



THE PRINCE'S TRUST NATWEST YOUTH INDEX 2023

FOREWORD

For many young people, starting to think about how we're going to make our way in the world can be a daunting process. At this transitional time in our lives, there are so many choices to consider and 'firsts' to navigate. Every decision we make has the potential to affect us long into the future.



Jaina Valji
Prince's Trust young person and founder of Copy and Space

Change is something that so many people struggle with, despite their age or experience, and yet young people face it all the time. A change from school to college, the classroom to the office, or sometimes the need to leave one destination with no clear image of where we might end up.

Throughout the past few years, young people have adapted to change in ways we haven't seen for decades. We have continued to make life-changing decisions about our education, career pathways and lifestyles, all while living through the disruption of a global pandemic. This demonstrates the sheer resilience, strength, and determination of our generation. Now, with the cost of living crisis affecting us all, things are only getting harder – particularly for those young people who are already facing barriers and are more at risk of being left behind.

This year's Youth Index report not only looks at how young people feel about the challenges facing us today, but also what is important to us. The findings show that financial security and good mental health are at the top of my generation's wish list for the future, and that having a job is an important component of being able to establish these things for ourselves.

More than two thirds of young people feel determined to achieve our goals in life, but sometimes we just need a little guidance and support to help get us there. For 29 per cent of us, help with building confidence feels key to realising our career ambitions. It was certainly key to my own journey in starting my own business.

There have been times in my own life when I have been so afraid of making mistakes or worried about what others will think that I've ended up missing out on opportunities to learn and excel. After

working with The Prince's Trust, I have learnt how to overcome these barriers and have more confidence in myself and my business.

When I was choosing a career, I had no clear idea of where I wanted to go and ended up just following a pathway that was clearly paved out in front of me. I didn't understand how many career options existed, the different routes to get to them, or have anyone working in those jobs who I could look to as a role model. It therefore comes as no surprise to learn from this report that one in four young people say they need guidance on what jobs are available to feel able to achieve their career goals.

Last year, I chose to change my career and start my own business. The Prince's Trust supported me by sharing business insights and knowledge, providing me with a mentor, and giving me the opportunity to learn from established entrepreneurs.

So many young people are in the same position, where the right support could make all the difference in their lives. They have the determination to succeed, but we need you, as those a few steps ahead of my generation, to create opportunities and support that enables young people like me to fulfil our potential.

We have big aspirations, and we want to achieve them. We're counting on your support to help make that happen.

INTRODUCTION

This year's Prince's Trust NatWest Youth Index delivers a stark warning about the profound impact that economic pressures from the cost of living can have on young people's wellbeing.

After the significant hardship this generation endured as a result of the pandemic, this new research shows that their happiness and confidence has not recovered, as economic instability presents new challenges which threaten their aspirations and future prospects.

This latest report shows us that young people's happiness and confidence with money is now lower than it was when the Index first began during the Global Financial Crisis. This is reflected in young people's worries about a looming recession and rising cost of living. Real fears are emerging about paying for day-to-day essentials and job security, which in turn risk affecting young people's financial goals and career aspirations.

As a bank, we are resolute in ensuring young people are given the support they need to manage the real and perceived barriers around finances so that it does not hold them back from their life and career ambitions. The NatWest Thrive programme, for example, equips young people with the mindset to increase their financial confidence, as well as

to help define what success looks like for them and the steps they need to take to get there.

NatWest and The Prince's Trust share a conviction that all young people, no matter their background, should be able to build the skills, tools and self-belief to achieve their potential. By working in partnership for over twenty years, we have helped thousands of young people to develop the skills needed to get into employment or start their own businesses, as well as supporting hundreds of our staff members to volunteer with young people across the UK to grow their confidence and skills for work.

From working with The Trust, we know that young people are resilient, passionate and ambitious.

As their wellbeing stagnates in such uniquely challenging times, it is crucial this generation are equipped with the tools and support to overcome the challenges they face and fulfil their potential.




Alison Rose DBE,
Chief Executive of
NatWest Group

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

The Youth Index is a national survey that gauges the happiness and confidence young people feel across a range of areas, from working life to mental and physical health. It measures how young people are feeling about their lives today as well their aspirations for the future.

Methodology

Survey participants are asked how happy and confident they are in different areas of their lives. The responses are then converted into a numerical scale, resulting in a number between zero and 100, where 100 denotes participants being entirely happy or confident and zero being not at all happy or confident.

The results for 2023 have been mapped against the data from the previous 14 reports to give a high-level view of how the wellbeing and outlooks of young people have changed over time.

The findings are derived from the results of an online survey in which a sample of 2,025 16 to 25 year olds participated between 22nd November and 7th December 2022. The survey was conducted online by YouGov on behalf of The Prince's Trust. The figures have been weighted and are representative of 16 to 25-year olds in the UK.

10%

Of respondents are not currently in education, employment or training (NEET). Of these, 58 per cent have been unemployed for more than six months.

9%

Of respondents achieved fewer than five GCSEs graded A* to C, or the new grading of 4 to 9, or Scottish Standards, levels 1 or 2.

23%

Of respondents received free school meals either throughout their time at school or some of the time. Young people from low-income backgrounds are indicated in this study as those who received free school meals.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Prince's Trust NatWest Youth Index shows that young people's overall happiness and confidence remains at an all-time low, as the pressures of a cost of living crisis and looming recession weigh heavily on their minds.

The Index, which measures how young people feel across different aspects of their lives, has flatlined at the lowest level seen in the fourteen-year history of the study, having stayed at a score of 68. The level of happiness young people feel in their work, education and training has dropped by one point, while happiness and confidence levels around money have returned to the lowest points on record.

Amidst these challenges, it is clear from the findings that many young people view having a job as the key to unlocking the stability they need to achieve their goals; and these goals range from good mental health and financial stability to being able to plan for a successful future.



Aspiring to stability

The research shows that for many young people, financial security and good mental health are among their biggest goals in life, and having a job can help them to create the stability they need to realise their aspirations.

- 64 per cent of young people say being financially secure is one of their biggest goals in life.
- More than a third (43 per cent) say having good mental health is one of their biggest goals.
- Having a family and owning their own home are also among the biggest life goals for 36 per cent and 34 per cent of young people respectively.
- More than two thirds of young people (71 per cent) say that having a job means they can plan for a successful future.
- More than half of young people (59 per cent) agree that having a job is, or would be, good for their mental health.
- 61 per cent of young people say that having a job gives them, or would give them, a sense of purpose in life.

The perfect storm

The research suggests that the public health and economic challenges of recent times are damaging young people's aspirations and confidence in the future. The trials of the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis have made it incredibly difficult for them to find a way forward, particularly for those who were already facing disadvantage and adversity.

- More than half of young people (53 per cent) think the cost of living crisis will have a worse impact on their life than the pandemic, with young people from poorer backgrounds more likely to think this is the case (60 per cent).
- Almost half of young people (47 per cent) are worried about the impact of a recession on their job security, rising to more than half for those from poorer backgrounds (52 per cent).
- A third of young people (34 per cent) said that worrying about money has made their mental health worse. This rises to 39 per cent among young people who are NEET and 45 per cent among those from poorer backgrounds.
- One in four young people (26 per cent) feel like they are going to fail in life, rising to 35 per cent among NEET young people and 36 per cent among those from poorer backgrounds.
- 64 per cent of young people say a good quality, stable job would improve their mental health.

Compromised by cost of living

The rising cost of living is of huge concern to young people right now, with many experiencing anxiety and worrying that they will never achieve their life ambitions as a result of the economic turmoil.

- 57 per cent of young people report the rising cost of living as the biggest worry for their future, with 44 per cent saying they feel anxious about this on a daily basis.
- One in four young people (24 per cent) feel ashamed about not being able to pay bills, rising to 31 per cent among NEET young people and 40 per cent among those from poorer backgrounds.
- 47 per cent of young people have lowered their expectations for their future because of the rising cost of living. Among young people from poorer backgrounds, this rises to 53 per cent.
- One in four young people (27 per cent) feel excluded from society due to a lack of money. This rises to 44 per cent among young people from poorer backgrounds and 37 per cent among those young people who are NEET.
- 47 per cent of young people worry they will never be financially stable. This rises to more than half for those from poorer backgrounds (57 per cent) and those who are NEET (53 per cent).

The pressures on young women

Young women's responses suggest they are more likely than young men to be feeling anxious about how a looming recession and the rising cost of living might impact their lives, both now and in the future.

- Significantly more young women than young men said the rising cost of living is one of the biggest worries for their future (64 per cent of young women versus 52 per cent of young men), with 50 per cent of young women saying this makes them feel anxious on a daily basis, compared to 39 per cent of young men.
- More than half of young women (51 per cent) are worried about the impact of a recession on their job security, compared to 44 per cent of young men.
- More young women than young men have lowered their aspirations due to the rising cost of living, with half of young women (52 per cent) saying they have lowered their expectations for their future goals compared to 43 per cent of young men.
- More than a third of young women (38 per cent) feel a lack of self confidence is one of the biggest barriers to achieving their career aspirations, compared to 31 per cent of young men.
- Two thirds of young women (68 per cent) are scared about the future, compared to 57 per cent of young men.

The way forward

Despite their worries about the future, this research shows that many young people are resolved to overcome any barriers they face. They also feel that having access to the right support will make all the difference in helping them to achieve this.

- More than two thirds of young people (70 per cent) feel determined to achieve their goals in life.
- 64 per cent of young people feel they can overcome the challenges they face but need practical support to build their confidence and skills.
- When asked what would help them to achieve their career ambitions, 29 per cent of young people said help with building confidence, 30 per cent said securing better qualifications, training or work experience and 26 per cent said guidance on what jobs are available to them.
- More than half of young people (59 per cent) would like to have a job that has a positive impact on society or their community.
- A fifth of young people (20 per cent) would like to have a job in health and social care.

70%

Feel determined to achieve their goals in life.

64%

Feel they can overcome the challenges they face but need practical support to build their confidence and skills.

59%

Would like to have a job that has a positive impact on society or their community.

20%

Would like to have a job in health and social care.



SHANNON'S STORY

"I've finally found the sense of direction I've been looking for. I thought I'd fallen too far behind to ever catch up, having been out of education and work for four years, but the opportunities I've had through The Prince's Trust helped me to develop my skills and start my career in social care."

Shannon faced a number of challenges in life when she first heard about The Prince's Trust. She is now thriving as an Enabling Support Worker after completing one of our Get Started in Health and Social Care programmes.

"I had been struggling with my mental health and isolated myself a lot. It got to the point where I didn't want to talk to anyone. My dad then fell very ill after a cancer diagnosis and I became his carer for around four years.

"After my dad got better, I started to look for jobs but, having been out of education and work for so long, I felt very lost. I applied for all sorts of jobs but never heard back from any of them, which was frustrating.

"When I heard about The Prince's Trust and the programme they were running about health and social care I liked the thought of becoming a Support Worker, so thought why not give it a try?"

"We had a few online sessions explaining everything about the job role, and then did a mock interview to prepare us for the real thing, which was really helpful. I got the job a few days later.

"Before the course, I was the quietest and shiest person you'd ever meet. My job has encouraged me to come out of my shell and interact with others, which has really boosted my confidence. I know I can make a living for myself now and that's really important to me."

"In my role, every day is different, and I find this variety exciting. If there's one thing I've learned, it is to persevere. There were many moments when I thought about giving up, but in the end, it was all worth it!"

YOUTH INDEX SCORES

Year	Work/ Employment		Home/ Accommodation		Community/ Local Area		Family Relationships		Relationships With Friends		Money		Qualifications/ Training		Physical Health		Emotional Health		Total Index Scores		Overall Index Scores
	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	☹️	★	
2009	71	71	76	76	69	70	79	81	77	79	56	67	79	79	69	74	67	73	71	74	73
2010	70	70	76	75	69	69	81	82	78	78	56	66	77	76	71	74	70	71	72	74	73
2011	68	67	76	73	68	68	78	78	75	75	57	65	76	75	68	72	67	68	70	71	71
2012	70	70	78	75	69	71	80	81	77	78	58	67	77	76	71	74	67	70	72	74	73
2013	69	67	76	73	68	69	79	79	74	74	58	66	76	74	69	73	66	72	70	72	71
2014	70	67	76	73	70	70	79	79	75	75	58	65	76	74	69	72	67	72	71	72	72
2015	69	68	75	72	69	68	79	80	73	73	58	65	77	74	67	70	64	70	70	71	72
2017	69	68	75	71	68	68	77	78	73	73	58	65	76	74	65	70	61	67	69	70	70
2018	67	67	75	71	69	68	77	78	72	72	56	64	76	73	63	68	57	65	68	69	69
2019	68	68	76	71	68	68	77	79	72	72	56	65	76	73	63	68	58	64	68	70	69
2020	68	68	75	70	67	66	75	76	72	71	58	64	76	74	63	68	58	64	68	69	68
2021	67	66	76	72	69	68	77	78	74	73	60	65	77	74	65	69	56	64	69	70	69
2022	68	66	74	69	67	66	74	75	71	71	60	65	75	72	63	68	57	64	67	68	68
2023	67	67	73	71	66	66	76	76	70	70	56	64	75	73	64	68	58	64	67	68	68

☹️ Happiness ★ Confidence

WELLBEING ANALYSIS

Happiness



The overall happiness young people feel in their lives has stagnated at the lowest level recorded by the Index since the study began. The score remains at 67 after dropping to this level last year and is five points off its highest peak of 72, which was last recorded in 2012.

The most significant fall this year was in the score relating to the happiness young people feel about how much money they have, which is down by four points, returning it to the lowest level ever recorded by the study.

Other happiness scores dropped by one point, including those which look at how young people feel about their work and education as well as their home and accommodation situation. Happiness in physical health increased by one point, happiness in emotional health increased by one point and happiness in family relationships saw an increase of two points.

Despite the increase in the score for emotional health to 58, it is the aspect with the second lowest happiness score and is still twelve points below the peak score of 70 that was recorded in 2010.

Confidence



Young people's overall confidence has increased by one point this year, from 68 to 69. This is still five points below the peak score of 74, which was last recorded in 2012.

The lowest scoring aspects of young people's confidence this year are money and emotional health, which both stand at 64, reflecting the pattern seen in the scores relating to happiness. The score for emotional health has now stayed at its lowest ever score of 64 since 2019.

The confidence young people feel in their relationships with friends has reached a new low, down one point this year with a score of 70 and significantly lower than the score of 79 which was recorded in 2009. Other areas of concern include the confidence young people feel in their community and local area and their physical health, both of which have remained at the lowest levels recorded by this study for the second year running.



PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCE COMPARISONS

The overall confidence and happiness young people feel differs according to their varying personal circumstances and identities. The data shows a correlation between circumstances such as being unemployed, from a low income background, or having a lack of qualifications, and having lower Index scores. There is also a correlation between certain identity factors and having lower Index scores, with this being true for young women as well as young people who are from a Minority Ethnic background.

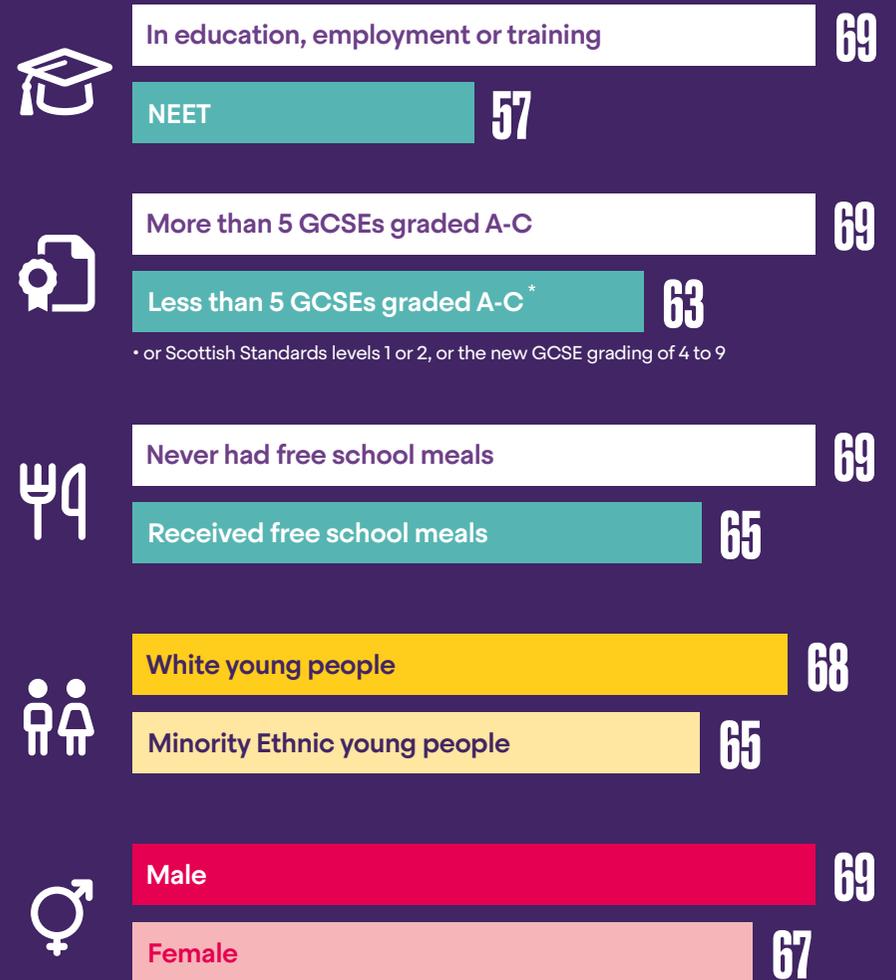
Of these factors, it is the young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) who have reported the lowest overall score this year. While this is usually the case, it is concerning to see that there is now a 12 point difference between those who are NEET and those who are in education, employment or training. The score for NEET young people has fallen by four points since last year, which is the most significant drop in recent years.

For those young people from low-income backgrounds (who are indicated in this study as those who received free school meals), there is a four point difference in their overall Index score compared to the score of those from more affluent backgrounds. Similarly, there is a six point difference between the overall score of those young people who did not achieve more than five GCSEs graded A to C (or Scottish Standards levels 1 or 2, or the new GCSE grading of 4 to 9) and those who did.

The findings also highlight a disparity between young people from Minority Ethnic backgrounds and White young people, with those from Minority Ethnic backgrounds scoring three points lower in their overall level of confidence and happiness.

There is also a difference between the scores for young women and young men, with young women scoring two points lower in their overall level of confidence and happiness.

The graphic below shows Index scores for differing personal circumstances and lived experiences.



Overall 2023 Index score: 68

ASPIRING TO STABILITY

Against a backdrop of economic uncertainty and looming recession, this year's research shows that for many young people, financial security and good mental health are among their top goals in life, followed by having a family and owning a home.

The findings also indicate that for most young people, having a job is pivotal to creating the necessary stability to build a bright future for themselves. Of those young people surveyed, more than two thirds of young people (70 per cent) state that having a job gives them, or would give them, the financial stability they need and 71 per cent agree that having a job means they can plan for a successful future.

Young people also reported benefits that being in work can have on their wellbeing, with 61 per cent stating that having a job gives them, or would give them, a sense of purpose in life and more than half (59 per cent) agreeing that having a job is good for their mental health.

“The thought of going into teaching would never have crossed my mind a year ago, when I'd lost all motivation. Now, I'm doing a teaching assistant apprenticeship and loving it. My life is back on track and the future isn't so daunting.”

– **Charlie, aspiring teacher.**

YOUNG PEOPLE'S BIGGEST LIFE GOALS



Almost two thirds of young people (64 per cent) say being financially secure is one of their biggest goals in life.



More than a third of young people (43 per cent) say having good mental health is one of their biggest goals in life.



A third of young people (36 per cent) say having a family is one of their biggest goals in life.



One third of young people (34 per cent) say owning their own home is one of their biggest goals in life.



More than a quarter of young people (28 per cent) say that having a stable job is one of their biggest goals in life.



More than a quarter of young people (27 per cent) say that having a positive impact on society and their community is one of their biggest goals in life.

THE PERFECT STORM

While the pandemic caused disruption to young people's education and job prospects at a key developmental time in their lives, the cost of living crisis and imminent recession now bring additional hardships that are weighing heavily on young minds.

The research shows that many young people are worried about the impact these factors will have on their lives. Those from poorer backgrounds are even more concerned about what the future holds for them.

More than half of young people (53 per cent) think the cost of living crisis will have a worse impact on their life than the pandemic, with young people from poorer backgrounds more likely to think this is the case (60 per cent).

A third of young people report the coming recession as one of their biggest worries for the future, while one in five (21 per cent) view not being able to find a job as one of their top concerns. Job

security is on their minds, with 47 per cent of all young people feeling worried about the impact of the recession on their job security and this rising to more than half among those from poorer backgrounds (52 per cent). Three in ten of all young people (30 per cent) worry about losing their job in a recession, with this rising to 39 per cent of those from poorer backgrounds.

A troubled state of mind

The findings suggest that these pressures are having a knock on effect on young people's mental health. A third of young people (34 per cent) say that worrying about money has made their mental health worse, rising to 39 per cent among those who are NEET and 45 per cent among those from poorer backgrounds.

Worryingly, one in four young people (26 per cent) feel they are going to fail in life, rising to 35 per cent among NEET young people and 36 per cent among those from poorer backgrounds.

63%

Of young people say they are scared for their future.

56%

Of young people say they always or often feel anxious.

62%

Of young people say they always or often feel stressed.



DWAYNE'S STORY

"My life has a lot more structure now, as I have a job that enables me to develop. After working on zero hour contracts, I really needed that stability and it's made a huge difference – I can finally start planning for my future."

Dwayne is now enjoying his role as a crewman, a job he didn't know existed until he completed The Prince's Trust Get into Events programme, run in partnership with Crewsaders. Dwayne's new role involves building sets and stages for events across the West Midlands and beyond.

"The programme was extraordinary, no other word can describe it! There were hands on activities that showed us what the role involved, as well as support to build our confidence and knowledge of the events sector.

"I was in a zero contracted job prior to getting this role, with no progression or steady shifts, so was never sure what I would earn from month to month. I needed something that was consistent, so I could plan for my future.

"I was also looking for a job that would stimulate me, something a bit different and which had prospects. Working in events isn't something I'd ever considered – The Prince's Trust and Crewsader's programme introduced me to a whole new sector and opportunity."

"There are so many aspects of this job that I enjoy. I've always had a fascination with what goes on behind the scenes at events and what makes a concert or festival happen. The role is also quite physical, which I like.

"So far, I've worked on the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, installing stages and lighting rigs across the many sites, plus a few concerts too. I'm really enjoying the job and as a result I've introduced a few friends who are now working for Crewsaders too.

"I would encourage everyone to consider this sector and programmes with The Prince's Trust. Their staff offer real support and encouragement, while also building your confidence. Thanks to The Prince's Trust, I think this role is the start of something special."

COMPROMISED BY COST OF LIVING

The rising cost of living is making young people feel fearful, despondent and disenfranchised.

More than half of young people (57 per cent) report the rising cost of living as being one of the biggest worries for their future, with 44 per cent saying they feel anxious about this on a daily basis.

Furthermore, 47 per cent of young people worry that they will never be financially stable. For those young people from poorer backgrounds and those who are NEET, this rises to 57 per cent and 53 per cent respectively.

Ultimately, this could be causing many young people to feel that their life ambitions are out of reach. The findings show that 62 per cent of young people worry they will never be able to afford to buy their own home, and 45 per cent worry they will never earn enough to support a family.



24%

One in four young people (24 per cent) feel ashamed about not being able to pay bills, rising to 40 per cent among young people from poorer backgrounds and 31 per cent among NEET young people.



47%

Almost half (47 per cent) of young people have lowered their expectations for their future because of the rising cost of living. Among young people from poorer backgrounds, this rises to 53 per cent.



27%

One in four young people (27 per cent) feel excluded from society due to a lack of money. This rises to 44 per cent among young people from poorer backgrounds and 37 per cent among those young people who are NEET.



AQIBUR'S STORY

“All I needed was an opportunity to show my potential – for me, that was the difference between being in and out of work, relying on Universal Credit, and where I am now.

“Looking back at my progress, I am proud of myself – I’ve overcome a lot of challenges and have a job with good career prospects. Now, I am focusing on keeping a clear mind and striving towards my goals.”

From the age of 16, Aqibur worked on and off in different roles to help make ends meet. Knowing he had more to offer, he turned to The Prince’s Trust to pursue a career in tech. After completing a placement in the IT department at JD Sports, he is now thriving in a permanent role.

“I dipped in and out of employment and I also relied on Universal Credit. During school I juggled waiting jobs and, after I graduated college in 2018, I got into the warehouse industry.

“After a while, I was in a really dark place mentally as the wage and working conditions were bad, and I felt like I amounted to nothing. December 2021 was my breaking point – I’d had enough, and I knew I had a lot more potential.

“The Prince’s Trust Kickstart placement couldn’t have come at a better time; it gave me the direction I needed in life and put me on the right career path.

“I began my journey as an Apprentice IT Operations Staging and Configuring Analyst for JD Sports in February 2022 and also applied for a BSc Cyber Security course with The Open University during this time.

“I gave it my all during my placement – I came in early and did extra work. It paid off, as I was offered a permanent role. I can see a way forward now and getting this job has also meant I’ve been able to support myself during the tricky economic situation we’re facing.”

PRESSURES ON YOUNG WOMEN

This year's Youth Index suggests that concerns about the rising cost of living and approaching recession are having a greater negative impact on young women than young men. Two thirds of young women (68 per cent) said they are scared about the future, compared to 57 per cent of young men.

The research indicates that young women are more likely to report the rising cost of living as one of the biggest worries for their future (64 per cent of young women versus 52 per cent of young men), with 50 per cent of young women saying this makes them feel anxious on a daily basis, compared to 39 per cent of young men.

They are also more worried about the impact of a recession on their job security (51 per cent of young women compared to 44 per cent of young men).

Worryingly, this is having a knock on effect on how young women think about their life goals, with 52 per cent of young women saying they have lowered their aspirations due to the rising cost of living compared to 43 per cent of young men.

“ I am no longer sitting at home doing nothing; I am getting out of bed and doing things proactively towards one day working as a paramedic, social worker or police officer. Spending time building my confidence and skills with The Prince's Trust helped me to break down the barriers that had been holding me back.”

- **Grace, student of health and social care.**



Sentiments expressed by young women, compared to young men:

Statement	Young Women	Young Men
Help with building confidence would support me to achieve my career ambitions	34%	24%
Mental health is one of the biggest barriers to achieving my career aspirations	28%	18%
I can overcome the challenges I face, but need practical support to fulfil my potential	66%	59%
Having a job gives me a sense of purpose in life	65%	58%



HOLLY'S STORY

"If you'd told me this time last year that I'd be working at the hospital in a job I love, I wouldn't have believed you – poor mental health and low self-confidence held me back for so long. I've achieved so much since then thanks to The Prince's Trust and my brilliant colleagues. Their belief in me helped me to believe in myself."

Holly now works as a Hospital Porter and a Healthcare Assistant at the Sunderland Royal Hospital. But before she secured her employment with the help of The Prince's Trust, she hadn't worked for five years because of her struggles with mental health.

"I've suffered from anxiety and depression from a very young age. I'd only just gotten used to going out to public places and visiting friends and family when we went into lockdown, and I fell back into my old ways. I cut myself off from my friends and family and was stuck between the same four walls day in and day out, feeling trapped, lonely, and helpless.

"One day, I came across an advert for a The Prince's Trust healthcare programme. I've always wanted to work for the NHS, but my mental health prevented it. I pushed myself out of my comfort zone and gave the course a go.

"I spent a week on video calls with The Prince's Trust gaining new skills, writing a CV, applying for jobs and working on my confidence. It really helped my mental health having something to do every day, and The Trust's youth support workers were friendly and understanding.

"Shortly after this, I had two job interviews with the NHS and started working as a Hospital Porter. Recently, I have also been successful in getting a job as a Healthcare Assistant, which I am over the moon about!

"I love my job and my work colleagues have made me feel so welcome. If it wasn't for their support, I probably wouldn't have had the confidence to stay after the first week. I now have a new lease on life, and I can't wait to see where my journey will take me."

THE WAY FORWARD

Although young people are facing a complex and sustained range of challenges, the findings of this research are encouraging when it comes to looking at their attitudes to overcoming barriers and their desire to make a positive impact, both for themselves and for their communities.

More than two thirds of young people (70 per cent) feel determined to achieve their goals in life. The findings suggest that having a job is crucial to realising success, with two thirds of young people (67 per cent) saying that having a job will help them to get through the cost of living crisis.

More than half of young people (59 per cent) said they would like to have a job that has a positive impact on society or their community, and a fifth of young people (20 per cent) would like to have a job in health and social care.

While 64 per cent feel they can overcome the challenges they face, they also feel they need practical support to help build their confidence and skills. The following graphic illustrates what support young people feel would help them with achieving their career ambitions:

Young people's responses when asked what support would help with achieving their career ambitions:





“ It feels good to have a job I can be proud of after being unemployed for a long time, and with an employer that is so supportive of my additional needs. I can see opportunities to progress in my role and I feel so much more in control of my future now.”

– **Bineet, store assistant at TK Maxx.**

ABOUT THE TRUST

The Prince's Trust believes that every young person should have the chance to succeed, no matter what their background or the challenges they are facing. We help those from disadvantaged communities and those facing the greatest adversity by supporting them to build the confidence and skills to live, learn and earn.

The courses offered by The Trust help young people aged 11-30 to develop essential life skills, get ready for work and access job opportunities. We support them to find work because having a job or running a business can lead to a more stable, fulfilling life.

Since The Trust was founded by His Majesty The King in 1976, when he was HRH The Prince of Wales, we have helped more than a million young people across the UK, and three in four of those we supported over the last five years have moved into work, education or training.

We are committed to enabling even more young people to create a better future for themselves. By helping young people today, the benefits for them, their communities and the wider economy will be felt for years to come.

Further information about The Prince's Trust is available at princes-trust.org.uk or on 0800 842 842.

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