

Coronavirus and Me



Comisiynydd
Plant Cymru
Children's
Commissioner
for Wales

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Coronavirus and Me

On 13th May 2020 the consultation 'Coronavirus and Me' was launched to find out about the experiences of children and young people in Wales. This consultation captured information about the lives of over 23,700 children between the ages of 3-18, and ran for a two-week period during which restrictions to keep communities in Wales safe had been in place for two months.

Whilst the restrictions affected everyone, this consultation shows children have had widely different experiences. Some have experienced bereavement, distress and worry. Many have missed their friends, their families and feel they are missing out on their education. At the same time, many children describe how they have valued a chance to spend more time with their family, to play and relax more, or to learn in a different way.

During this time, children and young people have experienced a restriction to their human rights, as guaranteed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). But these human rights have not gone away and once it is safe to do, children will be able to experience their rights again.

The purpose of the Coronavirus and Me consultation is to make sure that children and young people experience their right under the UNCRC to express their view and participate in decisions that affect their lives. This initial report contains an overview of the main results from the consultation. A further, detailed report is being developed with the intention that the important insights children have shared will be used to inform decisions taken on a national level. This will make sure that children's rights are at the centre of the next steps we take in Wales to keep our children and young people happy, healthy and safe.

Who developed this consultation?

The Coronavirus and Me consultation has been a partnership consultation between four organisations:

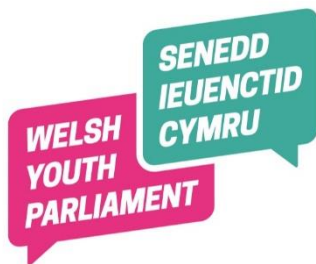
- Welsh Government
- The Children's Commissioner for Wales
- The Welsh Youth Parliament
- Children in Wales

As a Government committed to the children's rights laid out in the UNCRC, the [Welsh Government](#) must provide children with opportunities to express their views and should be accountable to them for its actions. This survey is one way to do this during the coronavirus restrictions. [Children in Wales](#) is an organisation with several roles, and as part of their work they are commissioned by Government to help Government consult with children. The [Welsh Youth Parliament](#) and the [Children's Commissioner for Wales](#) are both organisations that are independent from Government and whose role it is to challenge Government on behalf of children and young people. But at this time, all four organisations decided to work together to respond to the challenges of the coronavirus. This is because all these organisations want children and young people to have a chance to express their views and take part in decisions.





Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Analysis of findings

The Children's Commissioner's office led on all project management with financial independence from Welsh Government and other partners. The Children's Commissioner for Wales is also the data owner for this project and is responsible for the analysis and production of this report. The entire quantitative data have been analysed to generate quantitative findings in this report. Comments and quotes from children and young people are used in this report to illustrate some of the statistical findings. A full qualitative analysis is underway, but for the purposes of this report a sample of 2000 responses has been used to identify key themes emerging in response to each open-ended question. Quotations used illustrate the key themes as identified from this initial sample.

Summary of key findings

Are children worried?

37% of children and young people stated that they were not worried about Coronavirus on the day they completed the survey. A similar number (38%) felt the same level of worry that they had the week before while smaller numbers felt more worried (12%) or less worried (14%)¹.

What are their worries?

Worries include concerns about how long the situation would last and fears that they or those they love will catch the virus. Comments of children who were not worried or were less worried suggest they felt they were being kept safe, daily numbers of deaths were decreasing, children were less affected, or they were avoiding watching too much news.

How are children feeling?

The majority (58%) of children and young people report that they have felt happy most of the time during the crisis and a large majority (84%) report feeling safe most of the time. Young people of secondary age reported more negative feelings than younger children, with 16% feeling sad 'most of the time'. 2% overall report that they have 'not very often' felt safe.

What has impacted them most?

The top three responses from young people (12-18) on which stay at home rules have impacted the most on how they feel are 'not being able to spend time with friends' (72%), 'not being able to visit family members' (59%) and 'school or college closing' (42%).

Are there any benefits?

Many children and young people have commented on positive aspects of the experience of the Coronavirus crisis. For many there has been a pleasure in spending more time with their family, learning new skills and enjoying the outdoors in gardens and during daily exercise. For some, this period has also brought relief from previous social and health pressures such as mental health difficulties or bullying.

¹ Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding up or down of decimal points

Do children know where to get help for their mental health and wellbeing?

The majority report that they know where to get help but only 39% of young people age 12-18 would feel confident seeking school counselling at the current time.

How confident do children feel about learning?

51% of total selected that they feel confident or very confident. 25% of total selected that they lacked confidence, with 10% of this group stating they felt 'not at all confident'. 24% of total selected the neutral option. But 12-18 year olds are reporting worries: only 11% of respondents in this age group stated they did not feel worried about their education, and the most commonly reported concern they had about learning was that they were worried about falling behind (54%).

Are children in touch with their schools?

Respondents overwhelmingly report being contacted by their place of education, with only 1-2% of respondents across the different surveys reporting no contact.

What are barriers to home learning?

Themes emerging from a sample of 2000 comments show that many children would like more contact and support from their school, with additional online provision. There are also specific challenges around access to electronic devices and pressures in the home environment, and other challenges raised by children with additional learning needs.

What do year 6 pupils want?

Year 6 children overwhelmingly want to say goodbye to their primary school (76%) and visit their secondary school before school starts (75%).

How do young people feel about cancelled exams?

Only 17% of young people feel happy that exams have been cancelled. Young people were more likely to feel uncertain (51%) or worried (18%). Young people also report feeling angry (6%) and sad (5%).

Are all children able to use Welsh?

The majority of children in both Welsh-medium and English-medium education are continuing to use Welsh during this period. Some children in Welsh-medium education are not getting any opportunity to use Welsh (8% of 7-11 year olds; 15% of 12-18 year olds). Over a quarter of children in English-medium

education who usually learn Welsh are not getting any opportunity to use Welsh (31% of 7-11 year olds; 26% of 12-18 year olds).

Are all children able to play?

Over half of children report playing more than usual (53%) with a wide range of online and offline play described including outdoor play, imaginary play, playing with toys or games, sports, and creative play.

How the survey was carried out

The aims were to enable children and young people in Wales to have their experiences and views of the coronavirus pandemic taken into account by Welsh Government and other public services. The evidence collected in the survey will inform Welsh policy-makers' response, information and communication to children and young people during the crisis and help them develop guidance and policies both immediately and in the longer term.

At the start of the project an Equality Impact Assessment was created to inform the design and distribution of the consultation. Due to the coronavirus restrictions it was not possible to do any face-to-face consultation, and whilst the obvious solution to this was to offer an online platform, it was necessary to think of creative ways to make sure all groups of children and young people had a chance to have a say, not least because the digital divide in existence in Wales has been a pressing issue even before the pandemic.

As participants were to be self-selecting for the survey, care was taken to ensure that children and young people in as many different groups and situations as possible could participate. To do this, the following provisions were made:

- The survey was open to ages 7-18 and took three forms: a version for 12-18s, a slightly shorter and simpler version for 7-11s and an accessible version with symbols to assist reading for 7-18s.
- We also made available an option to share views using pictures or words that was mainly aimed at 3-7s but also available to older children who preferred to communicate in that way.
- To enable children and young people without access to electronic devices and/or the internet to take part, we requested that schools, community groups and participation officers in local authorities do the survey with those they know who haven't got online access via their regular 'check in' telephone calls with the family.
- All consultation tools were tested with young people. Young people engaged in the partner organisations as advisors or elected representatives contributed to the development of the materials, including the themes to be covered. Agreed themes were then collated under relevant articles of the UNCRC. Over 50 children and young people from 11 local authorities piloted the survey and picture activity prior to their launch and their comments led to changes in formatting and wording.
- All Directors of Education were asked to cascade the survey to their schools and the survey was also set as this term's 'special mission' for the Children's Commissioner's network of ambassador schools and community groups, with particular groups and schools receiving targeted communications to ensure a diversity of response.
- Monitoring data were included in the survey, so that the results can be disaggregated by protected characteristic and analysed to reveal any statistical patterns affecting different groups.
- The Commissioner's office liaised with in-patient mental health units and secure youth justice settings so that young people could share their views in a safe way with support of their key workers.

- We were also keen to get as even a geographical representation as possible and through a regular monitoring of the response rate while the survey was open, local authorities, local community groups and elected politicians, including youth parliament members, were alerted to areas that were under-represented and asked to promote it.

We have had confirmation that children taking part included those living in foster care, children's homes, hospital, young carers and gypsy and traveller children – all groups who often miss out on general surveys. We have also received the views of young people in a secure children's home and young offender's institution. In total the survey web page was visited 95,884 times between 13 May and 27 May.

The Commissioner's team has also logged comments and responses received via social media and email, positive and negative, as part of an ongoing evaluation of the methodology and success of the project.

Full analysis of the survey results is underway. This initial report presents overall findings and includes illustrations from the free text responses where children were able to express themselves in their own words. The free text responses in this report should be regarded as individual expressions: they have been included exactly as submitted on the survey, with no changes to spelling or language. Subsequent analysis will involve a content analysis of free text responses as well as some more in-depth analysis of the quantitative questions. Monitoring data were included in the survey, so that the results can be disaggregated by protected characteristic and analysed to reveal some statistical patterns affecting different groups.

Limitations of the consultation

It was important that surveys were quick and easy to complete and that consultation was undertaken swiftly. Due to these constraints it was not possible to collect information about the personal characteristics of respondents with the level of detail which would allow us to understand the representativeness of the sample. Information shared through the Commissioner's Ambassador network means that we know that some groups of children and young people who can often miss out did get a chance to take part, but these groups may still be under-represented in the sample. We also cannot rule out the possibility of individuals taking the survey more than once.

Who took part?

In total, 23,719 children and young people participated in this consultation.

23,488 took part by completing a survey:

- 11,815 (50%) completed the 7-11 survey
- 11,002 (47%) completed the 12-18 survey
- 671 (3%) completed the accessible survey (ages 7-18)

231 took part by completing an **open-ended activity** to express their experiences through writing or drawing. 193 of these responses were completed by children under 7 and 22 were completed by older children or young people. 16 did not include their age.

Survey responses were received from **every local authority area** in Wales. The local authorities with the highest number of responses were: Cardiff (3602); Carmarthenshire (2218); Swansea (2132). The lowest number of responses received from any authority was 353.

Equalities information

56% of survey respondents were girls, 42% were boys, 1% identified as trans and 1% preferred not to say.

1,077 children and young people that took part in the survey said that they have a disability.

19,949 respondents (88%) were White Welsh or British. Responses were received from children and young people of all ethnic groups listed.

Survey responses were received from children and young people of all ages between 7 and 18. Ten year olds were the age with the highest representation (2,694 respondents: 12% of total). 18 year olds were the age group with the lowest representation (467 respondents: 2% of total). Whilst this does show that some ages are over-represented, these are ages that are not likely to access and complete other surveys designed for the adult population.

“I am happy being with mummy and daddy but miss people. But I'm not sad’ (Age 4, north east Wales)



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Feelings

The section reports how children and young people have felt during the crisis. They were also asked how worried they were on the day they completed the survey.

On average, 37% of children and young people stated that they were not worried about Coronavirus on the day they completed the survey. A similar number (38%) felt the same level of worry that they had the week before while smaller numbers felt more worried (12%) or less worried (14%)².

All questions were optional but large numbers of children chose to comment on their response to this question. Worries included concerns about how long the situation would last and fears that they or those they love will catch the virus.

'My mummy and daddy still need to work and I need to stay with nanny to keep safe I am scared they will get ill and I won't see them again' (8 year old boy, south east Wales)

'Because it might not go for a long time, and I miss people' (9 year old girl, west Wales)

'because there is no cure and it has already killed 1000s of people' (10 year old girl, central south Wales)

'My grandma has lung problems and she lives with me and I don't want her to die like lots of people have' (9 year old girl, west Wales)

'My mum works at the hospital on a covid ward' (11 year old boy, north east Wales)

'My mum is terminal ill so I scared now this virus will her as up to now she able to live but now she can't go out and if she get the virus she will die as the hospital not put her on a ventilator' (11 year old boy, north east Wales)

Other comments suggest that they were not worried or less worried because they felt safe at home, daily numbers of deaths were decreasing, children were less affected, they were avoiding watching too much news or their families keeping them safe.

'I am not worried my mummy tells me it's her job to worry' (7 year old boy, north east Wales)

'Because I follow social distancing rules and I'm quite young' (8 year old girl, central south Wales)

'I obey the rules and stay in. I also wash my hands if I go out' (11 year old girl, south east Wales)

² Numbers do not always add up to 100% due to rounding of percentages.

Table 1: 7-11 and 12-18 Surveys. How have you been feeling during the Coronavirus Crisis?

	Most of the time			Some of the time			Not very often		
Age	7-18*	7-11	12-18	7-18*	7-11	12-18	7-18*	7-11	12-18
Happy %	58	66	50	34	29	40	8	5	10
Worried %	12	10	14	39	37	41	48	53	44
Sad %	11	7	16	58	35	41	31	59	43
Safe %	84	90	78	13	8	18	2	1	4

*7-18 column refers to the combined percentage of respondents to both surveys (7-11 and 12-18)

It can be seen that the majority (58%) of children and young people report that they have felt happy most of the time during the crisis and a large majority (84%) report feeling safe most of the time. Young people of secondary age reported more negative feelings than younger children, with 16% feeling sad 'most of the time'. 2% overall report that they have 'not very often' felt safe.

Children ages 7-18 answering the accessible survey were asked a simpler question and the results on Table 2 therefore cannot be compared to the results in Table 1.

Table 2: Accessible survey. How have you been feeling about coronavirus? (n=633)

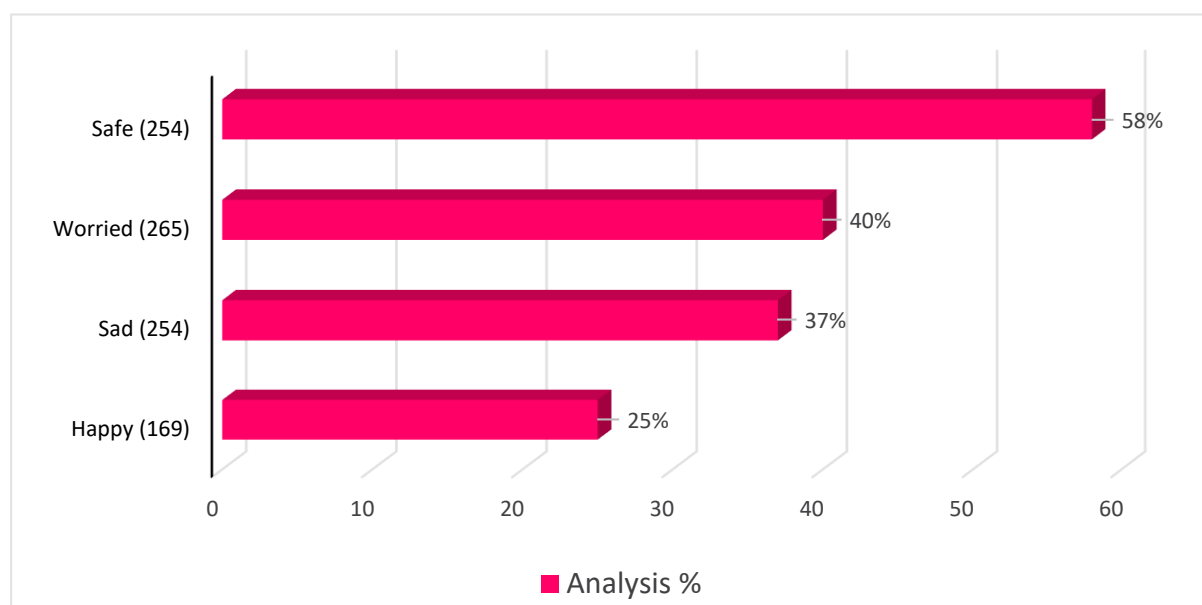
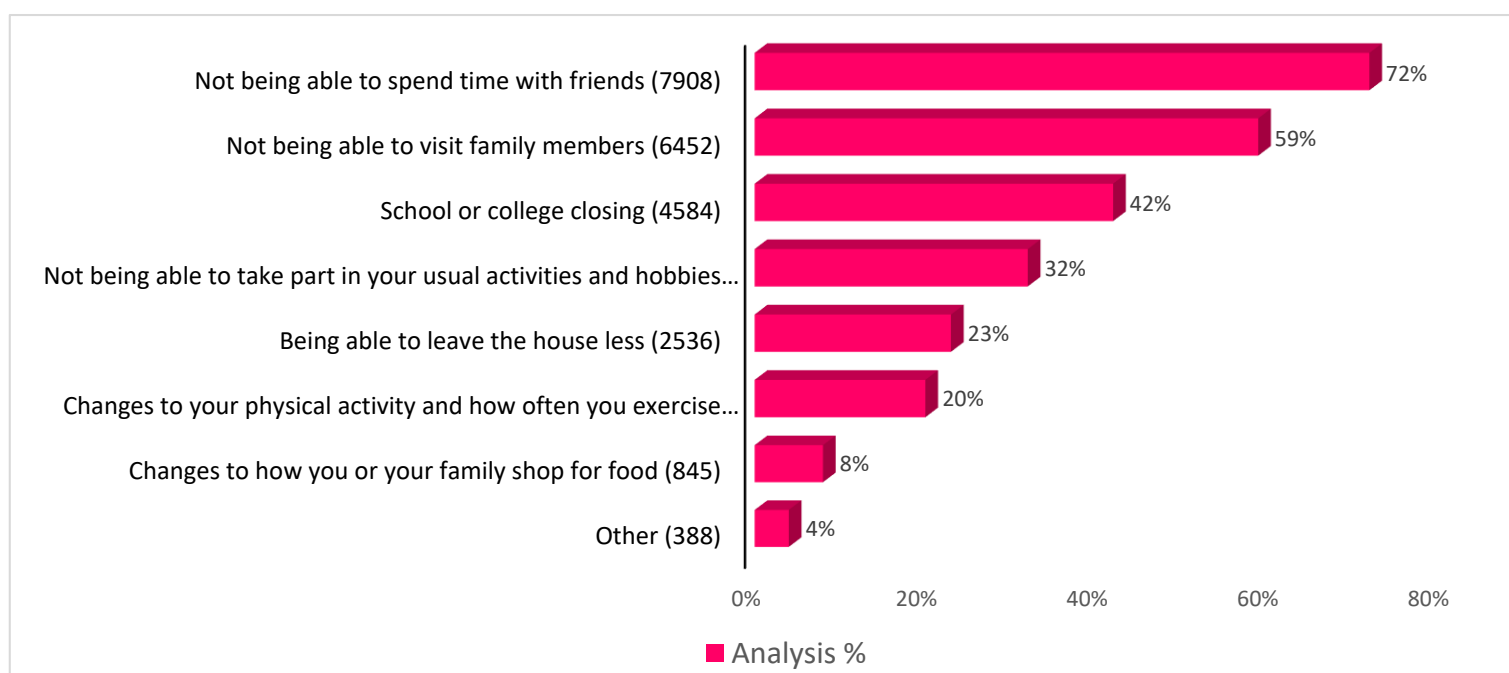


Table 3: 12-18 survey. What changes have had the most impact on how you feel? Choose up to three (n= 10937)



It can be seen that the top three responses from young people on which stay at home rules have impacted the most on how they feel are 'not being able to spend time with friends', 'not being able to visit family members' and 'school or college closing'. It is notable that the loss of time with friends is the biggest factor by some margin.

'Going out with my friends was a daily thing I did almost everyday. Not being able to do that has been difficult' (15 year old girl, west Wales)

A number also commented that they miss seeing their partners:

'Unable to spend any time with my partner who lives in another household' (18 year old girl, central south Wales)

A number commented on family pressures:

'Much less income as one parent cannot work and is self employed' (16 year old girl, south east Wales)

'Lockdown made my primary household (my dad's) incredibly more hostile, so I've had to move in with my mum away from my beautiful dog and with none of my things' (18 year old girl, central south Wales)

'I can't see my dad face to face, I can only see him on face calls' (12 year old girl, west Wales)

Positive feelings and experiences

It is notable that many children and young people report positive aspects of the experience of the Coronavirus crisis. These findings may have long term policy implications and will be considered in detail by the partner organisations once fully analysed. This section gives a flavour of children's and young people's comments.

For some, this period has brought relief from previous social and health pressures such as acting as a carer to other family members, mental health difficulties and bullying.

'Helped more to look after my mum and not worry how she is because I'm at home. When I'm in school I worry if she is ok' (12 year old girl, Wales, no area stated)

'Not going to school has helped me in many ways; it gave me time to recover from being in poor mental health and gave me a break from all the hassle of school days' (13 year old, trans, north west Wales)

For others there has been a real pleasure in learning new skills and enjoying the outdoors in gardens and during daily exercise. Children's everyday lives can be very busy with school and organised activities and comments in the survey suggest that the crisis has given time to discover different pleasures. Most strikingly is the large number of comments about the additional time spent with family members.

'I have learnt new skills (British sign language), I can listen to music whilst doing work, I can speak to friends who live far away more, we've connected with our neighbours more' (14 year old girl, central south Wales)

'Being outside, exploring, climbing, exercising more in the outdoors. More relaxed, less rushing about' (9 year old girl, central south Wales)

'having fun playing rugby with my parents, learning new skills and keeping fit for next season. I enjoy challenges' (11 year old boy, central south Wales)

'playing outdoors, going on walks to the forest and pond' (8 year old girl, west Wales)

'Rydw yn cael mwy o amser i fod yn greadigol ac i dreulio amser gyda fy nheulu' [I am getting more time to be creative and to spend time with my family] (14 year old, no gender specified, west Wales)

'I have formed a closer relationship with my parents. The community has really come together. Has made me appreciate the small things' (15 year old girl, central south Wales)

'i've gotten closer to my family because they used to be out all the time. now they are at home and i talk to them more' (15 year old girl, south east Wales)

'I am a swimmer and so is my younger sister and we're always being dropped off at the leisure centre after school and because we train at different times, we don't eat dinner together so it's nice spend quality time with my family' (12 year old girl, south east Wales)

'Allows you to do things that once you didn't have time for. Studying in year 13 5 days a week and having a part time (job) on the weekend with homework means that things like exercise, eating right, reading and relaxing are almost impossible.' (17 year old girl, central south Wales)

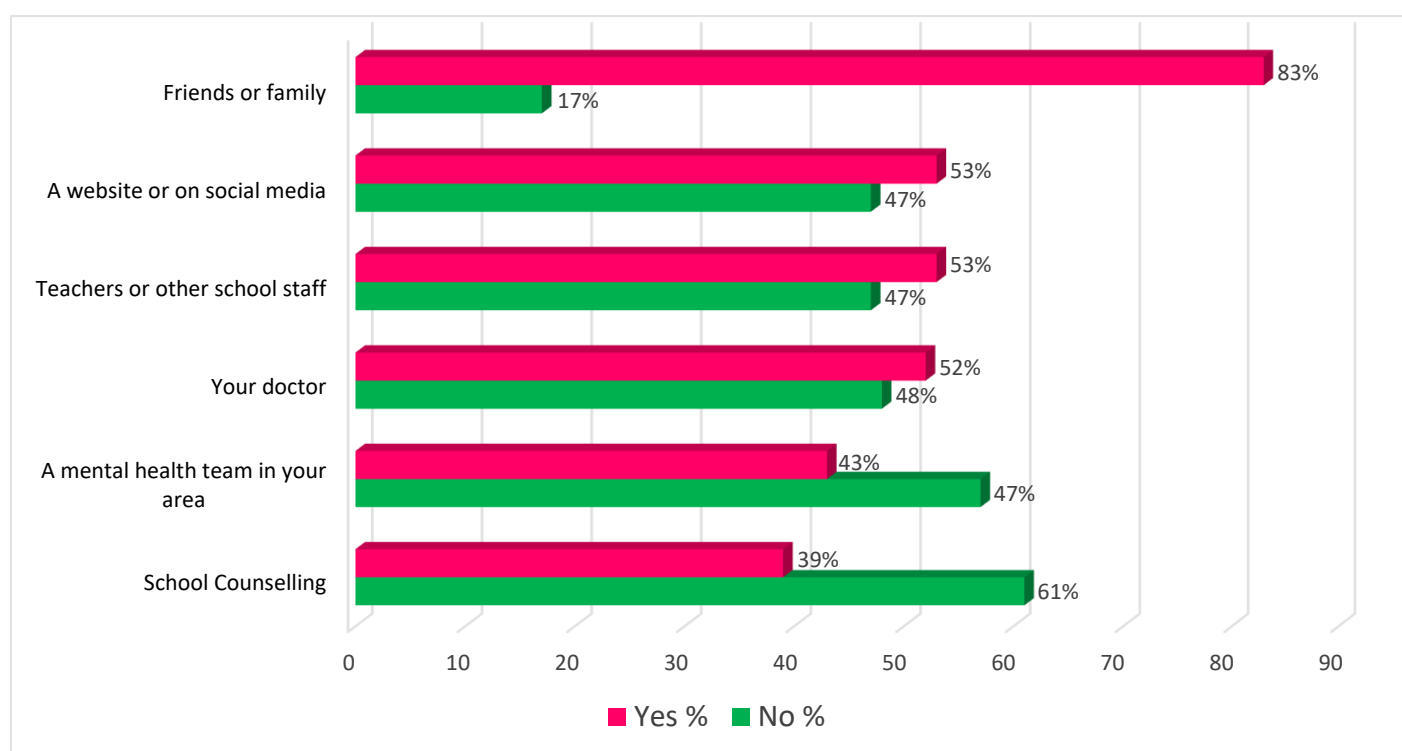
Emotional and Mental Health Support

UNCRC Article 24: a child's right to good quality health care

Many have expressed concerns about the mental health of people of all ages during the crisis. Children and young people were asked about seeking help for this. Younger children and those answering the accessible version were asked whether they knew where to get help if they need support to feel happy and well. 77% of 7-11 year olds said 'yes', 16% were not sure and 7% answered 'no'. Of those answering the accessible survey, 70% said 'yes', 23% were not sure and 8% answered 'no'.

Young people responding to the 12-18 survey were asked about different types of support available:

Table 4: 12-18 Survey. If you need help with your emotional or mental health now, would you be confident to get help from these places? (n= 11,002)



There are opportunities for services to provide clear information to young people on how to seek help and to increase their confidence by explaining what will happen if they ask for help.

Education

UNCRC Article 28: A child's right to learn

Confidence

Coronavirus has changed the way children and young people learn. All survey respondents (to 7-11, 12-18 and accessible survey) were asked to rate **how confident** they feel about their learning during this time.

- 51% of total selected that they feel confident or very confident
- 25% of total selected that they lacked confidence, with 10% of this group stating they felt 'not at all confident'
- 24% of total selected the neutral option

Positive learning experiences

Free text comments give some insight into reasons why some feel confident, showing that many respondents are enjoying **self-directed** learning in the home environment, and are developing their own skills and interests. Many describe learning a new skill, including arts, crafts, cooking, outdoor learning, science, languages and music:

'learning about things which interest me... I've learned about plants, our solar system and constellations. I feel more clever than when I'm in school because I understand more' (10 year old girl, west Wales)

I'm able to self-learn and understand the work much more clearer compared to in-school...For example, I never understood anything related to Physics in class before but now due to this lockdown I began revising and I'm now understanding it for the first time' (15 year old boy, west Wales)

'I have learned new skills like playing keyboard and painting' (8 year old girl, south east Wales)

'My headaches from stress at school have dramatically reduced. I don't feel the same pressure however I am still doing the same and maybe more work than usual. I have enjoyed working from home however I will enjoy school when we get back. Also I have had the time to take up new skills like piano and cooking' (15 year old girl, south central Wales)

'Gwella sgiliau addysgu annibynnol' [improving independent learning skills] (17 year old boy, north east Wales)

'Educating myself new skills in the subjects I love (maths, physics, chemistry and music).' 17 year old, no gender specified, central south Wales)

'wi ddim moen mynd nol i'r ysgol. Dwin teimlo dylai fod ffyrdd gwahanol o ddysgu ar gael sydd ddim yn profi plant o hyd. Hoffwn i addysg mwy creadigol.' [I don't want to go back to school. I

feel there should be a different way of learning available, which children aren't experiencing now. I would like to learn more creatively.] (14 year old girl, central south Wales)

Another common theme is **less pressure and constraints to time** in learning activities:

'I'm able to devote more time to learning a new skill' (17 year old boy, north east Wales)

'dwi gyda dyslexia ac yn yr ysgol dwi teimlo yn cael fy rusho ac ddim cael amser ac dwi eisiau aros ac neid addysg gartref tin anhapus yn yr ysgol' [I have dyslexia and in school I feel I get rushed and don't get time and I want to stay and do home education you're unhappy in school] (14 year old girl, central south Wales)

'Feeling less pressure of school. I can take my time when learning and creating my own structure' (16 year old girl, central south Wales)

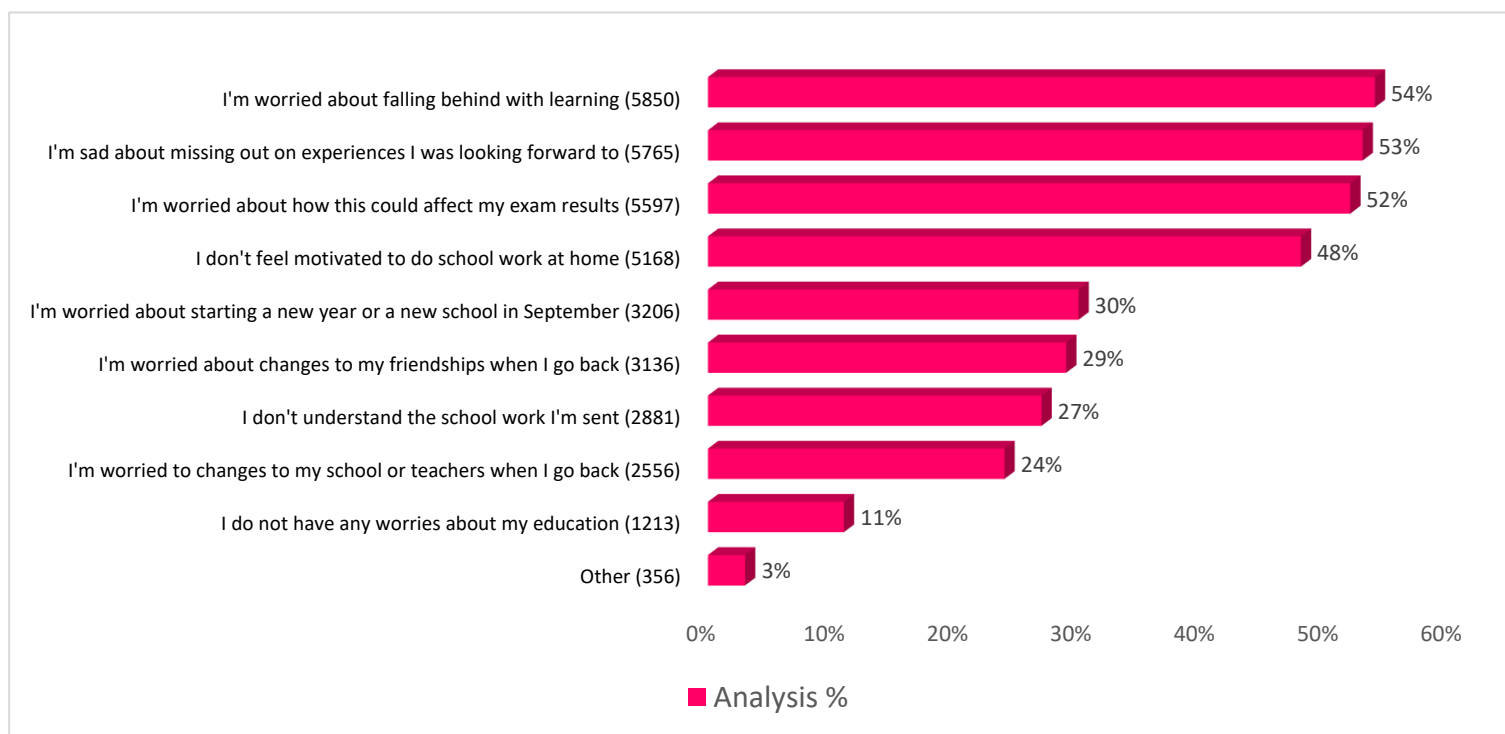
Possibly related to positive confidence levels, there is also continued interaction with schools. Respondents overwhelmingly report being contacted by with their place of education, only 92 (less than 1%) of children completing the 7-11 survey state that they have not been contacted by their school. This figure is consistent with that shown in the accessible survey, where only 7 respondents (1%) had not been contacted by their school. This compares with 226 of young people (2% of total) completing the 12-18 survey. It should however be noted that schools were one key distribution mechanism for the survey so this may have increased the likelihood that respondents reported having been contacted by schools.

The most common way 7-11 year olds and those completing the accessible survey have been contacted is through the online learning platform Hwb; the most common way 12-18 year olds have been contacted is through e mail. Those completing the accessible survey were the most likely to have been contacted by phone, 51% of this group had been called by their school compared to 45% of 7-11 survey respondents and 37% of 12-18 survey respondents.

Concerns about learning

12-18 year olds were asked additional questions about their **concerns**. Only 11% of respondents in this age group stated they did not feel worried about their education, and the highest concern was that they were worried about falling behind with learning (54%).

Table 5: 12-18 Survey. Which of the following sentences are true for you? (select as many as you like). (n = 10873)



This information is supplemented by free text comments which indicate that many children and young people would like **greater support and contact** from their school, when asked what would help them more:

'A video or phone call from my teacher. I miss them' (11 year old girl, north east Wales)

'Teachers live on zoom or teams to talk to us at the beginning of the day about our home schooling tasks for that day' (10 year old girl, south central Wales)

'Hoffwn weld mwy o gefnogaeth oddi wrth athrawon i wneud gwersi trwy saflaeoedd fel "zoom" i barhau a fy addysg yn lle dim ond gosod gwaith.' [I would like to see more support from teachers doing lessons through sites like "zoom" to continue my education instead of just setting work] (13 year old girl, central south Wales)

'I would like to have interactive online learning with my teachers and classmates' (10 year old girl, central south Wales)

'my school work has decreased in quantity and quality so I would like to do some Zoom chats with my teacher' (11 year old girl, west Wales)

Other comments describe **specific challenges** affecting groups of children and young people, often around **access to devices and pressures in the home environment**:

'Home Learning is difficult when your parents are essential workers and/or don't speak English very well. I need to take care of my little sister all day and explain the worksheets her teachers

have sent to her and it's difficult to do all this while sharing one device for all of us' (17 year old girl, central south Wales)

'I was loaned a laptop through collage because I am dyslexic & the charger has broken, it won't stay in the laptop which is having a massive impact on me doing my work' (17 year old girl, west Wales)

'It's very stressful having to teach yourself and I don't have access to a laptop or good wifi at home which is a real struggle as an A level student' (16 year old girl, mid Wales)

There are also specific challenges raised related to **additional learning needs**:

'I am finding the school work really difficult to do as I am dyslexic and it all come in written text, which I find hard to read' (12 year old boy, west Wales)

'Really struggling with school work the Hwb isn't set up for dyslexics' (15 year old girl, west Wales)

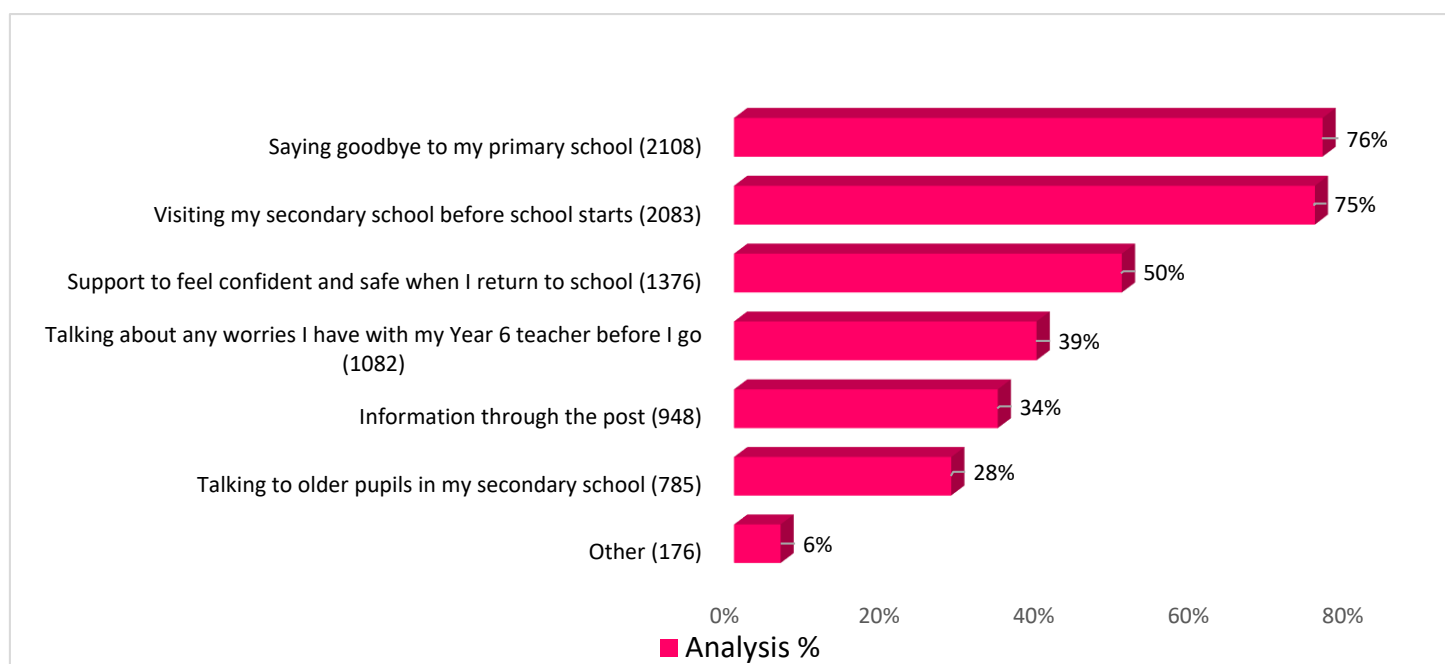
'I have ASD so I have struggled with suddenly no school and a different routine. I'm worried about going back to school. I don't know when. I don't know who will be there.' (10 year old boy, central south Wales)

'No support for my schoolwork. No contact with friends in the Asd base at school. No contact with specialist clubs I was part of' (16 year old boy, central south Wales)

'I have asd and I like routine my school day is structured and I don't like being off school they help me with my learning' (12 year old girl, north east Wales)

Year 6 children

Table 6: 7-11 survey. Question only for Year 6 respondents. What support will you need when you go to secondary school in September? (n= 2764)



Whilst specific open ended questions were not asked about this many children chose to describe concerns about transition to secondary school in their responses to other open ended questions. Concerns include the sense of loss of the experience of year 6, sadness at missing their peer group, fear about starting a new school, anxiety about a lack of certainty or worry about returning to a changed school environment that feels strange.

'It has been a rough experience because I am in year 6 and nearly in year 7 and this pandemic has took my last year in primary school well hopefully not all of it' (11 year old, unspecified gender west Wales)

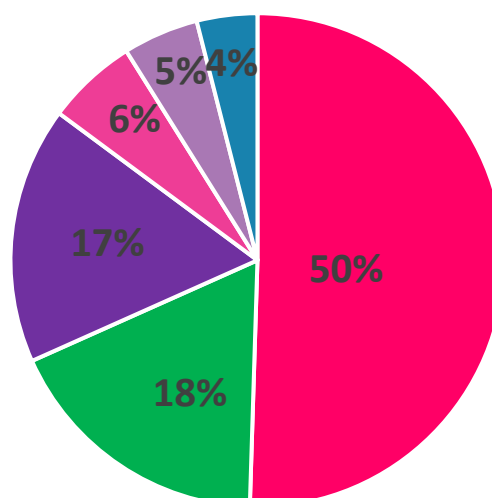
'I'm nervous about going back to school in year 7 its scary' (11 year old girl, west Wales)

'I would like some time in my Year 6 school before I go straight to Year 7 - I feel upset and scared about leaving Year 6 so quickly without time to say goodbye to my friends as I'm going to a different High school' (11 year old girl, north east Wales)

'Dwi isho gwbod mwy am be neith Digwydd I fi pan ai ysgol uwchradd oherwydd Dwi heb bod i weld o llawer na Gwybod pa dosbarth fyddai yn. Dwi hefyd yn poeni os ai nol I ysgol cyn gwyliau haf fydd o yn creepy yna just Blwyddyn 6 a hefyd pa gemau Fedrai Chwarae efo ffrindiau Amser chwarae os rhaid aros 2 meters' [I want to know more about what will happen to me when I go to secondary school because I have not been to see it much and I don't know what class I will be in. I'm also worried if I go back to school before the summer holidays it will be creepy there, just Year 6 and also what games can I play with friends at playtime if we have to keep 2 metres apart'] (11 year old girl, north west Wales)

Exam cancellations

Table 7: 12-18 Survey. Question only for respondents taking exams. How do you feel about exams being cancelled? (choose the best option for you) (n= 4495)



■ Uncertain (2273) ■ Worried (794) ■ Happy (747) ■ Angry (277) ■ Sad (207) ■ Other (197)

A free text question asked respondents to explain why they chose the option selected. Respondents often took a very balanced view, often showing understanding of reasons for the decision but describing personal impacts that range from anger, disappointment, relief, confusion or worries about how this might affect the future. Several also were concerned that results could be devalued or unfair.

'Angry - I've put in so much effort for these exams and it's all gone to waste' (15 year old girl, central south Wales)

'Uncertain - Because my grades are in the hands of my teachers and I have no control over whether I get into uni or not now' (17 year old boy, west Wales)

'Worried - I'm worried the qualifications I'm awarded won't be seen in the same way by future employers' (18 year old girl, central south Wales)

Learning outside school

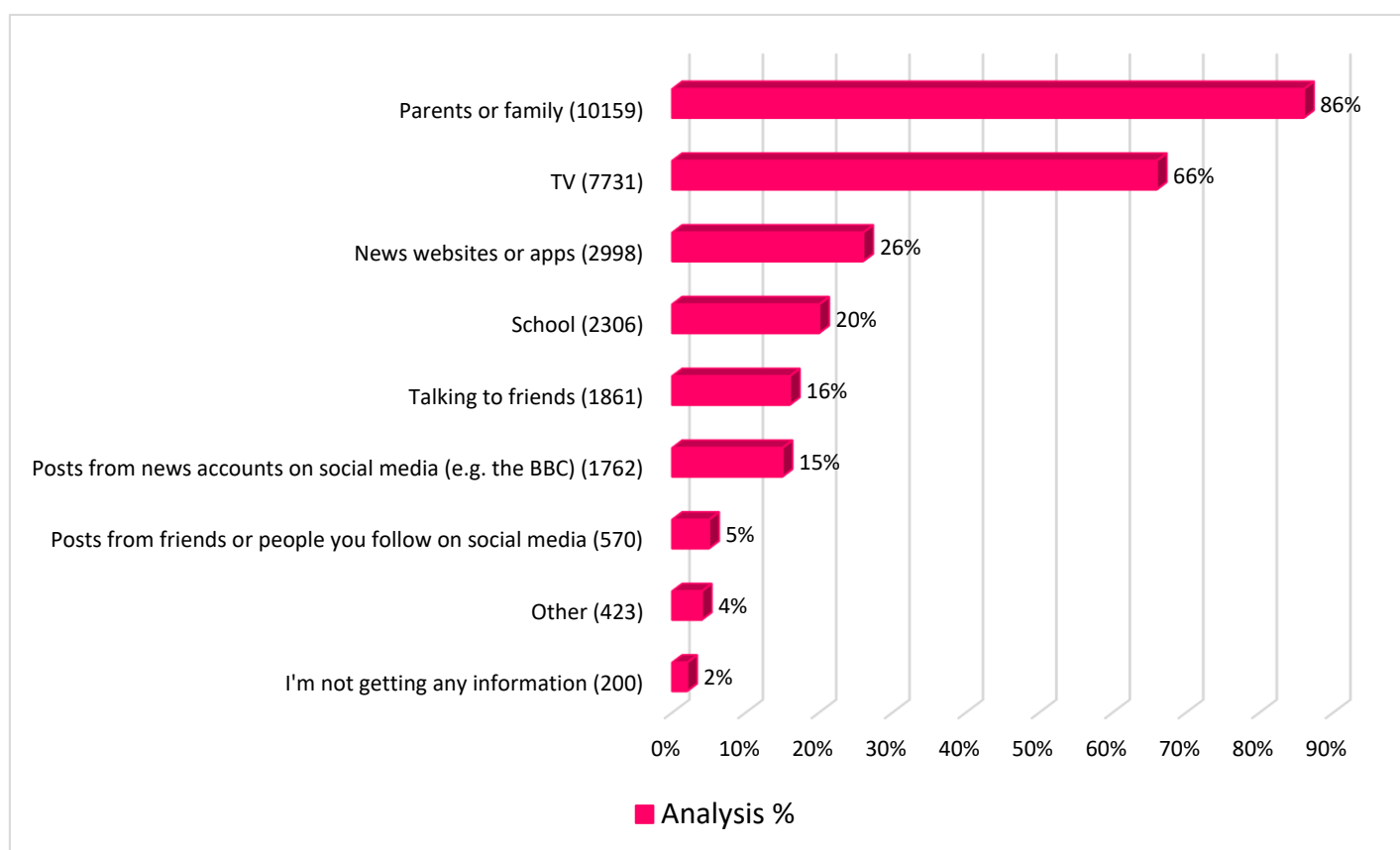
Children and young people were also asked what restrictions impacted their learning outside school the most. Children and young people educated in school settings overwhelmingly chose not being able to meet friends and join groups outside school as the change with the greatest impact. 291 children and young people who are usually home educated also completed the survey, and these respondents also selected not being able to meet friends and join groups as the change with the greatest impact on learning.

Information

UNCRC Article 17: A child's right to information they can understand

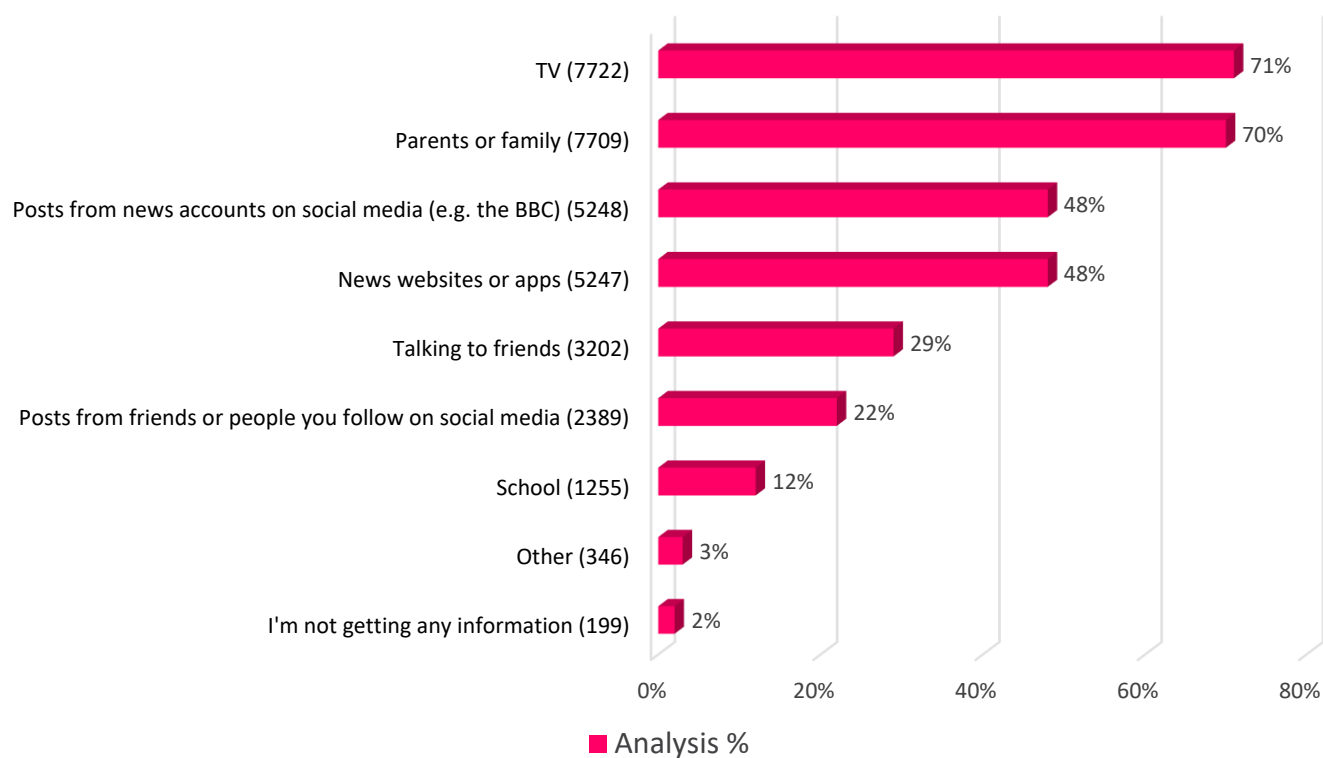
Children in the 7-11 survey were asked where they are getting their information on coronavirus, and asked to tick all sources that applied. Respondents report primarily getting info about Coronavirus from family, followed by TV, as shown in the graph below.

Table 8: 7-11 Survey. Where are you getting your information on coronavirus? (tick all that apply) (n= 11775)



Respondents to the accessible survey closely reflect this picture, with the three most common information sources being family (76%), TV (65%) and school (20%). 3% of respondents to the accessible survey selected that they were not getting any information. Young people taking the 12-18 survey have similar sources of information but are more likely to be getting information online from news websites and accounts.

Table 9: 12-18 Survey. Where are you getting your information on coronavirus? (tick all that apply)
(n = 10953)



Welsh Language

UNCRC Article 30: a child's right to speak their own language

Children and Young People usually attending Welsh-medium settings

Children in Welsh medium education completing the 7-11 survey show that the majority are continuing to use Welsh, with 86% using Welsh to do work and activities from school, 59% reading Welsh language books and 55% using Welsh with family. Of this group 8% said they are not getting opportunities to use Welsh.

The 12-18 survey also indicates the majority of young people in Welsh medium education are finding opportunities to use Welsh during the period of school closures. 74% are using Welsh in the activities and work they do from school, 49% are using Welsh with family and 35% are using Welsh with friends. But 15% are not getting opportunities to use Welsh during this period.

Children and Young People usually attending English-medium settings

Children completing the 7-11 survey who are in English medium education, and who usually learn Welsh, are primarily using Welsh in work and activities from school (56%). But 31% say they are not getting any opportunities to use Welsh.

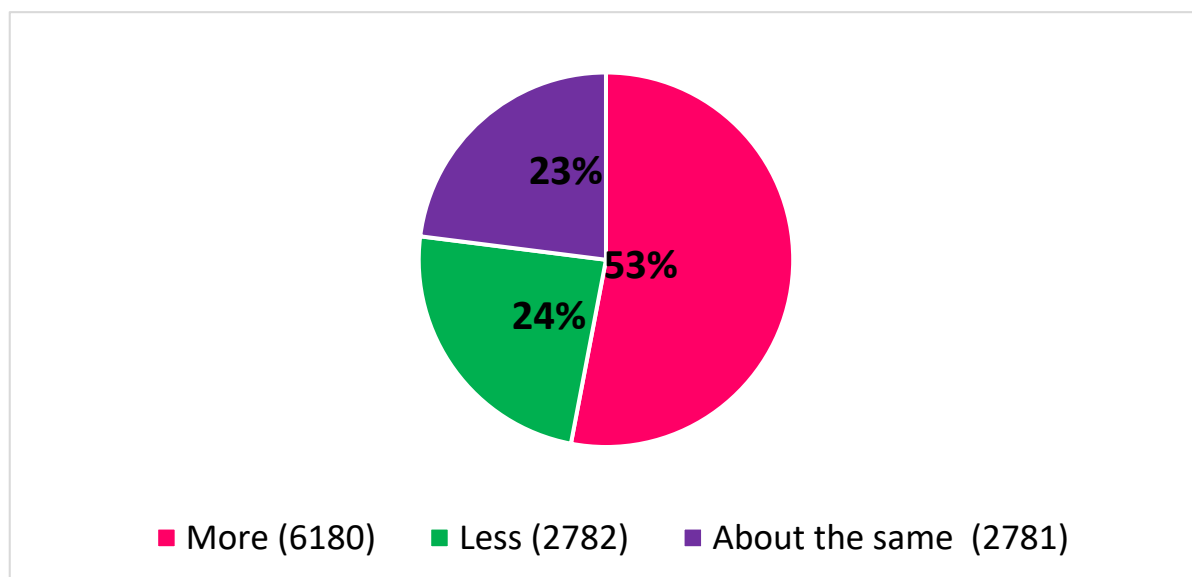
This is echoed in the 12-18 survey, where young people who are in English medium education, and who usually learn Welsh, are mostly using Welsh in school work (66%). But for this age range 26% are not getting any opportunities to use Welsh.

Play and Leisure

UNCRC Article 31: a child's right to relax and play

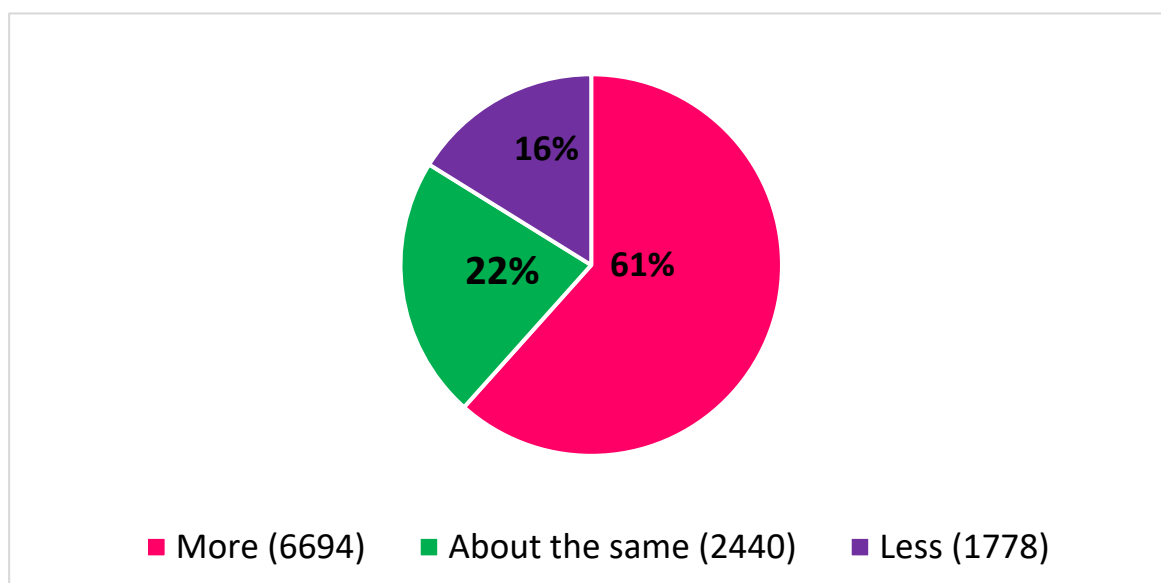
'Are you playing more or less often since schools closed on the 20 March?' was asked in both surveys, with the word 'playing' substituted for 'relaxing' in the 12-18 survey.

Table 10: 7-11 Survey. Are you playing more or less often since schools closed on the 20th March?
(n= 11743)



These figures were very closely matched in the accessible survey, with 57% playing more often, 22% playing less often and 21% playing the same amount.

Table 11: 12-18 survey. Are you relaxing more or less often since schools closed on the 20th March
(n = 10912)



Both the 7-11 survey and the 12-18 survey show that more children and young people are relaxing and playing during this period.

For 7-11s, this question was succeeded by an open-ended question which asked what children have been enjoying most when playing. Some of the responses included playing with family, engaging with friends online through games or chat, exercising, playing outside and playing with games or toys. Many children also mentioned the positives around having more time to play such as having fun, having a chance to forget about coronavirus and enjoying more freedom.

Those completing the 12-18 survey had a multi-choice question asking what ways young people have been relaxing during this period. Three-quarters said they had been speaking with friends online and online gaming and exercising were the next most popular responses. The question contained an 'other' option which prompted young people to add, in free text, any other ways they had been relaxing. Popular free text responses included reading, watching TV or Netflix and spending time with family. Other responses mentioned exercising indoors, walking or playing sports, coding, baking, pampering themselves and being creative through playing music, making TikTok videos and writing. Responses also included an element of entrepreneurship by using the time to run a YouTube channel or creating a business.

Picture Activity

The option of an open-ended activity was available so that children under 7, and any other young people who would benefit from submitting a response in this way, could take part in the consultation. 232 responses were submitted, including pictures, written responses and poems. A template was included where children could choose a face to show how they feel about staying at home, alongside an open box to tell us more about their experience.

The majority of children who responded chose the happy face to represent their feelings, with just less than a third of the responses choosing the neutral or sad face. This suggests that younger children are largely enjoying their time at home, even if they miss certain things or people (personal names on the response have been hidden using heart shapes).



When talking about their experience of staying home, the most frequent response was that they had been busy homeschooling or doing work set by their teacher. There were also a fewer number of responses saying that they had learned a new skill, such as counting and telling the time. Children also frequently mentioned playing with toys and games, and playing with family members. A small number spoke about helping out at home by doing some cleaning and looking after younger siblings.

Arts and crafts was the third most frequent response, with other activities such as cooking or baking and gardening being moderately popular. Children also mentioned being physically active in numerous ways. Going for walks with family and riding their bikes were most common, however there were also numerous references to trampolining, outdoor exercise and doing PE lessons.

Use of technology was less common in this age group. Where it was mentioned, watching TV or films and using it to play alone were most frequently talked about. Others mentioned using technology to play with friends online, for learning or to video call their family.

Some children mentioned washing their hands, while others spoke about showing support for keyworkers through things like clapping for the NHS and making rainbows for their houses. These were small numbers, but reflect how the youngest children have absorbed these cultural changes (as previously, personal names on the response have been hidden using heart shapes).



One of the prompts for the open-ended question asked who kept children safe whilst staying at home. As expected, the majority of the answers said a parent or guardian kept them safe, with siblings and a more generic 'family' following these. A small number mentioned their pets keeping them safe, which complements the mentions of playing with pets as a pastime. A handful of children said their grandparents kept them safe and that keyworkers such as doctors, nurses and the police force did the same.

A final prompt asked children whether they were missing anything, though not all children responded to this. A clear majority of those who did respond said they missed their friends and around half of that number said they missed going to school or nursery. This demonstrates the importance of meeting with their peers and how valuable children's social relationships are. A smaller but significant number of responses said they missed their teacher specifically. Many children said they missed their wider family in general, with grandparents specifically mentioned in a lot of responses.

'I am happy being with mummy and daddy but miss people. But I'm not sad' (age 4, north east Wales)

'Cuddles with Nanny and Grandma, going swimming with daddy, going to Dyffryn Gardens' (age 6, central south Wales)

A moderate number spoke about not being able to take part in hobbies or clubs such as football or swimming. Some responses mentioned missing going out on trips or outings to places like the beach, library or cinema, with the park being the most missed place to visit. A handful of children spoke about

missing going on holiday or missing their place of worship. This largely suggests that children are looking forward to being able to visit places outside of their house, but that school and seeing friends and family are the priorities.

Some children included creative responses that revealed many aspects of the impact on their life, an example is included here in its entirety:

My Feelings during Coronavirus

I am lonely

I am scared

I am school

I am ambition

I am rainbows

I am a nurse

By a year 10 girl, south east Wales.

Next steps

The findings of this consultation have immediate and longer term policy implications and will form an invaluable part of the evidence used to inform decision-making by Welsh Government and other public bodies. This briefing gives an overview so that national, regional and local decisions makers can consider and reflect these in their decision making straight away. Following more detailed analysis, the results will continue to inform decisions with information made available to Welsh Government and local authorities. This will ensure the experiences and views of children and young people during this time remain central to the decisions that will affect their lives.