
**BRISTOL CITY
YOUTH COUNCIL**

#YOUTHVOICECONSULT

2020

PREPARED BY
ALICE TOWLE
YOUTH MAYOR

THE AIMS OF THE STUDY

What has the impact of lockdown been on young people?

During the height of lock down as youth mayors we became increasingly worried about the impact of COVID 19 on young people. At the time most of the work being done around it was being done by adults liaising with other adults. This ultimately wasn't going to give the most accurate picture of what lock down was like for the young people of Bristol.

In one of our meetings with the Mayor and Cllr Godwin we were asked to consult with young people on this topic so that we could use this information to shape the work that we are doing as a council.

In this report you will find our findings from our survey #youthconsult2020 which asked young people what support they felt like they would need when they returned to education in September.

We hope that professionals in the city will use our findings to shape the work that they are doing with young people as these findings and ideas come directly from the young people themselves. It is immensely important that we listen to the voice of young people now more than ever especially on issues of wellbeing.

~John Wayman and Alice Towle
Youth mayors 2020-2022

About the Bristol City Youth Council:

The youth council is a group of 32 elected young people and 5 co-opted members between the ages of 11-18 (11-25 if they have a learning disability) who represent the young people of Bristol.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED

What sort of questions did we ask young people?

We wanted young people to have their say on a variety of themes but one of our main focuses was on education as young people have missed many months of it.

We also felt as it was important to ask questions about the future of Bristol Post COVID 19 to include young people in that conversation, one which may otherwise have happened without them.

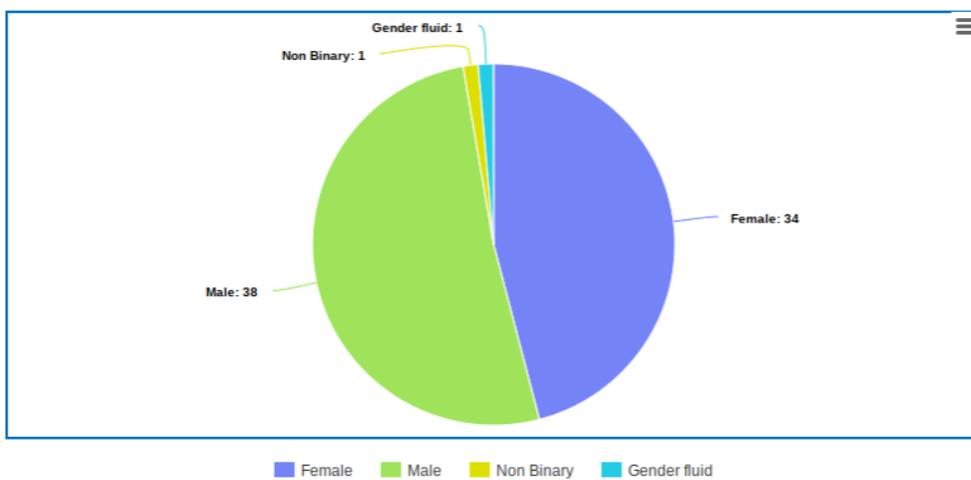
Throughout this report we will discuss our findings which will hopefully help influence the targeted work that you do with young people.

We have also asked young people questions on the themes of:

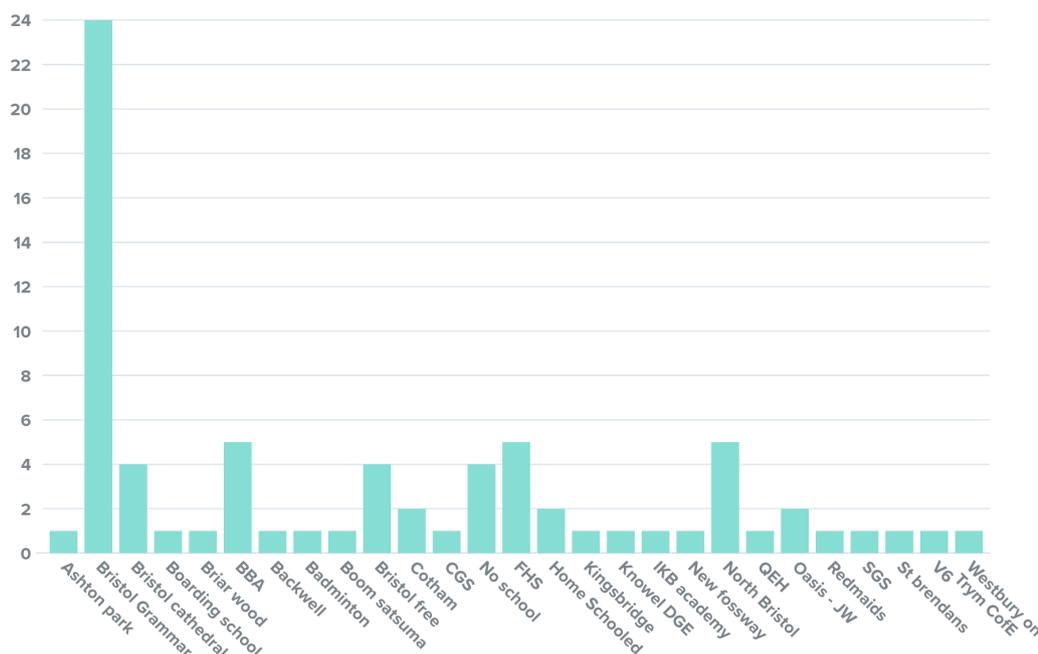
- mental health
- family life
- support they feel they need
- and how COVID 19 has impacted on them.

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC

Who answered our survey ?



Schools participation



Overall we had 74 young people involved with over 25 different academic institutions represented.

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN DURING LOCKDOWN?

Young people's experience during lockdown

Overall Discoveries

Overall the responses from young people fell into 4 distinct categories. Good, fine, bad and fluctuating. Less than 35% of young people commented that their general life in lock-down was "good" with a further 21% being on the fence with their answer. The older that the young people were the more that worries crept in. For example, quite a few young people said that they had been "good" but those who were older had fears about Universities and grades. 15% of young people thought that they were doing poorly in lock down. And 14% said that they were up and down and had a fluctuating state of well being. On a number of occasions the term "Productivity" was raised. Young people have commented that they found working in lock down to be unproductive and they struggled to stay motivated. Overall we would recommend that if any school has to face a lock down again, they should focus on teaching their young people time management skills and productivity skills (for example how to create a revision time table) in order for young people to feel less lost. A number of year 11s commented on feeling forgotten and unproductive as they had not been set any work.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF LOCK DOWN?

Challenges faced by young people in lock down.

Overall there were a variety of challenges that came up from young people that varied dramatically. Obviously the most common ones came up such as not being able to see friends or family but there were also a variety of other problems that may not have previously been considered.

- Social media

There were a variety of comments about social media, some of the most common that came up were arguments on social media and managing a social life on there. Another very interesting comment that occurred was people feeling excluded because they didn't have social media. Therefore we believe that it is important to make the distinction between appropriate use of social media rather than banning young people from using it as often that can be more detrimental than them being on it in the first place.

- Productivity

Young people commented numerous times that they were struggling to stay productive in lock down. Despite the fact that we are no longer in a full lock down we have to be vigilant at the possibility of local lock downs forcing young people into online school once more. Structure and focus were big problems that came up along with motivation and procrastination. We would recommend that any schools that have to go back online either run a class in study skills or send home resources to all students, there are many free resources available online for this which should be used.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF LOCKDOWN?

Challenges faced by young people in lockdown.

- School

As a theme school came up a lot. It was one of the biggest challenges that young people felt that they faced in lock down. The lack of contact that some students faced meant that they struggled to keep up with the workload while others just commented on the workload in general. Another point that we believe has been rarely considered is the financial burden of online school. With some students commenting that they have had to spend large sums of money on books as they have been unable to use public and school libraries.

- Lack of sport / extra curricular activities

Young people commented often that they were struggling with the lack of normal activities that they participated in prior to lock down. Especially in areas that have had local youth provision cut it is more important than ever that those clubs and events that can run do.

We would recommend that clubs that would like to run talk to those who have been running to share best practise and ideas of how they can start their activities again.

Overall young people's concerns all came up time and time again on the same themes. Despite the fact that we are no longer in a lock down all of these problems will still be applicable until COVID 19 has been eradicated so it would be a good idea to ensure that these comments from young people are used when doing your work.

HOW HAS COVID 19 IMPACTED YOU/ YOUR FAMILY

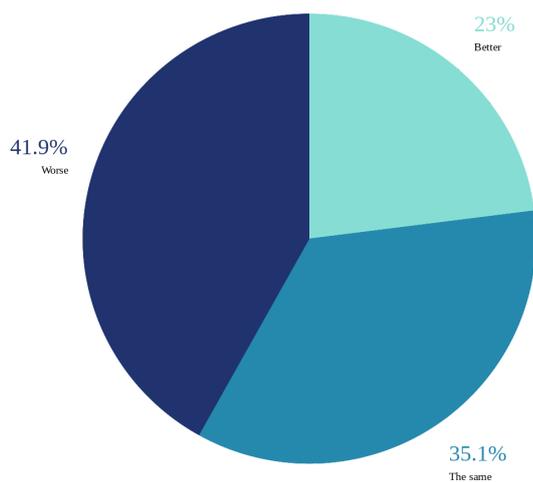
Personal impacts of COVID 19 on young people.

People, especially professionals, forget just how much young people pick up on within the home. There were lots of comments from young people that were incredibly perceptive. There was a lot of worry about family finances and financial stress that their families were going through. A lot of young people also commented on the anxiety that they felt about their parents jobs and whether or not they would still be employed. Other ways in which young peoples families were impacted were that they had a general increase in anxiety (30% of comments) as well as this quite a lot of young people were shielding which has had a huge impact on them emotionally and mentally. It is important that we think about these young people in our work. Fortunately, a lot of young people found that their lives stayed very similar as they had a parents who were key workers so they worked through the pandemic. And it was not all doom and gloom with 20% of young people commenting that they felt closer to either their family or their community, which is positive to see.

HOW HAS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH BEEN DURING LOCK DOWN?

Impacts of lock down on young people's mental health.

How has your mental health been during lockdown?



41.9% said it was worse
35.1% said it was the same
23% said it was better

Young people that commented that they had struggled with their mental health during lock down said that it was due to increased anxiety. Many young people commented on family problems that they have been experiencing. Others have commented on dips and peaks in their mental health. Mainly the isolation aspect of lock down was what affected young people the most. The lack of routine and not knowing when it will end was also a major contributor to it.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT DURING LOCK DOWN, IF SO WAS IT HELPFUL?

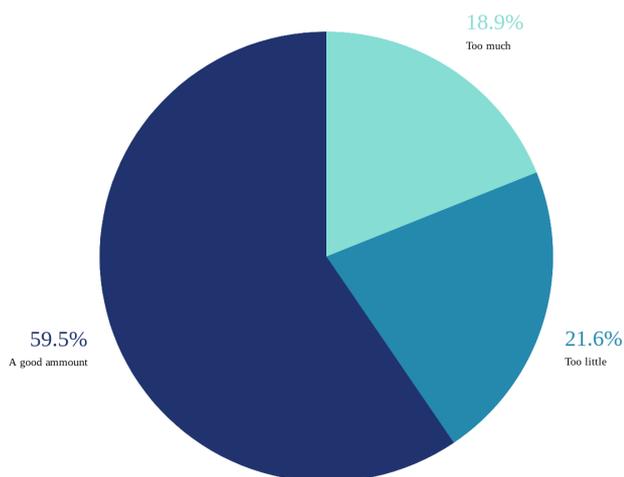
Impacts of mental health services on young people's mental health.

Approximately half of the young people who were surveyed revealed that they had received mental health support. The majority of those who did found it to be helpful which is very positive news for mental health professionals in Bristol. Most amazingly there were lots of comments about how good schools have been for pastoral care over this time. While many young people said that they hadn't received help from a mental health professional most of them did comment that they had talked to friends and family about it which is encouraging as it means that the stigma around mental health is breaking.

HOW HAS YOUR SCHOOL HELPED YOU DURING LOCKDOWN?

How have schools helped young people in lockdown?

Amount of work set during lock down.



59.5% A good amount
21.6% Too little
18.9% Too much

When asked about the amount of work set, most young people felt like they were set a good amount of work. However most worryingly there were some young people who felt like they had not been set enough work 21.6% which is concerning as to what impact this will have had on their education. Furthermore 18.9% said that they had been set too much work which may have a noticeably bad impact on young peoples mental health. Even if as an institution you don't feel like you are setting too much work it is important to think about it from the students perspective and if they think it is too much then it is important to explore why this is.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL YOU NEED POST LOCKDOWN?

The support that young people believe they will need after lockdown.

Young people are who we should be speaking to when it comes to targeted provision coming out of lock down. Many young people feel as though their education has been impacted by lock down and feel that they may need catch up work or extra provision in schools in order for them to make up for the content that they missed. Many young people called for an overhaul of the education system. With this survey being undertaken in the summer it is understandable that we had a lot of comments about the exam fiasco and how that has impacted young people. Many young people have called for an overhaul of exams with no exams or reduced content this year. Lots of young people pointed out the need for post 18 guidance as many young people's life plans have been drastically altered. Young people also commented that they felt that they may need to be eased back into a full school timetable having been out for so long. Young people also spoke of the need for financial aid as well as mental health help.

WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN BRISTOL POST LOCKDOWN?

Young people's opinions on post COVID Bristol.

Young people's ideas for the future are varied and wide ranging. One of the most common themes to come up is the environment and the fact that we should use COVID as a chance to re build a greener society. Another environmental concern that was brought up was around COVID precautions more often than not involving single use plastic, so we may need to re-evaluate how we balance the environmental obligations with COVID risks. Mental health support was frequently mentioned as a provision that they city needs to increase. The majority of comments were around making sure COVID regulations are adhered to and strictly enforcing them to ensure community safety (aprox. 70% of comments.) Something that is still incredibly topical was the calls for Colstons statue to be dealt with and for their to be more BAME education in schools. Young people were also concerned with public transport and the fact that it needs to be cheaper and more accessible. One really nice thing to see was that lots of young people commented on the fact that they would like there to be an increased sense of community in their local areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions on the survey.

Overall young people had a variety of opinions on the questions asked. Now more than ever it is important that we listen to the views of young people especially when doing work that affects them. If you would like to get in contact about working with the youth council or about any further detail on the survey findings then please contact ywparticipation@bristol.gov.uk
