



I have connected with the workers well and they have helped me a lot from getting basic tasks done as well as major tasks done. The workers were social and friendly so they were easy to speak to when I needed help.

Young people with disability and mental health 7 year analysis, 2015-2022

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) assists vulnerable young people to find and maintain appropriate housing, address physical and mental health issues, and establish successful relationships and support networks.

BYS has collected self-reported mental health diagnoses and self-rated mental health data from everyone accessing ongoing planned support since 2015. We've analysed this data to compare demographic factors such as age, gender, cultural identities, sexuality, experience of disability, and parenthood.

Over 2,600 young people provided information about their disability status and mental health at intake. This factsheet summarises the mental health assessment data for **young people with disability**. Over the last 7 years, 18% of young people supported by BYS identified that they have a disability. The most common disabilities were learning/behavioural followed by intellectual/developmental.

Young people with disability and homelessness:

Anyone can be affected by homelessness. However, some groups, such as people with disability, may face additional risk factors, such as limited engagement with the labour market, lack of social support and low income.ⁱ

Previous research highlights that people with disability in Australia are at greater risk of homelessness than the general population, with the highest risk groups being people with psychological, intellectual and mental health disability as well as those with difficulties in schooling and employment.ⁱⁱ

Young people with disability and mental health:

People with intellectual disability have a very high rate of mental health concerns and experience a range of barriers to accessing mental health support.ⁱⁱⁱ

Nine in ten young people with disability noted a negative impact on their mental health over the COVID-19 pandemic.^{iv}



ⁱ<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/housing/homelessness-services>

ⁱⁱ<https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research-in-progress/Homelessness-policy-and-systems-for-people-with-disabilities>

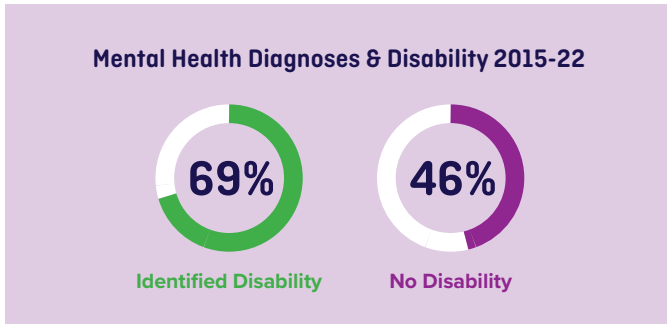
ⁱⁱⁱWhittle et al., 2018. Barriers and enablers to accessing mental health services for people with intellectual disability: A scoping review. *Journal of Mental Health Research in Intellectual Disabilities*.

^{iv}Theis et al., 2021. The effects of COVID-19 restrictions on physical activity and mental health of children and young adults with physical and/or intellectual disabilities. *Disability Health Journal*.

Young people with disability and mental health

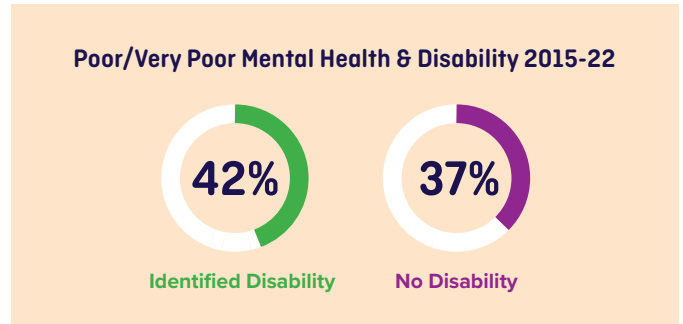
7 year analysis, 2015-2022

Our data on mental health diagnosis - 2015-2022:

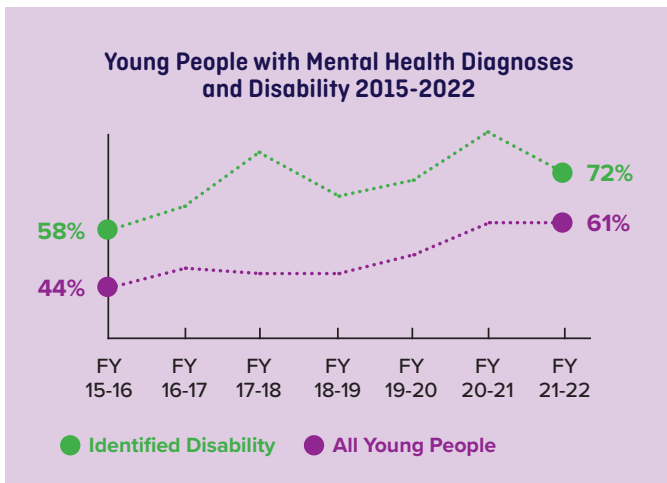


At intake, we found that young people with disability were **much more likely** to have mental health diagnoses (69%) compared to young people without disability (46%).

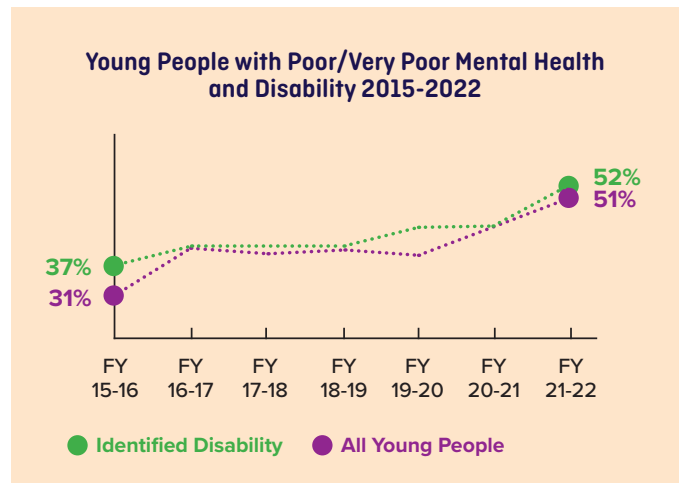
Our data on self-rated mental health - 2015-2022:



We found young people with disability were **much more likely** to self-rate their mental health as poor/very poor (42%) compared to young people without disability (37%).



Across the 7 years, the rate of mental health diagnoses for young people with disability was **consistently higher** than for all young people, peaking at 83% in 2020-21.



For the first 5 years, young people with disability were **more likely** to self-rate their mental health as poor/very poor but this **returned to similar rates** as all young people in 2020-21 and 2021-22.

CONCLUSION

The findings in this report highlight the need for expanded mental health supports for young people with disability. There are mild/ moderate early intervention supports and acute mental health crisis services available, but few free, accessible, and timely support for young people who fit between acute crisis and early intervention in Brisbane.