

BRIGHT FUTURES

The Jack Petchey Survey of
Young People's Ambitions



If you think you can, you can!

3,000 young people responded to our survey*



*The survey ran between 16th February and 30th April 2024 and had 2,985 respondents



In Loving Memory of Sir Jack

Sir Jack always believed in the importance of listening to young people and empowering them to know they can make a difference.

“My grandfather, Sir Jack Petchey CBE, always believed in the importance of listening to young people and empowering them to use their voice to make a difference. Surveys like this one give young people a chance to make that positive change to the world around them. It is our responsibility to listen to what young people tell us and to help them believe in Sir Jack’s famous motto: ‘If you think you can, you can!’” **Matt Rantell, Chair of Trustees, JPF**



A Note from our Chief Executive Officer

The Jack Petchey Foundation (JPF) was set up in 1999 to inspire, motivate and champion the achievements of young people across London and Essex. In 2024, the Foundation celebrates its 25th anniversary and will invest over £11m in programmes and partnerships, bringing our total investments to over £180m since 1999. Our work has directly benefitted over 1.1 million young people aged 11-25 since we were set up by Sir Jack.

As we celebrate Sir Jack Petchey CBE's legacy and the 25th anniversary of the Foundation, we reflect on the successes of every young person who has benefitted from our programmes and partnerships so far. We also look forward to how we can be even better and do even more to honour Sir Jack's legacy.

One of the ways we can do this is to further embrace our key aims of the Foundation. One of those is to **empower young people** to use their voices, believe in themselves and shape the future. That is why we regularly run youth surveys. Our **Bright Futures** survey gave young people from London and Essex the chance to tell us about their ambitions for the future. **3,000 young people** responded and told us what opportunities were available to them, what opportunities they would like more of, and what ambitions they have for their futures.

The majority of 11-13 year olds think about what career they'd like **at least once a week**, and have a solid understanding of how to achieve their career goals. This illustrates how proactive and forward-thinking young people are when it comes to considering their futures.

We also found that over 65% of young people have received support and information from their family when it comes to their career ambitions. This means it is vitally important that we ensure young people who don't have these networks around them have access to high-quality career support elsewhere.

Young people told us they value **real-world experiences** as the key to achieving their future career ambitions – rating it as more important than a university degree. Apprenticeships and internships were also highly valued. Our own Internship Programme, currently in its sixth year, provides invaluable opportunities for young people to develop a career in the youth sector.

Only **15%** of respondents said they didn't take part in any extra-curricular activities, suggesting the majority of young people are active in their community. This is supported by **1 in 3 of those surveyed between the ages of 17-25 actively volunteering**, showing they are socially conscious and ambitious about supporting others in their community.

The Jack Petchey Foundation will listen to what young people have told us and shape our future programmes to provide the best opportunities for them to succeed. We will share these results with decision makers and the wider community to help us work together to enact the change that young people want to see.

Gemma Juma
Chief Executive Officer
Jack Petchey Foundation





A Message from our Youth Consultation Panel

The Youth Consultation Panel (YCP) is a dynamic group of young people who meet regularly to ensure that youth voice is at the centre of all the Foundation does. They are committed to highlighting and amplifying young people's experiences and are involved in all aspects of JPF's strategy for the future, including the creation of youth surveys. Mayumi, who has been a member of the YCP for two years, shared her thoughts on the process and findings...



“The YCP helped create the Bright Futures survey to learn young people's future goals, and to understand what steps they believe will aid them in achieving them. This then enables the Jack Petchey Foundation and the YCP to work together to make those aspirations a reality.

Some of the key results from the survey were that, of those participants that had won an Achievement Award, 77% said doing so made them feel 'more confident' in achieving their ambitions. This demonstrates how young peoples' confidence can thrive when provided with uplifting recognition. The survey also found that young people rated their chances of achieving their career ambitions as 7 out of 10. The Foundation and the YCP are committed to creating different pathways, resources, and opportunities to help increase this rating to 10 out of 10.

The Foundation's programmes are as impactful as they are thanks to young people's proactive engagement with them. Their participation in this survey is just another demonstration of that. The survey shows how, as young people, we are not just recipients of opportunities but we are creators and shapers of them when we use our voices! We can make a difference and shape our futures when given the opportunity.” **Mayumi, JPF Youth Consultation Panel Member**

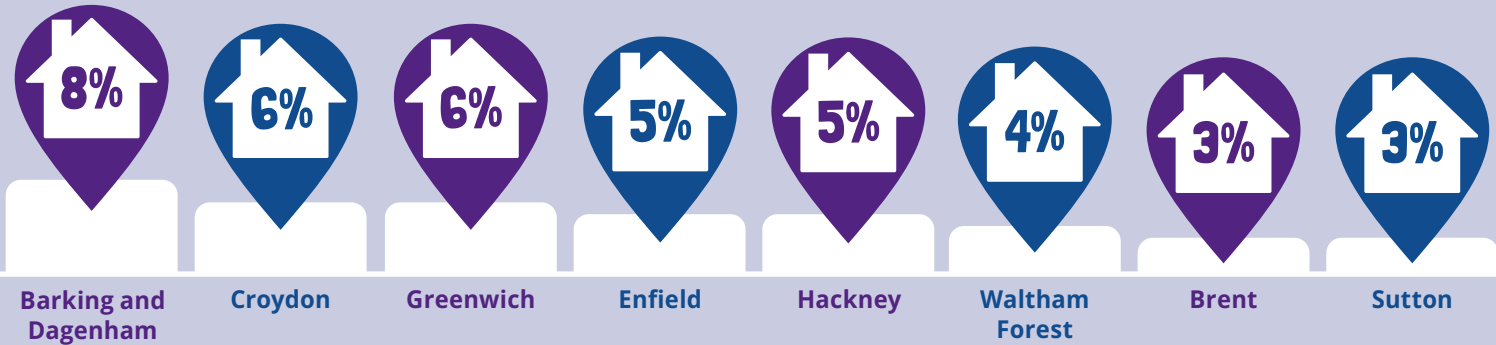
Respondents

We asked those taking our survey to tell us about themselves - their age, whether they are in work or studying, where they lived and more. This helps us understand the results and what young people want or need in their local communities to help them achieve their ambitions.



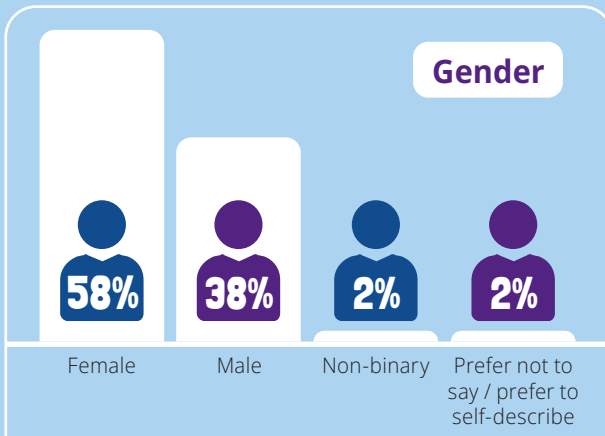
Where respondents lived

The survey had a wide reach with every borough and district across London and Essex represented. The highest number of responses came from those living in Barking and Dagenham, who accounted for **8%** of the total.

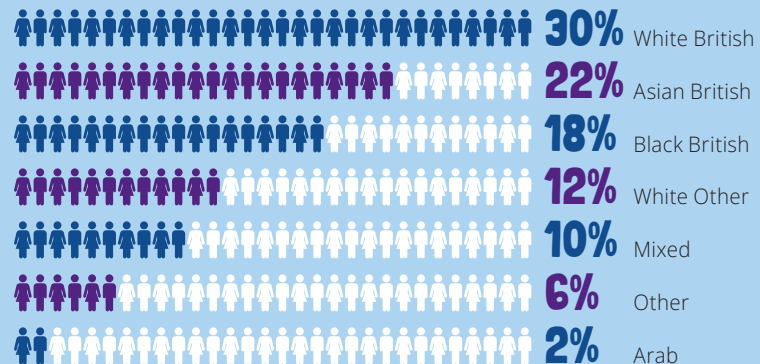


How respondents identified

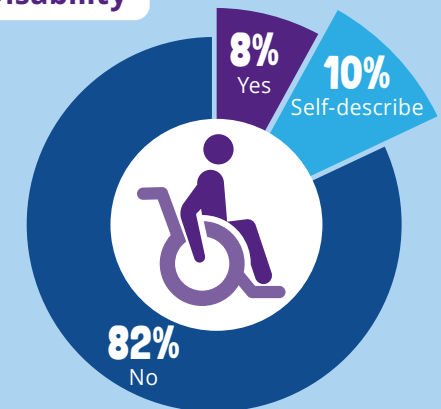
Gender



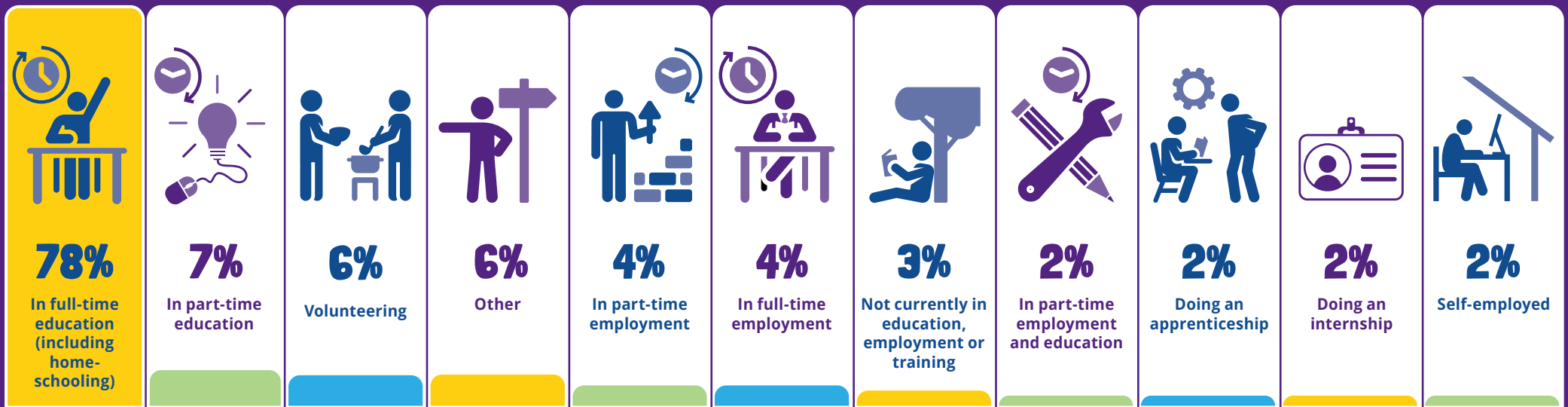
Ethnicity



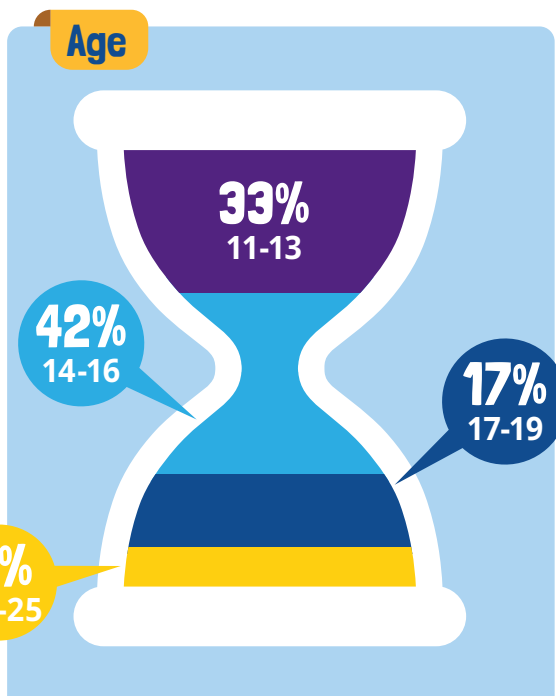
Disability



Education/employment status



78% of respondents were in full-time education (including home-schooling)



Have you won a Jack Petchey Achievement Award?

19% of respondents had won an Achievement Award



4% of respondents were in full-time employment and **4%** were doing an internship or apprenticeship

Opportunities on Offer

We wanted to understand what opportunities are currently available to young people. We found that **85% of young people** take part in activities outside of education or work, and that the main reason they don't engage in more is due to **not having enough free time**. Almost **1 in 3** felt activities they wished to take part in but didn't were too expensive, while **1 in 4** said the option wasn't available to them in their area.



What extra-curricular activities does your school/college/university offer?



69%

Sport



52%

Music



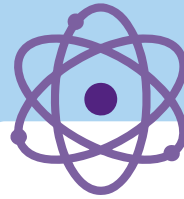
50%

Arts and Crafts



43%

Drama



39%

Science



32%

IT



31%

Public Speaking and Debating Clubs



24%

Cooking



17%

Environmental Action



Data suggests that young people are offered fewer extra-curricular opportunities as they progress through education, particularly creative activities. For example:



63% of 11-13 year olds said they are offered Music as an extra-curricular activity, which dropped to **36%** of those aged 17-19



5% of 11-13 year olds were offered First Aid Training compared to **14%** of 17-19 year olds



What activities do respondents take part in outside of work/education?



45%

Sports



22%

Music



18%

Volunteer Activities



17%

Cooking



13%

Uniform Groups

15% of respondents said they don't take part in any activities outside of school or work. This suggests the majority of young people are active in clubs and youth organisations



As with the extra-curricular activities on offer, participation in most activities decreases with age. For example:



55% of 11-13 year olds take part in Sport compared to **32%** of 20-25 year olds

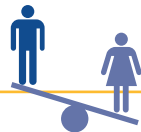


11% of 11-13 year olds participate in Self-Defence and Martial Arts compared to **3%** of those aged 20-25



1 in 3 17-25 year olds volunteer showing they are socially conscious and active

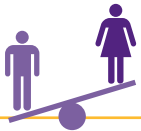
We see some gender differences in what activities young people take part in:



14% of males take part in Computer and IT activities compared with **4%** females

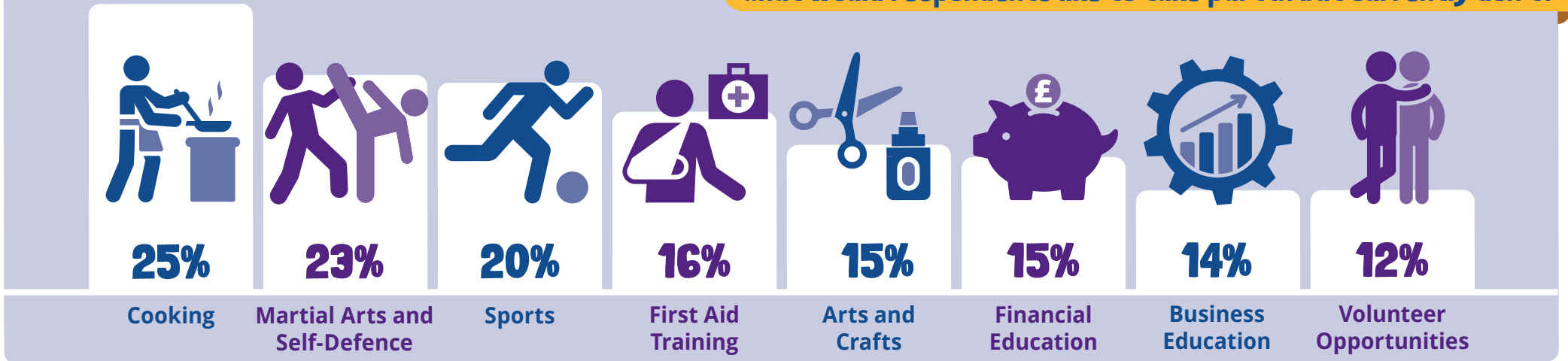


Females are much more likely to take part in Dance, Drama and Arts and Crafts (**20%, 15%, 20%**) compared to males (**4%, 7%, 12%**)



JPF is committed to taking steps to ensure that all genders are equally included in our STEM and artistic programmes. Our survey suggests there are fairly equal levels of participation in Environmental Action, First Aid Training, Music and Cooking.

What would respondents like to take part in but currently don't?



45% of those identifying as non-binary said a lack of confidence prevents them from participating in activities

25% of young people are interested in Cooking

What is preventing young people from taking part in the activities they're interested in?



Half of participants feel they don't have enough free time



30% activities are too expensive



28% can't find information on the activities or know how to get involved



25% said it was not available in their area – this was a more common response in Essex compared to London



Only 1 in 10 said they were not interested in taking part in any of the activities listed





“Know that young people, teens especially, may not be set on what we want for our futures. Let us explore but never settle, and please keep supporting our passions.” **Tilda, Hackney**



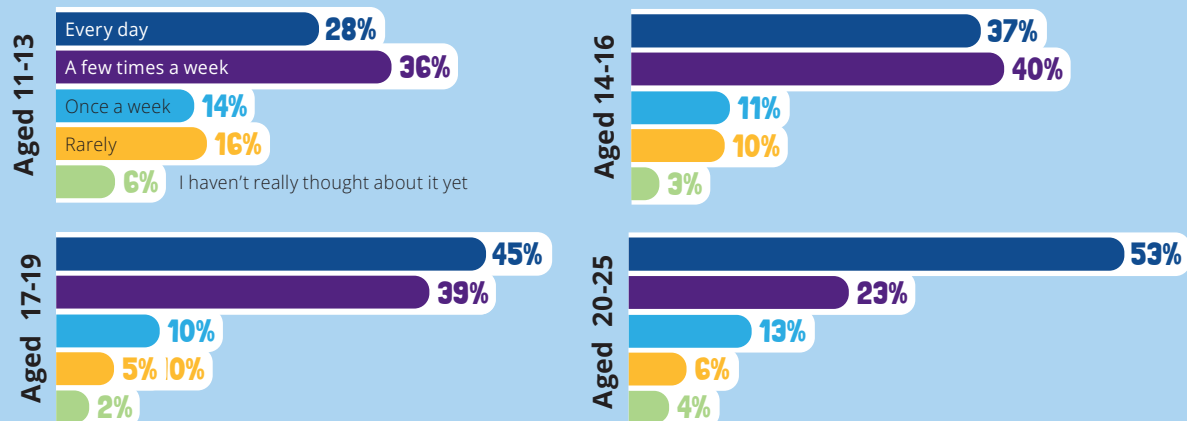
Young People's Ambitions

In order to build programmes that will benefit as many young people across London and Essex as possible, we asked what ambitions they have for the future. Only **4%** haven't thought about what career they'd like yet.

78% of 11-13 year olds think about what career they'd like at least once a week

How often respondents think about what career they'd like

Unsurprisingly, a higher proportion of older respondents think about what career they would like on a daily basis in comparison to younger ones.



How important were these factors* when choosing a career?



*Respondents could select more than one option

28% of 11-13 year olds think about their future careers on a daily basis

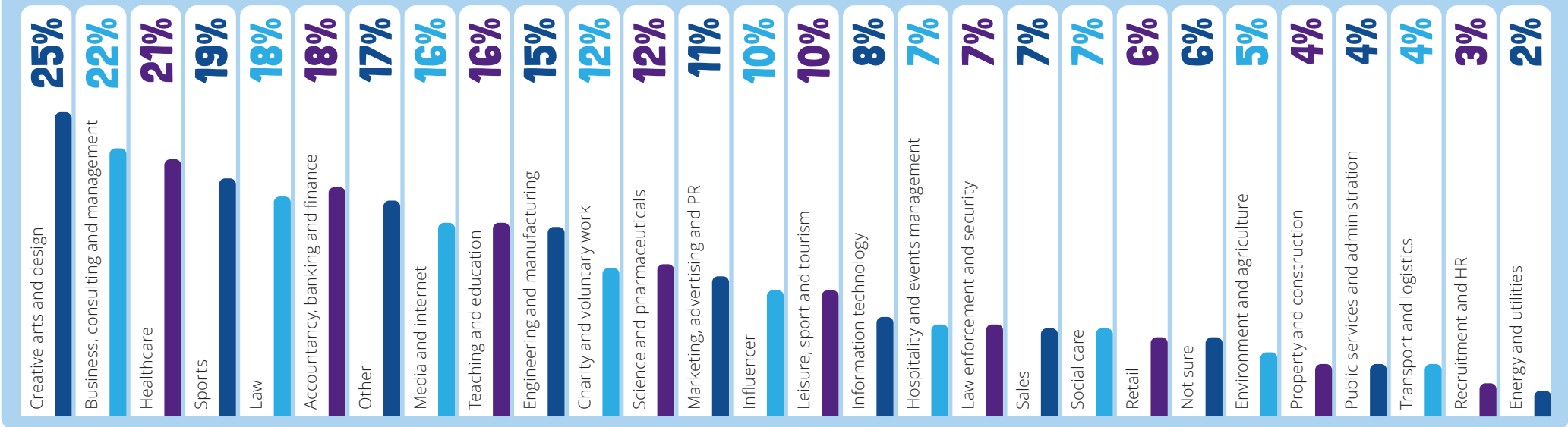


The biggest difference between those identifying as male and female related to wanting to work for a company with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion: **43%** of females rated it very important compared to **27%** of males.



What job sectors* respondents are interested in

*Respondents could select more than one career option



A career in the Creative Arts was the most popular future profession, with **25%** of respondents being interested in it. Business, Consultancy and Management came second with **22%**, with Healthcare third with **21%**.

A number of young people were interested in Veterinary careers, and some highlighted non-traditional options such as a professional eSports player.



Do young people know what steps to take to achieve their career goals?

77% of those aged 11-13 have at least some idea of what steps to take. This shows young people have a solid understanding of how to achieve their career goals.





Realising Ambitions

We asked questions about the factors young people think are most useful to them in helping them achieve their career goals, how hopeful they are in regards to their career prospects, and what support they currently receive.

Where respondents have received support* on their career ambitions

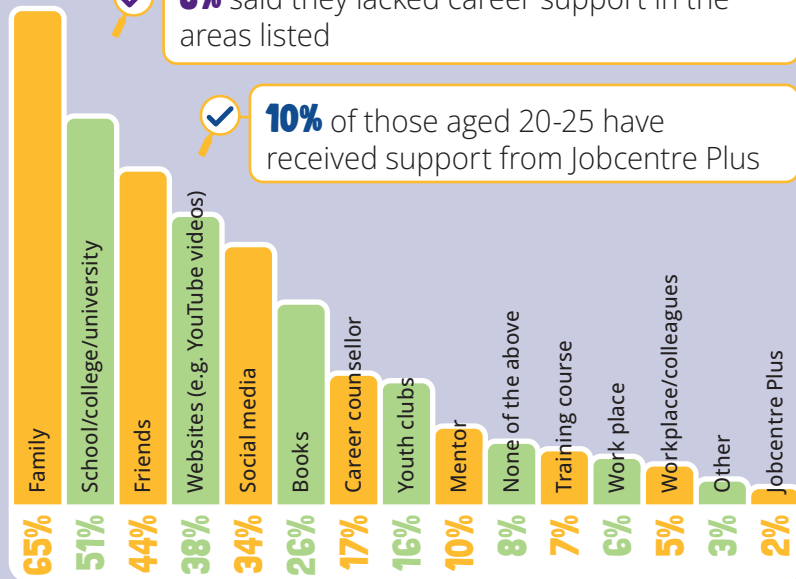
Family and friends are the primary ways young people receive support and information on their career ambitions.

65% have received support from family and **44%** from friends



8% said they lacked career support in the areas listed

10% of those aged 20-25 have received support from Jobcentre Plus



*Respondents could select more than one option



It is vital that all young people have access to high-quality career support. That is why JPF partners with organisations such as Young Enterprise and Talk the Talk to run programmes dedicated to preparing young people for success in life after school and college – including providing CV and interview tips.

Many young people told us they value real-world experiences such as work experience (**58%**) as most important in helping them achieve their ambitions – more so than a university degree (**54%**). Internships and apprenticeships were also held in high regard (**35%** each).

3 in 10 were interested in support to start their own business.



Young people rated* these as 'very important' to them:



*Respondents could select more than one option

Only **1 in 10** of young people have mentors to support their career ambitions

How Jack Petchey Achievement Awards Make a Difference

Here are the most common words respondents used to explain how winning an Achievement Award made them feel



Of those that had won an Achievement Award, **77%** said that doing so made them feel 'more confident' in achieving their ambitions.

No one said that it made them feel 'less confident'.



“I received it because even though I was a bit shy, I was very nice and welcoming and people enjoyed my presence. That made me feel special and appreciated by people around me and I grew more confidence in myself to just be me.”
Rudo, Bromley

What winning an Achievement Award meant to young people

“Winning made me feel seen, made me feel heard and it was like a sign to keep going and don't stop.”
Chibuza, Enfield

“I felt like a very important person when I attended the event. I am a young person with Down syndrome who has been bullied at school and couldn't get work placements, and this gave me hope about my future dream. Thank you Jack Petchey Foundation for helping me.”
Sabrina, Hackney

“It boosted my confidence significantly and I've been on an upwards trajectory since then!”
Kenny, Newham

“I felt that my dreams weren't that impossible seeing as this award was evidence that I'm on the right track.”
Saskia, Brent

Shaping our Future

We asked young people what one message they would like to send to the UK government and other decision makers. Here's what they said:

UK Government



“Offer more paid apprenticeships, internships and volunteer opportunities.” **Matthew, Lewisham**

“Have more opportunities for work experience to gauge if we like the industry/role early on.”

Anya, Richmond upon Thames



“Hire a more diverse workforce – people who understand what young people are going through.” **Britney, Newham**

“More support for SEN teenagers and opportunities to achieve independence.”

Elizaveta, Ealing



“More information should be given about entrepreneurship, encouraging young people to thrive and become independent and bring money back into the community.”

Humeirah, Waltham Forest



“To invest more into mentorship programmes so young people have more confidence to proceed with the things they want to achieve in life without feeling the stress of getting judged or worried that their plan might not work out.” **Wiktorija, City of London**



“Help students explore careers before picking GCSEs so they have the opportunity of forming a foundation for their future.”

Dianne, Bexley

We asked young people how else JPF could help them achieve their career ambitions. Here's what they said:



“Networking events for young people aged 16 and above to meet businesses and employers.”

Joel, Merton

“Mentoring sessions for career advice.”

Isaak, Ealing

“Create videos for young people with information and help.”

Afifa, Barking and Dagenham

“I think you can do workshops to reach every school who may not know about your charity.”

Nyla, Brent

“Webinars for young people to ask any career related questions in.”

Avital, Barking and Dagenham

“By offering grants or more financial support without the concern of being in debt or having to pay back massive amounts, or having to worry about tax. Also offering paid volunteering for these young people so they have a source of income and work experience while helping a good cause.”

Treyvani, Hammersmith and Fulham



“Show them that anything is possible to reassure them if they have doubts.”

Julia, Sutton



How we will use this report...

With the Jack Petchey Foundation's new Strategic Plan 2025-2027, we are looking to develop our funding and programmes that enable young people to achieve their ambitions even further. To shape this work, we want to be led by young people and their voices, experiences and ideas.

We commit to taking forward young people's suggestions raised in this survey to empower them to build their own futures. We also commit to amplifying young people's voices and ensuring they are involved in the decisions that affect their future.

To find out more about our work, and how to get involved as a young person or as a school or youth organisation, please visit our website by scanning this QR code.



SCAN ME




“I felt somewhat invisible when I first started college. But when my teacher told me I won the Achievement Award, I suddenly felt that my contributions were appreciated. It boosted my confidence incredibly.”


Cara, Achievement Award winner

Spread the Word

We currently run our flagship Achievement Award Scheme in over 1,400 youth organisations, state secondary schools and colleges. But we want to work with them all! We are looking for new schools and youth organisations to join the Jack Petchey Achievement Award scheme to help us recognise and empower even more young people with our awards, programmes and funding opportunities.

 **Visit our website** or scan the QR code to find out more information about our full range of opportunities and take our eligibility quiz to see if a school or youth group you know would be eligible to apply.

 **Tell others you know about us** and all the opportunities we offer.

 **Sign up to our newsletter** to receive our latest opportunities and updates directly to your inbox and forward these onto colleagues, friends and family.

 **Get in touch** if you have any queries about our opportunities email mail@jackpetchey.org.uk or call **020 8252 8000** to speak to a member of our team!



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