



The Hastings Baseline Youth Resilience Study 2017

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Hastings Baseline Youth Resilience Study 2017 was undertaken by Hastings District Council to establish an indicator for youth development across Hastings District. The study will be delivered again in two years' time (2019) to measure a desired trend over time, which is improvement in our District's Youth Resilience.
- 1.2 The promotion and delivery of the Hastings Baseline Youth Resilience study, was regarded as an important prospective measure of the District's youth development. The Hastings District Council Supporting Social Wellbeing Strategic Framework 2010, has as one of its key outcomes:
Young people connect and develop positively within the community and add to the strength of the community in the future.
- 1.3 The study measures the strength of psychological resilience, which is generally defined as one's ability to cope with adverse or traumatic events. Stress and adversity can come in the shape of family, school, work, or relationship problems, among other areas. Resilience is one's ability to bounce back from a negative experience.
- 1.4 Any risk that responses to some questions may have raised issues for some youth were addressed via proactive communication with participating schools, and provision of Youthline contact options at the end of the survey.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The survey tool used to establish the baseline measure of youth resilience was the 14-Item Resilience Scale (RS-14). This tool was selected because it was reviewed as having valid application for use with adolescents and younger adults. The survey was developed by Gail Wagnild (2014) as a short form survey which captured the five characteristics of resilience. A copyright licence was purchased by the researcher for use in this study.
- 2.2 Study participants were asked to agree or disagree with how much they thought the following statements sounded like them generally. The 14 items and corresponding resilience characteristic are in the table below:

Item/Question:	Resilience Characteristic:
1) I usually manage one way or another	<i>Self-reliance</i>
2) I feel proud that I have achieved things in my life	<i>Purpose</i>
3) I usually take things in my stride (handle things my way)	<i>Equanimity</i>
4) I am friends with myself	<i>Authenticity</i>
5) I feel that I can handle many things at a time	<i>Self-reliance</i>
6) I am determined	<i>Perseverance</i>
7) I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before	<i>Self-reliance</i>
8) I have self-discipline	<i>Perseverance</i>
9) I keep interested in things	<i>Purpose</i>
10) I can usually find something to laugh about	<i>Equanimity</i>
11) My belief in myself gets me through hard times	<i>Authenticity</i>
12) In an emergency, I am someone people can rely on	<i>Self-reliance</i>
13) My life has meaning	<i>Purpose</i>
14) When I'm in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it	<i>Self-reliance</i>

- 2.3 The study measured the strength of each of the resilience characteristics, i.e. 'self-reliance', 'purpose', 'equanimity' (calmness and composure in a difficult situation), 'perseverance', and 'authenticity', e.g. "I am friends with myself".
- 2.4 Each respondent rated the 14 statements from 1 to 7 depending on how much they agreed with them. The maximum possible score is 98, which indicates 'very high resilience tendencies' by strongly agreeing with all 14 statements.
- 2.5 The short survey was delivered online through an independent software platform. The survey was anonymous and did not request any personal identifiers such as name. Demographic information included age group, gender, where the respondent lived, and what activities they were participating in this year, i.e. school or study; paid work; sport; other activities, e.g. playing music; or 'no formal activities'.
- 2.6 Each response was scored and contributed to the data from which the average psychological resilience score for the District was revealed.
- 2.7 The study will be delivered again in 2019 to observe any changes in the measure of youth resilience.

2.8 Part Two of the survey comprised questions to identify the need for programmes addressing youth development in any of the areas below:

- Becoming alcohol/drug-free
- Job skill training
- Volunteering in the community
- Addressing anti-social behaviours
- Forming positive relationships with adults

2.9 Stakeholder engagement included direct communication with the following groups:

- Hastings District Council - Youth Council representatives who served as ambassadors for promoting survey participation amongst their schools
- EIT Students Association
- Youth Development organisations, e.g. Zeal, Sport Hawke's Bay

The survey link was promoted on the Hastings District Council website and Facebook page from April until July 2017.

3.0 RESULTS

758 responses were received.

Q1 - What is your gender?

1	Male	35.67%	270
2	Female	60.90%	462
3	Prefer not to say	3.43%	26
	Total	100%	758

Q2 - How old are you?

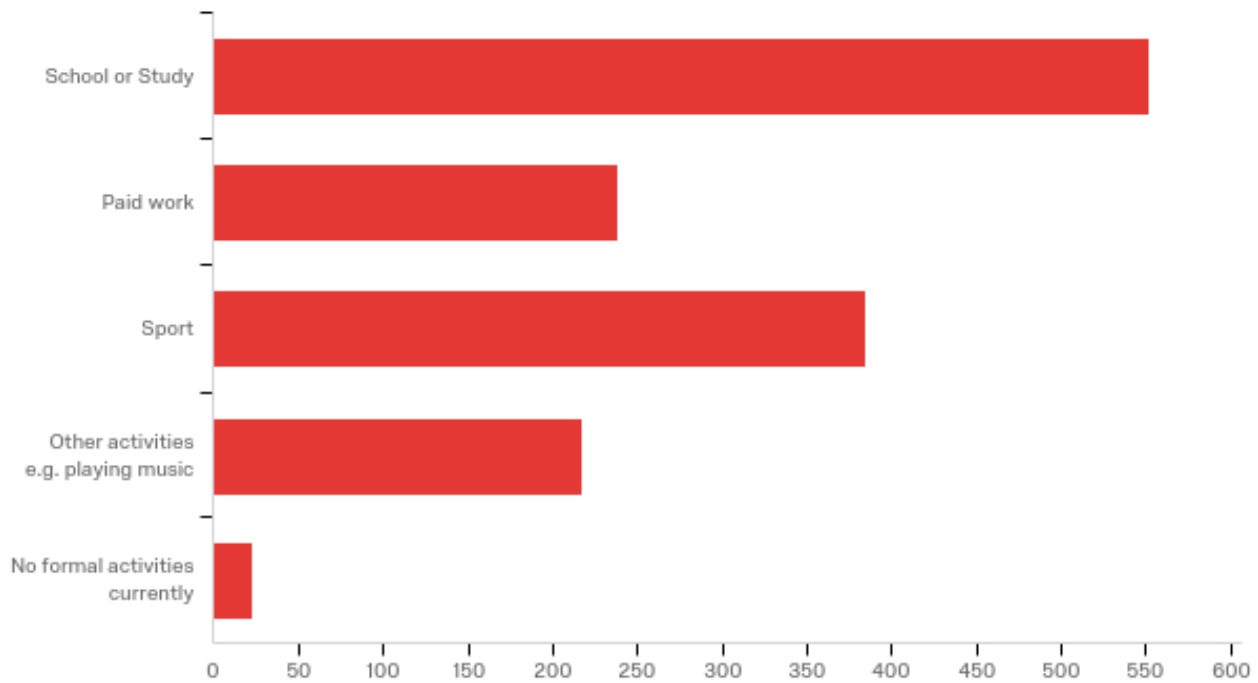
1	14-16	69.73%	529
2	17-18	21.23%	161
3	19-24	4.37%	33
4	over 24	4.67%	35

Q3 - Where do you live?

1	Havelock North	15.21%	115
2	Hastings	58.32%	442
3	Flaxmere	5.86%	44
4	Other, e.g. Napier	20.60%	157*
	Total	100%	758

*Respondents came from outside Hastings District as some attend EIT and Hastings Schools

Q4 - What activities will you be participating in this year?



#	Answer*	%	Count
1	School or Study	38.96%	552
2	Paid work	16.87%	239
3	Sport	27.17%	385
4	Other activities e.g. playing music	15.38%	218
5	No formal activities currently	1.62%	23
	Total	100%	1417

*More than one answer was permitted

Q 5-19 - Please read the following 14 statements about how you feel generally.

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I usually manage one way or another	6.04%	9.78%	6.98%	4.77%	2.25%	3.21%	5.16%
I feel proud that I have achieved things in my life	9.83%	7.64%	6.31%	4.14%	2.81%	4.81%	6.35%
I usually take things in my stride (handle things my way)	5.70%	8.58%	8.52%	6.26%	3.65%	2.14%	3.57%
I am friends with myself	6.54%	6.06%	5.90%	10.39%	10.39%	13.90%	13.49%
I feel that I can handle many things at a time	3.34%	6.60%	9.75%	7.74%	16.29%	10.16%	7.14%
I am determined	8.35%	7.30%	6.46%	6.57%	6.18%	5.35%	3.97%
I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before	6.83%	7.57%	7.70%	7.10%	5.90%	3.21%	5.56%
I have self-discipline	5.95%	7.14%	7.18%	8.06%	13.20%	5.88%	5.56%
I keep interested in things	6.04%	6.30%	9.03%	7.85%	8.15%	8.56%	4.76%
I can usually find something to laugh about	12.87%	6.83%	4.72%	4.14%	2.53%	3.21%	4.37%
My belief in myself gets me through hard times	4.57%	5.46%	8.21%	9.54%	12.36%	20.32%	12.70%
In an emergency, I am someone people can rely on	8.55%	7.00%	6.46%	6.79%	5.90%	5.88%	6.35%
My life has meaning	9.73%	5.49%	5.13%	8.91%	5.90%	8.02%	15.48%
When I'm in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it	5.65%	8.24%	7.64%	7.74%	4.49%	5.35%	5.56%

The spread of responses amongst the 758 survey participants are indicated as percentages above.

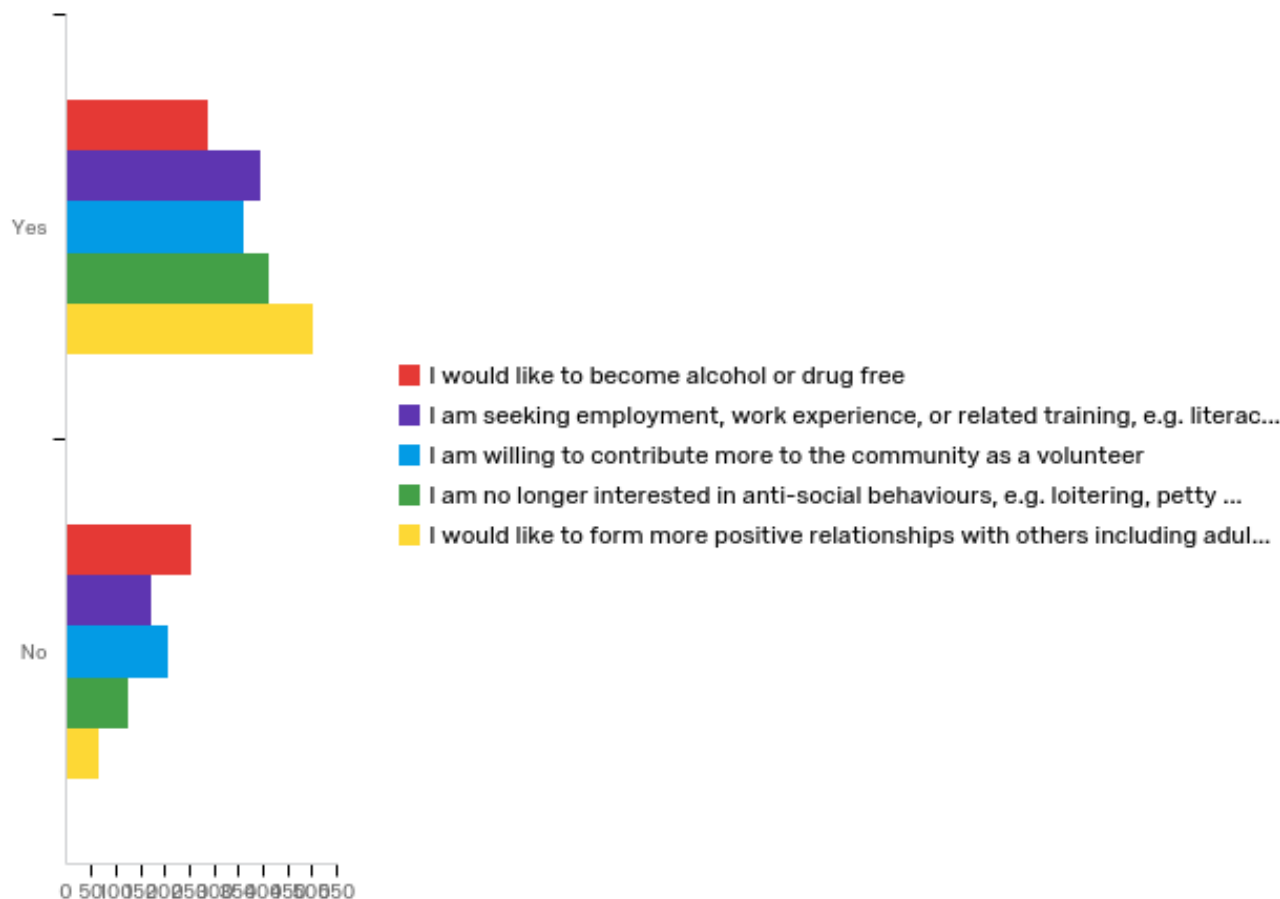
The most common response for each question is highlighted in **bold**.

The maximum possible resilience score is 98 which indicates 'very high resilience tendencies'.

The average resilience score for the 758 respondents was 64.7 which is just above the 'average resilience tendencies' score range of 49-63.

In summary, the baseline measure of youth resilience as at 2017 is 64.7 which is a high 'average' level of psychological resilience.

Q 20 - We are also interested in your participation in any of the following personal goals for change you may have been thinking about lately:



Question	Yes	No
I would like to form more positive relationships with others including adults	88%	12%
I am no longer interested in anti-social behaviours, e.g. loitering, petty crime	76%	24%
I am seeking employment, work experience, or related training, e.g. literacy skills	70%	30%
I am willing to contribute more to the community as a volunteer	64%	36%
I would like to become alcohol or drug free	53%	47%

4.0 SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

4.1 The Hastings Baseline Youth Resilience Study 2017 was undertaken to establish a baseline indicator for youth development across Hastings District.

4.2 The average resilience score for the 758 respondents was 64.7 out of a possible 98 which is just above the 'average resilience tendencies' score range of 49-63. Hastings youth have

therefore demonstrated a 'high average' level of psychological resilience which is a positive level to build upon.

- 4.3 The highest scoring resilience trait demonstrated was 'equanimity' (calmness or composure in a difficult situation). The results were also positive with regard to 'wanting to form positive relationships with others including adults' (88%) and 'willingness to contribute to the community as a volunteer' (64%).
- 4.4 The lowest scoring resilience trait was 'authenticity' (believing in yourself), with 27% or 209 youth reporting that they 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that "I am friends with myself". This result may suggest a need for opportunities to discuss feelings, especially when considered in the context of findings on youth suicide (Dominion Post, February 2017) which indicated that 20% of school age children will have a suicidal thought at some point, and more importantly 80% will never talk about it. The article stated that it is important to talk to youth about their emotions, and that 15-24 year olds have the highest rate of suicide in our population (Coroner's Office, 2016).
- 4.5 Another significant finding of the Hastings Baseline Youth Resilience Survey 2017 was that 53% reported they '*would like to become alcohol or drug free*'. This suggests an opportunity for exploring further education around drug and alcohol use and issue identification in schools and youth organisations. Youthline's 'The State of the Generation' report (Colmar Brunton, 2014) also found that alcohol was the single biggest issue facing young people today (73%), ahead of bullying and self-esteem.
- 4.6 Limitations of the study were that it was digital so only those with email access could receive and respond to the survey link. Communicating via Facebook proved problematic with the survey link.
- 4.7 Also to note was that youth not engaged in school, EIT or a youth development programme were less likely to be exposed to the survey unless they visited the libraries or community centres.
- 4.8 In summary, the 'high average' resilience score demonstrated amongst survey respondents is suggestive of the benefits of youth being engaged in school or youth development programmes/sport and that the average resilience score for youth not engaged in school, study or sport/other programmes is likely to be lower.
- 4.9 The survey will be run again in 2019 to measure any changes in the average level of youth resilience. The findings of the study provide suggestions for areas of youth education and development in the meantime.