

# Coronavirus pandemic is an emotional rollercoaster for teenagers, says new study

27 August 2020, by Joe Stafford



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A new study by The University of Manchester and Liverpool John Moores University has found that the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown has been an "emotional rollercoaster" for teenagers, which has created many difficult and intense feelings, as well as bringing some positives.

In May, researchers asked [young people](#) aged 16-19 to share their [lockdown](#) experiences, and over 100 responded. The researchers analyzed their accounts in order to understand what lockdown has been like for this group, what feelings it has created, and how they have managed to cope with it.

They found that 2020 has been an emotional rollercoaster for teenagers, as they have experienced intense feelings of change, loss and uncertainty. Many felt they have missed out on important experiences, and others are worrying about their futures.

One of the main findings is how turbulent this year has been for teenagers. Their day-to-day lives have changed substantially, they're missing out on normal teenage experiences, from spending time

with friends to traditions like exams and the last day of school, and there's been a lot of sudden uncertainty about the future.

Some have found it helpful to feel connected to the people around them, though many felt disconnected in lots of ways, and virtual contact with friends has not been enough. They also found it reassuring to remember that everyone is in this together, though some feel angry and frustrated with the government for their handling of the pandemic.

However, lockdown hasn't been all bad—in some ways, teenagers have felt normal pressures have been removed, and they have had a rare opportunity for personal growth and development. This may also be an important wake-up call to how much we normally ask of teenagers in everyday life.

"Our findings show just how challenging this year has been for teenagers," said principal investigator Dr. Ola Demkowicz, Lecturer in Psychology of Education at The University of Manchester. "As schools and universities are set to reopen, we need to make sure that [mental health](#) and wellbeing is prioritized as well as learning, making sure there are opportunities to seek support, re-connect with peers, and ease back into things slowly. It is important to think about how much we have asked our young people to sacrifice this year, and to make sure we can give them a sense of normality and security moving forward, including making sure re-opening schools goes smoothly and considering initiatives to help young people enter the job market."

**More information:** Teenagers' Experiences of Life in Lockdown:

[www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/educ...of-life-in-lockdown/](http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/educ...of-life-in-lockdown/)

Provided by University of Manchester

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