



The Man Box:

A study on being a young man in Australia

Fact sheet

Life Satisfaction, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Young men in Australia report significant challenges with their mental health and wellbeing.

Across the entire sample of all young men responding to the survey, we saw a very high percentage reporting 'little interest or pleasure in doing things' and 'feeling down depressed or hopeless' – indicators associated with poor mental health outcomes. 33 per cent of all survey respondents reported having thoughts about suicide in the past two weeks.

Those who endorse the rules of the Man Box are more likely than other men to have poor mental health, including having little interest in things and having thoughts of suicide.

Percentage of respondents who report experience at some point in the last two weeks

	Man Box	Little interest or pleasure in doing things	Feeling down depressed or hopeless	Having thoughts of suicide
Australia	In	83%*	72%	44%*
	Out	77%*	69%	22%*
US	In	74%*	64%	40%*
	Out	63%*	61%	17%*
UK	In	82%*	74%*	55%*
	Out	70%*	63%*	20%*
Mexico	In	68%	50%	19%*
	Out	67%	50%	13%*

* represent statistically significant relationships at $p < .05$

"Men are just as emotional but don't show it as much."

"Push them (emotions) down."

"It's not okay to show weakness (as a man) – if you present yourself as a weaker more emotional person you suddenly become less desirable or less stable (but) if you're a woman it's okay."

– Responses from focus group participants

Looking at young men's help seeking when they are sad or depressed, the most common sources of support were family, close relationships and peers, as opposed to online or professional support.

When you feel sad or depressed, who are the first few people you seek help from?

