

# CoRAY

Covid-19 response: Mental Health  
Resources for and by Young People



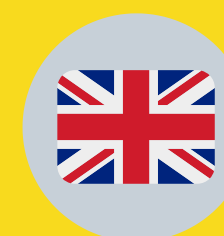
Medical  
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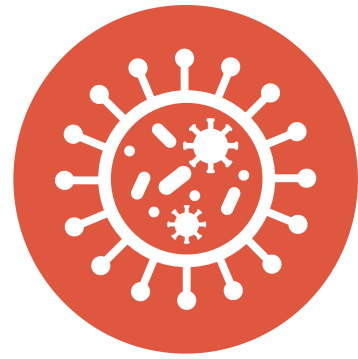


## WHAT DOES RESEARCH TELL US ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

11-  
16

2ND ITERATION





Mental  
Health

# CORAY OVERVIEW



11–  
16

## IN THE CORAY PROJECT WE ARE ...

Looking at  
what the **research  
evidence**  
tells us about the  
impact of the pandemic  
on young people's  
mental health



Asking young people  
what they think are  
the **most important**  
issues that 11-16 year  
olds want help /  
support with



Working with young  
people to **develop  
resources**  
(e.g. films, podcasts)  
to help young people  
with their mental  
health




# WHAT WE WANTED TO FIND OUT?

- 
- How young people's **mental health & wellbeing** has *changed* **throughout the pandemic**

- What are the *main issues* for young people's **mental health & wellbeing** in:

1. General population
2. Specific groups

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- We looked at **research from a range of sources**, including charity reports and academic papers
- **Look out for the numbers in brackets** throughout this report e.g.  **[1]**.
- **At the end of the presentation you will find the references for each report/ paper & more details about the research**

# HOW HAS YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING BEEN AFFECTED DURING THE PANDEMIC?



## PART 1. YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE GENERAL POPULATION



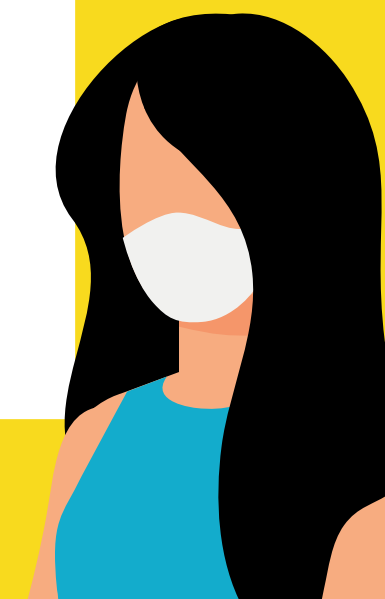
# HOW HAS YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CHANGED THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC



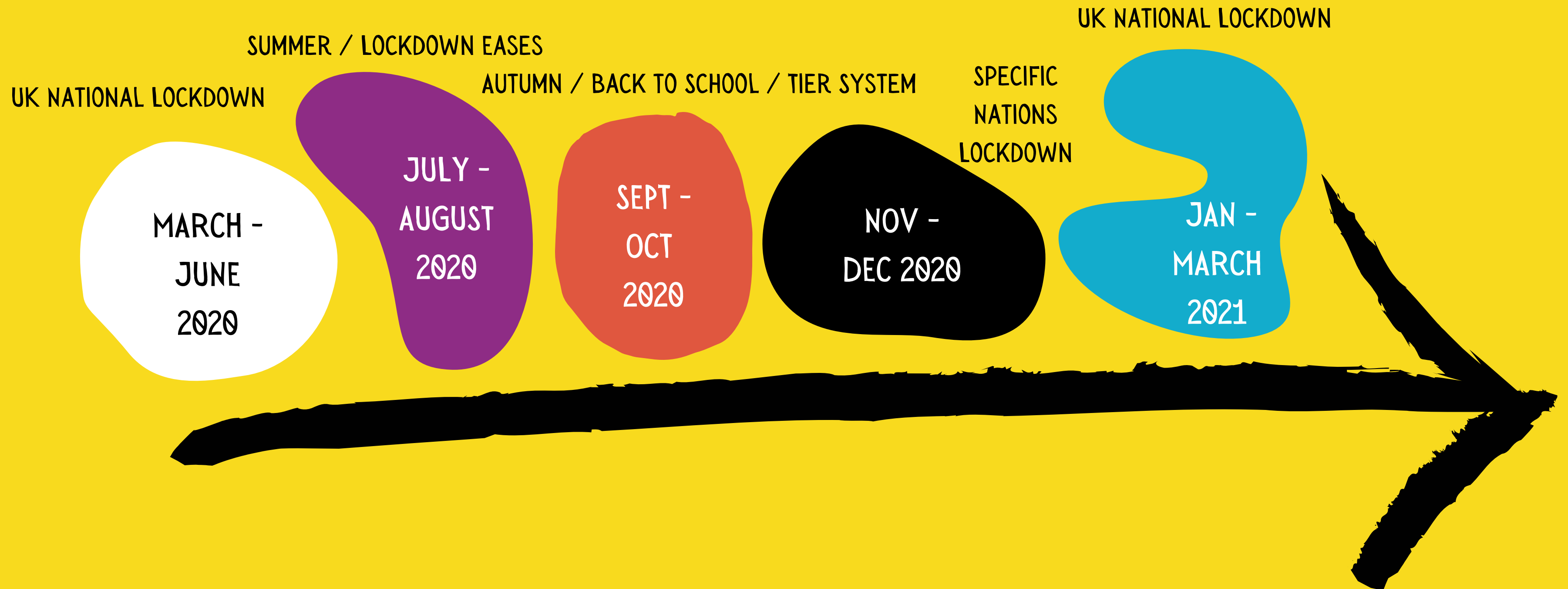
The **Co-SPACE study** has been **tracking young people's mental health over time** since the 1st national lockdown



- Although many **young people** have been **doing okay**, some have **found the pandemic challenging** for their **mental health** [1] [2].[3] [4]
- The **most difficulties** were reported during **national lockdowns** when **restrictions** were **highest** [1] [3]



# HOW HAVE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING BEEN AFFECTED AT DIFFERENT POINTS IN THE PANDEMIC?





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020



DURING THE FIRST NATIONAL LOCKDOWN...

Around half of young people in one survey said their **general happiness** levels decreased [5], and the number of young people **signposted** (by a text helpline; SHOUT) to young people's **mental health services** doubled [6].

Young people described feeling a **range of emotions**, including: **sadness, loneliness** [7], [5], **boredom, anger, frustration, stress and anxiety** [8]  
[9].





## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES DURING THE FIRST LOCKDOWN....

A lot of young people felt **worried** about their **health** and the health of others [10] [11]. During lockdown around half of young people in England who completed the Oxwell survey felt their **sleep quality** and their **ability to manage schoolwork** got worse, with over a third saying they **did not cope well** with **not seeing family and friends** [5].

Most **did not feel hopeful** for the future [8]. Young people were also concerned about lockdown easing, and **uncertainty** around the future [12], including when the pandemic would end [10].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION



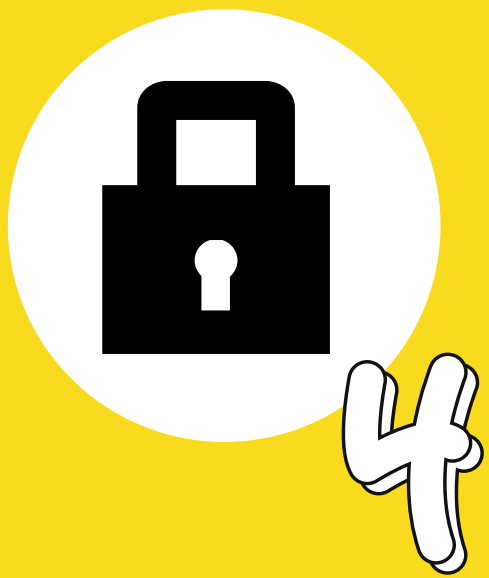
UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020

WHEN REFLECTING ON THE 1ST LOCKDOWN (AFTER RESTRICTIONS BEGAN TO EASE)...

Young people described **missing social interactions** and reported a sense of **grief** for their life before the pandemic [13]. Feelings of **boredom** and **stress** were often associated with life under lockdown [14].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020

REFLECTING ON THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON DAILY LIFE ....

**Days felt repetitive** due to being stuck indoors with **fewer activities** to do [15] and some young people struggled with **tiredness** due to a **lack of routine** [15] [12 – lack of routine in general]. Some also described feeling tired [15], **stressed** and **overwhelmed** [11] from spending so much **time online** [15] [16].

Some girls felt increased **online pressure** about their **appearance** [17]. However, according to the helpline SHOUT, there was an almost 60% **decrease** in the number of young people that mentioned **bullying** whilst schools were closed during lockdown, compared to before lockdown [6].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020



YOUNG PEOPLE ALSO REPORTED ON THE POSITIVES OF LOCKDOWN...

Some young people felt spending **more time at home** (including home learning) was a chance to improve/**strengthen family relationships** [4] [18] [19] [13], but some described family relationships becoming **strained** due to lockdown [16].

**Keeping busy, maintaining a routine** and spending time trying **new hobbies/activities** helped some young people during the pandemic [13] [10].







# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

MARCH -  
JUNE 2020



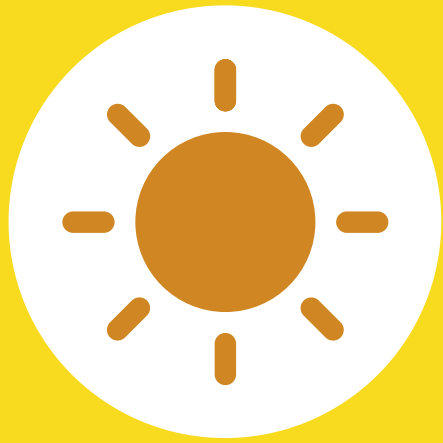
## OTHER POSITIVES OF LOCKDOWN...

Using **digital media** helped young people to **connect with friends and family**, and made them **feel less 'alone'**, for example contacting friends through online games, social media and the phone [10].

**Home learning** also provided a **break from the pressure of school** for some young people [13], and it gave some young people a **chance to be more creative** [11].







# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

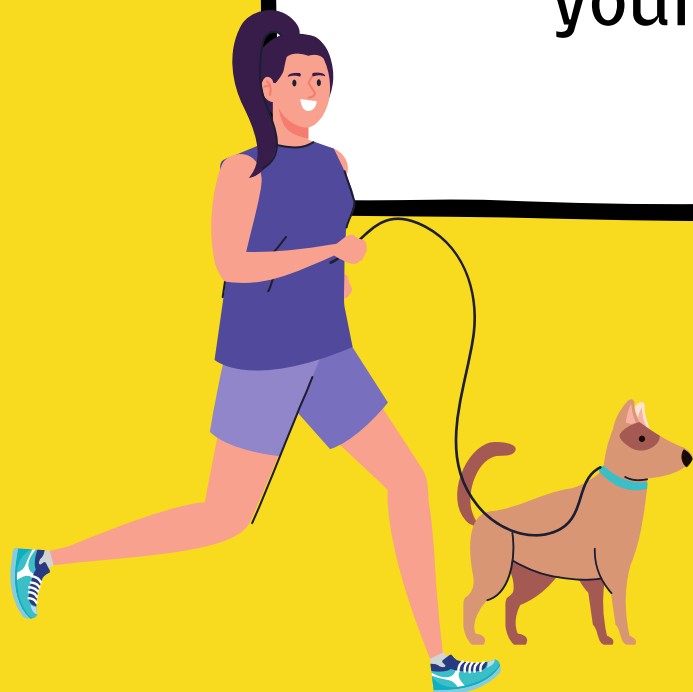
SUMMER /  
LOCKDOWN EASES

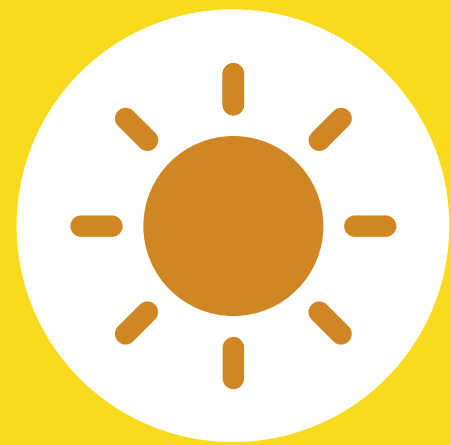
JULY -  
AUGUST  
2020



SUMMER 2020 SAW RESTRICTIONS BEGIN TO EASE ACROSS THE UK ...

In the Co-SPACE study, **emotional difficulties decreased slightly** as restrictions eased, but **slightly more hyperactivity** and **conduct problems** were reported [2]. According to a report by the YMCA, more than two-fifths of young people **worried about their wellbeing** as they **came out of lockdown** [16].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

SUMMER /  
LOCKDOWN EASES

JULY -  
AUGUST  
2020

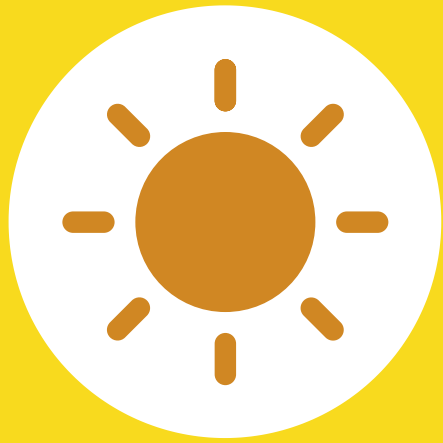


MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES CONTINUED...

In a nationally (England)-representative study conducted in July 2020, **16%** of young people were **experiencing mental health problems**, which was a **big increase from before the pandemic** [20].

Nearly a tenth of young people were **depressed and/or anxious** and around half said these difficulties had got worse since the start of the pandemic [21]. More than a quarter of young people said they had **disrupted sleep** and more than a tenth of young people felt **lonely** [20]. Ten percent of families did **not have enough to eat** or relied on foodbanks, and had no **reliable** access to the **internet** [20].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

SUMMER /  
LOCKDOWN EASES

JULY -  
AUGUST  
2020

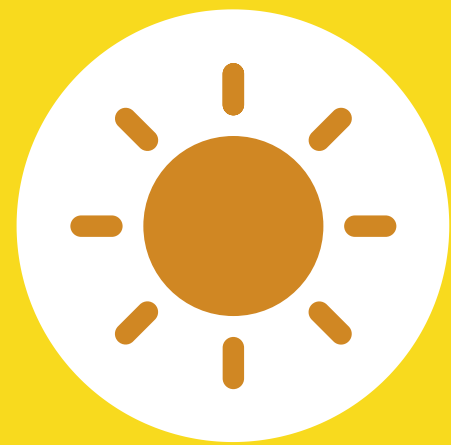


AS YOUNG PEOPLE PREPARED TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL ...

Over half were worried about how the pandemic would affect their **final grades**. They were also worried about their **futures** [22] –in one report, between a quarter to half of young people were worried about **getting a job** and felt the pandemic had affected their **decisions** on what to do when **school finished** [16].

For many, **exam cancellations** had been a **relief**, but were also seen as a cause of **stress and uncertainty** [21].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

SUMMER /  
LOCKDOWN EASES

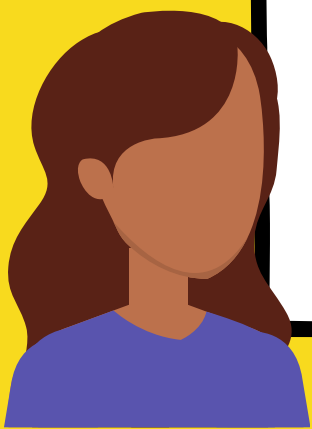
JULY -  
AUGUST  
2020

FEELINGS ABOUT RETURNING TO SCHOOL...



When asked what would make going back to school easier, the top responses from young people were: **not having lots of pressure to catchup on learning**, knowing they would be able to **see their friends at school**, and knowing what returning to school would be like **in advance**. [4].

According to the COVID-19 Adolescent Study (representative sample of 13-19 year old's across Great Britain), the summer and start of return to school saw 1 in 10 young people reporting **poor mental health**. In the survey, young people said they had **mixed feelings about going back to school**, with around a fifth felt happier working at home, whilst over half said that schools closures had, had a negative impact [22].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION



AUTUMN /  
BACK TO SCHOOL /  
TIER SYSTEM

SEPT - OCT  
2020

EARLY AUTUMN SAW MOST YOUNG PEOPLE RETURN TO SCHOOL ...

Young people generally felt **positive** about going back to school [21] (excited and safe) [23], but some felt **nervous**, with concerns around **bringing COVID home to their family** [14] and **changes** to their **routine** [24]. Young people felt they needed **more mental health** and wellbeing **support in schools** [21].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

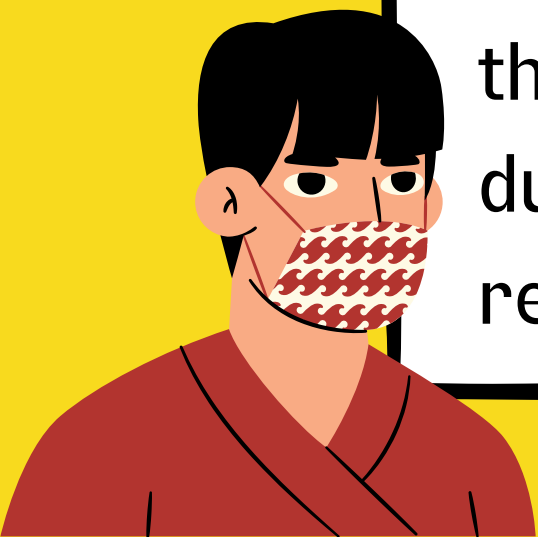
AUTUMN /  
BACK TO SCHOOL /  
TIER SYSTEM

SEPT - OCT  
2020

WHEN THE 'TIER SYSTEM' WAS INTRODUCED, YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS THE UK WERE  
LIVING UNDER DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RESTRICTIONS...

According to results from the TeenCovidLife survey, many young people in Scotland said the pandemic was having a **negative impact** on their lives, with around a fifth feeling **stressed** or **lonely** [25].

In the ALICE study, young people interviewed in the North of England also described feeling stressed and **worried**, and talked about what they had '**lost**' because of the pandemic (e.g., **relationships, experiences**). Changes to young people's lives due to lockdown was often experienced **negatively**, but young people also reflected on the **enjoyable parts** of lockdown (e.g., time for self-care) [26/27].







# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

AUTUMN /  
BACK TO SCHOOL /  
TIER SYSTEM

SEPT - OCT  
2020

IN COMPARISON TO THE FIRST LOCKDOWN ...

Some young people said they felt **less bored**, **less lonely** and had more things to do, with some seeing their mood and self-confidence improve. However, many young people were **still worried** about their **health**, the health of others and the **future** [28]. Young people had particular **fears** around the impact of the pandemic on their **education**, **exams** and **qualifications** [29].

According to a survey by the Children's Parliament in Scotland, **fewer** young people reported **enjoying learning new things**, knowing they were **good at things**, and wanting to be **creative** [28].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION



NOV -  
DEC 2020

WINTER / TIER SYSTEM /  
SHORT LOCKDOWNS

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUED TO BE UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE  
AT THE END OF 2020 ...

... with young people saying they thought their **mental health had worsened** over the course of the pandemic [30]. Some young people continued to experience **anxiety**, and felt uneasy about **not knowing when restrictions** would end and the impact this had on **being able to make plans** [31], for example, what **activities** this would **restrict** (e.g. religious festivals, hobbies), future exams and careers [32].

For example, one report by the Mental Health Foundation found that a quarter of young people felt **nervous/anxious, annoyed/irritable** or had **difficulty concentrating** most days (as well as struggling with **sleep**) [30].







# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION



NOV -  
DEC 2020

WINTER / TIER SYSTEM /  
SHORT LOCKDOWNS

## MENTAL HEALTH AT SCHOOL...

**Schools** reported a **decline** in young people's **mental health** [33]. For example, a report by STEER Education said that girls in particular had struggled with **social skills** and **managing emotions in school** [34].

Young people said that **schoolwork and exams** (as well as family) had the biggest negative impact on their mental health [35].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL  
LOCKDOWN

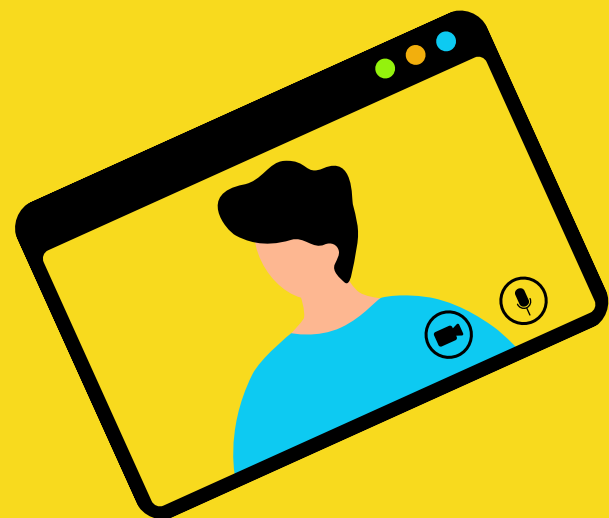
JAN -  
MARCH  
2021



IN COMPARISON TO THE FIRST NATIONAL LOCKDOWN...

Lots of young people said the **second national lockdown** had a **negative impact** on their **mental health** [36, 37]. Young people felt **sad, lonely, bored** and fed up. Not being able to see friends, family and teachers had a big negative impact on their mental health [37].

Lots of young people reported **worries** around **catching COVID-19**. Other common worries included topics like **school** and **relationships** with others, with some worries around **parent's jobs** or having enough **money** to buy food. [38].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: GENERAL POPULATION

UK NATIONAL  
LOCKDOWN

JAN -  
MARCH  
2021



REFLECTIONS ON THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN (EARLY 2021) ....

According to a report by the Children's Commissioner for Wales - although around half of young people **enjoyed learning at home** at their own pace, many felt **worried about falling behind** on learning and **losing confidence and motivation** [36].

Furthermore, a Girlguiding survey found that young people had concerns about the **impact of missed opportunities** on their **future** and how the pandemic will **affect society**. [37].



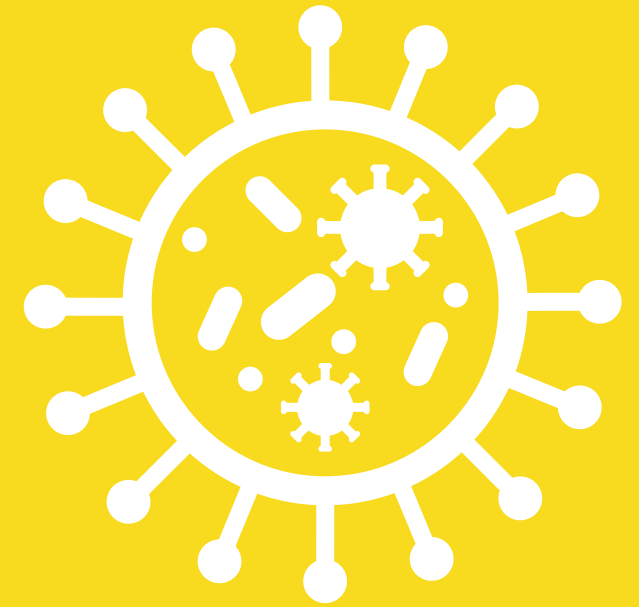
# HOW HAS YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING BEEN AFFECTED DURING THE PANDEMIC?



PART 2. SPECIFIC GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MIGHT  
HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

## Mental Health



NOT EVERYONE HAS BEEN  
AFFECTED EQUALLY BY THE PANDEMIC.  
SOME GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE FOUND  
THINGS MORE CHALLENGING FOR A NUMBER OF  
REASONS.

So, what does the evidence say about this?

Here are a few examples...



# SPECIFIC GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRE-  
EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH  
DIFFICULTIES

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING AS  
MIGRANTS OR REFUGEES

YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH  
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE  
LGBTQ COMMUNITY

YOUNG CARERS

CARE-EXPERIENCED  
YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
A PHYSICAL OR  
INTELLECTUAL  
DISABILITY

YOUNG PEOPLE  
FROM LOW INCOME  
HOUSEHOLDS

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM  
BLACK, ASIAN &  
MINORITY ETHNIC  
BACKGROUNDS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR A  
NEURODISABILITY

PARENT WITH MENTAL  
HEALTH  
DIFFICULTIES

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
PHYSICAL ILLNESSES

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN RURAL  
COMMUNITIES

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

1

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT...

Among young people who felt they **needed mental health support** during the pandemic, according to YoungMinds, over half said they received support, with around a quarter looking for support but not accessing it, and around a quarter not looking for support [39]. Young people with mental health difficulties said they **did not think** their **school** was **focusing more on mental health** and wellbeing [39].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

2

## IMPACT ON EDUCATION...

An academic report of young people in Europe (including the UK) suggested that children and young people with mental health conditions **struggled to fully engage with home schooling**, and might be **falling behind with their education** more than young people without mental health conditions [40].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

3

REFLECTIONS ON LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTIONS EASING...

Three quarters of young people surveyed by YoungMinds with a pre-existing mental health conditions said they found the **lockdown at the start of 2021 harder to cope with** than previous lockdowns [39]. The main pressures experienced by young people were around **loneliness, school work**, and a **breakdown in routine** [39].

Three quarters of young people were **hopeful** that their mental health would **improve** once **restrictions were lifted**, but two thirds felt the pandemic would have a **negative impact** on their mental health in the **long term** [39].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

4

## EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN INPATIENT SETTINGS...

Some young people in **inpatient wards** experienced additional challenges, with some experiencing **delays** in being **discharged** during lockdown periods [41]. Staff in an **eating disorder unit** reported that young people were **coping worse** during the pandemic [42].

According a report by the Children's Commissioner for England, nearly three quarters of inpatient wards for young people **stopped face-to-face visits** from family for at least some of the time. Some face-to-face visits from **teachers** and external **professionals** also **reduced**, and some young people **struggled** to engage with **online learning** or **support** [41].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

PARENT WITH MENTAL  
HEALTH  
DIFFICULTIES

## LIVING WITH A PARENT WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTY....

According to a report by the Children's Commissioner for England, **over a tenth** of young people in England **live with a parent** with **mental health difficulties** [43]. For some **parents**, the pandemic has led to **increased anxiety** and **difficulty accessing support** [43].

But **we don't know much** about the **impact on young people themselves**.



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

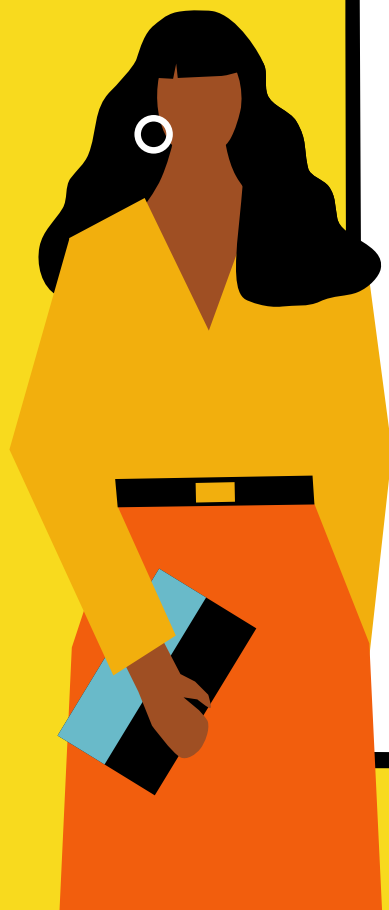
YOUNG PEOPLE FROM  
BLACK, ASIAN &  
MINORITY ETHNIC  
BACKGROUNDS

1

## NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH...

According to Kooth (digital health provider in the UK), mental health difficulties such as **depression, anxiety, self-harm** and experiencing **suicidal thoughts** were **higher** amongst Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds young people than white young people during lockdown [44].

In academic studies, young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds who were interviewed about their experience of the pandemic, were concerned about feeling **blamed or stigmatised** around COVID-19 [45] [46]. Interviews also highlighted issues around the impact of the pandemic on **being away from family/friends during events** like Ramadan and Eid [47].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM  
BLACK, ASIAN &  
MINORITY ETHNIC  
BACKGROUNDS

2

## CHALLENGES COMMUNICATING INFORMATION...

**Language barriers** also sometimes made things difficult, with young people reporting that some information about COVID-19 was only available in English, making it **difficult to communicate information to their families** [48].

**Unclear information** from schools or decision makers was a **source of stress** and anxiety for some [45]. Young people also felt **worried** about the pandemic negatively affecting their **future job prospects** [45].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE  
FROM LOW INCOME  
HOUSEHOLDS

1

## NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH...

Some young people from households with a low income were more likely to have **poor mental health** which **got worse** during the pandemic [1] [49]. There is some evidence to suggest that young people with unemployed parents are at **particular risk** of experiencing symptoms of **anxiety** and **depression** [50].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE  
FROM LOW INCOME  
HOUSEHOLDS

2

FURTHER NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH...

According to the Co-SPACE study, young people from a low income or single adult household also experienced **higher levels of behavioural, emotional and restless/attention difficulties** throughout the pandemic [51]. Young people from low-income households showed **higher mental health symptoms** throughout the pandemic, even when restrictions began to ease in March 2021 [1].

In a wellbeing survey run by the organisation Llamau (who support young people facing homelessness), young people reported **increased self-harm, suicidal thoughts and panic attacks** during the pandemic[3048].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE  
FROM LOW INCOME  
HOUSEHOLDS

3

## IMPACT ON EDUCATION ...

**Challenges with remote learning** were often greater for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, in a survey by ImpactEd young people felt more worried than their peers about **falling behind with school work** as a result of COVID-19, were **less likely** to get **help** from their family, to have **access** to a digital device to complete school work on [4] or have access to a study space [53].

According to the online maths platform Nesta, schools with higher levels of disadvantaged young people also saw **lower** levels of **student engagement**, with young people more likely to **access online learning** via a phone than a computer [54].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

CARE-EXPERIENCED  
YOUNG PEOPLE

1

## IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION...

In early summer 2020, two thirds of care-experienced and disadvantaged young people completing a survey from the mentoring charity MCR pathways reported feeling **low, anxious** and **stressed**, with 9 out of 10 reporting **disrupted sleep** [55]. Young people also felt **lonely** and **isolated** [56].

According to the MCR survey, almost three quarters **struggled with school work**, finding the work either **too hard**, feeling **too stressed** to complete it, or having other **caring responsibilities** to do [55].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

CARE-EXPERIENCED  
YOUNG PEOPLE

2

## ACCESSING SUPPORT ...

The majority of young people who completed a survey by the group Research in Practice felt **contact with professionals was the same or better** than their contact before lockdown, but for some, they felt **contact** had **decreased**, especially for those who had changed social worker [57].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

CARE-EXPERIENCED  
YOUNG PEOPLE

3

## REFLECTIONS ON LOCKDOWN...

Feelings about the **lockdown** were **mixed**. Some enjoyed having **more quality time** to spend with those they lived with, but found **virtual family time** (with those not in their household) hard [57]. Experiences of **home learning** also varied, some young people enjoyed the **flexibility** and **one to one support** from carers, whereas others struggled with a **lack of routine** and **reduced social contact**.



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG CARERS

1

## CHANGES TO MENTAL HEALTH...

Some young people in children's homes experienced **improved mental health** during lockdown and **better relationships** with staff [58]. But for some, restrictions lead to **increased anxiety, low mood, self-harm drug/alcohol misuse** [58] [59].

Some young carers felt their **mental health had worsened** since COVID-19. Young people said they were finding it **hard to manage increased responsibilities** when caring for family members [60] [48].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG CARERS

2

## CARING RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCESSING SUPPORT ...

Young carers also reported finding it **hard to take a break from their caring responsibilities** during the pandemic, especially when schools returned [48]. They also felt there was **not enough information** and updates provided for people **'shielding'** during the pandemic [60].

Some young carers experienced **difficulty accessing support for themselves** [60], and being on **waiting lists** for mental health support [48]. Some reported receiving **support** at the beginning of the pandemic, which then **reduced**, and some reported having a **consistent** level of support throughout [48].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS



## SHIELDING, ISOLATION AND ANXIETY ...

Some young people with a range of physical illnesses struggled with the **isolation of shielding** [61], and reported concerns about **missing out on life experiences**, feeling **bored** and **missing family and friends** [61].

In an academic study, over half of young people surveyed living with / beyond cancer said they felt **more anxious** than they did before the pandemic [62] and in a survey by the charity CLIC Sargent, over half said they were **not coping** [63]. Young people who were immunocompromised also reported high levels of **anxiety** (particularly around **catching COVID-19**) [68].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL ILLNESSES

2

## ACCESSING CARE AND SUPPORT ...

Many young people with epilepsy were **reluctant to go to hospital** and some had **difficulty getting medication**, as well as experiencing **worse sleep, mood** and **physical activity levels** [65].

In a survey conducted by RAISE of young people with a chronic illness, 80% said their health had been **negatively impacted** by the pandemic, and felt **stressed** and **lonely** during the pandemic [66]. Some were also **refused access to care** or were **unable to access medicines** for their conditions [66].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
A PHYSICAL OR  
INTELLECTUAL  
DISABILITY

1

## NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ...

Young people who reported having a disability were **more likely** to comment on the **negative impact** of the pandemic on their mental health, feeling more **worried about catching the virus** [67] than non-disabled young people.

Furthermore, they were **more likely** to feel **sad**, less **safe** or **happy**, and to say they needed **extra help** and **wanted support** to help them feel happy and well, as well as **preferring learning at home** and to be worried about food security [67] [68].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
A PHYSICAL OR  
INTELLECTUAL  
DISABILITY

2

## CHANGES TO DAILY LIFE ...

In one report by the NSPCC, deaf, disabled and autistic young people reported difficulties during the pandemic, such as **changes to daily routines**, trouble **accessing services** and being **aggressively challenged for not wearing a face covering**, despite being exempt [79].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH  
A PHYSICAL OR  
INTELLECTUAL  
DISABILITY

3

## IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH...

For young people with an intellectual disability, experiences of the pandemic were mixed. Some evidence from academic studies suggests that **behavioural and emotional difficulties** were similar during the first lockdown compared to before the pandemic [80], but other studies reported **negative effects** of **lockdown restrictions** (for example, over half of young people were **less active** during the pandemic due to a lack of access to facilities and therapies [81]).



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR A NEURODISABILITY

1

## MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES...

Some young people with Special Educational Needs or a Neurodisability (SEN/ND) experienced **high** levels of **behavioural, emotional and restless/attention** difficulties throughout the pandemic, compared to young people without SEN/ND [51].

Young people with a neurodevelopmental disorder also had a **higher** prevalence of **emotional** and **conduct problems** during the pandemic than young people without a neurodevelopmental disorder [77]. Parents of young people with rare neurogenetic conditions also reported that young people experienced more **physical aggression, disrupted sleep, repetitive behaviours** and **sensory behaviours** during the pandemic [78].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

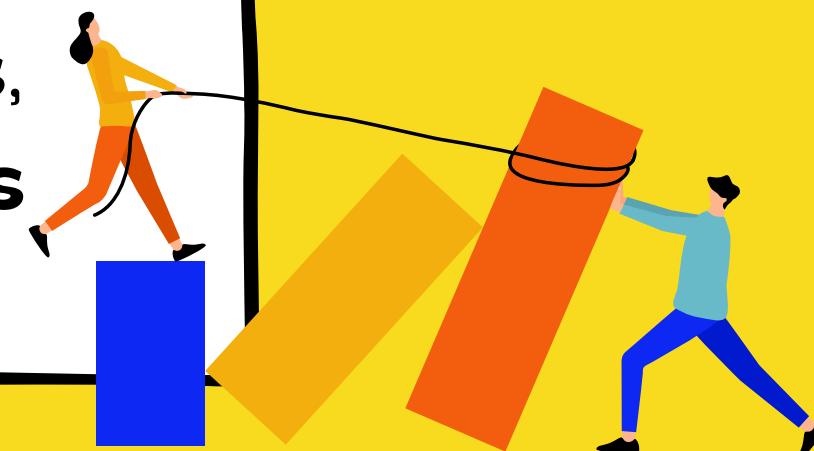
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR A NEURODISABILITY

2

MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES CONTINUED...

According to the Co-SPACE study, although overall young people's mental health improved as restrictions eased in March 2021, children and young people with SEND/ND **continued to experience higher levels of mental health symptoms** [1]. Parents felt young people were **more anxious** [69] during lockdown/school closure. Parents also felt young people's wellbeing had been **negatively affected** [70] by the **rapid social changes** [71], **disruption** to their **routine** [3030] and **blurring** of home/school **boundaries** [73].

Some parents reported that children had started to have **more anger issues, aggression and emotional outbursts** [74]. However, a **minority of parents** reported **improvements** in young people's mental health [71].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS



ACCESSING SERVICES AND EDUCATION...

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR A  
NEURODISABILITY

3



Families of young people with additional needs also reported that **education** and **care services** were **withdrawn** [75] or limited [72] at the beginning of the pandemic. Teachers felt young people with SEND often **struggled more** than their peers without SEND to engage with **remote learning** and were less likely to attend school in person when schools reopened in September [76] [33].

Despite this, some families also reported **positive experiences** during the pandemic, such as **enjoying spending more time together**, less school-related **stress** [75], and smaller class sizes/ **more learning support** [72].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

1

## NEGATIVE IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH...

For young adults in the LGBTQ+ community, worse mental health during the pandemic was often related to **lack of social support**, **unsupportive living environments** and **difficulty accessing mental health** support or interventions [70].

In an academic study, more than two-thirds of LGBTQ+ young adults (aged 18-24) surveyed experienced significant symptoms of **depression** during the first lockdown [83]. In an international study of young LGBTQ+ adults, levels of depression and **anxiety** were higher among those who felt **uncomfortable at home and isolated** from non-LGBTQ+ friends [84].





# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

2

## ACCESSING SUPPORT ...

For some, **sudden withdrawal of support networks** during lockdown (e.g. youth clubs for LGBTQ+ youth) **negatively affected** young people's **wellbeing** [60]. Some LGBTQ+ young people living in transphobic or homophobic households also experienced **digital exclusion**, without privacy to use devices to access the support or healthcare they need.

LGBTQ+ young people also reported that they felt the pandemic had led to **delays and disruption** to the **treatment** of transgender young people [60].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

3

CONNECTION...

Young people reported that **digital youth work** during lockdown helped them to feel **more connected** and **able to mix** with friends, other young people and youth workers online, which helped to **reduce feelings of isolation** and **improve** their **wellbeing** [85].

However, overall, **we don't know much** about the **impact** of the pandemic on young people **aged 11-16 in the LGBTQ+ community**.



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

1

## ACCESSING SUPPORT...

Young people with experience of the youth justice system reported that it was **harder to access services** as things had moved online during the pandemic [48]. Some young people reported that they were receiving **more support** at school/college, whereas others felt that schools/colleges were **struggling to meet support needs** [48].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

2

## LACK OF FACE TO FACE CONTACT ...

Across youth offender institutions in the UK, access to **time out of a cell** has been **severely limited** by the pandemic [86]. Young people in these institutions have faced challenges such as: **less face-to-face education** and during the first lockdown, **no in-person visits** [86].

For young people whose parent was in prison during lockdown, many young people felt **grief** and **sadness** at the **stopping** of **in-person visits** [87].



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

ISOLATION AND LACK OF OPTIMISM...

Young adults living in particularly remote rural communities reported higher levels of **loneliness** than other young people in less remote rural communities [88]. According to a survey by the Rural Youth Project, the **optimism** of young people living in rural Scotland about the **future reduced** from nearly three quarters to less than half in August 2020 [89]. Over half of respondents (60%) were **worried** about the effect of the pandemic on them and nearly a third wanted immediate help from the government and local authorities to **improve mental health services** [89].

But overall, **we don't know much** about the **impact** of the pandemic on young people **aged 11-16** in **rural communities** across the **UK**.



# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING: SPECIFIC GROUPS

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING AS  
MIGRANTS OR REFUGEES

HIGHLIGHTING INEQUALITIES...

According to an academic study conducted in the USA, immigrant and refugee youth and families who have experienced trauma reflected that the pandemic had **highlighted inequalities in health, education**, and opportunities for immigrant and refugee youth. Staff working with migrant and refugee families reported **increased levels of worry** and **anxiety** among families, as well as increased **boredom** and **isolation** due to lockdown and the closure of schools [90].

But overall, **we don't know much** about the **impact of the pandemic** on young people migrants or refugees **living in the UK aged 11-16**.





# SUMMARY: WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE TELLS US ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11 – 16 IN THE UK?

LOTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE **STRUGGLING** WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH & ARE FEELING A **RANGE OF DIFFERENT EMOTIONS** (I.E. FEELING WORRIED OR LONELY), BUT **SOME** YOUNG PEOPLE ARE **FEELING OKAY**

SOME YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL LIKE CHANGES TO THEIR DAILY LIFE (I.E. NOT GOING TO SCHOOL OR SOCIAL DISTANCING) HAVE HAD A **NEGATIVE IMPACT** ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH, BUT FOR OTHERS THEY EXPERIENCED **SOME POSITIVES** (E.G. SPENDING TIME AT HOME).

SOME GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE MAY HAVE BEEN **PARTICULARLY AFFECTED** BY THE PANDEMIC (I.E. YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PREVIOUS MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES), BUT THERE IS **STILL A LOT WE DON'T KNOW**





# WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT?

LOOK OUT  
FOR  
THESE  
BADGES

## TYPES OF INFORMATION

### SURVEY



Most studies use surveys or questionnaires which lots of people complete - these studies can tell us if large groups of people are having similar experiences.

### INTERVIEW



Some studies use interviews which a smaller number of people complete - these studies give us a more detailed look at what certain people are experiencing.

## TYPES OF STUDY

### CROSS-SECTIONAL



Most studies are cross sectional, which means they only look at people's responses at one point in time. These answers may be compared to other people's answers at a different point in time.

### LONGITUDINAL



Some studies are longitudinal, which means they ask the same people to take part more than once over a period of time.

## TYPES OF SAMPLE

### CONVENIENCE



**Most studies** have a sample that is **not representative of the general public** - this means that certain groups of people are not properly represented (i.e. females/Asian background/low income)

### REPRESENTATIVE



**But some studies** do have **a sample that is representative of the whole population** - this means it is more likely that the views of lots of different people are represented

# WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT?

LOOK OUT  
FOR  
THESE  
BADGES

## AGE GROUP

11-16

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE

2176

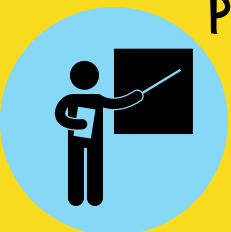
## PERSON WHO REPORTED



YOUNG PERSON



PARENT



PROFESSIONAL  
(i.e. teacher, social worker)

## STAGE OF THE PANDEMIC

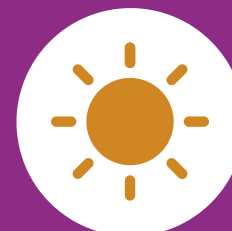
PRE-PANDEMIC



NATIONAL LOCKDOWNS



SUMMER



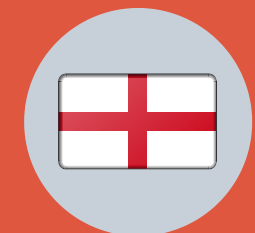
AUTUMN



WINTER

## PART OF THE UK

ENGLAND



N. IRELAND



SCOTLAND



WALES



UK

## TYPE OF ORGANISATION



ACADEMICS








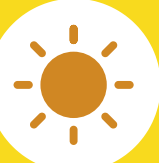













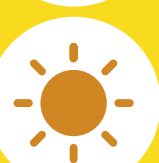



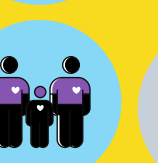






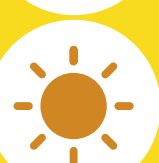








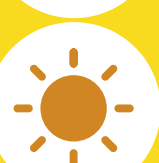






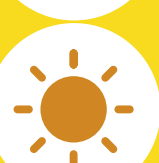

















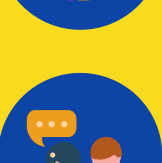






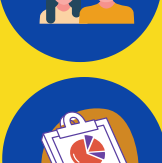







CHARITIES



PUBLIC BODIES  
(e.g. Children's Commissioner, NHS Digital)

# REFERENCES (1)

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	<u>1.</u>				4-17	10036								
	<u>2.</u>				4-16	2988								
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	<u>7.</u>				5-18	12917								
	<u>8.</u>				11-25	1065								
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	<u>10.</u>				8-12	970								

# REFERENCES (2)

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 <u>12.</u>				8-14								
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# REFERENCES (3)

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<u>21.</u>				14-20	759						
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<u>24.</u>				8-14							
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<u>26.</u>				11-13	14						
<u>27.</u>				11-13	294						
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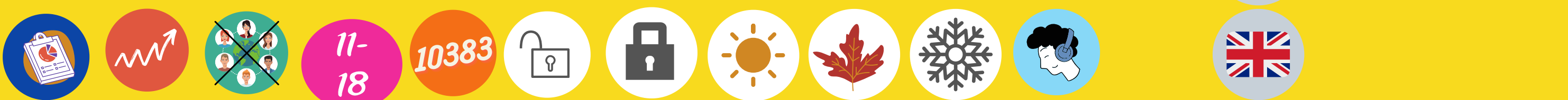
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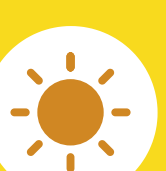













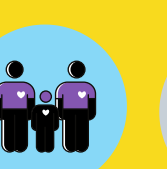
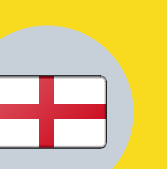





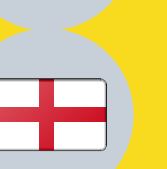












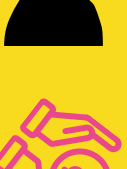





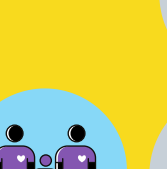





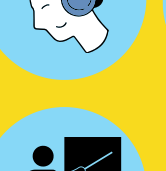
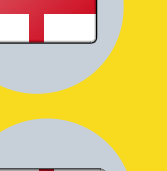




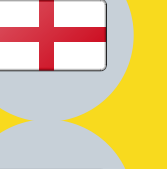






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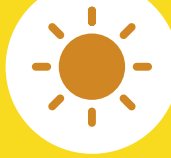






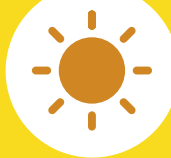








































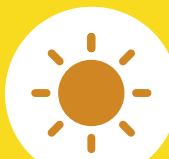




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# REFERENCES (6)

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 <u>52.</u>													
<u>53.</u>				4-15	5585								
<u>54.</u>				4-18									
<u>55.</u>				13-18	1025								
<u>56.</u>				18+	251								
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<u>60.</u>				10-25	31								
























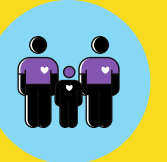


































# REFERENCES (7)

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<u>61.</u>				Under 18	171						
 <u>62.</u>				18-39	177						
<u>63.</u>					264						
<u>64.</u>				Under 18	1490						
<u>65.</u>				Under 25	201						
<u>66.</u>					131						
<u>67.</u>				7-18	1198						
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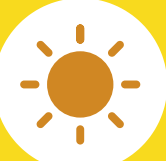

































































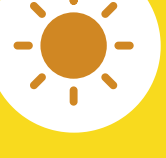








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<u>71.</u>					5-18	241							
<u>72.</u>													
<u>73.</u>					5-13	8							
<u>74.</u>													
<u>75.</u>					4-18	16							
<u>76.</u>					4-18								
<u>77.</u>					4-15	453							
<u>78.</u>						171							
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# REFERENCES (9)

81.					125									
82.				16-25	161									
83.				18-24										
84.				18-29	1934									
85.				8-14	22									
86.														
87.						36								
88.					Over 16	380								
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THANK YOU!