



Prince's Trust

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YOUNG PEOPLE IN LOCKDOWN:

A report by The Prince's Trust and YouGov

With data supported by L'Oréal Paris

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FOREWORD

The figures in this report should be a wake-up call for all of us.

There is clear evidence that being unemployed when you're young can lead to lasting damage to mental health, income and employment prospects, and it is very likely that youth unemployment is already higher than it was in the depths of the last recession.

Added to this, up to half a million young people will be leaving education this summer into the toughest jobs market in our lifetimes.

We need to act now, to ensure that all young people can access high quality employment, careers and training support, and are guaranteed the offer of a decent job before they become long-term unemployed.

Tony Wilson, Institute Director, Institute for Employment Studies

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus emergency has left young people all over the UK, including many who have only just started their working lives, without access to the jobs, training and education which will set them up for the future.

This report is being published at a time when the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has predicted that the lockdown will hit young workers the hardest.

According to the IFS, young people are nearly two and a half times as likely as other employees to work in a sector which has shut down due to social distancing measures.

Alongside this, data from the Office of National Statistics shows that those under the age of 25 were already four times as likely to be unemployed as the rest of the working age population, even before the pandemic.

The impact of the current situation on mental health and wellbeing is also becoming apparent, with data from the Royal Society for Public Health showing that 70 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds are experiencing more anxiety than usual, compared with 47 per cent of over 75s.

This Prince's Trust research gathers the views of 16 to 25-year-olds living through lockdown and paints a truly stark picture of how this crisis is impacting the younger generation. An alarming proportion of young people are feeling increased levels of anxiety, with fears building about their future lives and livelihoods. More than a quarter of young people feel their future career prospects have already been damaged by the pandemic.

The Prince's Trust has youth support workers and mentors all over the country working hard to support young people during this difficult time. We are holding group employability and enterprise sessions online, and we have a hub of guidance and resources to help young people in the challenging times ahead. The face to face support we normally provide is currently being delivered online and over the phone, and every young person who gets in touch is offered personalised one-to-one support.

To help young people through these unprecedented times, we are providing mentoring and wellbeing support, helping those who are unemployed to build their skills and find work, and supporting those who are missing school and college to continue their learning.

Also in response to this crisis, The Trust has launched its Young People Relief Fund, to make possible much of this support for young people. We want to thank all of you who have already donated to our relief fund, as well as all of our long-standing supporters. Your assistance for the younger generation is crucial, both during this emergency and on the other side.

We know that the outlook for young people is bleak, and we know that in order to stop the effects of this pandemic from spiralling out of control, we need government, employers and charities to work in partnership. It is up to all of us to give a lifeline to a generation of young people at this critical time.

Jonathan Townsend, UK Chief Executive of The Prince's Trust

REPORT FINDINGS

Fears for future employment

Findings from this report show young people across the country are concerned about their future job prospects.

- More than a quarter of young people (29 per cent) feel their future career prospects have already been damaged by the coronavirus pandemic
- 46 per cent say that finding a job now feels “impossible”
- Almost half (49 per cent) worry it will be harder than ever to get a job
- A third (33 per cent) feels that everything they have worked for is now “going to waste”

Saaemah, 21, East London “Being in lockdown is a difficult experience for a lot of young people. It can feel lonely and I think it would be really easy to lose your routine and motivation. This was something I was worried about and my Prince’s Trust mentor recommended that I sign up for an online skills programme – I’m so happy to be able to upskill from home while keeping my family safe.”

Increased anxiety

Research conducted in lockdown reveals how young people feel their anxiety levels have increased as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

- Forty-three per cent of young people say their anxiety levels have increased due to the pandemic
- 32 per cent say they are “overwhelmed” by feelings of panic and anxiety on a daily basis
- 69 per cent of young people feel like their life is “on hold”

Hope and resilience

Despite widespread concerns about how this crisis will affect them, some of the research findings show that young people remain hopeful and optimistic about the future.

- 52 per cent of respondents “always” or “often” feel optimistic, and the same percentage believes the pandemic will make their generation stronger and more resilient.

Rebecca, 23, North London “Work is very important to my routine, with the sense of purpose and the social element of being around people. Everything has been pulled from underneath us. I know I still have that job, which is reassuring, but there is uncertainty around not knowing when we’ll be back at work.”

A new normal?

When looking back at how young people felt just five months ago, in research from The Prince's Trust and L'Oréal Paris, the following comparisons can be made:

- Research taken in lockdown shows how almost half (47 per cent) of young people do not feel in control of their lives
- This is a significant increase compared with similar research conducted just five months ago, supported by L'Oréal Paris, which showed that 38 per cent felt this way
- Young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are significantly more likely than their peers to say they don't feel in control of their lives, with 65 per cent feeling this way. This has increased significantly compared with similar Prince's Trust research supported by L'Oréal Paris five months ago, when 52 per cent of NEETs felt this way.

Young people not in education, employment or training

Research supported by L'Oréal Paris in December 2019 shows how young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) were significantly more likely to feel down or depressed than their peers in work, education or training.

- While 38 per cent of young people in work, education or training said they "always" or "often" felt down or depressed, this increased to 53 per cent among NEETs
- In this more recent study conducted during the coronavirus lockdown period, the percentage of NEETs claiming to feel down or depressed "always" or "often" has increased to 58 per cent.

Caroline O'Neill, General Manager at L'Oréal Paris, said: "During this difficult time, it is more important than ever that we equip young people with the confidence and self-belief they need. L'Oreal Paris is proud to partner with The Prince's Trust, helping young people to fulfil their potential."

ABOUT THE PRINCE'S TRUST

Youth charity The Prince's Trust helps young people to build their confidence and skills and supports them into jobs, education and training. Founded by The Prince of Wales in 1976, the charity supports 11 to 30-year-olds who are unemployed, struggling at school and at risk of exclusion.

Many of the young people helped by The Trust are in or leaving care, facing issues such as homelessness, mental health problems, or have been in trouble with the law.

The support and courses offered by the charity give vulnerable young people the practical and financial support needed to stabilise their lives, helping develop self-esteem and skills for work.

The Trust has helped over 950,000 young people to date and supports over 100 more each day. Further information about The Prince's Trust is available at princes-trust.org.uk or on [0800 842 842](tel:0800842842).

THE YOUNG PEOPLE RELIEF FUND

In order to continue critical support for young people through these challenging times, The Trust has launched a Young People Relief Fund. This will help provide mentoring and wellbeing support for young people, help those who are unemployed to build their skills and find work and support those who are missing school and college to continue their learning.

To donate, search “Young People Relief Fund”, or call The Prince's Trust on 020 7543 1384.

METHODOLOGY

All figures in this report, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,022 16 to 25-year-olds. Fieldwork was undertaken between 24th April - 6th May 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK 16 to 25-year-olds.

REFERENCES

The Office of National Statistics data covering December 2019 to February 2020 shows that the unemployment rate for 16 to 24-year-olds was 11.8%. This is four times higher than the unemployment rate for those aged 25-65 (at 2.9%): <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/april2020>

Research from the **Institute for Fiscal Studies**, April 2020, found that the virus lockdown

Research from the **Institute for Fiscal Studies**, April 2020, found that the virus lockdown will hit younger workers the hardest, as young workers are nearly two-and-a-half times more likely to work in a sector that is now shut down as other employees:

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14791>

The **Royal Society for Public Health** released research on 15 May 2020:

<https://www.rsph.org.uk/about-us/news/rsph-calls-for-more-mental-health-support-for-young-people-in-lockdown.html>

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