



Prince's Trust

# THE PRINCE'S TRUST YOUTH INDEX 2013

## FOREWORD

For five years The Prince's Trust Youth Index has measured how confident and happy young people feel about their lives and their futures. The index considers young people's wellbeing across the spectrum of their lives from family relationships, local community and health, to qualifications, employment and money.

**Martina Milburn CBE**  
Chief Executive,  
The Prince's Trust

**Our latest report suggests an overall decline in young people's wellbeing, with the index rating returning to the lowest figure since the study was launched.**

The Youth Index also reveals a considerable 'wellbeing gap' between young people who are in work, education or training compared to those who are not. Our findings reinforce the fact that there is still much to do to support the most disadvantaged young people who face significant barriers to finding a job. The Prince's Trust knows that it is often the young people who have faced considerable challenges while growing up who end up furthest from the workplace. Life can become a demoralising downward spiral - from a chaotic childhood into life as a jobless adult.

This year's index exposes how unemployed young people feel unable to cope with day-to-day life. It is vital they are reached and helped to regain their confidence and, ultimately, find a

job. A significant amount of Prince's Trust time is dedicated to providing a support network for those who have lost their way in life.

We should not underestimate the impact a positive adult influence can have on a young person. Our mentors help young people build positive futures by offering support that they may have lacked earlier in life and providing inspiration and guidance towards employment, training or education opportunities.

The Prince's Trust is increasing its support for disadvantaged and unemployed young people across the UK and aims to help 55,000 of them this year alone. We will continue to help some of the most vulnerable young people with our personal development programmes, pre-apprenticeship schemes and mentoring to get them into jobs.



## FOREWORD

The fifth Prince's Trust Youth Index makes for challenging reading when we learn of how desperate unemployed young people are currently feeling.



**Richard Parish**  
Chief Executive,  
The Royal Society of Public Health

**The recession has hit those young people not in work, education or training the hardest. There is a worrying discrepancy between young people who are in work and those who are not.**

Over a third of young people who are out of work say they have not been given the support they need to find a job. It is therefore crucial that the help and guidance offered by The Prince's Trust to young people in need continues to thrive. The results achieved by the charity demonstrate that, often, a little bit of help at the right time can go a long way in setting a young life on the right course. Three in four young people supported by The Prince's Trust move into work, education or training.

Strikingly, contentment amongst young people about their emotional or mental health fell to its lowest ever level this year. The report is peppered with statistics which illustrate how the recession has eroded young people's confidence and ambitions. Almost half of unemployed young people admit to feeling down or depressed "always" or "often".

To avoid a major crisis of confidence amongst our young people, we need to remind them that they can have bright futures if they access the right support. At RSPH we have developed the Youth Health Champion education initiative to provide this type of support. We are also building national education pathways to ensure young people have access to relevant health and wellbeing guidance and information.

The Prince's Trust launched additional help for young people with mental health needs on its Team programme four years ago and has been increasing this support year on year ever since.

Initiatives like these do make a real difference to young lives. The Trust's work with vulnerable young people is more critical than ever.



## YOUTH INDEX RESPONDENTS

A sample of 2,136 16 to 25 year-olds took part in an online poll by YouGov on behalf of The Prince's Trust between 29th October and 8th November 2012. The data has been weighted according to age, gender and region to be representative of all UK 16 to 25 year-olds.

Of the sample, 289 respondents were not in education, employment or training (NEET).

### Background

This report is the fifth annual Youth Index carried out by YouGov on behalf of The Prince's Trust. The index gauges how young people feel about the state of their lives today and how confident they are about their futures. The results are displayed in a happiness index and a confidence index. The primary focus of the Youth Index is measuring young people's wellbeing.

The latest results have been mapped against the indexes from the past four years to demonstrate how the wellbeing of young people has changed over time.

The study explores some significant demographic differences between young people.

This includes:

- those not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- those without a positive role model of the same gender
- those who did not achieve five or more GCSEs graded A\*-C
- those who received free school meals

Respondents are asked how happy and confident they are in different areas of their life. The responses are converted to a numerical scale, resulting in a number out of 100 – with 100 representing entirely happy or confident and zero being not at all happy or confident.

### The Prince's Trust Youth Index 2013

The Prince's Trust Youth Index reveals an overall decline in young people's wellbeing. The index, which measures levels of happiness and confidence, has fallen since last year, returning to the lowest figure since this study was launched five years ago.

The index reveals a considerable wellbeing gap between young people in employment and those who are jobless. NEETs are significantly less happy across all areas of their lives than their peers.

#### Key findings:

- **The overall index (combining young people's happiness and confidence) is 71. This is a decrease on last year's index of 73**
- **The index for young people's happiness is 70**
- **The index for young people's confidence is 72**
- **Contentment with emotional health fell to its lowest ever level this year**
- **Achievement at school and having a positive role model while growing up are factors which alter the index significantly**
- **Young people who had a positive role model of the same gender in their lives generated the highest average index rating**
- **Attitudes towards money returned the lowest scores in this year's happiness index and confidence index**

### Coping with day-to-day life

Life can be difficult for young people who do not have access to sufficient support. There is a clear link between the levels of support a young person received whilst growing up and whether they are subsequently in employment, education or training.

#### Key findings:

- One in 10 young people (10 per cent) feel they cannot cope with day-to-day life
- Young people who are NEET are more than twice as likely to feel unable to cope as their peers
- One in five young people did not have someone to talk to about their problems while they were growing up
- Almost a third (31 per cent) of NEETs did not have someone to talk to about their problems while they were growing up
- Young people who did not grow up in a supportive family environment are twice as likely to not be in education, employment or training

### Not in education, employment or training

NEETs are significantly less happy and confident with their lives compared to their peers who have a job.

#### Key findings:

- The index for young people in education, employment or training is 72
- The index for young people who are NEET is 64
- NEETs are significantly less happy across all areas of their lives, according to the index
- NEETs are least happy about their work/education circumstances, followed by money and emotional health

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The impact of the recession

The report details the extent of damage the recession has caused to young people's attitudes to work.

#### Key findings:

- More than one in four young people (27 per cent) believe their prospects have been "permanently damaged" by the recession
- More than half (51 per cent) of young people feel disillusioned by the state of the current jobs market
- 43 per cent of young people believe the recession has set them back in their career
- A quarter of young people have put their ambitions on hold due to the recession

NEET young people feel even more desperate about their employment prospects. The report provides a specific insight into the views of young people who are out of work, demonstrating the levels of negativity they feel about finding a job.

#### Key findings:

- 55 per cent of NEET young people feel their life has been put "on hold" due to unemployment
- More than a third (36 per cent) of NEET young people feel they have no future due to the recession
- One in five unemployed young people (20 per cent) believe their confidence will never recover from their spell out of work

The longer young people are out of work, the more likely they are to feel a lapse in confidence. Those who are long-term unemployed are significantly more likely to feel this way than those out of work for less than six months.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Young people online

The research shows that many young people are feeling isolated in their lives and are turning to online communities for support.

#### Key findings:

- More than one in five young people (23 per cent) claim the internet gives them a sense of community and friendship that they do not have elsewhere in life
- This increases to a third (33 per cent) among those who are unemployed.
- A third of young people (34 per cent) have felt depressed as a direct result of something they have seen on a social network.
- More than one in ten young people (14 per cent) have been bullied online, while one in five (20 per cent) say they have witnessed more bullying online than in person.
- Two thirds of young people (65 per cent) would prefer to talk to someone in person than online if they had a problem.

The Youth Index measures how young people feel about their lives today and how confident they are about their futures.

Respondents were asked how happy or unhappy they felt about different aspects of their life, from work, relationships and money to physical and emotional health. They were also asked about how confident they felt about their future in these areas.

Figure 1 shows that the overall index score this year is 71. This is a decrease from last year's index of 73 and a return to the lowest index figure since this study was launched.

**Figure 1:** Youth Index scores for the past five years

Total index scores (both happiness and confidence combined)



Figure 2 shows that the overall index number for young people's happiness is 70. The index number for young people's confidence is 72.

**Figure 2:** The Prince's Trust Youth Index scores for the past five years

|                            | 2013      |            | 2012      |            | 2011      |            | 2010      |            | 2009      |            |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                            | Happiness | Confidence | Happiness | Confidence | Happiness | Confidence | Happiness | Confidence | Happiness | Confidence |
| Work/education             | 69        | 67         | 70        | 70         | 68        | 67         | 70        | 70         | 71        | 71         |
| Home/accommodation         | 76        | 73         | 78        | 75         | 76        | 73         | 76        | 75         | 76        | 76         |
| Community/local area       | 68        | 69         | 69        | 71         | 68        | 68         | 69        | 69         | 69        | 70         |
| Family relationships       | 79        | 79         | 80        | 81         | 78        | 78         | 81        | 82         | 79        | 81         |
| Relationships with friends | 74        | 74         | 77        | 78         | 75        | 75         | 78        | 78         | 77        | 79         |
| Money                      | 58        | 66         | 58        | 67         | 57        | 65         | 56        | 66         | 56        | 67         |
| Qualifications             | 76        | 74         | 77        | 76         | 76        | 75         | 77        | 76         | 79        | 79         |
| Physical health            | 69        | 73         | 71        | 74         | 68        | 72         | 71        | 74         | 69        | 74         |
| Emotional health           | 66        | 72         | 67        | 70         | 67        | 68         | 70        | 71         | 67        | 73         |
| <b>TOTAL INDEX SCORE</b>   | <b>70</b> | <b>72</b>  | <b>72</b> | <b>74</b>  | <b>70</b> | <b>71</b>  | <b>72</b> | <b>74</b>  | <b>71</b> | <b>74</b>  |

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING: FLUCTUATING LEVELS OF HAPPINESS AND CONFIDENCE

### Happiness

The happiness index has dropped back down to its lowest level. This suggests that young people are now marginally less happy with their lives than they were last year.

In every aspect of life, except money, the index scores decreased this year. Young people's happiness with their relationships with friends is at its lowest ever score (74), falling by three points since last year.

Happiness with work/education fell by one point since last year to 69 and contentment with home/accommodation returned to the index's average score of 76 points (down from 78 last year). Young people seem less happy with their physical health (a decrease of two points since last year). Contentment with emotional health fell to its lowest ever level this year (scoring 66).

Attitudes to money remained consistent to last year at 58 points, still higher than the three years previous. However, money is still a major concern for young people and is the aspect of life that young people ranked lowest in the happiness index this year.

Figure 3: Happiness index over the past five years

Total happiness index



## YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING: FLUCTUATING LEVELS OF HAPPINESS AND CONFIDENCE

### Confidence

Young people's confidence has decreased from 74 points last year to an overall score of 72 this year.

Confidence in friendships and in qualifications both reached record lows in this year's index.

Money continues to be the aspect of life in which young people are least confident (with a score of 66 points). Confidence with work/education fell by three points this year from 70 to 67 and satisfaction with home/accommodation also decreased from 75 to 73.

Confidence in physical health has declined with an index score of 73 (from 74 last year) but, interestingly, young people professed more confidence about their emotional health compared to last year (an increase by two points to 72).

Figure 4: Confidence index over the past five years

Total happiness index



## COMPARISONS BETWEEN PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Young people's confidence and happiness levels are affected by their personal circumstances. Situations including unemployment, underachievement at school or coming from a poor background can influence overall wellbeing.

Figure 5 shows the difference in index scores according to whether young people are in employment, education or training, whether they have a positive role model in their life, achieved five or more GCSEs graded A\*-C or whether they received free school meals.

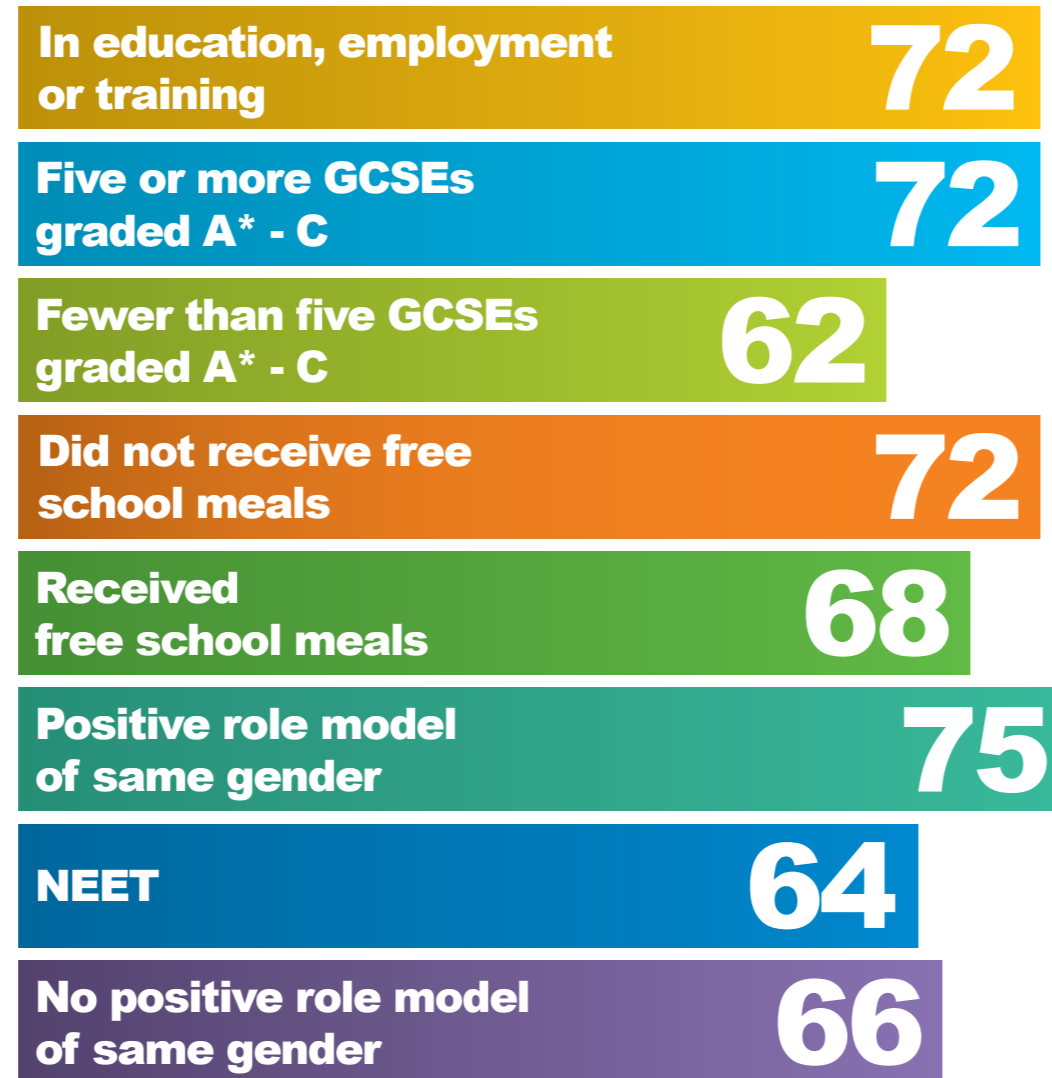
Levels of achievement at school affect the index significantly. There is a 10 point difference between young people who achieved five or more A\*-C GCSE grades and those who did not.

Young people who gained fewer than five GCSE A\*-C grades have the lowest index score of 62, closely followed by NEETs with an index score of 64. This can be compared to the overall index of 71.

Young people who had a positive role model of the same gender in their lives scored the highest in the index (at 75, four points above the overall index of 71).

**Figure 5:** 2013 Youth Index scores broken down by specific demographic factors

Overall 2013 Youth Index score: 71



## COPING WITH DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Life can be particularly difficult for young people who do not have access to sufficient support. One in 10 young people (10 per cent) feel they cannot cope with day-to-day life.

Young people who are NEET are more than twice as likely to feel unable to cope as their peers (22 per cent of NEETs feel they cannot cope with day-to-day life).

One in 10 young people (11 per cent) believe they did not grow up in a supportive family environment.

\* **42%**

of young people who did not grow up in a supportive environment are unhappy with their lives now, compared to 14 per cent of those that did receive support

\* **22%**

of young people did not have someone to talk to about their problems while they were growing up

\* **31%**

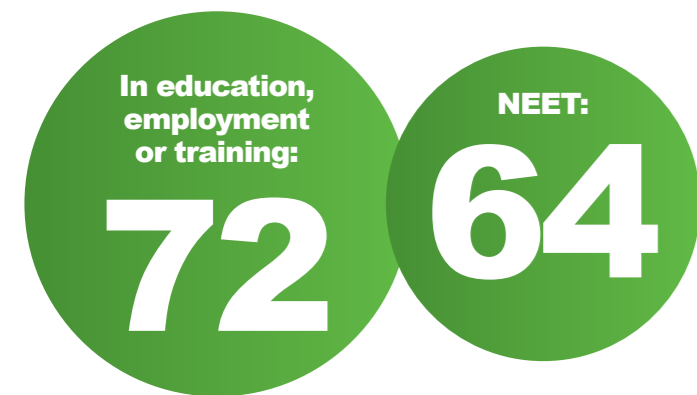
of NEETs did not have someone to talk to about their problems while they were growing up



## NOT IN WORK, EDUCATION OR TRAINING

The index shows that NEETs are significantly less happy and confident with their lives compared to their peers who have a job. Overall, young people in education, employment or training scored eight points higher in the Youth Index than NEETs.

**Figure 6:** Index scores for young people in education, employment or training and NEETs



**Figure 7:** Index scores for wellbeing by employment status

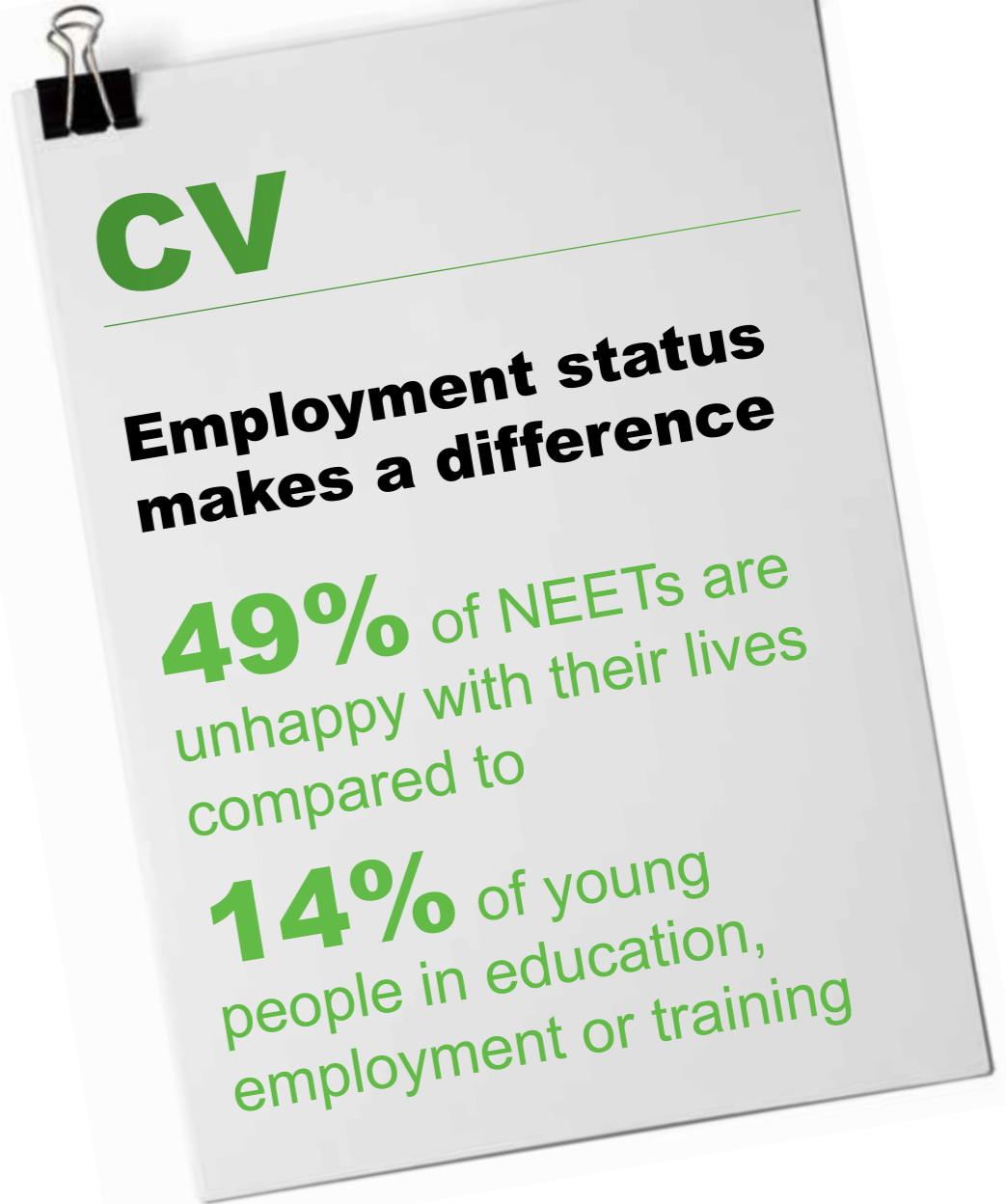
|                            | HAPPINESS                            |                                          | CONFIDENCE                           |                                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|                            | In education, employment or training | Not in education, employment or training | In education, employment or training | Not in education, employment or training |
| Work/education             | 73                                   | 41                                       | 69                                   | 53                                       |
| Home/accommodation         | 77                                   | 68                                       | 74                                   | 65                                       |
| Community/local area       | 69                                   | 62                                       | 70                                   | 62                                       |
| Family relationships       | 80                                   | 70                                       | 80                                   | 71                                       |
| Relationships with friends | 75                                   | 64                                       | 75                                   | 65                                       |
| Money                      | 60                                   | 45                                       | 67                                   | 55                                       |
| Qualifications             | 77                                   | 62                                       | 76                                   | 60                                       |
| Physical health            | 70                                   | 60                                       | 74                                   | 63                                       |
| Emotional health           | 68                                   | 55                                       | 74                                   | 62                                       |
| <b>Total index score</b>   | <b>72</b>                            | <b>59</b>                                | <b>73</b>                            | <b>62</b>                                |

## NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING

NEETs scored 13 points lower in the happiness index than young people who are in education, employment or training. NEETs were also 11 points behind their peers in levels of confidence about their futures.

**While 28 per cent of young people in work feel down or depressed “always” or “often”, this increases to almost half (48 per cent) among NEETs.**

Unsurprisingly NEETs are least happy about their work/education circumstances, followed by money and their emotional health. Work and money are also the aspects of life that NEETs feel least confident about.



## MARTIN'S STORY



**WITHOUT THE PRINCE'S TRUST, I WOULDN'T BE WHERE I AM NOW. MY LIFE HAS CHANGED BEYOND RECOGNITION AND I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE HELP AND SUPPORT I'VE RECEIVED.**

**- MARTIN WAKENELL, NORWICH**

**Martin Wakenell, 24, has turned his life around despite a difficult home life, a lack of qualifications and a long spell of unemployment.**

Martin lost his father when he was just 16. Life at home was difficult and he often felt like he had no-one to talk to about his problems. This had an impact on his grades and he left school with just two qualifications.

The difficulties at home meant Martin ended up homeless, surviving on tins of cold beans.

Martin said: "Life was tough. I felt like I didn't have many people to talk to and every day was a struggle. I found it really hard to cope. I felt very alone and didn't know which way to turn."

With dyslexia, few qualifications and no experience, Martin struggled to find full-time work. He was on the dole and at rock bottom when he heard about The Prince's Trust.

Martin joined The Trust's Get into Hospital Services course, supported by Serco Group, run at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital. As part of the scheme, he completed a work placement as a hospital porter. He shone in the role, for the first time realising his potential.

After completing the course Martin impressed the hospital so much with his determination and hard work that he was offered a full-time role as a catering assistant.

Martin is currently completing his NVQ Level Two in Support Services where he is building upon his business and health and safety skills to further his career.

## THE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION

Youth unemployment reached record levels during the recession.

This report examines how the recession has affected young people's lives and damaged their attitudes to work. The results suggest that unemployment can leave long-term scars on young people who are desperately trying to secure their first job or establish a career.

**Worryingly, more than one in four young people (27 per cent) believe their prospects have been "permanently damaged" by the recession.**

**Figure 8:** Illustrates how young people believe the recession has impacted on their working lives



**51%**

feel disillusioned by the state of the current jobs market



**43%**

believe the recession has set them back in their career



**27%**

believe their prospects have been permanently damaged by the recession



**25%**

believe their ambitions have been put on hold due to the recession

## NEETS AND THE RECESSION

NEET young people feel even more desperate about their employment prospects.

Almost one in five young people (19 per cent) feel they have no future due to the recession. This increases to more than a third (36 per cent) among young people who are NEET.

How NEETs feel their lives have been affected by the challenging economic climate:



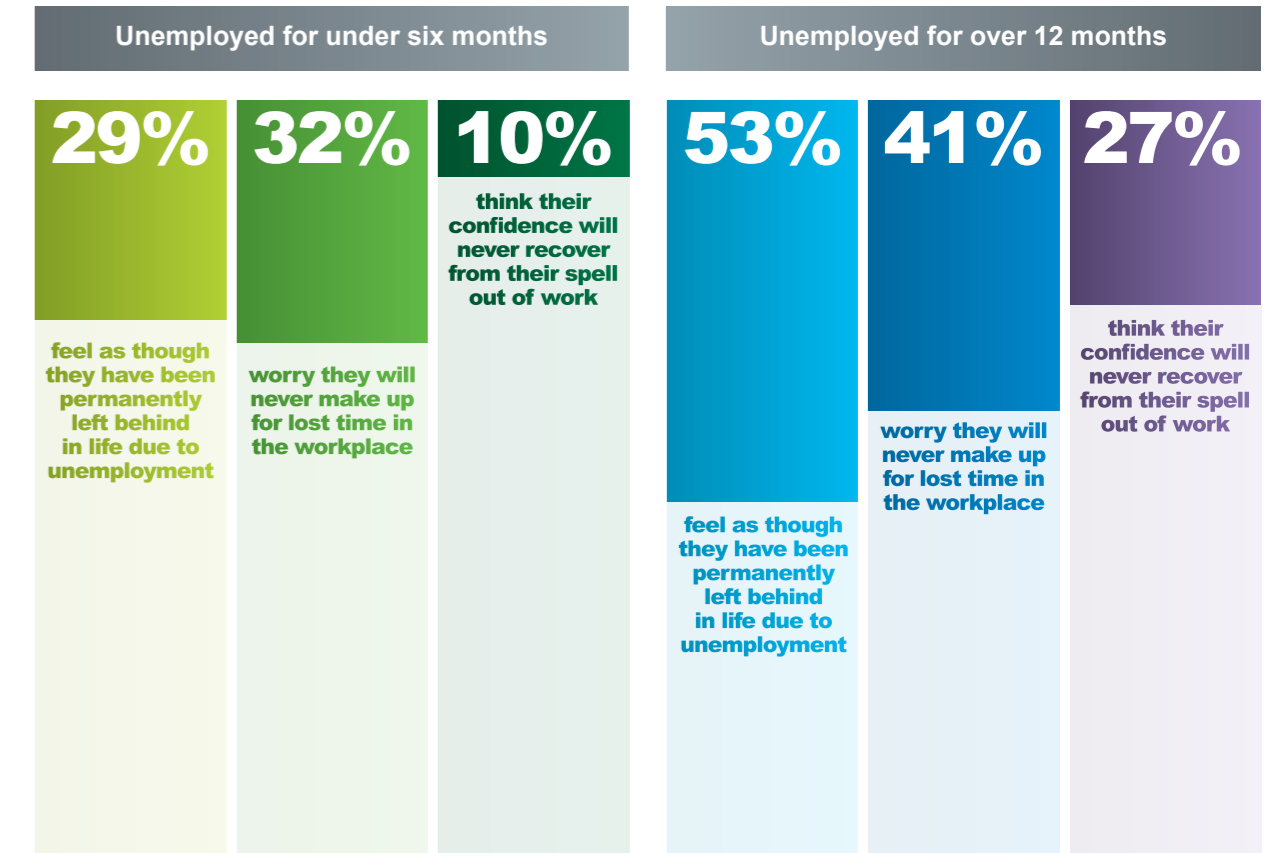
## LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

The Youth Index reveals that one in five unemployed young people (20 per cent) believe their confidence will never recover from their spell out of work.

The longer young people are out of work, the more likely they are to feel a lapse in confidence. Those who are long-term unemployed are significantly more likely to feel this way than those out of work for less than six months.

Ten per cent of those unemployed for less than six months feel their confidence will never recover from their spell out of work. For those out of work for more than a year, this figure almost triples to 27 per cent.

Figure 9: A comparison of views between young people who have been unemployed for six months or less and those who have been out of work for more than 12 months



## CRAIG'S STORY



**I CAN'T THANK THE PRINCE'S TRUST ENOUGH FOR THEIR SUPPORT.**

**- CRAIG BLAND, CHESTERFILED**



**Craig Bland, 29, from Chesterfield, was left devastated when he found himself unemployed after being made redundant at the height of the recession.**

Craig had always had a passion for antiques and left school at 16 to start an antiques restoration apprenticeship and was thrilled when this turned into a full-time job. Craig spent the next 10 years working his way up and was even chosen for an exciting project restoring World War One aeroplane propellers.

However, at the age of 26, and just two weeks before his wedding, Craig was dealt a huge blow when he was made redundant.

Craig recalls: "Realising I had no job was the worst moment of my life. I had seen other people struggling to find work and felt completely worthless knowing I had just joined a very long queue."

Craig started applying for other jobs straight away and would have taken anything to ensure he was earning money. But it was the middle of the recession and after applying for hundreds of jobs and hearing nothing back, he was left feeling hopeless.

Craig said: "I felt very low not being able to support myself and my family and I honestly thought my life had been completely ruined. I couldn't see a way forward and thought my prospects had been snatched away for good the very moment I was told I was being made redundant."

Six months later his wife suggested he use his skills to set up on his own and Craig approached The Prince's Trust to see if they could help. Within a few weeks Craig signed up to take part in The Trust's Enterprise programme which helps disadvantaged young people to set up in business.

After completing the course Craig was thrilled when he was awarded a dedicated business mentor to help him launch *Quality Antique Restoration* – a business specialising in antique furniture restoration and french polishing.

A few years later Craig's business is a huge success. Business is booming and he has built up a trusted reputation with the local community and across Derbyshire.

## YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE

Almost a third of young people (31 per cent) "always" or "often" feel lonely – and those who are unemployed are significantly more likely to feel this way.

The report reveals that many young people are turning to online communities.

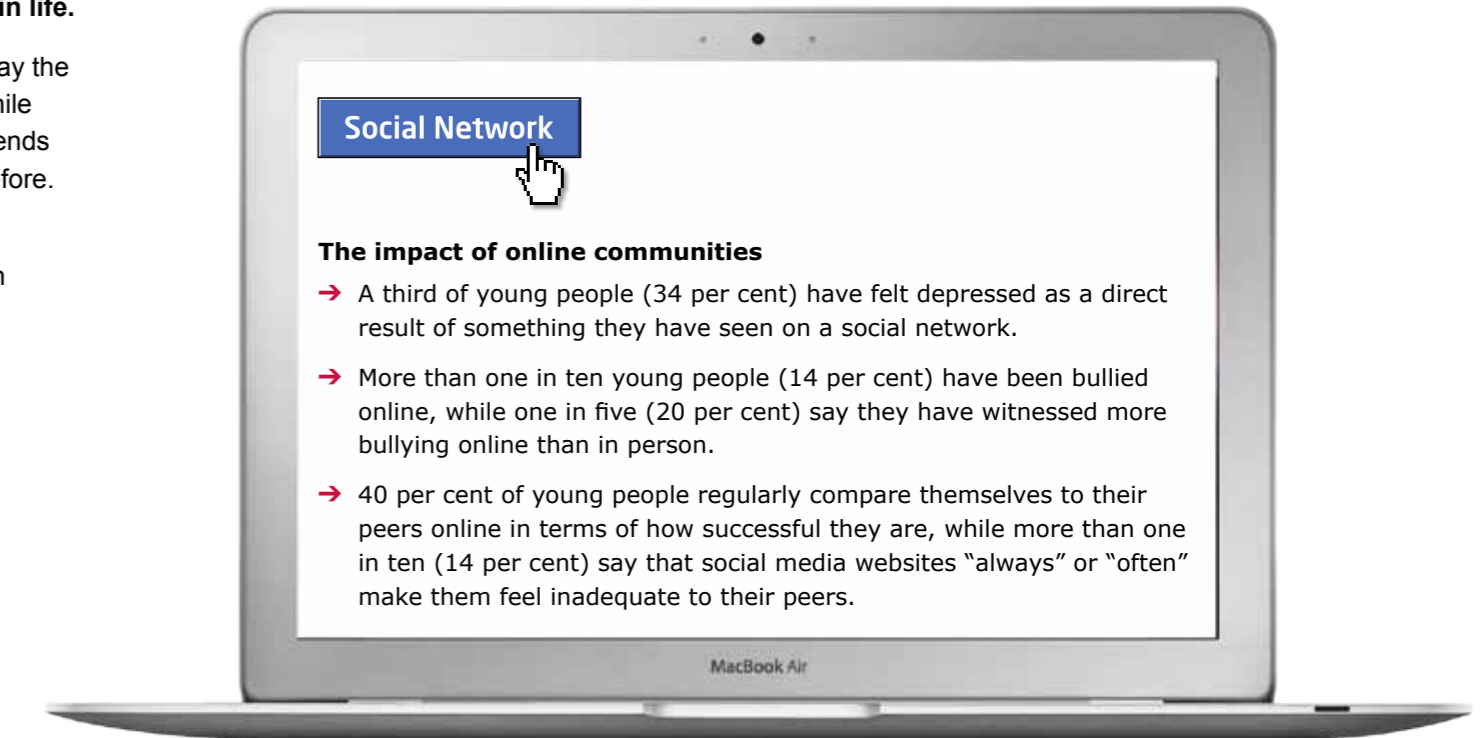
**More than one in five (23 per cent) claim the internet gives them a sense of community and friendship that they do not have elsewhere in life.**

More than half of young people (54 per cent) say the internet lets them talk to like-minded people while more than a third (39 per cent) say they are friends with people online that they have never met before.

However, two thirds of young people (65 per cent) would prefer to talk to someone in person than online if they had a problem.

At The Prince's Trust, we know that there are many positive aspects to the growing digital world, but it is important we do not neglect the vital support networks that young people need around them.

The Trust offers mentoring and one-to-one support for the most vulnerable young people, giving them the skills and confidence to move forward with their lives



## **THE PRINCE'S TRUST: SUPPORTING DISADVANTAGED YOUNG PEOPLE**

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The Prince's Trust launched additional support for young people with mental health needs on its Team programme four years ago and has been increasing this support year on year ever since.

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To date more than 8,200 young people have benefited from the Working for Wellbeing project, which is funded by Zurich Community Trust.

The Prince's Trust provides a range of personal development programmes, pre-apprenticeship schemes and mentoring to help young people into jobs. More than three in four young people supported by The Prince's Trust move into work, education or training.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

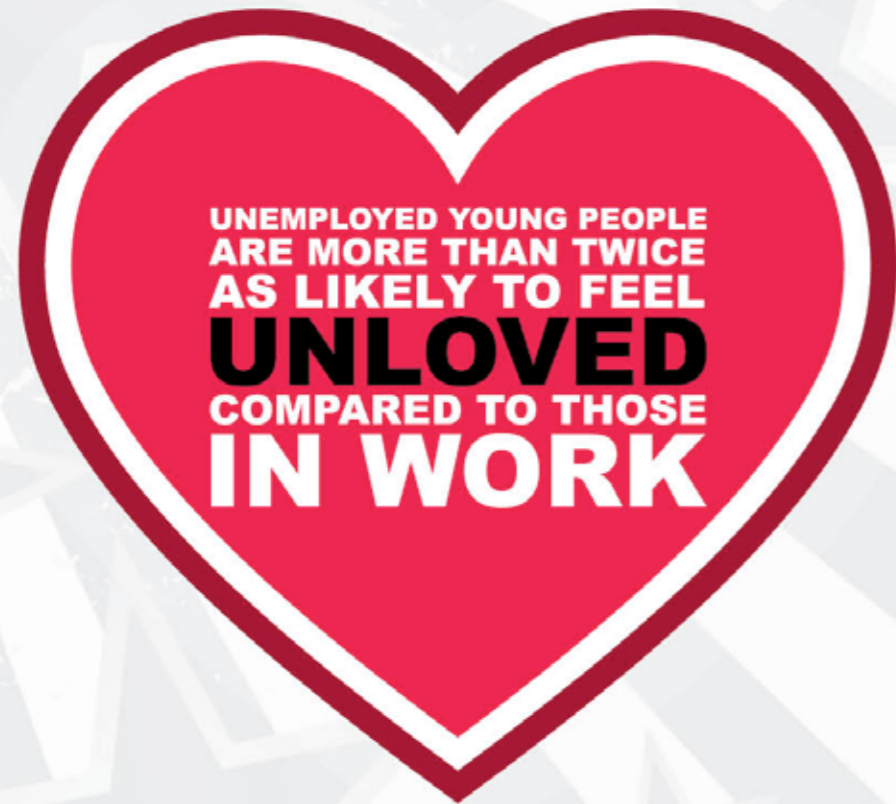
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The Prince's Trust would like to thank all the young people who are featured as case studies in this report.

The Trust would also like to thank YouGov for carrying out the research.

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**YouGov**<sup>®</sup>  
What the world thinks



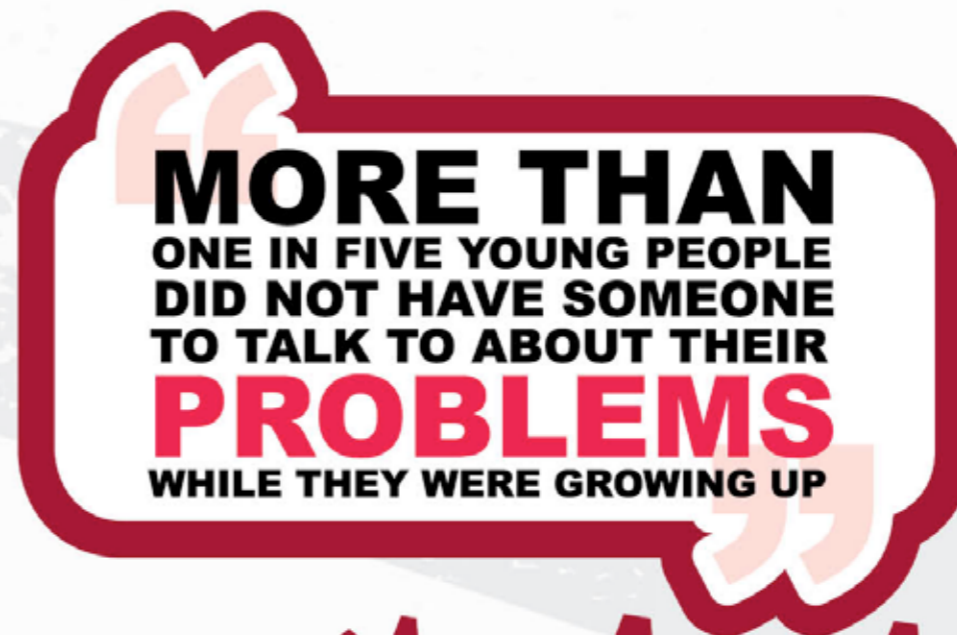
THE PRINCE'S TRUST  
**YOUTH INDEX**  
**2013**



ONE IN TEN YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL THEY **CANNOT COPE** WITH DAY-TO-DAY LIFE



YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (NEETS) ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO FEEL **UNABLE TO COPE** AS THEIR PEERS



**MORE THAN ONE IN FOUR** YOUNG PEOPLE BELIEVE THEIR PROSPECTS HAVE BEEN **PERMANENTLY DAMAGED** BY THE RECESSION





**Prince's Trust**