



YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

A report for the Health Foundation's
Young People's Future Health Inquiry

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The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK. Their aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality health care that can be equitably accessed. From giving grants to those working at the front line to carrying out research and policy analysis, they shine a light on how to make successful change happen. The Health Foundation use what they know works on the ground to inform effective policymaking and vice versa. They believe good health and health care are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what they learn, collaborating with others and building people's skills and knowledge, they aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

The Young people's future health inquiry

This report is part of the Young people's future health inquiry which is funded by the Health Foundation. The inquiry is a first-of-its-kind research and engagement project that set out to consider how the experiences of young people today are likely to shape their future health outcomes. This report forms part of a wider programme of policy research in the action phase of the inquiry. The research is led by IES across the four UK nations and is focused on understanding how to improve access to good youth employment and amplifying the voices of young people in research and policy-influencing.

Inclusive language

The terminology used to define ethnicity continues to evolve, and greater awareness has arisen about gender, cognitive differences as well as of disability. IES seeks to be a learning organisation; as such we are adapting our practice in line with these shifts. We aim to be specific when referring to each individual's ethnicity and use their own self-descriptor wherever possible. Where this is not feasible, we are aligned with Race Disparity Unit (RDU) which uses the term 'ethnic minorities' to refer to all ethnic groups except white British. RDU does not use the terms BAME (black, Asian, and minority ethnic) or BME (black and minority ethnic) as these terms emphasise certain ethnic groups and exclude others. It also recommends not capitalising ethnic groups, (such as 'black' or 'white') unless that group's name includes a geographic place. More broadly, we understand that while individuals may have impairments it is society that disables them, hence we refer to disabled people. Not all people identify with male or female and we reflect their self-descriptions in our work and use the term non-binary should abbreviation be necessary. We value neurodiversity. Where possible we always use people's self-descriptors rather than impose categories upon them.

Acknowledgements

The author is indebted to IES colleagues Beatrice Rosolin, who supported the development of the research, and Becci Newton, who supported both the development and review of this work, for their time, feedback and expert input. This project has also greatly benefitted from the expertise of IES colleagues Sally Wilson and Zofia Bajorek, who provided their time and expertise generously. The author is also grateful to IES colleague Sara Butcher who was responsible for the set up and monitoring of the survey for the research. Thanks goes to IES colleagues Steve O'Rourke and Michaela Scowen for their time and input in supporting with the review and publication process. Thanks also goes to Dan Smith, www.DanSmithGraphic.Design, who created the design for this report, and to YouthSight who supported the recruitment of research participants. This work would have not happened without the involvement of the young people who took part in the research – thanks go to them for their time and insight. Finally, thank you to the Health Foundation for funding this research and continuing our learning and understanding of youth employment and quality of work.

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Executive summary

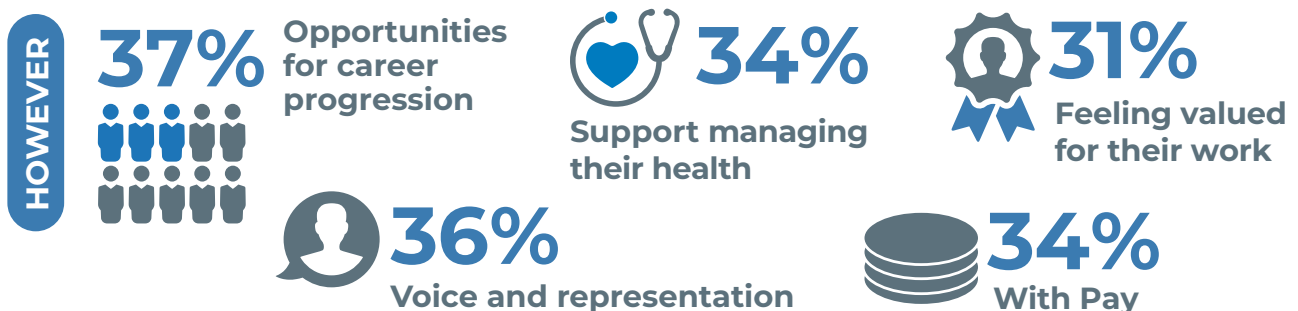
Young people across the UK have been facing increasing challenges over recent years which have impacted their health and wellbeing. The combined impact of the pandemic, cost of living rises, and decreasing support for young people have exacerbated pre-existing concerning trends in young people's mental health. Young people are struggling to make transitions to the labour market and, for those who do, work may not be having the positive impact on their wellbeing that supports them to thrive. These challenges raise concerns about the longer-term impact on young people's future health, and wider life outcomes, as work is a key social determinant of health. The research presented in this report aims to shed light on the experience young people in work when it comes to mental health, to understand what challenges young workers might be facing and what action is needed, by policy, employers, and wider support networks, to address these.

Key Findings

Young people are satisfied with most aspects of their work, but a notable minority report dissatisfaction around key aspects which impact on their health and wellbeing and rates are higher among disadvantaged groups. Young people are generally satisfied with the quality of their work (70% average across all factors). However, over three in ten respondents in our survey reported being dissatisfied with opportunities for career progression (37%), voice and representation (36%), pay (34%), feeling valued for their work (31%), and receiving support to manage their health (30%). Dissatisfaction was higher among disadvantaged groups, including those who have an impairment, disability or health condition and those who have a mental health condition. Similarly, young people who report either very poor or poor mental health also report greater dissatisfaction with support to manage their health.



RESPONDENTS IN OUR SURVEY REPORTED BEING DISSATISFIED WITH



DISSATISFACTION WAS HIGHER AMONG DISADVANTAGED GROUPS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAVE AN IMPAIRMENT, DISABILITY OR HEALTH CONDITION AND THOSE WHO HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.

Satisfaction with individual aspects of job quality does not translate into an overall positive impact on health and wellbeing. Just over half of young people feel satisfied at work (51%), and over one-third feel supported (35%) or enthusiastic (35%). Nonetheless, over one-quarter report feeling exhausted (27%).




A large minority of young people in the survey experience a mental health condition or challenge, and this rate increases among those who are more likely to face disadvantage in the workplace. Over two-fifths of young people in the survey either had a pre-existing mental health condition or challenge when recruited to their job (37%) or started experiencing one after joining (7%). Female respondents are more likely to have a mental health condition or challenge compared to male respondents, as are disabled respondents compared to their non-disabled peers. Those currently experiencing very poor or poor mental health are three times as likely to have a pre-existing condition compared to those who report good or very good mental health.

37%  **OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SURVEY REPORTED A PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR CHALLENGE**

7% **AFTER JOINING A WORKPLACE**

 **FEMALE RESPONDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR CHALLENGE COMPARED TO MALE RESPONDENTS**

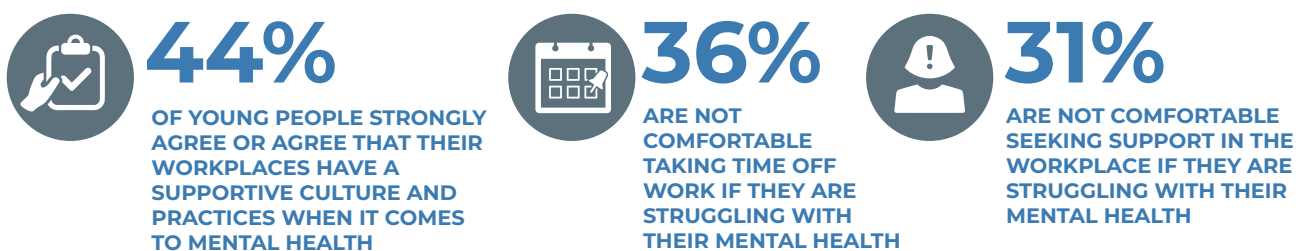
 **DISABLED RESPONDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR CHALLENGE COMPARED TO NON-DISABLED PEERS**

 **Those currently experiencing very poor or poor mental health are three times as likely to have a pre-existing condition compared to those who report good or very good mental health.**

Two in five young people with a mental health condition or challenge do not disclose this in the workplace, as they feel uncomfortable doing so. Over two-fifths (46%) of young people who have a mental health condition do not disclose this to their employer. Female respondents are much less likely to disclose compared to male peers. On the other hand, disabled young people are more likely to disclose their mental health conditions or challenges compared to non-disabled peers. Young people who report very good mental health are also more likely to disclose compared to those who report very poor mental health. Over two-fifths (45%) of young people who do not disclose their mental health condition or challenge report it is because they feel uncomfortable disclosing, with the second most common reason is fearing the consequences of disclosure in their work (17%). Female respondents and those from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to feel this way. Among those who disclose their mental health condition or challenge to their employer, three in ten feel very supported (30%) and around two in five feel a little supported (43%).



A minority of young people say their workplace has a supportive culture when it comes to mental health, and the rate is lower among young people who have a mental health condition and/or struggle with their current mental health. Around two-fifths (44%) of young people strongly agree or agree that their workplaces have a supportive culture and practices when it comes to mental health. Around one-third are not comfortable either taking time off work (36%) or seeking support in the workplace (31%) if they are struggling with their mental health. This is particularly the case where young people identify as having a mental health condition. There is a 30 percentage point gap on average between those who report having good mental health and those with poor mental health across all statements around workplace culture and practices.



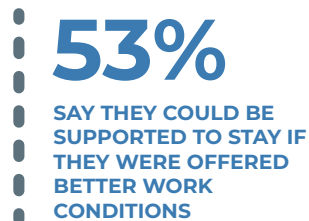
There is a 30 percentage point gap on average between those who report having good mental health and those with poor mental health across all statements around workplace culture and practices.

Flexible working and signposting to mental health resources are the most common types of workplace support available to young people, but many young people are not aware of any support offered at their work. The most common forms of workplace support that young people access are flexible working options (61%) and signposting to mental health information (50%). A fifth of respondents (21%) say their workplace has no mental health support provision in place. When asked about specific forms of support, many young people do not know if their workplace provides them, with around one-third to two-fifths saying they do not know about a range of support options.

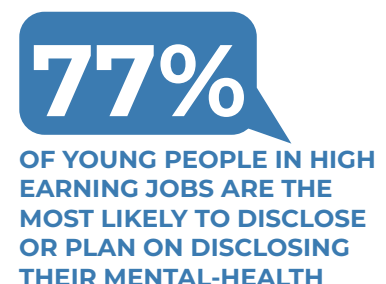
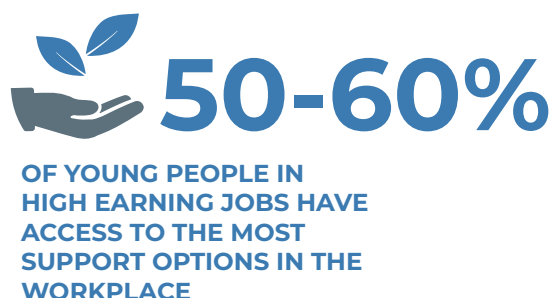
Young people's mental health in the workplace



Three in ten young people left or plan to leave their job as a result of its impact on mental health, and say that better work conditions, a better relationship with their manager, and better job design would support them to stay in work. Three in ten young people in the survey had either left a previous job or are planning on leaving their current job as a result of its impact on their mental health (19% and 11% respectively). Rates are higher among those who have an impairment, disability or health condition and among those who specifically have a mental health condition. Of those who say they had left or were planning to leave their job, the majority (53%) say they could be supported to stay if they were offered better work conditions, and over two-fifths say they would stay if offered better support from their manager (48%), and better workload management and/or job design (45%).



There are notable variations among young people in their experiences depending on the type of work they do and how much they earn. Across the majority of industries between a quarter and two-fifths of respondents' report experiencing very poor or poor mental health. Over half, in four out of five of the main industries respondents work in (education, healthcare, hospitality, retail), do not disclose their mental health. When it comes to earnings, young people in high-earning jobs are the most likely to disclose or plan on disclosing their mental health (77%). Similarly, notable variations emerge in how well-informed young people feel about the mental health support in the workplace, with rates of strong agreement or agreement progressively decreasing from high-paying to above/below median and low-paying roles. Young people in high-paying jobs also have access to the most support options, with the majority (ranging from 50 to 60%) saying their workplace provides most types of support. At the other end of the spectrum, only around a quarter of young people in low-paying jobs say they have access to a wider range of workplace support options (26% on average).



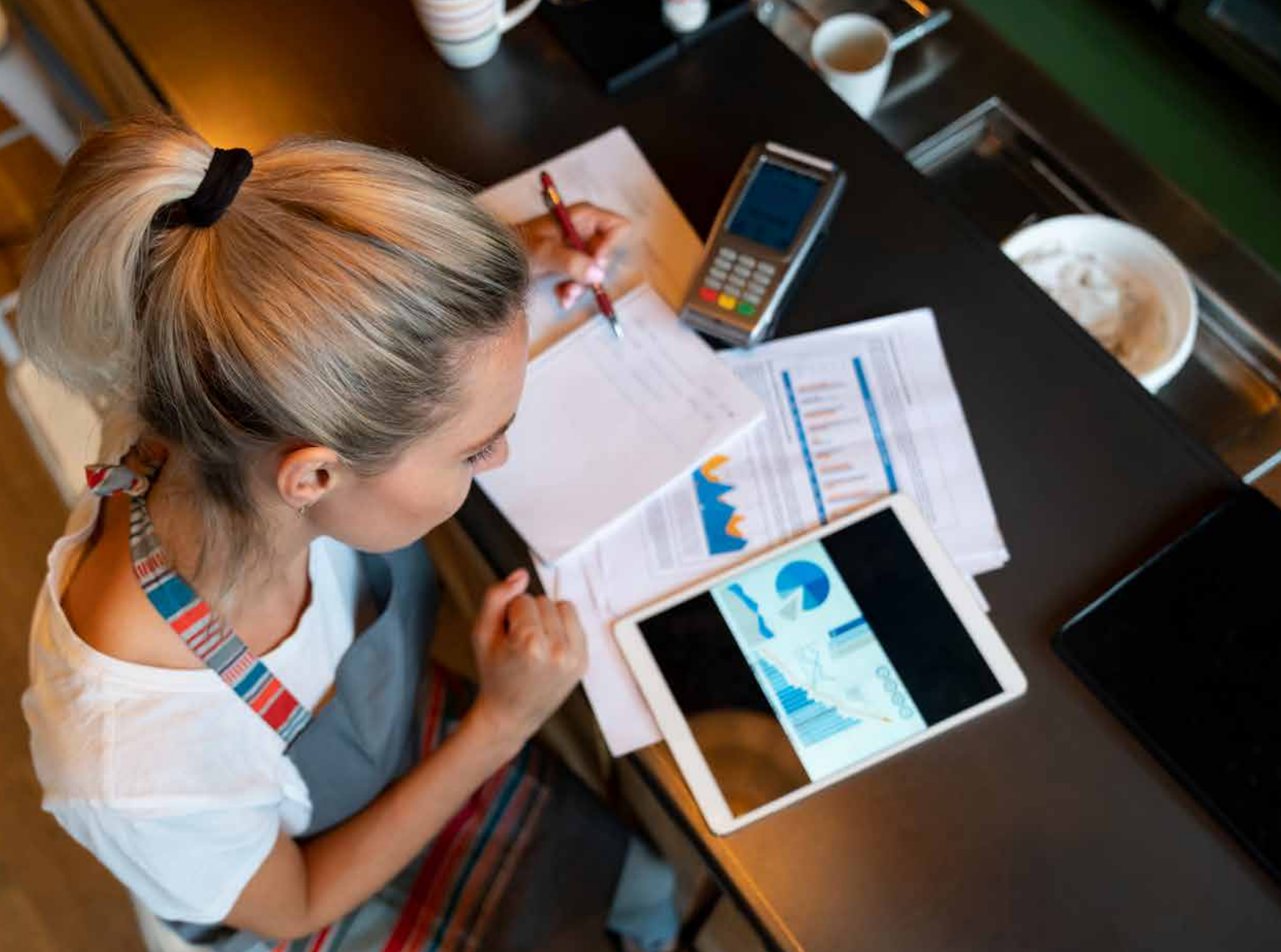


Recommendations

This research aimed to understand the experience of young people who are currently in employment when it comes to mental health and specifically around mental health in the workplace. It deliberately recruited higher numbers of young people who are known to face disadvantage generally and in work to understand the effects on their health. In turn, this provides insights into the challenges young workers face, the impact on their experience at work, and what type and quality of support they have access to in the workplace. The research highlighted that struggles with mental health are widespread among young people in employment, and particularly among young workers who traditionally face disadvantage in the workplace, including women, disabled young people, and those who already struggle with a mental health condition or challenge. The conclusions from the research highlight six key areas of focus for government, employers, education and support and advocacy organisations to take action as follows:

- **Developing a national strategy and guidelines to support employees' mental health in the workplace, with a focus on young people.** Central government should address the mental health crisis among young people, including young workers, as a matter of priority. This should involve developing an evidence-based national strategy and set of guidelines, outlining specific goals and actions for promoting mental health among employees. This should include a focus on challenges encountered specifically by young workers and by groups who traditionally face disadvantage in the workplace, including women, those with a health condition or disability, and those who already struggle with a mental health condition or challenge. This can also support in advocating for changes in the way work is designed and managed, with a particular focus on improving job design. There should also be specific attention placed on sectors and jobs that traditionally provide lower-quality opportunities, to identify tailored solution which can help address disparities that young people in these sectors face when it comes to their mental health and the support they can access.
- **Investing in health and wellbeing support.** Central government should support employers with limited resources to invest in providing a better and wider range of health and wellbeing support in the workplace. This can be done through funding for SMEs, to support mental health training for managers, and improve access to services such as occupational health and employee assistance programmes. This can also be supported by improving links between workplaces and health services, by equipping employers with information and resources to signpost employees to further support. In particular, government should collaborate with mental health support and advocacy bodies to create a central resource hub for employers with key resources (eg toolkits, best practice, case studies) for supporting employee mental health in the workplace.
- **Establishing partnerships with local employers, education, and youth support organisations.** Local government can play a key role in working with the local community of mental health professionals, employers, educators, and youth support organisations to create integrated approaches to supporting young people's mental health at work locally, promoting a pipeline for sustained support from education to work. This can be done by supporting the development of local networks to share information and best practices and promote improved links between education, community-based organisations and employers, to better support young people's transitions. It can also be done through local awareness and information campaigns and events, both to improve knowledge and reduce stigma around mental health at work and providing educational resources for employers and young people.

- **Fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.** Employers should take action to promote open dialogue and reduce stigma around mental health in the workplace, by fostering work environments where young people feel safe and comfortable discussing mental health. This should start at the recruitment stage and continue at later stages, by establishing clear procedures for employees to disclose around their mental health while ensuring confidentiality. A key element to this is providing adequate training to managers, to respond appropriately and provide necessary accommodations. This includes ways to have supportive and sensitive conversations around mental health, identify signs of distress, and develop strategies tailored to each employee's needs. Employers should also recognise and address disparities faced by different groups of young workers, such as women, ethnic minorities and those who have a health condition or disability and take proactive steps to provide additional support to mitigate these inequalities.
- **Improving job quality and satisfaction.** Employers should take further measures to improve young people's satisfaction and wellbeing at work. This includes involving young employees in decision-making processes, including the development of mental health support measures. They should address wider issues around job quality, including providing opportunities for skill development and growth, and ensuring the work young people do feels both meaningful and manageable. Importantly, employers need to ensure young employees receive wages and benefits which fairly recognise their value and labour, including paying the Real Living Wage as a minimum. Further measures could include implementing recognition programs to acknowledge and appreciate young employees' achievements and contributions to the organisation, and actively promoting a healthy work-life balance by discouraging long working hours, encouraging breaks, and respecting personal time outside of work.
- **Empowering young workers around their mental health.** Policy, education, youth support organisations, and employers should collaborate to ensure young employees are empowered when it comes to their mental health at work. This includes raising awareness among young people around their rights and right to support when it comes to mental health and mental health at work. This should happen before they enter the workforce, through education at school, university, and wider support services they access at different stages. It also involves developing partnerships between policymakers, employers, trade unions, and mental health organisations to jointly develop and implement initiatives and mechanisms which amplify young workers' voice on mental health. It requires employers to improve visibility and awareness of available resources, by regularly communicating about the full range of mental health support and resources available through work. Beyond this, it could include the creation of peer support networks or mentorship programs within the workplace, which can provide a safe space for young workers to share experiences, seek advice, and receive support from colleagues who have faced similar challenges.



INTRODUCTION





Introduction

Young people across the UK have been facing increasing challenges over recent years which have impacted their health and wellbeing. They have been among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, losing out on education, work, and social connections with negative impacts on their mental health, aspirations and prospects (Orlando, 2021) (L&W, 2021) (Wilson & Papoutsaki, 2021) (Youth Employment UK, 2021). Since then, young people have been among the groups most exposed to the impact of an unprecedented cost of living crisis (Centrepoin, 2022), with many worrying that the crisis will have a worse impact on their life and future prospects than the pandemic (The Prince's Trust, 2023). As these challenges have been unfolding, and policymakers have sought to fund new support to compensate (for example, Kickstart and Plan for Jobs, and additional tuition and hours in education), wider support important to mental health and wellbeing has been decreasing, with cuts in funding to youth services reaching £1 billion in the past decade (YMCA, 2022).

The combined impact of the pandemic, cost of living rises, and decreasing support for young people have exacerbated pre-existing concerning trends in young people's mental health. Young people are now experiencing a mental health emergency, with over one in five of those aged 17-24 likely to have a mental health disorder (NHS, 2022), and mental health challenges reported as one of the biggest barriers young people face around accessing and staying in work (Orlando, 2021) (Youth Employment UK, 2022). Alongside and aligned to these findings, the number of young people not engaged in education or employment is rising, driven by large falls in the number of young people participating in full-time education, and those exiting education finding it harder to get jobs (IES, 2023).

Young people are struggling to make transitions to the labour market and, for those who do, work may not be having the positive impact on their wellbeing that supports them to thrive. These challenges raise concerns about the longer-term impact on young people's future health, and wider life outcomes, since work is a key social determinant of health (Hagell, et al., 2018) (Papoutsaki, Byford, Wilson, & Newton, 2019). Furthermore, it raises important questions for employers and policymakers alike, in the face of ongoing labour market shortages and skills and recruitment challenges (CIPD, 2023), with implications for retention and the development of stronger talent pipelines. The research presented in this report aims to shed light on the experience young people in work when it comes to mental health, to understand what challenges young workers might be facing, the impact on their experience at work and decisions to stay in or leave their jobs.

This report is part of a three-year research project for the Health Foundation's Young People's Future Health Inquiry, focused on understanding how to develop effective approaches in policy and practice which will improve access to good quality work for young people across the four UK nations.

Methodolgy

With the support of the youth market research agency YouthSight, the research team recruited a sample of 2,000 young people aged 16-25 drawn from the four UK nations to take part in an online survey. All young people who took part were in some form of employment (full-time, part-time, self-employed or other) at the time of the survey. The survey was undertaken between December 2022 to February 2023.

It should be noted that the survey sample is not always representative of the wider demographics for young people. As with previous research led with young people as part of IES’s work for the Young People’s Future Health Inquiry, the research aims to provide a platform to amplify the voices and experiences of young people who are more likely to face marginalisation and disadvantage generally and at work, and who may be more exposed to experiencing a negative impact of work on health. This includes respondents who identify as female, as having an impairment, disability, or health condition, and/or those from minority ethnic backgrounds, among others. The research team therefore deliberately recruited a larger sample of young people from these groups. The sociodemographic breakdown for respondents is outlined in Table 1 below, while the health and employment profiles for young people in the research are included in Section 1 of this report.

Table 1: Sociodemographic breakdown of young people who responded to the survey.

Age		Gender		Ethnicity		Nation	
16-18	20%	Female (including transgender women)	61%	White ethnic group	68%	England	84%
19-21	37%	Male (including transgender man)	37%	Ethnic minority group	32%	Scotland	8%
21-25	43%	Non-binary	2%			Wales	5%
						N.Ireland	4%

Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Respondents to the survey answered 20 closed questions, including multiple choice and five-point Likert scale questions, asking them about their health and mental health, employment, work satisfaction, impact of work on health, workplace mental health support, and impact of mental health on their choice to stay in or leave work. Data from the survey was analysed descriptively and encompassed sub-group analysis using cross-tabulation of variables to identify trends (such as by gender, ethnicity, employment status, disability, mental health). Throughout this report, we highlight subgroup findings where notable trends and variances emerge. It should be noted that in reporting our findings we have not reported responses from young people identifying as non-binary and from young people working in industries with less than five per cent of respondents, as these samples are too small, and both do not allow for robust comparisons or conclusions and raise disclosure risks.



01

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROFILES

1 Young people's profiles

This chapter outlines the employment and health profiles of the young people who took part in the survey. On employment, this includes information on young people's employment status, number of jobs currently worked, organisation size and industry and gross earnings. On health, this covers information on young people identifying as having an impairment, disability, or health condition, those who identify as having a mental health condition, and young people's self-reported current mental health.

1.1 Employment

All young people in the survey were in employment, with over a third (38%) in full-time employment and over half (55%) in part-time employment. Small numbers were self-employed (3%) or were in other forms of employment (such as temporary work) (3%). The vast majority of respondents were employed in one job (86%) and a minority were employed in two jobs (12%). Two in five young people were working in a large organisation (40%), around one-fifth were in

Table 2: Employment status and number of current jobs

What is your current employment status?		How many jobs do you currently have?	
Part-time employment	55%	One	86%
Full-time employment	38%	Two	12%
Self-employed	3%	Three	1%
Other	3%	More than three	0%

Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

a medium organisation (22%), and the same number were in a small organisation (22%), while just over one in ten were employed at a micro organisation (11%).

Table 3: Size of the organisation worked in and gross earnings

What is the size of the organisation or business you work for?		Gross earnings	
Large (more than 250)	40%	Low	35%
Medium (50 to 249 employees)	22%	Below median	45%
Small (10 to 49 employees)	22%	Above median	14%
Micro (0 to 9 employees)	11%	High	7%
Don't know/ not sure	5%		

Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Earnings data was available for 1,551 respondents. We used the ONS classification of low, median and high earnings¹ to establish whether young people were earning low, below median², above median, or high wages. Over one third of respondents for whom data was available were in low-paying jobs (35%), over two-fifths were earning below the median wage (45%), over one in ten were earning above the median wage (14%), and a small minority were in a high-paying job (7%).

Young people's mental health in the workplace

Around two thirds of respondents (65%) were working in five key industries: retail (20%), hospitality (14%), education (12%), healthcare (10%), and accountancy (8%). All other industries had only a small minority of respondents working in them (between one and three per cent). Given the rate of respondents for all other industries is too small to draw meaningful findings and conclusions, in successive sections of this report we focus our analysis on the five major groups.

Table 4: Industry of work

What industry is your work in?	
Retail	20%
Hospitality and events management	14%
Education	12%
Healthcare	10%
Accountancy	8%
Other	5%
Business	4%
Charity and voluntary work	3%
Engineering and manufacturing	3%
Creative arts and design	2%
Leisure	2%
Information technology	2%
Public services and administration	2%
Transport and logistics	2%
Sales	2%
Marketing	2%
Science and pharmaceuticals	1%
Energy and utilities	1%
Law enforcement and security	1%
Social care	1%
Property and construction	1%
Environment and agriculture	1%
Media and internet	1%
Recruitment and HR	1%

Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

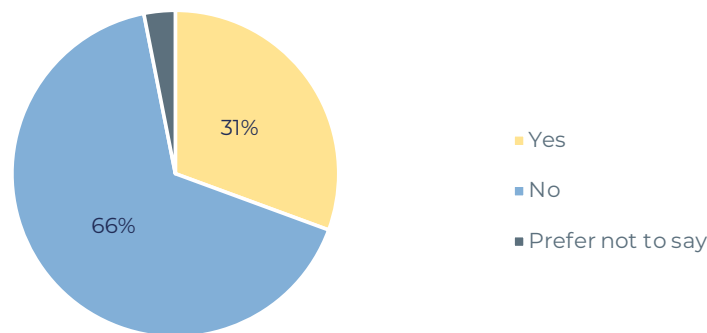
- 1 ONS, Low and high pay in the UK: 2022. The distribution of hourly earnings of high-paid and low-paid jobs and jobs paid below the National Minimum Wage.
- 2 Median hourly wage for all employees was £14.77 in 2022 (ONS, 2022)

1.2 Health and mental health

We asked young people in the survey whether they identified as having an impairment, disability or health condition, and separately, if they identified as having a mental health condition.

Figure 1: Young people identifying as having an impairment, disability or health condition.

Three in ten (31%) young people identified as having an impairment, disability or health condition



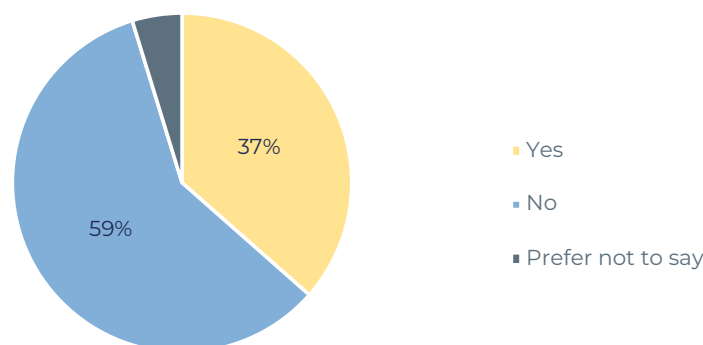
Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Around three in ten (31%) young people identified as having an impairment, disability or health condition, and a greater number (37%) identified as having a mental health condition.

When looking at respondents' characteristics, we found that those from white ethnic backgrounds were more likely to identify as having a mental health condition compared to peers from ethnic minority backgrounds (39% and 30%, respectively), and female respondents were more likely compared to men (41% and 27%). Of those who identified as having an impairment, disability or health condition, the vast majority (72%) reported also having a mental health condition, compared to one in five (20%) of those who did not. These findings are consistent with wider population studies, showing that the majority people with a mental health condition often tend to have at least one additional condition (Stafford, et al., 2018).

Figure 2: Young people identifying as having a mental health condition.

Over a third of young people (37%) identified as having a mental health condition



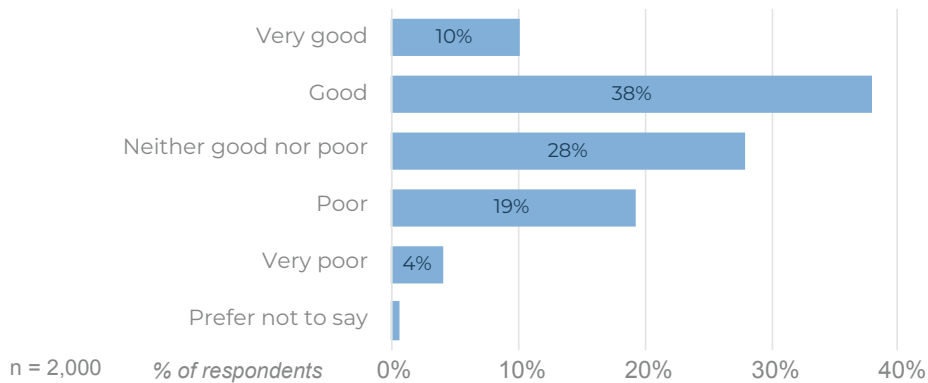
Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Young people's mental health in the workplace

We went on to ask young people how they would describe their current mental health and found that just under half (48%) said they were experiencing very good (10%) or good (38%) mental health. In contrast, over one in five (23%) reported experiencing poor or very poor (19% and 4% four per cent respectively) mental health, with over a fourth reporting having neither good nor poor mental health (28%).

Figure 3: Young people's current mental health

Just under half (48%) of young people report currently experiencing good or very good mental health

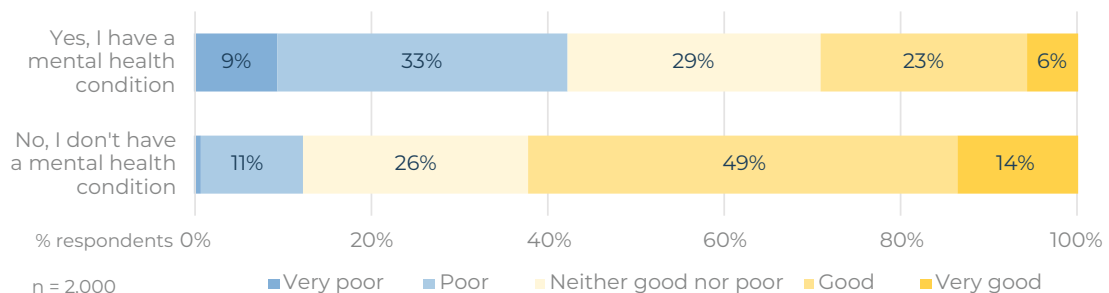


Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Variations emerged when looking at respondents' characteristics. Over one in four female respondents (26%) reported their mental health as being very poor or poor compared to under one in five (19%) of male respondents. The incidence of poor mental health was also higher among young people who identified as having a mental health condition, with two in five of these reporting very poor or poor mental health (42%), compared to just over one in ten (12%) of those who did not identify as having a mental health condition.

Figure 4: Young people's current mental health, by presence/absence of a mental health condition

Over two in five (42%) young people with a mental health condition report currently experiencing poor or very poor mental health



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Across the majority of industries young people worked in, between a quarter and two-fifths of respondents reported experiencing very poor or poor mental health. Exploring those industries where most respondents were employed, very poor or poor mental health was reported by three in ten young people working in hospitality (30%), around a quarter of those in retail (26%) and education (25%), and around a fifth of those in healthcare (22%).



02

QUALITY OF WORK



2 Quality of work

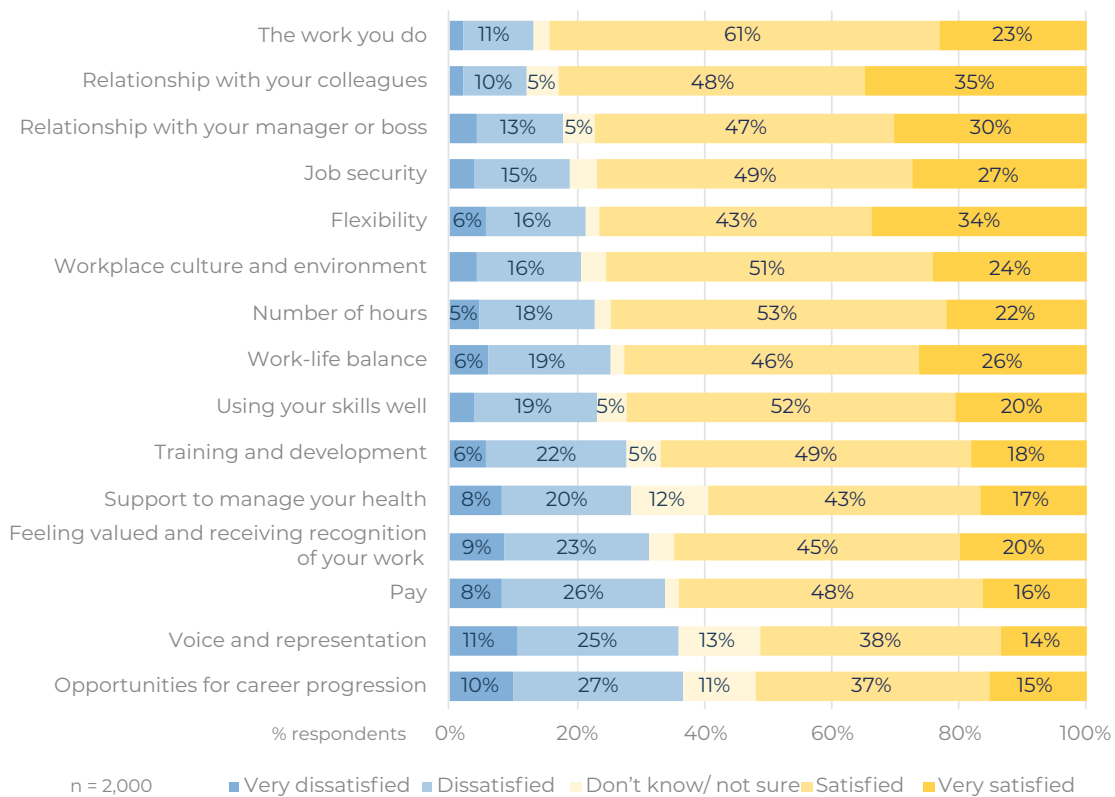
This chapter explores young people's views on the quality of their jobs, including how satisfied they are with different aspects of their work and workplace, and how they feel at work.

2.1 Work satisfaction

We asked young people in the survey how satisfied they felt with different aspects of the quality of their jobs³. The majority of respondents reported satisfaction across most quality of work factors, including the nature of the work, relationships with colleagues and managers, job security, flexibility, workplace environment, and work-life balance, among others. However, substantial numbers reported being very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with opportunities for career progression (37%), voice and representation (36%), pay (34%), feeling valued and receiving recognition for their work (31%), and receiving support to manage their health and wellbeing (30%).

Figure 5: Young people's satisfaction with their work

The majority of young people report satisfaction with most aspects of their jobs, but over a third report dissatisfaction around opportunities for career progression (37%), voice and representation (36%), and pay (34%)



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

³ For the assessment of 'good work' factors we drew on the 'CIPD Indicators of Job Quality' (2018) and the 'Good work: the Taylor review of modern working practices' (2017)

Young people's mental health in the workplace

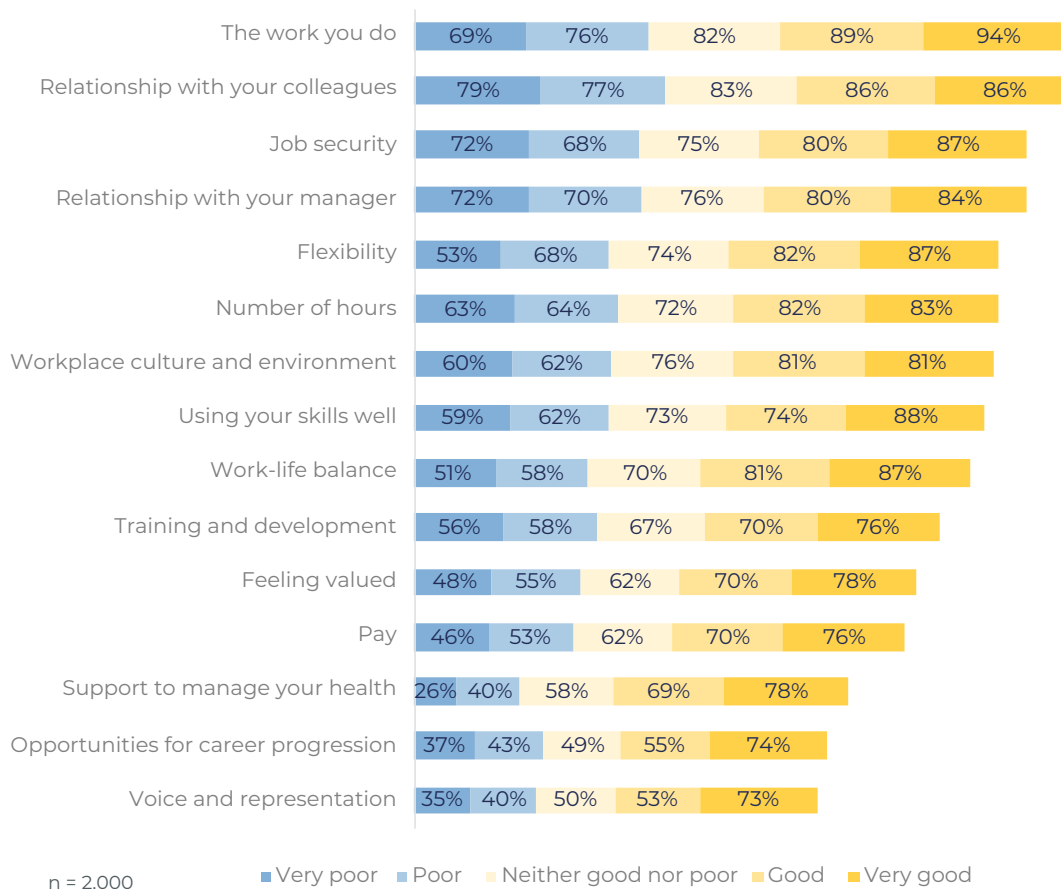
When looking at young people's characteristics, respondents who identified as having an impairment, **disability** or health condition reported lower levels of satisfaction, compared to their peers, on pay (56% vs 68%), work-life balance (67% vs 76%), and relationship with their manager (71% vs 80%).

Similarly those who identified as having a **mental health condition** reported lower levels of satisfaction, compared to their peers, about the work they do (78% vs 89%), the pay (56% and 70%), work-life balance (65% vs 78%), workplace culture (69% vs 79%), and support to manage their health (49% vs 66%).

In particular, variations emerged when looking at young people's satisfaction at work by their reported **current mental health**. Young people who reported having very poor or poor mental health were notably less likely to report satisfaction across all aspects of job quality compared to their peers who reported having good or very good mental health. This was the case, in particular, when it came to support to manage their health (33% on average for very poor and poor and 74% for good or very good) and work-life balance (54% vs 84%).

Figure 6: Young people being 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their work, by their reported mental health.

There are wide gaps in job satisfaction between young people reporting good and poor mental health, particularly around work-life balance and support to manage health



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Young people's mental health in the workplace

When looking at young people's **employment**, those working part-time reported lower levels of satisfaction, compared to those working full-time, on support for managing their health (56% vs 65%), opportunities for progression (45% vs 63%), and voice and representation (45% vs 59%). This might be in part explained by the nature of part-time work, which may make it harder for young people to feel as embedded in their workplaces as peers working full-time. However, there is also a cross-over between those in the survey working part-time and industries with high turnover and less investment in workforce retention (ONS, 2018). In contrast, there were only modest variations across the main **industries** respondents worked in, with the exception of support to manage health, with bigger variations between those working in accountancy (69%) and healthcare (62%), and those working in education (54%), retail (53%), and hospitality (46%).

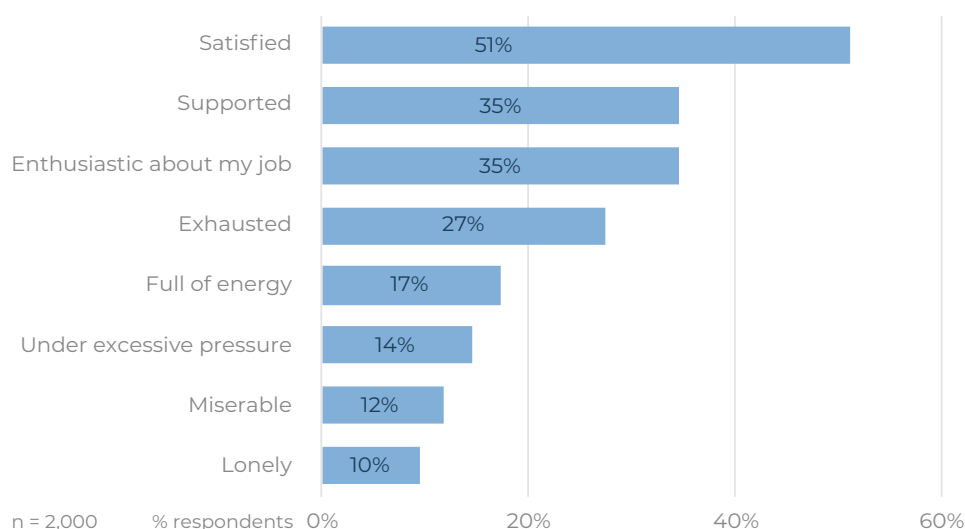
There tended to not be notable variation according to young people's **earnings** across many aspects of job satisfaction. However, and unsurprisingly, young people in low-paying and below median-paying jobs were less likely to say they were satisfied or very satisfied compared to peers in above median and high-paying jobs on pay (58% on average for low and below median and 73% for above median and high), voice and representation (48% vs 67%), and opportunities for career progression (46% vs 61%).

2.2 Impact of work on wellbeing

We asked young people how they felt at work, asking them to choose all relevant options from eight statements, ranging from feeling enthusiastic about their job to feeling under excessive pressure⁴. Just over half of respondents reported feeling satisfied at work (51%). Smaller numbers – slightly over one-third, reported feeling supported (35%), and the same proportion reported feeling enthusiastic about their job (35%). Both show only a minority of young people reported feeling supported and enthusiastic at work, while at the same time, more than one-quarter (27%) reported feeling exhausted, and more than one in ten said they felt under excessive pressure (14%), miserable (12%), or lonely (10%).

Figure 7: Young people's reported wellbeing at work

Just over half of young people feel satisfied at work (51%) - meaning 49% are not, around a third feel supported (35%) and enthusiastic (35%), and over a quarter feel exhausted (27%)



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

⁴ In developing this question we adapted the question included in the CIPD 'Health And Wellbeing At Work 2022' research

Young people's mental health in the workplace

When looking at these findings by young people's reported **satisfaction with job quality**, young people who tended to report they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied across most aspects of job quality, were much more likely to report they felt miserable. This included 33 per cent of those who were very dissatisfied on average, and 16 per cent of those dissatisfied, compared to five per cent of those satisfied and two per cent of those very satisfied on average. They were also more likely to report they felt exhausted, with 31 per cent of those who were very dissatisfied on average, 18 per cent of those dissatisfied, eight per cent of those satisfied, and five per cent of those very satisfied. On the other hand, young people who tended to report they were satisfied or very satisfied with most aspects of job quality, were much more likely to report they felt enthusiastic. This included 29 per cent of those who were very satisfied on average, 25 per cent of those satisfied, 16 per cent of those dissatisfied, and 10 per cent of those very dissatisfied.

When looking at young people's characteristics, respondents who identified as having an impairment, **disability** or health condition were twice as likely to report they were lonely (16%) compared to peers who did not identify as having a disability (9%), and were less likely to report they were satisfied at work (29%) compared to non-disabled peers (34%). A similar trend was highlighted for young people who identified as having a **mental health condition** specifically, who were more likely to report they felt lonely (15%), compared to peers without a mental health condition (8%), and were less likely to report they felt satisfied at work (25%) compared to peers (34%).

Further variations emerged when looking at the impact of work on young people's wellbeing by their reported **current mental health**. Young people who reported having very poor or poor mental health at the time of the survey were up to three times as likely compared to their peers who reported good or very good mental health, to say they felt exhausted (23% on average for very poor and poor, and 8% for good and very good), lonely (17% vs 6%), and under excessive pressure (19% vs 6%).



03 MENTAL HEALTH
AT WORK



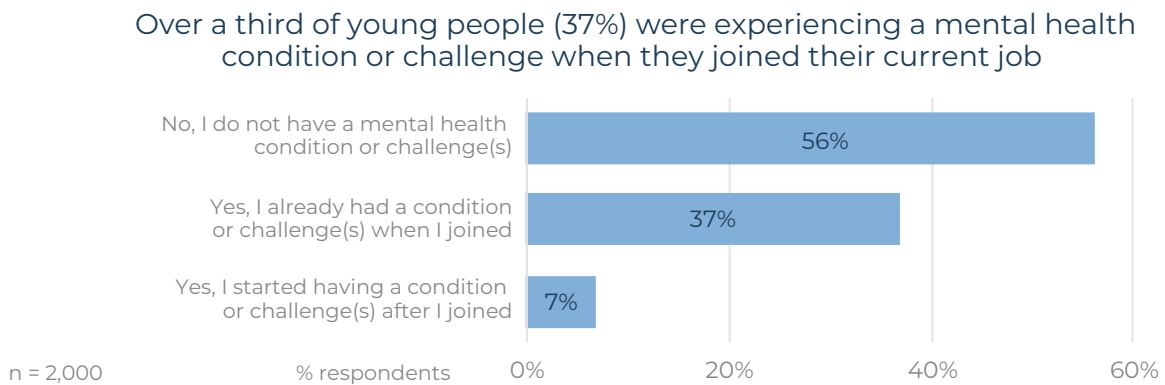
3 Mental health at work

This chapter explores the interaction of young people's mental health and work, exploring disclosure practices, workplace culture and support provision, and the impact of mental health on retention.

3.1 Young people's mental health and work

We asked young people whether they were experiencing a mental health condition or challenge when or after they joined their current job. The majority of young people (56%) said they were not, but 37 per cent said they did already have a condition or challenge on starting their job, and seven per cent said they had started experiencing challenges after joining their job.

Figure 8: Presence of a mental health condition or challenges when or after joining work.



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

When looking at respondents' **gender**, female respondents were more likely to say they had a pre-existing condition or challenge (41%) compared to male respondents (28%). Similarly, when it came to **ethnicity**, respondents from white ethnic backgrounds were more likely to say they had a pre-existing condition or challenge (40%) compared to peers from minority ethnic backgrounds (30%). The vast majority of those who identified as having an impairment, **disability** or health condition reported having a pre-existing mental health condition or challenge (71%), compared to a notable minority of those who did not (20%).

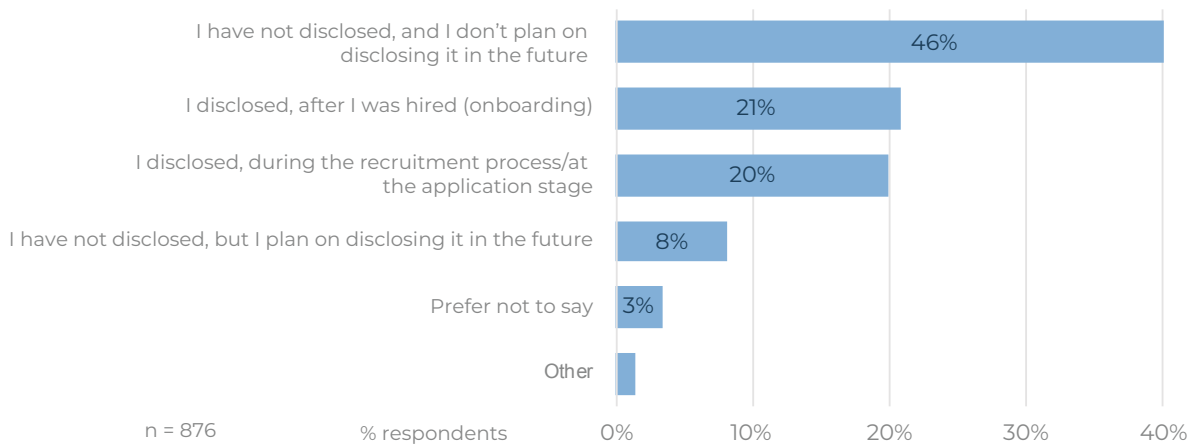
Around two thirds of those who reported their **current mental health** to be poor (62%) or very poor (69%) had a pre-existing condition, compared to around a fourth of those who reported it to be good (24%) or very good (22%). Around one in ten (11%) of those who reported very poor mental health started having a condition after they joined their current job. When looking at young people's responses by **earnings**, over half of those in high-paying jobs had a pre-existing mental health condition (56%), and two fifths of those in low-paying jobs (40%), compared to around a third of those in below (37%) and above (32%) median paying jobs.

3.2 Young people's disclosure practices

We then asked young people who reported having a mental health condition or challenge whether they disclosed this to their employer, over two in five (46%) said they did not and were not planning to do so. Around a fifth had disclosed after they had been hired (21%), and a fifth had disclosed during the recruitment process (20%).

Figure 9: Disclosure practices of young people who experience mental health at work.

Over two in five young people (46%) who have a mental health condition do not disclose nor plan to disclose this at work



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Reviewing these findings by respondents' **gender**, female respondents were less likely to disclose (51%) and did not plan to do so compared to male peers (36%). It is notable that female respondents, who are traditionally more likely to face discrimination in the workplace, are also those less likely to want to disclose. On the other hand, over a third of young people identifying as having an impairment, **disability** or health condition said they did not nor were planning on disclosing (37%), compared to over half of those who did not identify as having a condition (58%). Disabled young people were more likely to have disclosed during recruitment or induction (24% and 27% respectively) compared to their non-disabled peers (12% and 17%).

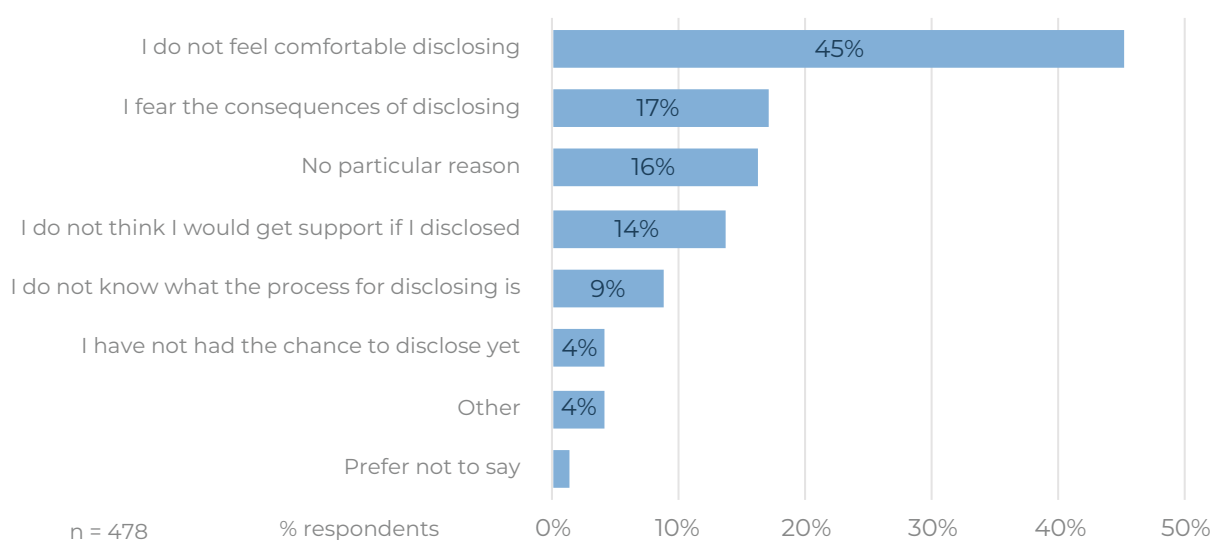
Those in part-time **employment** were less likely to disclose or plan to do so compared to peers in full-time employment (54% and 46%). Half or more of young people in each of the main **industries** respondents worked in did not and were not planning on disclosing (59% in hospitality, 55% in retail, 51% in education, and 50% in healthcare), with the exception of those working in accountancy (25%). Similarly, when it came to **earnings**, around half of those in low (53%), below (53%) and above median (47%) earning jobs did not and were not planning on disclosing, compared to only above a fifth of those in high-earning jobs (22%).

3.2.1 Reasons for not disclosing around mental health

We asked young people who had not disclosed their mental health condition or challenge, whether or not they were planning to in the future, their reasons for not disclosing. Over one-third (35%) did not feel comfortable disclosing, and a smaller but notable minority either feared the consequences of disclosing (17%) or felt that they would not get support (14%).

Figure 10: Reasons why young people do not disclose their mental health at work.

Over two in five (45%) of those that don't disclose or have not yet disclosed feel uncomfortable doing so, over one in ten fear the consequences (17%) or believe they would not get support (14%)



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

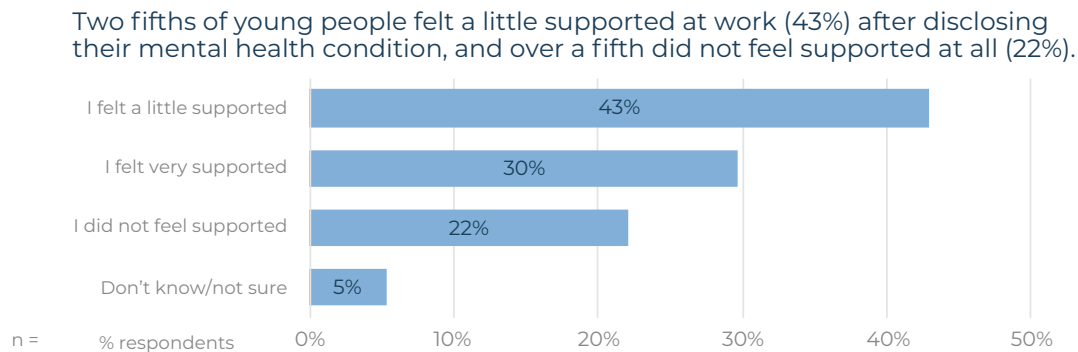
When looking at respondents' characteristics, in terms of gender, female respondents (48%) were more likely to not feel comfortable disclosing compared to male respondents (38%). The same was the case when it came to ethnicity, with respondents from minority ethnic backgrounds more likely to not feel comfortable (52%) compared to peers from white ethnic backgrounds (43%). It is important to note that groups who are more likely to face discrimination, in terms of both gender and ethnicity, are also those who are more likely to not feel comfortable disclosing around their mental health.

When it came to current mental health, there were higher rates of respondents among those who had very poor or poor mental health who did not feel comfortable disclosing (61% and 49%), compared to those who reported very good or good mental health (33% and 37%). There were no notable variations across other sub-groups and across other reasons for not disclosing.

3.2.2 Support following disclosure

Finally, we asked young people who had disclosed their mental health condition or challenge at work whether they had felt supported by their employer. Around two fifths felt a little supported (43%), and over a fifth did not feel supported at all (22%). Just three in ten young people who had disclosed to their employer had felt very supported (30%).

Figure 11: Disclosure practices of young people who experience mental health at work.



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

When looking at respondents' characteristics, young people who did not have an impairment, **disability** or health condition were more likely to feel very supported (36%), compared to peers who had a condition (27%). There were also wide gaps in terms of **current mental health**, with over two in five of those reporting good or very good mental health saying they disclosed and felt very supported (43% average), compared to just over one in ten of those reporting very poor or poor mental health reporting they had felt very supported following disclosure (15%).

Young people who were in full-time **employment** were more likely to feel very supported (39%), compared to peers in part-time jobs (24%), and this may once again be in part explained by the nature of part-time work and sectors in which it is more widespread. There were no notable variations across the main **industries** respondents worked in, in terms of respondents who said they had felt a little supported after disclosing about their mental health, but there were starker differences among those who said they had felt very supported. This ranged from over two fifths of those working in accountancy (42%) and healthcare (45%), to around or under a fifth of those working in hospitality (17%) and retail (22%).

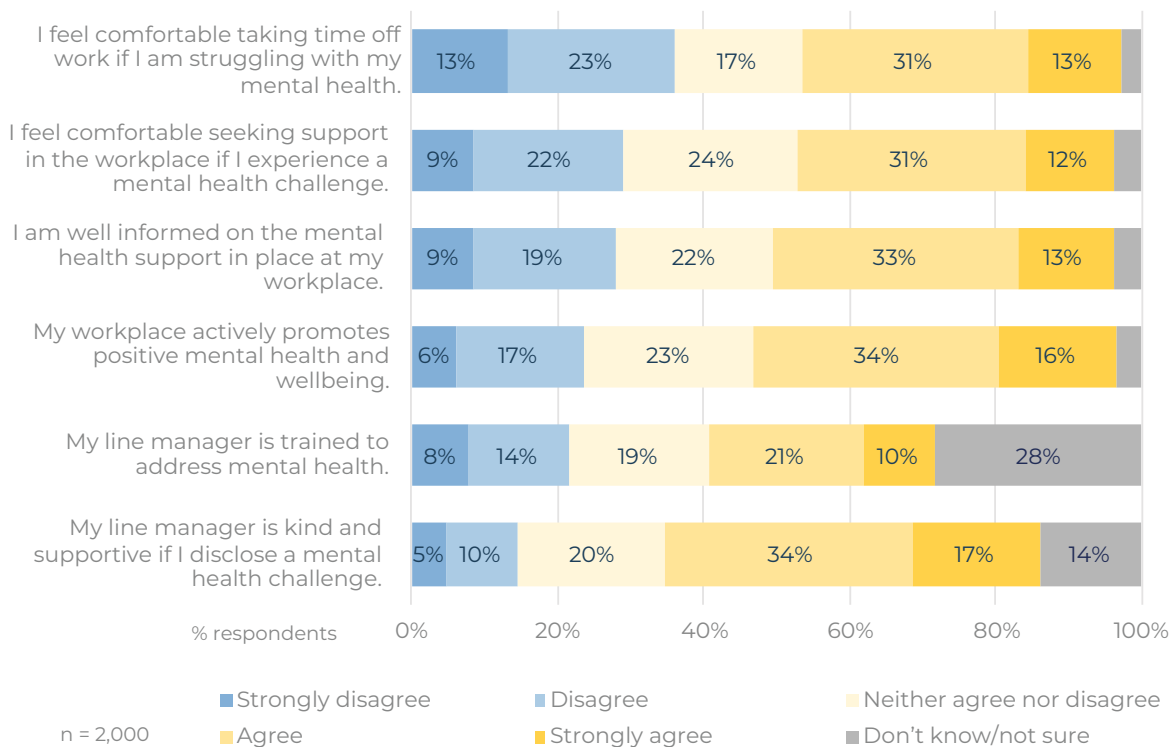
Similarly, when it came to variations by **earnings**, there were no notable differences across groups for those who felt a little supported, but two-fifths of those in high-earning jobs felt very supported (40%), compared to just above a fourth of those in below median and low-earning jobs (26% respectively). Once again, this may suggest that young people in high-earning jobs work for employers that invest more resources to provide better support.

3.3 Workplace culture

We asked young people about their workplace culture and practices when it came to mental health and mental health support. Around half of respondents agree or strongly agree that their workplace actively promotes mental health and wellbeing (50%) and that their line manager is kind and supportive if they disclose information about mental health (51%). However, over a third strongly disagree or disagree that they feel comfortable taking time off work if they are struggling with their mental health (36%) and three in ten do not feel comfortable seeking support (31%). Similarly, over a quarter disagree that they are aware of their workplace support provision around mental health (28%).

Figure 12: Young people's views of workplace culture and support around mental health

Over three in ten young people do not feel comfortable taking time off work (36%) or seeking support in the workplace (31%) if they are struggling with their mental health



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

When looking at respondents' characteristics, in terms of **gender**, male respondents were more likely to agree or strongly agree across all statements compared to female peers.

Those in full-time **employment** were more likely to strongly agree or agree, compared to those in part-time employment, that they felt well-informed of mental health support available at their workplace (56% vs 40%), that their workplace actively promoted mental health (57% vs 44%), and that their line manager was kind and supportive (57% vs 48%).

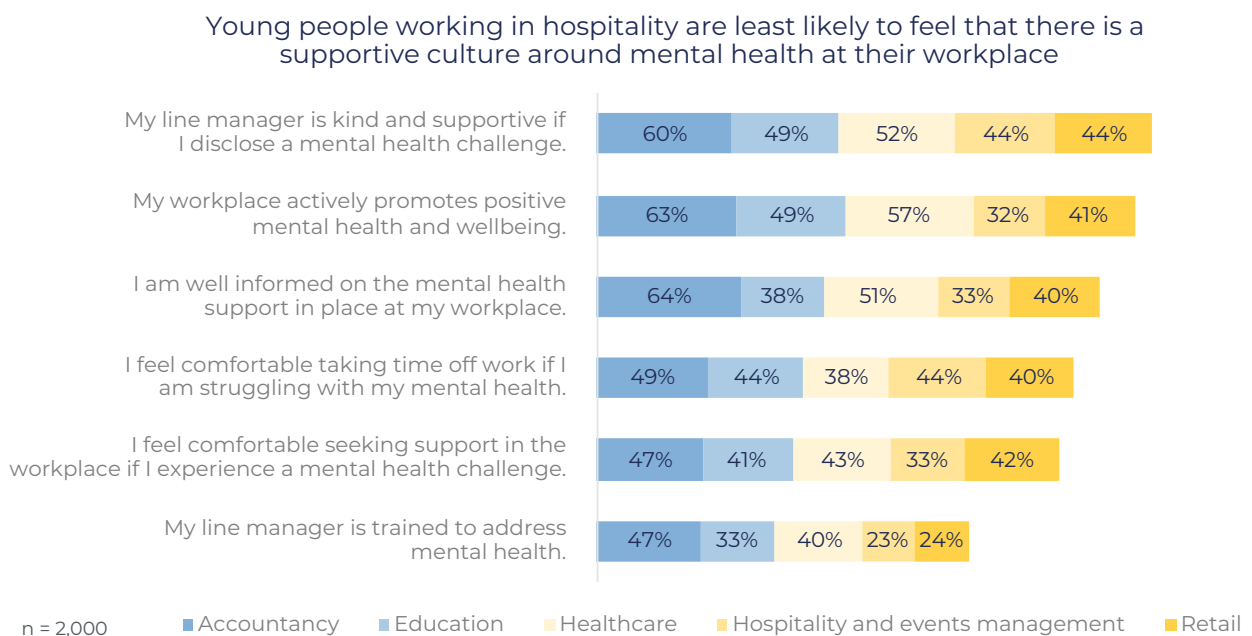
Those who identified as having a **mental health condition** were instead less likely to agree or strongly agree, compared to peers who did not identify in this way, that they felt comfortable seeking support at work (38% vs 57%), and that they felt comfortable taking time off work (38%

Young people's mental health in the workplace

vs 47%). As expected, there were wide gaps across all statements between young people who reported having very poor or poor current mental health and peers who reported having very good or good mental health, with a 30 percentage point gap on average across statements. Notably, young people reporting very good mental health had the highest rate of strongly agreeing with all statements (around 30% for each statement).

When looking at the main industries young people in the survey worked in, young people working in accountancy and in healthcare displayed the highest rates of agreement that their workplace provided a supportive culture around mental health, while those working in hospitality and retail displayed the lowest (see Figure 12). This may be expected as it aligns with findings outlined above around variations in young people's satisfaction with their jobs across different industries.

Figure 13: Young people who 'strongly agree' or 'agree' on workplace culture and support statements, by main industries survey respondents work in.



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

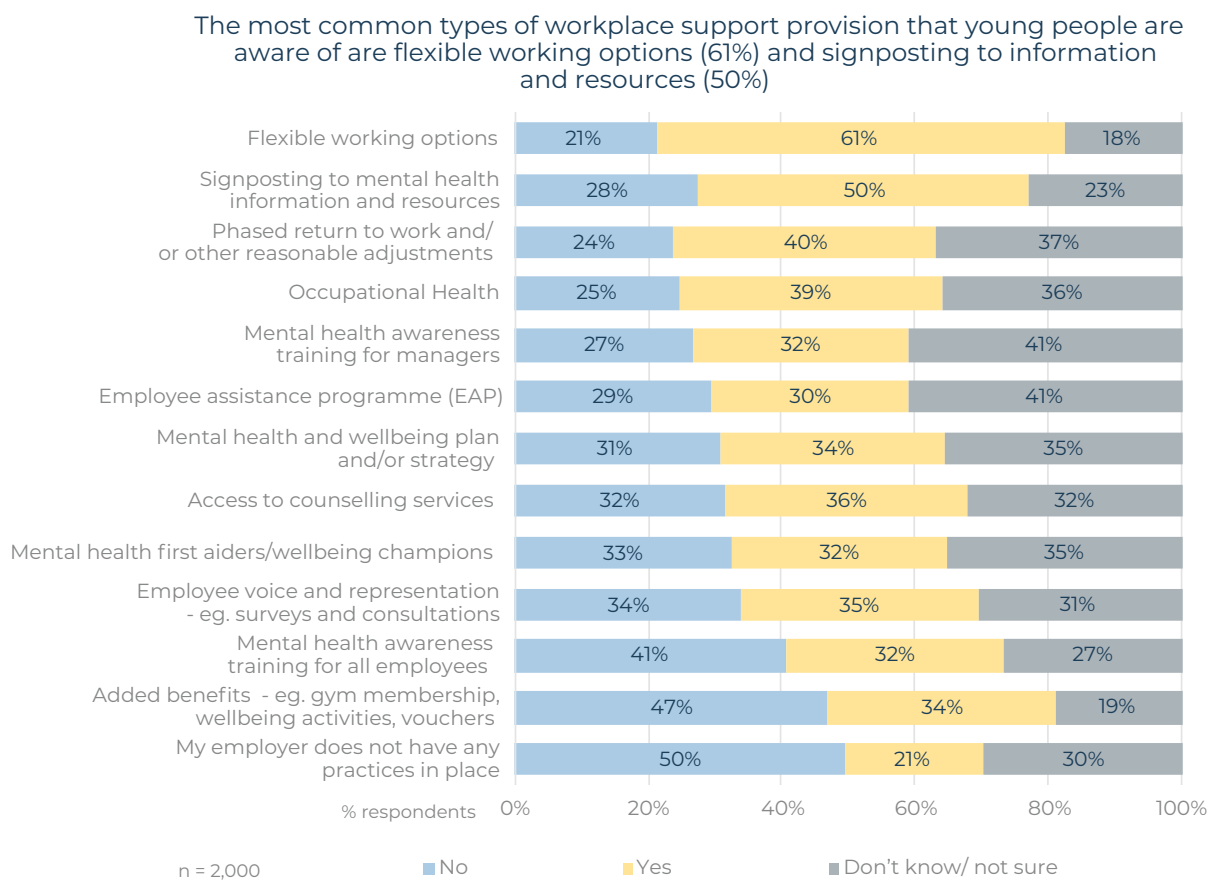
There were also some variations between respondents in full-time and part-time **employment**. Young people in full-time jobs were more likely to strongly agree or agree, compared to peers in part-time jobs that they felt well-informed on the mental health support in place at their workplace (56% vs 40%), that their workplace actively promoted positive mental health (57% vs 44%), and that their line manager was supportive (57% vs 47%).

When it came to **earnings**, instead, notable variations emerged around how well-informed young people felt about the mental health support in the workplace, with rates of strong agreement or agreement progressively decreasing from high-paying to above/below median and low-paying roles (62%, 52%, 45%, and 41% respectively). The same was the case on whether young people felt their workplace actively promoted positive mental health (57%, 59%, 50%, and 43%), and around whether line managers were trained to address mental health (46%, 37%, 28%, and 26%).

3.4 Workplace support provision

We then asked young people about specific support provision for mental health available at their workplace. The majority said their workplace provided flexible working options (61%) and signposting to mental health information and resources (50%), while a large minority said they could access reasonable adjustments (40%), and occupational health (39%). A fifth of respondents (21%) said their employer did not have any mental health support provision in place. Young people were often not aware of whether their workplace provided certain types of support, with a third to two fifths saying they didn't know about a range of different forms of support (see Figure 14).

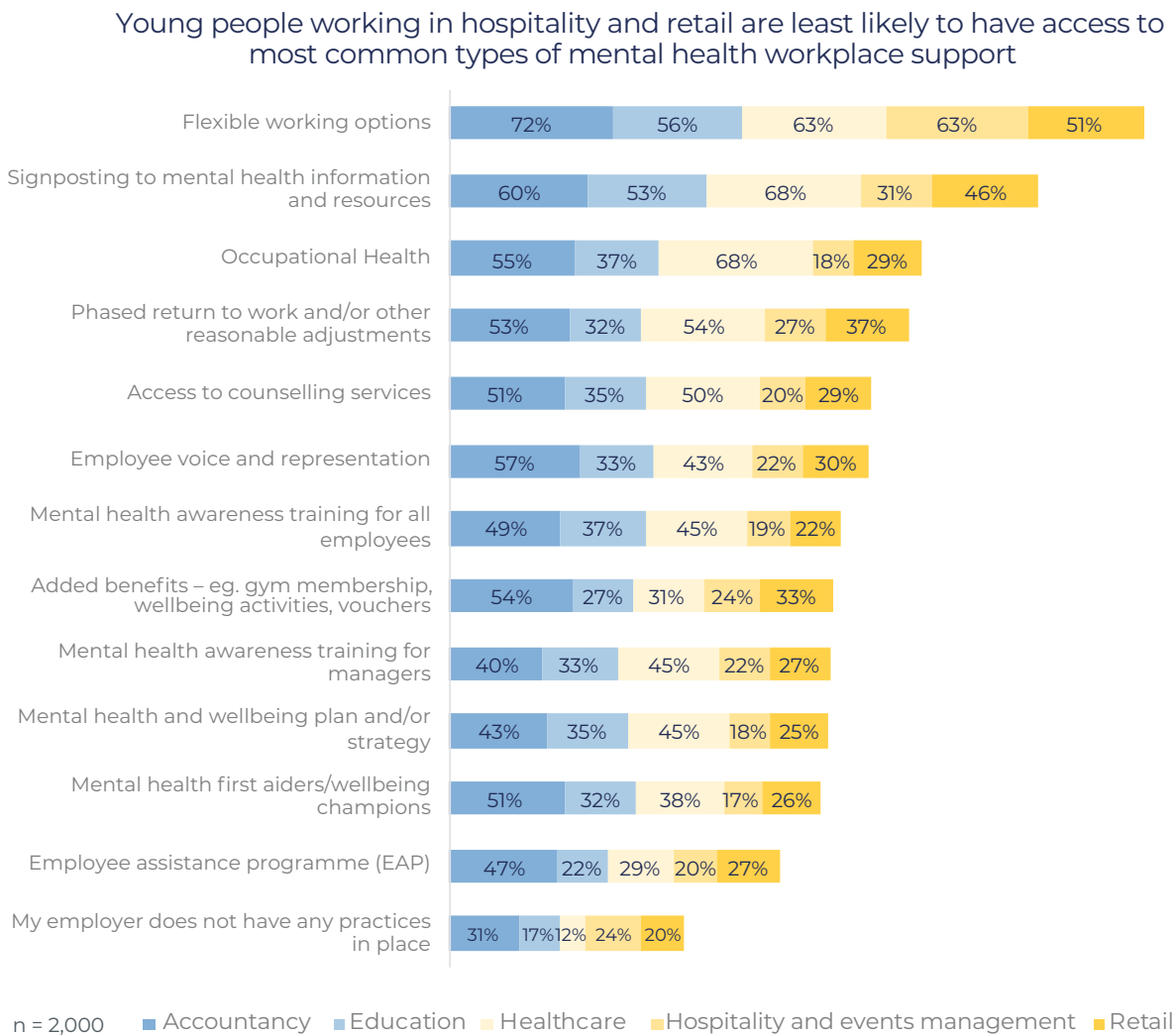
Figure 14: Young people's workplace support provision



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

There were some interesting variations around the support young people had access to across the main **industries** respondents worked in. The majority working in accountancy reported being aware of or having access to most types of mental health support in their workplaces, while those working in hospitality and retail had the least access to most types of support (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: 'Yes' responses to types of workplace support provision, by main industries survey respondents work in



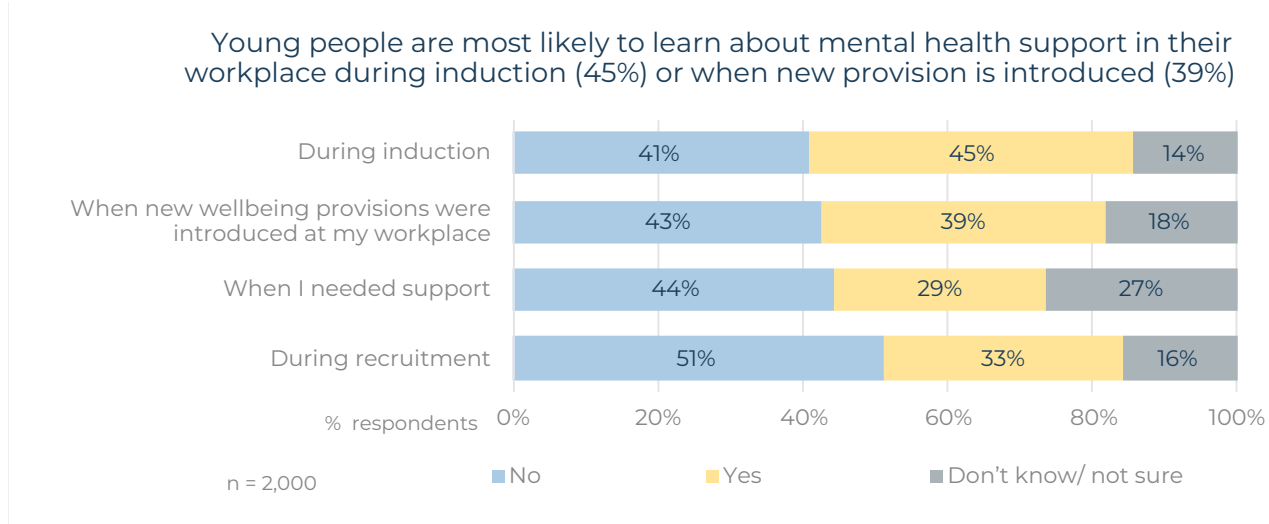
Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

There were also interesting variations when looking at answers by respondents' **earnings**. Young people in high-paying jobs had access to most support options, with the majority (ranging from 50 to 60%) saying their workplace provided most types of workplace support. At the other end of the spectrum, only around a quarter of young people in low-paying jobs answered yes to most workplace support options (26% on average), with flexible working being available to the majority (61%) followed by signposting to information and resources (43%). As when looking at other aspects of workplace culture and practices, this highlights that better-paid jobs also provide access to better support, as a result of increased resources and focus on supporting employees.

3.4.1 Awareness of support

We also asked young people at what point they became aware of the mental health support provision available at their workplace. Respondents most commonly became aware of support provision during induction (45%) or when new provision was introduced (39%). Only a third became aware of support during the recruitment phase (33%).

Figure 16: Points at which young people become aware of workplace support provision.



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

There were some variations on when young people learned about support available to them, by the main **industries** respondents worked in. Over half of those working in accountancy learned about support at multiple stages including recruitment (51%), induction (56%), and when new provision was introduced (58%). Of those working in education, a third became aware of support during recruitment (33%) and when new provision was introduced (34%), and over two fifths during induction (45%). Those in healthcare followed a similar pattern, but with a higher rate of respondents saying they learned about support when new provision was introduced (48%). Young people working in hospitality generally displayed lower rates across each of the stages including recruitment (23%), induction (30%), and when provision was introduced (19%). Those in retail were more likely to learn about support during induction (40%), followed by when new provision was introduced (36%), and lastly during recruitment (32%).

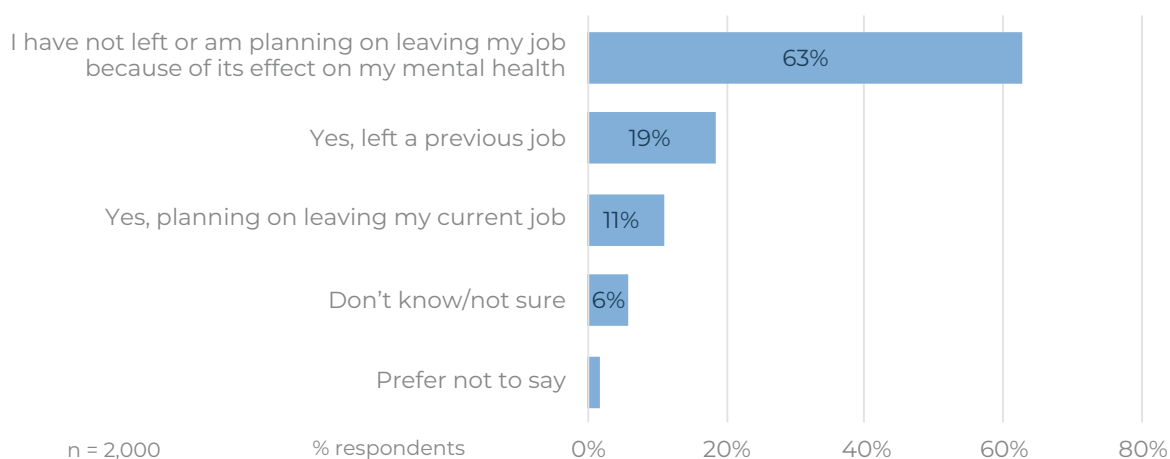
Interesting variations also emerged when looking at answers by respondents' **earnings**. Young people in high-paying jobs were much more likely to learn about support during recruitment (52%), compared to peers in above median (37%), below median (31%), and low-paying jobs (29%). Variation was less on learning about support at the induction stage but were once again high when it came to when new provision was introduced for high (57%), above median (54%), below median (40%), and low-paying jobs (30%).

3.5 Impact of mental health on retention

In the last part of the survey, we asked young people whether they had or were planning to leave their job as a result of its effect on their mental health. While around two thirds of respondents said they had not, nor were planning to leave their jobs, three in ten said they had either left a previous job (19%) or were planning on leaving their current job (11%).

Figure 17: Impact of mental health on young people's decision to leave their job

Three in ten young people have left their previous job (19%) or are planning to leave their current job (11%) as a result of its impact on their mental health



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023

Reviewing these results by respondents' characteristics, in terms of **gender**, female respondents were more likely to have left a job as a result of its impact on their mental health compared to male respondents (21% vs 15%). In terms of **ethnicity**, respondents from white ethnic backgrounds were also more likely to have left a job compared to peers from minority ethnic backgrounds (21% vs 14%).

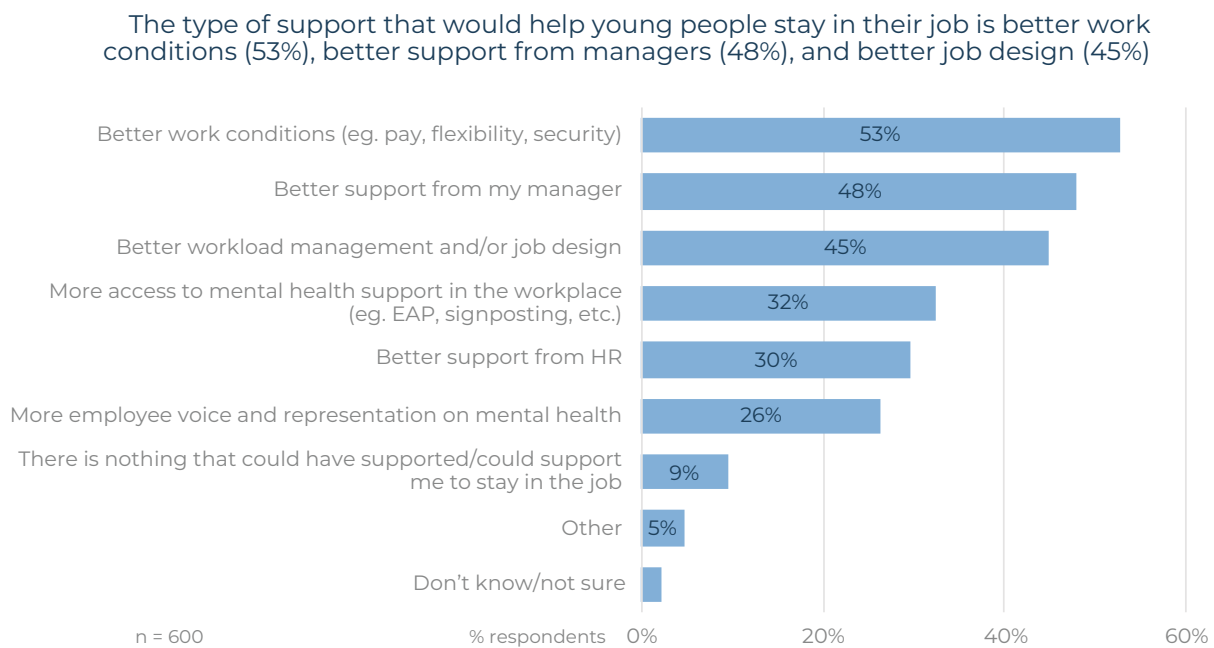
There was a higher rate of respondents who identified as having an impairment, **disability** or health condition who had left a job compared to peers who did not (29% vs 14%), and who were planning on leaving a job (18% vs 8%). The rate was also higher among those who identified as having a **mental health condition** compared to peers who did not, both for leaving a previous job (28% vs 13%), and for planning to leave a current job (17% vs 8%). Similarly, young people who reported having very poor or poor **current mental health** had higher rates of those reporting good or very good mental health, both around leaving a previous job (26% average for very poor and poor and 16% for good and very good), and around planning to leave their current job (22% vs 8%).

When looking at the main **industries** young people in the survey worked in, around one in ten were planning to leave their current job across accountancy (10%), education (8%), healthcare (12%), hospitality (14%), and retail (12%). There were no notable variations between young people in full-time and part-time jobs. However, when it came to **earnings**, young people in high-paying jobs were more likely to be planning to leave their job (23% vs 11% average for all others).

3.5.1 Support to improve retention

Of respondents who said they had left or were planning to leave their job, the majority (53%) said they could be supported to stay if they were offered better work conditions, and over two fifths said they would stay if offered better support from their manager (48%), and better workload management and/or job design (45%). Around three in ten felt more access to mental health support (32%) and better support from HR (30%) would help. Just over a quarter said that better voice and representation mechanisms might support them to stay (26%). There were no notable variations between subgroups.

Figure 18: Support that would help young people stay in their jobs.



Source: IES survey of young people, 2023



04

CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

4 Conclusions and recommendations

This research aimed to understand the experience of young people who are currently in employment when it comes to mental health and specifically around mental health in the workplace. It deliberately recruited higher numbers of young people who are known to face disadvantage generally and in work to understand the effects on their health. In turn, this provides insights into the challenges young workers face, the impact on their experience at work, and what type and quality of support they have access to in the workplace. The research highlighted that struggles with mental health are widespread among young people in employment, with almost half of respondents in the survey reporting having a mental health condition or experiencing a mental health challenge.

While young people report being satisfied with many aspects of their work, job satisfaction does not translate into overall positive impact on health and wellbeing - only half of respondents' report feeling satisfied with their work overall, and a minority feel supported and enthusiastic. Additionally, many young people report dissatisfaction with key aspects of job quality which impact on health and wellbeing, including pay, receiving recognition for their work, feeling that there are adequate platforms for voice and representation at work, and receiving support to manage health. These factors also relate to feelings of being valued and recognised as valuable parts of the workforce, of feeling visible and supported, and highlight how, just as for any worker, they are very important for young workers' mental wellbeing and demand more attention from employers.

Furthermore, despite many young people struggling with mental health, the research found that a large number decide to not disclose having a mental health condition or that they experience mental health challenges at work, mainly due to feeling uncomfortable disclosing or fearing the consequences. Moreover, just two in five young people feel that their workplaces have a supportive culture when it comes to mental health, and only three in ten, among those who disclose about their mental health, feel that they receive adequate support. This highlights that there may still be widespread stigma – or perception of stigma, about mental health in workplaces, and that processes for safe disclosure which helps young people talk about and manage their mental health in ways that feel empowering, are often lacking.

A further finding of note is that flexible working and signposting to mental health information and resources are the most common types of workplace support available to young people. A minority of young people report having access to more tailored or intensive forms of support. However, many young people also report not knowing about whether certain types of mental health support are available at their workplace. This further suggests that there is a need for increased investment in and development of workplace provision specifically around mental health across sectors and businesses. Furthermore, it also highlights a need to ensure that young people are aware of their rights and provided with the adequate information that can enable them to access support at work.

Importantly, the research shows that young people who are likely to already be facing disadvantage in the workplace, such as women, and/or those who may be more likely to be struggling with their health, including disabled young people, those who have a mental health condition and those who are currently experiencing poor mental health, report increased challenges compared to peers when it comes to mental health and work. These groups consistently report lower levels of satisfaction with job quality, challenges feeling comfortable disclosing about mental health at work, feeling that there is a supportive workplace culture around mental health, and that the support they can access is sufficient and adequate. This highlights that the conditions that disadvantaged or more vulnerable people, face at work may further negatively impact their experience of mental health at work.

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Notable findings also emerge when looking at employment factors, highlighting different forms of inequalities between young people. In particular, those working in part-time jobs, in traditionally lower-quality sectors (hospitality, retail), and in lower-earning jobs report having worse experiences of mental health at work and not being able to access the same support as their peers in better or more secure work. These findings highlight stark disparities in the way young people are treated and supported at work, also highlighting that those with access to more support and resources, as a result of being in better quality work, are likely to have better experiences of mental health at work.

Finally, the research highlights that young people's experiences of mental health in the workplace have an impact on retention, with three in ten young people reporting they left or plan to leave their job as a result of its impact on mental health. In particular, young people report that having better work conditions, a better relationship with their manager, and better job design would support them to stay in work. Given current labour market challenges and the challenges that employers are experiencing around recruitment, these findings highlight that increased attention to improve the quality of work for young people and ensure adequate support is in place have important implications for workforce retention.

The conclusions from the research highlight six key areas of focus for government, employers, education and support and advocacy organisations to take action as follows:

- **Developing a national strategy and guidelines to support employees' mental health in the workplace, with a focus on young people.**

Central government should address the mental health crisis among young people, including young workers, as a matter of priority. This should involve developing an evidence-based national strategy and set of guidelines, outlining specific goals and actions for promoting mental health among employees. This should include a focus on challenges encountered specifically by young workers and by groups who traditionally face disadvantage in the workplace, including women, those with a health condition or disability, and those who already struggle with a mental health condition or challenge. This can also support in advocating for changes in the way work is designed and managed, with a particular focus on improving job design. There should also be specific attention placed on sectors and jobs that traditionally provide lower-quality opportunities, to identify tailored solution which can help address disparities that young people in these sectors face when it comes to their mental health and the support they can access.

- **Investing in health and wellbeing support.**

Central government should support employers with limited resources to invest in providing a better and wider range of health and wellbeing support in the workplace. This can be done through funding for SMEs, to support mental health training for managers, and improve access to services such as occupational health and employee assistance programmes. This can also be supported by improving links between workplaces and health services, by equipping employers with information and resources to signpost employees to further support. In particular, government should collaborate with mental health support and advocacy bodies to create a central resource hub for employers with key resources (eg toolkits, best practice, case studies) for supporting employee mental health in the workplace.

- **Establishing partnerships with local employers, education, and youth support organisations.**

Local government can play a key role in working with the local community of mental health professionals, employers, educators, and youth support organisations to create integrated approaches to supporting young people's mental health at work locally, promoting a pipeline for sustained support from education to work. This can be done by supporting the development of local networks to share information and best practices and promote improved links between education, community-based organisations and employers, to better support young people's transitions. It can also be done through local awareness and information campaigns and events, both to improve knowledge and reduce stigma around mental health at work and providing educational resources for employers and young people.

- **Fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.**

Employers should take action to promote open dialogue and reduce stigma around mental health in the workplace, by fostering work environments where young people feel safe and comfortable discussing mental health. This should start at the recruitment stage and continue at later stages, by establishing clear procedures for employees to disclose around their mental health while ensuring confidentiality. A key element to this is providing adequate training to managers, to respond appropriately and provide necessary accommodations. This includes ways to have supportive and sensitive conversations around mental health, identify signs of distress, and develop strategies tailored to each employee's needs. Employers should also recognise and address disparities faced by different groups of young workers, such as women, ethnic minorities and those who have a health condition or disability, and take proactive steps to provide additional support to mitigate these inequalities.

- **Improving job quality and satisfaction.**

Employers should take further measures to improve young people's satisfaction and wellbeing at work. This includes involving young employees in decision-making processes, including the development of mental health support measures. They should address wider issues around job quality, including providing opportunities for skill development and growth, and ensuring the work young people do feels both meaningful and manageable. Importantly, employers need to ensure young employees receive wages and benefits which fairly recognise their value and labour, including paying the Real Living Wage as a minimum. Further measures could include implementing recognition programs to acknowledge and appreciate young employees' achievements and contributions to the organisation, and actively promoting a healthy work-life balance by discouraging long working hours, encouraging breaks, and respecting personal time outside of work.

- **Empowering young workers around their mental health.**

Policy, education, youth support organisations, and employers should collaborate to ensure young employees are empowered when it comes to their mental health at work. This includes raising awareness among young people around their rights and right to support when it comes to mental health and mental health at work. This should happen before they enter the workforce, through education at school, university, and wider support services they access at different stages. It also involves developing partnerships between policymakers, employers, trade unions, and mental health organisations to jointly develop and implement initiatives and mechanisms which amplify young workers' voice on mental health. It requires employers to improve visibility and awareness of available resources, by regularly communicating about the full range of mental health support and resources available through work. Beyond this, it could include the creation of peer support networks or mentorship programs within the workplace, which can provide a safe space for young workers to share experiences, seek advice, and receive support from colleagues who have faced similar challenges.

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