# Social Issues and Diverse Young Australians

## A Summary of Key Challenges and Young People's Concerns

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Youth, Diversity and Wellbeing in a Digital Age Stream
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This is a summary of our full paper which can be found on our website.

## Literature Reviews

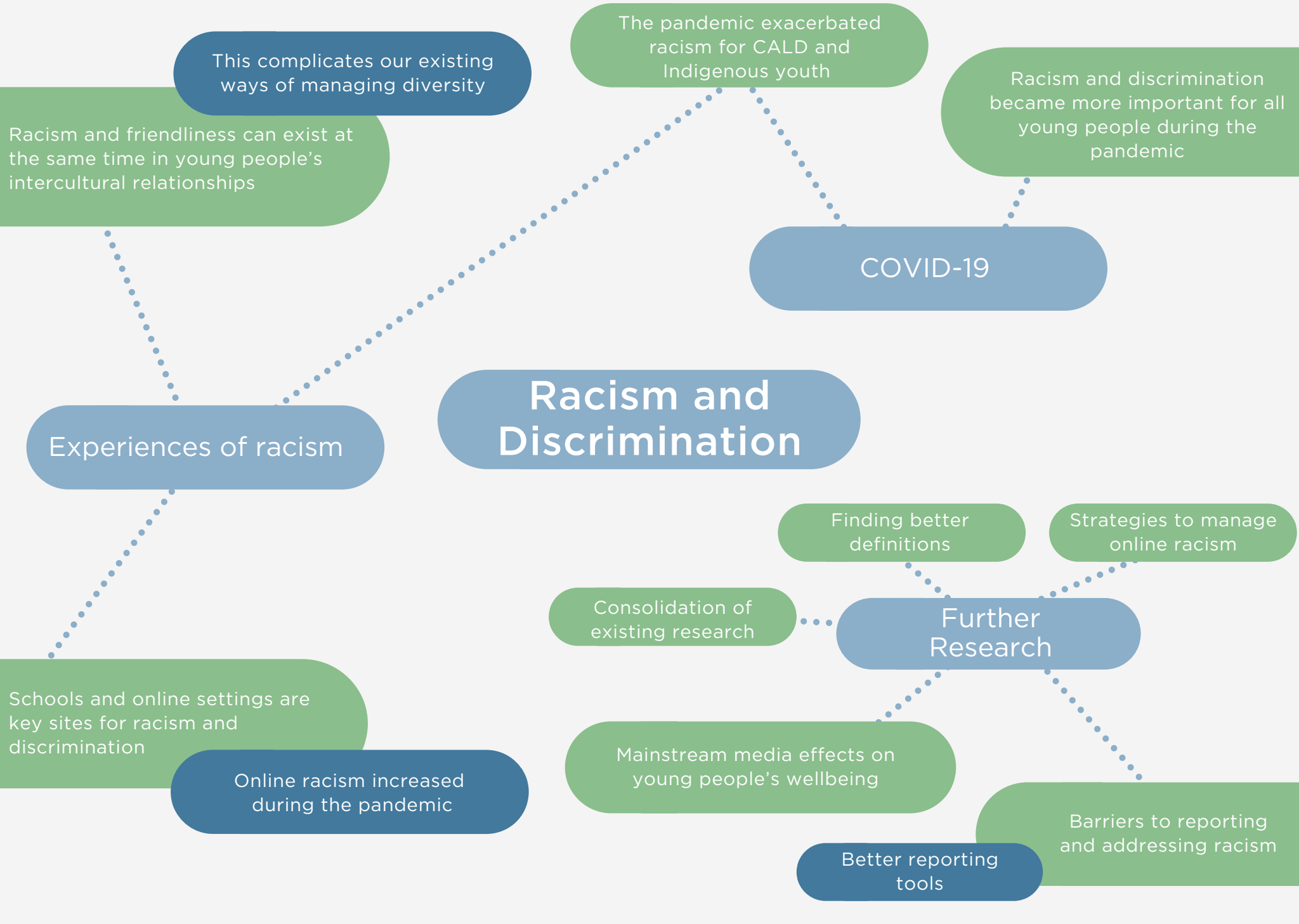
We evaluated existing evidence in academic research, policy documents, and grey literature to find the most significant issues.

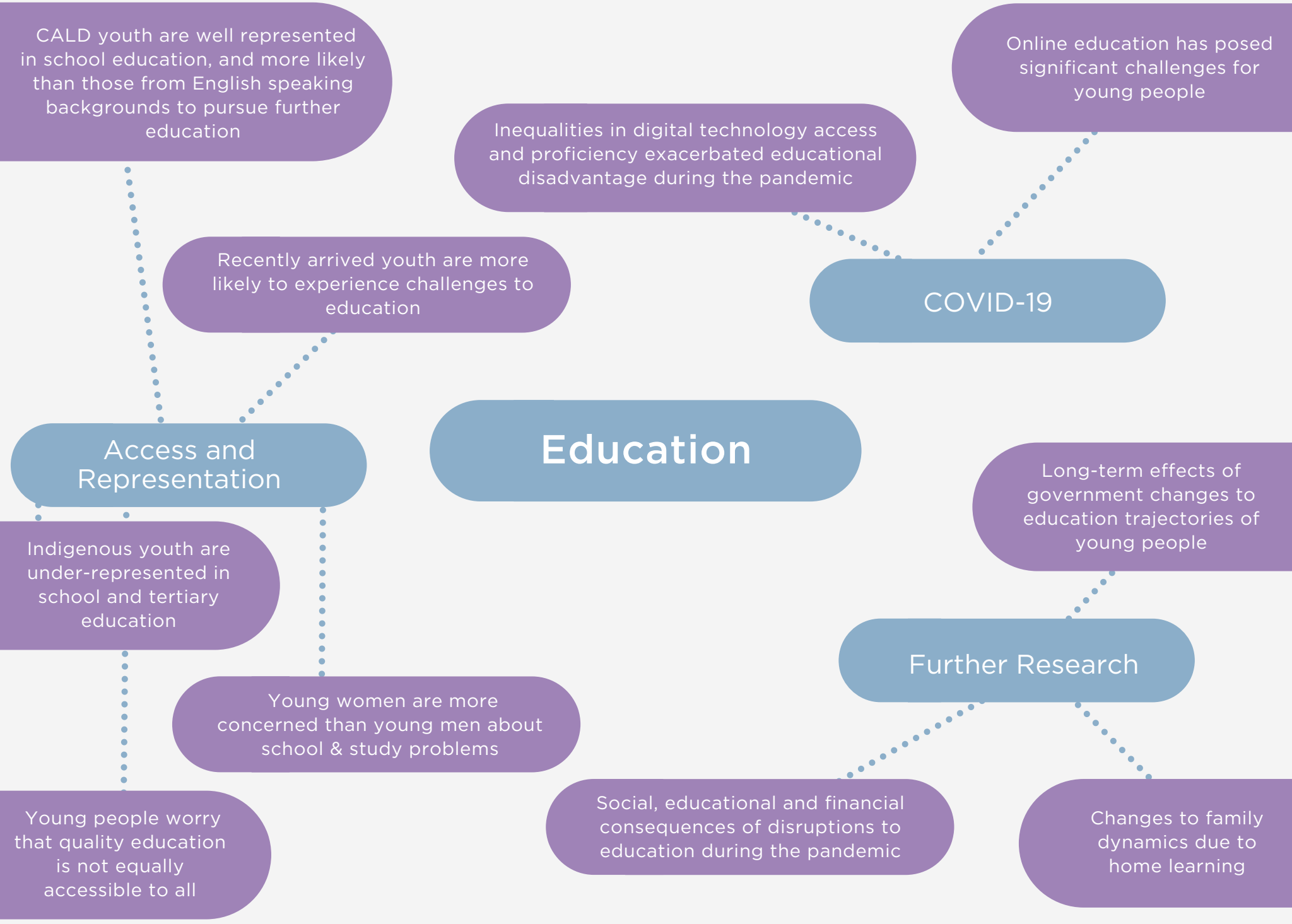
## Living Lab

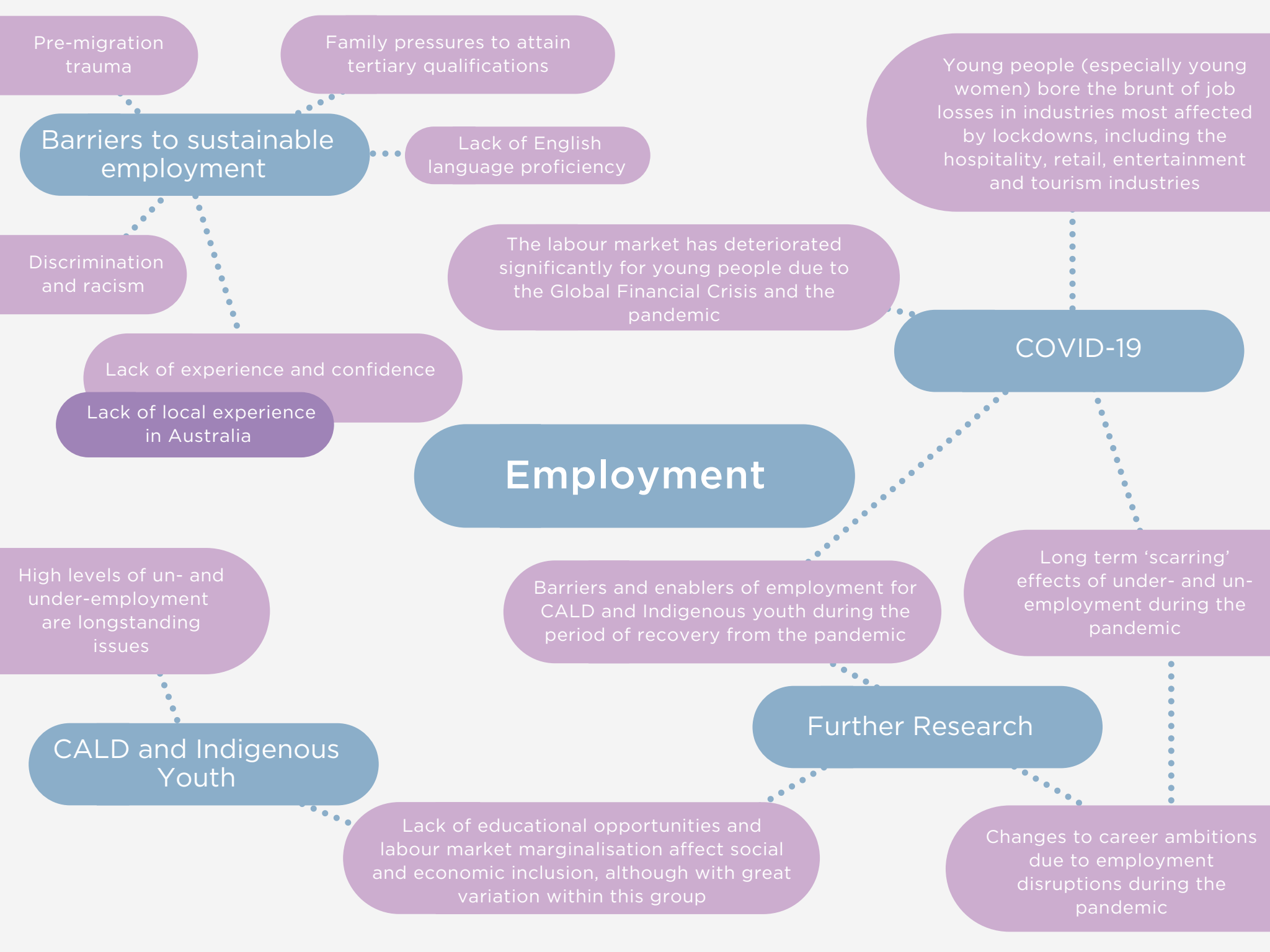
Over 50 representatives

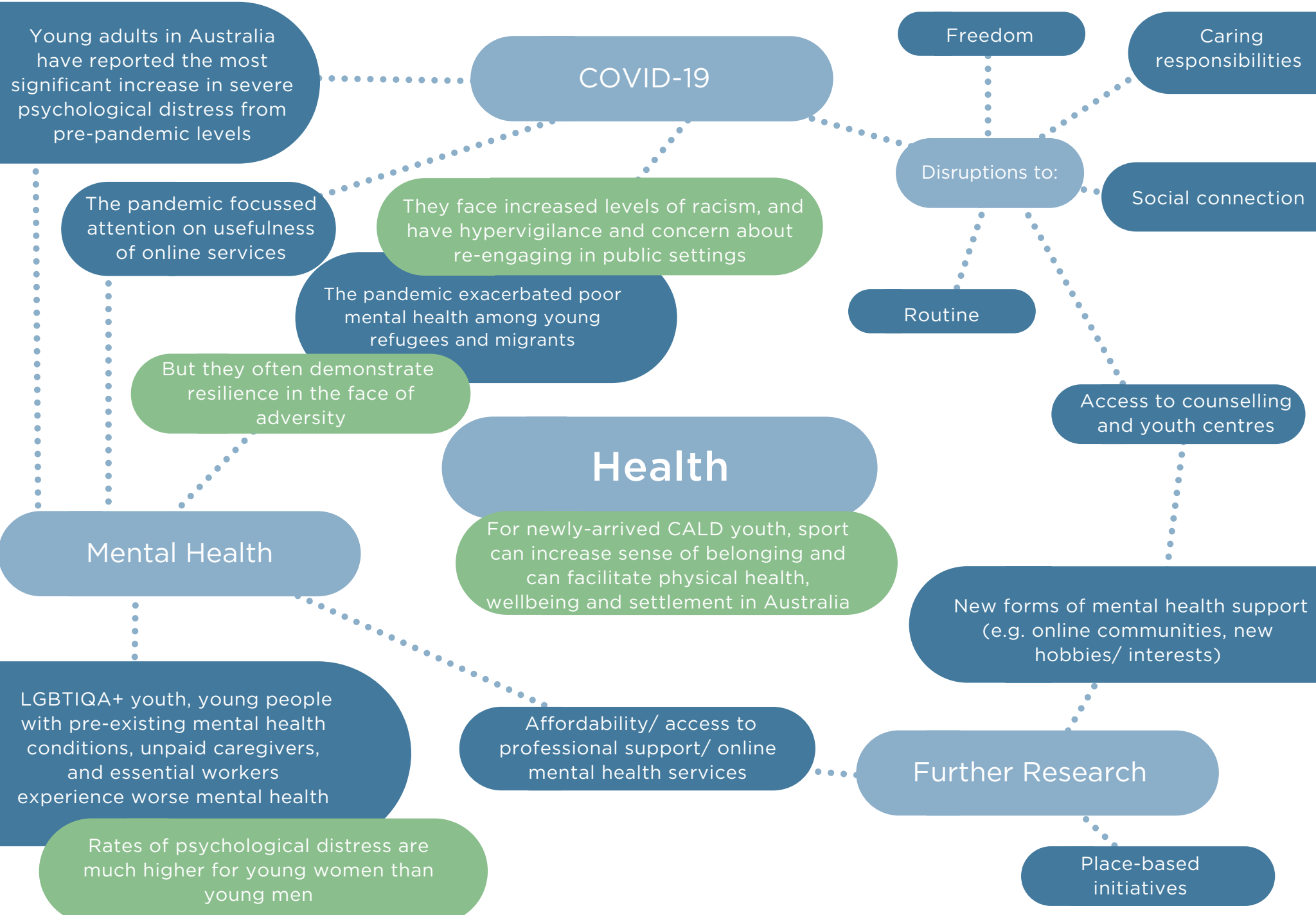
We asked government, organisations, academics and young people what they thought over 6 roundtables

- Racism and Discrimination
- Education
- Employment
- Health


Racism and Discrimination
Experiences of racism
Racism and friendliness can exist at the same time in young people's intercultural relationships
This complicates our existing ways of managing diversity
Schools and online settings are key sites for racism and discrimination
Online racism increased during the pandemic
COVID-19
The pandemic exacerbated racism for CALD and Indigenous youth
Racism and discrimination became more important for all young people during the pandemic
Further Research
Finding better definitions
Strategies to manage online racism
Consolidation of existing research
Mainstream media effects on young people's wellbeing
Barriers to reporting and addressing racism
Better reporting tools


Education
Access and Representation
CALD youth are well represented in school education, and more likely than those from English speaking backgrounds to pursue further education
Recently arrived youth are more likely to experience challenges to education
Indigenous youth are under-represented in school and tertiary education
Young women are more concerned than young men about school & study problems
Young people worry that quality education is not equally accessible to all
COVID-19
Inequalities in digital technology access and proficiency exacerbated educational disadvantage during the pandemic
Online education has posed significant challenges for young people
Further Research
Long-term effects of government changes to education trajectories of young people
Social, educational and financial consequences of disruptions to education during the pandemic
Changes to family dynamics due to home learning


Pre-migration trauma
Family pressures to attain tertiary qualifications
Barriers to sustainable employment
Lack of English language proficiency
Discrimination and racism
Lack of experience and confidence
Lack of local experience in Australia
Young people (especially young women) bore the brunt of job losses in industries most affected by lockdowns, including the hospitality, retail, entertainment and tourism industries
The labour market has deteriorated significantly for young people due to the Global Financial Crisis and the pandemic
COVID-19
Employment
High levels of un- and under-employment are longstanding issues
Barriers and enablers of employment for CALD and Indigenous youth during the period of recovery from the pandemic
Long term 'scarring' effects of under- and un-employment during the pandemic
CALD and Indigenous Youth
Further Research
Lack of educational opportunities and labour market marginalisation affect social and economic inclusion, although with great variation within this group
Changes to career ambitions due to employment disruptions during the pandemic


Young adults in Australia have reported the most significant increase in severe psychological distress from pre-pandemic levels
COVID-19
Freedom
Caring responsibilities
Disruptions to:
Social connection
Routine
The pandemic focussed attention on usefulness of online services
They face increased levels of racism, and have hypervigilance and concern about re-engaging in public settings
The pandemic exacerbated poor mental health among young refugees and migrants
But they often demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity
Access to counselling and youth centres
Health
Mental Health
For newly-arrived CALD youth, sport can increase sense of belonging and can facilitate physical health, wellbeing and settlement in Australia
New forms of mental health support (e.g. online communities, new hobbies/ interests)
LGBTIQA+ youth, young people with pre-existing mental health conditions, unpaid caregivers, and essential workers experience worse mental health
Affordability/ access to professional support/ online mental health services
Further Research
Rates of psychological distress are much higher for young women than young men
Place-based initiatives

Read the full review at
crisconsortium.org/publications

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