



Group Development Pakistan



PAKISTAN

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Preface

#CovidUnder19: is an initiative to meaningfully involve children in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. 26,258 children from 137 countries across all five United Nations regions responded to this survey, which represents the biggest child participatory global survey ever conducted.

#COVIDunder19 is a multistakeholder initiative that has brought together children, civil society organizations, academia, child rights experts and other partners¹ to work together in understanding children's experiences of their rights during the COVID19 Pandemic. #COVIDunder19 aims at creating a space for children across the globe to engage safely, meaningfully and in an inclusive manner, in the discussions around issues triggered by the COVID19 pandemic and contribute towards shaping the post COVID-19 world.

A total of 433 children took part in the survey from Pakistan. Some of those children responded directly online, others who did not have any access to internet, shared their answers with Group Development Pakistan's field officers who entered the information via their smartphone on a real time basis.

We are thankful to the parents who allowed their children to share their insight, to the children who gave their assent and filled this survey. We also would like to express our most sincere gratitude to the community members, Mashal School management, and other volunteers who despite the pandemic, made outstanding efforts to ensure that children's voice would be heard.

We also would like to acknowledge the secretariat of Child Rights Coalition Asia, as well as the research team of Queen's University Belfast and Terre des Hommes, who provided us invaluable technical support and ensured smooth coordination to generate this report.

We are confident that this is only the beginning of an impactful process to reinforce child participation at a global level.

More than ever, we are committed to abide by the children's motto: "Nothing about us, without us".

¹ <https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/content/covidunder19>

Disclaimer

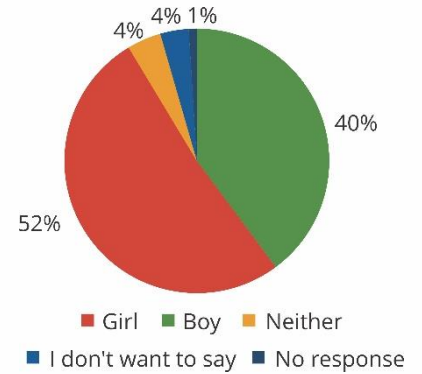
This report is based on a sample which includes the views of only 443 children from Pakistan. It can therefore not be considered as a representative sample, although we have tried to be as inclusive as possible under the circumstances surrounding the pandemic and the preventive measures to follow to mitigate the spread of the Covid19. Hence, when the report quotes a certain percentage of “children”, it only refers to the ones who took part in this survey.

The survey abides by the child safeguarding standards that UNICEF has recommended while conducting research with children, and all information and activities linked to this report follow the principle of the *best interest of the child*.

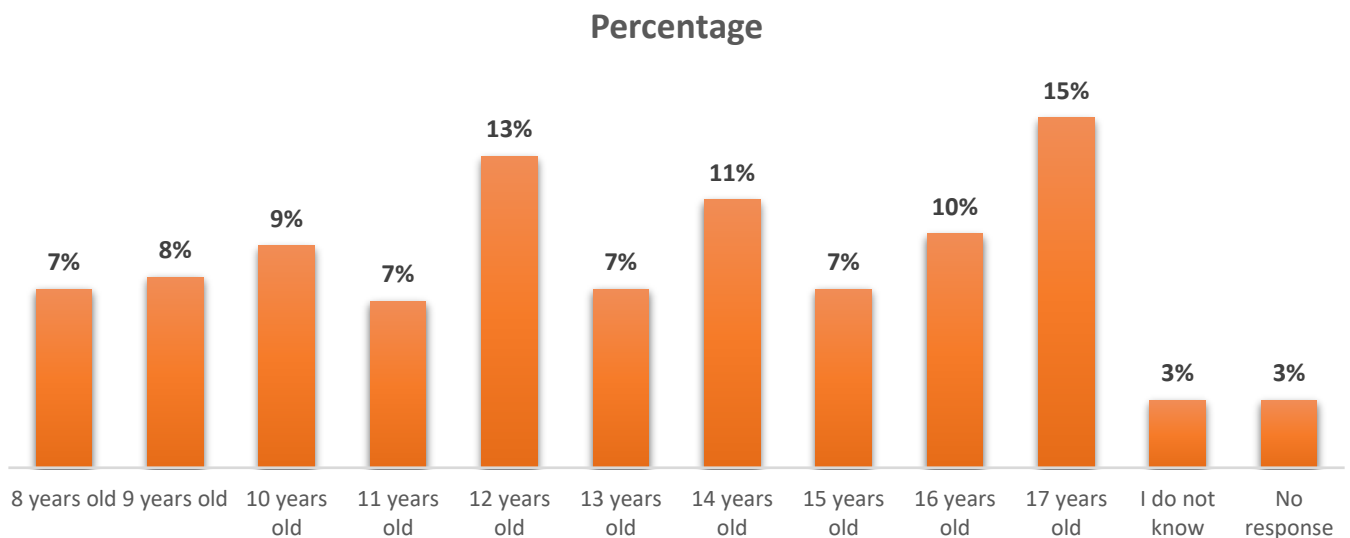
1.0. Demographics

Sample Composition: what is your gender?

The results show that out of the children who participated in the survey, 40% were boys, 52% were girls and 4% non-binary. 4% respondents chose not to divulge their gender and one respondent did not respond.



How old are you?



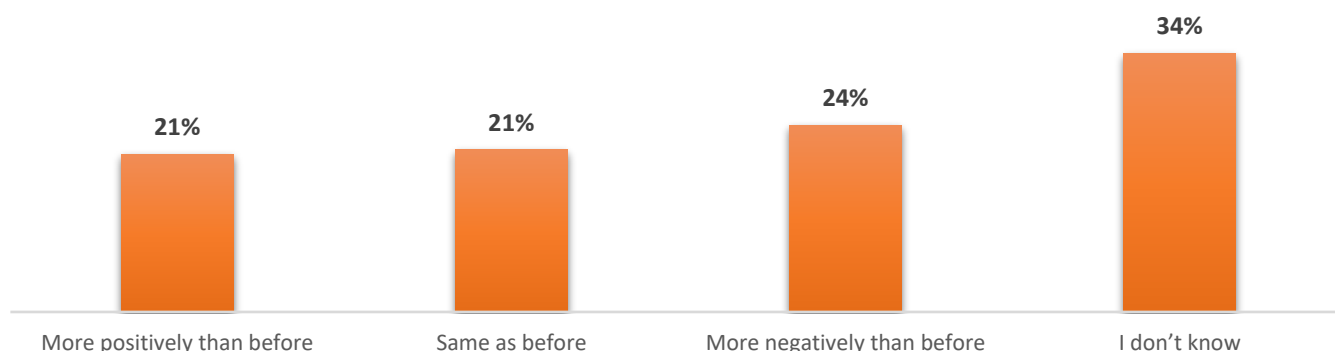
Most respondents (15%) were 17 years old, followed by 13% respondents aged 12 years. 3% of the respondents chose not to respond and an equal proportion of children were not sure about their age.

2.0. Headline Findings

Article 2: Discrimination & Public attitudes towards children and families

Almost a quarter of the children (24%) stated that they felt that the media portrayed children and young people more negatively than before the Coronavirus lockdown; 21% thought the opposite. 34% of the respondents shared that they have not monitored the change whereas 21% felt no difference in the portrayal of children by media.

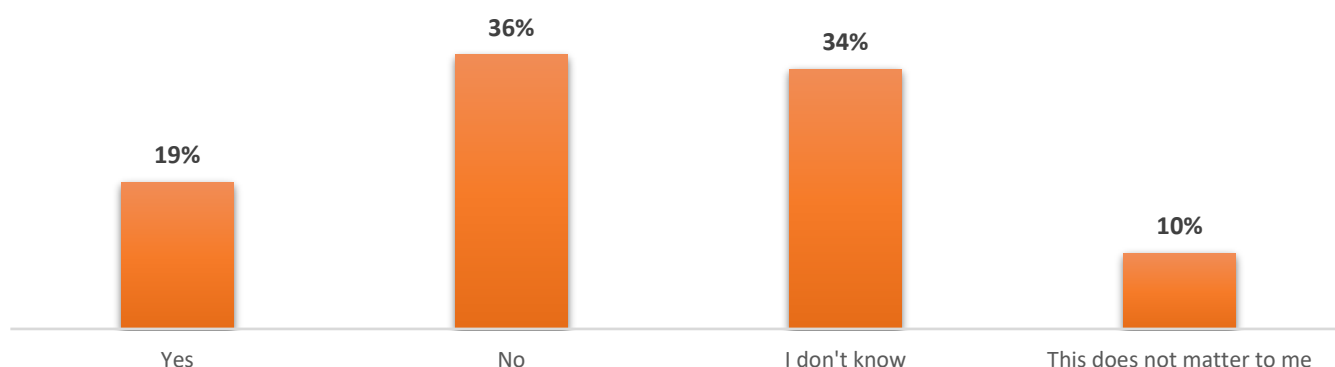
How has media portrayed children and young people during the Corona Virus lockdown?



Article 12: Giving children's views due weight

36% of the children shared that the government was not been taking into account children's views when making decisions about handling the corona virus; 19% believed in the inclusion of children's voices in the government planning. 34% of the children stated that they were not informed about the inclusion of children's voices in the government planning. 10% of the children shared that this did not matter to them.

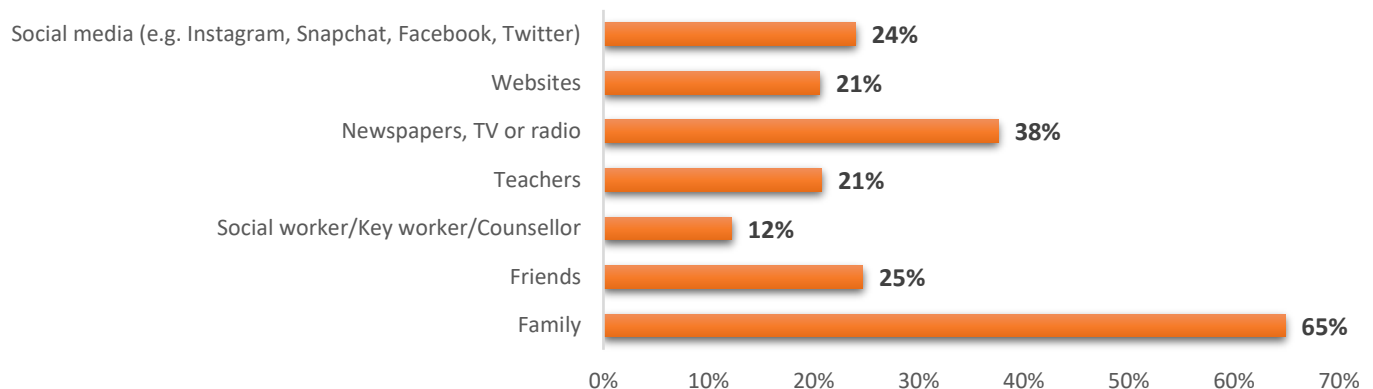
Do you think your government is listening to children when it is making decisions about how to handle the Coronavirus crisis?



Article 13 & 17: Information

The most popular information sources (for information children would trust) were: family (for 65% of the children involved in the survey); Newspapers, TV or radio (38%); friends (25%) and social media (24%).

If you wanted to find out more about the Coronavirus, where would you get information that you would trust?

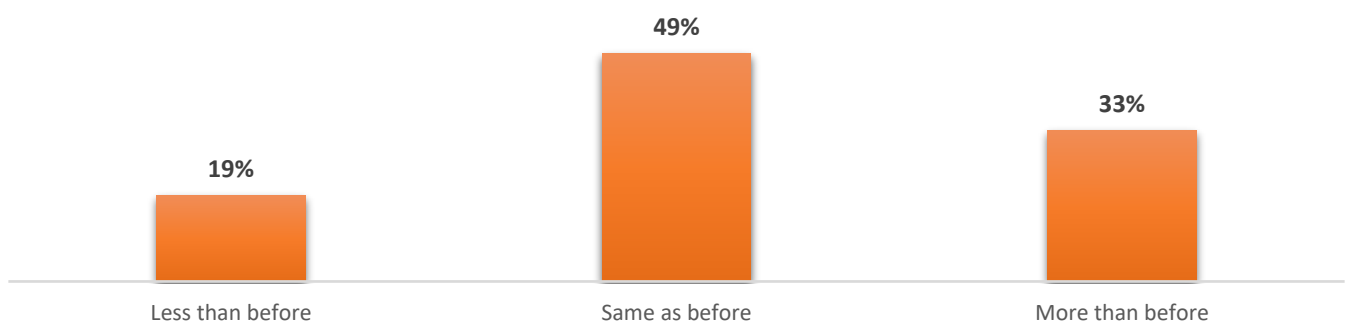


Article 19: Protection from violence

One-third (33%) of the children felt safer at home/place where they live during the coronavirus pandemic as compared to 19% who did not feel safe at home/place they live in. 49% of the children who took part in the survey did not feel any difference in their safety.

'I feel safe at home. Because of the Covid-19 I feel unsafe outside the house' (Boy, 9)

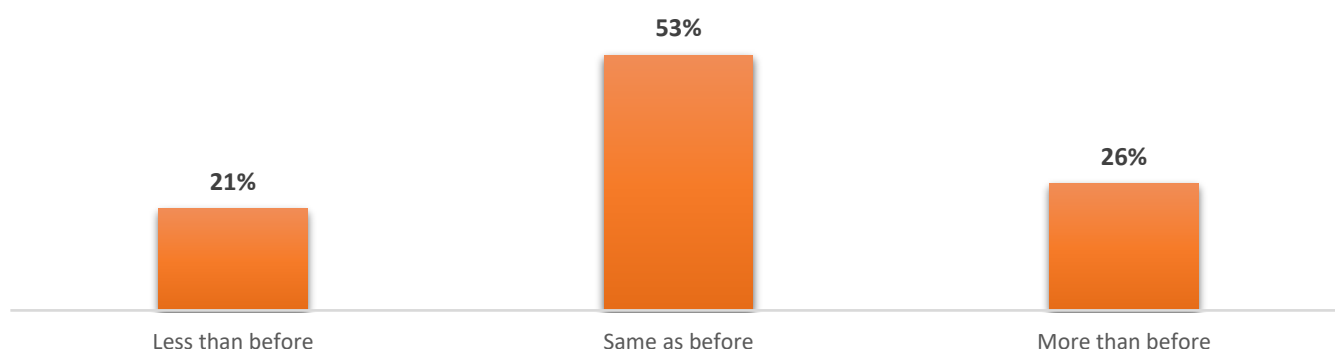
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I feel safe at home/place where I live



Additionally, with reference to the knowledge of how to get help if needed (if feeling unsafe or worried), just over a quarter (26%) of the child respondents felt that during the pandemic, they had become more informed about how to get help. 21% of the children felt they were less aware of avenues to reach out for help during the COVID19.

'Many children have abusive households all across the globe. Child physical abuse, mental abuse and also sexual abuse is very common. They thought of school as an escape way to stay away from their household. As the corona virus has arrived, they have to stay home and deal with the traumatic experiences. The government should try to make sure children have a way to call for help and to make sure households are protecting them.' (Girl, 14)

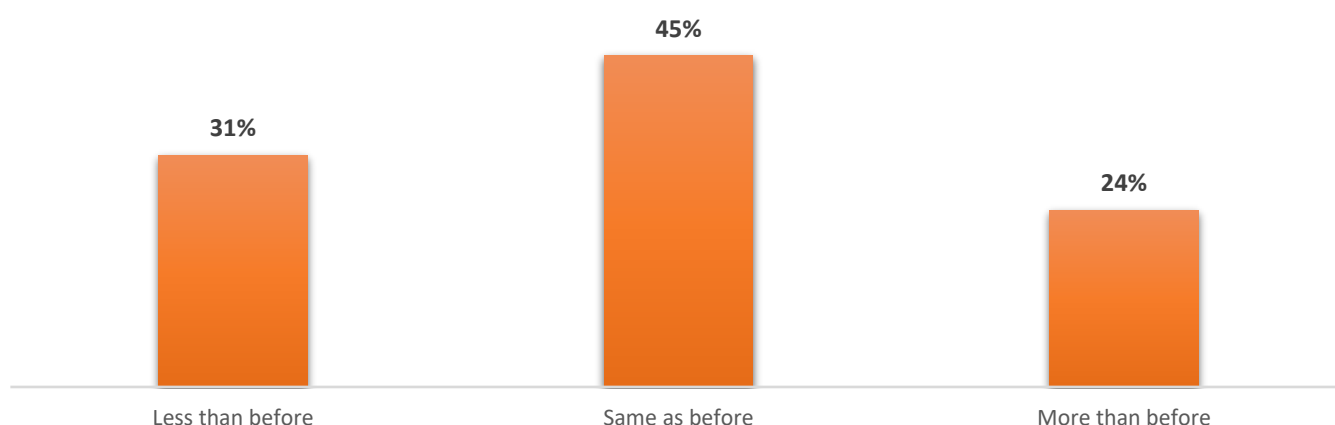
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I know how to get help if I feel unsafe or worried



Article 24: Access to health services

Almost one third (31%) of the children reported that they had less access to medical help since the Covid pandemic started, whereas 24% of the respondents stated they had medical facilities widely available to them. Nearly half (45%) of the respondents shared that they did not feel any change in the access to medical services during the coronavirus outbreak.

Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I can access medical help if I need it

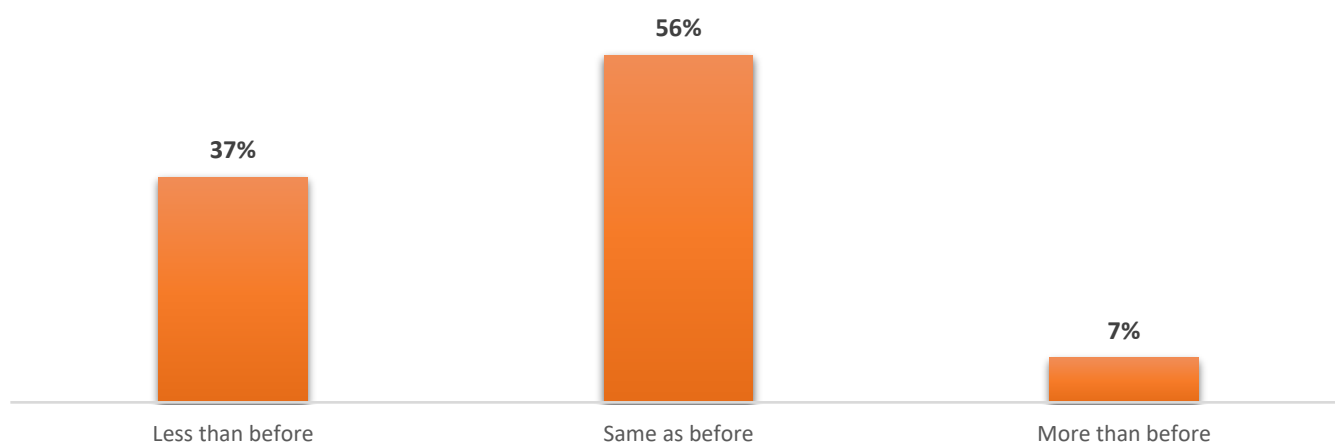


Article 27: Adequate standard of living

Just over one third of the children (37%) reported that the people they lived with had less money to meet their needs (as compared to before the Coronavirus19); 7% stated that they had more financial resources at their disposal during the Coronavirus pandemic. More than half (56%) of the respondents shared that their economic situation remained unchanged during the pandemic.

'No money, we can't meet our needs.' (Girl, 11)

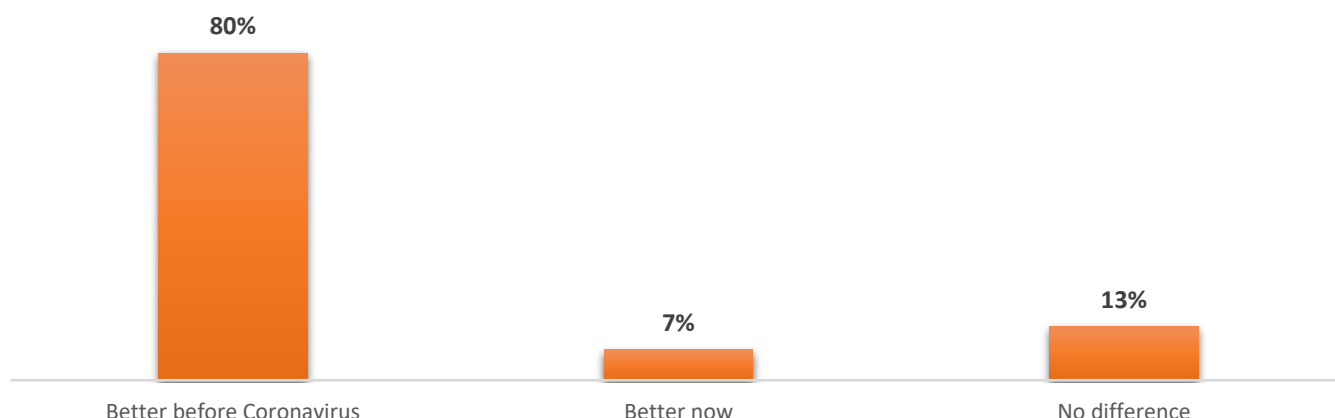
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: The people I live with have enough money to meet my needs



Articles 28 & 29: Education

A large majority of the children (80%) reported that their education was better before the Coronavirus, against 7% who claimed to have better education facilities during the Corona virus pandemic. 13% felt that there was no difference in the quality of education they accessed during the pandemic.

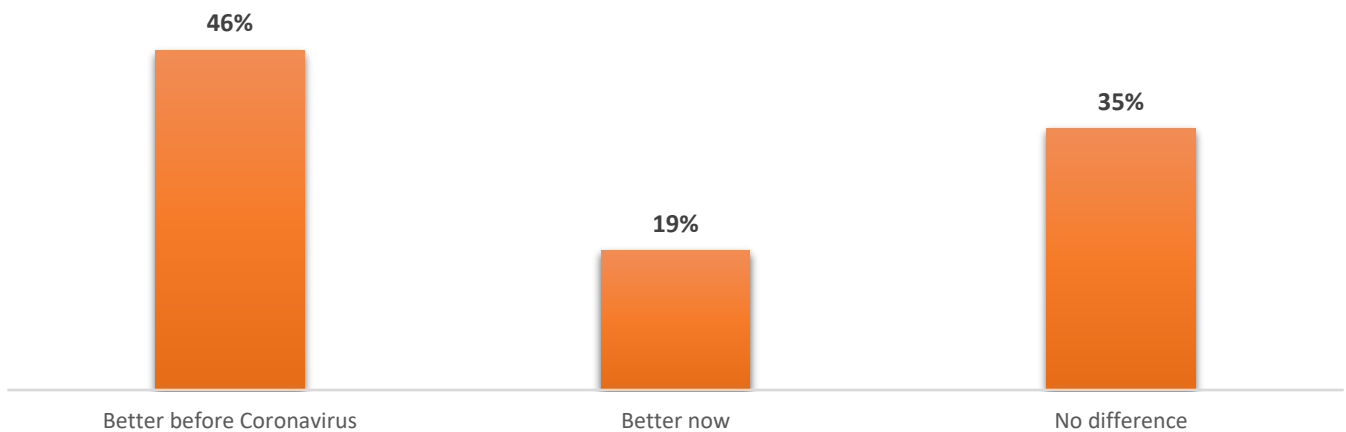
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I am getting a good education



Article 31: 'Play, rest and leisure

Nearly half of the children (46%) reported that they were better able to talk to their friends before the Coronavirus, in contrast to 19% who reported an increased interaction with their friends during this period. 35% of the child respondents did not think that their interaction with friends had been impacted by the pandemic.

Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I get to talk to my friends (as much as I would like)

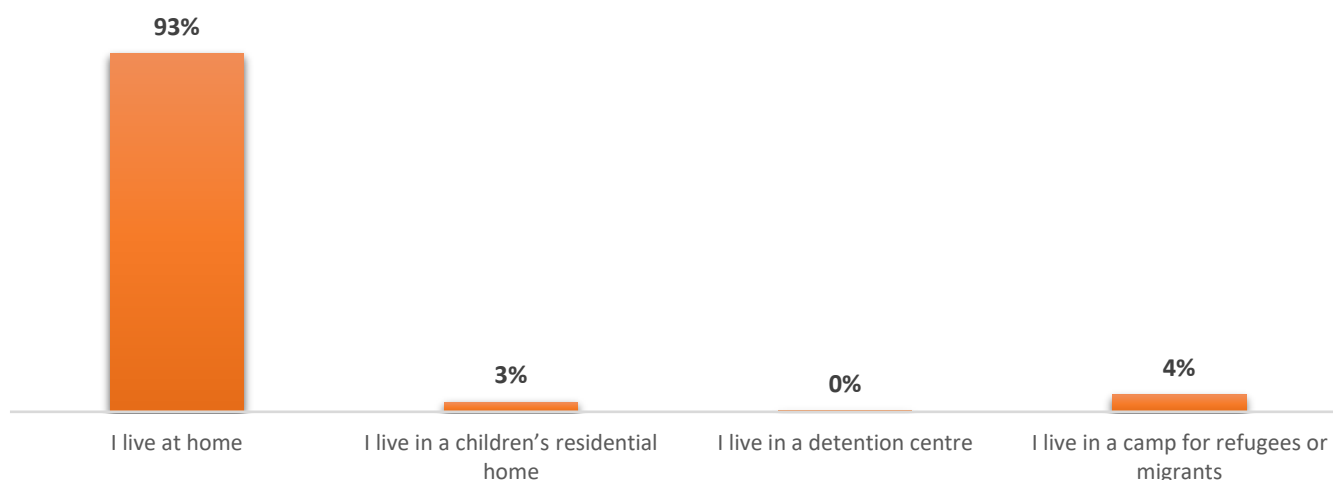


3.0. Further analyses: Full sample

3.1. Demographics

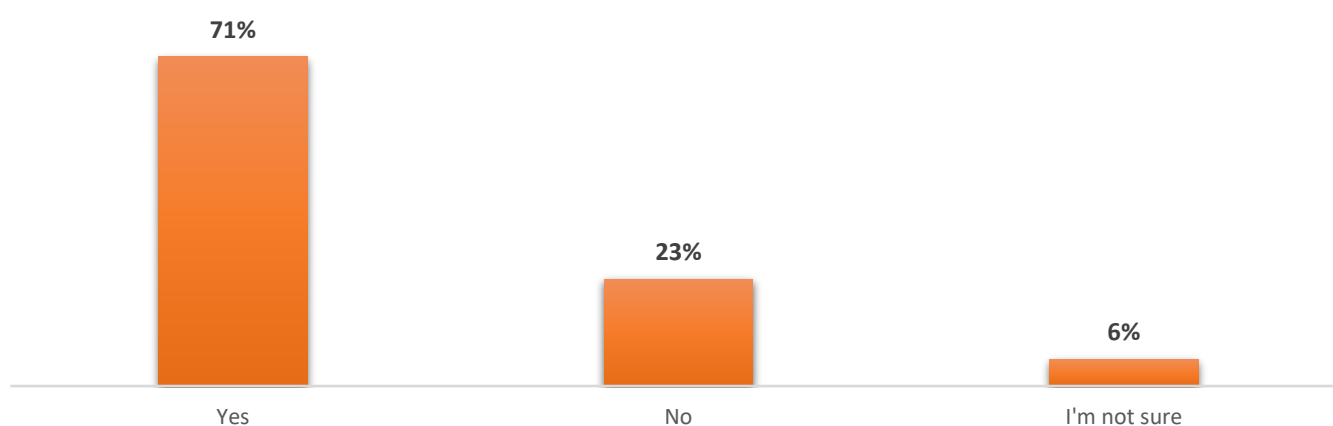
Most respondents (93%) lived at home, while 3% of the respondents represented children in residential homes; 4% were children living in migrant camps. Only 1 child from a detention facility participated in the survey.

Where do you live?



From the sample, 71% of the children were living with other children, whereas 23% of the respondents were living alone – without another child at home/place of residence. 6% of the children were not sure if they had children around them in their place.

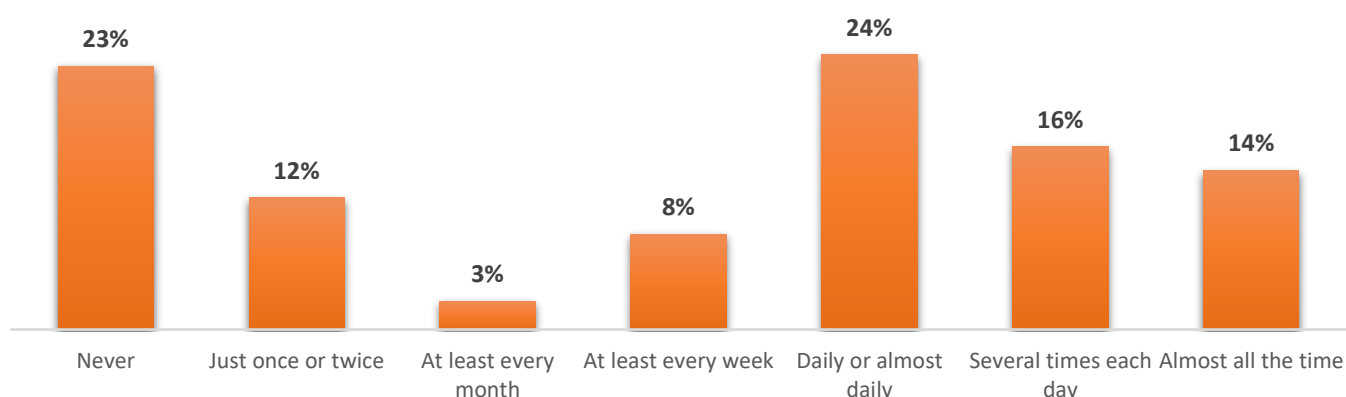
Do you live with other children (that means anyone under the age of 18 years)?



How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices?

Among the respondents, more than half have access to internet through a smart phone with almost a quarter (24%) using it on a daily basis, 16% using it several times a day, 14% using it almost all the time and 8% at least every week. 23% of the child respondents have never accessed internet through a smartphone.

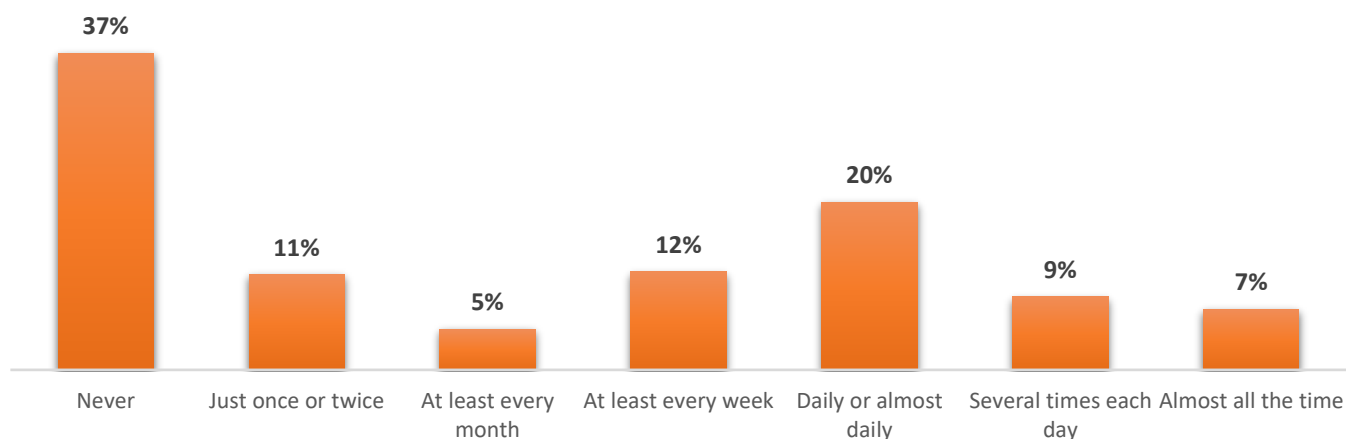
How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A smart phone



How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A computer (IPad, Tablet, Desktop, Laptop)

The sample shows that more than one third of the respondents (37%) have never used a computer. However, nearly half of the respondents have access to computers and use it at least every week (12%), daily (20%), several times each day (9%) and almost all the time (7%).

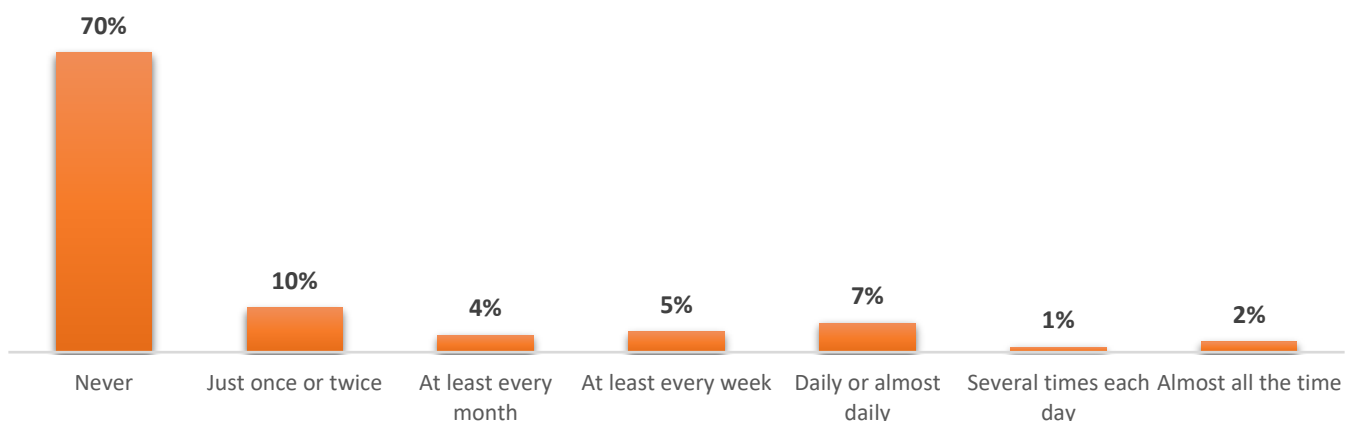
How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A computer (Ipad, Tablet, Desktop, Laptop)



How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A games Console (Play Station, Xbox)

70% of the respondents do not have access to game consoles, whereas 10% of the respondents have just used it once or twice. There is a lesser proportion of respondents using game consoles all the time (2%), several times a day (1%), daily (7%) or at least every week (5%).

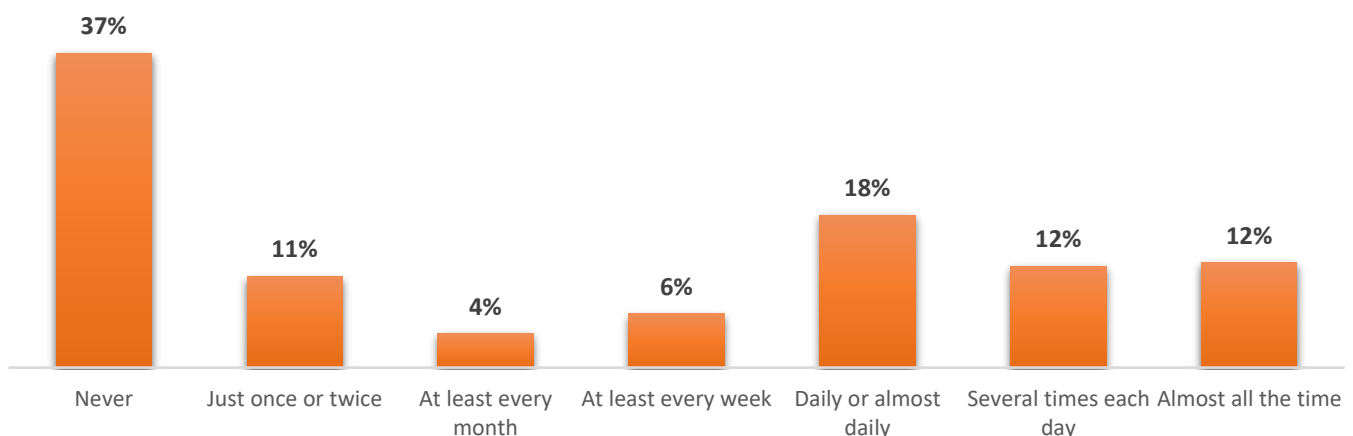
How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A games Console (Playstation, Xbox)



How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A connected TV

37% of the children do not have access to internet via a connected TV whereas 11% have just used it once or twice. 4% use it once a month, 6% at least every week, 18% almost daily, 12% several times a day and 12% almost all the time.

How often do you go online or use the internet using the following devices? A connected TV



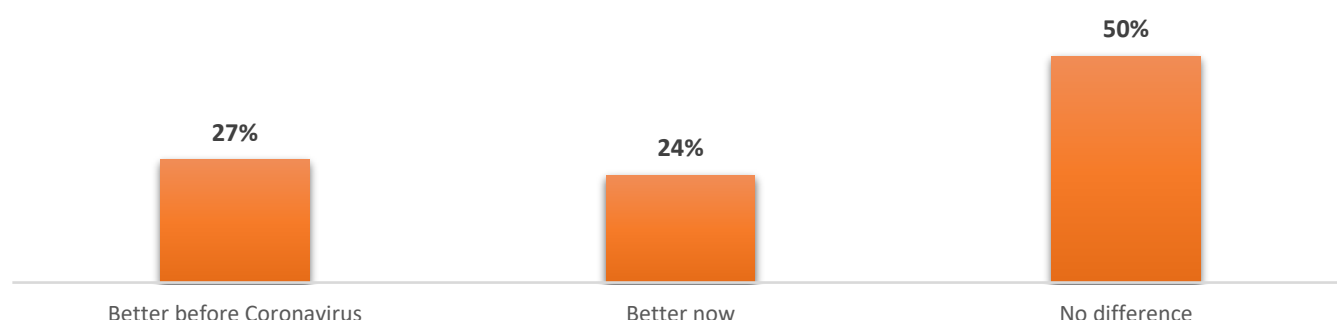
3.2 Additional children's rights questions

Thinking about my family life since Coronavirus began.....: I have as much contact as I want with my mum

27% of the respondents reported that before the corona virus they had as much contact with their mum as they wanted, however 24% reported that due to the COVID19 they have more time to spend with their mum. 50% reported no change in their interaction level.

The best thing about Lockdown is that we are actually being able to understand our family members. My parents used to be busy all the time before this lockdown so now I am getting sufficient time to understand them," said a 16-year-old girl from Pakistan.

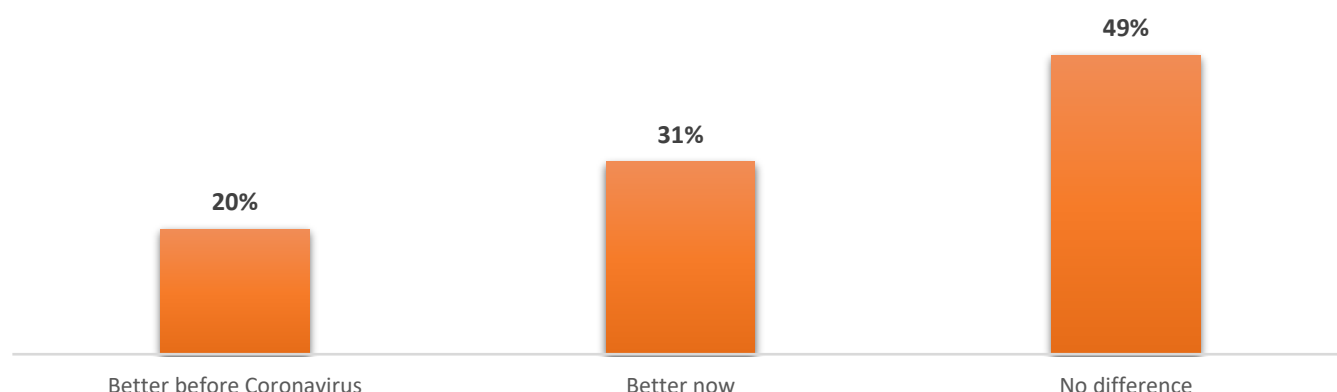
Thinking about my family life since Coronavirus began.....: I have as much contact as I want with my mum



Thinking about my family life since Coronavirus began.....: I have as much contact as I want with my dad

The results show that 20% of the children had better contact with their dads before the corona virus pandemic; 31% of the respondents felt that their contact with their dad had improved during the pandemic. Almost half (49%) felt no change in the interaction.

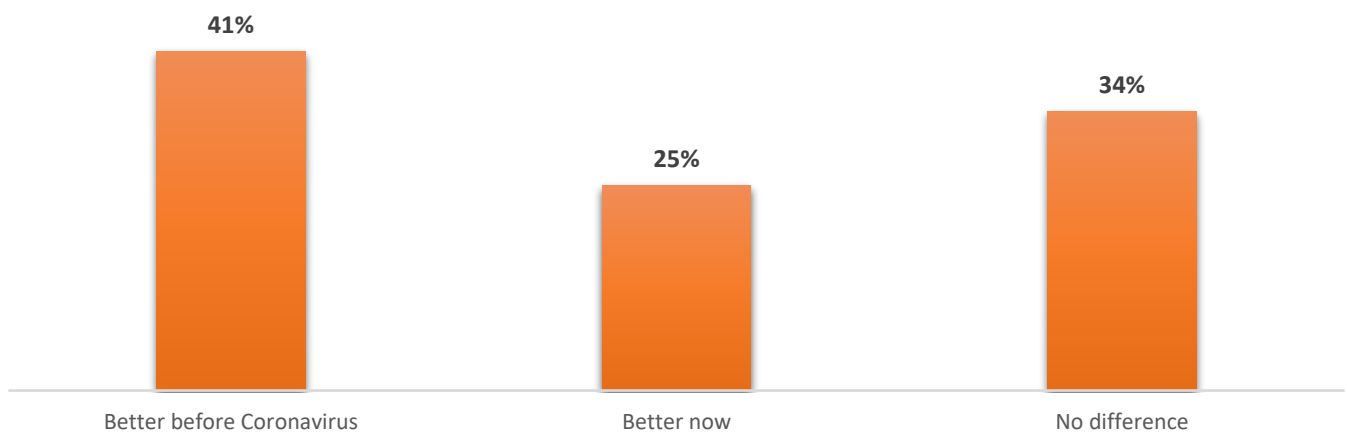
Thinking about my family life since Coronavirus began.....: I have as much contact as I want with my dad



Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I can get as much physical exercise as I need

41% of the respondents shared that they better opportunities to exercise before the corona virus pandemic as compared to 25% who felt that during the Corona virus pandemic, they had more opportunities to practice physical exercise. 34% traced no change during this period.

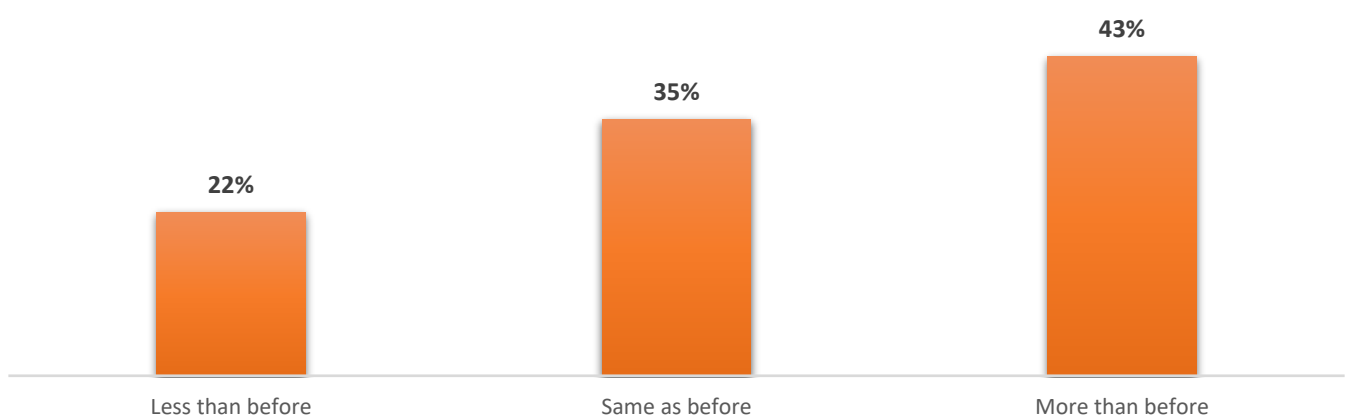
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I can get as much physical exercise as I need



Thinking about my life since the Coronavirus began.....: I think that most children are safe in their home.

22% of the children shared that they felt less safe at home during the corona virus pandemic. 43% of the children shared that they felt more secure at home as compared to the pre-pandemic period.

Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I think that most children are safe in their homes

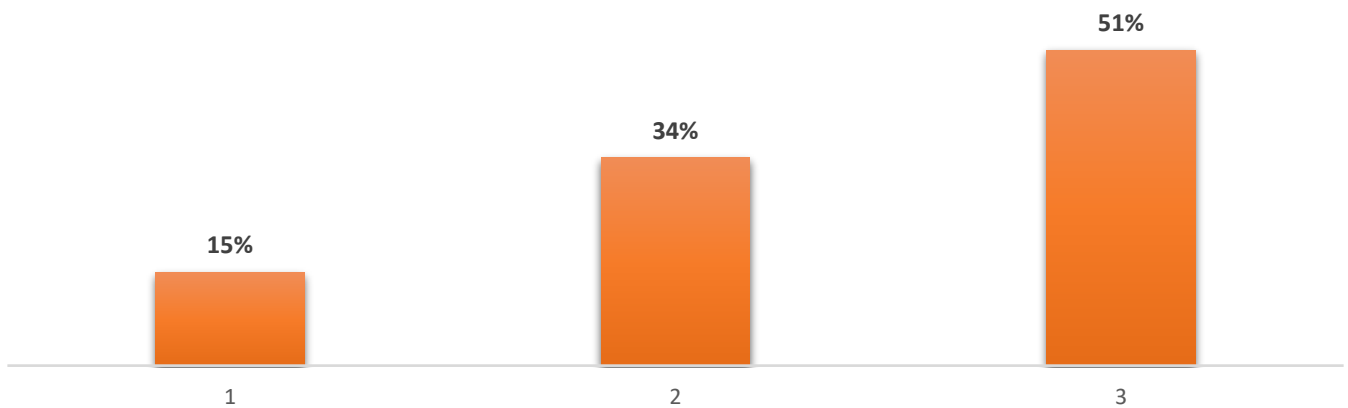


Thinking about your life since the Coronavirus began, which of the following do you feel most often? Stressed

51% of the children mentioned stress as the most experienced feeling during the covid19 pandemic.

'As my mother is a doctor so I spent most of the days in stress, thinking about the uncertainty of future. '(Girl, 11)

Thinking about your life since Coronavirus began, which of the following do you feel most often? Stressed



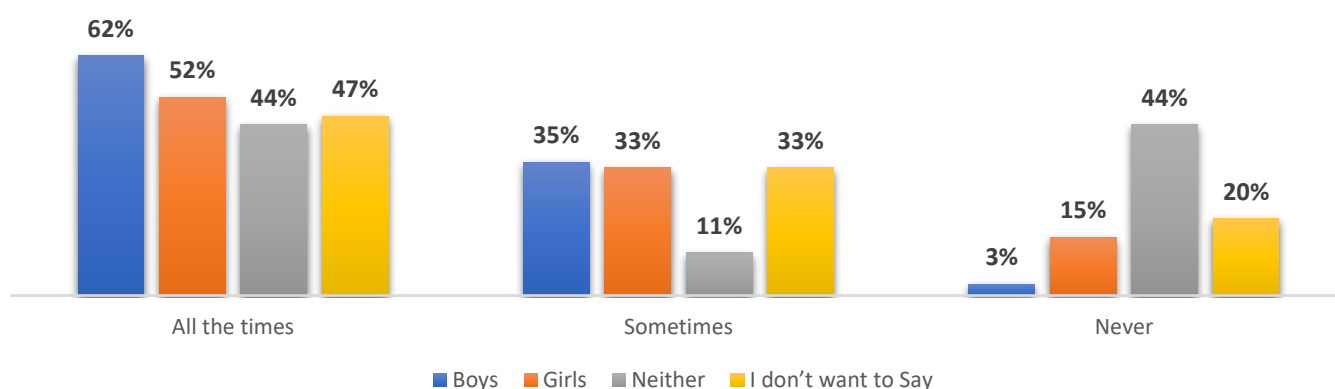
4.0. Further analyses: Disaggregation

Thinking about my life since the Coronavirus began.....: I have an adult I can talk to (contact) if I need support.

Since the corona Virus outbreak, 62% of the boys and 52% of the girls have an adult available for them in case they need support whereas 3% of the boys and 15% of the girls never have an adult available for them in case they need support.

They [adults] have to feel, speak, think and hear like a child to take the right decisions for children... In order to protect our rights, our voices have to be heard and taken seriously. Make our voice your choice.' (Girl 17)

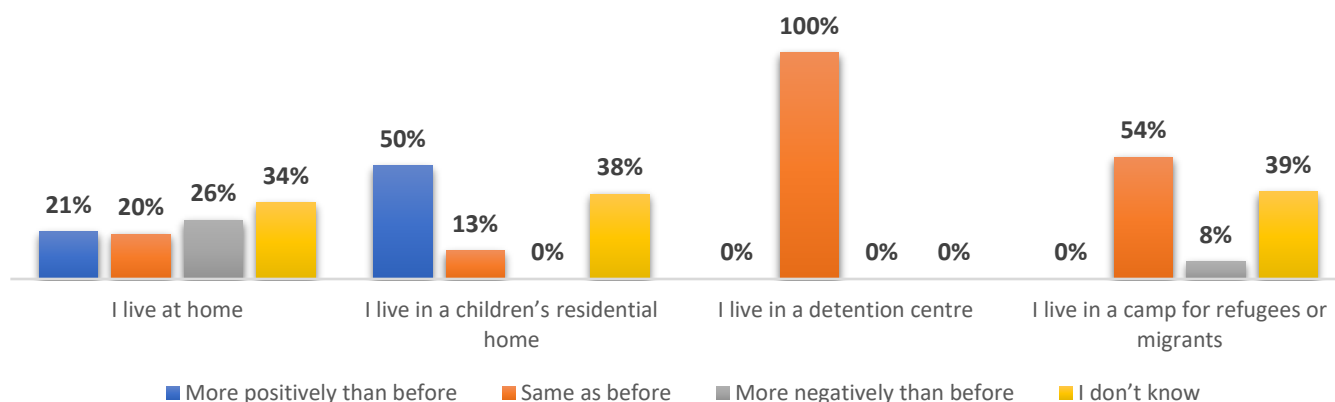
Thinking about my life since Coronavirus began.....: I have an adult I can talk to (contact) if I need support



How do you think the media has portrayed children and young people during the Coronavirus lockdown?

Children living in homes and residential homes believe that media has portrayed children and young people more positively than before. In contrast, children in detention and more than half of the children (54%) living in refugee camps could not witness any change in media portrayal. More than a quarter of the children (26%) living at home think that media has negatively portrayed children and youth.

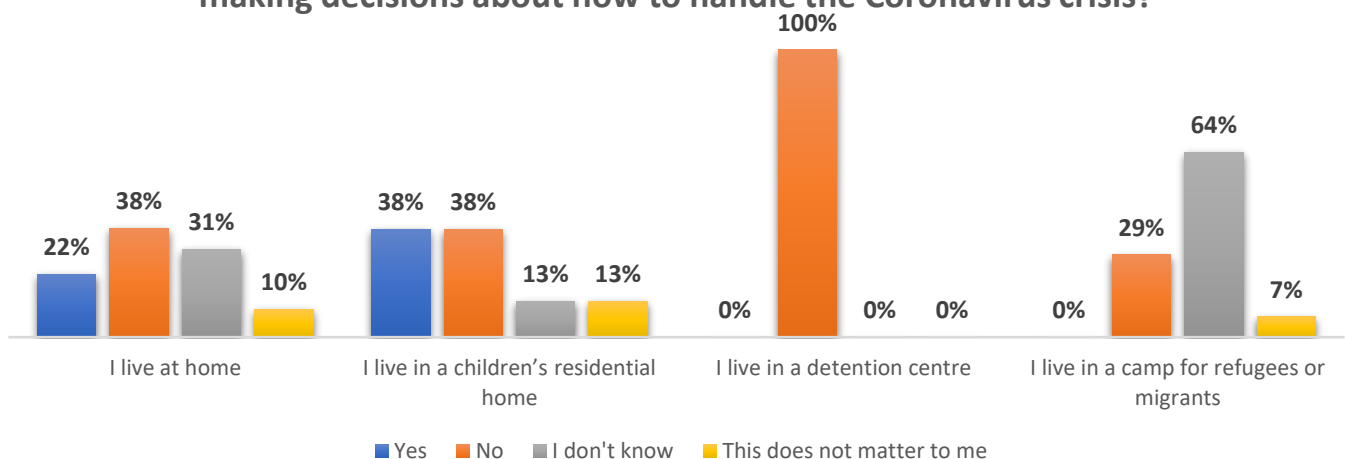
How do you think the media has portrayed children and young people during the Coronavirus lockdown?



Do you think your government is listening to children when it is making decisions about how to handle the Coronavirus crisis?

On average 37% of the child participants believe that the government is not making child inclusive decision making on handling Corona Virus. The opinion is held by 38% of the children living at home and in residential care, by the child in detention and by 29% of the children residing in migrant camps.

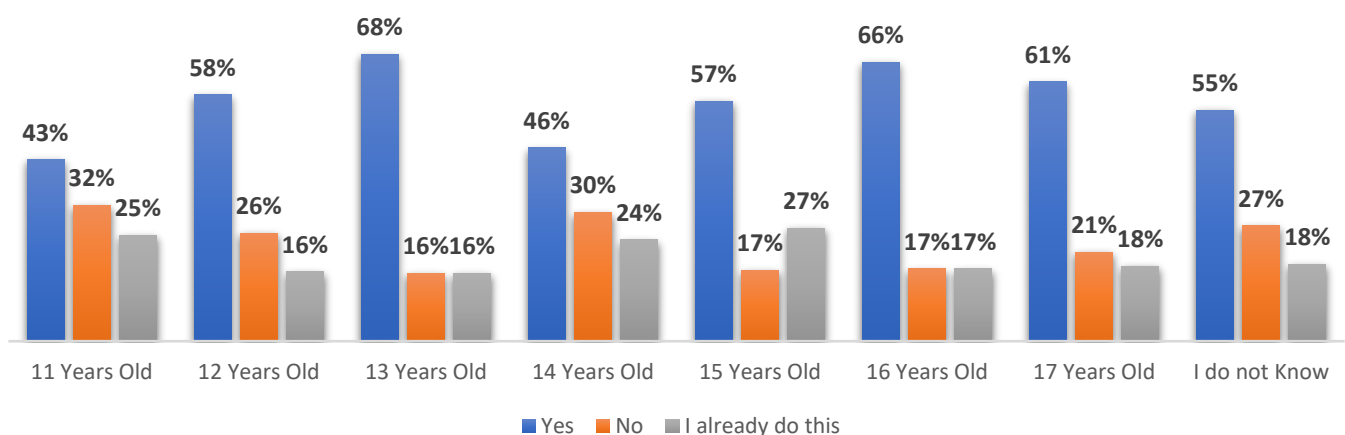
Do you think your government is listening to children when it is making decisions about how to handle the Coronavirus crisis?



After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? "Find ways to help my family" was the most common answer.

After experiencing the Coronavirus pandemic, 57% of the children are motivated to find ways to help their family. The highest level of new motivation was identified among the children aged 13 and 16 years.

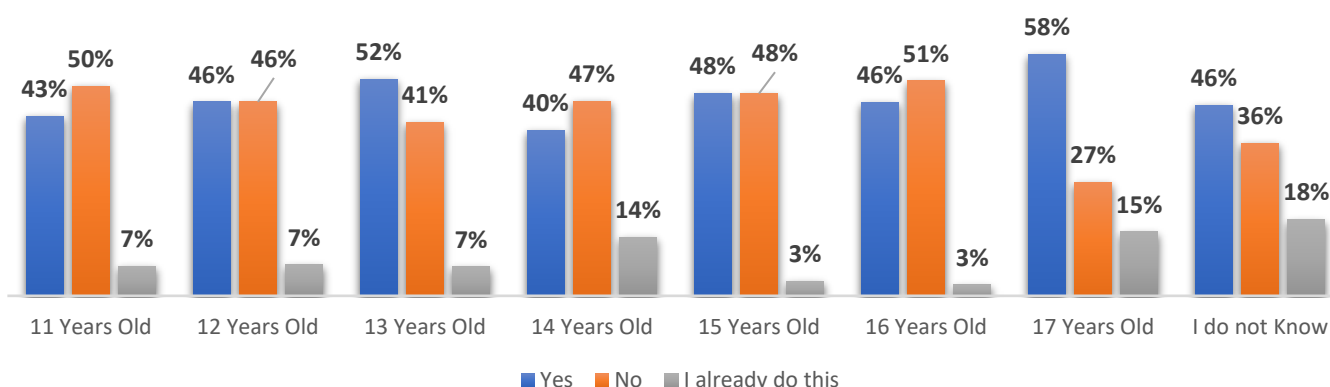
After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Find ways to help my family



After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Get involved with other children and young people (e.g. youth group, school or youth council)

After experiencing the corona virus crisis, 47% of the children have reported to be engaged with other children and young people along with 9% who are already engaged with the children and youth group. The highest level of new motivation emerged among the 7 years old group.

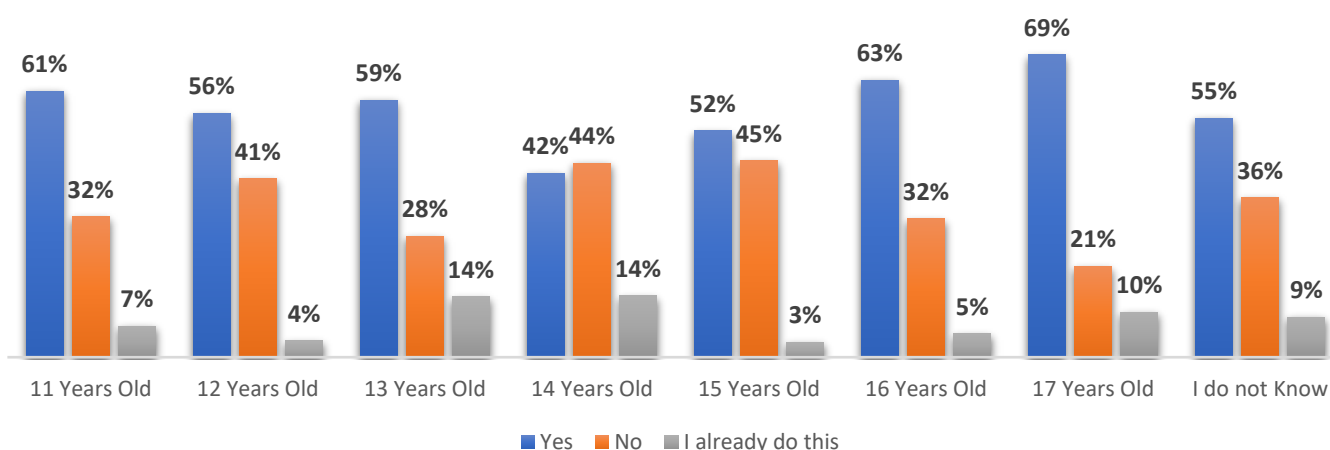
After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Get involved with other children and young people (e.g. youth group, school or youth council)



After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Find ways to help my community.

57% of the children have shared that they are increasingly finding ways to help community after experiencing the corona virus crisis and 8% were already practicing this. The highest level of new motivation was found among children aged 16 and 17.

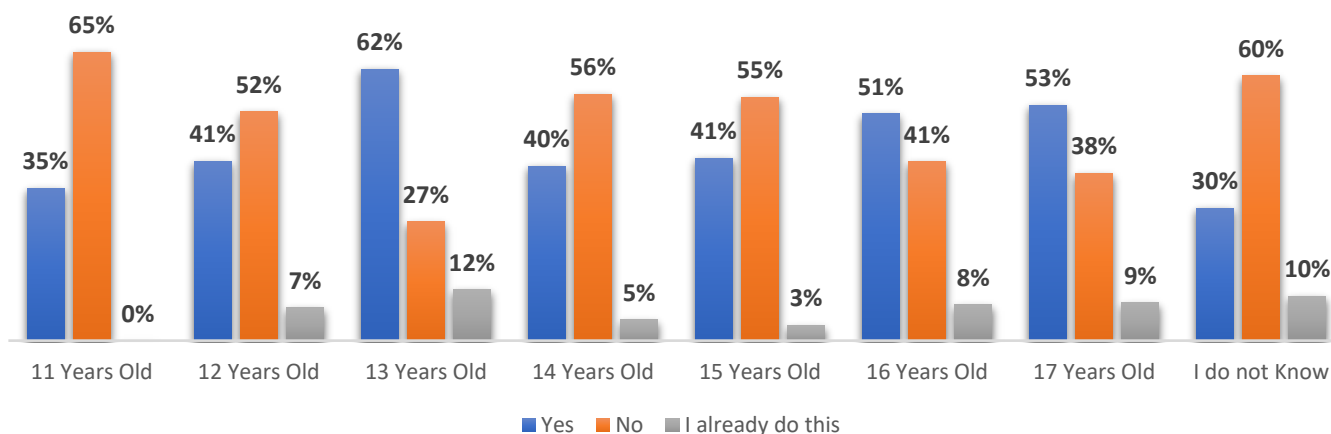
After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Find ways to help my community



After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Take part in a campaign.

44% of the children have shared that they are motivated to take part in a campaign after experiencing the corona virus crisis; 7% were already taking part in such initiatives. The highest level of new motivation is identified among children aged 13 and 17.

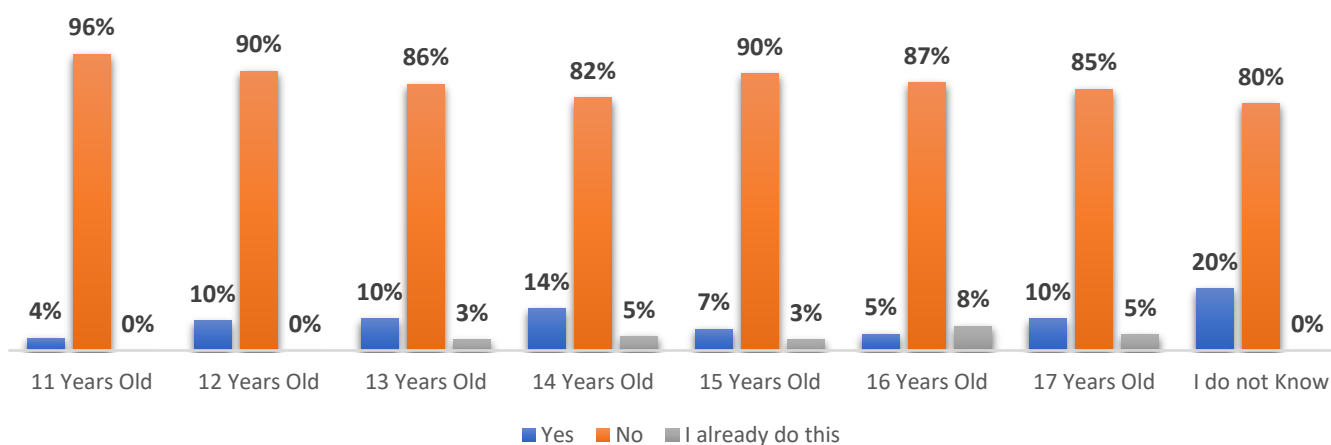
After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Take part in a campaign



After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Get involved in politics.

After experiencing the Coronavirus crisis, 9% of the children are motivated to join politics. This opinion is predominantly held by 14% of the children aged 14, 10% of the children aged 12, 13 and 17.

After experiencing this Coronavirus crisis which of the following are you motivated to do? Get involved in politics



Conclusion

The trend emerging from those findings suggest that the Covid19 has had positive as well as negative effects on the children.

On one hand, it seems that:

- Most child respondents have used the pandemic to re/connect with their family, or connect more with their parents, which in some instances has contributed to improving dialogue and understanding between the children and their parents: this is a useful finding for policy makers who will think about how to promote peaceful communication, positive parenting and child protection. It must be taken into consideration while identifying potential media for an efficient flow of information.
- Most children also express a feeling of safety at home especially when they feel stressed about their family' health and safety; hence home seems to remain the safest place as per children's views which is encouraging but which also must guide our strategy for child welfare and relevant child protection case management.
- A increased flow of information has reached children to better protect themselves, which may indicate that the mass media awareness campaign have been quite efficient to boost access to information on covid19 preventive measures and child safety;
- The pandemic has also contributed to motivating children to engage in activities for positive social change, especially within the 13- and 17-years old group.

On the other hand:

- Among the children who lack an adult to talk to about issues and concerns, girls are particularly vulnerable: they are the ones who lack access to a trustworthy adult the most.
- Some children feel that media have portrayed them badly during the pandemic; it may hence be useful to organize an interface between media and children to boost child-sensitive & ethical reporting;
- A significant percentage of children think that the government does not take into consideration their views while devising policies: this calls for pursuing and further institutionalizing efforts for child participation in the country and at a global level to shape the "new normal" and the response to the "shadow pandemic";
- Some children, especially child refugees, lack access to information;
- There is also a need to place mental health at the center of the Covid19 and humanitarian crisis response as some children disclose being stressed;
- Additionally, an overwhelming majority of child respondents indicate a decrease in the quality of their education during the covid19 pandemic: this must be addressed in the newly devised education policies about which children should be consulted to ensure relevant and impactful action;
- Some child respondents also indicated strong difficulties for their family to survive due to their livelihood challenges. The exacerbated economic challenges faced by families as a result of the pandemic, has been quoted by the children;

- Others explained that they had less interaction with their friends and less physical exercise during the pandemic: this must be addressed at a policy level to ensure the children's well-being;
- Moreover, the policy makers must also take into account the digital gap faced by children while devising their education action plans and awareness strategies;
- Finally, the data illustrates the need to raise awareness on the concept of child participation among children.