



# YOUNG VOICE PERU REPORT



Save the Children

Executive Summary

**“Yes, there are chances to be heard, but it depends on the context, the date, and the politician”**

*(Adolescent from Huancayo)*

Young Voice Peru is a nation-wide survey carried out by Save the Children with the participation of children from all the regions in the country. In light of Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Young Voice Peru becomes a valuable instrument which amplifies the voices of adolescents so that they are acknowledged and taken into account by adults who are responsible of their development and care, as well as by authorities in charge of decision making and the formulation of policies in their favour.

The survey was originally developed by Save the Children Sweden in 2014. Based on this experience, the application of the survey was promoted in Kosovo, Lithuania, Mongolia, Armenia, and Jordan. For their part, Peru is the first country in the Americas to apply this strategy in order to contribute with significant changes in our society, and leaving a valuable landmark for other countries in the region.

The Young Voice Peru survey was carried out between July and September of 2017 with a total of 2,617 adolescents (between the ages of 12 and 17) participating voluntarily both in person and virtually in order to facilitate accessibility in the face of the geographical, cultural, and economic diversity of our country. In addition to the survey, participatory workshops were held with four focal groups consisting of adolescents from the regions with most respondents. Their participation was essential to the analysis and interpretation of the information gathered in the survey.

This report collects some of the outcomes of the survey on issues like security, participation, and the school, along with the analysis performed by the adolescents participating in the focus groups.

- One of the main forms through which a child or adolescent can exercise their rights is through participation. In this regard, 75.5% of the respondents believe it is important for politicians and decision-makers to listen to what children and adolescents think about different issues. In contrast with this interest, only 8.3% of the respondents was able to speak their opinion on any subject they consider important within a municipal space.
- The issues adolescents feel more interested about are associated with discrimination, equal rights between men and women, and other issues like corruption, sports, pets, the economic situation, adolescent pregnancy, vocational orientation, and the environment. The issue where they feel less interested is education (6%), which has generated a profound reflection by the authorities.

Assessment of the importance of adolescents being heard by the authorities

75%

Perception of the level of opportunities adolescents have to speak their minds and points of view to their municipal authorities

31.8%  
many

20.5%  
few

Have had a real opportunity to give their opinion in a municipal setting

8.3%

- It is worth noting that 37.7% said they had never heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Also, during the last year, only 37.4% of adolescents had received information regarding the Convention at their school.

It is difficult to guarantee the exercise of children's and adolescents' rights if the responsible authorities do not provide the necessary information to know those rights and to keep them in mind in their daily lives.

- 39.8% of the respondents has felt harassed during the school year (18.1% routinely, and 21.8% only sometimes), 44.6% has witnessed someone being beaten within the school. 46.1% feel worried of becoming victims of bullying (22%) or experiencing violence from their peers (24.1%); and little more than a third of the respondents sometimes or never felt safe in their classroom (21.8% sometimes; 12.8% never) or during the break (21.9% sometimes; 12.5% never). In the face of this terrible scenario, only 39.9% believe the teachers and other school personnel really work to stop school bullying, and 77% of the respondents don't know where to go and ask for help when they feel harassed and unfairly treated.
- Even when not all acts of discrimination are considered bullying, it is a significant risk factor and an attack against the dignity and rights of adolescents (and of any person, for that matter).

**“Here they discriminate against you for being weak, for not knowing how to defend yourself.”**

*(Adolescent from Callao)*

**22%**

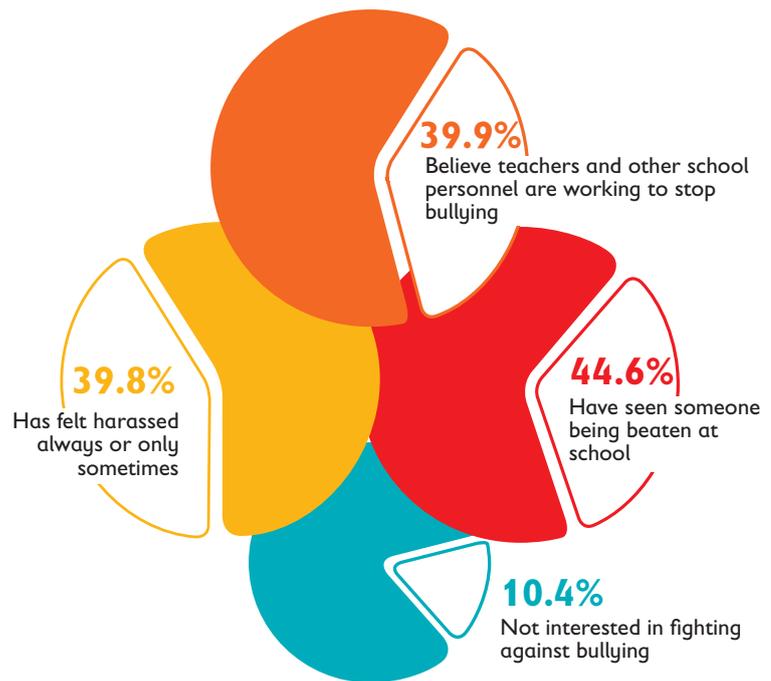
Are worried of becoming bullying victims

**34.6%**

Sometimes or never feel safe in their classroom

**34.4%**

Sometimes or never feel safe during their break



- According to the results, having “your parents not living with you” (8.1% of the respondents) is a condition which generates a high level of emotional vulnerability (“it makes you weak”), and which exposes them to becoming easy victims of bullying. In addition, 8.1% was discriminated during last year because of their age, and 7.6% because of their looks.

Additionally, the adolescents feel they are also discriminated against by adults. “They discriminate against us because of the way we think, and because of our age.” They are underestimated and not taken seriously. They say there are many tags that adults use on them, and adults also confuse having their own thinking with being rebellious or troublesome.

### Do you feel safe?

- Public transport creates a significant feeling of insecurity on more than half of the respondents: 50.1% feels sometimes or never secure when using this means during the day (29.4% sometimes and 20.7% never) and an alarming 61.4% at night (34.6% sometimes and 26.8% never). This feeling of insecurity has a direct impact on the lives of adolescents, because at this age they have a greater level of autonomy to move on their own in public transportation to school, and later, to carry out their extracurricular activities such as going to academies or institutes, to do schoolwork, to practice, etc.

- The spaces with more support and care by adults, both at home and in school, are perceived as safe: 56.2% always feel safe at home, and 44.6% in classrooms. Although it is worrying to notice the existence of an unbelievable 12.8% who never feel safe in the classroom, where a teacher supports students permanently, and 10.7% who feel the same level of insecurity at home. A similar percentage of insecurity is perceived during the break: 12.5% of adolescents always feel safe. Part of this is explain by the 21.4% who have felt worried during the year for experiencing violence from adults, and 24.1% who experienced violence from other children and adolescents.

- Regarding city or public spaces, 56.1% consider the district or community of residence safe: 33.1% always feel safe, and 23% almost always.

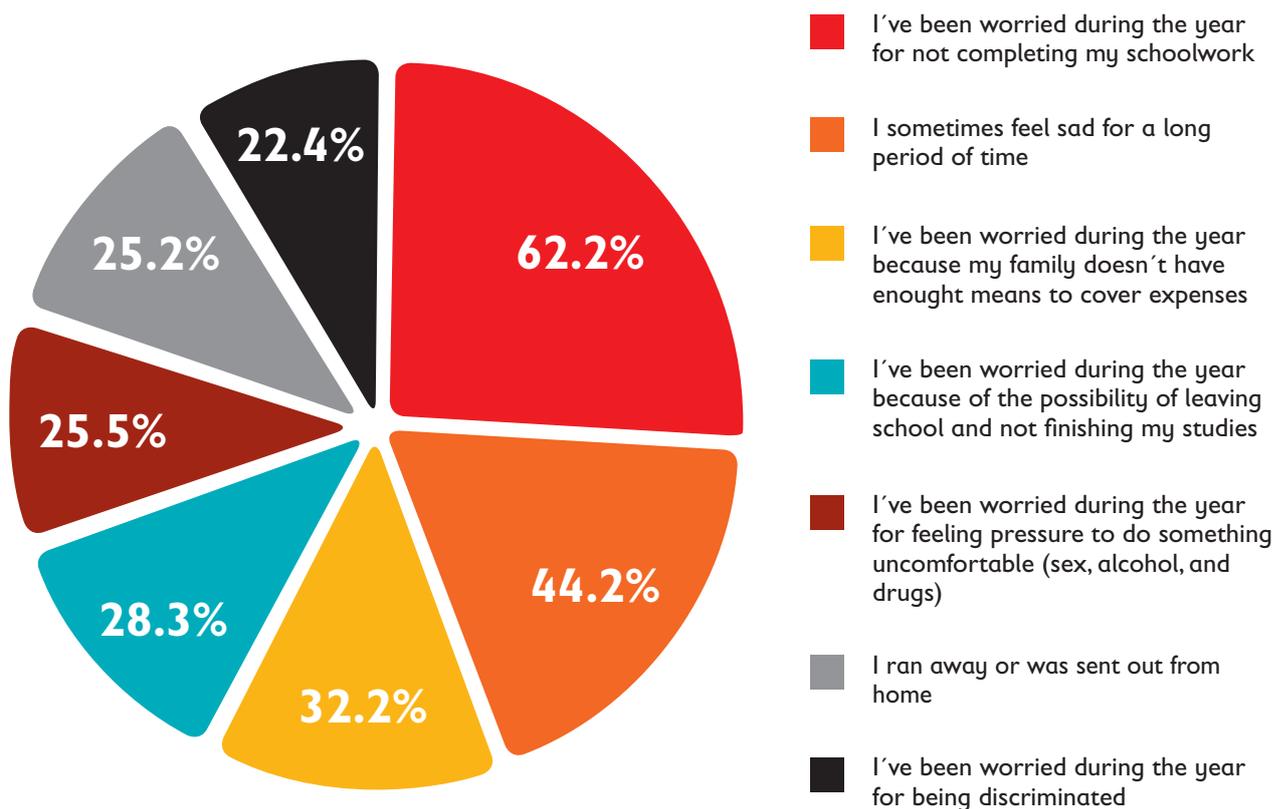
The city or community center is perceived as safe during the day at 59% (35.4% always safe, and 23.6% almost always); but this security perception is considerably reduced during the night: 56.9% feel safe at that time sometimes or never (33.5% sometimes, and 23.4% never). It is worth noting that 61.4% (42.1% always, and 19.3% almost always) feel safe where they practice sports, cultural activities, among others, which could be a key to make public spaces safer.

- Even with the high levels of violence and insecurity, it is particularly interesting to notice that the survey shows, in most cases (except at night), a feeling of security at relatively high levels. The then becomes evident—are adolescents unaware of this reality of insecurity affecting us? What makes them feel insecure?

For adolescents, insecurity also includes other factors, among which it is worth mentioning schoolwork, loneliness, and fitting in a group (having no one to trust), incomprehension (being treated unfairly), and lack of money at home.

Many of these criteria are reflected in the 62.2% that have felt worried during the year for not completing their schoolwork, and the 44.2% which sometimes have sad for long periods of time, or the 32.2% who are worried because their family have insufficient means to cover the necessary expenses.

These criteria are to change the traditional outlook and forms with which adults and authorities, in exchange for decision making, create safety plans and strategies for the city.



The use of the internet has become necessary and of daily use. Nevertheless, only 34.5% of the respondents have permanent access to internet at home, and 33.7% only sometimes. 31.8% do not have any access from home. The lack of access of little access to internet—therefore little access to information and knowledge—creates significant breaches of social inequalities and a negative impact on building capacities and the generation of opportunities, which adolescents need to live in a society that is born and works in the digital era..

### Dangers and risky situations

Along with the need and right adolescents have to access the internet, there is also the need for security and self-care in the event of dangers or situations that make them particularly vulnerable while they are online: 27.3% sometimes feel safe when surfing the web, and 16.8% never.

The survey shows two situations:

- a) The 31.8% with no access to the internet at home is forced to pay to get access temporarily in places locally known as “internet booths” (*cabina de internet*).

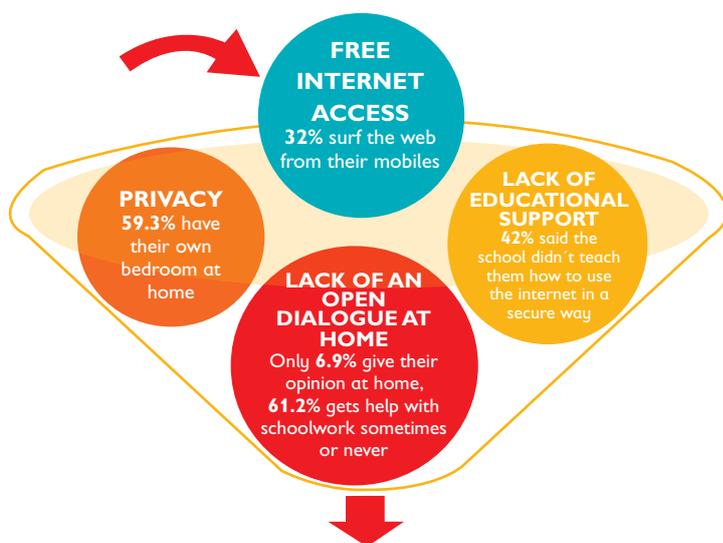
b) 32% of adolescents have internet access in their mobile phones, and 59.3% say they have their own bedrooms at home, which gives them enough privacy.

- If they cannot count on the support, guidance and trust of their parents or caregivers, being exposed to dangers is a possibility: their homes are the spaces where they were given the least chance to give their opinion on matters they considered important (only 6.9%) and 61.2% said they did not get (or only sometimes) help with schoolwork at home.
- If the school does not provide the necessary tools, they will likely be exposed to threats: 42% of the respondents said they were not taught how to use the internet in a secure way.
- If the authorities do not develop mechanisms to guarantee the safety, guidance and quality that the internet booths require, children and adolescents will be exposed to a variety of threats. It is a task that must be urgently addressed.
- But what threats are we speaking of? 22.8% of the respondents have been contacted online by an adult to talk about sex, and 28% have received insulting messages online by other children or adolescents.

Feeling exposed to being approached or contacted by an adult (with a false identity) seeking to cause them harm or to take advantage of them by revealing private aspects on social networks are two of the situations that make adolescents most insecure and fearful.

**“ I know someone who has more than 8 Facebook accounts... It makes him feel more secure, but that’s a lie—it’s only insecurity.”**

*(Adolescent boy from Lima)*



**Exposed to online threats**

*22.8% has been contacted by an adult to talk about sex, 16.8% never feel safe when they are online.*

**“ I know of a school where they train you to become a housewife.”**

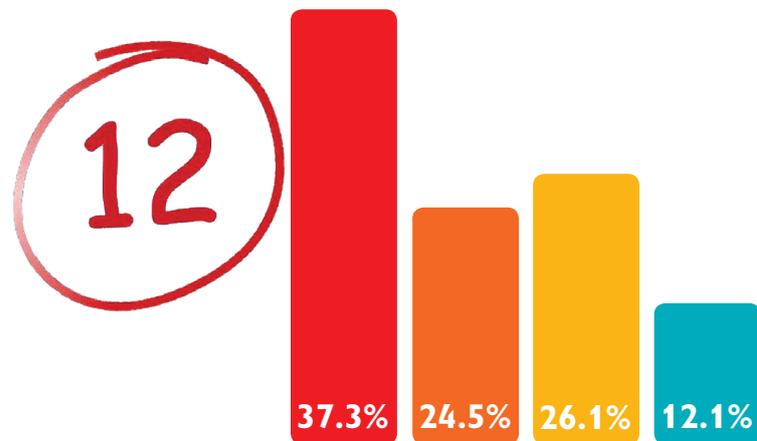
*(Adolescent girl from Huancayo)*

Likewise, the level of acceptance and/or recognition they get through social networks is an important aspect that makes them feel more confident and determines the behaviour these adolescents use on social networks every day. Specific examples of this are the need to create several Facebook accounts—each one tailored to fit in a particular group or to build different identities—, and the considerable emotional burden generated by many or few likes their posts get on their Facebook walls. All this increases their levels of exposure and vulnerability.

- Finally, the adolescents expressed their level of satisfaction on the teaching they get at school. 61.8% feel satisfied always (37.3%) or almost always (24.5%) with the teaching they get at school, and 38.2% is sometimes (26.1%) or never satisfied (12.1%). If this was converted into a grade or mark, the adolescents would have given a 12 to the teaching they receive.

**““We adolescents hold a lot of hope inside us.”**

*(Adolescent boy from Huánuco)*



Are you satisfied with the education you receive in your school?

