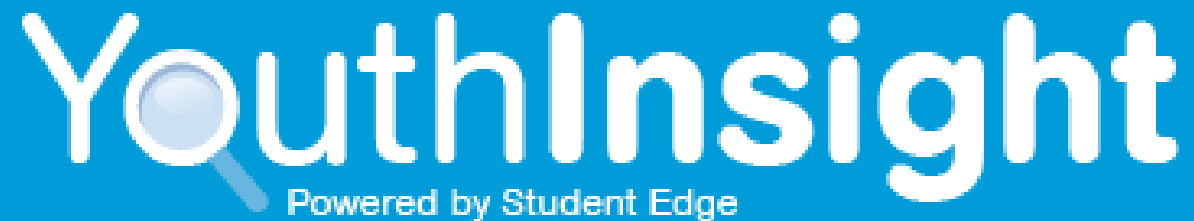




# COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

## Youth understanding and sentiment

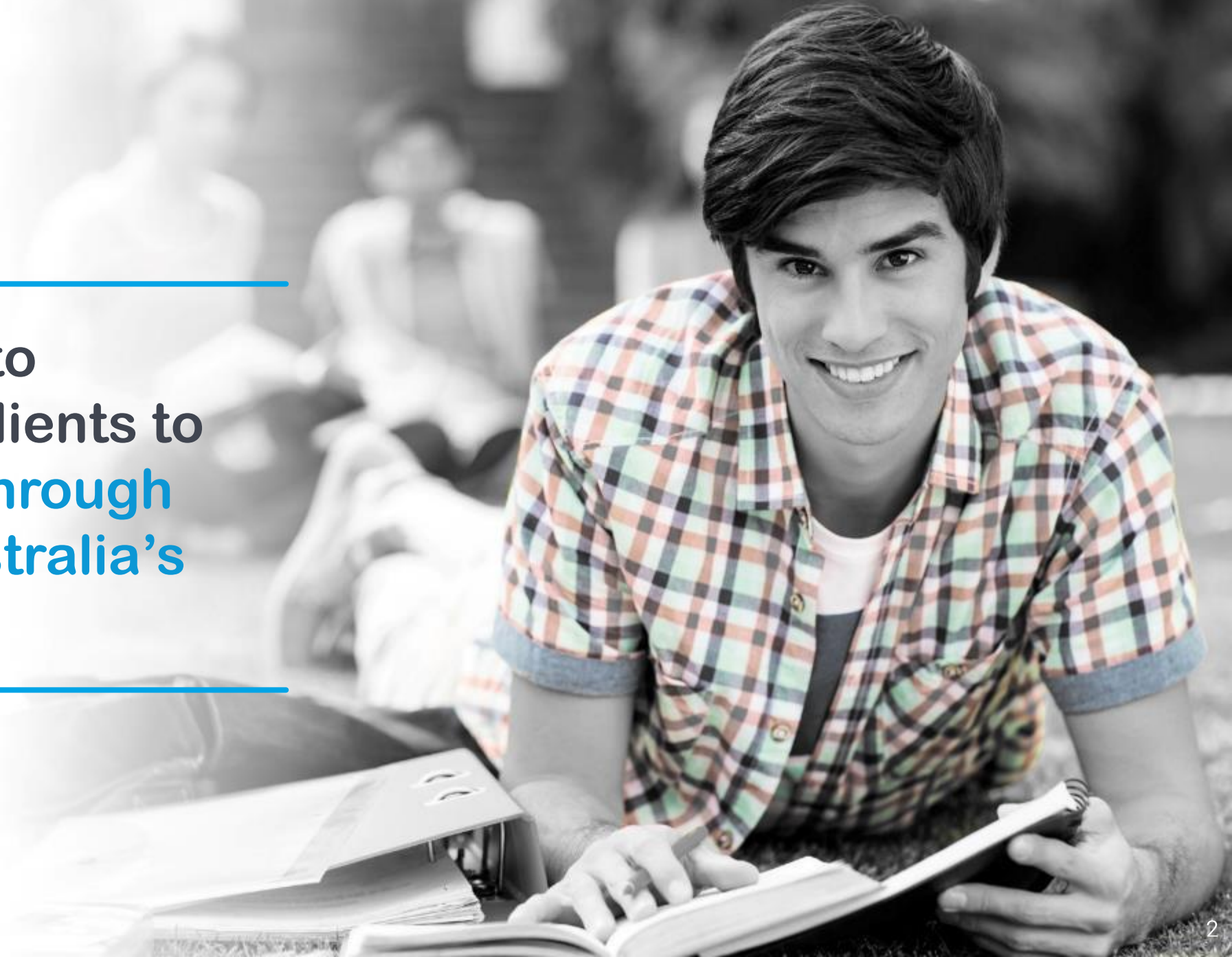
May 2020



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**Our mission is to  
empower our clients to  
see the world through  
the eyes of Australia's  
young people**

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# Who is YouthInsight?

YouthInsight, the research arm of Student Edge, arose from a desire to [share the unique access and understanding of Australia's Gen Y and Gen Z](#) developed since Student Edge opened its doors in 2003

Student Edge has always been committed to a singular vision: [“Helping to create a world where students are empowered and supported to make great life choices.”](#)

By offering advice and support on lifestyle, education and career choices, Student Edge has grown to become the [largest member-based organisation of high school and tertiary-based students in Australia](#), and a true expert in the youth space. Student Edge members are highly engaged and are quick to reference it as a “trusted go-to” for their key life stage decisions.

Connected via Student Edge and supported by a team of highly experienced market research specialists, YouthInsight possesses three unique assets that position it as the [authority on Australia's Gen Y & Gen Z](#).

- Access to over 1.1 million 12 – 29 year-olds through email, phone and social media
- Dedicated in-house Youth Panel with over 140,000 high quality respondents
- Ability to gain unrivalled insight into their lives, behaviour and attitudes

# OUR MEMBERS

Collaborating with Student Edge means tapping into more than a million members across Australia, and beyond. Get a load of these numbers.

**1.1 MILLION+**  
*members, including:*

**260,000+**  
*opt-in email subscribers*

**700,000+**  
*SMS subscribers*

**85,000**  
*international students in AUS*

**50,000**  
*international members*

**150,000+**  
*Facebook followers*

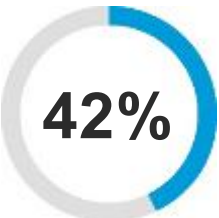
## AND WE'RE STILL GROWING

**7,000+**

*new members  
per month*



*female*



*male*

**38%**

**AGED UNDER 18**

**62%**

**AGED 18 AND OVER**

**MEMBERS  
PER STATE**

**WA** 13%

**SA** 7%

**VIC** 27%

**TAS** 1%



**NT** 1%

**QLD** 11%

**NSW** 38%

**ACT** 2%





# Who We Work With

## Government



## Education



## Retail Brands



## Technology



## Financial Services



# Background

YouthInsight has been tracking young Australians' understanding and sentiment towards the COVID-19 situation through the online survey methodology. This most recent survey collected data from over 500 young people across Australia.

The objective of the research was to gain an understanding of the precautions being undertaken by young people, as well as their concerns. The first part of this survey asked young people to separate the facts from the myths of COVID-19, as well as to measure how well the messages from news organisations and the government are gaining traction.

The second part of this survey attempts to understand how the constant news coverage and shifting situation is affecting youth wellbeing. We also endeavored to find out how young people would cope with remote learning, and whether or not they believed themselves to be facing an uncertain employment future (for instance, if their current casual hours of employment had been cut).

Below are the fieldwork periods for each wave:

**Wave 1:** Wednesday 18 March and Sunday 22 March

**Wave 2:** Tuesday 7 April and Wednesday 15 April

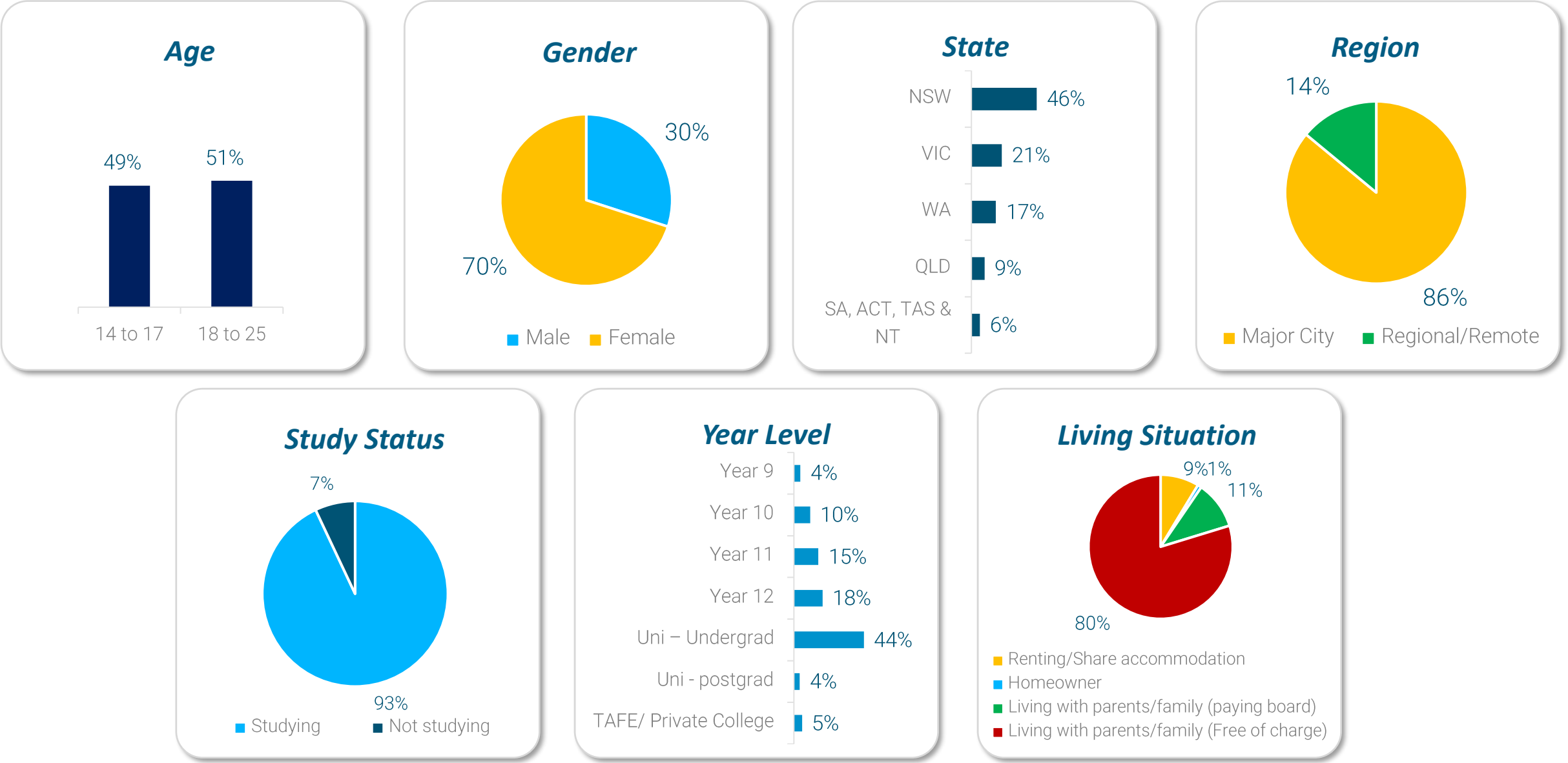
**Wave 3:** Monday 11 May and Sunday 24 May

For this report and moving forwards, each wave will be referred to by its corresponding fieldwork month.

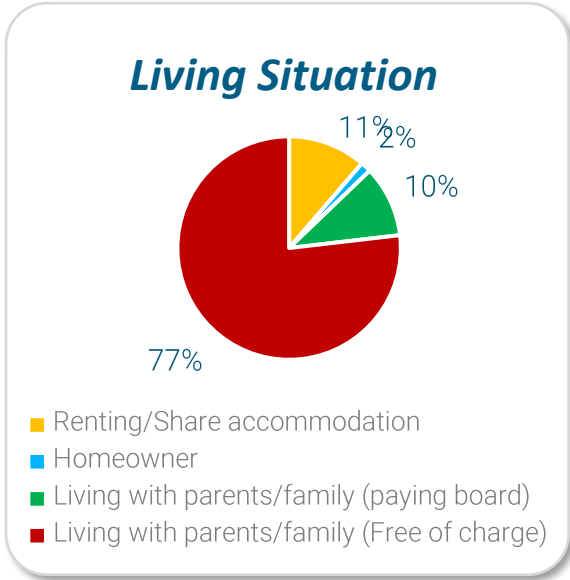
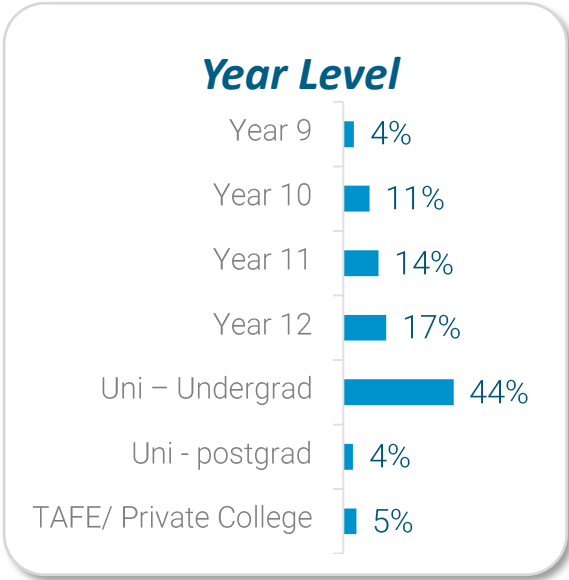
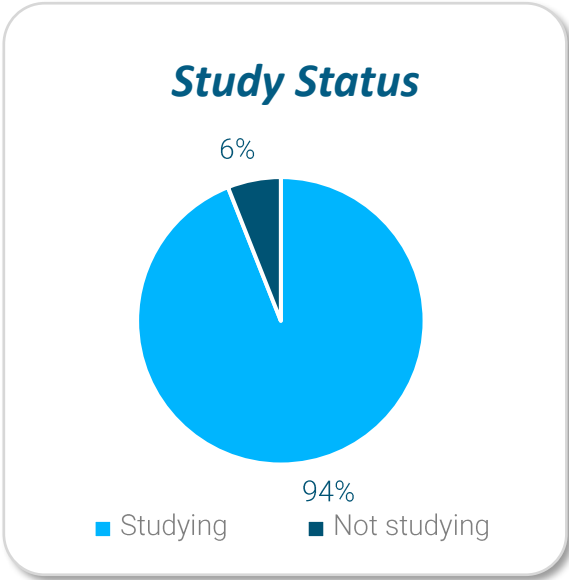
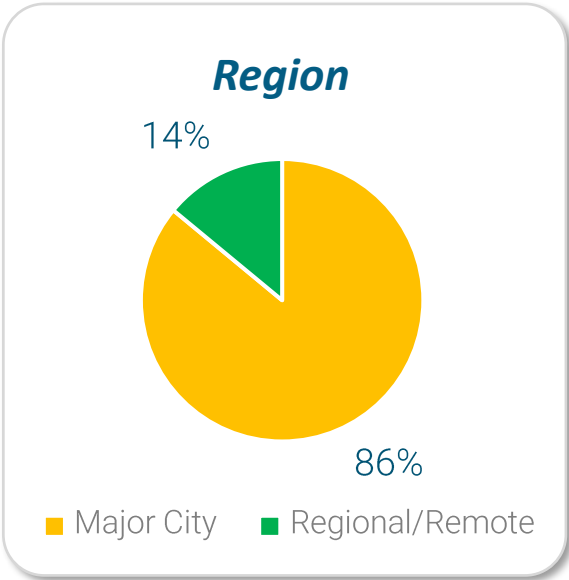
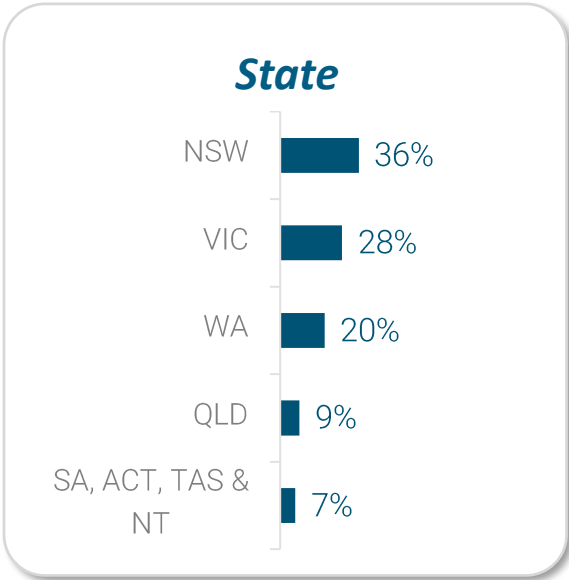
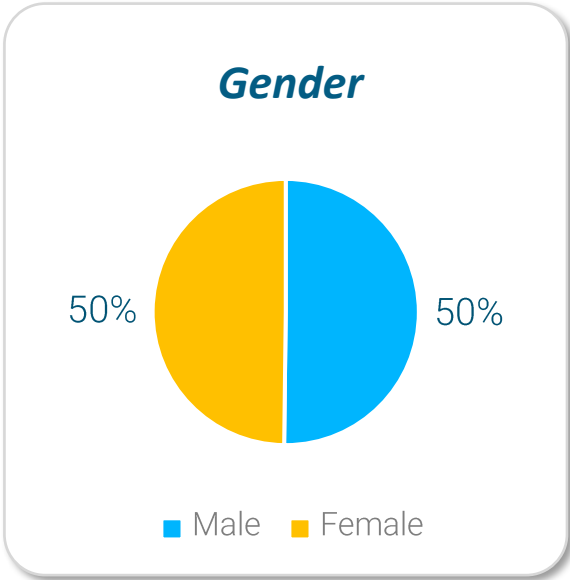
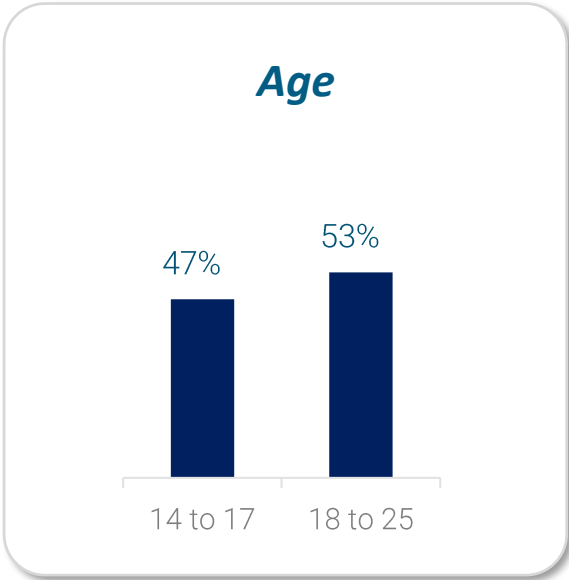
New questions have been included with each additional wave.



# Sample Profile – Key Demographics (Wave 1)



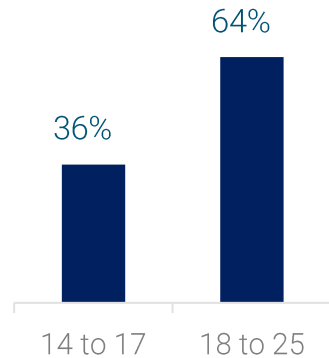
# Sample Profile – Key Demographics (Wave 2)



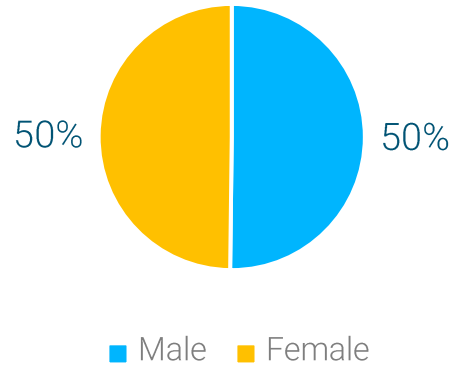


# Sample Profile – Key Demographics (Wave 3)

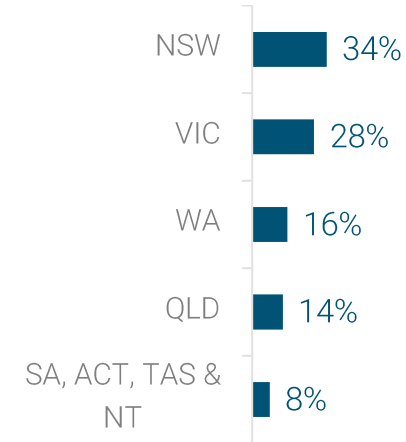
## Age



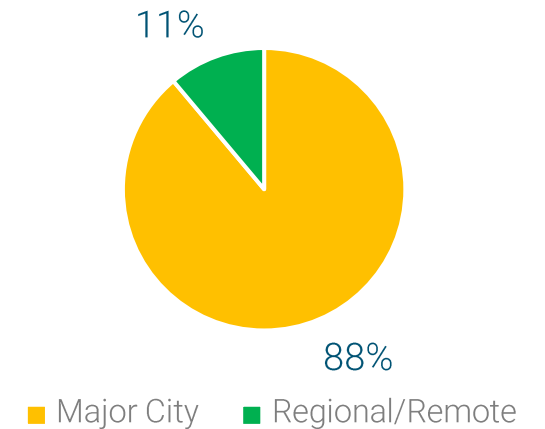
## Gender



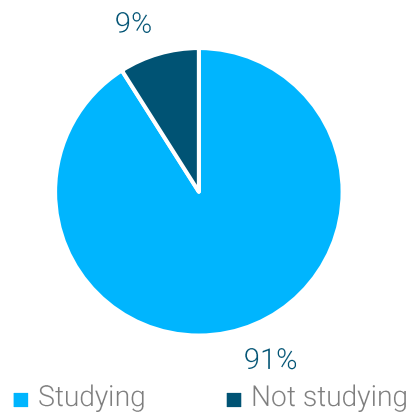
## State



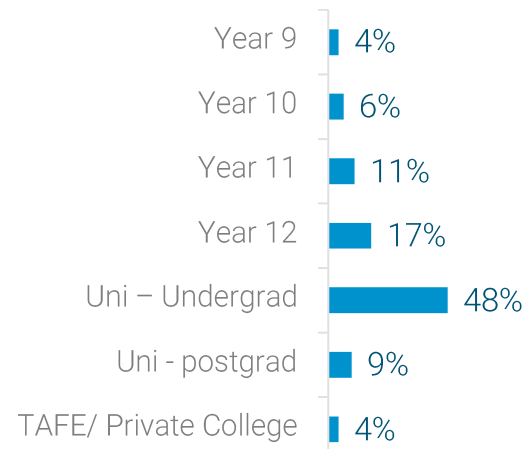
## Region



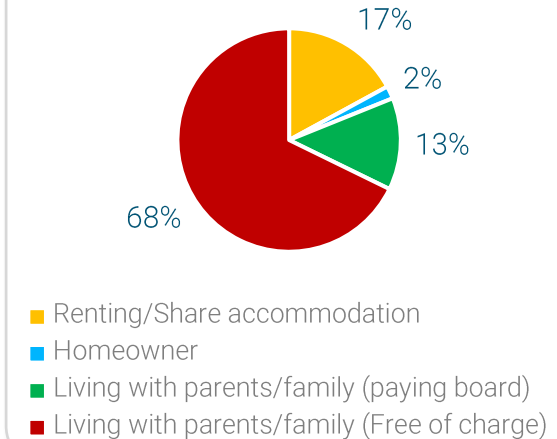
## Study Status



## Year Level



## Living Situation



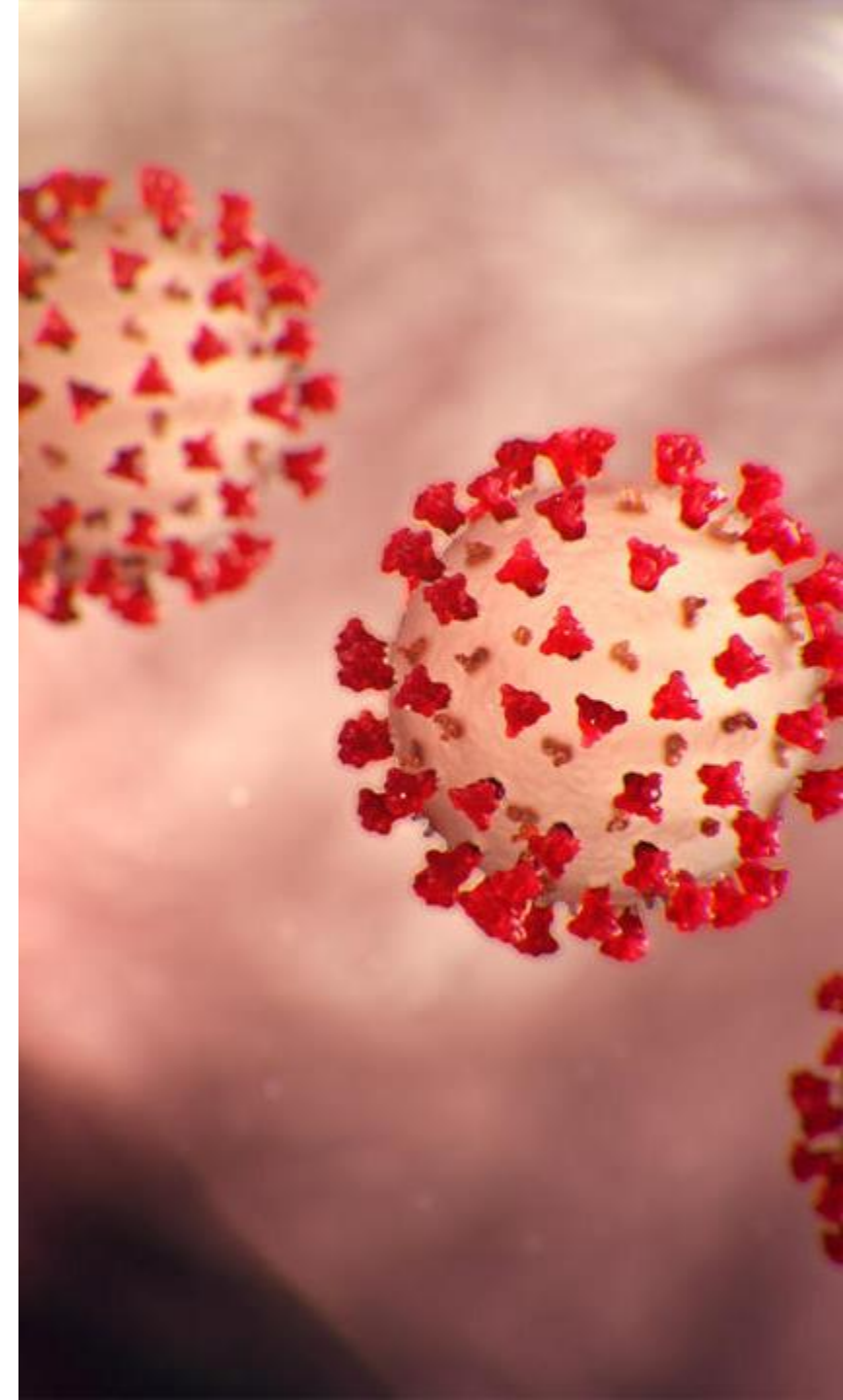
# Introduction to the report

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, Student Edge and YouthInsight set out to track young people's understanding of what precautions they should be taking, their perceptions of the government's management of the crisis and their overall sentiment about the unfolding situation.

The research has been conducted via online surveys and among a national sample of young Australians aged 14 to 25. The first wave of the study ran between 18 and 22 March among 520 people, then the second wave occurred between Tuesday 7 and 15 April among 522 people, and most recently the third wave fieldwork ran from Monday 11 May to Sunday 24 May, among 565 people.

This report comments on trends and identifies significant changes in attitudes and behaviours among young Australians in the 3rd wave of research in comparison to previous waves.

New questions have been added to each wave of this research.



# Summary of findings - COVID-19 Precautions

Confidence around young people's understanding of COVID-19 precautions remains steady, with 94% of respondents saying they are very or somewhat confident of what to do to prevent the spread of the disease. The majority of young Australians can now also clearly distinguish myths from facts about what the right precautions to take are and have shown marked improvement in this regard since wave one.

However, as the curve flattens and restrictions are lifted, young people are also beginning to relax their own precautions. This third wave of the research shows that young people are starting to wash their hands less regularly and not worry as much about covering their mouth when coughing, sneezing or touching their face.

Apart from government TV and outdoor ads, there is a general drop across all sources of information regarding COVID-19 precautions. This is likely due to young people seeking less information as life begins to return to normality. The Australian government remains a primary source of information for young Australians, with 72% still referencing government messages as a source of information about COVID-19 precautions.

Sentiment regarding the Federal Government's response to COVID-19 has continued to improve, with a significant increase in promoters from 9% in April to 15% in May. This sentiment improvement is being driven more by the older group (18 – 25 years old), which has more than doubled its promoter score since April (8% to 17% in May).

# Summary of findings - COVID-19 Sentiment

The research shows that levels of concern among young Australians are starting to ease, although there are still 70% of young people saying they are concerned about the situation, and notably, approximately one in two young people continue to experience troubling mental health issues relating to the epidemic, including depression, anxiety, fear and feelings of panic.

The health of families and future education continue to be the main concerning factors for young people, although the extent of the concerns have reduced since April.

With Australia's success in flattening the curve, there has been a corresponding increased positivity towards opening schools, with 55% now supporting (cautious) re-opening

Encouragingly, the research shows positive signs of an increase in paid work for young people, with 23% saying they've increased their hours in May. However, it is essential to note that overall, 77% still either had no change in their work hours or had their hours reduced since April.

# Summary of findings - Studying From Home

May saw the beginning of the return to the classroom, with 76% of students saying they are completing their studies from home, down from 88% in April.

Half of students have found that doing schoolwork from home is harder than doing it at school. The study has also found that 58% say they are more productive at school than at home, however, this has indicatively decreased since April (64%), suggesting that perhaps there has also been an adjustment period to get used to the new arrangement.

Most young Australians understand that the remote learning arrangement was necessary but is not something they would like implemented permanently.

A key factor which makes the remote learning arrangement difficult, has been the lack of immediate feedback regarding their schoolwork, with around 9 in 10 students saying 'instant feedback on online worksheets/assignments' (when available) is something which helps them work better from home.



# Summary of findings - COVIDSafe App

In May, the research investigated the awareness and perception of the COVIDSafe app and set out to understand how many had downloaded it and if not, why not.

The research found that awareness is very high, with nine out of ten young people aware of the COVID-19 app and a further two thirds able to correctly recall the name of the app (unprompted) – COVIDSafe. However, there was 20% who didn't know the name or had forgotten.

Regarding where they had heard about the app, TV news and social media accounted for 73% of all awareness of the COVIDSafe app.

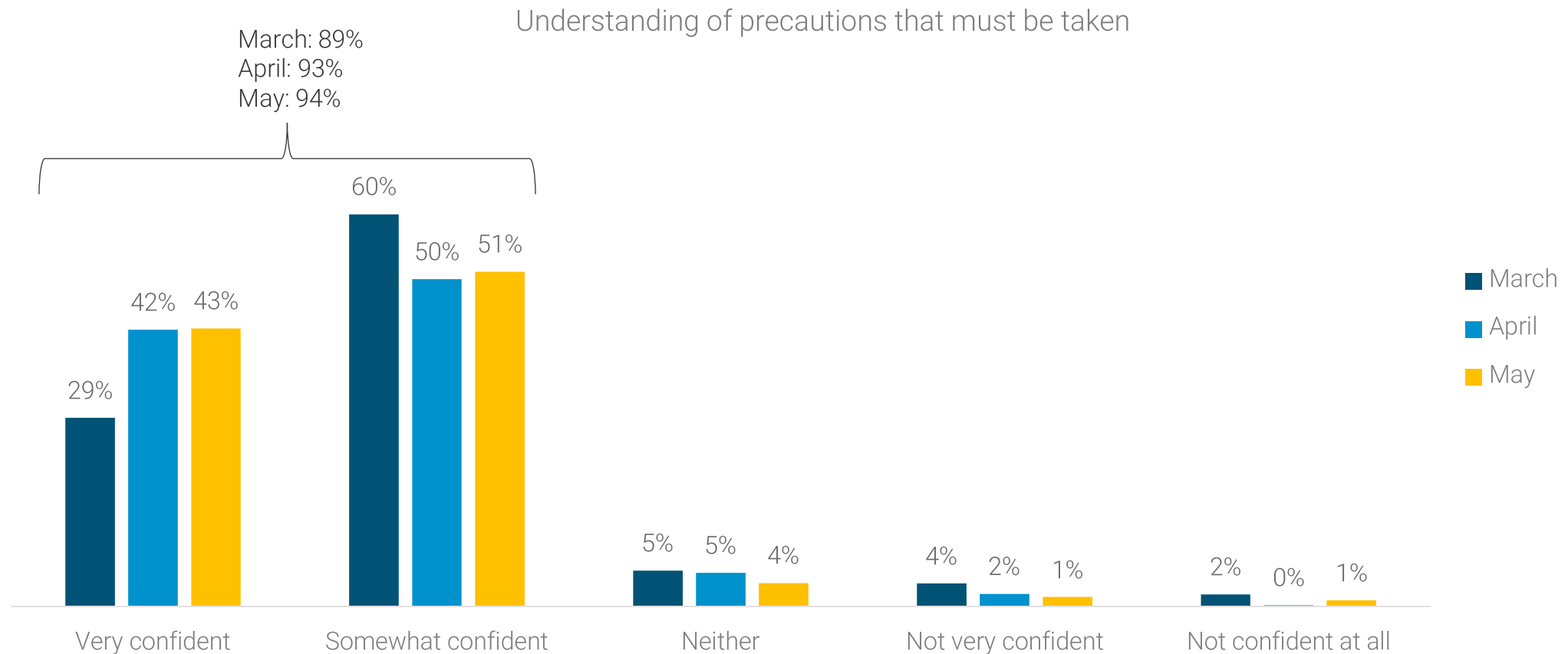
As of the end of May, only 34% of young people had download the app, with the main concern being data privacy (42%). Encouragingly, two-thirds say they haven't downloaded the app simply because 'they haven't got round to it'. Another reason for not downloading was due to many not leaving the house during the lockdown, so not understanding the point – a fact which will fade as restrictions are lifted.

Among those who had not downloaded the app, 28% would consider downloading it if they feel there have been improvements made. The sentiment of the app not working correctly came off the back on initial teething issues made public when first launched. Among those who have downloaded the app, the process of downloading was seamless. However, there were still concerns about data security and a lack of feeling any safer.




# COVID-19 Precautions

No significant changes reported from April, with almost all young people feeling confident they understand the precautions to take to prevent the spread of COVID-19.




Little to no changes in young people’s understanding of what the right precautions are. Almost all now recognise the importance of sneezing into your elbow to avoid the spread of germs.

FACT


Prevention facts	Believe it's right		
	March	April	May
Maintain social distancing	96%	97%	96%
Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth	98%	97%	95%
Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze	98%	97%	94%
Wash hands regularly with soap and water	98%	98%	96%
If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care	97%	96%	95%
Using hand sanitiser	96%	95%	95%
Sneezing into your elbow	64%	72%	94% 

FACT



Prevention facts	Believe it's a myth		
	March	April	May
Maintain social distancing	4%	3%	4%
Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth	2%	3%	5%
Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze	2%	3%	6%
Wash hands regularly with soap and water	2%	2%	4%
If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care	3%	4%	5%
Using hand sanitiser	4%	5%	5%
Sneezing into your elbow	36%	28%	6% 

# COVID-19 precaution myths continue to slowly erode with young people becoming more informed.





Prevention myths	Believe it's right		
	March	April	May
If you feel sick use hand dryer a that can kill the virus	5%	6%	9%
Use repellent as mosquitoes can transmit the virus too	12%	10%	13%
Take a hot bath if you feel you are sick, as that will kill the virus	13%	9%	12%
Avoid eating certain foods	17%	15%	16%
Get a vaccine against pneumonia	30%	31%	36%
Exercising more	45%	51%	46%
Eating fruit and vegetables	61%	61%	53% 
Washing your clothes regularly	83%	86%	80%
Drinking lots of water	77%	71%	60% 



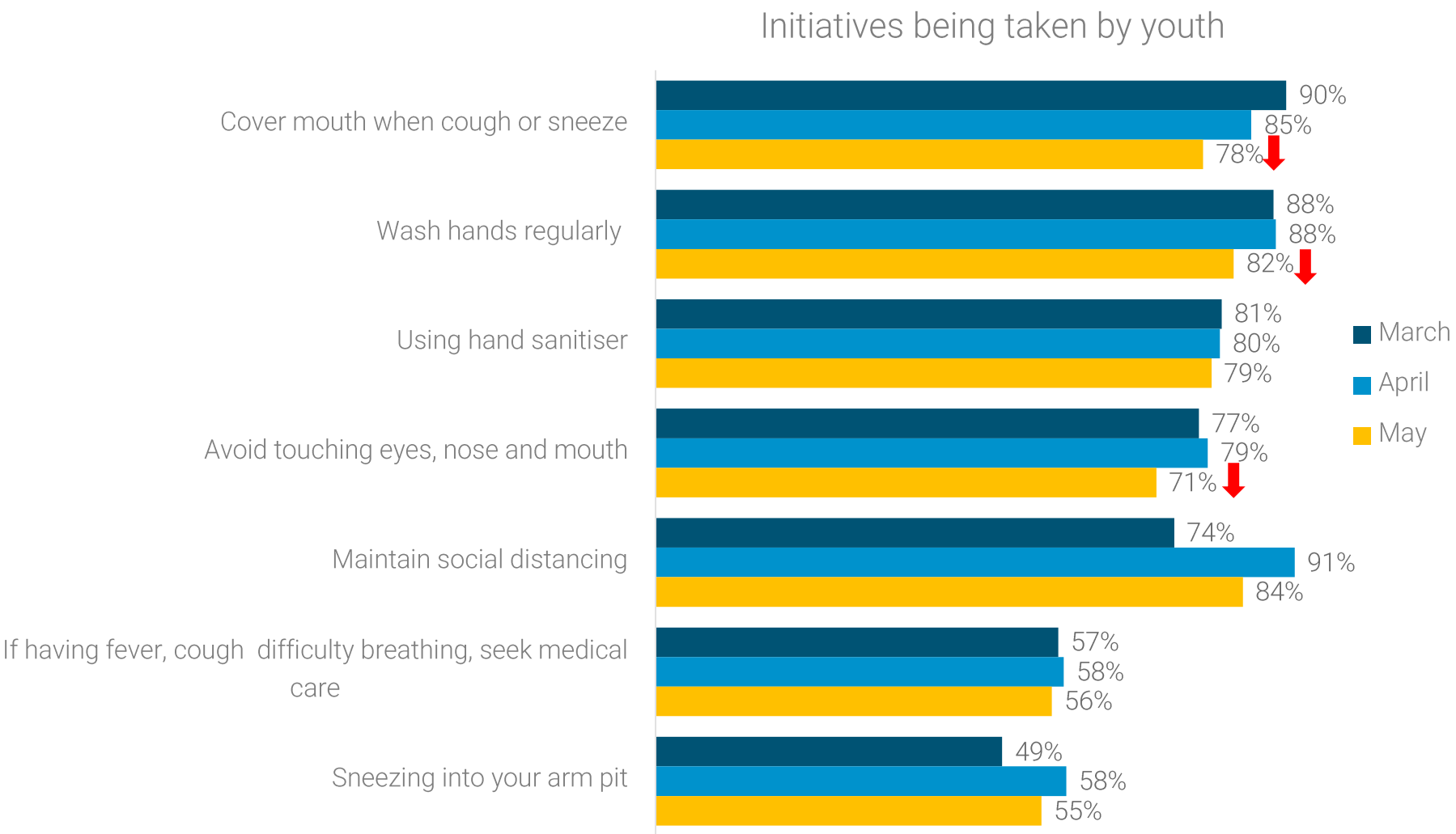
Prevention myths	Believe it's a myth		
	March	April	May
If you feel sick use hand dryer a that can kill the virus	95%	94%	91%
Use repellent as mosquitoes can transmit the virus too	88%	90%	87%
Take a hot bath if you feel you are sick, as that will kill the virus	87%	91%	88%
Avoid eating certain foods	83%	85%	84%
Get a vaccine against pneumonia	70%	69%	64%
Exercising more	55%	49%	54%
Eating fruit and vegetables	39%	39%	47% 
Washing your clothes regularly	17%	14%	20%
Drinking lots of water	23%	29%	40% 

Q. Which of the following precautions do you believe are the right precautions to take and which are myths?

  Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.



As the curve flattens and restrictions get lifted, young people begin relaxing their own precautions. Results show significant drops in key precautions taken by young people.

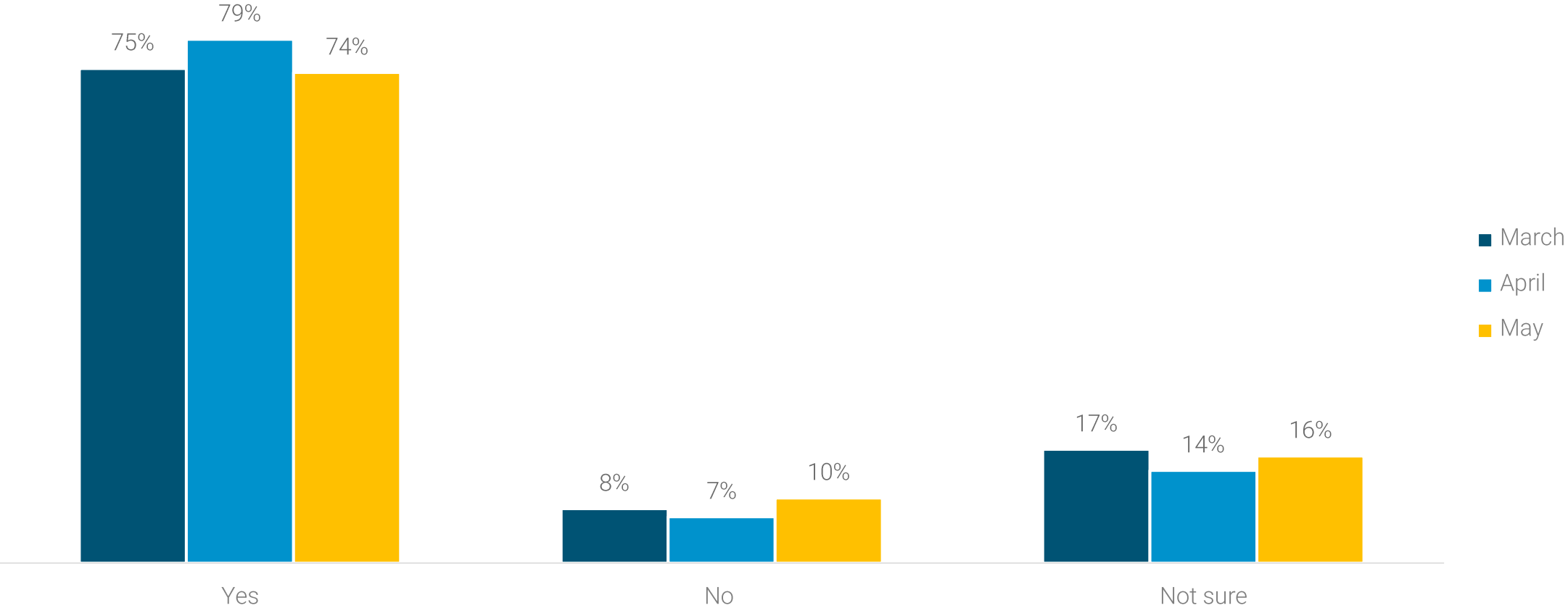


Q. And which of these precautions are you currently taking?

Significantly higher/lower than total average. Based on 95% confidence interval.

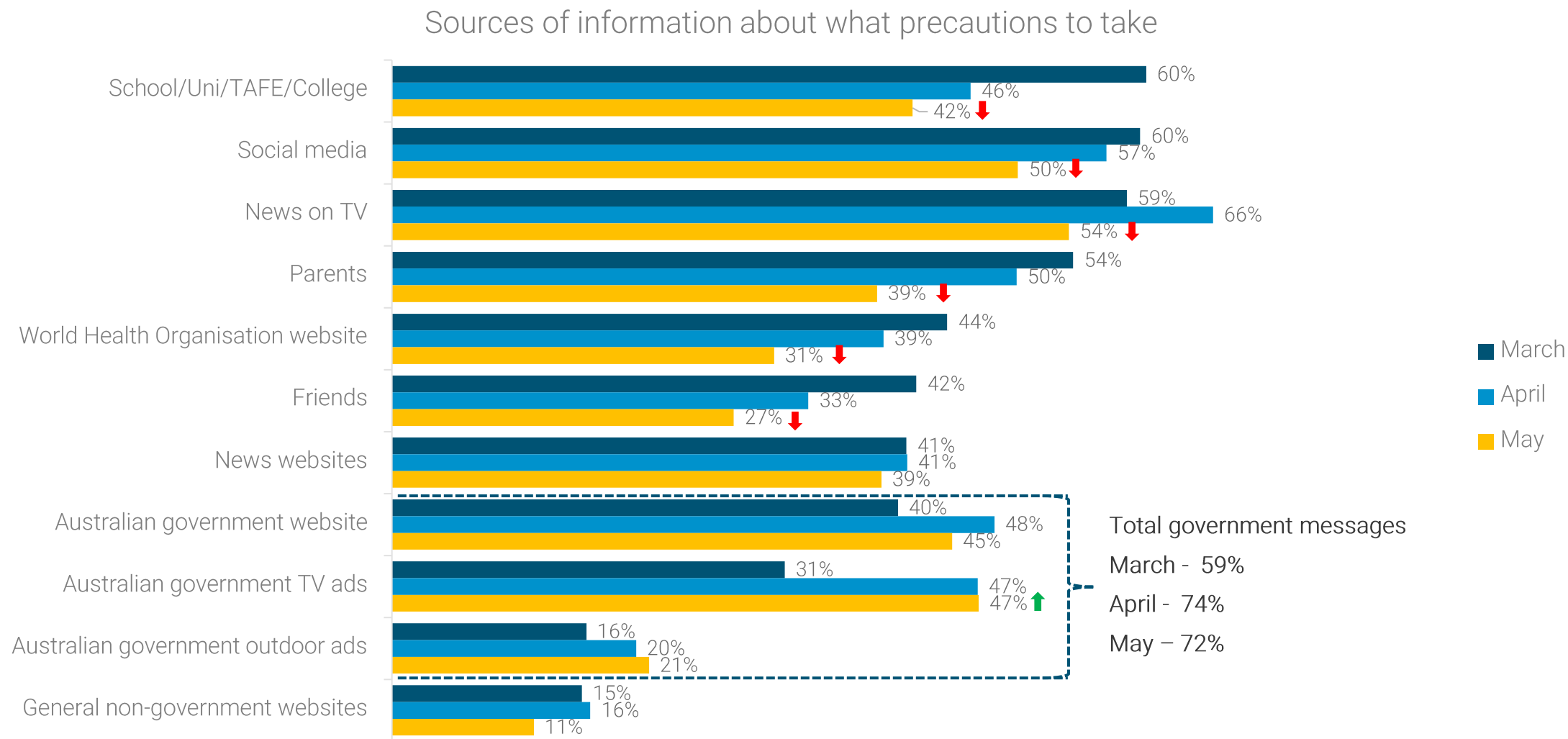
No major changes were seen in the understanding that young people pass on the virus to older people. Although a quarter still believe they can't or are unsure.

Can young people pass on virus to older people



Q. From what you understand about the COVID-19, do you believe young people pass the virus onto older people ?

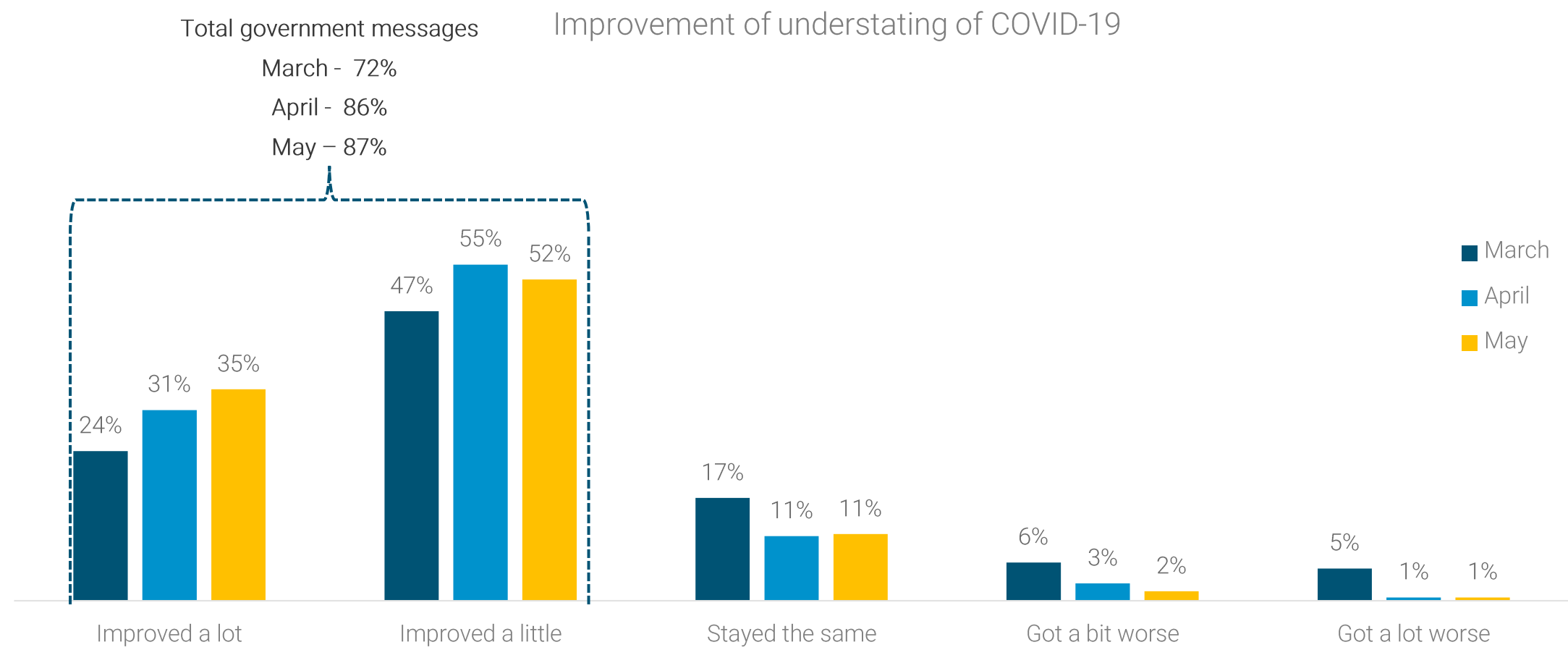
Apart from government TV and outdoor ads, there is a general drop across all sources of information regarding COVID-19 precautions. This is likely due to young people seeking less information as life begins to return to normality.



Q. Where are you finding information about what precautions to take?

Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

# Understanding of the COVID-19 situation remains steady with almost 9 in 10 young people saying government messaging has helped improve their understanding.



Q. Based on the government messages that you've seen, how much has your understanding of the COVID-19 situation improved?

Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

Sentiment of the Federal Government’s response to COVID-19 has improved again with a significant increase in promoters.

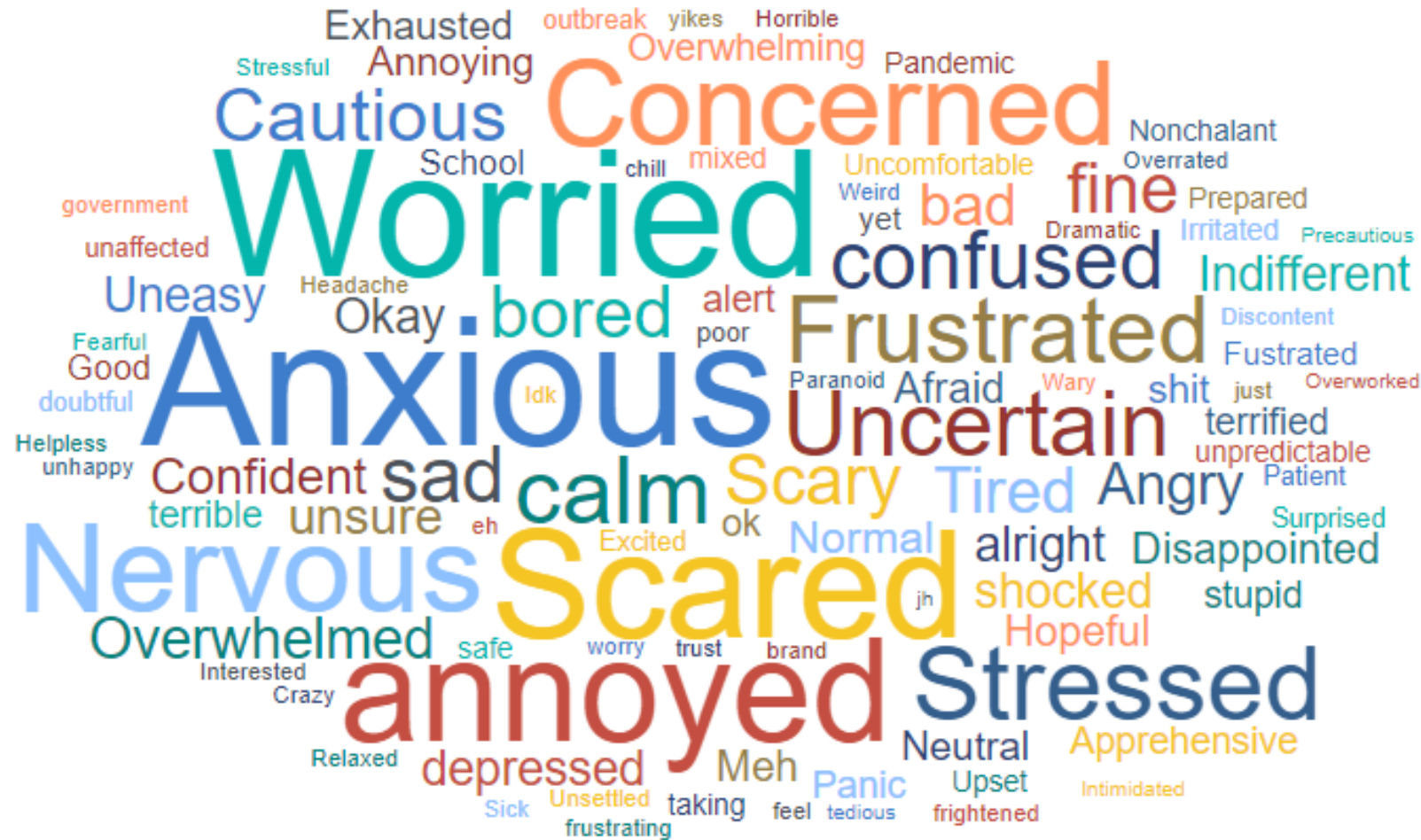
March			
	Detractors 😡	Passive 😐	Promoters 😊
Total	74%	23%	2%
14 – 17 year olds	83%	16%	1%
18 – 25 year olds	66%	30%	4%
April			
	Detractors 😡	Passive 😐	Promoters 😊
Total	51%	39%	9%
14 – 17 year olds	55%	35%	11%
18 – 25 year olds	48%	44%	8%
May			
	Detractors 😡	Passive 😐	Promoters 😊
Total	37% ↓	48% ↑	15% ↑
14 – 17 year olds	41%	47% ↑	12%
18 – 25 year olds	34%	49% ↑	17% ↑







# COVID-19 Sentiment

# As pandemic fears worsen, mental health issues follow.





# Although concern is starting to ease, there are still over 50% of young people experiencing negative mental feelings as a result of the pandemic

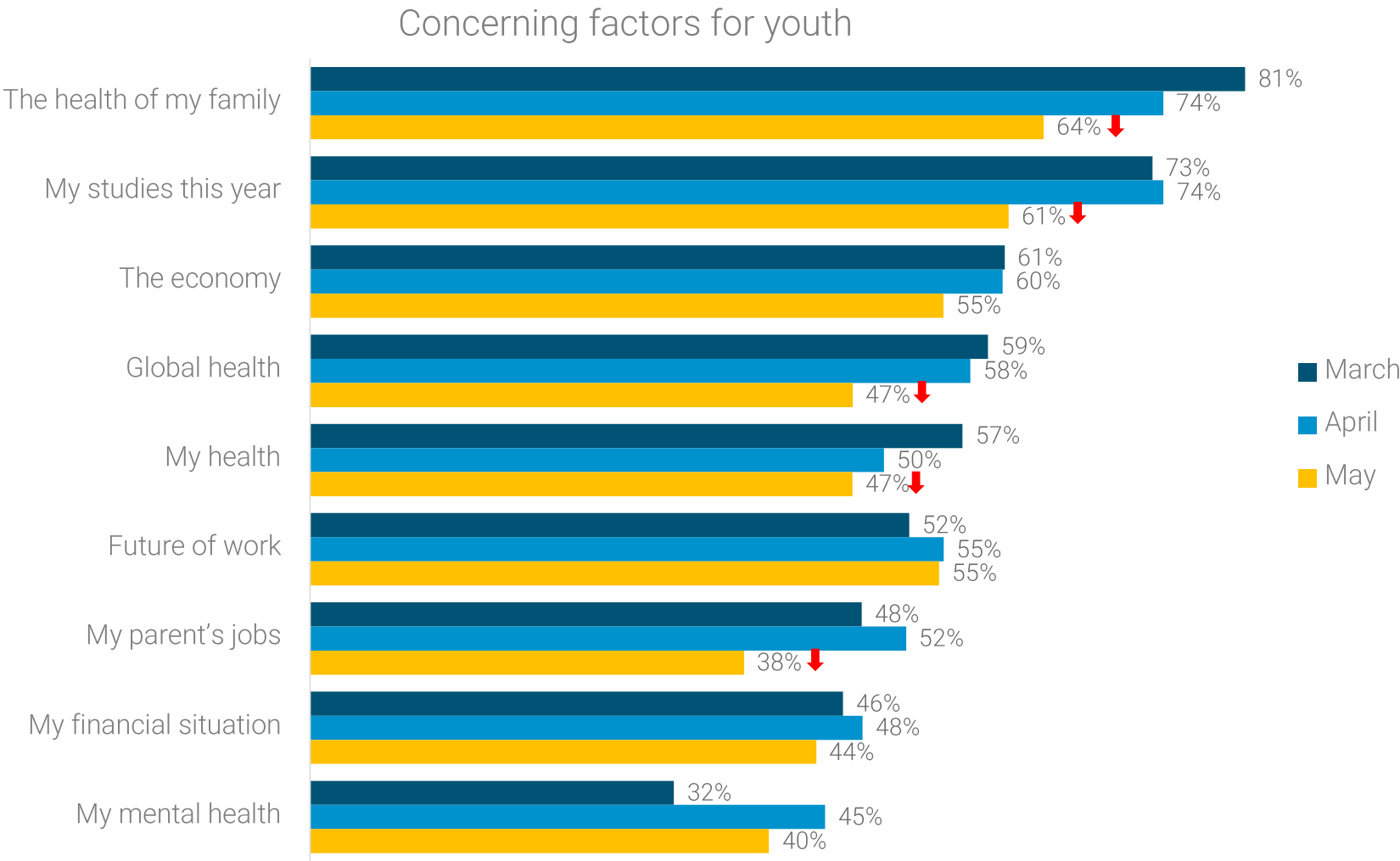
Youth feelings about COVID-19

Negative feelings				Positive feelings			
	March	April	May	March	April	May	
Concerned	78%	77%	70% 	22%	23%	30% 	Unconcerned
Depressed	66%	64%	58%	34%	36%	42%	Happy
Anxious	62%	58%	57%	38%	42%	43%	Calm
Afraid	60%	55%	53%	40%	45%	47%	Unafraid
Panicky	56%	48%	50%	44%	52%	50%	Indifferent

Q. Which of the below feelings best describes how you are feeling about the COVID-19 situation? On the scale of 1 to 10 please indicate how strongly you have any of these feelings.

  Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

# The health of their families and education continue to be the main concerning factors for young people, although the extent of the concerns have reduced.

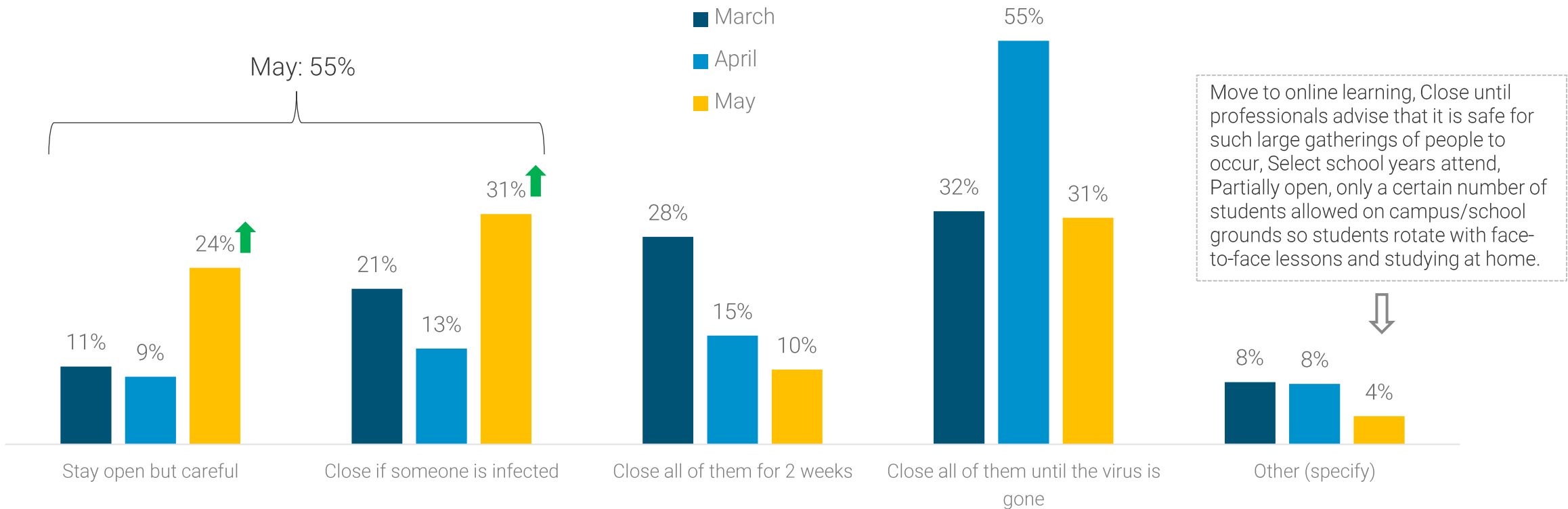


Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

Q. What are the things you are concerned about regarding the COVID-19 situation?

# With Australia's success in flattening the curve, there has been a corresponding increased positivity towards opening schools, with 55% now supporting (cautious) re-opening

Correct action for schools, universities and colleges to take



Q. Which of the below do you believe is the correct action for schools, universities and colleges to take?

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.





# As time passes, students are becoming increasingly restless while stuck at home.

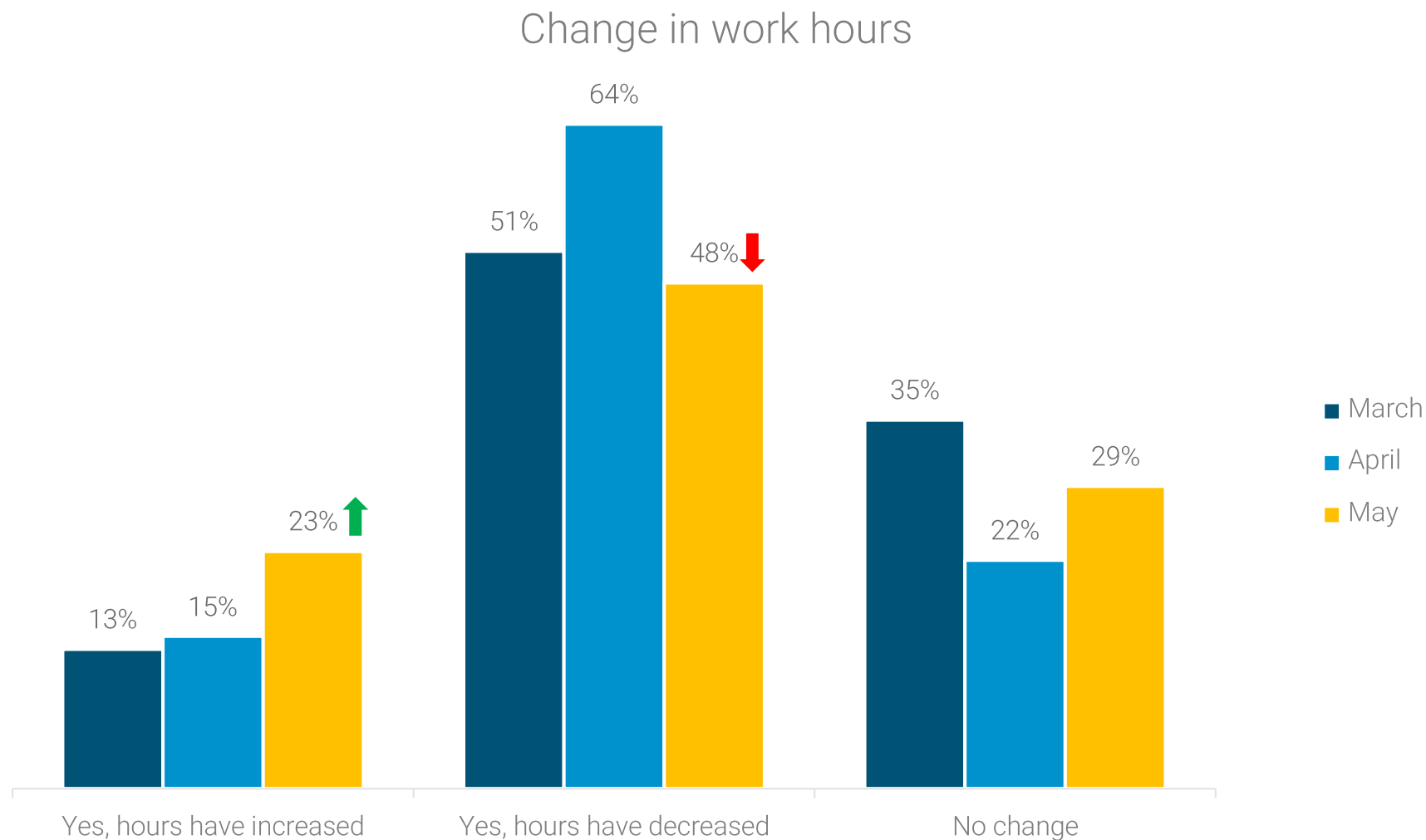
Youth feelings about doing school/Uni/college/TAFE work from home

Negative feelings about home work/study				Positive feelings about home work/study			
	March	April	May	March	April	May	
Uncomfortable	22%	33%	34% ↑	78%	67%	66% ↓	Comfortable
Lonely	33%	48%	49% ↑	67%	52%	51% ↓	Happy to be alone
Unproductive	42%	55%	56% ↑	58%	45%	44% ↓	Productive
Unhappy	28%	42%	43% ↑	72%	58%	57% ↓	Happy

Q. How would you feel about doing school/Uni/college/TAFE work from home?



 Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
 Based on 95% confidence interval.

Encouragingly, there are signs of increase work for young people, with 23% saying they've increased their hours in May. Although 77% either had no change in work hours or had their hours reduced.



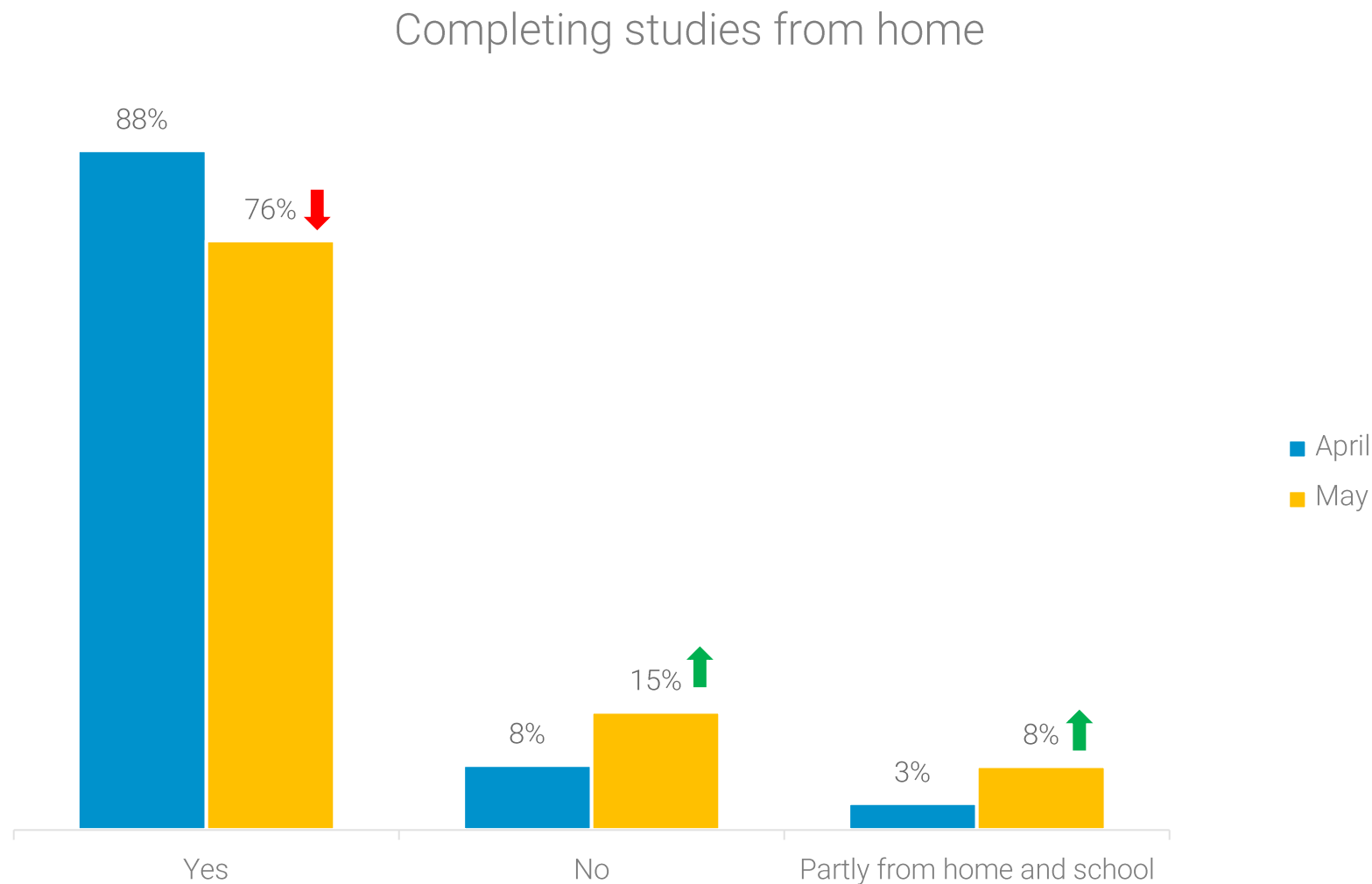
Q. In your job, has your work hours changed since over the past 2 weeks?

↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.



# Studying From Home

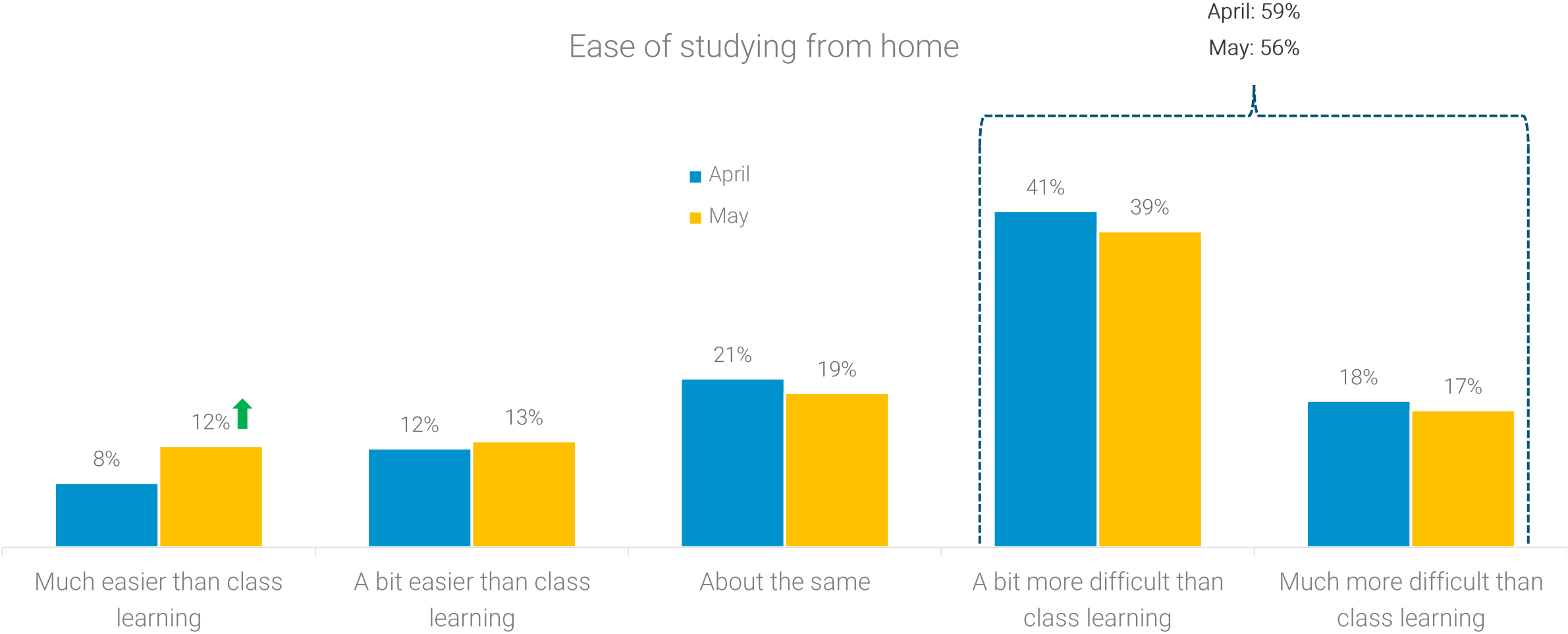
# As the situation improves, students are staring to return to school.



Q. Are you currently completing your studies from home?

Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

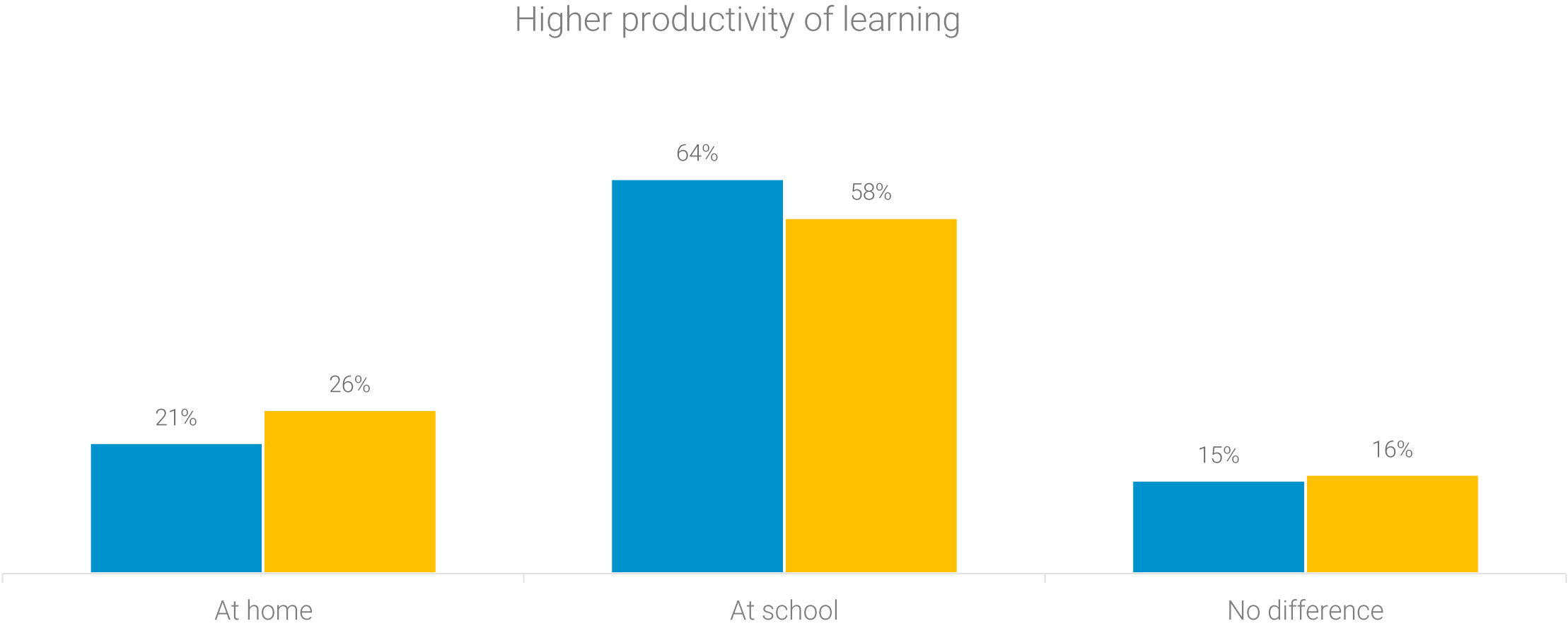
# Six out of ten students have found learning from home more difficult than from school.



Q. How have you found remote learning? (doing your schoolwork from home)

Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

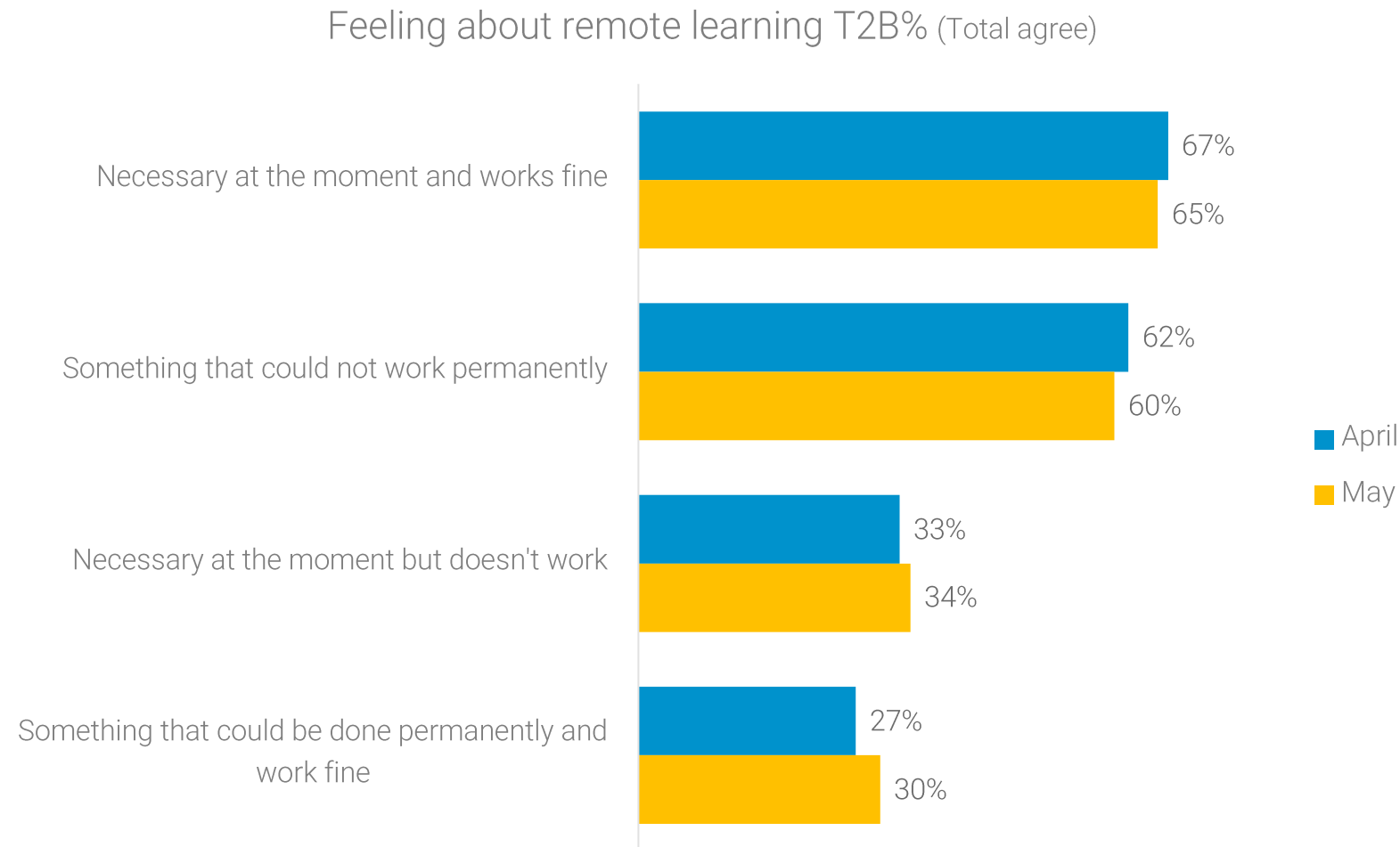
# No significant changes in beliefs of where young people are more productive, with the majority choosing school over home.



Q. Are you more productive at school or learning from home?

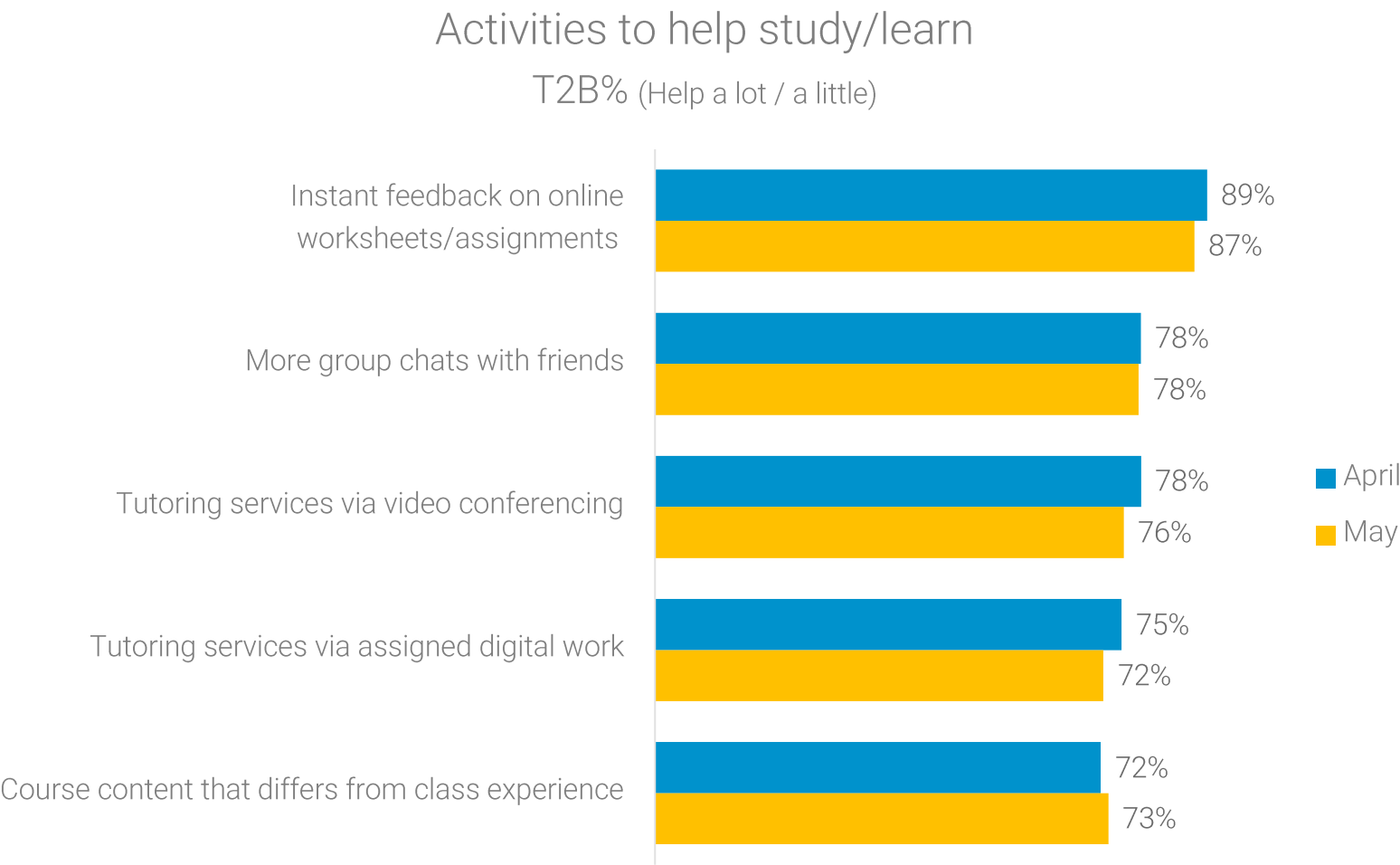
↓ ↑ Significantly higher/lower than total average.  
Based on 95% confidence interval.

Most young Australians understand that the remote learning arrangement is necessary for now, but not something they would like implemented permanently.





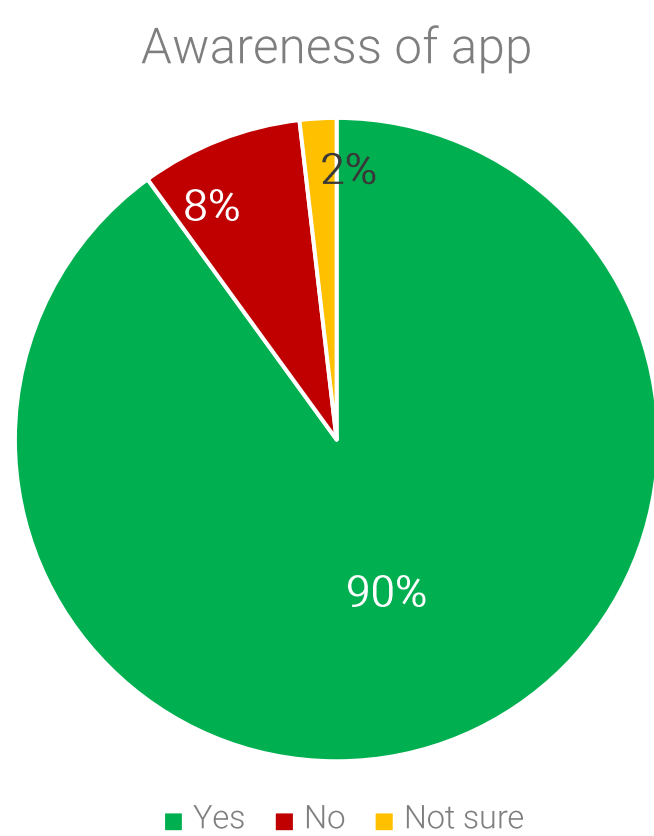
# Above all, young people are needing more immediate feedback with their schoolwork as they try to adjust to remote learning.



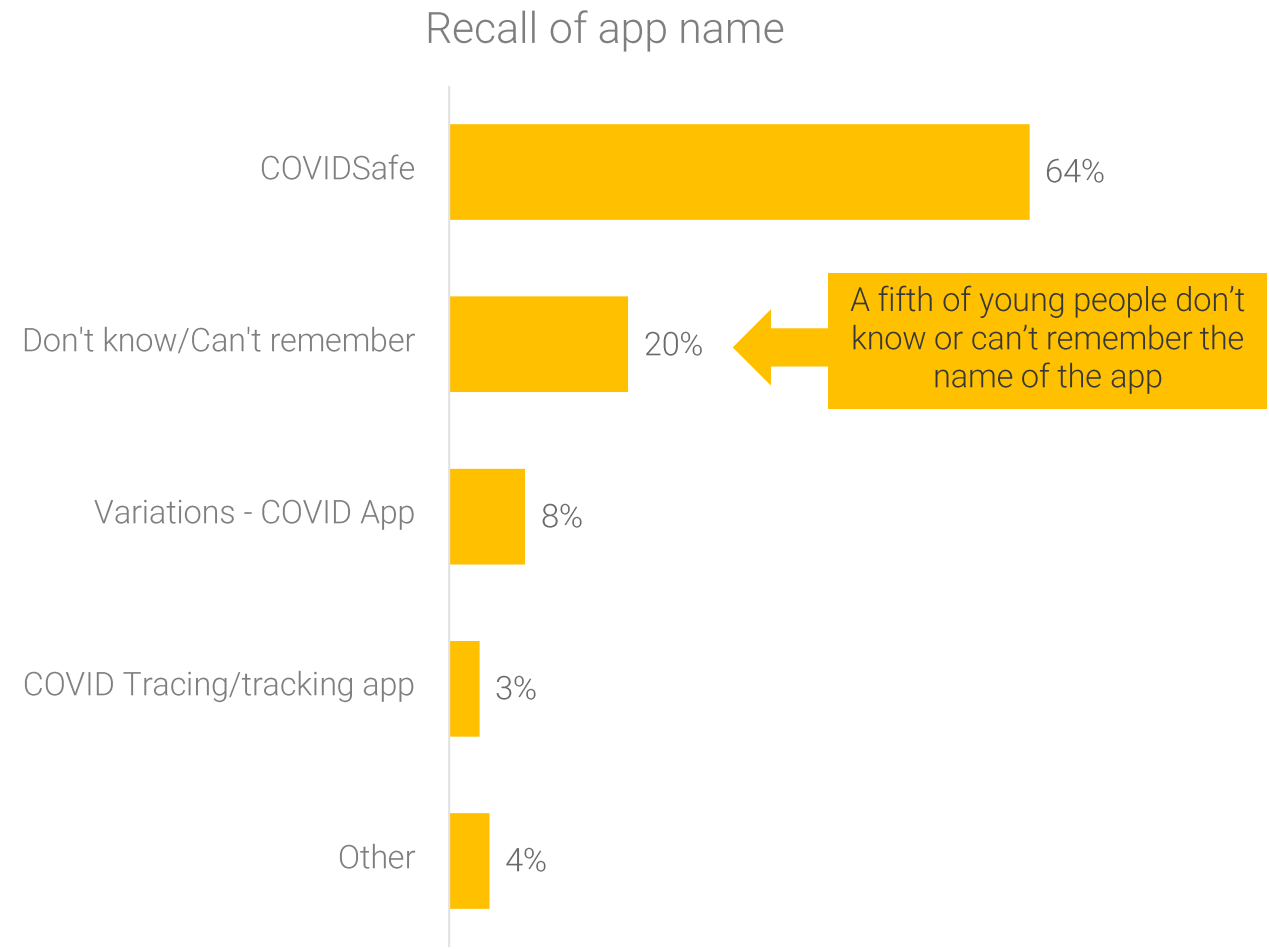


# COVID SAFE APP

# Nine out of ten young people are aware of the COVID-19 app and two thirds could correctly recall the name of the app.

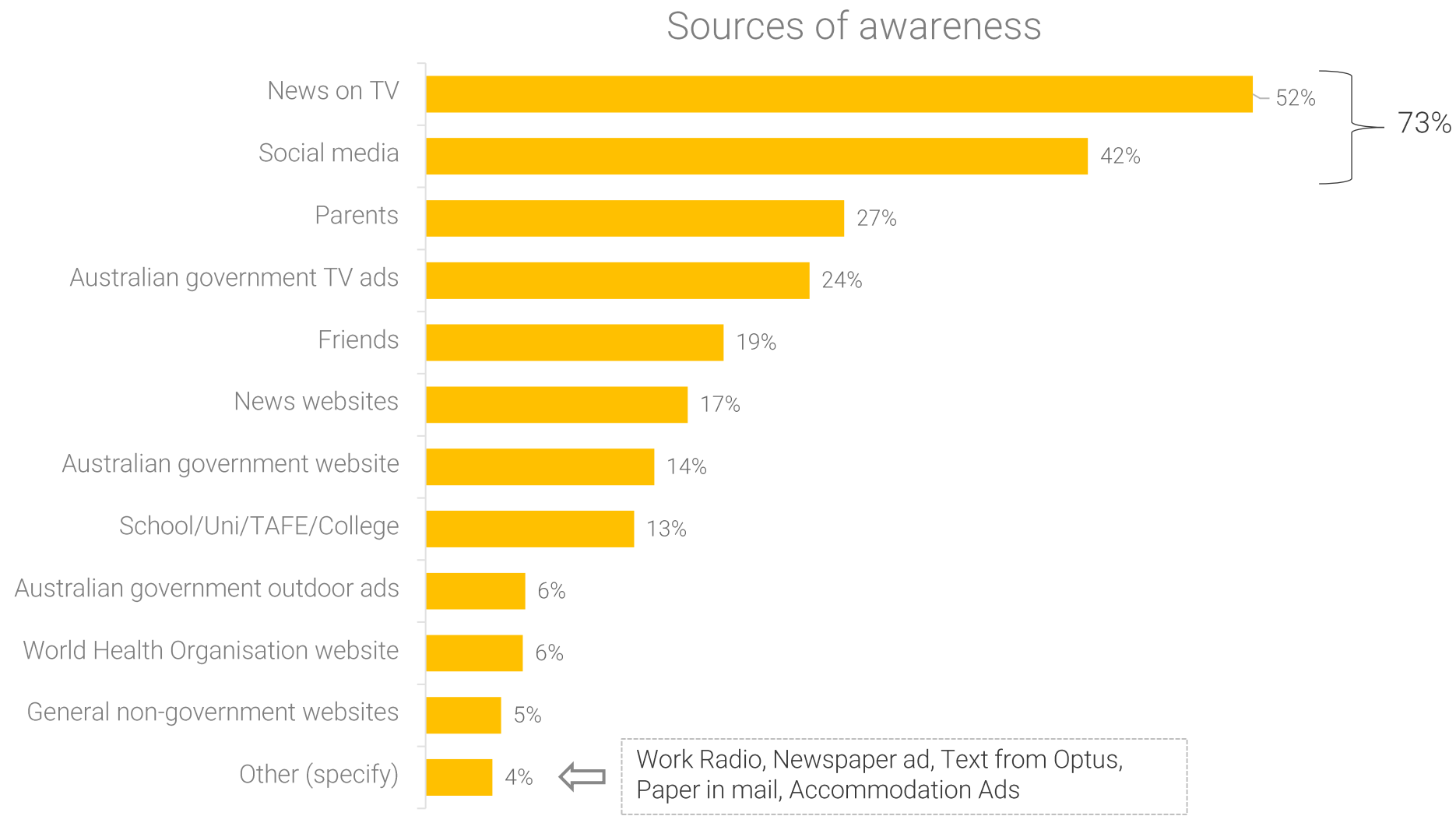


Q. Have you heard about the COVID-19 tracing app?



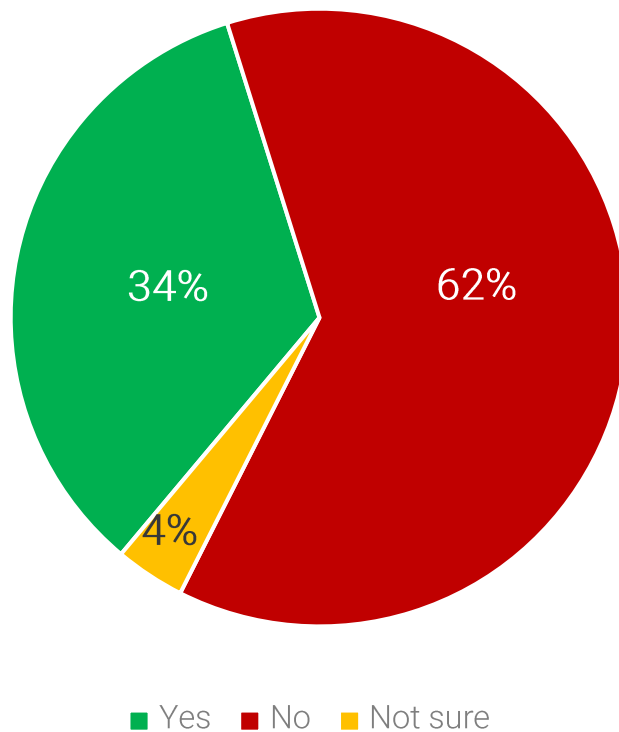
Q. From memory, do you know what is the app called?

# TV news and social media account for 73% of all awareness of the COVIDSafe app.

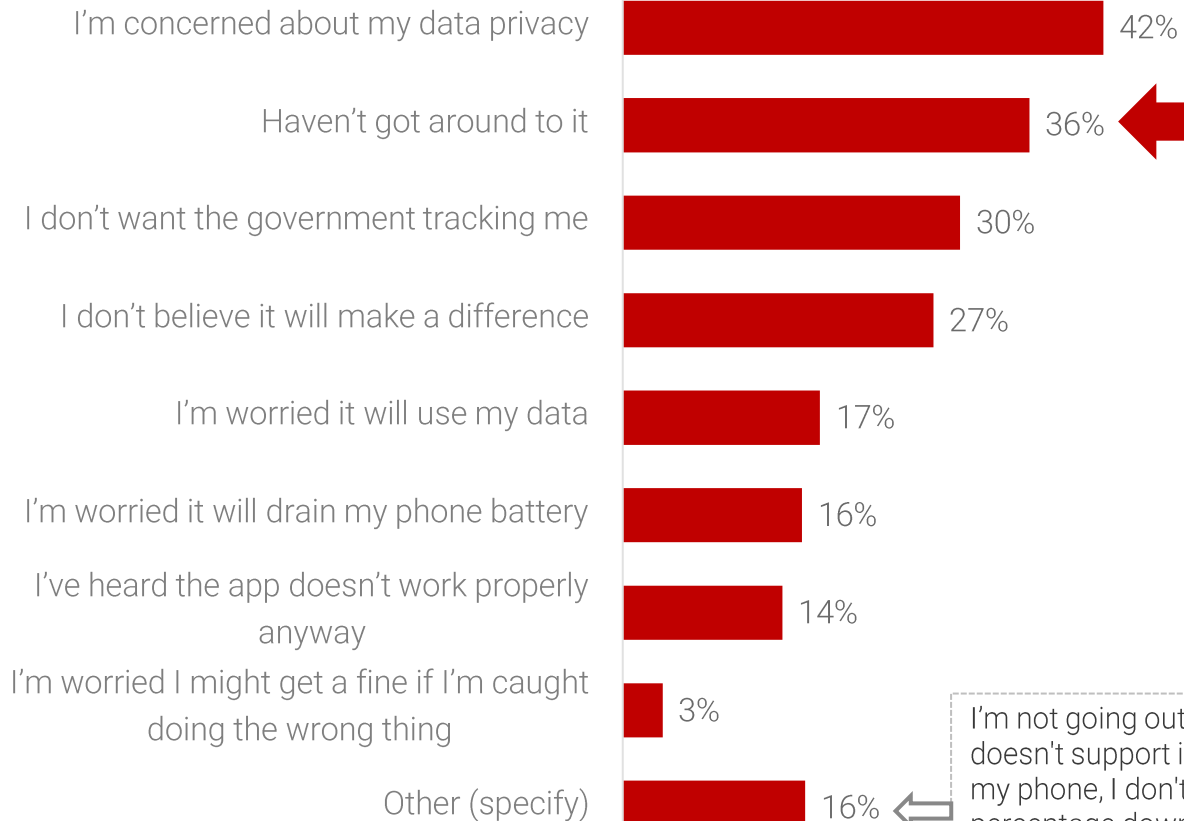


# While 9 in 10 know about the COVIDSafe app, only 34% have downloaded it, with the majority concerned about data privacy.

Downloaded the app



Reasons for not downloading the app



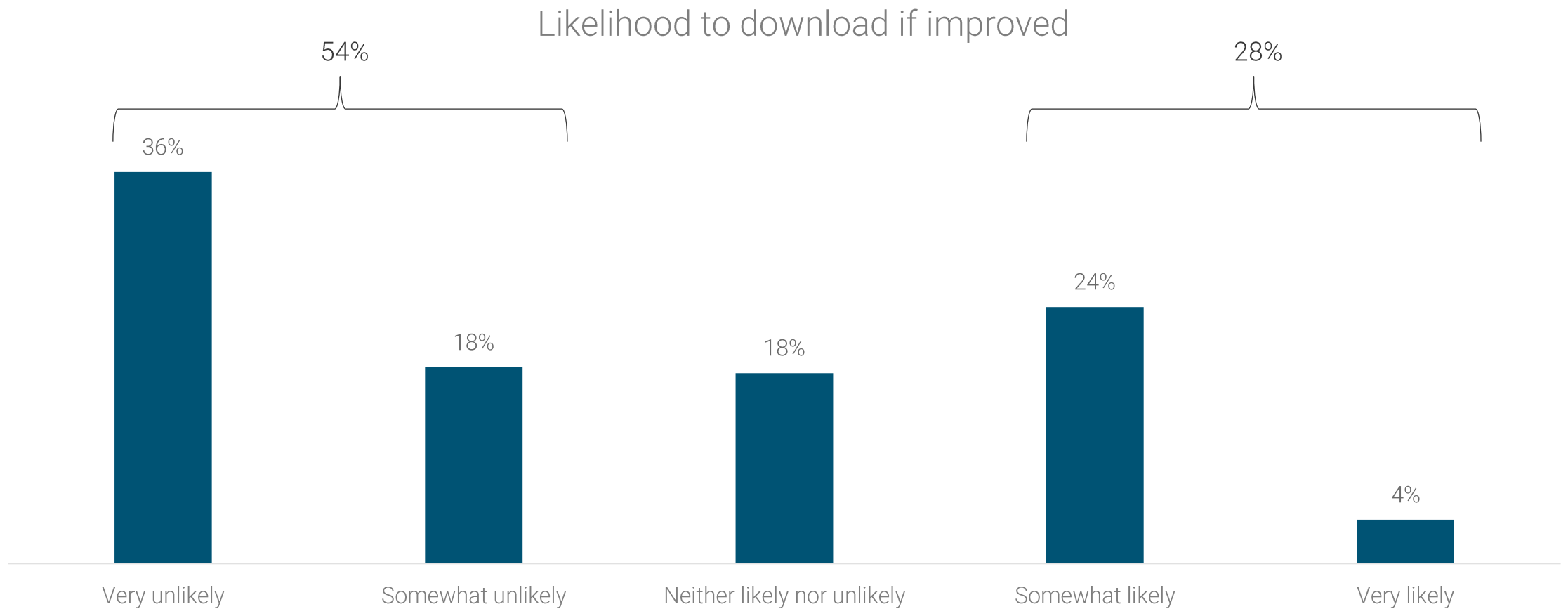
Two thirds only need more reminding to download the app

I'm not going out, not allowed, Phone doesn't support it, Not enough storage on my phone, I don't think it will work if a small percentage downloads it or if your phone runs out of battery/data, Not optimised using Apple's API for this

Q. Have you personally downloaded the COVID-19 tracing app?

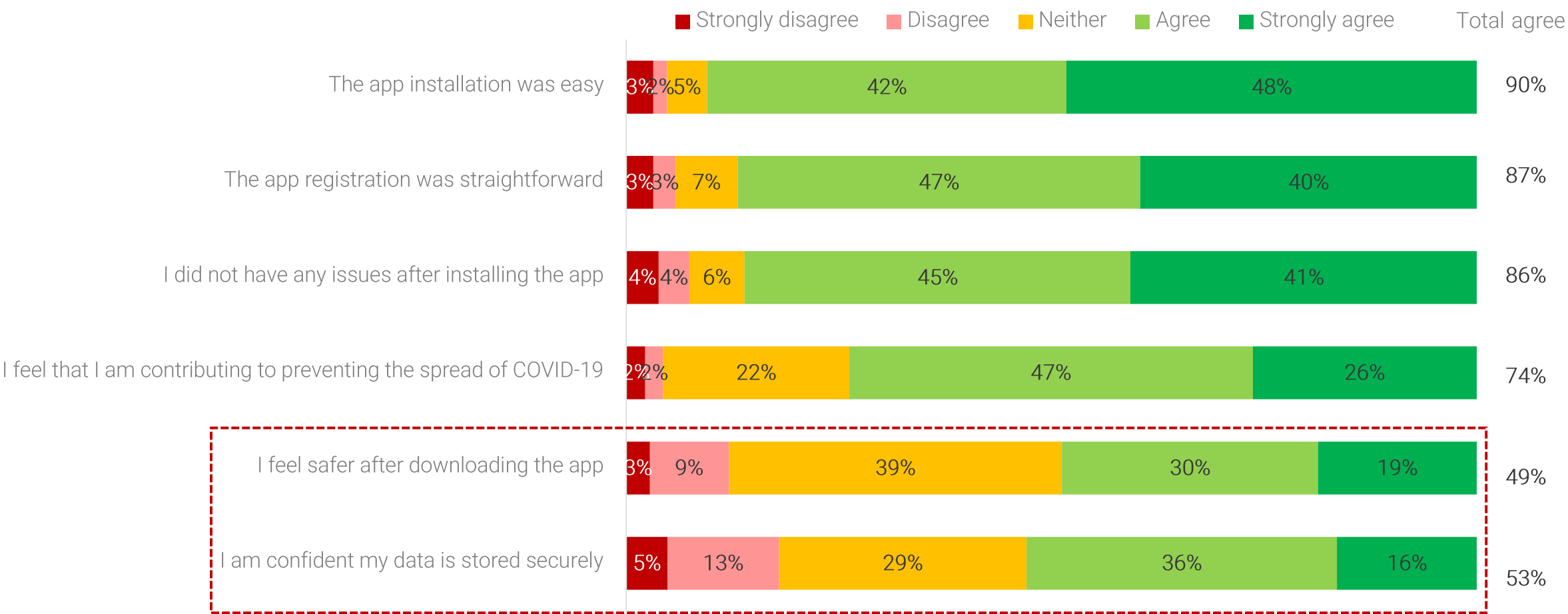
Q. Which (if any) of the below reasons best explain why you haven't downloaded the COVID-19 tracing app?

Although half of those who have not downloaded the app won't be convinced, even if they hear about improvements, there are 28% that are likely to reconsider.



Among those who have downloaded the app, the process of downloading was seamless, however there were still concerns about data security and a lack of feeling any safer.

Experience with the app







# Telling the story of Gen Y & Gen Z

**YouthInsight**  
Powered by Student Edge