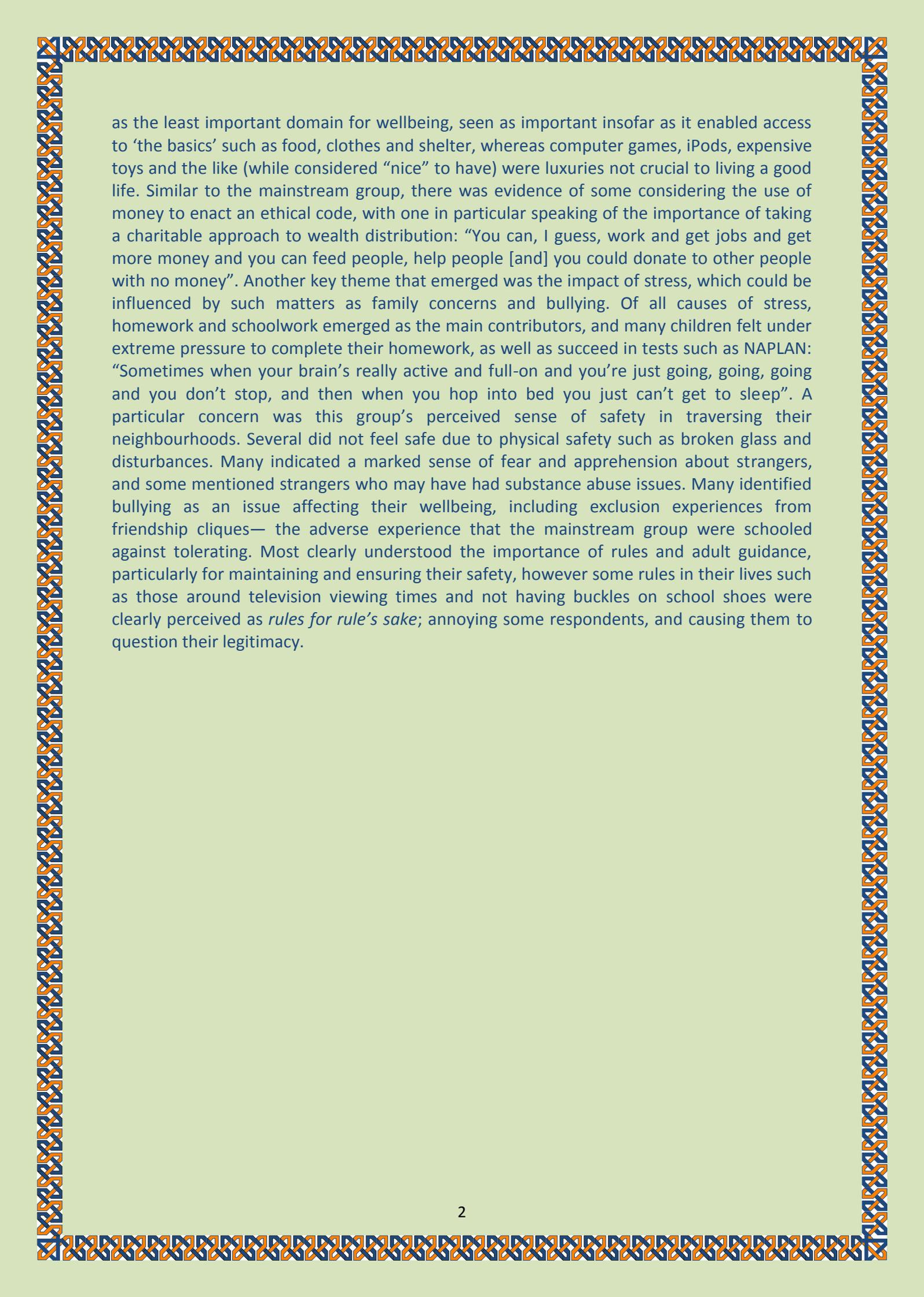


What have young people from regional and remote communities said about "wellbeing"?



Like most, this group prioritised family as the cornerstone of their wellbeing, and noted stress, safety, and bullying as concerns that hindered their wellbeing. The group's conception of 'family' revolved around biological-based connections, including parents, siblings and extended family, while some also counted pets as part of their family. There was some discussion of struggling with the relational dynamics of their families: "All my brothers gang up on me [and] did stuff to me [and] then my mum would listen to my brother and she would instantly take sides with him", and perhaps similar to most groups, the respondents ranked friendship high on their lists for their support and listening, helping each other, and having fun: "I mostly did 'friends' because they keep you company, they can help you, support you ...friendship is a single soul dwelling in two bodies". Most friends were found at school, but some spoke about making friends around the neighbourhood, differentiating "friends at school" from "street friends". Beyond this, similar to some of the other groups, there was a differentiation between 'good friends' and 'bad friends'. Health was seen as important for wellbeing, and most considered this getting good exercise and sport; eating healthy food; and generally looking after yourself. One child spoke about the cost of healthcare: "hospitals; I believe that they should be less expensive". The group ranked school high and articulated two common themes: school was seen as a place to get an education, a sphere for learning and growing and thus linked to future wellbeing securing a good job in adult life; and school was also seen as important for respondents to socialise with their friends and peers. This group had a clear concept of community; as encompassing a number of different groupings such as relationships that spanned family and school. Definitions of community tended to revolve around shared activities: "There's lots of different communities...like there's the community at school; there's community at dancing [and] there's Indigenous communities, more out of town". Again, the relational dimensions of community were emphasised as a source of support and connectivity. Money was ranked



as the least important domain for wellbeing, seen as important insofar as it enabled access to ‘the basics’ such as food, clothes and shelter, whereas computer games, iPods, expensive toys and the like (while considered “nice” to have) were luxuries not crucial to living a good life. Similar to the mainstream group, there was evidence of some considering the use of money to enact an ethical code, with one in particular speaking of the importance of taking a charitable approach to wealth distribution: “You can, I guess, work and get jobs and get more money and you can feed people, help people [and] you could donate to other people with no money”. Another key theme that emerged was the impact of stress, which could be influenced by such matters as family concerns and bullying. Of all causes of stress, homework and schoolwork emerged as the main contributors, and many children felt under extreme pressure to complete their homework, as well as succeed in tests such as NAPLAN: “Sometimes when your brain’s really active and full-on and you’re just going, going, going and you don’t stop, and then when you hop into bed you just can’t get to sleep”. A particular concern was this group’s perceived sense of safety in traversing their neighbourhoods. Several did not feel safe due to physical safety such as broken glass and disturbances. Many indicated a marked sense of fear and apprehension about strangers, and some mentioned strangers who may have had substance abuse issues. Many identified bullying as an issue affecting their wellbeing, including exclusion experiences from friendship cliques— the adverse experience that the mainstream group were schooled against tolerating. Most clearly understood the importance of rules and adult guidance, particularly for maintaining and ensuring their safety, however some rules in their lives such as those around television viewing times and not having buckles on school shoes were clearly perceived as *rules for rule’s sake*; annoying some respondents, and causing them to question their legitimacy.