



# Coronavirus Health & Wellbeing Conversation for Young People across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland June 2020

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## INTRODUCTION

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Amongst the global Coronavirus pandemic there is little known about the immediate impact on young people's health and wellbeing.

Barnardo's initiated their 'Big Barnardo's Conversation' campaign in May 2020 in order to highlight the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people across the UK. In order to gather a localised understanding this consultation was adapted with the permission of Barnardo's and the endorsements of both Leicester City and Leicestershire & Rutland's Safeguarding Children Partnerships to enable Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to obtain timely localised data.

Young people were invited to complete an online survey over 18 days (10/06/20 - 28/06/20) to enable the quick processing of results and potential service responses in the ever-changing landscape.

The age range was extended up to 25 years to include young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Overall there were **676** responses to the survey:

- Leicester – **455**
- Leicestershire – **147**
- Rutland – **74**

We received **77** responses from young people identifying themselves as SEND.

The average age of those completing the survey was **14 years**.

## LOCKDOWN

It should be noted that on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, two days after the survey closed, Leicester and its outlying areas faced a localised 'lockdown' and results demonstrate a 'snapshot' in time prior to restrictions imposed.

## DATA

Full survey data is available upon request.

## LEICESTER CITY

### HEADLINE THEMES

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The average age of Leicester City respondents was **14 years** with **455** young people taking part in the survey, below are the key themes:

Compared with feelings before lockdown, young people shared that they felt more stressed, which saw the biggest increase from feelings before lockdown. This was coupled with feeling lonely and having more trouble sleeping.

Although being in lockdown has been difficult, young people have enjoyed being at home more.

Young people felt it was harder to stay connected or talking to friends during lockdown. Doing enough school or college work was also harder during lockdown.

Not seeing friends was the hardest thing during lockdown, with over half of respondents saying they found being bored and not being able to go outside the hardest. Although a small number of young people did state they found nothing hard about being in lockdown.

The feeling felt the most during lockdown was boredom, with over two thirds of young people stating this. Other feelings felt the most during lockdown, was loneliness, worry, trapped and sadness, however just under a third also stated feeling comfort the most also.

Young people said they felt people will be more thankful for the things they have more because of coronavirus. Although a half of all young people said they did not feel positive about their future because of coronavirus.

Not learning enough because of coronavirus is the biggest worry for young people, with a third worried whether they can get a job in the future. Young people also worried if they were healthy enough with just over one fifth of respondents worrying for the health of their family and friends.

Moving into life as lockdown restrictions are lifted, but where we are still social distancing, saw just over half of young people saying they were more worried about going out/ leaving home and more worried about returning to school /college. Just under half of all young people felt they would not be as connected with their friends.

During lockdown young people have been online more than they would have been, and a quarter said they have seen more things online that made them uncomfortable or scared than they normally would.

The support young people found the most helpful during lockdown was that from family and friends. Just over a third of young people found information online useful.

Just over a half of all young people felt one of the impacts of coronavirus on their future was that it would make them more creative/ imaginative.

## SUMMARY

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The majority of young people reported that they found talking to their friends and family the most helpful support during this time with very few accessing professional services. It is hoped that as restrictions begin to ease those experiencing negative emotions will be able to talk more with friends and wider family who do not live in their household.

Young people's online activity naturally increased during lockdown, but there are concerns that a number stated seeing things that scared them more, young people could benefit from information on how to report concerns.

As we prepare to reopen schools and colleges fully it is worth noting that returning there is a big worry for young people, and messages of reassurance and involving young people fully in plans for return will help mitigate this.

Not learning enough has also been shared as a major worry, alongside worries for their future, such as getting a job. This is coupled with just under one fifth of young people worried about shops and businesses having to close. Young people may benefit from space to explore this with relevant professionals.

Young people have experienced a range of emotions during this time, young people have been able to express positive as well as negative feelings, however there has been an increase in negative and fewer positive emotions. Young people will need support as they return to normal live to explore this and to mitigate any long-lasting impact.

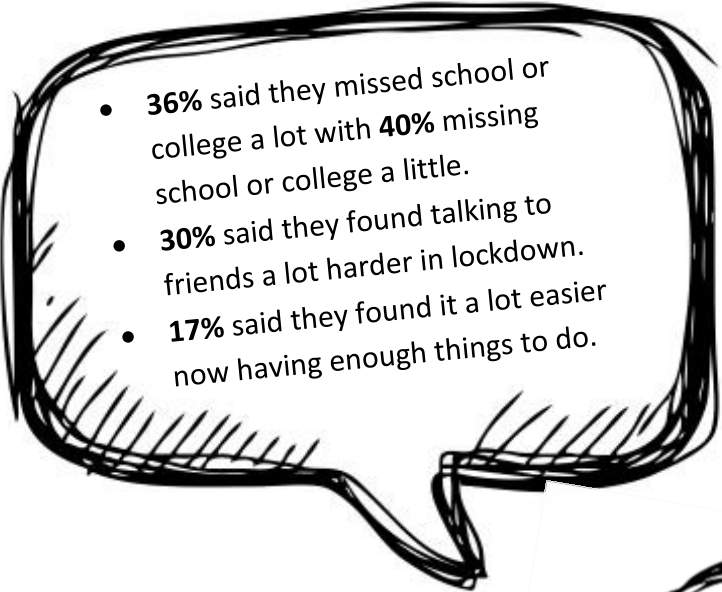
There is learning to be shared from time in lockdown, with young people stating the impact of coronavirus on their future being they will be able to bounce back from difficult situations, time should be spent exploring resilience and coping strategies that can be used in other aspects of their lives.

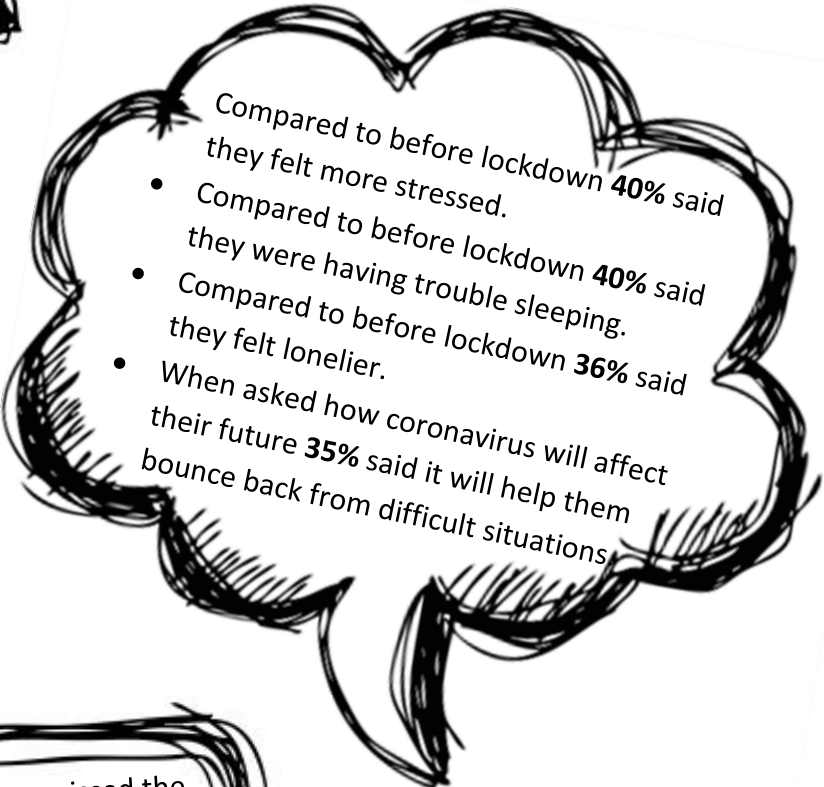
It is worth exploring if young people having trouble sleeping more is related to a loss of routine or a symptom of underlying worries and/or concerns.

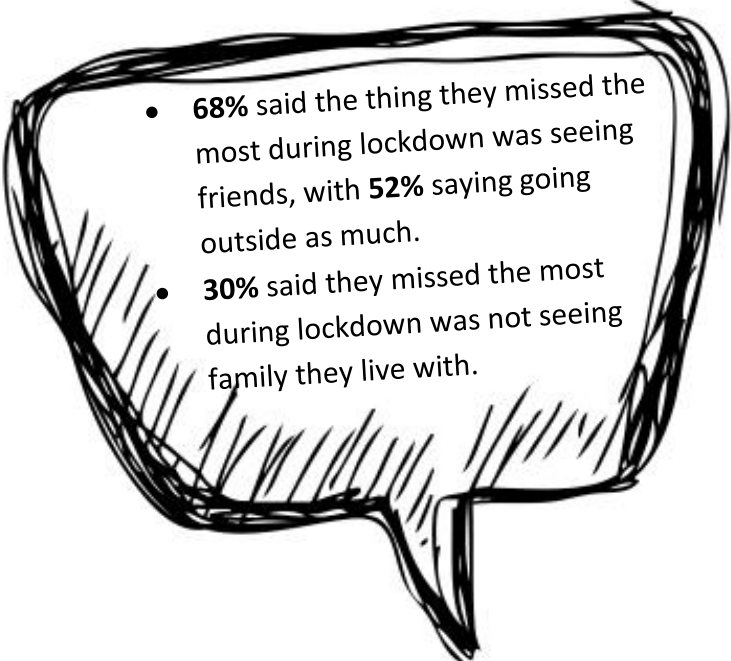
Young people worried more about the happiness of their friends and family than their own.

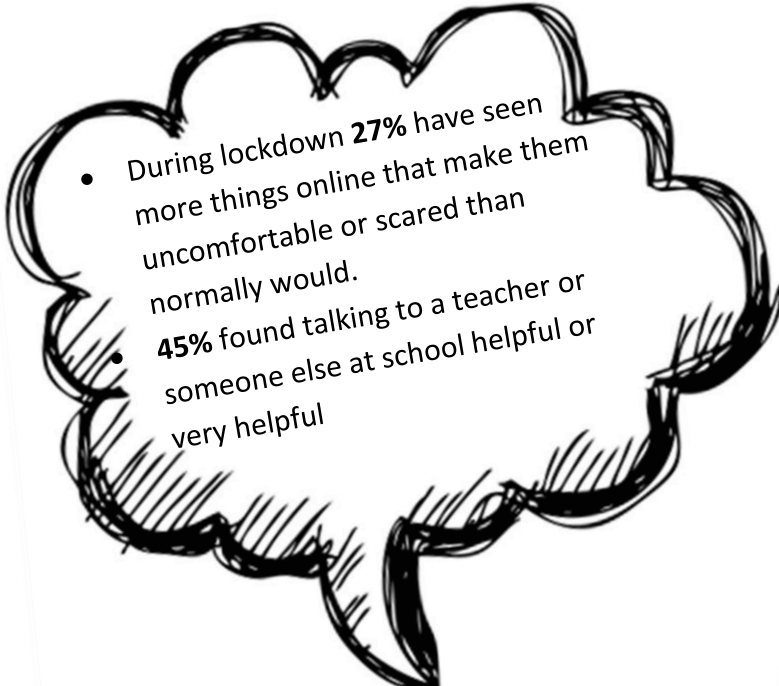
## RESPONSE SUMMARY

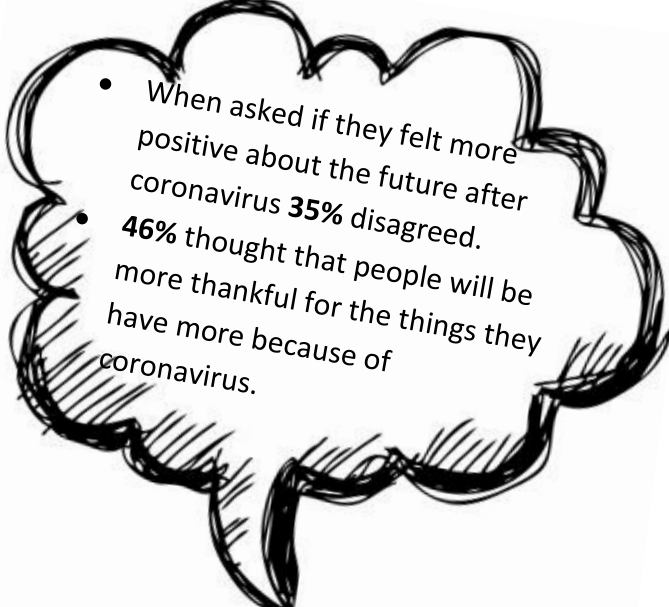
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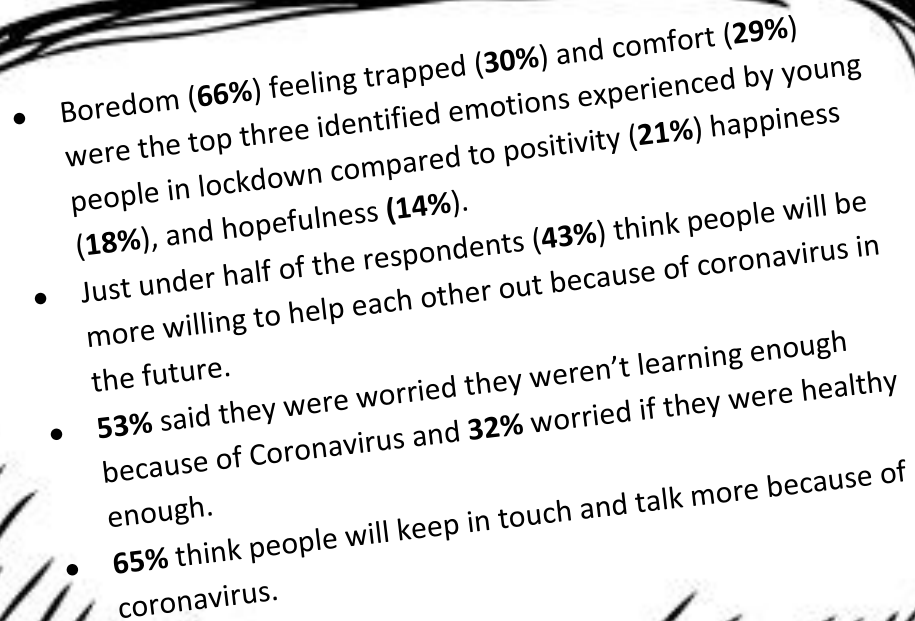
- 
- **36%** said they missed school or college a lot with **40%** missing school or college a little.
  - **30%** said they found talking to friends a lot harder in lockdown.
  - **17%** said they found it a lot easier now having enough things to do.

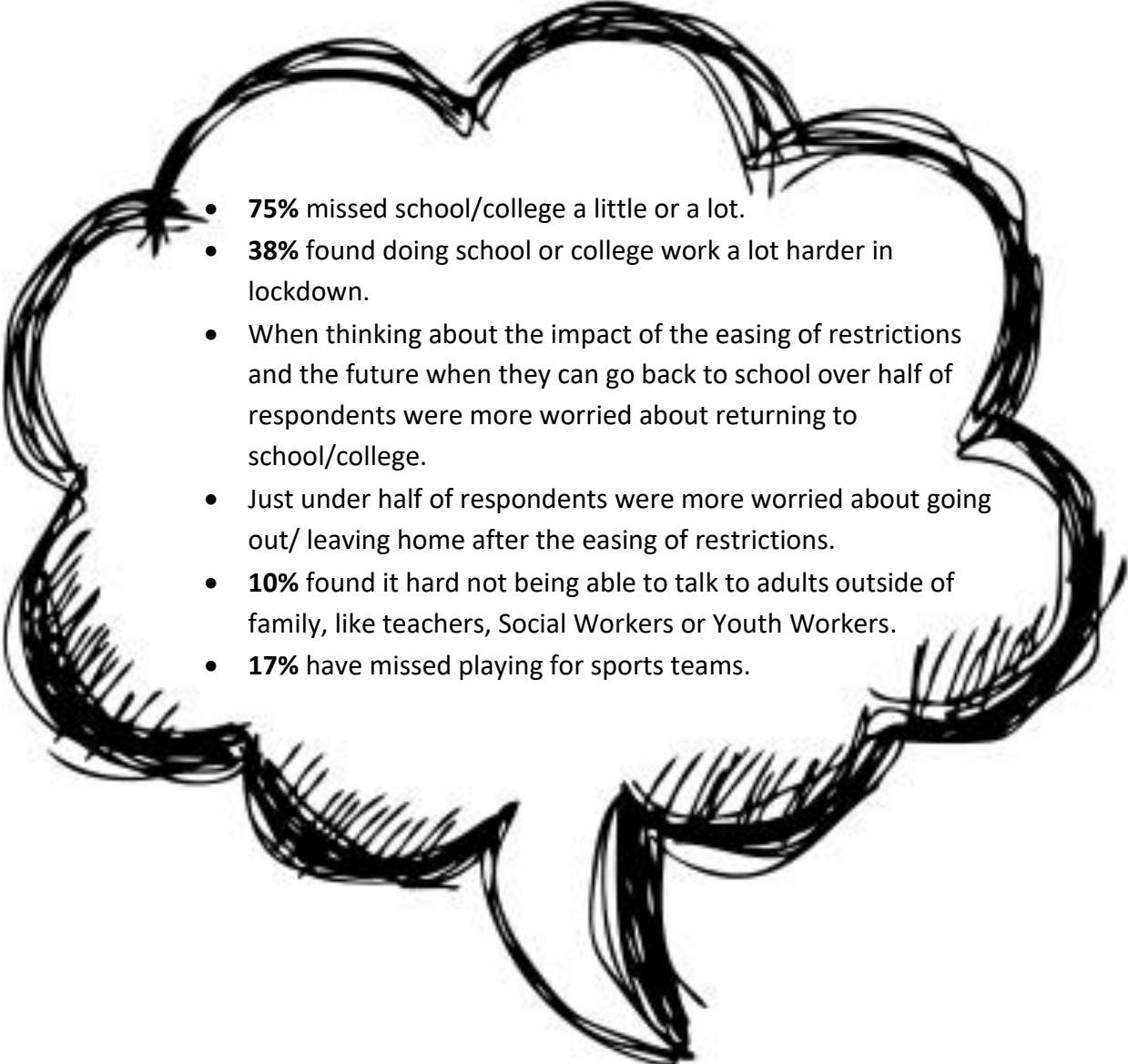
- 
- Compared to before lockdown **40%** said they felt more stressed.
  - Compared to before lockdown **40%** said they were having trouble sleeping.
  - Compared to before lockdown **36%** said they felt lonelier.
  - When asked how coronavirus will affect their future **35%** said it will help them bounce back from difficult situations.

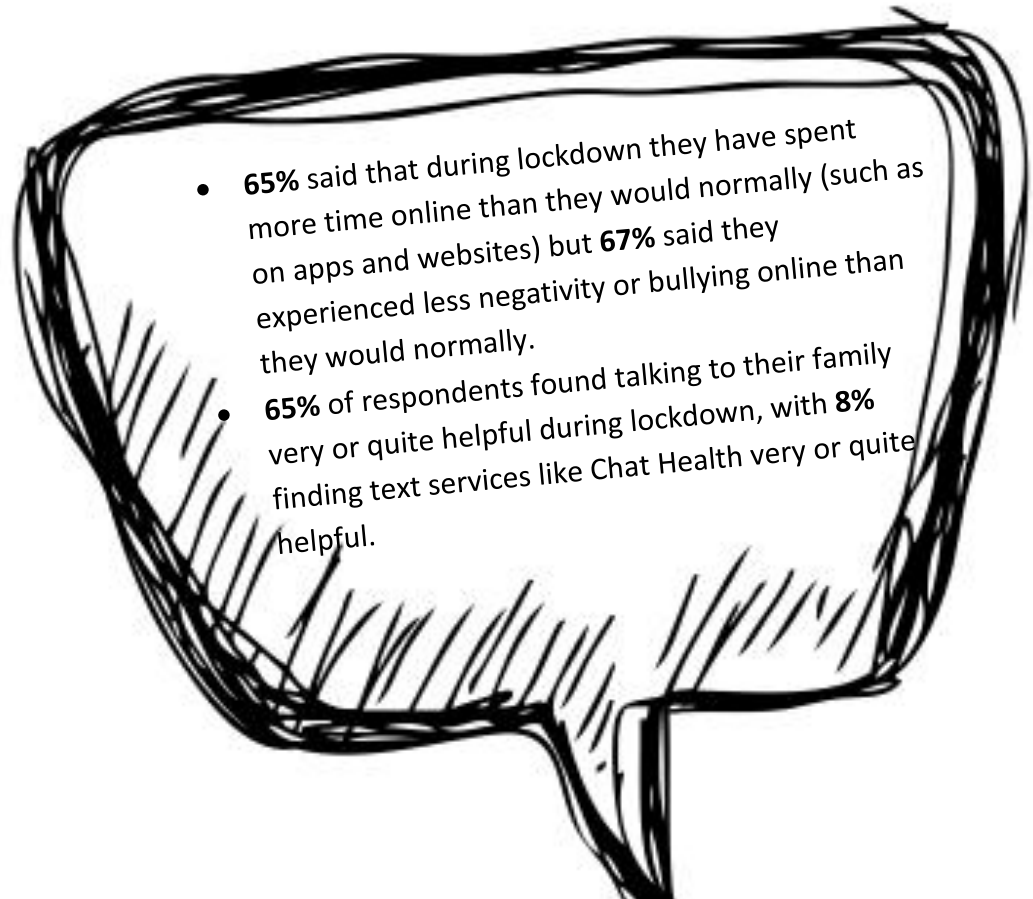
- 
- **68%** said the thing they missed the most during lockdown was seeing friends, with **52%** saying going outside as much.
  - **30%** said they missed the most during lockdown was not seeing family they live with.

- 
- During lockdown **27%** have seen more things online that make them uncomfortable or scared than normally would.
  - **45%** found talking to a teacher or someone else at school helpful or very helpful

- 
- When asked if they felt more positive about the future after coronavirus **35%** disagreed.
  - **46%** thought that people will be more thankful for the things they have more because of coronavirus.

- 
- Boredom (**66%**) feeling trapped (**30%**) and comfort (**29%**) were the top three identified emotions experienced by young people in lockdown compared to positivity (**21%**) happiness (**18%**), and hopefulness (**14%**).
  - Just under half of the respondents (**43%**) think people will be more willing to help each other out because of coronavirus in the future.
  - **53%** said they were worried they weren't learning enough because of Coronavirus and **32%** worried if they were healthy enough.
  - **65%** think people will keep in touch and talk more because of coronavirus.

- 
- **75%** missed school/college a little or a lot.
  - **38%** found doing school or college work a lot harder in lockdown.
  - When thinking about the impact of the easing of restrictions and the future when they can go back to school over half of respondents were more worried about returning to school/college.
  - Just under half of respondents were more worried about going out/ leaving home after the easing of restrictions.
  - **10%** found it hard not being able to talk to adults outside of family, like teachers, Social Workers or Youth Workers.
  - **17%** have missed playing for sports teams.

- 
- **65%** said that during lockdown they have spent more time online than they would normally (such as on apps and websites) but **67%** said they experienced less negativity or bullying online than they would normally.
  - **65%** of respondents found talking to their family very or quite helpful during lockdown, with **8%** finding text services like Chat Health very or quite helpful.

Q19 How do you feel about returning to school or college? What are you looking forward to and what are your concerns?

however yes may stressed now meeting friends teachers nervous need good haven t  
 want go back wont home properly lot don t know able nothing also go back GCSE  
 don t much happy see friends know anything going school new really  
 really looking forward looking forward meeting s m catch  
 teachers Ok excited excited see friends people want work  
 im feel im looking forward worried still concerns us  
 will different looking forward seeing  
 lockdown forward seeing friends bit worried  
 school anxious learning return looking forward  
 meeting new people go back school dont know going  
 happy going back scared family m looking forward coronavirus  
 see friends education social distancing help  
 seeing friends concerned quite might keep college hard  
 returning school want see friends seeing friends teachers back routine  
 year grades forward meeting friends everything time understand miss catch work  
 virus returning back school happy don t want think set make classes see friends worried  
 routine

Q20 What are your top concerns in the coming months?

normal soon open happen seeing friends gonna safety able see family  
 go back normal deaths job catch work really Nothing really corona virus m going  
 grades Trying family catch virus going school covid things m  
 coronavirus im time life health social distancing second wave  
 able see friends education also school work next year want  
 whether will concerns well virus make GCSE top concerns  
 people mental health school summer going long will  
 cases Nothing homework work start  
 go back school things will know enough Whether  
 safe college worse None might Catching find better life will  
 don t know Will able year New dont know idk able pass friends lock  
 don t Covid-19 much die will go back continue future need corona stop  
 friends family feel learning able go lockdown GCSE s family friends back normal  
 worried exams

Q21 What do you think schools or colleges could do to support the mental health of students who are returning?

worries open also Yes talk students calm Social distancing comforting class enough  
 keep setting Ask stop Nothing make feel things give support stress every  
 Maybe Give advice will return try safe think even make sure Encourage  
 groups surveys feel learn mental health others give put make  
 lockdown sure week support Give us don t know advice  
 school going know everyone talk tell students  
 sessions help may us teaching work call people reassure  
 dont know everything don t counsellors need relax counselling  
 something much new teachers want one one concerns good therapist  
 lot possible time happy start form chats N Understand children idk dont really  
 focused Offer support groups Provide return school ease homework take lessons

## LEICESTERSHIRE

### HEADLINE THEMES

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A total of **147** young people from across Leicestershire completed the online survey, with the average age of respondents being **14 years** old.

The gender split between young people taking part was comparatively even.

From analysis of the data, the following key themes can be identified and reflected upon: -

The majority of young people evidently disliked the impact of lockdown upon their day-to-day lives and requirement to stay indoors at home.

Young people confirmed they had missed going to school / college and that completing academic study had become more difficult. Additional anxiety was also reported, regarding young people knowing how much study to complete.

Evidently inter-linked with not attending school / college, was young people reporting increased difficulty regarding talking with friends and not being able to maintain peer relationships.

Baseline data also confirmed young people had experienced difficulty in finding things to do and positively occupy their time.

Young people clearly stated that Covid-19 and the impact of lockdown had resulted in the majority experiencing increased anxiety, worry and feelings of sadness. A significant number also reported increased difficulty sleeping.

Young people identified feeling lonely, with some also reporting increased stress and instances of anger.

When asked what young people had found hardest, the majority identified not being able to see friends throughout lockdown. Issues concerning boredom were also identified by over half of all respondents.

Other factors identified as impacting upon young people, included not being able to visit or have contact with extended family members and being unable to go outside as much.

As a result of Covid-19, nearly half of young people surveyed think people will be more willing to help each other and also communicate and keep in touch more.

Young people also think a further outcome will be that people will become more thankful for the things they have.

When asked what young people are most worried about, the majority identified concerns regarding their education and whether they had been learning enough. Other concerns included young people worrying about friends, relationships and the overall happiness of their friends and family members.

A number of young people identified that the experience of lockdown had made them feel an increased sense of resilience and potentially more able to bounce back from difficult or challenging situations.

Young people also reflected that in future they would feel more appreciative and thankful for what they have. A significant proportion also described that the experience of lockdown would make them more creative and imaginative.

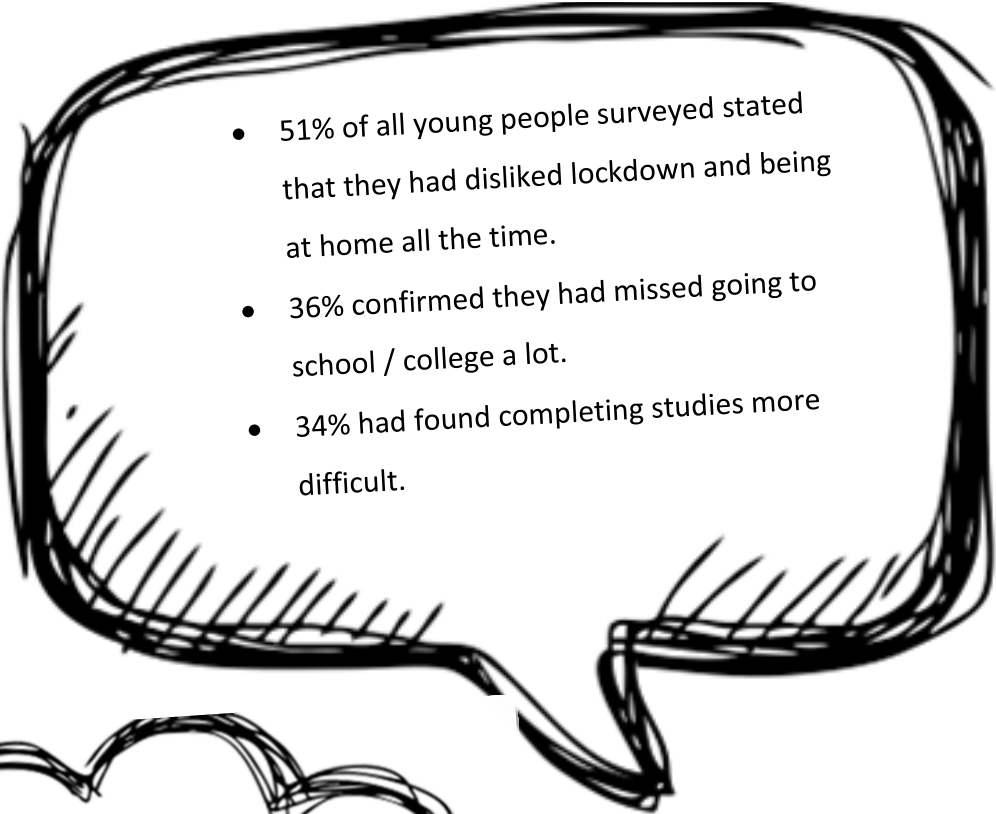
However, following lockdown, young people did report concerns regarding going out / leaving home and also not feeling as connected to their friends.

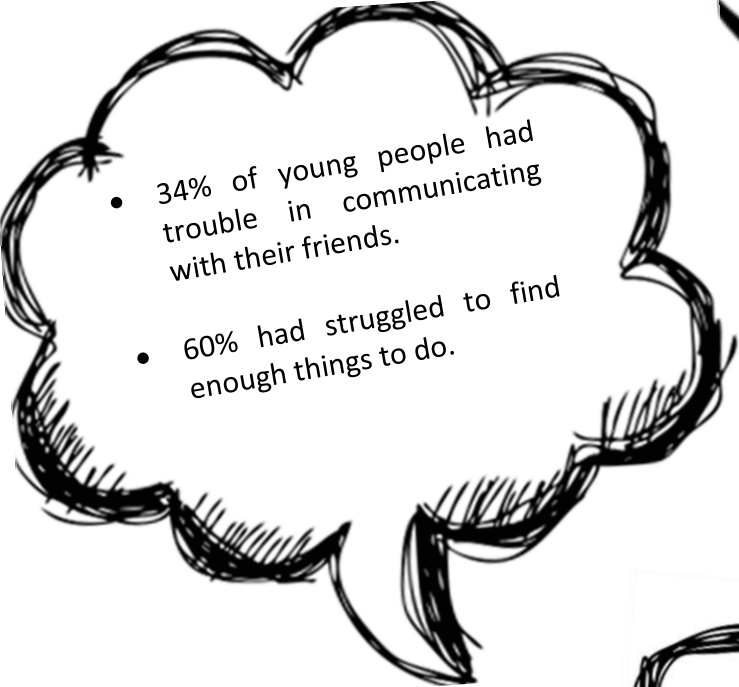
Young people also reported feeling more worried about returning to school / college.

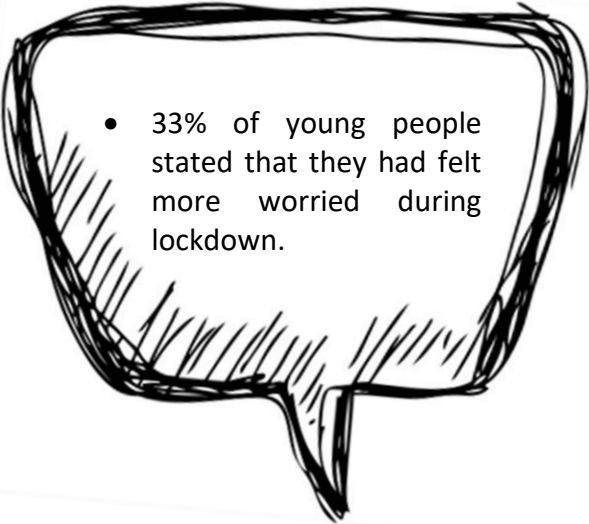
Throughout the period of lockdown, young people confirmed that they had spent far more time online, using social media apps and visiting websites.

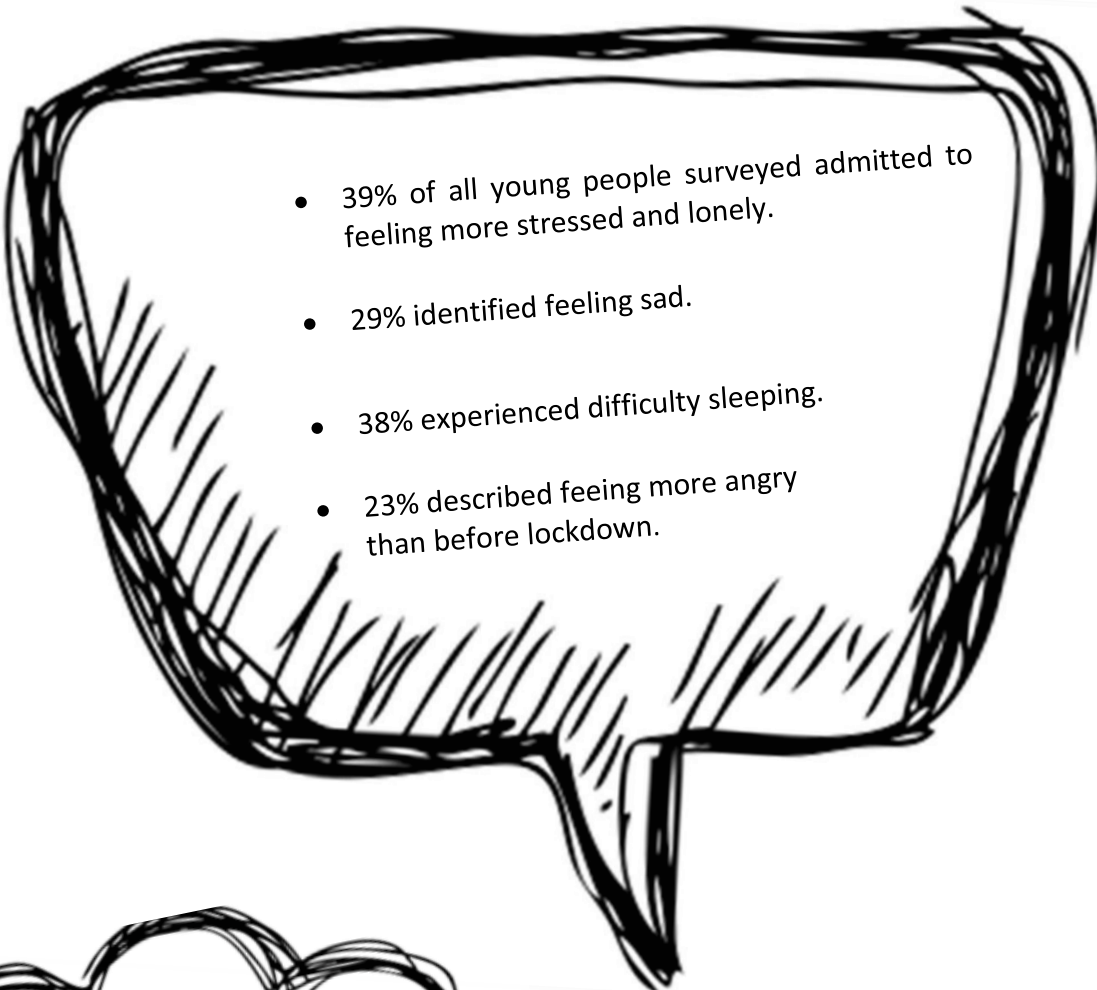
A proportion of young people stated that they had viewed online material that had resulted in them feeling uncomfortable. However, any increased prevalence of online bullying was not reported.

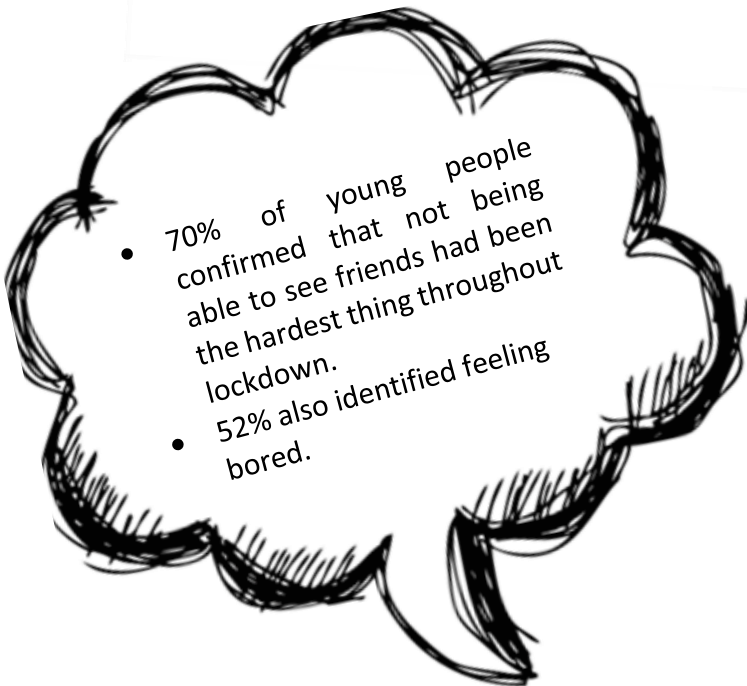
Young people identified friends and family as their greatest source of support during the period of lockdown.


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- 51% of all young people surveyed stated that they had disliked lockdown and being at home all the time.
  - 36% confirmed they had missed going to school / college a lot.
  - 34% had found completing studies more difficult.

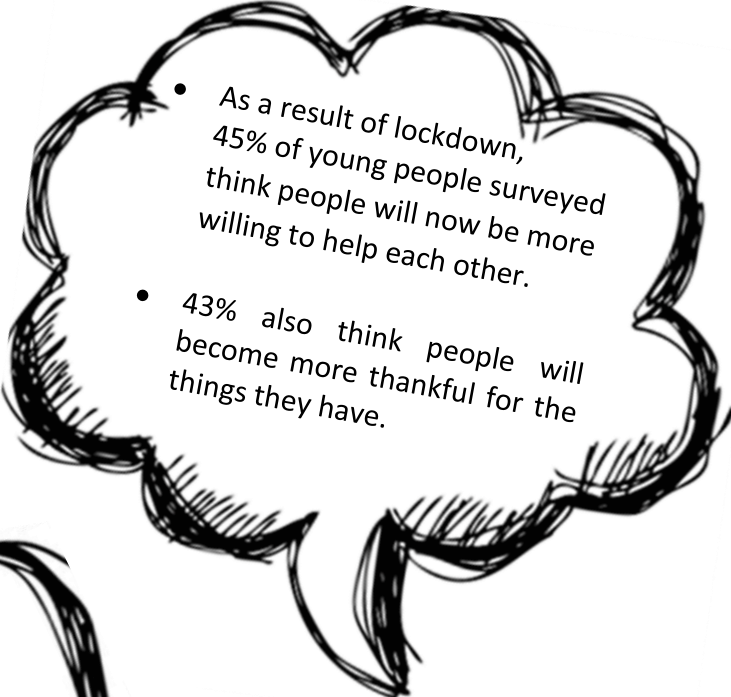
- 
- 34% of young people had trouble in communicating with their friends.
  - 60% had struggled to find enough things to do.

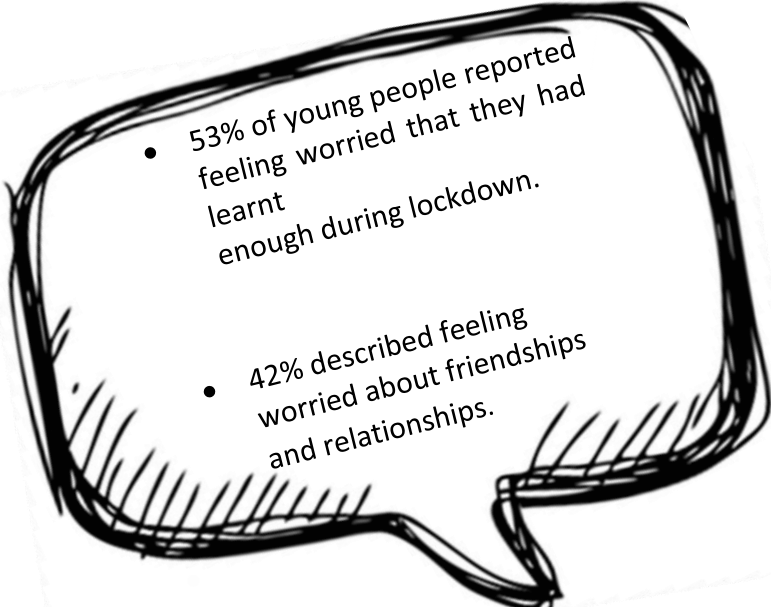
- 
- 33% of young people stated that they had felt more worried during lockdown.

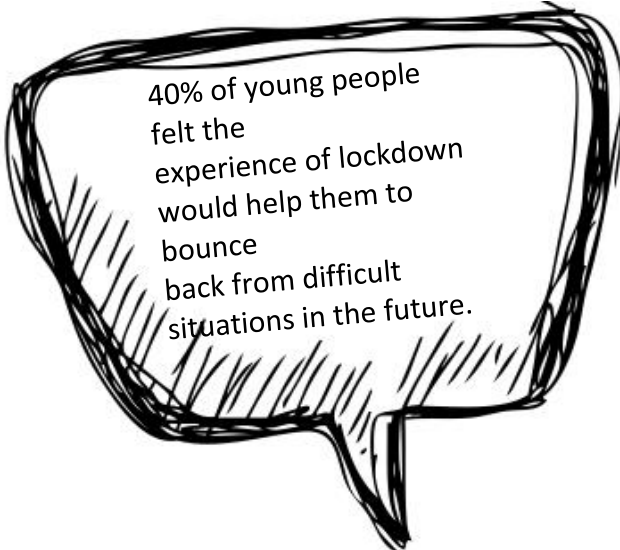
- 
- 39% of all young people surveyed admitted to feeling more stressed and lonely.
  - 29% identified feeling sad.
  - 38% experienced difficulty sleeping.
  - 23% described feeling more angry than before lockdown.

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- 70% of young people confirmed that not being able to see friends had been the hardest thing throughout lockdown.
  - 52% also identified feeling bored.

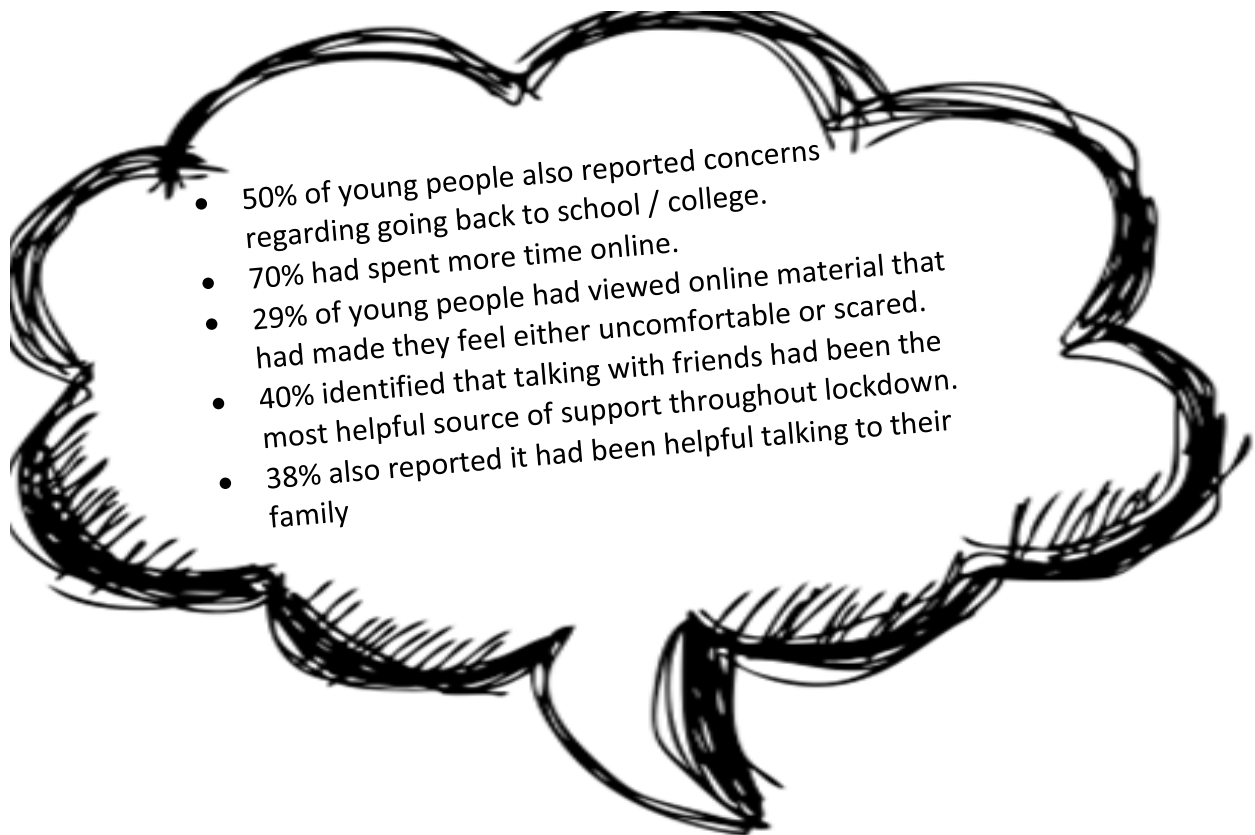
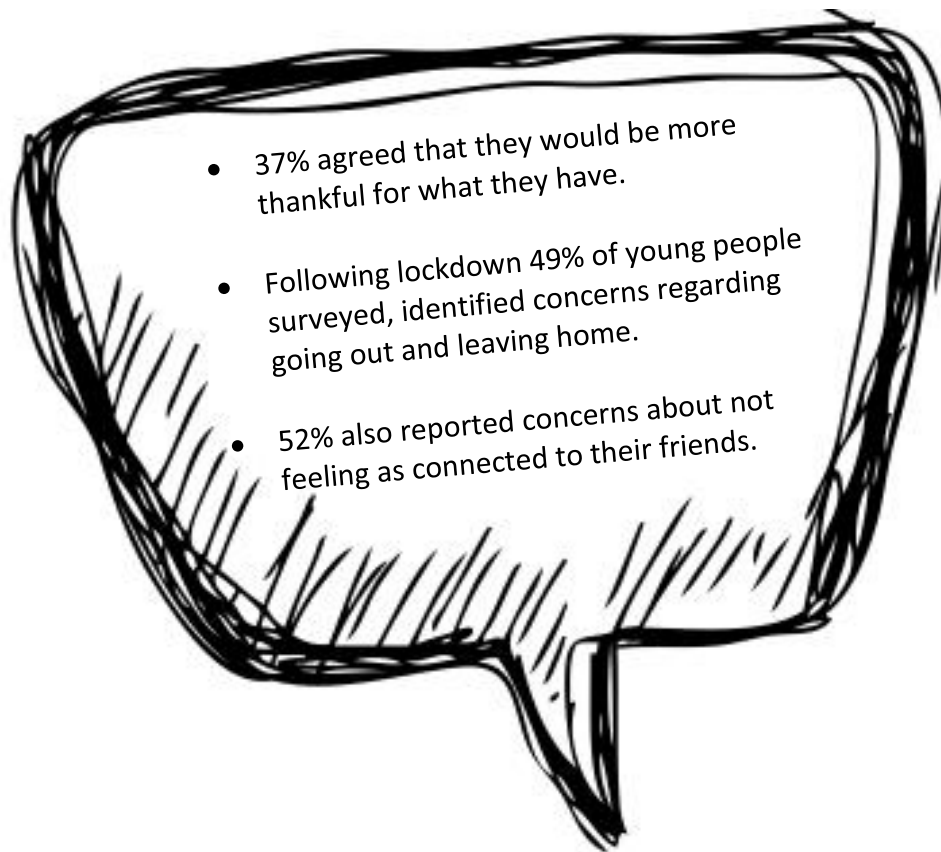
- 
- 39% missed not seeing their extended family members.
  - 35% disliked not being able to go outdoors as much.

- 
- As a result of lockdown, 45% of young people surveyed think people will now be more willing to help each other.
  - 43% also think people will become more thankful for the things they have.

- 
- 53% of young people reported feeling worried that they had learnt enough during lockdown.
  - 42% described feeling worried about friendships and relationships.



40% of young people felt the experience of lockdown would help them to bounce back from difficult situations in the future.



## LEICESTERSHIRE - WORDS CLOUDS

Q19 How do you feel about returning to school or college? What are you looking forward to and what are your concerns?

go back school experiencing routine t im Making new scared exited really also  
 feel back normality new back routine want social distancing friends dont know  
 looking forward learn see friends happy will nervous  
 forward seeing friends Excited  
 looking forward seeing going school  
 school m concerns catch worried meet able people will  
 people miss teachers home work keep returning starting  
 m looking forward year going sixth form go back want go back GCSE proper  
 make

Q20 What are your top concerns in the coming months?

future hard whether seeing friends friends family able see family friends know normal long  
 need coronavirus Going back school people family t school much  
 going last will nothing really work going back concerns catch virus  
 Nothing able things s second wave education Catching support college virus  
 health cases really

Q21 What do you think schools or colleges could do to support the mental health of students who are returning?

much return think chats work needs sure going students  
 Give advice know don t help people talk asking us Make sure  
 school teachers support back give mental health don t know  
 Make Will force Counselling

## RUTLAND

### HEADLINE THEMES

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The average age of Rutland respondents was **15 years** with **74** young people taking part in the survey, below are the key themes:

Overwhelmingly young people have experienced feelings of boredom and increased loneliness with not seeing friends conveyed as one of the hardest things about lockdown.

Compared to before lockdown young people have experienced an increase in negative feelings such as stress and sadness. Two thirds reported that they do not feel positive about the future because of coronavirus.

Some young people have enjoyed the experience of being at home more with almost half agreeing that Coronavirus has made them more thankful for what they have and think that people will be more willing to help each other out because of coronavirus in the future.

Not attending school has impacted on respondents with nearly half reporting missing school and finding it a lot harder to complete school or college work, leading them to worry about whether they are learning enough and what this means for their future and progression.

Friends and family have provided the most helpful support network for young people during this time with a third also reporting that they found it beneficial to talk to a teacher or someone else at school.

Being unable to see family who don't live in the same household during lockdown has been hard for some young people.

Young people's online activity has increased dramatically with a small percentage reporting this as a negative experience.

Less than a quarter of respondents reported being worried about returning to school or college. Most respondents are looking forward to returning to see friends and have a sense of 'normality' however expressed concerns about their exposure to the virus and the potential for a 'second wave'.

Respondents would like to be supported with increased open conversations about mental health and increased signposting to support services when returning to school or college.

## SUMMARY

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Rutland responses were limited and as such the reader is advised to note that data will not be statistically robust. It is worth noting that the survey was completed during nationwide 'lockdown' and since its completion some restrictions have eased.

Responses suggest that not seeing friends is one of the hardest things young people faced about lockdown. The results indicate that during lockdown and the time frame that the survey was carried out young people were experiencing more negative emotions such as stress, loneliness and sadness.

The majority of young people reported that they found talking to their friends and family the most helpful support during this time with very few accessing professional services. It is hoped that as restrictions begin to ease those experiencing negative emotions will be able to talk more with friends and wider family who do not live in their household.

Understandably there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of time that young people are online, but a minority of respondents have found this to be negative, seeing more things that made them feel uncomfortable or experiencing negativity. Young people would consequently benefit from information about how to report concerns.

Respondents are concerned about both the immediate and long-term effects of the pandemic on their education and career prospects as well as the potential 'second wave' of the virus. A small proportion of respondents are worried about returning to school or college with the majority looking forward to it. The responses suggest that young people will take comfort from a return of routine and being able to spend time with their peers.

Respondents are very concerned about the impact on their studies, future prospects and do not feel positive about the future over-all and would benefit from being supported gradually to return to school or college with options to access additional support.

Professionals need to be mindful that young people have experienced a range of emotions throughout this time and that they have identified that they would like to be supported by being given the opportunity to discuss and validate their feelings and ongoing concerns.

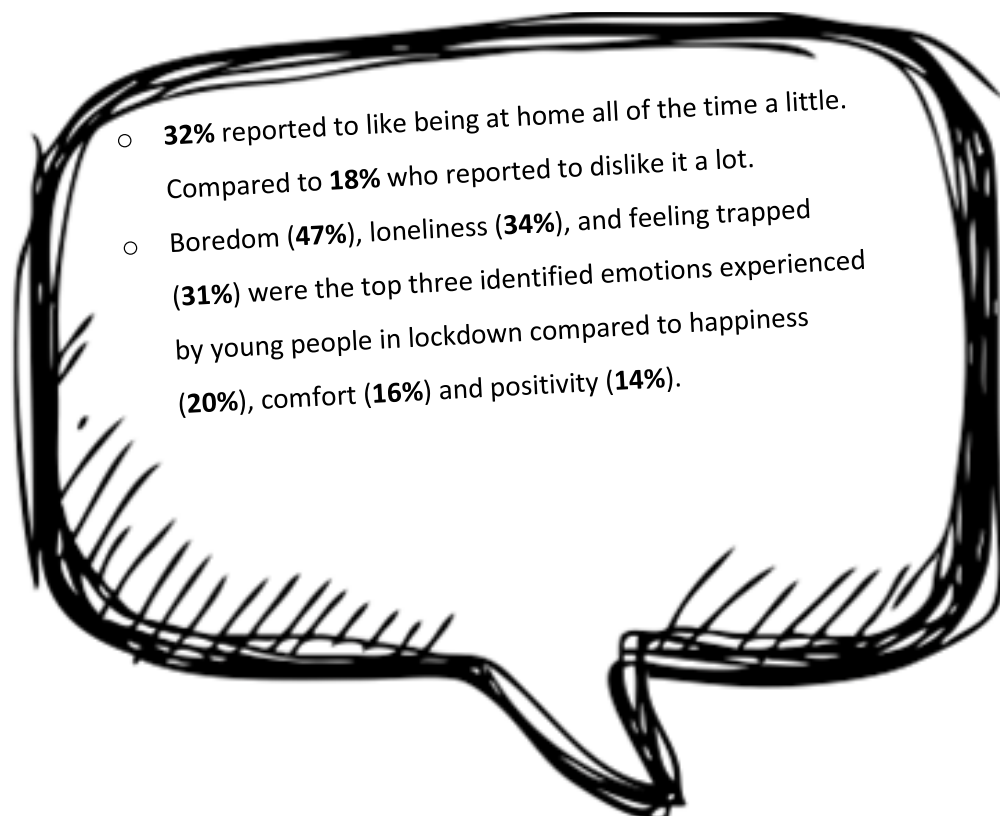
## RESPONDENT'S DATA

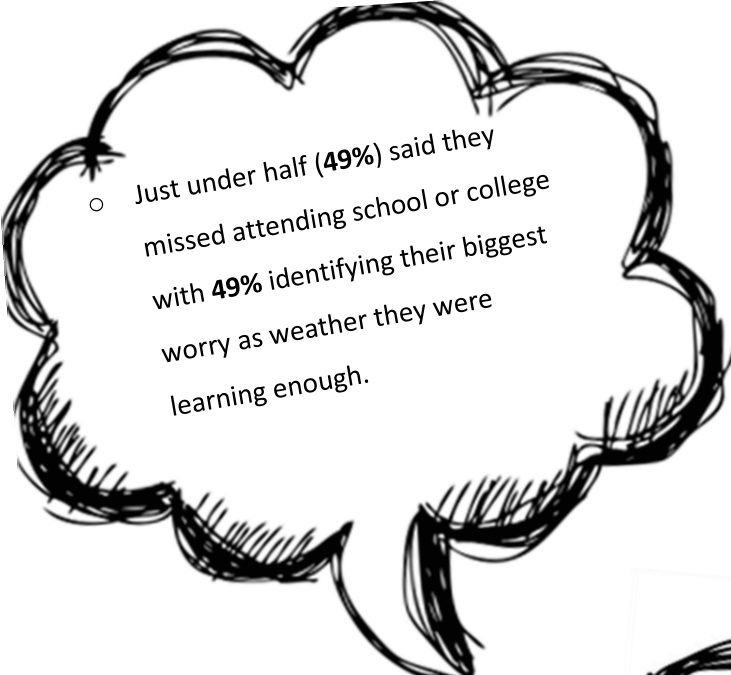
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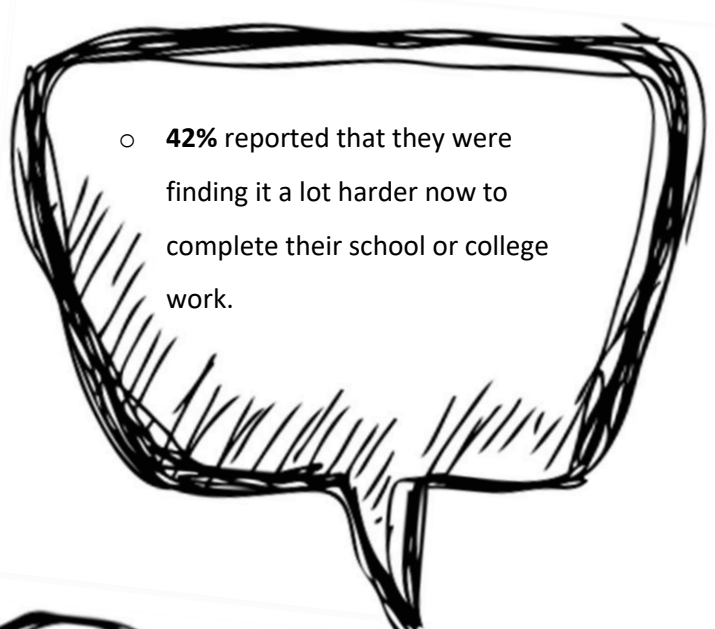
- **74** young people completed the survey live in Rutland
- Over half of the respondents were female accounting for **55%**.
- The average age of respondents was **15**
- **19** respondents identified themselves as having SEND
- **93%** identified as English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- **2%** of respondents did not attend school or college

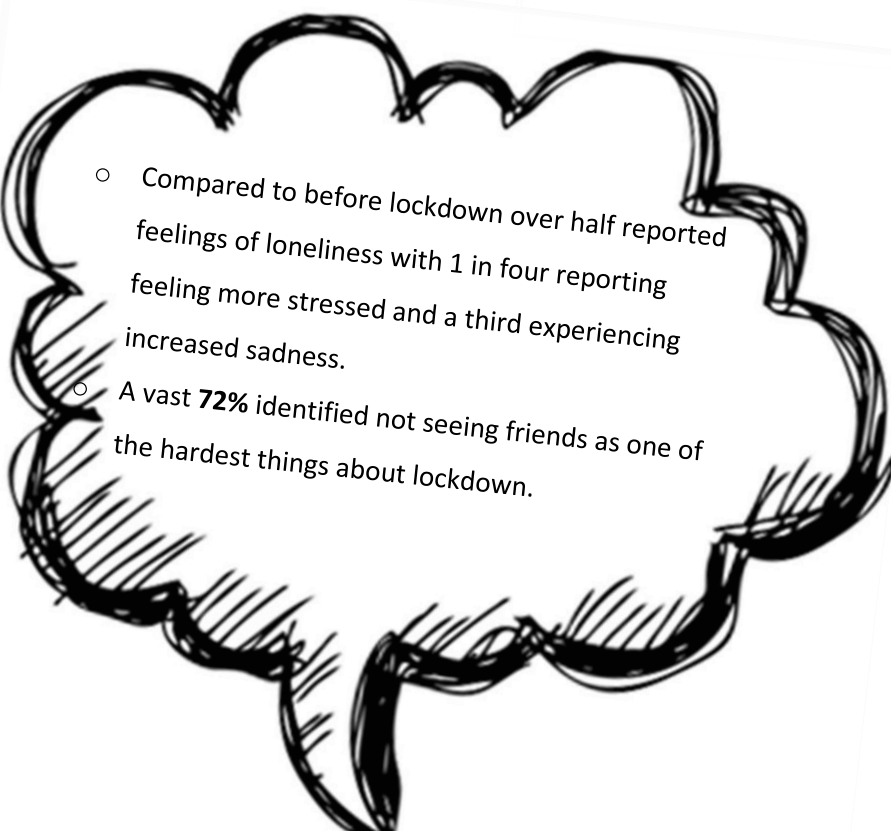
## RESPONSE SUMMARY

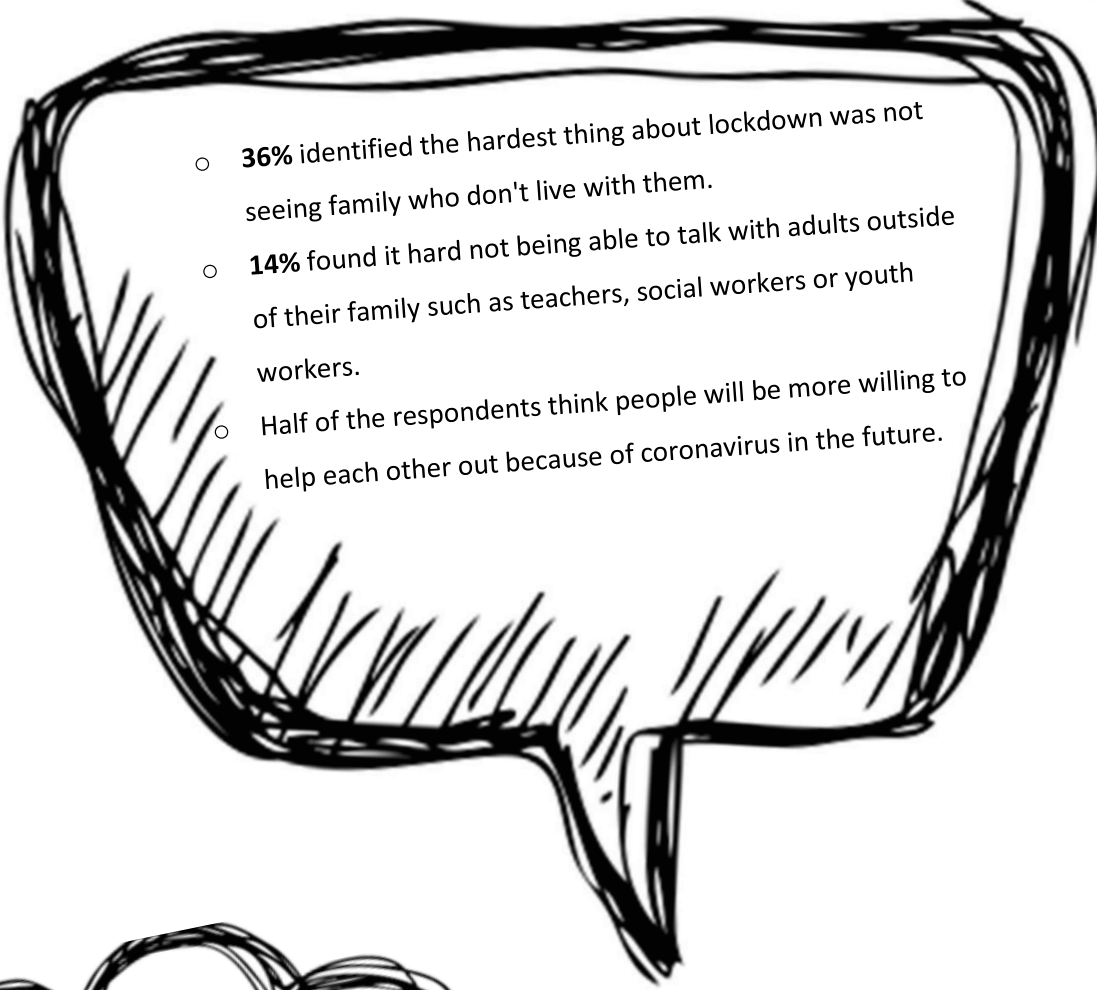
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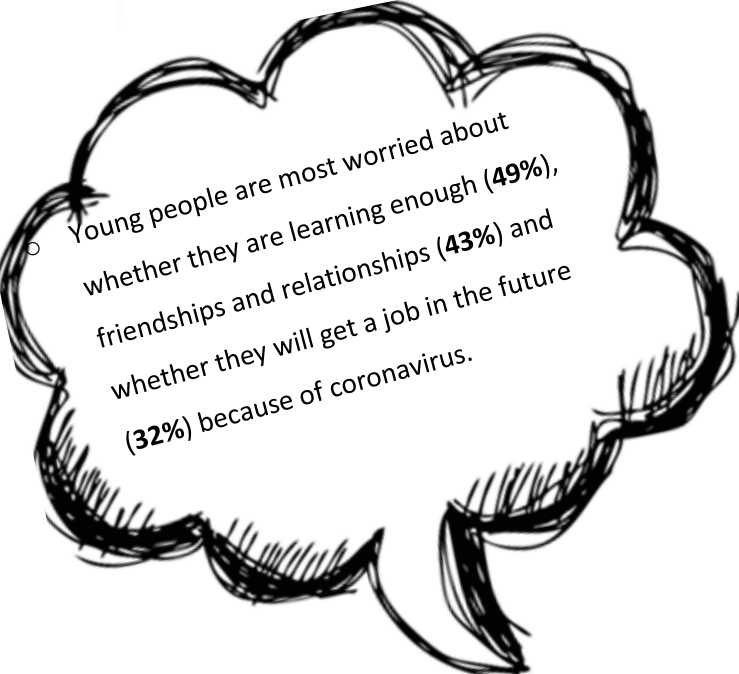


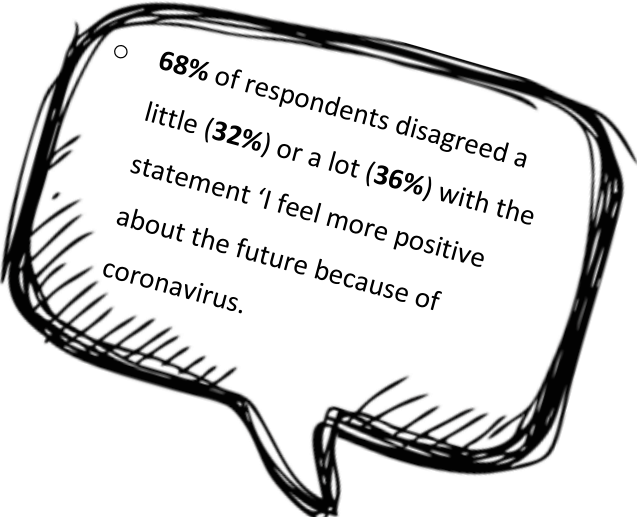
- 
- Just under half (**49%**) said they missed attending school or college with **49%** identifying their biggest worry as whether they were learning enough.

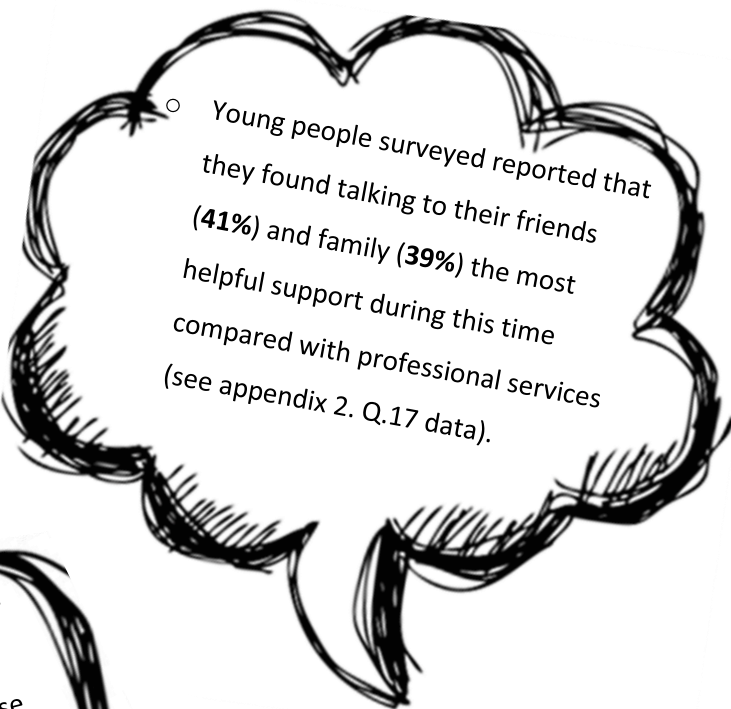
- 
- **42%** reported that they were finding it a lot harder now to complete their school or college work.

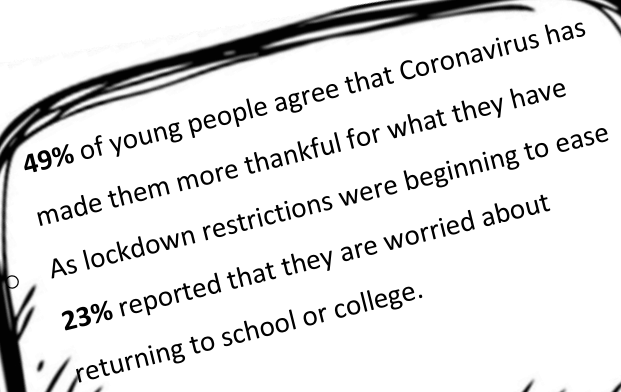
- 
- Compared to before lockdown over half reported feelings of loneliness with 1 in four reporting feeling more stressed and a third experiencing increased sadness.
  - A vast **72%** identified not seeing friends as one of the hardest things about lockdown.

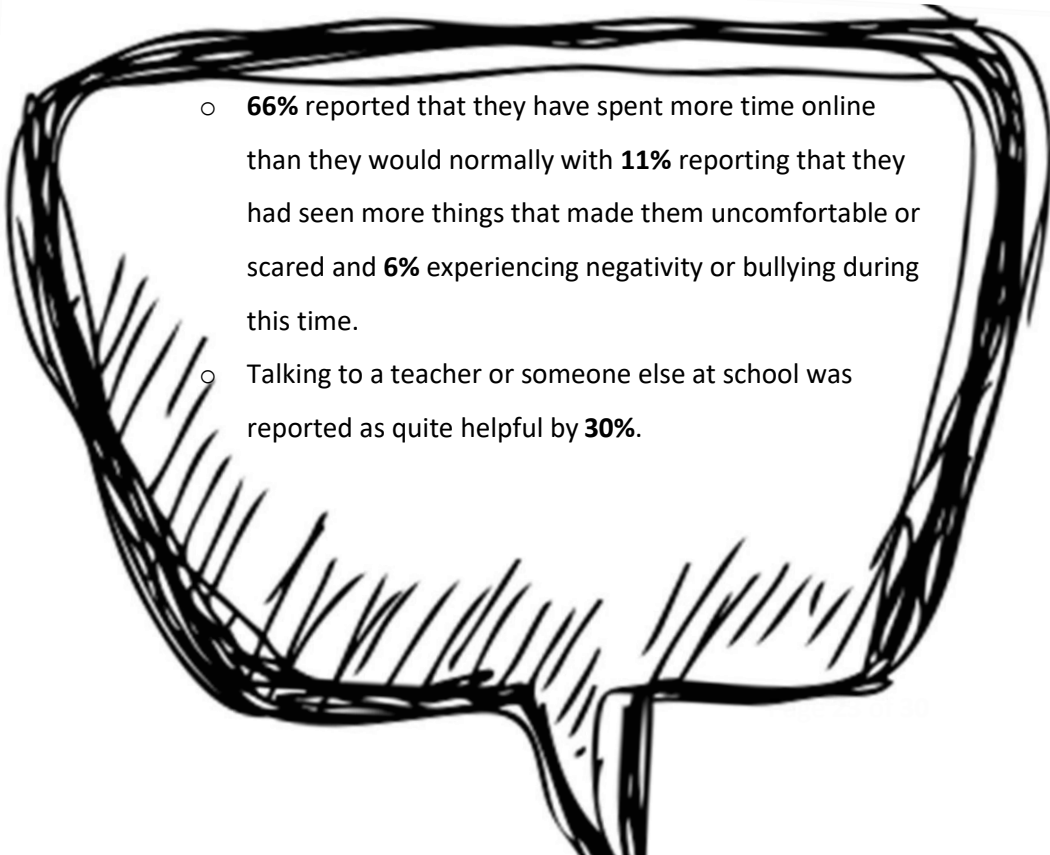
- 
- **36%** identified the hardest thing about lockdown was not seeing family who don't live with them.
  - **14%** found it hard not being able to talk with adults outside of their family such as teachers, social workers or youth workers.
  - Half of the respondents think people will be more willing to help each other out because of coronavirus in the future.

- 
- Young people are most worried about whether they are learning enough (**49%**), friendships and relationships (**43%**) and whether they will get a job in the future (**32%**) because of coronavirus.

- 
- **68%** of respondents disagreed a little (**32%**) or a lot (**36%**) with the statement 'I feel more positive about the future because of coronavirus.'

- 
- Young people surveyed reported that they found talking to their friends (**41%**) and family (**39%**) the most helpful support during this time compared with professional services (see appendix 2. Q.17 data).

- 
- **49%** of young people agree that Coronavirus has made them more thankful for what they have
  - As lockdown restrictions were beginning to ease **23%** reported that they are worried about returning to school or college.

- 
- **66%** reported that they have spent more time online than they would normally with **11%** reporting that they had seen more things that made them uncomfortable or scared and **6%** experiencing negativity or bullying during this time.
  - Talking to a teacher or someone else at school was reported as quite helpful by **30%**.

- When asked about how they felt about returning to school or college respondents reported looking forward to seeing friends with some concern about the exposure that this will bring

*“I really want to return to college. I'm looking forward to seeing my friends and teachers, but I am worried about being exposed to the virus”*

Q19 How do you feel about returning to school or college? What are you looking forward to and what are your concerns?



Fig.1

- Respondents were asked what about their top concerns for the coming months, over a third are concerned about the impact on their education and future followed by concerns that there will be a second wave

*“Personally, whether I'll be happy with my GCSE grades and whether I will have prepared enough for college. Generally, that people are going to start going against lockdown restrictions causing it to be extended/ a second spike”*

- Respondents would like to be supported with increased open conversations about mental health and increased signposting to support services when returning to school or college

*“Encouraging students to talk about how they are feeling and not overloading them”*

*“Actually, start conversations about mental health - mental health facilities .....  
Also make sure extra curricula's can still be continued, as these boost mental health like nothing else”*

*“Don't pressure anyone into saying anything but make a more open and comforting environment for students to talk.  
Don't pretend our emotions don't exist. We are under a lot of pressure and you don't know our stories”*

## SUPPORT GRAPH

Q17 Thinking about support that you may have looked for or received during this time. How helpful have you found the following types of support?

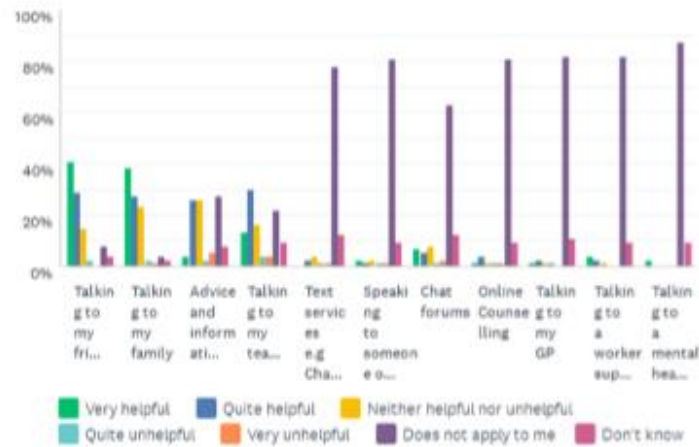


Fig. 2

## TABLE OF RESPONSES

	VERY HELPFUL	QUITE HELPFUL	NEITHER HELPFUL NOR UNHELPFUL	QUITE UNHELPFUL	VERY UNHELPFUL	DOES NOT APPLY TO ME	DON'T KNOW
Talking to my friends	41.10%	28.77%	15.07%	2.74%	0.00%	8.22%	4.11%
Talking to my family	38.36%	27.40%	23.29%	2.74%	1.37%	4.11%	2.74%
Advice and information online	4.11%	26.03%	26.03%	2.74%	5.48%	27.40%	8.22%
Talking to my teacher or someone else at school	13.70%	30.14%	16.44%	4.11%	4.11%	21.92%	9.59%
Text services e.g. ChatHealth	0.00%	2.74%	4.11%	1.37%	1.37%	78.08%	12.33%
Speaking to someone on a helpline	2.74%	1.37%	2.74%	1.37%	1.37%	80.82%	9.59%
Chat forums	6.85%	5.48%	8.22%	1.37%	2.74%	63.01%	12.33%
Online Counselling	1.37%	4.11%	1.37%	1.37%	1.37%	80.82%	9.59%
Talking to my GP	1.37%	2.74%	1.37%	1.37%	0.00%	82.19%	10.96%
Talking to a worker supporting my family	4.11%	2.74%	1.37%	0.00%	0.00%	82.19%	9.59%
Talking to a mental health professional such as my counsellor or therapist	2.74%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	87.67%	9.59%

Fig.3

## CONCLUSION

Responses across the 3 authorities were limited in relation to population as a whole and as such the reader is advised to note that data will not be statistically robust. Leicester City had by far the largest response. It is worth noting that the survey was completed during nationwide 'lockdown' and since its completion some restrictions have eased.

Generally, it would be fair to say that most young people have been quite resilient during the Covid-19 pandemic period but for some young people, their emotional health and wellbeing was affected. This is expanded upon below.

Responses suggest that not seeing friends is one of the hardest things young people faced about lockdown. The majority disliked the impact of lockdown upon their day-to-day lives and requirement to stay indoors at home and not being able to visit or have contact with extended family members. Inter-linked with not attending school or college, young people reported increased difficulty regarding talking with friends and not being able to maintain peer relationships.

Young people clearly stated that Covid-19 and the impact of lockdown had resulted in the majority experiencing increased anxiety, worry and feelings of sadness. A significant number also reported increased difficulty sleeping. Some also reporting increased stress and instances of anger, however young people reported that they found talking to their friends and family the most helpful support during this time with very few accessing professional services. It is hoped that as restrictions begin to ease those experiencing negative emotions will be able to talk more with friends and wider family who do not live in their household.

When asked what young people are most worried about, the majority identified concerns regarding their education and whether they had been learning enough. Other concerns included young people worrying about friends, relationships and the overall happiness of their friends and family members.

Throughout the period of lockdown, young people confirmed that they had spent far more time online, using social media apps and visiting websites, but there are concerns that a number stated seeing things that scared them more. However, any increased prevalence of online bullying was not reported. Young people could benefit from information on how to report concerns.

Young people have experienced a range of emotions during this time, young people have been able to express positive as well as negative feelings, however there has been an increase in negative and fewer positive emotions. Young people will need support as they return to normal life to explore this and to mitigate any long-lasting impact. It is worth exploring if young people having trouble sleeping more is related to a loss of routine or a symptom of underlying worries and/or concerns.

There is learning to be shared from time in lockdown, with young people stating the impact of coronavirus on their future being they will be able to bounce back from difficult situations, time should be spent exploring resilience and coping strategies that can be used in other aspects of their lives. Young people also think a further outcome will be that people will become more thankful for the things they have, and a significant proportion also described that the experience of lockdown would make them more creative and imaginative. Nearly half of young people surveyed think people will be more willing to help each other and also communicate and keep in touch more.

Respondents are concerned about both the immediate and long-term effects of the pandemic on their education and career prospects as well as the potential 'second wave' of the virus. A small proportion of respondents are worried about returning to school or college with the majority looking forward to it. The responses suggest that young people will take comfort from a return of routine and being able to spend time with their peers.

As we prepare to reopen schools and colleges fully it is worth noting that returning there is a big worry for young people, and messages of reassurance and involving young people fully in plans for return will help mitigate this. Not learning enough has also been shared as a major worry, alongside worries for their future, such as getting a job.

Professionals need to be mindful that young people have experienced a range of emotions throughout this time and that they have identified that they would like to be supported by being given the opportunity to discuss and validate their feelings and ongoing concerns.

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