

Caregiver support

Another crucial factor that the PILNA student assessment captured was caregiver support for students. Caregiver support, in its many forms, is widely recognised as an enabler of success in children’s education.

Students from PILNA 2021 were provided with a list of activities and asked to indicate how frequently someone they lived with provided help or support with the activities. They could respond with ‘Always’, ‘Most of the time’, ‘Sometimes’, or ‘Never’.

Caregiver support by proportion of students

Table STT1.4 shows the proportion of students in both year four and year six who answered with either ‘Always’ or ‘Most of the time’.

Table STT1.4

Percentage of students whose caregivers more frequently support their children

category	Year 4	Year 6
Check that your homework is complete	64% (7.1)	44% (6.7)
Help you with your homework	62% (7.7)	46% (1.1)
Ask you about your school work	82% (3.6)	58% (2.1)
Ask you about what you read	66% (13.1)	35% (5.7)
Understand your problem and worries	52% (1.7)	43% (2.1)
Comfort you if you are feeling upset	52% (1.7)	50% (2.9)
Support or encourage you	75% (10.7)	59% (5.2)
Give you advice and guidance	75% (3.6)	43% (3.8)

Percentage of students whose caregivers frequently support their children, Niue, PILNA 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

The results show that half, or more than half, the students reported that their caregivers ‘Always’ or ‘Most of the time’ checked their homework was complete (year four, 64%; year six, 44%), helped with their homework (year four, 62%; year six, 46%), or asked about their schoolwork (year four, 82%; year six, 58%). Higher proportions of year four students reported their caregivers provide this support to them than did year six students.

Three out of four, 75%, year four students reported that their caregivers frequently supported or encouraged them and gave them advice and guidance. Fewer year six students reported frequent support in these areas; 59% of year six students reported that their caregivers frequently supported or encouraged them and 43% reported that their caregivers frequently gave them advice and guidance.

Across both year levels, about half the students reported that their caregivers 'Always' or 'Most of the time' understood their problems and worries (year four, 52%; year six, 43%) and comforted them when they were feeling upset (year four, 52%; year six, 50%). This may be an area to monitor, as these questions may be linked with student well-being.

What does this mean?

Similar to the region, high proportions of students are frequently receiving support from their caregivers. Niue has higher proportions of students frequently receiving support than the region in all areas, with one exception. Some of these proportions were substantially higher. The exception was that a lower proportion of year six students in Niue (43%) reported that their caregivers frequently gave them advice and guidance than did year six students across the region (63%).

Although Niue has higher proportions of frequent caregiver support than does the region, the implications of this should be investigated further as it may relate to student performance and well-being.

Also, in Niue, lower proportions of year six students reported frequent caregiver support than year four students in all areas. This may reflect changes in the need for caregiver support over time, but the reasons for this should be investigated further.