

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN 2020

CONSULTATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (12 – 17 YEARS)
IN DUBLIN CITY ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

- PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2020 -

HOW HAVE DUBLIN CITY YOUNG PEOPLE (12-17) BEEN IMPACTED BY COVID-19?



218
young people
(12-17 years) in
Dublin City surveyed

We asked Dublin City Young People, aged 12-17 years, how Covid-19 has impacted their lives. The research was carried out by Dublin City North and Dublin City South Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC), with Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg.

In total, 218 Young People answered an online survey in July/August 2020, and 10 Young People from Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg took part in an online focus group.



10
young people
Comhairle na nÓg
Focus Group

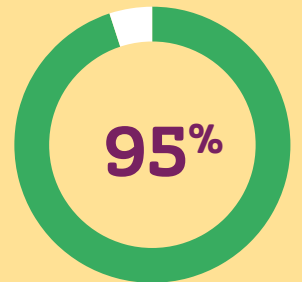
HERE'S WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID:

1. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

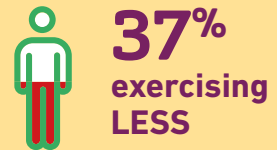
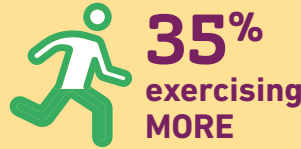
Mixed Feelings Since Covid-19
(some or most of the time)



Concern for Others:



are worried or very worried about someone else's health due to Covid-19



WHAT WOULD HELP?



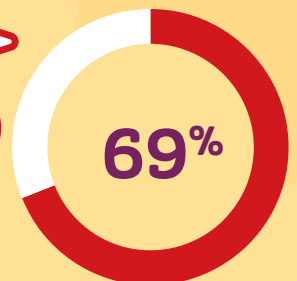
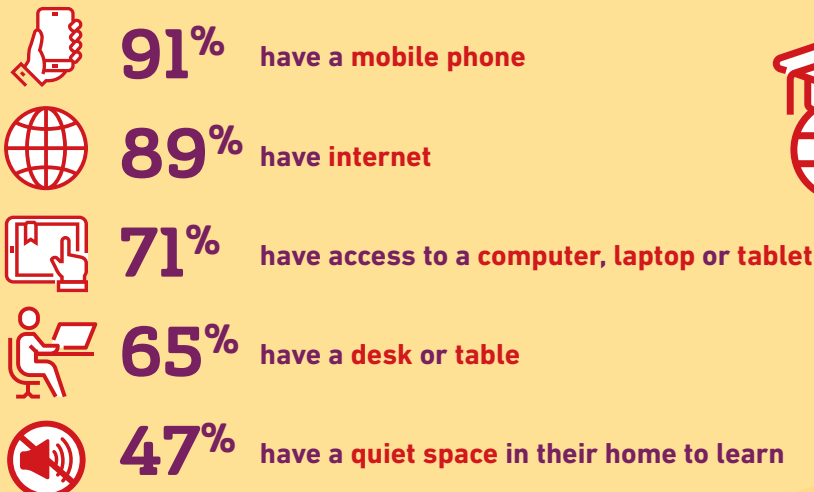
Information and access to counselling (online and face to face)



Mental health workshops in schools and more sports/ exercise and outdoor activities

2. LEARNING, EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

Not all young people have access to everything they need to learn at home



are worried their learning has been affected by schools being closed earlier in the year

WHAT WOULD HELP?



1 to 1 supports; extra classes and grinds to catch up in school

Most young people feel safe in their community since Covid-19

3. FEELING SAFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

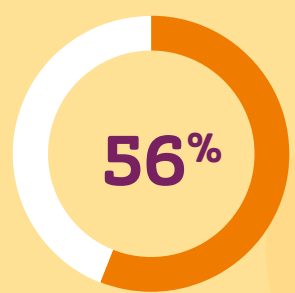
WHAT WOULD HELP?



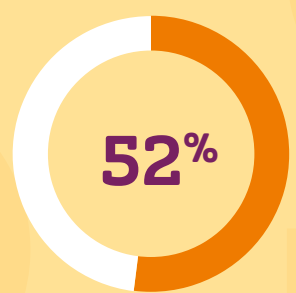
Clearer information on face masks, social distancing and safety in schools



Government Information on Covid-19 should be aimed directly aimed at Young People; and Young People should be asked to help create this information.



Over half of Young People are worried about money since Covid-19



Over half of Young People said their parents jobs had been affected by Covid-19



4. JOBS AND MONEY

WHAT WOULD HELP?



More jobs, training, apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities for Young People



66% seeing friends less often since Covid-19



52% meeting friends OUTDOORS



28% meeting friends ONLINE

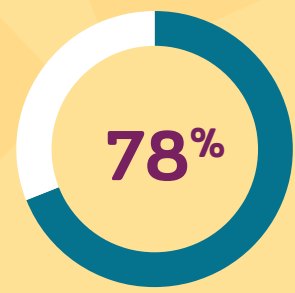


8% meeting friends INDOORS

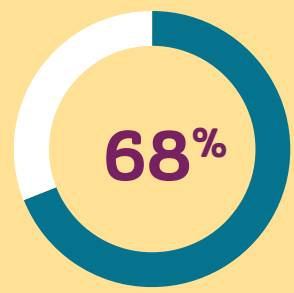
5. YOUNG PEOPLE CONNECTED AND RESPECTED



54% use Social Media to get their information on Covid-19



The majority miss taking part in activities/clubs as a result of Covid-19



Agree that Young People are treated unfairly by the media in relation to Covid-19



Attending clubs and activities during Covid-19 has helped Young People's mental health; to stay fit, and stay connected with friends

WHAT WOULD HELP?



Reopen youth services



More online activities



More outdoor activities

The full report can be accessed on the Dublin City North or Dublin City South Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) webpages at www.cypsc.ie.

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

On behalf of **Dublin City North** and **South** Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC)¹, we are delighted to launch the findings of our city-wide *Covid-19: Life in Lockdown 2020* consultation with young people aged 12-17 years. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been aware of various challenges faced by services and the communities we work within. The impact has seen many changes in the lives of young people – from adapting to home learning environments; transitioning back to school; to changing ways of socialising with friends; participation in extra-curricular activities; and the impact on physical and mental health.

In collaboration with **Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg** this consultation process sought to highlight the experience of lockdown for young people and to illustrate how Dublin City young people have been impacted across the 5 National Outcomes of the **Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Policy Framework (2014-2020)**.

This report captures a significant moment in time, a unique insight into the collective world of young people, and a learning opportunity for all services in Dublin City, to consider how we respond in the coming uncertain period. In our role to support effective interagency collaboration and coordination, Dublin City North and South CYPSC will seek to support activities at local level which support the findings of this consultation, and continue to build our responses with young people.

We would like to sincerely thank all the young people who participated in the online survey, and we are particularly thankful to the Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg Advisory Group who gave so willingly of their time and thoughts to designing the survey; the Focus Group, for enriching our understanding of *Life in Lockdown for Young People in Dublin City*. To Sandra Roe, who brought a wealth of experience and expertise to the process, we extend our gratitude for your hard work in producing this final report in such a short space of time.



Joy McGlynn

Chair, Dublin City North CYPSC
Tusla Child and Family Agency



Des Delaney

Chair, Dublin City South CYPSC
Tusla Child and Family Agency

¹ Dublin City North and South CYPSC collectively include the geographical boundaries of the Dublin City Local Authority Area

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the findings of consultations with young people in Dublin City on the impact of Covid-19. The key research methodologies used for the project were an online survey which was completed by 218 young people from Dublin City and an online focus group with young people from Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg. The research methodology was also developed in collaboration with a Youth Advisory Group made up of young people who are members of Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg.

The research findings are presented under five themes which correspond with the five national outcomes of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (Department of Children and Youth Affairs)



THEME 1: ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING

Key findings:

- 10.8% of young people are very worried about their own health due to Covid-19 and 49.2% of young people are very worried about someone else's health
- Girls are more worried about their own health and someone's else health than boys.
- In terms of exercise habits, 36.6% of young people are exercising less often since the Covid-19 pandemic, 35% are exercising more often and 28.4% reported no change in exercising.
- 53.3% of young people reported eating more junk food and sweets since Covid-19.
- In terms of feelings:
 - 91.2% of young people reported feeling sad some or most of the time since Covid-19.
 - 72.7% of young people reported feeling nervous some or most of the time since Covid-19.
 - 72.7% of young people reported feeling lonely some or most of the time since Covid-19.
- Girls were more likely to report feeling sad, nervous and lonely than boys; more inclined to request counselling in school than boys; and also more likely to identify online counselling than boys.
- The most commonly identified **mental health and well-being supports** and services young people need at the moment is:
 - counselling in schools,
 - closely followed by face-to face counselling.



THEME 2: ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Key findings:

- 69% of young people are very or a bit worried about their learning being affected by schools closures since Covid-19, with girls feeling more worried than boys.
- 66.1% of young people are very or a bit worried about schools not reopening fully in September 2020².
- In terms of home learning environment:
 - 91.3% of young people have access to a mobile phone;
 - 89.1% have access to the internet;
 - 71.2% have access to a computer, laptop or tablet;
 - 65.2% have a desk or table; and
 - 47.3% of young people have a quiet space in their home to learn.
- 35.5% of young people were happy with how their school and teachers helped them when schools were closed during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The most common **education and learning support** required by young people now is:
 - one-to-one learning support from teachers, followed by
 - better access to computers/laptops/tablets,
 - more technical support and better access to the internet.

² The survey was conducted in August 2020 before schools reopened.



THEME 3: SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM

Key findings:

- The majority of young people reported feeling safe in their community since the Covid-19 pandemic, with only 9.4% reporting feeling unsafe.
- Boys were more likely to feel safe in their community since Covid-19 than girls.
- 77.8% of young people find government information on safety around Covid-19 clear.
- Information on Covid-19 that would make young people feel safer included **clearer information on face masks, social distancing and the reopening of schools.**
- Respondents suggested **government information and messaging on Covid-19 should be aimed directly at young people and developed in consultation with young people.**



THEME 4: ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Key findings:

- 15.9% of young people had a part-time job that was affected by Covid-19.
- 52.3% of young people reported their parent's or guardian's job was affected by Covid-19.
- 59.9% of young people are a bit or very worried about money since the Covid-19 pandemic, with girls feeling more worried than boys.
- The **key financial and employment supports and services** that would help young people now are:
 - social welfare Covid-19 payments for parents and young people who were working before the pandemic;
 - more job opportunities for young people;
 - policies and incentives for companies to hire young people; and
 - more training, apprenticeship and volunteering opportunities for young people.



THEME 5: CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD

Key findings:

- 66.2% of young people are seeing their friends less often than before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 73.1% young people are a bit or very worried about not seeing their friends due to Covid-19, with girls feeling more worried than boys.
- 52.5% of young people are mainly meeting their friends outdoors, 27.8% are mainly meeting their friends online and 7.6% are meeting their friends indoors.
- 79.9% of young people agreed that Covid-19 had an impact on them taking part in extra-curricular activities.
 - Boys participation in extra-curricular activities was impacted more than girls.
- 78.5% of young people said they miss taking part in extra-curricular activities.
- 35.8% of young people are still attending extra-curricular activities in person.
- 26.1% of young people are engaging with extra-curricular activities online.
- According to young people, the key benefits of participation in extra-curricular activities during the Covid-19 pandemic are mental health, social and health benefits.
- 54.4% of young people are getting most of their information about Covid-19 from social media, with more girls getting information from social media than boys.
- 67.9% of young people agreed that young people are being treated unfairly by the media in relation to Covid-19.
- The **main supports and services young people need at this time to stay connected to friends**, youth clubs, sports clubs are to **reopen youth services, more online activities and more outdoor activities**.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. Their age remit spans all children and young people aged from 0 to 24 years. The purpose of CYPSC is to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in their area. The Committees are responsible for improving the lives of children, young people and families at local and community level by improving provision and delivery of key services. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (BOBF) Framework (2014 - 2020) is a key policy document for CYPSC which provides a framework for planning and actions. Further details on CYPSC can be found at www.cypsc.ie.

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR THE PROJECT

The Dublin City CYPSC Areas (including Dublin City North and South CYPSC) is made up of a diverse population of approximately 156,478 children and young people (0-24 years). Due to the impact of Covid-19 and subsequent public health measures and restrictions, the lives of all children, young people and families have been disrupted. This disruption has had many effects, positive and negative, across multiple domains including health, education, safety and security, and the connection with peers, community, family and support services. Dublin City South and North CYPSC with advice from Comhairle na nÓg members implemented a consultation process that aimed to capture a snapshot of these experiences for young people across the area.

RESEARCH AIM

The main aim of the research was to document and understand the lived experiences and needs of a cohort of young people aged 12-17 years living within the Dublin City CYPSC catchment areas in a (post) Covid-19 environment. As a result, both CYPSC aimed to gain insight and understanding as to the impacts of Covid-19 on the lives of young people, and the subsequent supports/resources that may be helpful in moving forward.

METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods approach was taken in this research project. The two main research methods used were:

- An online survey of young people in the Dublin City area (a copy of the survey can be found in the appendix)
- An online focus group with young people from Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg

A total of 218 young people responded to the online survey and 10 young people from the Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg were consulted in the online focus group. The research fieldwork was conducted over a four week period in July and August 2020.

YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP

The research methodology was developed in collaboration with a Youth Advisory Group made up of young people from Dublin City Comhairle na nÓg. The researcher met online with the Youth Advisory Group on two

occasions to develop the online survey. Young people had an input in developing the title of the survey, the survey graphics, the survey questions and ensuring the language used was youth friendly. Changes were made to the survey based on the input of the Youth Advisory Group.

REPORT STRUCTURE:

The research findings are presented under five themes which correspond with the five national outcomes of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures:

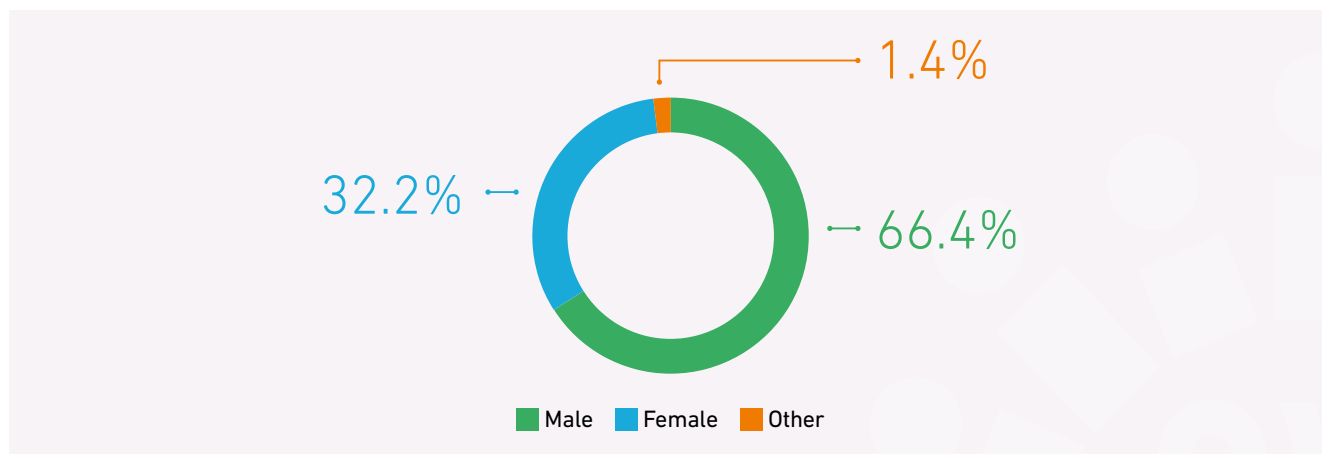
	 <p>THEME 1: ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING</p>
	 <p>THEME 2: ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT</p>
	 <p>THEME 3: SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM</p>
	 <p>THEME 4: ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY</p>
	 <p>THEME 5: CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD</p>

SURVEY RESULTS

ABOUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE

A total of 218 young people responded to the online survey. Six out of ten (60.5%) respondents were aged 15 – 17 years and 39.5% of respondents were aged 12 – 14 years. In terms of gender, two thirds of respondents were female (66.4%), 32.2% were male and 1.4% described their gender as other (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Gender of respondents



Young people from almost all areas of Dublin City responded to the survey, with most responses from young people from Dublin 11 (18.4%), followed by Dublin 7 (12.1%), Dublin 9 (11.1%), Dublin 10 (10.1%), Dublin 4 (9.2%), Dublin 1 (4.8%), Dublin 3 (3.9%), Dublin 12 (3.9%), Dublin 6W (2.4%), Dublin 2 (0.1%), Dublin 5 (0.1%), Dublin 13 (0.1%), and Dublin 17 (0.1%) (see table 1 below).

Table 1: Postcodes of young people who responded to the survey

Postcode	%
Dublin 11	18.4%
Dublin 7	12.1%
Dublin 9	11.1%
Dublin 10	10.1%
Dublin 4	9.2%
Dublin 1	4.8%
Dublin 3	3.9%
Dublin 12	3.9%
Dublin 6W	2.4%
Dublin 2	0.1%
Dublin 5	0.1%
Dublin 13	0.1%
Dublin 17	0.1%
Other/don't know	14.9%

Overall, 17% of young people who responded to the survey identified as LGBTI+, 5.2% were part of a cultural minority, 4.7% were young carers, 3.8% of young people had a disability, 3.3% were part of a religious minority and 0.5% were a member of the Traveller Community. 72.6% of young people did not identify with any of the mentioned identities.

Table 2: How do young people identify themselves?

	%
LGBTI+ young people	17%
Part of a cultural minority	5.2%
Young carer, e.g. caring for a parent, brother, sister or family member	4.7%
Young person with a disability	3.8%
Part of a religious minority	3.3%
A member of the Traveller Community	0.5%
None of the above	72.6%

THEME
1



ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING



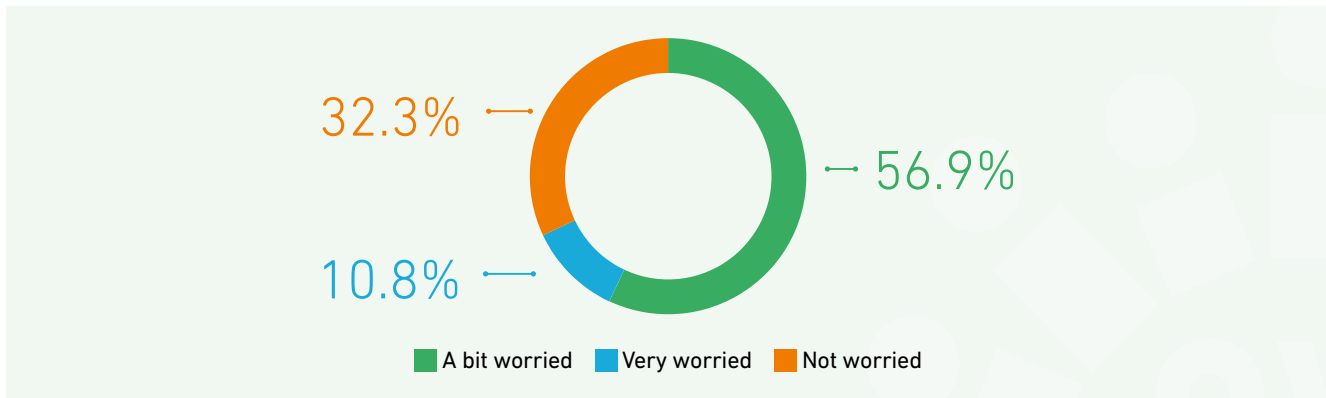


THEME 1: ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING

YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH CONCERNS

The survey asked young people, 'how worried are you about your own health due to Covid-19?' Over half (56.9%) of young people said they were a bit worried about their own health due to Covid-19, 10.8% said they were very worried and almost one third (32.3%) said they were not worried about their own health (see figure 2 below).

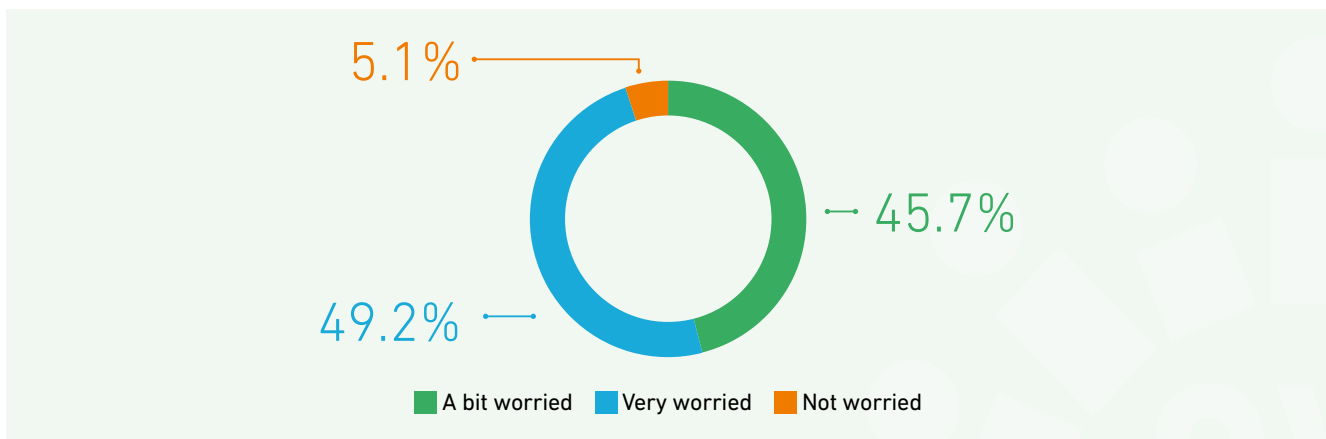
Figure 2: How worried are you about your own health due to Covid-19?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH CONCERNS ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE

Young people were also asked how worried they were about someone else's health due to Covid-19, e.g. family members/friends. Almost half (49.2%) of all respondents stated they were very worried about someone else's health due to Covid-19, 45.7% were a bit worried and just 5.1% were not worried about someone else's health (see figure 3 below). Overall, girls were more worried than boys about someone else's health.

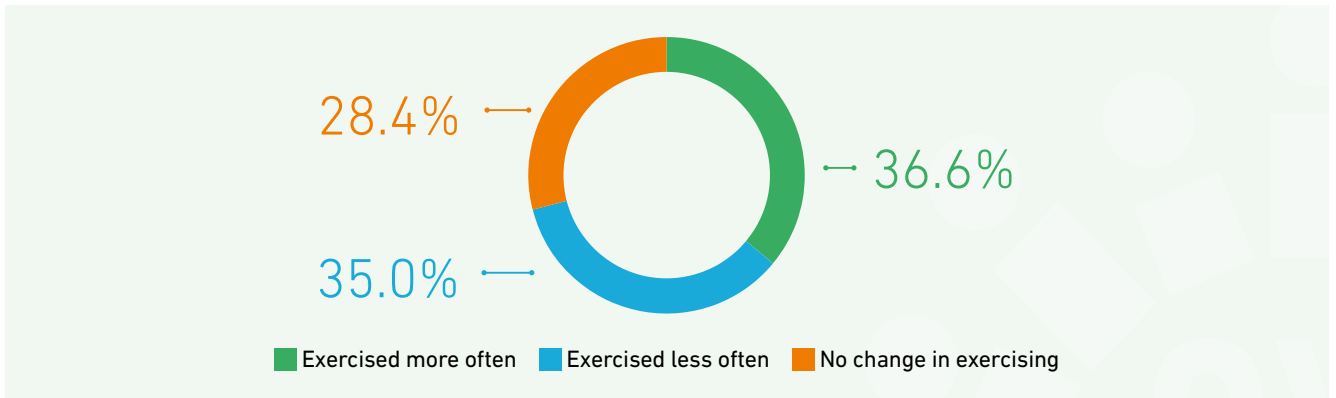
Figure 3: How worried are you about someone else's health due to Covid-19?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXERCISING HABITS

As can be seen from figure 4 below, 36.6% of young people said they exercised less often since the Covid-19 pandemic, 35% said they exercised more often and 28.4% reported no change in exercising since the pandemic.

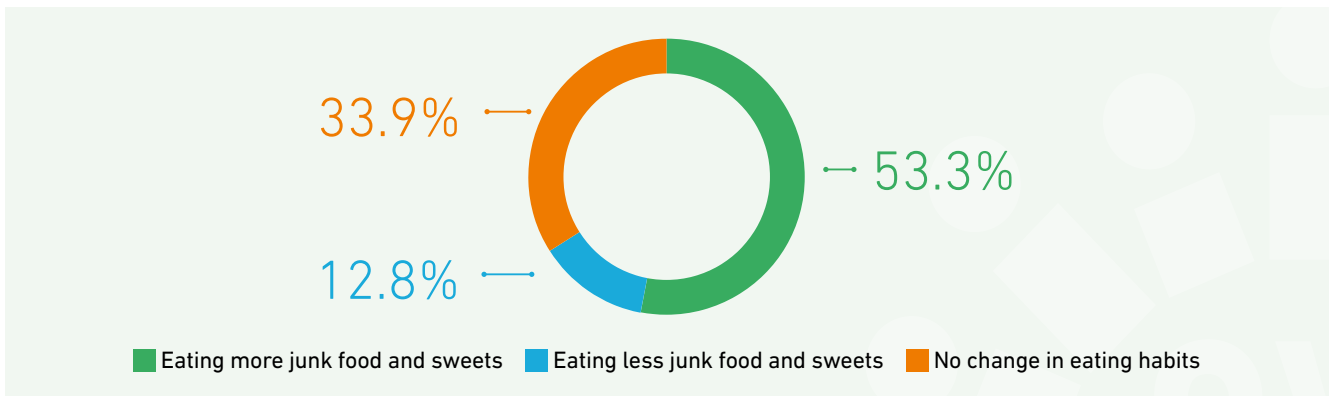
Figure 4: Young people's exercise habits since the Covid-19 pandemic



YOUNG PEOPLE'S EATING HABITS

Over half (53.3%) of all young people reported eating more junk food and sweets since the Covid-19 pandemic, 12.8% reported eating less junk food and sweets and just over one third (33.9%) reported no change in eating junk food and sweets since the pandemic (see figure 5 below).

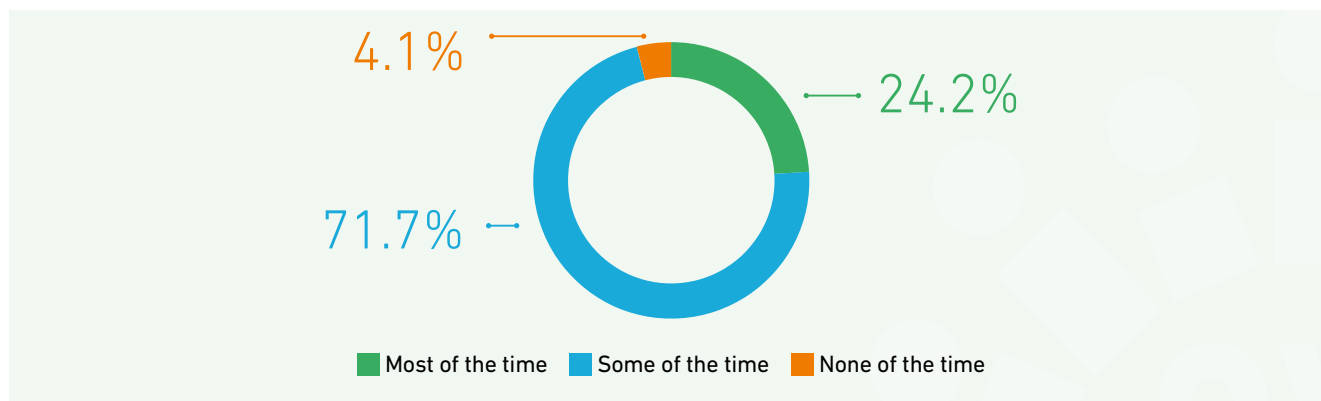
Figure 5: Young people's eating habits since the Covid-19 pandemic



HOW ARE YOUNG PEOPLE FEELING?

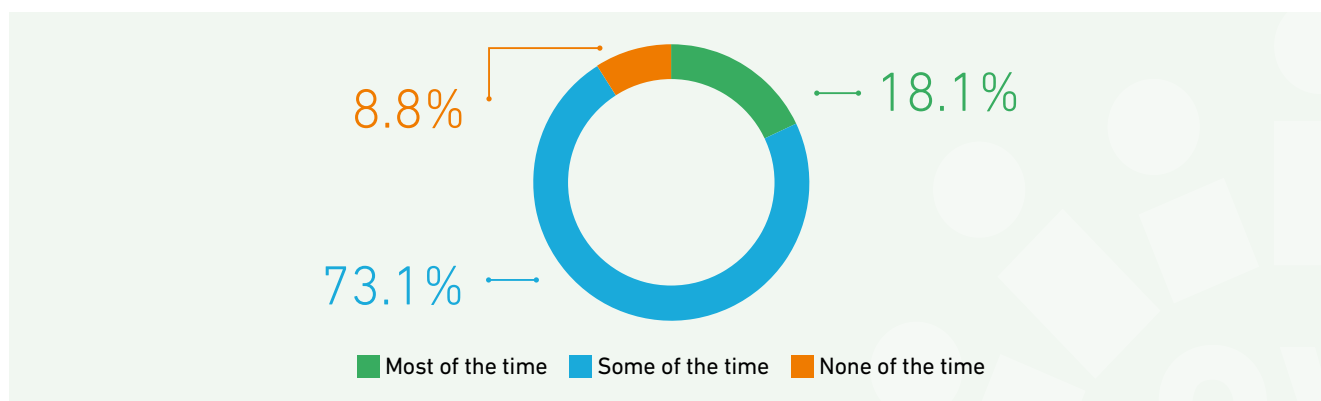
Since the Covid-19 pandemic, over seven out of ten (71.7%) young people reported feeling happy some of the time, almost one quarter (24.2%) reported feeling happy most of the time and 4.1% reported feeling happy none of the time (see figure 6 below).

Figure 6: Do you feel happy since the Covid-19 pandemic?



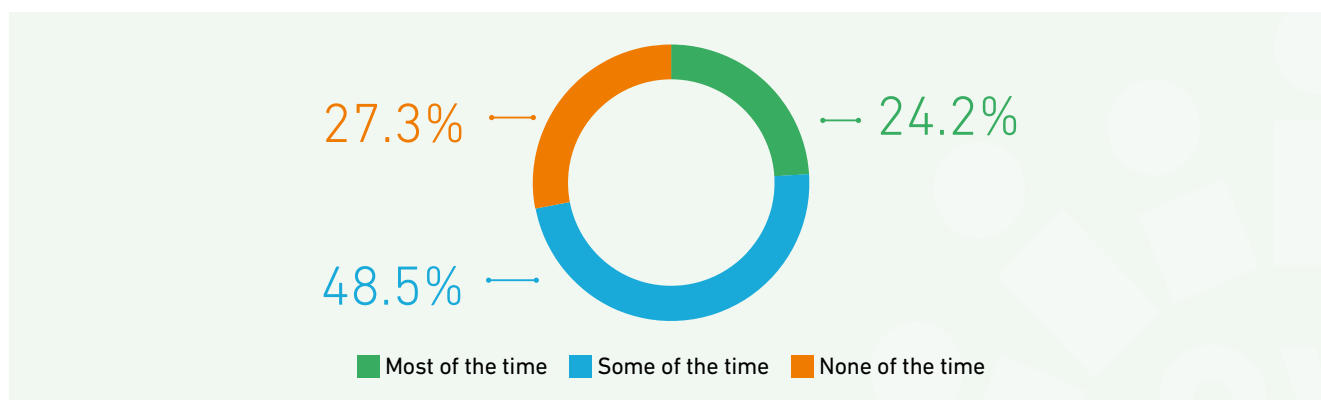
As can be seen from figure 7 below, almost three quarters (73.1%) of young people said they felt sad some of the time since the pandemic, 18.1% felt sad most of the time and 8.8% felt sad none of the time.

Figure 7: Do you feel sad since the Covid-19 pandemic?



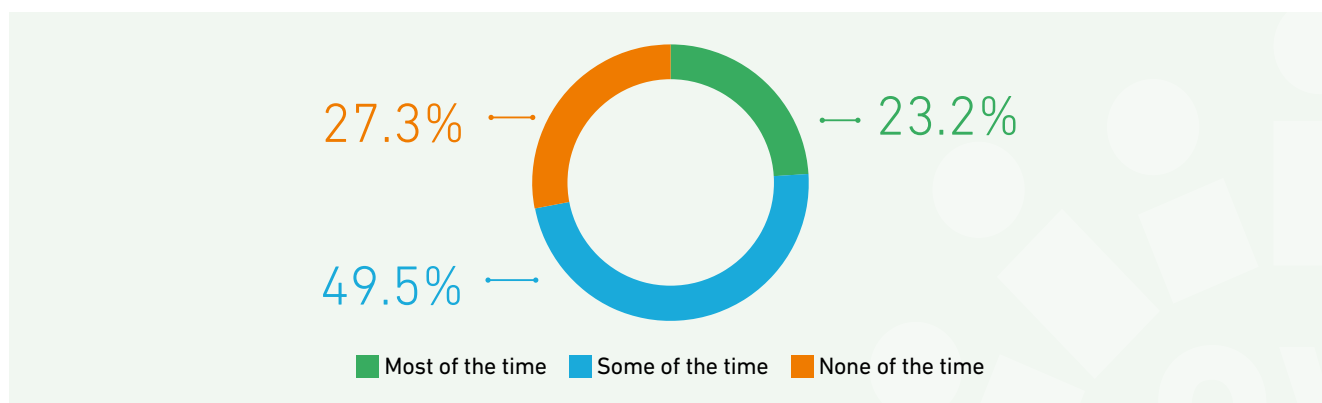
Almost a half (48.5%) young people felt nervous some of the time since the pandemic, almost one quarter (24.2%) of young people felt nervous most of the time and 27.3% felt nervous none of the time (see figure 8 below).

Figure 8: Do you feel nervous since the Covid-19 pandemic?



As can be seen in figure 9 below, close to half (49.5%) of young people reported feeling lonely some of the time, 23.2% felt lonely most of the time and 27.3% felt lonely none of the time since the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, girls were more inclined to feel sad, nervous and lonely than boys.

Figure 9: Do you feel lonely since the Covid-19 pandemic?



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Respondents were asked what mental health and well-being supports and services do young people need now due to Covid-19. As can be seen from table 3 below, almost six out of ten (59.9%) young people identified counselling in schools as the mental health support/service that is most needed now. However, girls were more likely to request counselling in schools than boys. The next most requested mental health support/service was face-to-face counselling (50%), followed by workshops on mental health and well-being, e.g. in youth services and schools (49.5%), online information on mental health and well-being (45.1%). Finally, one third (33.5%) of respondents said online counselling is what young people need most at the moment, with girls being more inclined to identify the need for online counselling than boys.

Table 3: Mental health supports/services most needed by young people

Mental health support/service	%
Counselling in schools	59.9%
Face-to-face counselling	50%
Workshops on mental health and well-being, e.g. in youth services/schools	49.5%
Online information on mental health and well-being	45.1%
Online counselling	33.5%
Other	7.7%
None of the above	72.6%

A further 7.7% of young people made other suggestions in relation to mental health and well-being supports and services. The main suggestion related to more face-to-face socially distanced interactions and activities for young people in youth clubs and sports clubs to support their mental health and well-being. There were mixed views among young people on the preference of face-to-face or online counselling. However, respondents agreed counselling should be free or affordable.

“Kids need to see counsellors face-to-face for trust. Some think it’s weird doing video call to strangers.”

“I wouldn’t feel safe with face-to-face (counselling).”

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Mental health emerged as a key theme from the focus group findings in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on young people.

Counselling in schools

According to focus group participants, all young people should have access to counselling in schools on a regular basis to support young people's mental health following the Covid-19 pandemic. The need for more Guidance Counsellors in schools to meet the mental health needs of young people was emphasised strongly. Young people suggested outsourcing counselling in schools to meet the additional mental health needs of students. Some young people do not feel comfortable talking to a Guidance Counsellor who may also be their teacher about their mental health issues. Young people would also like to access counselling online, over the phone and by texting. It was agreed that all counselling should be free or affordable for young people.

"If everyone in school was given a counselling appointment once a week even if you don't have any issues it would be a good idea after Covid. We usually have hardly any time with the Guidance Counsellors in our school because they are usually booked up because everyone wants to talk to them. If they got another Counsellor in and for once a week to have an appointment it would be great."

"Maybe they (schools) could outsource counselling and do it online, it would work slightly better. Our school doesn't have many supports in other ways. The Guidance Counsellor in our school teaches another subject so she wouldn't have much time and I don't think young people would be as inclined to want to go to her with mental health issues so I think outsourcing it would be a good idea."

"I had face to face counselling before, and I am quite shy so I don't feel that comfortable opening up maybe if they had a texting service or a phone call that would work better. I know lots of people wouldn't feel comfortable especially in an all-boys school they wouldn't feel comfortable opening up to a counsellor in school so if they had an anonymous online or text service it would be better."

Mental health initiatives in schools

A number of young people suggested the need for mental health initiatives in schools. Initiatives included linking up older students with younger students for "tea and a chat", a buddy system where older students can support younger students who may be struggling, for example first years settling into secondary school. Other initiatives included schools doing meditation classes during school or online and online book clubs.

"In my school the Guidance Counsellor sets up a tea and chat and you give out passes to people who are quite shy and we go into the canteen we give them biscuits and tea and get them to chat and it helps with first years who are struggling."

"The past few months I have been doing mediation online and I think schools should do that in free classes or after school to do a zoom and destress and relax. They could even have a book club or something like that to talk about something other than school."

Exercise and sport

The importance of exercise and sport to support young people's physical and mental health and well-being was also highlighted by many young people in the focus group. Some young people were concerned that their schools had planned to suspend PE classes and sports activities due to Covid-19. They felt it was very important to stay active and relieve stress through physical activity.

"I think sport would really help with our mental health and I don't know if they are going to do it as much this year in school but I think it is really important."

"I know in my school they aren't going to do sports for the first month but getting out on a pitch and running around gets out a lot of stress so I think it's really important to keep doing sport."

THEME
2



**ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL
IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING
AND DEVELOPMENT**



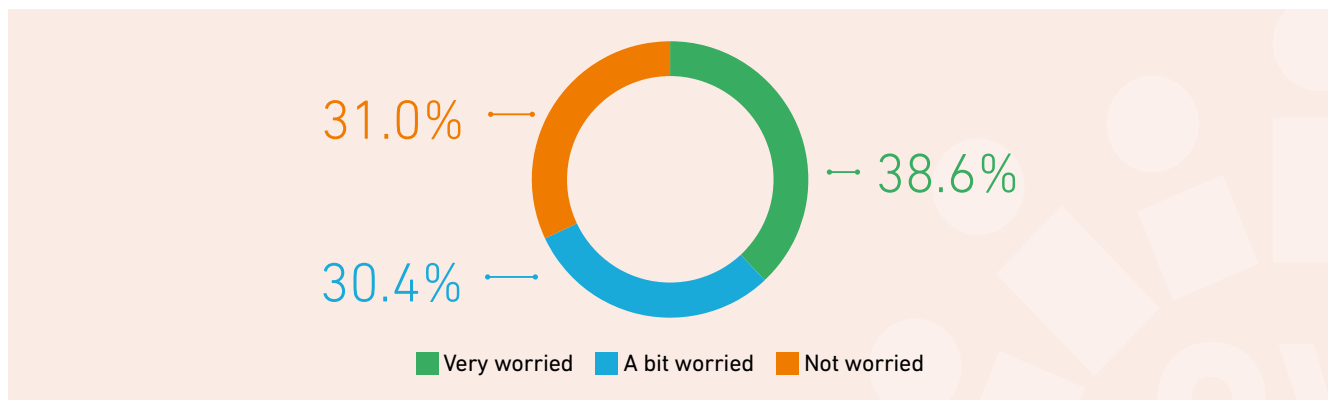


THEME 2: ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERNS ABOUT LEARNING

Young people were asked how worried they are about their learning being affected by schools being closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, 38.6% of young people said they are very worried about their learning being affected, 30.4% said they are a bit worried and 31% said they are not worried (see figure 10 below). Girls were more worried about their learning being affected than boys, with three quarters of girls stating they were a bit or very worried compared with only half of boys.

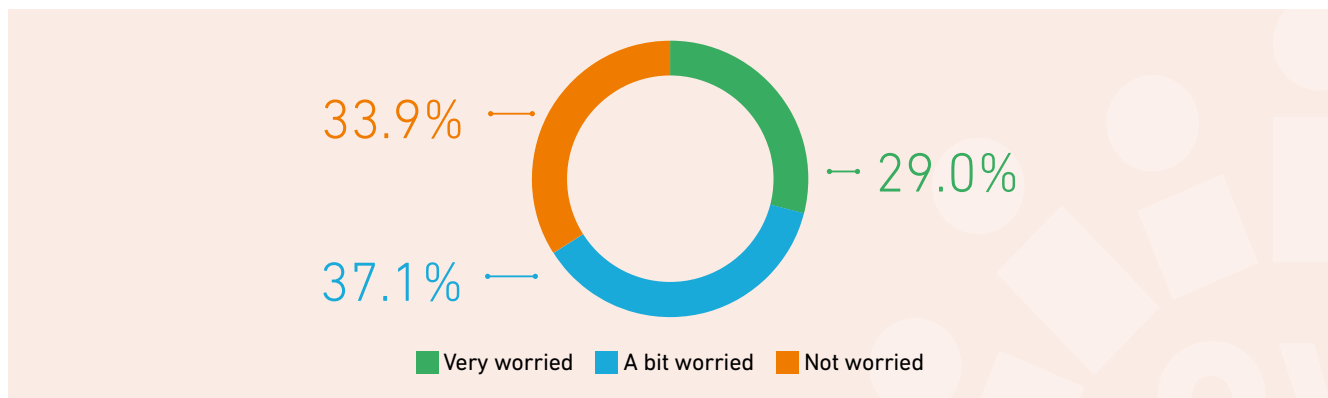
Figure 10: How worried are young people about their learning being affected?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERNS ABOUT SCHOOLS REOPENING

Respondents were also asked how worried they are about schools not reopening fully in September 2020³. Almost one in three (29%) young people were very worried about schools not reopening, 37.1% were a bit worried and 33.9% were not worried about schools reopening (see figure 11 below). Again, girls were slightly more worried than boys about schools not reopening.

Figure 11: How worried are young people about schools reopening?



³ The survey was conducted in July/August 2020 before schools reopened

HOME LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The survey asked young people about their home learning environment during the Covid-19 pandemic. This included young people's access to technology, equipment and space to learn. As can be seen from table 4 below, nine out of ten (91.3%) young people had access to a mobile phone for learning, 89.1% had access to the internet, 71.2% had access to a computer, laptop or tablet, 65.2% had a desk or table and almost half (47.3%) of young people had a quiet space in their home to learn. Just 2.7% of young people did not have access to any of the above mentioned technology.

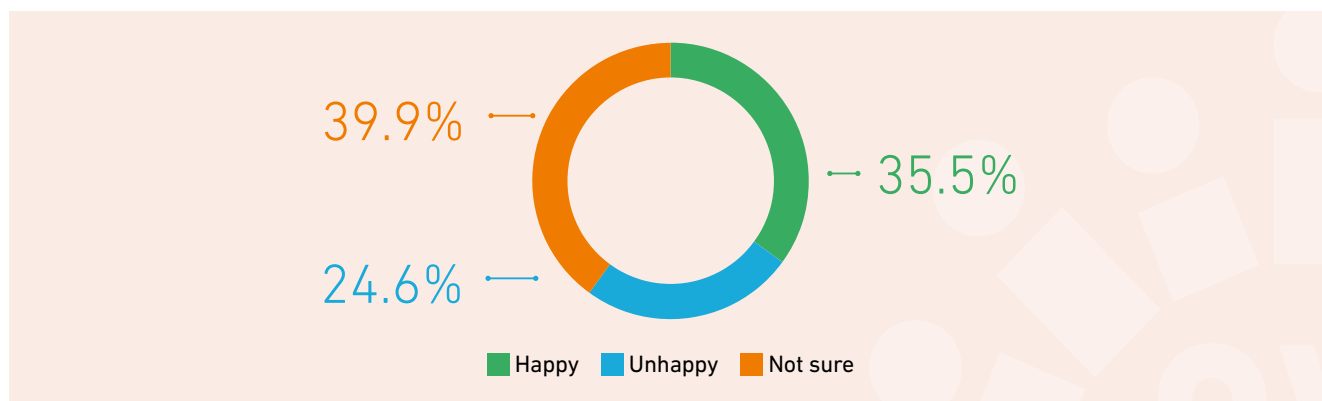
Table 4: Young people's home learning environment

Young people's home learning environment	%
Mobile phone	91.3%
Internet	89.1%
Computer/laptop/tablet	71.2%
Desk/table	65.2%
A quiet space	47.3%
None of the above	2.7%

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SATISFACTION WITH SCHOOLS/TEACHERS

The survey asked young people how happy they were with how their school and teachers helped them when schools were closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Just over one third (35.5%) of young people said they were happy with how their school and teachers helped them, 39.9% said they were not sure and almost one quarter (24.6%) of young people said they were unhappy about how their school and teachers helped them (see figure 12 below).

Figure 12: Young people's satisfaction with schools/teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic



EDUCATION AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

Respondents were asked what young people need now to help support education and learning. As can be seen in table 5 below, the most common support identified by young people was one-to-one learning support from teachers (62.2%). Significantly more girls than boys identified one-to-one support as a need (71.2% of girls compared with 42.4%). The next most commonly identified support young people need to support education and learning was better access to computers/laptops/tablets (58.9%). Almost half (49.4%) of all young people said they need more technical support, e.g. how to use Google/Microsoft Classroom, Zoom. Finally, 45% of young people said they need better access to the internet, e.g. faster broadband/Wi-Fi to help support their education and learning.

Table 5: Education and learning supports young people need now

Education and learning supports	%
One-to-one learning support from teachers	62.2%
Better access to computers/laptops/tablets	58.9%
Technical support, e.g. how to use Google/Microsoft Classroom, Zoom	49.4%
Better broadband/Wi-Fi	45%
Other	10%

A further 10% of young people made suggestions relating to other education and learning supports. Suggested included:

- Better communication between schools, teachers and students about education and learning, e.g. lesson plans, teachers checking in with students more regularly
- Online teaching rather than teachers sending work, e.g. lessons on Zoom
- Revision classes to help young people catch up
- Faster internet
- A safe and quiet space to study
- Mental health supports to help focus on education and learning

"My school didn't do zoom classes, just sent work, and I think they should have used zoom."

"Teachers ringing students once a week, just to check we are coping with the work and coping in general."

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS ON LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Many young people identified the main impact of Covid-19 as being in the area of education and learning.

Impact of school closures on young people

School closures due to Covid-19 had varying impacts on young people's learning. While some young people were happy with how their schools and teachers responded when schools were closed, others were not. There was differing levels of engagement from teachers with students in different schools. Some teachers used online technology to teach and interact, whereas young people found other teachers were less engaged. Some teachers lack of technology expertise was highlighted by young people as an issue. Many young people also found learning online very challenging.

"Our school didn't do Zoom at all which was really weird. They decided not to use Microsoft classroom even though we have it. They just gave us work to do but I think it was really unfair that some teachers were doing the best they could and putting the work in but some teachers gave you work every few days that would only last a day. They said the teachers didn't know how to use the technology."

"Me and my friends felt very unmotivated because the teachers didn't grade the work and then people stopped doing the work. It would have helped if the teachers interacted more and corrected the work we spent hours doing."

"Being in the classroom and being able to communicate is better. Being online and trying to learn was an ordeal."

Home learning environment

Other issues young people found difficult when schools were closed included lack of technology to support their home learning, lack of a quiet space to learn at home and some young people having to work or mind siblings when parents were working.

"A lot of my friends didn't have a lot of technology for Zoom and Microsoft classroom so unfortunately they weren't able to do all the work. Also some young people didn't have an email so the school wasn't able to email them."

"An issue I had was my houses was very noisy during Covid and I was trying to work at the kitchen table with my three siblings so it was very stressful."

"Some of my friends missed out on online classes in school because they have a part time job and their parents work was affected or they had mind their younger siblings who are usually in primary school and their parents had to work. It was a difficult situation for them to recover from. It's an experience some young people had to deal with."

Exam year stresses

Many young people, particularly those in exam years, reported feeling stressed about falling behind because of school closures and expressed concern about catching up with the curriculum upon their return.

"I'm going into 6th year and most of my 5th year was at home and it was very difficult to understand the courses and we are very behind and a lot of people in my year are very stressed out it. The uncertainty and pressure around everything in school is pretty stressful."

Some young people in exam years suggested additional supports from teachers such as extra classes and grinds to catch up with the curriculum would be very helpful for students.

"If we had grinds in small groups during the day and get taken out during classes or when we have a half day."

"My sister is going into third year this year and she feels like she doesn't know what to do going into junior cert year and she is thinking it doesn't really matter as much anymore because young people didn't have to do it this year. Maybe extra classes would help but you would have to do it in your own time and I know a lot of people wouldn't want to put the effort in."

Impact on Transition Year

One young person starting Transition Year expressed concern about the impact of Covid-19 on the year, for example in relation to work experience and trips abroad. He reported that some students from his year have decided to opt out of Transition as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I would like more info from the school because I am going into TY and we don't have a clue what we are doing, like are we going on any trips or doing work experience. I know a lot of people have opted out of TY because of it."

THEME
3



SAFE AND PROTECTED
FROM HARM



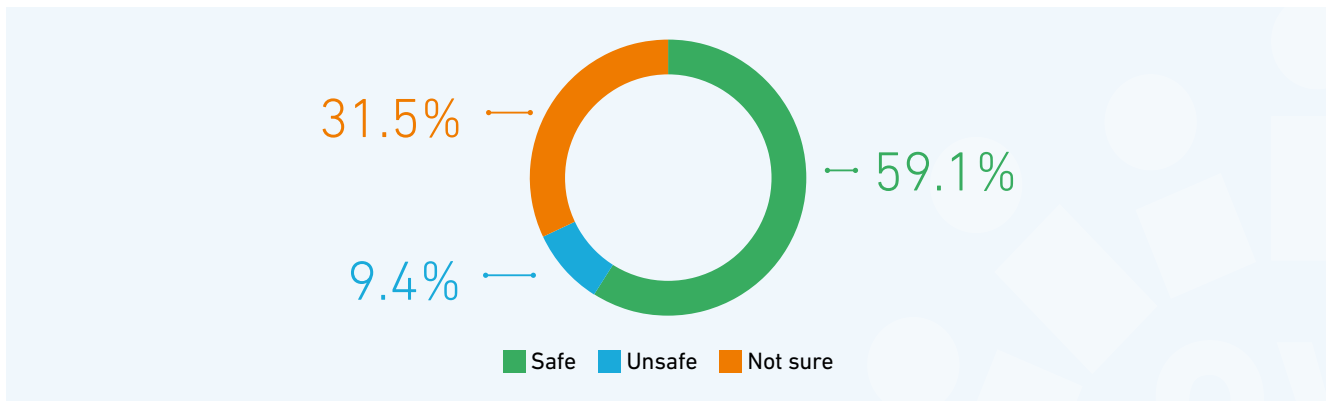


THEME 3: SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM

HOW SAFE DO YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL IN THEIR COMMUNITY?

59.1% of young people reported feeling safe in their community since the Covid-19 pandemic, 31.5% of young people were unsure and 9.4% of young people reported feeling unsafe (see figure 13 below). Boys were more inclined to feel safe in their community since Covid-19 compared with girls (76.7% of boys feel safe compared with 51.7% of girls).

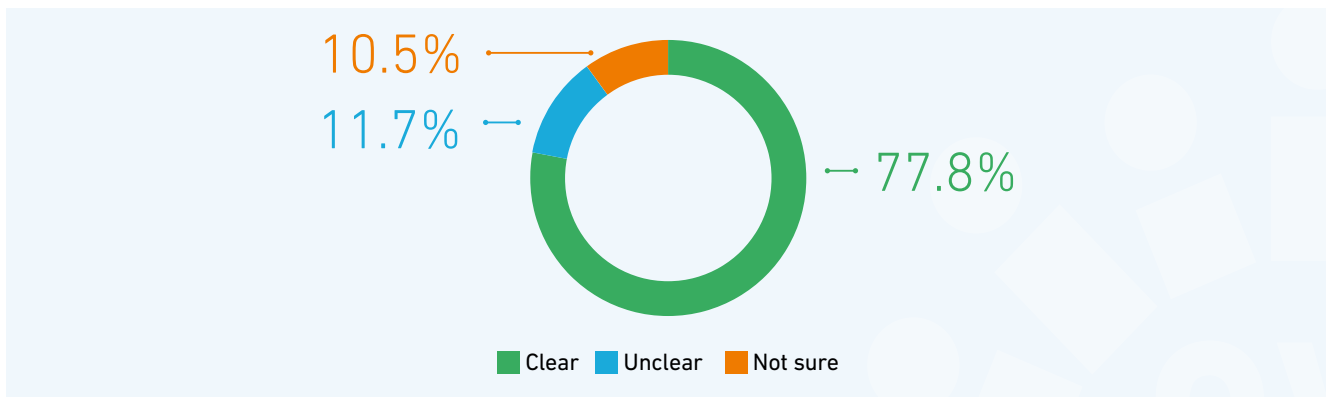
Figure 13: How safe do young people feel in their community?



HOW CLEAR DO YOUNG PEOPLE FIND SAFETY INFORMATION ON COVID-19?

Young people were asked how clear do they find government information on safety around Covid-19, e.g. information on hand washing, wearing masks, social distancing etc. Over three quarters (77.8%) of young people said they find the information on safety around Covid-19 to be clear, 11.7% find it unclear and 10.5% were not sure (see figure 14 below).

Figure 14: How clear do young people find government safety information on Covid-19?



What information would help young people feel safer?

The key pieces of information that would make young people feel safer identified by respondents included:

- Clearer information on the wearing of face masks.
- Clearer information on social distancing, e.g. not to gather in large groups, have parties etc.
- Information on the reopening of schools, e.g. a roadmap for young people on what returning to school will look like.
- More specific information on where cases of Covid-19 are located, e.g. local areas rather than county statistics.
- More positive information and messaging around Covid-19, e.g. vaccines, sticking with the rules, it's a temporary situation.
- Information on the risk to young people of contracting Covid-19.
- Information on how to access mental health services.

"How schools will operate. More clarity, and a clear roadmap on returning to school, like they had with the phases."

"More precise information on where the Covid cases are."

'Positive information. It will get better, this is just temporary. If you follow the rules now, you won't have to follow them so strictly (hopefully) soon.'

A number of respondents suggested information and messaging should be aimed directly at young people and would work best if young people were involved in its development. Information and messaging around social distancing, gathering in large groups and parties in particular should be aimed directly at young people to make them more aware of rules and guidelines.

"Ads and posters about the Covid-19 pandemic should be explained by young people to young people so it makes more sense. Another young person is more relatable than an adult explaining something."

"A lot of young people are not listening. They are gathering in large groups and not social distancing. I don't think a lot of young people are scared or worried, that's what makes it so much more worrying for the young people that do care and are heeding the government."

Setting up 'Covid-19 committees' in schools and youth services was also suggested. This could involve young people forming a committee, keeping up to date with information on the pandemic and sharing it with other young people in their school or youth service.

"Young people Covid committee in schools and youth services so they can take some responsibility for keeping up to date information among their peers and up to date feedback from their peers."

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS ON SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM

Feeling safe returning to school

The key concern young people raised in the focus group about feeling safe was in relation to returning to school amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Some young people raised concerns about those with underlying health conditions returning to school and the risk of contracting Covid-19.

"I would like to know when we have to wear masks in school and what will it be like for students who have special health needs like Cystic Fibrosis."

"I actually have asthma but we have found a solution with the school that people with asthma can wear the face shields instead of masks and I find it better because you can see your eyes and what people are saying better."

Lack of information and communication between schools and students

There was a general consensus that there is a lack of information and communication between schools and students about what the reopening of schools would look like with some young people feeling confused. Young people would like more information from schools about issues such as the wearing of face masks, school uniforms and the impact of Covid-19 on Transition Year. Other suggestions included being able to email schools with questions and online information sessions.

"Going back to school, there is a lot of confusion. Going into lockdown it was clear but now coming out of it isn't clear. Like there are no press conferences on TV about going back to school and there is a lot of rumours and misinformation like about masks, school uniforms and lockers and I am just a bit confused about going back to school."

"Our school have given us the basics of what will happen but I'm in a big class and I don't know what is going to happen. Maybe if you have questions you could email the school about it."

One young person gave an example of positive communication between their school and students which included an online webinar about the school reopening:

"Our school are good at emailing us and our parents to know what's happening. We are having an online webinar with the school to tell us what is happening which is really useful."

Government communication with young people

Some young people suggested the government should develop a roadmap related to returning to school similar to the roadmap for existing Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. They also suggested the government communicate directly with young people about Covid-19 through press conferences and social media.

"I feel that when the schools were closing there was messaging directly to young people about what was happening but they are reopening schools now again and they are not communicating and engaging with younger people in this way. I think if they had press conferences or used social media to target young people."

THEME

4



ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY





THEME 4: ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY

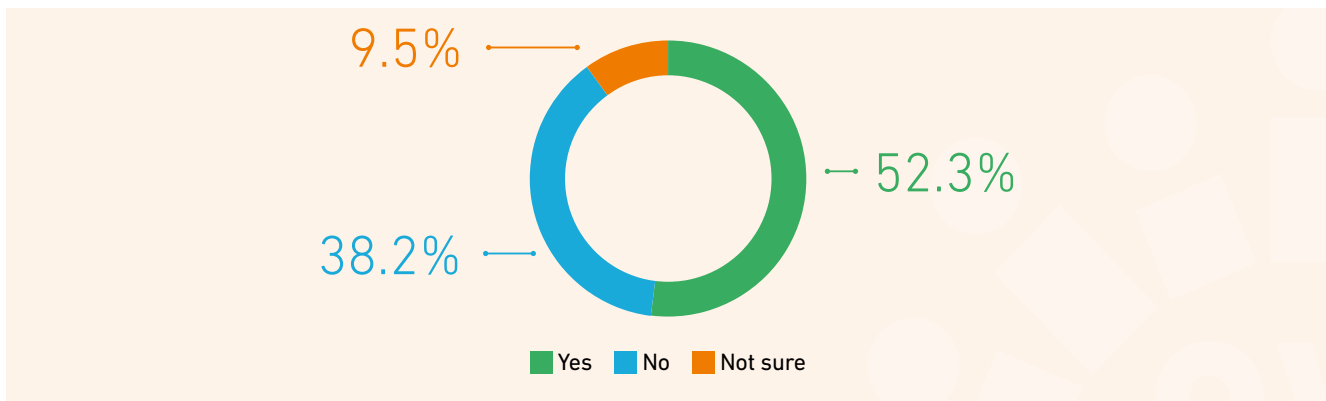
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

The survey asked respondents if they had a part-time job that was affected by Covid-19. In total, 15.9% of young people stated they had a part-time job that was affected by Covid-19. However, the majority (84.1%) of young people did not have a job that was affected.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARENTS EMPLOYMENT

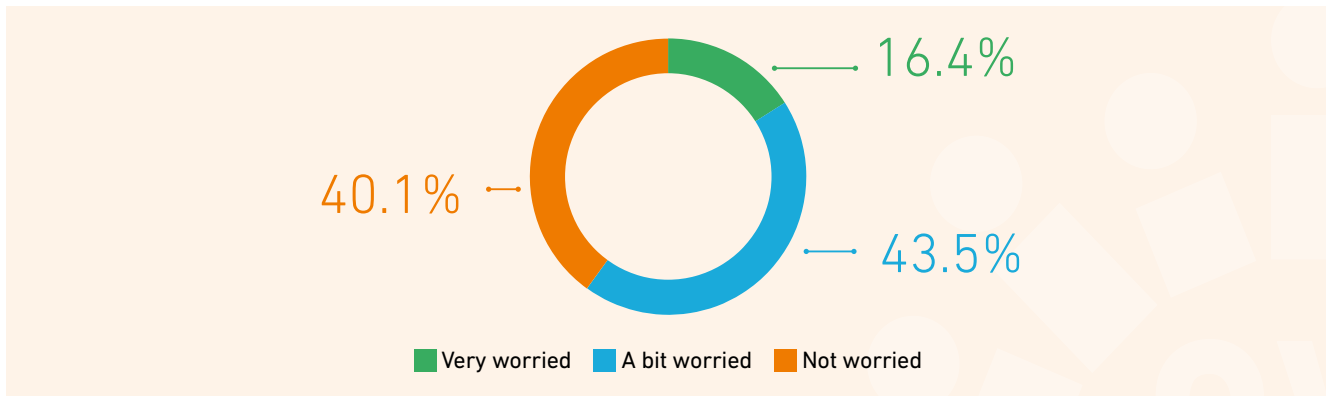
Just over half (52.3%) of young people reported their parent's or guardian's job had been affected by Covid-19, 38.2% said their parent's or guardian's job had not been affected and 9.5% were unsure (see figure 15 below).

Figure 15: Have young people's parents/guardians jobs been affected by Covid-19?



Young people were asked how worried they were about money since the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, 43.5% of young people stated they were a bit worried about money since the pandemic, 16.4% stated they were very worried about money and 40.1% of young people stated they were not worried about money (see figure 16 below). Overall, girls were more inclined to feel worried about money than boys since Covid-19.

Figure 16: How worried are young people about money since the Covid-19 pandemic?



Financial and employment supports and services

The survey asked what kind of supports and services would help young people in terms of jobs/money at this time. The most frequently identified supports and services were, from the most to the least commonly mentioned were:

- Covid-19 social welfare payments for parents/guardians
- Covid-19 social welfare payments for young people who were working before the pandemic
- More job opportunities for young people
- More work experience, apprenticeship, training and volunteering opportunities for young people
- Policies and incentives for companies to hire young people
- Help with CVs
- Online job retraining
- Community employment schemes for young people
- Career guidance in schools
- Money management

"I lost my job but because I was under 18 I couldn't claim Covid payment or social welfare payment. Supports need to be place for young people that are in this situation."

"Encourage employers to hire young people, because youth unemployment is 3x higher than overall unemployment."

"Local community services with small wage for young people e.g. delivering shopping locally and cleaning up around the area."

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS ON ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Jobs and money were not among the key impacts of Covid-19 on young people to emerge from the focus group. A small number of young people said their part-time job such as babysitting was affected by the pandemic but it had not had a major impact on them.

"Usually I babysit during the summer. It did impact on me but it wasn't a massive deal. I usually get money for going out."



THEME
5



**CONNECTED, RESPECTED
AND CONTRIBUTING TO
THEIR WORLD**



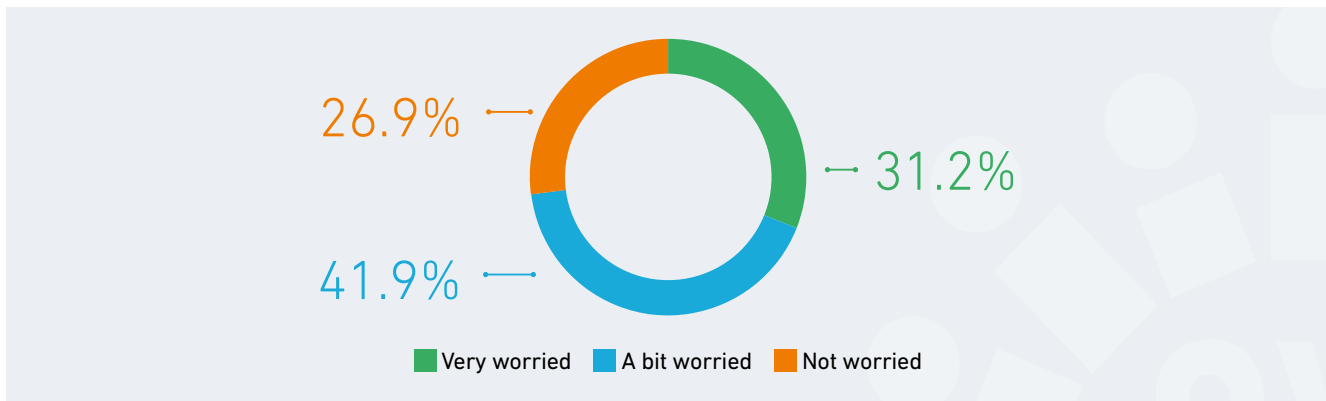


THEME 5: CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERN ABOUT NOT SEEING FRIENDS

Respondents were asked how worried they are about not being able to see their friends because of Covid-19. Just over four out of ten (41.9%) young people said they were a bit worried about not being able to see their friends because of Covid-19, 31.2% said they were very worried about not being able to see their friends and 26.9% said they were not worried about being able to see their friends (see figure 17 below). Girls were more worried than boys about not seeing their friends.

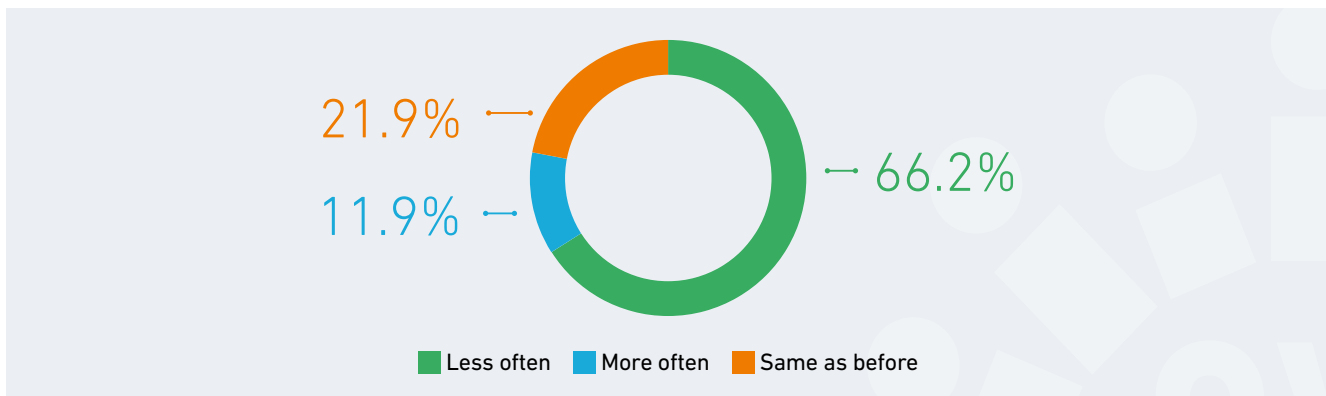
Figure 17: How worried are young people about not seeing their friends due to Covid-19?



HOW OFTEN YOUNG PEOPLE SEE THEIR FRIENDS NOW

Two thirds (66.2%) of young people reported seeing their friends less often than before the Covid-19 pandemic, 21.9% reported seeing their friends the same as before the Covid-19 pandemic and 11.9% reported seeing their friends more often than before the Covid-19 pandemic (see figure 18 below).

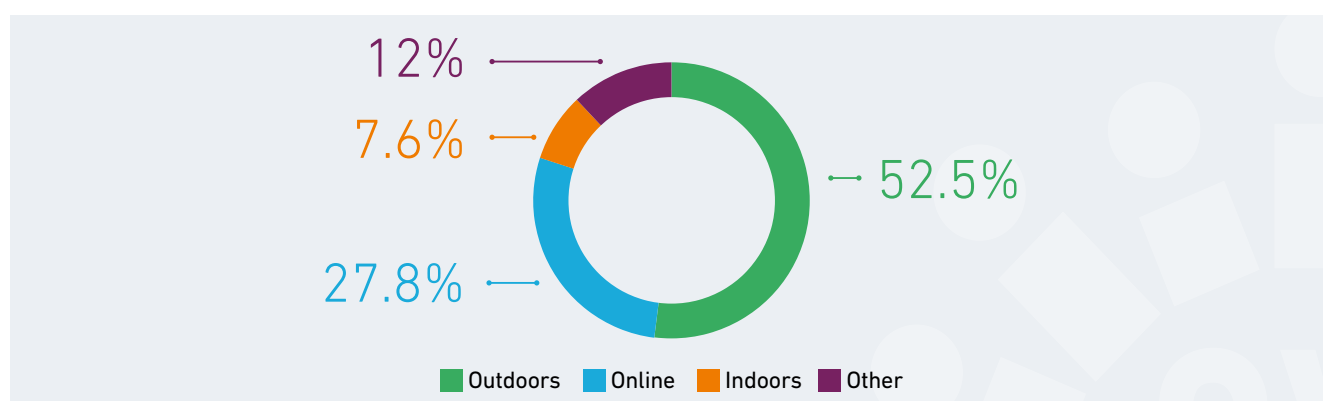
Figure 18: How often do young people see their friends now since the Covid-19 pandemic?



WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MEETING FRIENDS NOW

Young people were asked where they are mainly meeting up with their friends now. Just over half (52.5%) of young people said they are mainly meeting their friends outdoors, e.g. in parks, on the street, over one quarter (27.8%) of young people said they are mainly meeting their friends online, e.g. on WhatsApp, Messenger, Snapchat, Instagram and just 7.6% of young people said they are meeting their friends indoors, e.g. in their houses or their friend's houses. A further 12% mentioned other places they are meeting their friends which included in youth services and projects, at extra-curricular activities and through online gaming (see figure 19 below).

Figure 19: Where are young people meeting their friends now?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The survey asked respondents about the types of extra-curricular activities they participate in. As can be seen from table 6 below, participation in sports clubs was the most common extra-curricular activity identified by young people (42.1%). The next most common extra-curricular activity was youth services/clubs/projects (39.6%), followed by drama/dance clubs (18.2%), afterschool clubs (10.1%) and Scouts/Guides (8.2%). In total, 18.9% of young people said they did not participate in any extra-curricular activities. A further 8.8% reported participation in other activities including choirs/music groups, Order of Malta Ambulance Corps, going to the gym, student councils and Comhairle na nÓg.

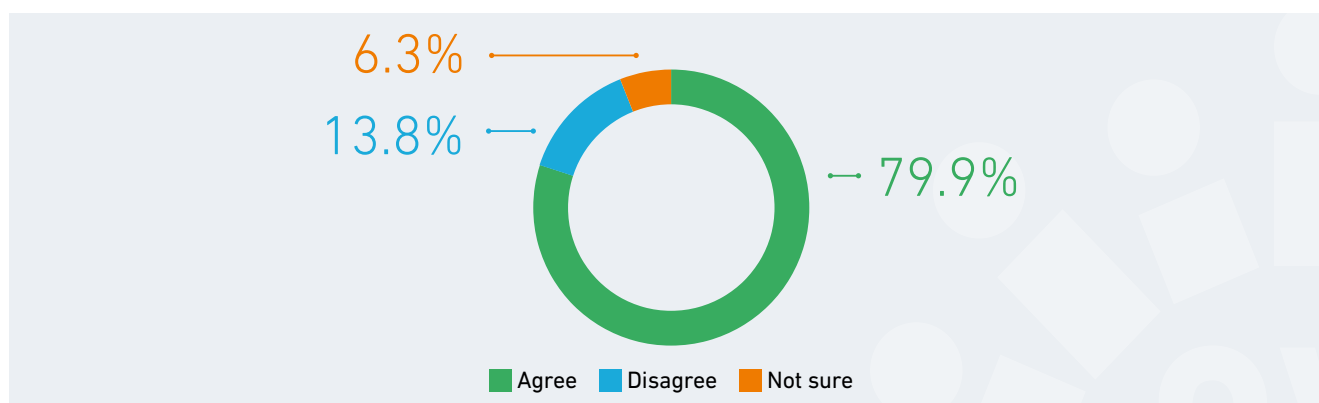
Table 6: Young people's participation in extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activity	%
Sports clubs	42.1%
Youth services/clubs/projects	39.6%
Drama/dance clubs	18.2%
Afterschool clubs	10.1%
Scouts/Guides	8.2%
Other	8.8%
I do not take part in any extra-curricular activities	18.9%

IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

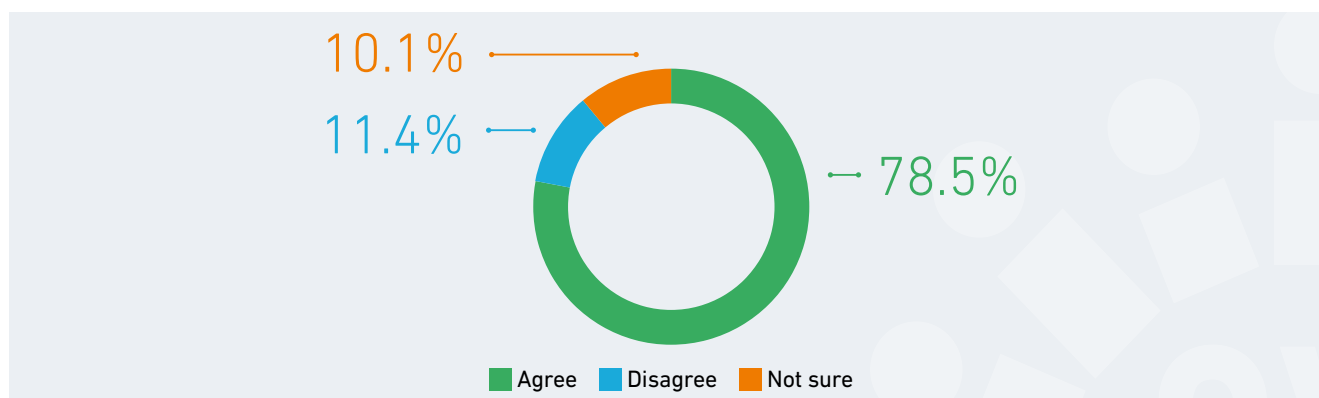
Young people were asked if Covid-19 had an impact on their participation in extra-curricular activities. Almost eight out of ten (79.9%) young people agreed that Covid-19 had an impact on them taking part in extra-curricular activities, 13.8% disagreed and 6.3% were not sure (see figure 20). More boys than girls reported an impact of extra-curricular activities than girls.

Figure 20: Has Covid-19 had an impact on young people's participation in extra-curricular activities?



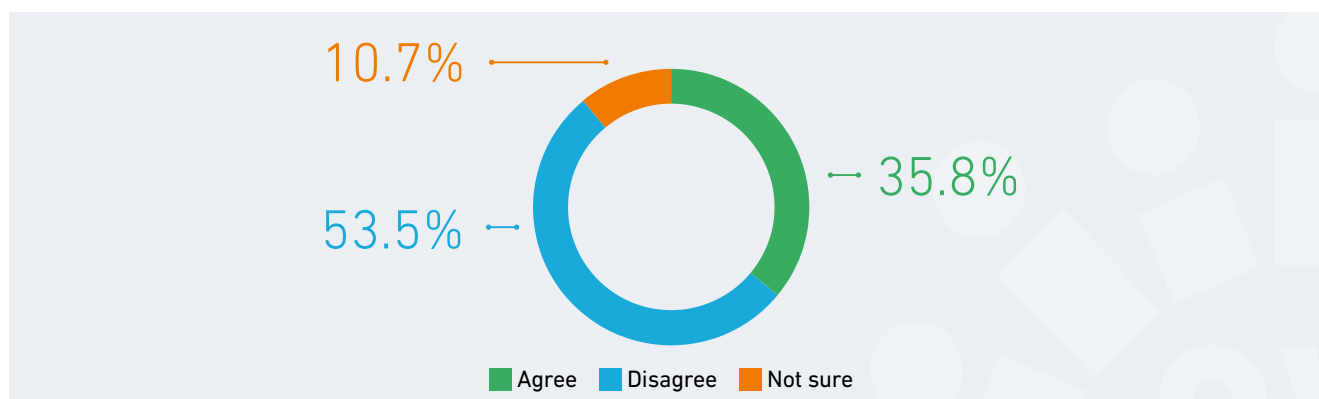
Similarly, close to eight out of ten (78.5%) young people said they miss taking part in extra-curricular activities, 11.4% disagreed and 10.1% were not sure (see figure 21 below). Boys were also slightly more inclined to miss parting part in extra-curricular activities.

Figure 21: Do young people miss taking part in extra-curricular activities?



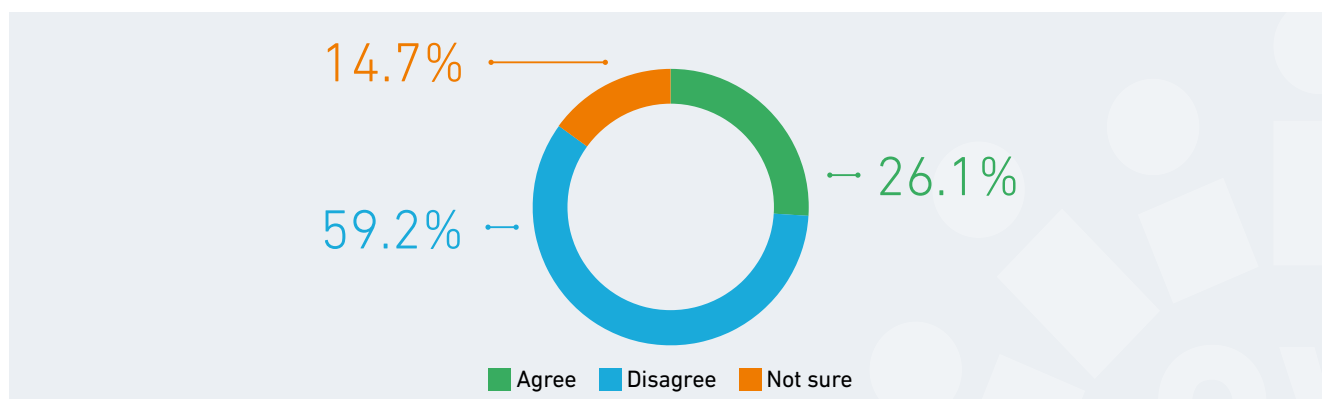
Just over one third (35.8%) of young people stated they were still attending extra-curricular activities in person, over half (53.5%) said they were no longer attending in person and 10.7% were not sure (see figure 22 below).

Figure 22: Are young people attending extra-curricular activities in person?



Just over quarter (26.1%) of young people said they were engaging with extra-curricular activities online, 59.2% were not engaging with activities online and 14.7% were not sure (see figure 23 below). More boys than girls indicated they are still engaging with extra-curricular activities online.

Figure 23: Are young people engaging with extra-curricular activities online?



Benefits of participation in extra-curricular activities for young people

Young people were asked if they are still taking part in extra-curricular activities in person or online, how does this help them. The key benefits outlined by young people related to continued participation in extra-curricular activities were:

- Mental health benefits, e.g. someone to talk to
- Social benefits, e.g. social interactions with friends and other young people, keeps young people connected to each other
- Health benefits, e.g. keeping fit and active
- Takes young people's minds off the pandemic
- Gives young people something to do
- Gives young people a routine and purpose
- Keeps young people motivated
- Gets young people out of their houses
- Provides a safe, fun place for young people to relax
- Provides a space for young people to get support and information, e.g. from youth workers

"It improves my mood, gives me something to do and distracts me from worrying about the pandemic."

"Sport helps my mental health a lot. It's nice to be back with my team playing GAA."

"During lockdown all we did was eat and bake, with restrictions lifted I am back training and just back to music lessons and it is such a relief to meet with friends, family have been great but it's nice to have a break too."

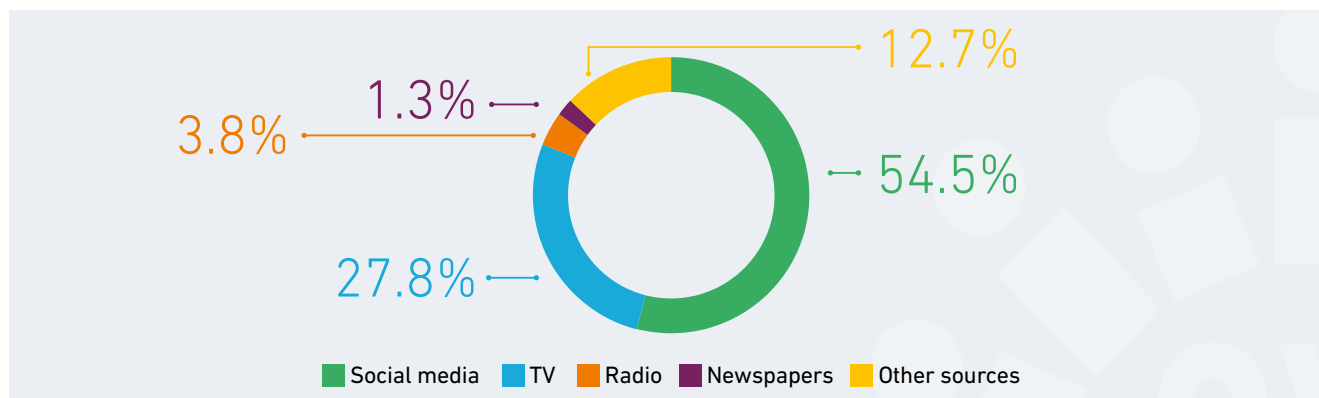
"It gives me motivation knowing that I will have an activity to do on a certain day."

"It's a safe place to relax and take your mind off the pandemic."

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON COVID-19

Respondents were asked where they get most information about Covid-19. Over half (54.4%) of young people said they get most information about Covid-19 from social media, 27.8% of young people get information from television, 3.8% from the radio, 1.3% from newspapers and 12.7% of young people said they get information from other sources. This included parents, family members, friends, youth workers and work colleagues (see figure 24 below). In terms of gender differences, more girls than boys were inclined to access information about Covid-19 on social media. Girls were also more inclined to get information in the newspapers. Boys were more inclined to get information from television and radio.

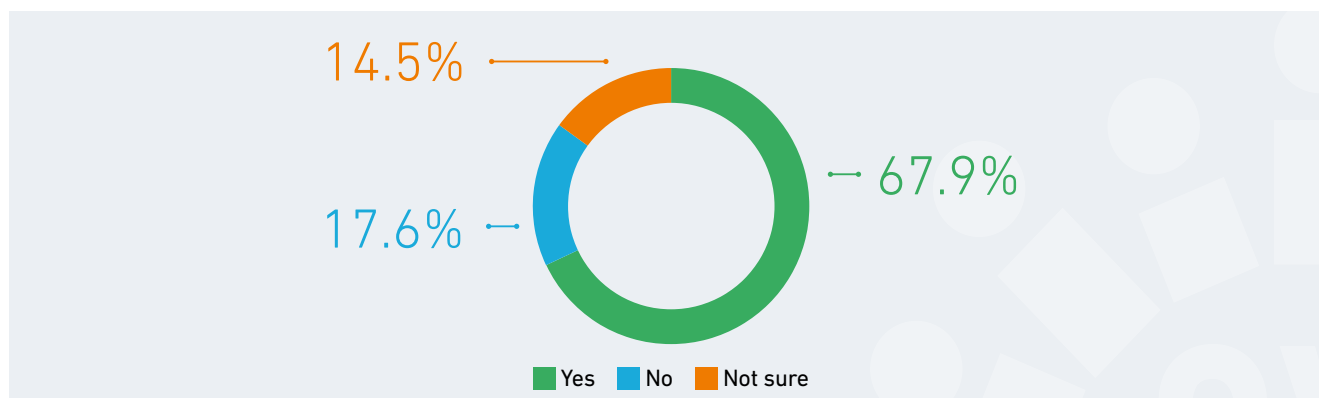
Figure 24: Young people's main source of information on the Covid-19 pandemic



HOW YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TREATED IN THE MEDIA

Young people were asked if they think they are being treated unfairly by the media during the Covid-19 pandemic, e.g. unfair stereotypes of teenagers not caring about social distancing. Almost seven out of ten (67.9%) young people agreed that young people are being treated unfairly by the media during the Covid-19 pandemic, 17.6% disagreed and 14.5% were not sure (see figure 25 below).

Figure 25: Are young people being treated unfairly by the media during the Covid-19 pandemic?



SUPPORTS AND SERVICES YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO STAY CONNECTED

The survey asked what kinds of supports and services do young people need at this time to stay connected to friends, youth clubs, sports clubs etc.

1. Open youth services:

The main suggestion made by young people in the survey was for youth clubs and groups to open and provide a space for young people to meet up. It was acknowledged that this might involve young people meeting in smaller groups. Young people also recognised the need for more funding for youth services to adapt to new safety measures related to Covid-19. Some young people suggested there should be more information on youth services and more walk-in youth services.

"To be allowed use the youth club building where we can hang out with friends in a safe space. A place to relax and not think about Covid-19."

"More money is needed to help youth projects deal with changes and put measures in place to get young people back in a safe way."

2. More online activities and information:

The next most frequently mentioned supports and services young people need at this time to stay connected to friends, youth clubs, sports clubs etc. was more online activities. This included online meetings, training, workshops and quizzes. Young people also highlighted the importance of faster broadband and access to free Wi-Fi to ensure they can access online activities, training for young people on how to use online technology and information on harmful online content.

"More free interactive zooms. For example, a musical theatre zoom would be really fun."

"I think young people need more info about online games and how dangerous they are. My lad mates play a lot more now than before the pandemic. Like a workshop or something would be good to help understand the dangers of online world it's all we have right now is social media and we need education on this."

3. More outdoor activities:

The next most commonly identified support/service was more outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, sports activities and trips. Young people felt engaging in more outdoor activities would work well as it would comply with social distancing guidelines, allow young people to meet up in person and help them keep physically active. They also felt if youth services organised outdoor activities it would be a safe way for young people to meet up without being stereotyped by others.

"Maybe with changing to more outdoor and/or smaller groups, but actual contact is very important."

"Outdoor gatherings organised by youth clubs and projects so that the young people won't be stereotyped for being 'selfish' or 'narrow mind during the pandemic.'"

Other suggestions:

Other supports and services young people need at this time to stay connected to friends, youth clubs, sports clubs included public transport to access supports and services; access to free online counselling; and youth workers/coaches etc. who are understanding as to how difficult the pandemic has been for young people.

FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS ON FEELING CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD

According to focus group respondents, not being able to socialise with friends and take part in extra-curricular activities because of Covid-19 had a major impact on young people.

Socialising with friends

Young people found it very hard not being allowed to socialise with their friends due to Covid-19. Many young people communicated with their friends online more and now mainly meet up with their friends outdoors.

“At the start when it was 2kms and 5kms from your house it was hard and I texted my friends and some live in different counties so it was hard at first but I can met up with them now.”

“At the start me and my friends zoomed a lot but after that we were outside. I am lucky lots of my friends live nearby and we went for walks together which was good for our health. You can socially distance doing that and we had picnics as well which was nice.”

Impact on extra-curricular activities

Young people discussed the impact of Covid-19 on participation in extra-curricular activities. While some young people were able to continue engaging with extra-curricular activities online many were not which had a negative impact.

“I did my karate online but I wasn’t able to do soccer or swimming and it is a bit weird. The soccer did an odd zoom call but they are volunteers the coaches. I think it would have helped to see them more and talk.”

“Socialising and not being able to see people in person was really weird and not being able to go to my swimming club.”

Benefits of continued participation in extra-curricular activities

The focus group highlighted the benefits for young people of continued participation in extra-curricular activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Key benefits outlined by young people included mental health benefits, physical health benefits, social benefits, having a routine or stability, having something to look forward to, maintaining a team bond and keeping young people engaged in activities.

“I am in a GAA club and it has been very difficult. In May they started to organise strength and conditioning classes and you would do them out in your garden which was really good and kept everyone in good spirits and it was at the same time as we usually train. It was good to see everyone and we had a good joke as well. It keeps the team bond going strong. We have got to know everyone really well and kept people involved and interested because there is usually a big drop off in football at our age.”

“It stabilised everything that there was something stable like Comhairle na nÓg meetings and we still had them, not as often, but we had people to talk to and it helped keep me sane.”

Young people's main source of information on Covid-19

Social media was identified as young people's main source of information on Covid-19. Some young people said they had been watching the news on television more since the pandemic.

"I have mostly been getting information about Covid-19 from Twitter, the news or social media. I have RTE news updates on Twitter. There is confusion on the message being spread and it hasn't been grasped as well."

"I think the amount of young people watching the news since Covid has skyrocketed because everyone is anxious to know what's going on and when they will get their lives back."

Negative stereotyping of young people by the media

In general, young people agreed they are being negatively stereotyped by the media in relation to Covid-19. They talked about feeling upset by the way young people are being portrayed in the media as irresponsible and breaking government guidelines on social distancing and gathering in groups. Respondents added that adults are often more likely to be found to be breaking rules than young people.

"At the start of the virus we are being blamed, that is was being spread by younger people and infecting older people but the opposite is true. That's why younger children don't have to wear masks."

"Every single person I have seen out breaking the rules is adults. Teenagers are going about their business but they are judged to be breaking the news. People were putting up groups of six teenagers together but that is allowed. Me and my friends were getting upset by that. I knew a girl who had a party for ten people and all the parents were getting mad her which wasn't fair because it was allowed at the time by the government."

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

Overall, this research study found that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on young people aged 12 – 17 years in the Dublin City area. The most significant impacts have been in the areas of mental health and well-being, education and learning and staying connected with friends. There were also some significant gender differences in relation to the way young people are being affected by Covid-19, with girls being adversely affected more than boys. The research also identified additional supports and services that are now needed to respond to these impacts on young people.

Young people in the study identified that the Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact on their mental health and well-being. While the majority of young people are not worried about their own health due to Covid-19, large numbers of young people reported feeling worried about the health of family and friends. Significant numbers of young people also reported feeling sad, nervous and lonely as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Young people identified counselling in schools as the most important mental health support they need access to now. However, adequate resources need to be put in place to meet the needs of young people in relation to counselling in schools. Guidance Counsellors resources are already stretched so more are needed as well as exploring the possibility of outsourcing counselling in schools.

The study's findings indicate that education and learning is another key area in which young people were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The majority of young people are worried their learning has been adversely affected by school closures during the pandemic and only one third of young people were happy with how their schools and teachers helped them when schools were closed. The study shows inequality in terms of young people's home learning environments, with many young people not having access to adequate technology, internet or space in their homes that is conducive to learning. Many young people, particularly those in exam years, need supports such as one-to-one supports from teachers, extra classes and grinds to ensure their education and learning isn't adversely affected. More technical support and training is also required to ensure young people are able to continue learning remotely should schools close again. The emphasis placed on schools in both the survey and focus groups, may point to the importance that school life plays in a number of areas of young people's lives extending across learning, socialising, and mental health and wellbeing.

The study found young people being connected to their friends has been impacted significantly by the Covid-19 pandemic. This has had an impact on young people's mental health and well-being as well as their social lives. The continuation of extra-curricular activities, either in person and online, is very important to young people, showing many benefits including mental health, physical health and social benefits. The research also highlighted that the majority of young people feel they have been treated unfairly by the media in terms of stereotyping young people as being responsible for spreading the virus. However, the study shows that the majority of young people are meeting their friends in a safe and socially distanced way either outdoors or online which is contrary to the stereotype of young people portrayed in the media.

The study suggests there is a need for the Government to communicate information on Covid-19 directly to young people. This includes using social media and having press conferences aimed directly to young people on issues such as wearing face masks, safety protocols in schools and meeting up with friends in a safe way. Importantly, information and messaging aimed at young people should be developed in partnership with young people so as to ensure it is youth friendly and effective.

Finally, there were a number of significant differences in relation to how Covid-19 is affecting girls and boys differently. Overall, girls appear to be more adversely affected by Covid-19 in terms physical and mental health and education and learning. The research shows girls are more worried about their own and other people's health due to Covid-19 than boys. Girls also reported feeling more sad, nervous and lonely than boys as a result of Covid-19. Girls are more worried about their education and learning being affected by Covid-19 and requested more supports to catch up in school than boys. Girls were more inclined to access information about Covid-19 on social media and in newspapers, while boys were inclined to get information from television and radio. One of the few areas where boys were more affected by Covid-19 than girls was in relation to participation in extra-curricular activities. On the whole, boys participation in extra-curricular activities was more inclined to be impacted by Covid-19 than girls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are drawn from the study's research findings. Dublin City North and South CYPSC will work towards supporting services and young people, to explore opportunities to further the recommendations contained in this report.



THEME 1:

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING

- Young people should be able to access mental health supports in schools, e.g. counselling and mental health and well-being workshops and initiatives.
- There is a need for more Guidance Counsellors in schools who can provide counselling services to young people.
- Schools should explore the idea of outsourcing counselling services in schools.
- Face-to-face counselling is more preferable for young people than online counselling.
- Young people should be able to access mental health and well-being information online.
- Counselling should be free or affordable to young people.
- Schools should continue PE and sports activities where possible.



THEME 2:

ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Teachers should provide one-to-one learning supports for students who need them.
- Schools should consider providing extra classes and grinds for students in exam years to catch up with the curriculum.
- Young people should be provided with better access to computers/laptops/tablets if they are to learn remotely.
- Technical support/training should be provided to young people on how to use technology such as Google/Microsoft Classroom, Zoom etc.
- Schools should provide clear information on Covid-19 safety protocols and impacts, e.g. wearing masks, social distancing, impact on Transition Year.



THEME 3: SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM

- Schools should communicate more effectively with students about safety concerns regarding school reopening and safety protocols, e.g. online webinars.
- The government should provide young people with clearer information on wearing of face masks, social distancing, restrictions in schools etc.
- Information on Covid-19 should be aimed directly at young people, e.g. using social media, press conferences aimed directly at young people.
- Information aimed at young people should be developed in partnership with young people to ensure it is youth friendly.
- The government should consider providing more detailed information on where cases of Covid-19 are located.
- Schools and youth services could consider setting up Covid-19 committees where young people could gather and share information with other young people on Covid-19.



THEME 4: ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY

- The government should continue to support parents/guardians and young people who were working before the pandemic with Covid-19 social welfare payments.
- The government should develop policies and incentives to encourage employers to employ more young people.
- Young people should be supported to access volunteering, work experience, training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Students should be supported in schools to receive career guidance and money management skills.



THEME 5: CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD

- Youth services should reopen their facilities to young people where possible.
- Youth clubs, sports clubs, drama clubs etc should provide online activities for young people as well as information on harmful online content.
- Youth clubs and sports clubs should organise outdoor activities for young people where they can socialise safely with friends, e.g. hiking, camping and sports activities.

APPENDIX

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN: A SURVEY ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 - 17 YEARS IN DUBLIN CITY



- This survey is being carried out by Dublin City South and Dublin City North Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC).
- The aim of the survey is to find out what the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been on young people aged 12 – 17 years living in the Dublin City area.
- The findings of the survey will be used to help improve services for young people in the Dublin City area.
- All information gathered in the survey will be treated confidentially, anonymised, stored securely and only accessed by the researcher and Dublin City South and Dublin City North CYPSCs.
- Taking part in this survey is completely voluntary.
- It will take about 10 minutes to fill in this survey.
- Thank you!

1. Are you?

- Male Female Other

2. What age are you?

- 12 – 14 years 15 – 17 years

3. Are you?

(tick all that apply)

- Part of a cultural minority
 Part of a religious minority
 A member of the Traveller Community
 LGBTI+ young person
 Young carer, e.g. caring for a parent, brother, sister or family member
 Young person with a disability
 None of the above

4. What is your postcode?

- Dublin 1
 Dublin 2
 Dublin 3
 Dublin 4
 Dublin 5
 Dublin 6
 Dublin 6W
 Dublin 7
 Dublin 8

- Dublin 9
- Dublin 10
- Dublin 11
- Dublin 12
- Dublin 13
- Dublin 17
- Other (please state) _____
- Don't know

SECTION 1: HEALTH AND WELLBEING

5. How worried are you about your own health due to the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Not worried
- A bit worried
- Very worried

6. How worried are you about someone else's health due to the Covid-19 pandemic, e.g. family members/friends?

- Not worried
- A bit worried
- Very worried

7. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, are you?

- Exercising more often
- Exercising less often
- No change in exercising

8. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, are you?

- Eating more junk food and sweets
- Eating less junk food and sweets
- No change in eating junk food and sweets

9. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, are you feeling?

	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time
Happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lonely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. What mental health and well-being supports/services do young people need now?

(You can tick more than one answer)

- Online information on mental health and well-being
- Workshops on mental health and well-being, e.g. in youth services, schools
- Online counselling
- Face to face counselling
- Counselling in schools
- Other (please describe) _____

SECTION 2: SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

11. How worried are you about your learning being affected by schools being closed during the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Not worried
- A bit worried
- Very worried

12. How worried are you about schools not reopening fully in September?

- Not worried
- A bit worried
- Very worried

13. Do you have access to the following things in your home to do school work/homework/study?

(Tick all that apply)

- Computer/laptop/tablet
- Mobile phone
- Internet/broadband/Wi-Fi
- A desk/table
- A quiet space
- None of the above

14. How happy were you with how your school/teachers helped you when schools were closed?

- Happy
- Not sure/don't know
- Unhappy

15. What do young people need now to help support education and learning?

- Better access to computers/laptops/tablets
- Better broadband/Wi-Fi
- Technical support, e.g. how to use Google/Microsoft Classroom, Zoom etc.
- One to one learning support from teachers
- Other _____

SECTION 3: FEELING SAFE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

16. How safe do you feel in your community since the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Safe
- Not sure/don't know
- Unsafe

17. How clear do you find the information on safety around the Covid-19 pandemic, e.g. hand washing, wearing masks, social distancing etc.?

- Clear
- Not sure/don't know
- Unclear

18. What information about the Covid-19 pandemic would help young people feel safer in their communities at this time?

SECTION 4: JOBS AND MONEY

19. Did you have a part-time job that was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Yes No

20. Has your parent's/guardian's job(s) been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Yes No Unsure

21. How worried are you about money since the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Not worried
 A bit worried
 Very worried

22. What kind of supports/services would help young people in terms of jobs/money at this time?

SECTION 5: YOUNG PEOPLE FEELING CONNECTED AND RESPECTED

23. How worried are you about not being able to see your friends because of the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Not worried
 A bit worried
 Very worried

24. How often do you get to see your friends now?

- Same as before the Covid-19 pandemic
 More often than before the Covid-19 pandemic
 Less often than before the Covid-19 pandemic

25. Where do you meet up with your friends?

- Online, e.g. on WhatsApp, Messenger, Snapchat, Instagram
 Outdoors, e.g. in parks, on the street
 Indoors, e.g. in your house, friend's house
 Other _____

26. Do you take part in any of these extra-curricular activities? (tick all that apply)

- Youth service/club/project
 Afterschool club
 Sports club
 Drama/dance clubs
 Scouts/Guides
 Other _____
 I do not take part in any extra-curricular activities

27. Please say if you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on me taking part in extra-curricular activities.

- Agree Not sure/don't know Disagree

28. I miss taking part extra-curricular activities.

- Agree Not sure/don't know Disagree

29. I am still attending extra-curricular activities in person.

- Agree Not sure/don't know Disagree

30. I am still attending extra-curricular activities online.

- Agree Not sure/don't know Disagree

31. If you are still taking part in extra-curricular activities in person or online, how does this help you?

32. Where do you get most information about the Covid-19 pandemic?

- Television
 Radio
 Newspapers
 Social Media
 Other (please describe) _____

33. Do you think young people are being treated unfairly by the media during the Covid-19 pandemic, e.g. unfair stereotypes of teenagers not caring about social distancing?

- Yes No Unsure

34. What kinds of supports/services do young people need at this time to stay connected to friends/youth clubs/sports clubs etc.?

35. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about what supports and services young people need because of the Covid-19 pandemic?
