

Children of the 90s

COVID-19 first questionnaire report

3rd June 2020



Summary

We had 6,800 responses to a questionnaire sent out from the 9th April 2020 for a month: 54% of all those invited took part in the study.

This report is designed to share an overview of the first findings – published research using your data will follow soon. Here are some of the key findings.

How many of you have had COVID-19?:

- Only 8 (0.1%) of you reported that you had a positive test to COVID-19.
- 77 of you (1%) told us that a doctor had told you that you probably had COVID-19
- 865 (13%) of you suspect that you have COVID-19.
- The low levels of confirmed cases mirror what is being shown in the South-West of England.

Mental health:

- Anxiety levels are much higher during lockdown whilst levels of depression appear to be similar to those reported when you were younger.
- The younger generation are suffering much more with anxiety and depression compared to their parents.

Lockdown – timing, guidance and changes in life:

- Most of you felt that lockdown happened too late (58% of parents and 68% of young people).
- Young people were more likely to report that the official guidance was an under reaction (26% compared to 17% of parents).
- 60% of you told us that you changed your day to day activities before lockdown was announced.
- You reported a huge move to working at home.
- You spent more time talking to family and friends and listening to the news.
- The amount of money you have spent has generally decreased.

We are giving these results to the Health Data Research UK (who liaise with the government's SAGE committee) and policymakers at Public Health England. The policymakers who determine how we respond to the pandemic are using your data as evidence and the research that follows will continue to inform this.

The second questionnaire (out now and which closes on 29 June) is so important as we look for greater detail on virus symptoms and transmission, health and well-being of families (including children), finances and understanding the impact on mental health as lockdown starts relaxing. We are particularly keen that more men take part in this questionnaire, so please remind your friends and family in the study. We couldn't do this without you, so

THANK YOU!

Introduction

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Children of the 90s launched an online questionnaire and invited all our participants who had given us an email address and who were happy to be contacted to complete questionnaires. We wanted to quickly collect information about the early stages of 'lockdown' which was announced by the UK government on March 23rd 2020.

Invites started going out on 9th April 2020 and the questionnaire remained open until 15th May. We had an incredible response with over 4000 people completing the questionnaire within the first week. When we closed the questionnaire, we had received over 6800 responses.

In this report we present some of our initial findings.

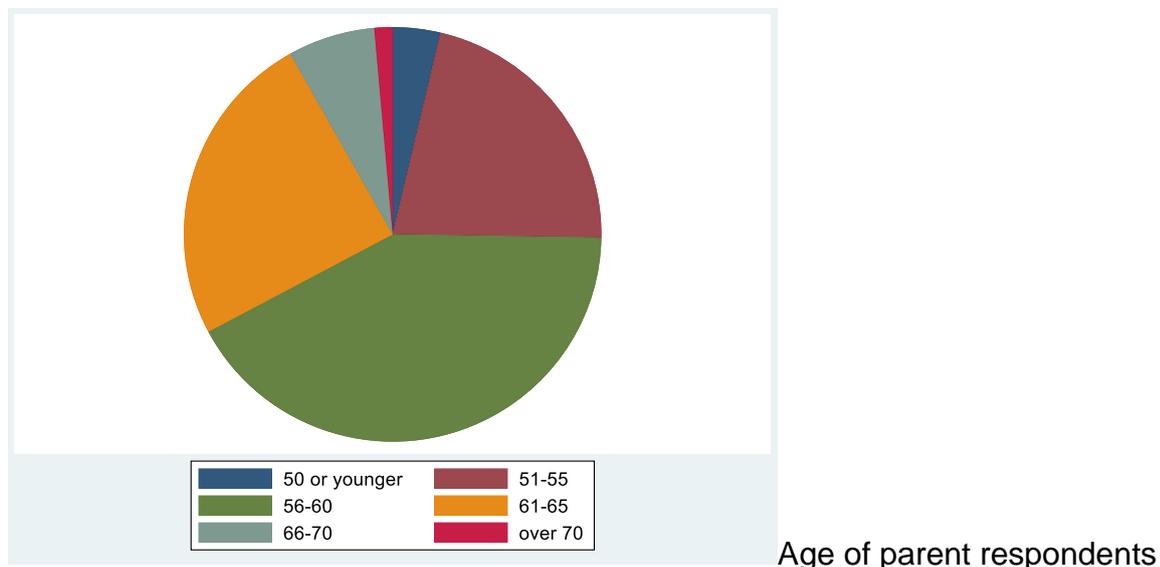
Who completed the questionnaire?

We sent the questionnaire out to 12,520 participants and it was completed by 6807, giving an overall response rate of 54%. We had responses from:

- 2706 original mothers
- 1014 original fathers or mother's partners (we will refer to these as *fathers* for the rest of this report)
- 2973 original children (now average age of 28 years – we will refer to these as the *young people* for the rest of this report)
- 114 partners of the original children (who are enrolled in COCO90s – we will combine these with the young people for the rest of this report).

Parents were more likely to respond than their children (58% versus 51%) and amongst the young people, females were much more likely to respond than males (59% versus 38%).

The majority of parents who responded were in their late 50s and early 60s.



We have a unique opportunity to compare any differences in the two generations that the study has.

What you have told us about...

Your health

We asked you whether you had any of the conditions identified by the government as making you high risk (known as shielded conditions) or at moderate risk:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/coronavirus/shielded-patient-list>

We estimate that 8% of Mothers, 7% of fathers and 3% of young people have a shielded condition. In addition, 2% of all responders said that they had a 'health problem that required them to stay at home'.

We estimate that 8% of mothers, 26% of fathers and 16% of young people were at moderate risk of developing complications from COVID-19 if they were to be infected.

We also asked you if you suffered from depression or anxiety – we are particularly concerned about how lockdown might affect you. The table below shows how many participants reported one or both.

	Depression	Anxiety	Both
Mothers	7.4%	13.9%	5.2%
Fathers	4.3%	6.1%	1.9%
Young people	15.3%	27.6%	13.1%

We have also looked at changes over time using more detailed questions that tell us whether someone might be clinically diagnosed as depressed or anxious. Anxiety levels are much higher during lockdown whilst levels of depression appear to be similar to when you were younger.

Travel

We are interested in looking at the different places you may have been since October last year. Around 40% of you reported at least one trip overseas. You have told us exactly where you have been and why but it will take us a little while to sort out that data and see if it has any effect on those of you who have displayed possible symptoms of COVID-19. A total of 257 responders live overseas.

Possible COVID-19 symptoms

We asked you whether you had experienced various symptoms each month since October last year. These included known COVID-19 symptoms. The government now recognises three main symptoms as potentially being related to COVID-19: a high temperature, a new, persistent (continuous) cough and a loss or change to your sense

of smell or taste (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>). Many of you reported at least one of these symptoms at some point between October 2019 and when you completed the questionnaire: 13% loss of smell/taste; 21% new, persistent cough and 23% of you reported fever. However, very few reported all three symptoms together (<1% most months)

Having COVID-19

Eight of you (4 parents and 4 young people) told us that you had a positive test for COVID-19, a further 77 (28 parents and 49 young people) told us that you had been told by a doctor that you have likely had COVID-19 and a further 865 (426 parents and 439 young people) told us that you suspected yourselves that you have had COVID-19.

Self-isolating

We asked you whether you had or were currently self-isolating. This was more common in the young people with 11% reporting that they had compared to 7% of mothers and only 2% of fathers. The next table tells us why you chose to self-isolate.

Reason	%
Showed symptoms	28.7
Someone in household showed symptoms	19.9
In vulnerable group	26.8
Live with someone in vulnerable group	13.9
Travelled and told to return	5.1

Behaviour change before lockdown

Over 60% of you reported that you changed what you did on a day to day basis before lockdown was announced. Young people were more likely to report this compared to their parents (66% versus 58%). The next table tells us why you changed your day to day behaviour.

Reason	%
Showed symptoms and felt unwell	55.3
Did not want to infect others	30.2
Following advice	66.8
Did not want to get infected by others	52.8

Behaviour change since lockdown

We asked you how aspects of your life may have changed after lockdown was announced. The tables over the page show that there have been substantial changes in your lives.

Parents

	Decreased	Stayed same	Increased
Amount of sleep	19%	61%	20%
Amount of exercise	41%	30%	29%
Use of green space	49%	29%	22%
Amount smoked	19%	61%	21%
Amount of alcohol consumed	11%	59%	30%
Time spent working outside home	73%	21%	6%
Time spent working at home	16%	24%	60%
Time spent computer/tablet/phone	4%	41%	56%
Time spent watching TV	7%	56%	37%
Time spent talking to family/friends inside home	9%	34%	57%
Time spent talking to family/friends outside home	33%	20%	47%
Time spent talking to work colleagues	45%	33%	22%
Frequency of relaxation/mindfulness	8%	70%	21%
Time spent listening to news	11%	25%	64%
Time spent learning new things	4%	67%	30%
Time spent doing hobbies	13%	37%	50%
How much food eaten	6%	62%	32%
How much money spent	78%	16%	6%

Young people

	Decreased	Stayed same	Increased
Amount of sleep	24%	44%	33%
Amount of exercise	44%	26%	30%
Use of green space	47%	24%	29%
Amount smoked	23%	36%	41%
Amount of alcohol consumed	19%	37%	44%
Time spent working outside home	77%	15%	8%
Time spent working at home	14%	14%	72%
Time spent computer/tablet/phone	3%	25%	72%
Time spent watching TV	6%	36%	58%
Time spent talking to family/friends inside home	5%	28%	67%
Time spent talking to family/friends outside home	38%	18%	44%
Time spent talking to work colleagues	45%	33%	22%
Frequency of relaxation/mindfulness	9%	59%	32%
Time spent listening to news	13%	22%	65%
Time spent learning new things	6%	58%	37%
Time spent doing hobbies	19%	31%	49%
How much food eaten	9%	49%	42%
How much money spent	68%	22%	11%

These changes are potentially both positive and negative. In the young generation there was a greater increase in sleep and use of green space.

In those parents who smoked or consumed alcohol the majority smoked the same amount whilst in the young people a greater proportion increased the amount of both.

As expected there has been a huge move towards working at home and the use of computers/tablets and phones has also gone up – much more so in the young people. More time is spent talking to family and friends and listening to the news. While the amount of money spent has decreased on the whole.

Mental Health

We asked you about different things that might be worrying you as a result of the pandemic. Parents were much more worried about getting COVID-19. Young people were more worried about the financial consequences or losing their job. There were no great concerns about being able to get medications or food or about relationships with family. There was a big difference in worries over mental health with young people being much more likely to express concern. Unsurprisingly, parents were much more likely to say they were worried about their own parents during the crisis.

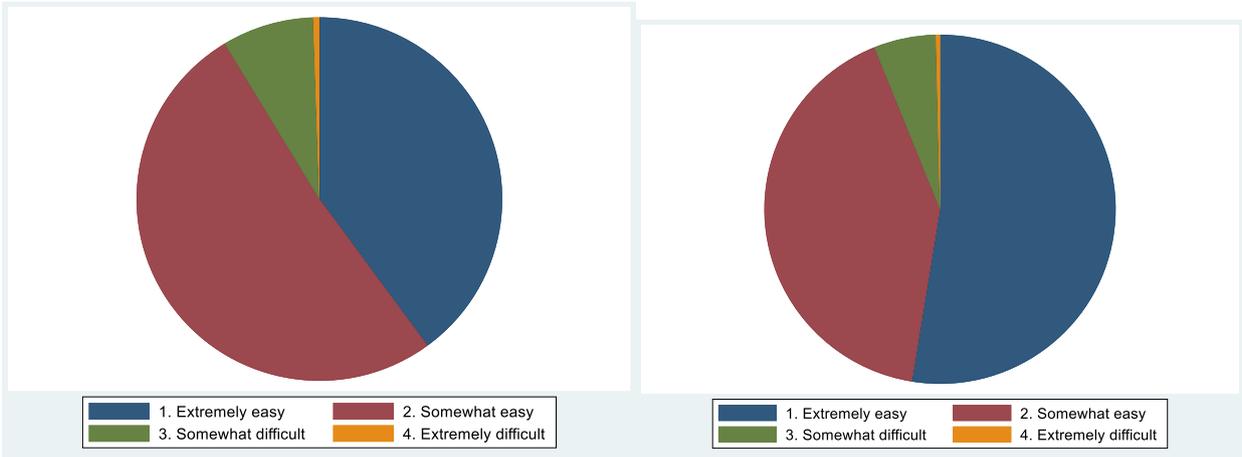
Poor mental health was much more likely in young people: 15% were scored as likely to be depressed compared to 4% of parents and 34% were scored as likely to have moderate or severe anxiety compared to 10% in parents.

Feelings about the government response

We asked you how easy you found the official guidance around the pandemic to understand. Young people were more likely to report it was extremely easy to understand.

Parents

Young people



The majority of you felt that lockdown happened too late (58% of parents and 68% of young people) but that the official guidance was about right (76% of parents and 64% of young people). Parents were more likely to say that it was timed about right (35% compared to 24% of young people) while young people were more likely to report that the official guidance was an under reaction (26% compared to 17% of parents).

Garden access

Nearly all parents told us that they had access to a garden (98%) but only 82% of young people did.

Keyworking

Around a third of you (both generations) told us that you were a keyworker and around 10% of you are healthcare workers. Our second questionnaire will explore your job in more detail.

What's Next?

Our second questionnaire is now live and we hope you will complete it (even if you didn't complete the first one!). This will allow us to track changes in how you have been affected by the pandemic as it has gone on.

We will be sharing the results from both of these questionnaires with a wide range of different people. Most importantly we are already reaching the people who make the decisions about relaxing lockdown. We will also feed into the NHS and government departments helping them to better understand the consequences of these unprecedented times.

We thank you for all of your contributions to Children of the 90s.