



Education

#CovidUnder19: Life Under Coronavirus is an initiative to meaningfully involve children in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. 26,258 children from 137 countries across all five UN regions responded to our survey. More detail on this can be found at the end of this paper. This briefing presents our findings on education



UNCRC ARTICLE 28 & 29

Articles 28 & 29 of the [UNCRC](#) set out children and young people's rights to education. The Children's Advisory Group identified the [transformation of education](#) as a major theme across the data.

'I think that during quarantine, the schedule of every child changed for worse, starting with the education, communicating with friends, less time outside, alimentation, spiritual state etc. First of all, I want to mention the fact on-line classes did not have the effect and the degree of information and necessary knowledge due to the fact that a lot of children did not have the possibility (financial) to use the internet and the needed device, such as a phone or a laptop. Secondly, the on-line classes done on the mobile phone had a negative impact on our eyesight.' (Girl 14, Moldova)

Coupled with this was educational, social and emotional [disruption to children's school lives](#).

'I miss my classmates. In a classroom at school, I learn more than online, personal communication and feedback are very important for me.' (Girl, 14, Russia)

And the final theme that they identified was the significant [dissatisfaction at not being involved in decisions](#) around closing/opening schools and how best to deliver and access education on and offline.

'We should be allowed to voice our opinions on when schools should reopen. It is our future so it should be our choice.' (Girl 15 from South Africa)



SOME CHILDREN FIND THEIR EDUCATION BETTER DURING CORONAVIRUS

12% of children said their education was better during Coronavirus. Some children enjoyed learning at their own pace and pursuing their own interests while others were glad not be in school so that they could avoid bullying.

'I like the online lessons; I have problems with anxiety, so being able to turn off my microphone and/or camera sometimes makes me feel much safer and makes it easier for me to pay attention. ..Personally, I've found that less extra murals and not having to spend time travelling leave me more time for hobbies and sleep, but this isn't universal - some of my friends say their workload has increased during lockdown.' (Girl, 15, South Africa)

'My teachers stopped verbally and mentally abusing me. I no longer get constantly bullied.' (Boy, 15, Ireland)



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MOST CHILDREN FOUND THEIR EDUCATION WAS BETTER BEFORE CORONAVIRUS

Most children (**58%** of 13-17 year olds and **68%**) of children from migrant communities said their education was better before Coronavirus.

41% (rising to 64% of asylum seekers and **62%** of migrant children) said that being able to get support from their teachers was better before Coronavirus.

'I dislike the fact that the teachers specifically in my school gave a bunch of task not according to the schedule resulting to stress, migraine, and sleep deprivation. And for some subjects like math it's harder to understand since we are not directly taught by the teacher and the teacher dont even bother setting up an online meeting to teach us ' (Girl, 17, Indonesia)

PROBLEMS WITH ACCESSING EDUCATION ONLINE

Children with no access to internet (**84%**) or with poor internet access (**69%**) were much more likely to say that access to good education was better before the outbreak.

'I feel they need more to work on right to education. Seeing that I live in a rural community where it is hard to access internet.. It is a challenge to learn online' (Girl, 14, Zambia)

'No typical school activities, nothing really. If schools are still closed, I am not sure how much of a decent education I will get from Zoom. This deeply worries me. Quite a number of zoom lessons are interrupted with teacher's having bad WiFi or audio problems, etc. I think online learning has its benefits, but I don't think it can be a primary source of education. I just wish us students were at least consulted ' (Girl, 16, Malta)

'I feel they need more to work on right to education. Seeing that I live in a rural community where it is hard to access internet.. It is a challenge to learn online' (Girl 14 Zambia)



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STRESS AND WORRY ABOUT EXAMS/GRADES

42% of children (and 54% of migrant children and asylum seekers) said that they were less confident that teachers would give them good grades for their studies due to Coronavirus.

'Some are not getting to join online classes because of no internet access and even some are getting to join it they are not having good studies as before and those whose examination was stopped by COVID-19 pandemic, their studying has so much stopped or they are being demotivated about exams.'
(Boy, 14, Nepal).



IMAGINE YOU COULD TALK TO GOVERNMENT...

Children told us they would tell government...

'I should tell you that our educators are strong and are not going to give up easily. They have created our new classrooms with the help of Google and Microsoft. I am worried about my friends who don't have access to these tool and will be left behind. But, you don't worry our global and local leaders will find some solutions for them too and we will help them to catch up their loss. Mark my words today - the day will come soon when we will again hug our teachers and play with our friends. JUST WATCH'.
(A letter to Covid from a girl aged 12, Canada)

'Start teaching door to door with a teacher with 4-5 children in group and provide ration to family at door with care of small children.' (Boy, 12, India)

'not everyone is able to educate themselves with the internet, but we all know that opening schools again is not about our education its so parents can go back to work. we all know it. If they actually cared about our education they would look at changing how schools are run and why we just get tested constantly but not actually learn anything' (Girl, 15, England).



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All children have rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). #CovidUnder19 is a multi-stakeholder initiative that brings together children, civil society organisations, academia and other partners to work together in understanding children's experiences of their rights during the COVID19 pandemic. A goal of #CovidUnder19 is to create a space for children across the globe to be meaningfully involved in the discussions around issues triggered by the COVID19 pandemic and contribute towards shaping the post-COVID19 world.

On 28 May 2020, the initiative launched a global consultation survey to understand children's experiences of their rights under the coronavirus pandemic and their views on how their rights could be better realised. The survey applied the Centre for Children's Rights' innovative approach to rights-based research directly involving children and young people as advisors from the outset. The survey has been designed by child rights experts and 270 children from 26 countries. The survey was open until 31 July 2020. It was made available in 27 languages as well as an Easy Read version for children and young people with intellectual disabilities.

Children and young people contributed to data analysis and interpretation. Each thematic paper presents key findings. Data is disaggregated as far as possible and where findings are significant. Please note that the survey is not intended to be representative of the global child population. Findings are presented on a global basis.

For more information please contact covidunder19@gmail.com

The Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's University Belfast designed and conducted the survey and developed the thematic briefings in collaboration with Initiative partners and a team of child advisors. This was supported by an ESRC Impact Acceleration Account award through Queen's University Belfast