

2 in 5 S'porean youths, aged 22-29, have never been in a relationship: Survey

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A survey done by the National Youth Council (NYC) and the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) found that 39 percent of youths surveyed, by 2022, had never been in a relationship.

These youths also face barriers to dating, the top three being:

1. Not having met the right person yet.
2. There are more important priorities like jobs and studies compared to dating.
3. Dating in Singapore is stressful in terms of expenses and expectations.

This longitudinal study followed more than 3,000 youths aged between 17 and 24 over the course of 2017 to 2022.

This study aimed to explore youths' life satisfaction, aspirations, and priorities as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Youth well-being

From 2021 to 2022, youth life satisfaction remained stable, with 64 per cent indicating they were satisfied with their lives.

However, this is lower than when the study began in 2017, where 74 per cent of youths were satisfied with their lives.

IPS and NYC attribute this dip to the impact of ageing, and the data is consistent with the happiness curve theory.

Youths have also increasingly agreed that there are enough opportunities in Singapore to achieve their personal aspirations, as the number increased from 40 per cent in 2020 to 57 per cent in 2022.

In addition, the study found that moving from school to full-time work, attaining higher education and building meaningful relationships had significantly improved youths' life satisfaction.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the youths have "a renewed perspective" on it, as they are more likely to view it as positively impacting their lives.

Career as a key priority

"Having a good career" was among youths' top life goals for the next five years.

Other goals include being in good health and attaining financial security.

In 2022, 61 per cent of the youths said their jobs made them stressed. However, 69 per cent can tolerate the pressures of their work well, and 66 per cent are satisfied with their jobs.

That is an increase from 2019, when only 47 per cent of youths were stressed about their jobs, but 65 per cent could tolerate the work pressure, and 62 per cent were satisfied with their jobs.

When asked what youths believed was important in a job, most indicated having good opportunities for advancement and job security.

Meaningful relationships

Across the years, 85 per cent of youths indicated they had people they could turn to for problem-solving and advice.

83 per cent of youths also shared that interactions with others draw them out of their comfort zones. However, youths still face barriers in dating and relationships.

By 2022, two in five people had never been in a relationship.

Other than being a low priority, youths have not met the right person yet and find dating stressful in terms of expenses and expectations.

More surveys coming

IPS and NYC will continue their research for another five years, from 2024 to 2028.

It will build on existing insights and survey approximately 3,200 youths aged 24 to 31, including returning participants and new surveyees.

It will further clarify young people's evolving aspirations, experiences, priorities and barriers they face throughout their late youth years.

The results will be released after the study concludes in 2028.