

How are young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory faring?

Youth is a key transition period in a person's life. It is a time when decisions are made about relationships, education and career paths, employment and finances. The social, economic, environmental and technological changes that have occurred in recent decades mean that young people now face issues that previous generations may not have experienced.

Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may face additional obstacles in making a successful transition to adulthood. The effect of inter-generational trauma, racism and prejudice, and socioeconomic disadvantage are all relevant in understanding the experiences of young Indigenous people today.

The new AIHW report, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescent and youth health and wellbeing 2018*, focuses on Indigenous young people aged 10–24. It reports against a set of indicators that cover health and wellbeing outcomes, social and economic determinants of health, health risk factors, and health and welfare services. This fact sheet is one of a series that present key statistics for each state and territory, compared with national average.

Wellbeing and happiness

In 2014–15, around 4 in 5 (75%) Indigenous people aged 15–24 in the Northern Territory were happy all or most of the time, which was similar to the proportion for all of Australia (76%).

Compared with young Indigenous people across Australia, those in the Northern Territory were more likely to:

- recognise their homeland or traditional country (81% compared with 61%)
- identify with a clan, tribal or language group (76% compared with 53%)
- participate in selected cultural activities in the previous 12 months (88% compared with 69%).

In the Northern Territory, a slightly lower proportion of young Indigenous people experienced personal stressors in the previous 12 months (61%) than across Australia (65%). The most common type of stressor experienced among all young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory was death of family member or close friend (29% in the Northern Territory and 22% Australia-wide) while not being able to get a job was the most common stressor across Australia (21% in the Northern Territory and 26% Australia-wide).

Health status

A slightly higher proportion of Indigenous people aged 10–24 in the Northern Territory (68%) compared with Australia (63%) assessed their health as either 'excellent' or 'very good'.

In 2012–13 around 35% of young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory reported that they had a long-term health condition compared with 62% in Australia. The most common long-term conditions reported were:

- respiratory diseases (14% in the Northern Territory compared with 36% across Australia)
- diseases of the ear (8% in both the Northern Territory and across Australia)
- eye and vision problems (6% in the Northern Territory compared with 20% across Australia).

Quick facts

In 2016:



There were 21,063 Indigenous people aged 10–24 in the Northern Territory. This represented 8.7% of all young Indigenous people in Australia.



There were 241,824 Indigenous people aged 10–24 in Australia. This represented 5.3% of the total youth population.

Social determinants

Study and work

In 2016, around 22% of Indigenous people aged 15–24 in the Northern Territory were in full-time study, full-time work or combining work and study and 10% were partially engaged in part-time work or part-time study. Around 68% were not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET). Across Australia, young Indigenous people were more likely to be engaged in full-time study or work (40%), partially engaged in part-time study or work (18%) and less likely to be NEET (42%) compared with Indigenous young people in the Northern Territory.

Housing

In 2016, around 13% of Indigenous people aged 10–24 in the Northern Territory lived in a home that was owned outright or with a mortgage, a lower proportion than across Australia (34%). Young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory were more likely to live in social housing (74%) or be homeless (24%) than nationally (30% and 4%, respectively).

Health risk factors

Drug use

In 2014–15, young Indigenous people in the Northern Territory were less likely to have ever used an illicit substance in the previous 12 months or consumed alcohol in the previous 2 weeks or drank but exceeded short-term alcohol risk guidelines, but slightly more likely to have ever smoked, than young Indigenous people across Australia.

Body weight

In 2012–13, 49% of Indigenous people aged 10–17 and 44% of those aged 18–24 in the Northern Territory were within the normal weight range compared with 54% and 34%, respectively, across Australia.

Health services

Health checks

In 2016, around 26% of Indigenous people aged 15–24 in the Northern Territory had an Indigenous health check, compared with 22% across Australia.

Hospitalisations

In 2015–16, the rate of hospitalisations of Indigenous people aged 10–24 in the Northern Territory was 196 per 1,000 population, higher than the rate across Australia (165 per 1,000). Injury and poisoning was the main reason for hospitalisations of this age group, with the rate in the Northern Territory (50 per 1,000), higher than the Australian rate (37 per 1,000).

Mortality





In 2011–2015, the mortality rate for Indigenous people aged 10–24 in the Northern Territory was 155 per 100,000 population, higher than the rate across Australia (70 per 100,000).

More information

This fact sheet is part of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescent and youth health and wellbeing 2018* release, which includes a report, an in brief, state and territory fact sheets, and supplementary data tables.

Together, these provide comprehensive information about the health and welfare of young Indigenous Australians.

For more information see <<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/indigenous-australians/atsi-adolescent-youth-health-wellbeing-2018>>.

Risk factor	Indigenous people aged 15–24	
	Northern Territory	Australia
 Never smoked	46%	56%
 Had not consumed alcohol in the previous 2 weeks or drank but did not exceed short-term alcohol risk guidelines	76%	74%
 Not used illicit substance in previous 12 months	76%	67%
 Normal weight (18–24 years)	44%	34%