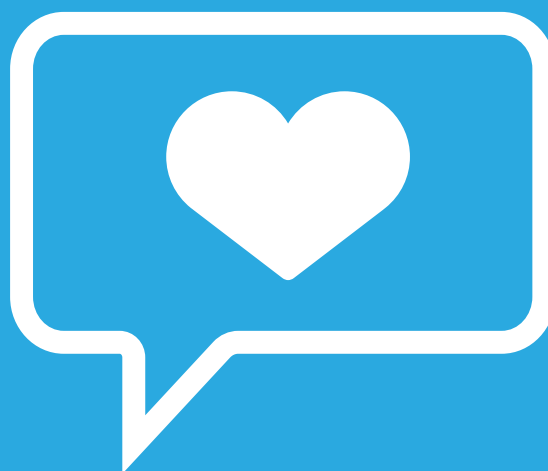
*Note: based on responses from 142 young people

Social media

Of the 150 who reported using social media,

63.8% described using social media more than they would like.

60.8% reported that social media made them feel dissatisfied with their body.



In relation to social media literacy strategies:

73.9%

never or rarely took a break because it was affecting how they felt about their body.

48.6%

never or rarely posted unfiltered images.

53.9%

never or rarely unfollowed pages that made them feel bad about their body.

75.4%

often or always comment kindly and honestly on a friend's post.

What is their experience of appearance-related teasing?

70.7%

reported receiving negative comments or being teased about their appearance.

This happened most frequently at

 School	81.3%
 Social Media	45.3%
 Home	40.6%
 Group chats	38.3%

No significant differences were found between 2023 and 2024 data for young people with autism.