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Eight in 10 (81%) Young Canadians Report Satisfaction with Their Life, up 4 Points from Last Year

Boys/Men Feeling more Positive than Girls/Women; Teens More Optimistic than Twenty-Somethings

Toronto, ON, April 21, 2023 — Although the struggles of the pandemic may be in the rear-view mirror for most, many Canadians are still grappling with uncertainty in the post-COVID era, stemming from skyrocketing inflation, potentially impending recession, war in Europe, and an ongoing climate crisis. However, a new poll conducted by Ipsos on behalf of RBC finds that younger Canadians continue to see improvements in their life compared to last year and their perceptions of their future, showing a different perspective toward the years ahead. That said, there remain gender and age differences in mental health and future outlook.

Young Canadians are More Satisfied with Life, as Adaptation to “New Normal” Continues

Overall, more young Canadians are faring better in different ways compared to last year. Compared to 2022, more report always or usually feeling happy (58% vs 54% in 2022), motivated (44% vs 41% in 2022), and excited (40% vs 36% in 2022). Fewer young Canadians report feeling overwhelmed (30%, - 4pts) and or isolated (25%, -4pts) compared to last year.

That said, gains have not been totally even, with boys/young men feeling more positive than girls and young women. While just over one in five (23%) of boys/young men report always or usually feeling anxious, this has decreased compared to last year (-6pts) and a similar decrease is seen in boys/young men who report always or usually feeling depressed (14%, -5pts). However, half (50%) of girls and young women now report feeling stressed out, an increase of 6 points compared to 2022, and the proportion of girls and young women who report always or usually feeling anxious (43%) or depressed (27%) is unchanged compared to 2022.

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Emotions felt always or usually, in general, by boys/men or girls/women
Bolded percentages indicate significantly higher results between years

	Boys/Men		Girls/Women	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Happy	61% (+6)	55%	56% (+4)	52%
Motivated	50% (+6)	44%	39% (+2)	37%
Excited	41% (+2)	39%	39% (+7)	32%
Anxious	23% (-6)	29%	43% (-)	43%
Depressed	14% (-5)	19%	27% (-)	27%
Stressed out	27% (-2)	29%	50% (+6)	44%
Overwhelmed	21% (-5)	26%	39% (-3)	42%

While overall satisfaction has increased among young adults, boys/young men are significantly more likely to say they are satisfied with their life overall (83%) compared to girls or women (78%). Life satisfaction is also significantly higher in younger teenagers, with over nine in 10 (92%) young Canadians aged 14-17 saying they are satisfied with life (very satisfied 33%/somewhat satisfied 59%), compared to three-quarters of Canadians (76%) aged 18-29 who report satisfaction with life overall (very satisfied 21%/somewhat satisfied 55%).

Young Canadians are also more satisfied with their family life compared to last year. Overall, significantly more young Canadians see an improvement in their family life (65% in 2023 compared to 61% in 2022) but differences between boys/young men and girls/young women persist in different aspects of life which boys/young men rate positively more than girls/young women.

For example, almost six in 10 (58%) boys/young men rate their friends and social life as good or excellent compared to under half (49%) of women. Boys/young men also give a higher rating to their physical health (62% boys/young men vs 50% girls/young women) and personal financial situation (38% boys/young men vs 29% girls/young women).

Younger Canadians aged 14-17, also rate more aspects of their lives positively compared to 18- to 29-year-olds, such as their family life (74% vs 62%), and their friends and social life (64% vs 50%).



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Overall, young Canadians in 2023 are significantly more likely to rate their mental health as excellent or good (47%) compared to 2022 (42%). Boys/young men, and 14-17-year-olds in general, are also significantly more likely to rate their mental health as excellent or good. Over half of boys/young men (55%) rate their health as excellent or good, compared to four in ten girls/young women (39%). Fourteen to seventeen-year-olds are also significantly more likely to rate their mental health as excellent or good (62%) compared to 18-29-year-olds (41%).

Half (50%) of Young Canadians Are Excited About their Future, a Significant Increase from 2022 (45%)

Continuing the trend, more young Canadians are excited about their future this year (50%) compared to last year (45%), though there are persistent gender differences when looking ahead. Almost one in six (56%) of boys/young men are excited about their future in 2023 compared to half (50%) in 2022. Although girls/young women are more excited when thinking about their life in general (39%) compared to last year (+7pts, 32% in 2022) they are significantly *less* excited about the future (43%) than boys/young men.

Girls/young women are also significantly more likely to feel anxious about climate change and the environment (30%) compared to boys/young men (24%). Anxiety about climate change and the environment is a bigger worry among 18-29-year-olds (30%) compared to 14-17-year-olds (18%).

Young Canadians are more excited about their future in the workforce (59%) compared to 2022 (54%). While over six in 10 (63%) of Canadian boys/young men are excited about their future in the workforce, this figure is just over half (55%) for girls/young women. Nonetheless, girls/young women are showing some signs of optimism about their future in the workforce compared to last year (+6pts, 49% in 2022), and report increased confidence that they have the knowledge and skills they need to find the jobs they want (60% compared to 52% in 2022). Girls/young women are also more confident than last year that they will be able to get a job in the field they want to work in (58%, +6pts) and that they will find one quickly (48%, +7pts). While these figures are still behind scores among boys/young men, girls/young women are catching up as the figures for boys/young men are on par with 2022, with 60% confident they will find a job in the field they want to work in and 52% confident they will find one quickly.

Among those aged 18-29 who are working, getting practical experience is considered among the most important factors in getting a job in their chosen career (35%), in addition to building confidence (36%), and improving the skills required for the job (35%).





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Nearly Four in 10 (38%) Young Canadians Feel they are Likely to Access Mental Health Resources in the Next 12 months, but the Type of Resources they Would Access Varies by Gender and Age

When asked how likely they would be to turn to different resources if they were struggling with a mental health challenge, the majority of young Canadians (61%) say they would be likely to turn to a friend, followed by looking for resources on the internet (54%), and talking to a parent (50%). Young Canadians are more likely to use an app for self-guided therapy (36%) compared to last year (32%) and use a free helpline (36% vs 32% in 2022).

Those aged 18-29 (40%) and girls/young women (42%) are more likely to access mental health resources in the next 12 months compared to 14–17-year-olds (31%) and boys/young men (34%). However, one in four (40%) said they would do nothing if they were struggling with a mental health challenge.

This year, more young Canadians say they have someone to turn to when they need help compared to last year (65% vs 61% in 2022). Boys/young men significantly more likely to say they have someone to turn to 2023 (66%) compared to last year (58%), while this increase is only marginal for girls/young women (65% in 2023 vs. 64% in 2022). Younger Canadians aged 14-17 year are also more likely to say they have someone to turn to when they need help (75%) compared to 62% of 18–29-year-olds.

Differences persist across gender and age when looking at the types of resources which young Canadians would turn to for help. Boys/young men are more likely than last year to speak to their parents (56% vs 48%), seek help from a medical professional in-person (45% vs. 40% in 2022) and go to the hospital emergency department (27% vs. 23% in 2022).

Girls/young women and 18-29-year-olds are more likely to turn to apps for help rather than speaking to someone directly: 18-29-year-olds are significantly more likely to use an app for self-guided meditation (37% vs 30% 14-17-year-olds), or an app for self-guided therapy (39% vs. 29% 14-17-year-olds), whereas teens aged 14-17 are more likely to talk to someone, be it to a friend (67% vs 59% 18-29-year-olds), to parents (70% vs 43% 18-29-year-olds) or a school counsellor (44% vs 26% 18-29-year-olds).



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between March 21, 2023, and April 14, 2023, on behalf of RBC. For this survey, a sample of 1,473 young Canadians (aged 14-29 years) was interviewed on the I-Say panel. For those under 18 years of age, permission from a parent/guardian was required before they could participate.

Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the target population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all young Canadians between the ages of 14-29 years been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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