



Covid, the shadow on a young generation?

Talent is spread throughout,
opportunity is not

Co-op Media Report - September 2021



It's what we do

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Steve Murrells Foreword

“ The findings are stark and concerning. Our young people aspire to so much – but too many do not believe they will have a chance to achieve those aspirations. ”



As we look to the future with an optimism unimaginable just a few short months ago, it is important we pause and reflect on what we have experienced if we are to meaningfully Build Back Better. Every person's challenge will differ and so, too, will their needs.

Official statistics detail the profound cost of the coronavirus pandemic, in both human and economic terms, with a brutal clarity. But they only tell part of the story. We must delve deeper if we are to ensure that each person in every part of Britain and the communities in which they live can flourish and prosper in the months and years to come.

And we can't do that without understanding the true cost paid by our young people. They have had to put on hold their plans and aspirations to help contain a virus, and they will also be the ones paying down the national debt we've accrued for the longest period. That is why we have commissioned this 'Young People Research' - to listen to what they think and feel and to look from a business community as to how we can support.

This new research, commissioned by the Co-op with ICM, has sought the views of over 5,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 25 years old. It is one of the biggest surveys of young people on this subject and looks to understand how the pandemic has affected young people in terms of their life chances, skills and education, mental health and overall future life aspirations.

We care about these areas because we know that they are often at the centre of deep-seated inequalities that prevent too many from reaching their full potential.

The findings are stark and concerning. Our young people aspire to so much – but too many do not believe they will have a chance to achieve those aspirations.

The research also reconfirms that there has been a disproportionate impact on ethnic minorities in the UK. Young Black people are less optimistic than their White counterparts – showing the urgent need to ensure opportunity is spread as evenly as talent is across our communities.

Our young people deserve hope for their future, and they are clear that having opportunities to develop their skills and prosper in the future job market will be key.

We asked young people what tangible actions they thought the Government needed to take to support people like them. They were clear on what they expect. We urge the Government to draw on this insight as it develops future policies. Alongside this, we will need over a decade of co-operation to fully recover from the pandemic and if we are to truly help communities across the UK level up. The central and unifying call of this report is that the voices of young people must be heard at every step and at every level of decision making, for it is their future at stake.

This report is just one small contribution to that effort. I urge government, business and every organisation that can, to actively seek - and listen to - the voices of young people across the UK.

As we come out of the pandemic, we face the greatest and gravest challenges we have faced in generations - some caused by the pandemic and some existing inequalities made worse by it.

I truly believe that co-operation has a vital role to play in making sure nobody is left behind - as it did when the Co-op was founded 175 years ago and the country faced challenges like the ones we now face. We will not effectively re-build our country and our communities, or lift up individuals without it.



Tommy Kirkwood, Co-op Young Members' Group, Foreword

“ The results of the research show an already identifiable impact on young people’s work opportunities, income, educational outcomes, life aspirations and mental health. ”



Whilst the pandemic has been challenging for all, this alarming research shows that, compared to other generations, young people have been disproportionately impacted upon by the pandemic. As young people who have lived through the pandemic and who represent the voices of other young people in the Co-op and throughout communities, we know first-hand of the devastating impact the pandemic has had on our generation.

The temporary closure of schools, colleges and universities, and economic consequences of the pandemic have already begun to show a substantial impact on young people’s lives. The results of the research show an already identifiable impact on young people’s work opportunities, income, educational outcomes, life aspirations and mental health. These are interconnected and are likely to exacerbate one another over time.

As young people and as Co-op Young Members, we know our communities have a wealth of proactive and inspiring young people who want to create change; it’s imperative we hear their voices so their generation and those subsequent can make the impact needed for a brighter future.

From our work with young people, we know that many feel incredibly anxious and worried about their future. The only way to make sure all young people feel supported in the aftermath of the pandemic is for those in charge to really listen to what young people have to say about their future, and the future of our society.

Tommy Kirkwood,
17, Co-op Young Members' Group

Co-op Young Members' Group

Co-op’s Young Members’ Group is a group of Co-op Members aged 16-25 from across the UK, coming from different backgrounds and experiences with different skills. They all work with Co-op on projects and activities with young people at the core.

Each member of the Co-op Young Members’ Group has their own network of young people to involve in their work, so it’s not just about the core team members. The group’s vision is to inspire a movement of young people who co-operate for a fairer world.

The group work by:

- Connecting young people with Co-op, working with them to co-create products, campaigns and services
- Collecting the views and ideas of young people to develop strategy and plan for the future of Co-op
- Making sure an authentic young people’s voice is heard in the organisation
- Supporting Co-op to shape a business aligned with the goals of younger and future generations
- Championing co-operation to a younger audience

A year of Covid: Gloom or Boom?

The research has uncovered just how hard the pandemic has hit young people's aspirations and life hopes. Almost two thirds (60%) of 13 to 25 years-olds think their generation will be permanently disadvantaged by the Covid-19 pandemic. More widely, as many as 1 in 3 (37%) 10 to 25-year-olds say the odds are stacked against them rising to 1 in 2 (46%) with 24 to 25-year-olds.

Over half (55%) of those aged 13 years and older felt like they had been pushed to the back of the queue on job opportunities, with this felt strongest by 16 to 25 year-olds (59%) as opposed to only 42% by 13 to 15-year-olds.

Aspirations and choices for their future diminish with age, with as many as 1 in 3 (37%) 25-year-olds feeling that their path has already been decided for them, compared to a more hopeful 1 in 5 (18%) of 10-year-olds.

There has been a huge level of disruption to their education, nearly half (47%) of 10 to 15-year-olds feel they have fallen behind in the past year. Nearly two thirds (59%) feel pressure to 'catch-up' quickly. Staggeringly, 3 in 10 (29%) 13 to 25-year-olds state that the Covid-19 pandemic has made them less likely to continue with further education entirely.



Thinking about the last year or so and the changes that have happened to you as a result of Covid-19, how much do you agree / disagree with the following:

I have fallen behind in the last year (10-25 years old)

48%

The pandemic has ruined my career dreams (13-25 years old)

26%

I feel pressure to 'catch up' quickly (10-25 years old)

59%

The government has failed young people like me (13-25 years old)

58%

I think my generation will be permanently disadvantaged (13-25 years old)

60%

The pandemic has made me less likely to continue with further education (13-25 years old)

29%

Covid-19 lockdowns have improved my education / work / opportunities for work (10-25 years old)

21%

I have enjoyed remote learning (all in education)

41%



Almost two thirds (60%) of young people aged 13 to 25 years of age feel they will be permanently disadvantaged by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Over a quarter (29%) state that the Covid-19 pandemic has made them less likely to continue with further education.

And their career hopes?

Over a quarter (26%) of 13 to 25-year-olds believe the pandemic has ruined their career dreams. More widely, two thirds (65%) of 16 to 25-year-olds believe that competition to get a job has increased so much it feels impossible. Whilst over half (58%) of 13 to 25-year-olds feel that the Government has failed young people.

“ The past 18 months have been quite hard. The pandemic has affected me as I haven't been able to go to school to carry on learning and see my friends as much I could have when Covid wasn't around. I feel like I haven't been able to do all of the things that I think we need to do to be as good as we can be in the future.

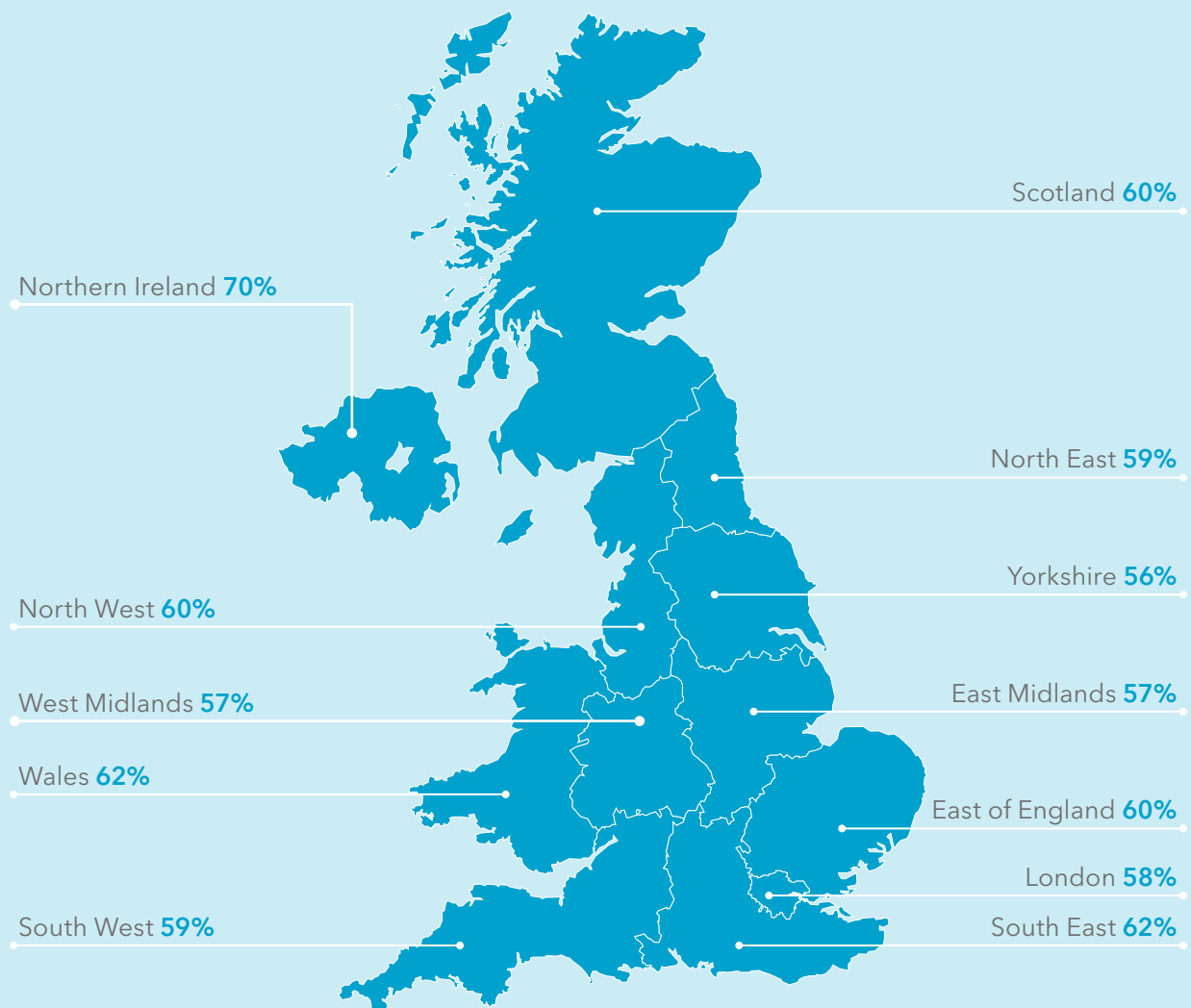
I do think it would have been better for to me to be in school. That way, I could be with my teachers and they could explain what we were doing. At home, I think parents wouldn't be able to explain something as well as a teacher could.

George Alpin, 11,
Co-op Academy, Stoke-on-Trent



Impact of Covid-19 on young people across the UK

Map of the UK showing how young people feel their generation will be permanently disadvantaged by Covid-19



If we want to support young people across the UK, we have to get more serious about levelling up, looked at in a holistic way. What that means to me is individuals and communities prospering together – and to achieve that we need social mobility to impact not hundreds of people, but tens of thousands of people and their communities.

Steve Murrells, Co-op CEO



Skills & Education

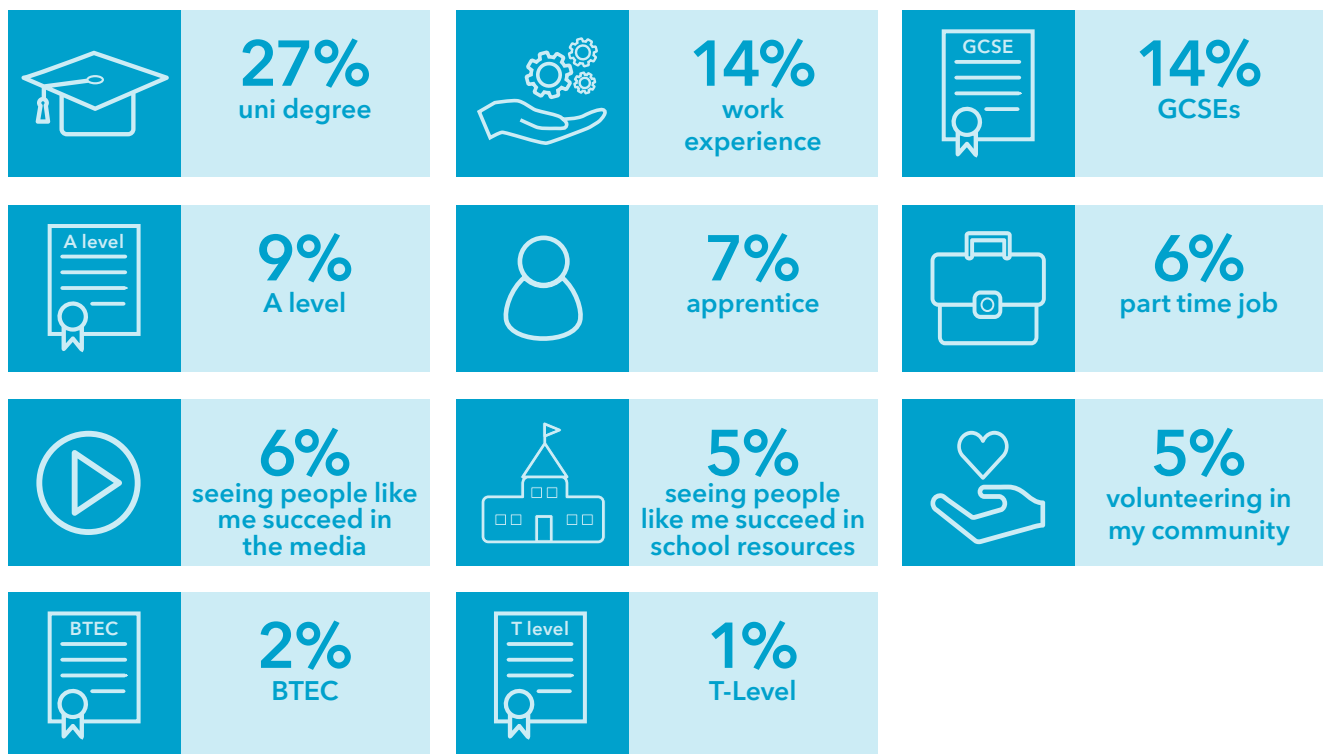
Despite 3 in 10 (29%) 13 to 25-year-olds saying the pandemic has made them less likely to continue with further education entirely, many 10 to 25-year-olds still want to go to college, university or continue with learning opportunities.

- 67% want to go to college or sixth form (of those not at college or university, or without an A-Level qualification or above) and the same proportion

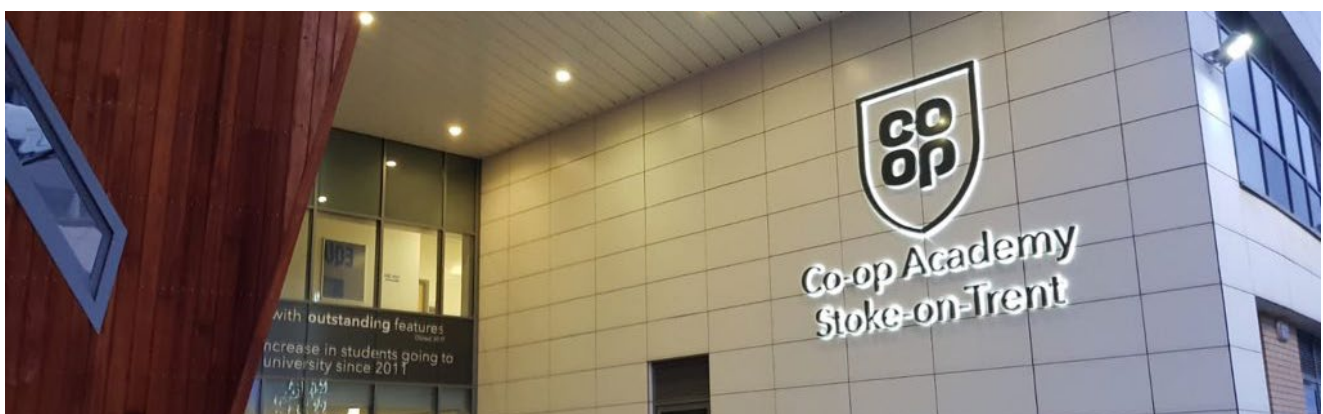
- 56% want to go on to study at university or a higher-level qualification
- 40% want to become an apprentice (of those who have never been one)

In reality, there are a myriad of things that 10 to 25-year-olds rate as helping them to achieve their future ambitions - vocational qualifications (Uni degree/GCSEs) and work experience rate most highly.

What will best help you to achieve what you want (13 to 15-year-olds)



With 45% of students achieving A or A* in their A-Level results this year, more young people are likely to be going down the route of college, sixth form or university.



CASE STUDY

Sasha Tafadzwa Mutanga, 16 years old, from Salford. Sasha is a student at Co-op Walkden who studied for her GCSEs during the pandemic and is hopeful about her future education.

“Despite the last 18 months being difficult for me at times and having to face certain challenges when I was studying for my GCSEs, the pandemic gave me the time to take a step back and focus on my education. I now have a great sense of pride in knowing that I can overcome adversity and I’m proud of what I’ve achieved, despite the challenges.

The pandemic has taught me if I want to achieve something, I can aim high to get the results I want. I’m excited to start my A levels and continue my education.”



However, apprenticeships and further training opportunities can equip young people with alternative skills to set them apart from the crowd. When considering the recommendations from organisations on what would help young

people the most, a fifth (21%) said education and training opportunities based on what skills are in demand and likely to be needed, and 18% said employment and training opportunities through apprenticeships.

**CASE STUDY**

Amy Louise Arthur is 18 years old, and a Property Commercial Apprentice at the Co-op. Having just completed her apprenticeship with a distinction in business administration, Amy is looking forward to starting her new role in September. She said:

“The pandemic was an emotional rollercoaster for me. There was a lot of uncertainty at the start which was worrying. I was also concerned at that point on how my future would look.

I think we need to do more to make apprenticeships at degree level highly recognised and accessible for people who want to gain qualifications and learn, but in a different way than going to university, so it suits them.”

In it together, when it comes to creating a brighter future for young people

Co-op's involvement in education dates back to 1844. In an effort to raise education standards, a reading room was added to the shop with people coming at night to learn by candlelight. Its focus on creating opportunities within deprived and under-represented communities remains the same as it did when Co-op was founded 175 years ago, as it now looks to support the country's wider 'levelling up' agenda and to help tackle persistent inequalities in our society.



Ways in which Co-op is supporting future generations by creating:

Co-op Academies	With 27 Co-op Academies and colleges across northern England, in some of the most economically challenged areas in the UK, Co-op has seen first-hand the positive impact it has in changing young people's lives through its expanding Academy network, where Co-op values and principles are brought to life.
Apprentices	Apprenticeships play a critical route for young, hard-working people enabling them to get to a long-term career. That's why we support 1,000 active apprenticeship across our Co-op, from the support centre in Manchester to the frontline in UK high streets, in food stores and funeral homes.
Co-op's Apprenticeship Levy Matchmaking Service	Designed to create even more apprenticeships from within under-represented groups, including black and ethnic minority candidates and those from low socio-economic backgrounds. It's a great example of what can be achieved through co-operation.
Virtual Work Experience	Co-op Virtual Work Experience. A 5-week online programme set up in response to coronavirus providing young people with insights into careers in a variety of sectors. Over 1,500 students attended the programme.
Young Business Leaders	This year, Co-op launched a first-of-its-kind Young Business Leaders programme, offering paid work placements to BTEC students, giving them practical experience, a competitive edge in the job market but also a valuable income during the pandemic.
Kickstart	Co-op is also working to create 150 Government Kickstart placements in communities where opportunities are most needed, based on data from our unique Community Wellbeing Index.*



CASE STUDY

Nicole Heath, 20, Sales & Service Customer Service Apprentice

"It has been difficult trying to find a job in the pandemic, because we've not had that opportunity to go out and gain the experience, because we've been so isolated.

When I was applying for jobs, people were turning me down for not having the experience even though I'd come straight out of school. I think businesses should be aware that young people won't always have the experience they're looking for. They should give young people a chance to learn, give them a chance to grow."

Co-op's Strive Network, offers young colleagues aged 16 to 30 the opportunity to co-operate, collaborate and learn from each other, creating a more inclusive environment for everyone and giving younger colleagues the resources and guidance to build their careers. Strive's ambition is to help young colleagues shine in their careers by providing them with training, networking and development opportunities.



What is the Community Wellbeing Index?

The Index gives an insight into what's important to people in a local community. From the quality of education, housing affordability, and public transport, to the amount of green space and the number of community centres in an area. We have gathered data for over 28,000 communities across the UK, to understand how they score across these and many other wellbeing measures.



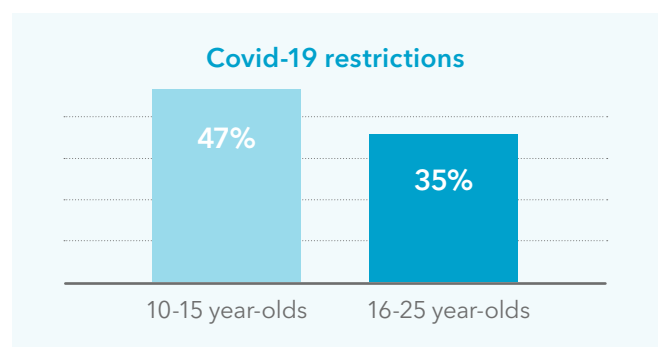
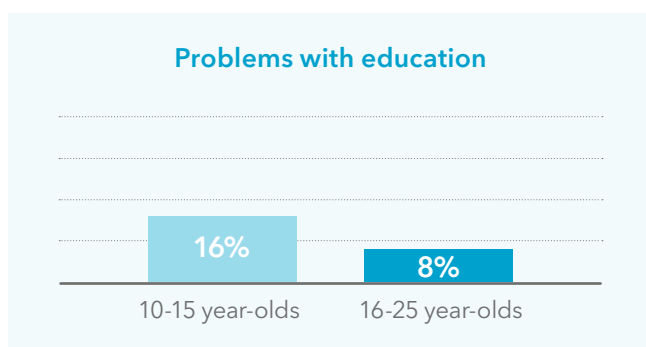
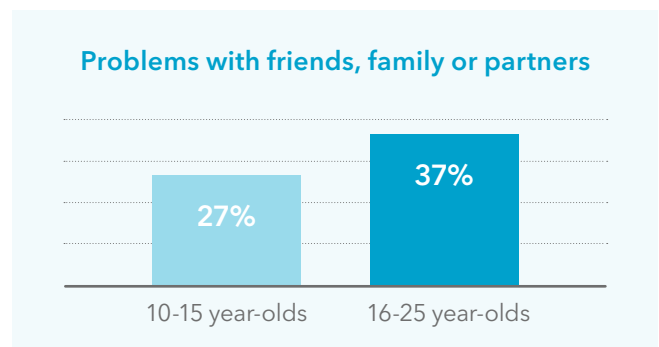
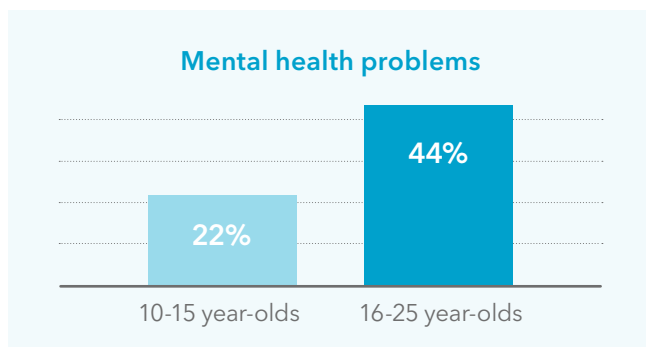


Mental Wellbeing

Even though young people remain hopeful about their future, their day-to-day emotions range from positive to negative. These negative emotions are driven by a range of experiences that can have significant impact on the livelihoods of young people.

Of those who have experienced neutral or negative feelings in the last two weeks, 44% of 16 to 25-year-olds attribute these to mental health problems.

Toughest challenges: 10-15 year-olds vs 16-25 year-olds



CASE STUDY

17-year-old, Luca Gray, Customer Service Apprentice, is one of those who has felt the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. He said:

“It was fine having spent up until Christmas last year in the office. I was still having something to do every day and you’re still seeing people, but it hit me quite hard the first few weeks in January because I went from coming to the office every day, seeing quite a few people to waking up, moving from my bed to my desk and working all day.

Suddenly you’re not leaving the house and not seeing anybody outside my family. So, for me it did affect my mental health quite a bit. Especially because there wasn’t really an end in sight, so I didn’t know how long it was going on for so and that affected me quite a lot.”

As part of its vision ‘Co-operating for a Fairer World’, the Co-op is working in partnership with Mind, SAMH and Inspire to bring communities together to improve mental wellbeing including new services across the UK that support people to build their resilience.



“ The coronavirus pandemic has taken its toll on all of us, but young people have been disproportionately affected. In England, an estimated 1.5 million young people under 18 will need new or increased mental health support as a direct result of the pandemic.

We are pleased that our partnership with Co-op will help respond to this growing need for better mental health support for young people. Together with Co-op, Mind will work with our partners at SAMH in Scotland and Inspire in Northern Ireland to deliver new, targeted services and early intervention support for young people to help improve their mental wellbeing.

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of Mind



Diversity & Inclusion

Although the impact of the pandemic has been felt by all young people, research shows that young people from diverse backgrounds are now facing even more challenges.

Alarmingly, half (50%) of Black young people feel that they are treated differently and in a more negative way in public settings compared to only a quarter (25%) of White young people.



These fears are also felt by job seekers. Over half (56%) of Black and almost half (47%) of Asian young people feel that their race or ethnicity makes it harder to achieve their dream job. This is in stark contrast to White young people, with only 9% feeling that their ethnicity would affect their chances.

Furthermore, over half (51%) of Black young people, 44% of Mixed and 40% of Asian young people feel that the odds are stacked against them, compared with just over a third (35%) of White young people feeling the same way. Further to this, 42% of Black young people, and 40% of Asian young people, feel their future path has already been decided for them, compared to only 28% of White young people feeling the same.

Despite these concerns, young Black, Mixed and Asian people remain incredibly aspirational and ambitious.

	Black	Asian	White
Almost three quarters (74%) of Black young people want to run their own business , compared to just over half (52%) of White young people.	74%	-	52%
68% of Asian young people and 63% of Black young people want to go to university . This is higher compared to White young people, with 54% saying they want to go to university.	63%	68%	54%
More than three quarters (77%) of Asian young people and (72%) of Black young people want to go to college or sixth form , which is moderately higher than 66% of White young people.	72%	77%*	66%

Overall, young people from ethnic minorities are optimistic and positive about their futures. Almost three quarters (73%) of Black young people **feel positive about the future** and a further 72% **believe opportunities are available for them**.

73%

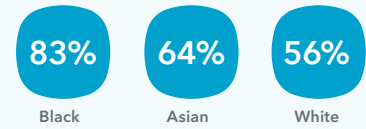
Positive

72%

Opportunities

Despite the challenges facing young people from ethnic minorities, aspirations linked to social mobility are higher than compared to White young people:

8 in 10 (83%) Black young people and 64% of Asian young people believe they will have more opportunities than their parents, whereas only half (56%) of White people feel the same



	Black	White
Want to earn more than their parents	87%	74%
Want to buy a house	85%	83%
Want to be financially secure	91%	91%
Want to leave the area they grew up in	62%	45%



Ruwaida Mohammend, Chair of Rise, said: "The report highlights the inequalities and challenges that young ethnic minorities continue to face. Even though they feel hopeful about the future, the same opportunities for career progression do not exist for them as they do for their White counterparts.

"We recently piloted a diverse talent programme to equip ethnic minorities with the skills to navigate their careers and help our business take practical steps to tackle the barriers to progression. This report must act as a wake-up call for our government, educational, commercial, and mental health organisations to prioritise the race equality agenda."

Rise

Network



The Hope Collective was formed to mark the 20th Anniversary of the death of school boy Damilola Taylor. It brings together a range of leading cross sector organisations, with aligned values to create real change for young people and communities across the UK. The Co-op has supported 5 'hackathons' run by the collective in 2021 to explore the theme of racism and division through the eyes of young people. This activity will inform a youth-led report that will be delivered to both Westminster and the devolved assemblies to amplify the voice of young people and the issues that impact on their lives, wellbeing and safety.



It's tremendous to see organisations like the Co-op shining a light on the shocking truths faced by young people across the UK, particularly those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. Whilst there has never been a shortage of drive or aspiration, it is clear that the barriers to success for many are still firmly in place. It is vital that these social disparities are addressed as organisations look to bounce back from the impacts of the pandemic. Not only is this the right thing to do, this is the only thing to do. By fostering a socioeconomically diverse environment, employers can better access and retain untapped talent pools and gain different expertise, experiences, and perspectives that we so desperately need in our workplaces, schools and wider society.

As we continue embrace modern and impactful inclusion for all it is critical that we recognise the respective differing needs of equity over equality and the prioritisation of affirmative positive action as a means with which to get there.

Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging and Equity are fast becoming strategic priorities and enablers to business success, and upward social mobility is at the heart of this evolutionary journey.

Now is the time for leaders to step up, take action, and play their part in levelling the playing field for our future leaders, until we see a society where no person gets left behind.

Leila McKenzie-Delis, Founder & Chief Executive Officer of DIAL Global.



DIALGLOBALTM
DIVERSE | INCLUSIVE | ASPIRATIONAL | LEADERS



Knock knock knocking on Number 10's door

This research has crystallised what we at Co-op have long been calling for. If we genuinely want to build Britain back different and better, then there must be collective action. Through collective spirit and co-operation we can make a difference to young people's lives. However, this should not just be about businesses, policymakers and educators coming together, it is vitally important that young people too are given a seat at the table and an opportunity to have their voices heard.

The APPG on Youth Employment has suggested interventions from a government-wide 'Young Person's Strategy' focused on education, training and employment, to employment and training opportunities through apprenticeships for 16 to 24-year-olds, as possible solutions to support young people following the pandemic.

We asked 16 to 25-year-olds what they thought of these interventions and invited them to vote on what they thought what make the most difference.



It is vital that decision-makers take note of this and combine the lived experience of young people with subject matter knowledge from experts to develop tangible solutions that will actually make a difference to young people's lives.

We urge the Government to draw on this insight as it develops future policies and to ensure the opinions of young people on these issues are heard at the highest level.

As well as continuing to engage with government on this issue, we are also:

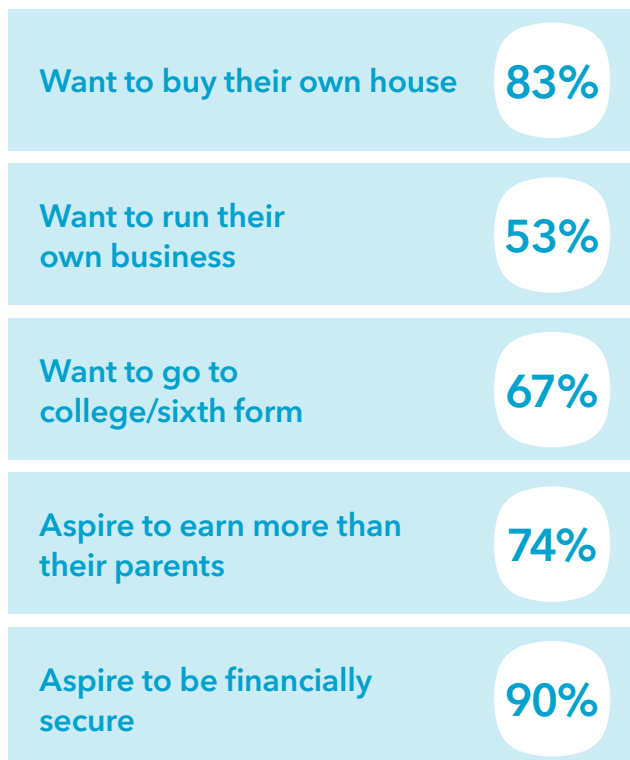
- Improving access for all to apprenticeship schemes and promote apprenticeship take up to the most deprived areas and under-represented communities. Apprenticeships are a vital way for young, hard-working people to kickstart their careers. By giving people the opportunity to make their mark through an apprenticeship, they can drive social mobility and tackle persistent inequalities in our society. And through this we can also create a skilled workforce that in turn creates future opportunity.
- Working with Mind in England and Wales, SAMH in Scotland and Inspire in Northern Ireland to help people to develop the skills needed to effectively support both their own and others' mental health in their communities.
- Co-operating with likeminded organisations also working to create a fairer world through our Community Partnerships Fund. The fund helps us invest in the communities we work in and create lasting change on key issues like access to food, mental wellbeing support, and education and employment for young people.
- Continuing our industry-leading work to improve access to food for everyone and guarantee no child should ever go hungry through our Community Fridges, in partnership with Hubbub, Healthy Start Vouchers and support of FareShare.
- Giving young people the chance to make their communities safer, fairer places to live through our unique partnership with Youth Endowment Fund (YEF), the #iwill Fund (a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) with an investment of £5.2 Million.
- Our Co-op Academies in Greater Manchester are pleased to be a part of the #BeeWell initiative. We are also in the early stages of exploring how #BeeWell and our Co-op Community Wellbeing Index can join forces to enable a richer view of the issues facing young people at a local level.
- Building on our commitments to reduce racial inequality by doubling the representation of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic leaders and managers by the end of 2022, annually publishing our ethnicity pay gap, work with our Co-op Academies Trust to develop a new curriculum on anti-racism and increase the number of local causes whose projects include Black, Asian, and ethnic minority beneficiaries.



Looking to the future with hope?

As our research illustrates, this generation of young people are feeling acutely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, they haven't lost hope!

Their ambition and aspirations are palpable - they want to own their own home, be financially secure, earn more than their parents, and run their own business - illustrating the strength and resilience young people still have.



What would help young people in their future following the Covid-19 pandemic:

Youth Hubs in local areas to support young people with their education/training and careers.

A 'Youth Productivity Index' using data to measure activity and progress of young people to help the Government understand where to focus or invest money.

Personalised and holistic support for young people who have had 6 months or more out of education/employment/training and for those most at risk of long-term unemployment.

A government-wide 'Young Person's Strategy' focused on education/training and employment, influenced by young people, so their voices/experiences/ideas are included in the areas that impact them.

Compulsory employability and life skills taught at school during the period after GCSEs and A-Levels.

Education and training opportunities based on what skills are in demand and likely to be needed in future by young people where they live.

Employment and training opportunities through apprenticeships for 16 to 24-year-olds.

Comments from Partners & Spokespeople



Saeed Atcha MBE DL

Chief Executive, Youth Leads UK and Commissioner of the Social Mobility Commission

“This new insight from the Co-op is significant because it gives a voice to our young people, to their aspirations and desires. We cannot allow this generation to be permanently disadvantaged by the pandemic and its after-effects. The Government, businesses and society must listen and act on what young people have said matters to them rather than simply assuming they know best. Only by doing so can we ensure that the world young people inherit is one where they can realise their dreams and ambitions.”



The Rt. Hon. Justine Greening

“This is vital research by the Co-op because meeting the ambitions and aspirations of young people is at the heart of what levelling up in our country means. This research shows us what that aspiration looks like for young people - training and careers, the chance to start a business, owning your own home, but also where they see the challenges, such as getting good advice at the right time.

If we can work collectively to tackle those challenges then we can make a real difference improving the futures of young people, and in doing so, the future of the country as a whole. The Co-op is a brilliant example of a purpose-led organisation which recognises its wider role within the community and is determined to now work with others to drive change on the ground.”

Comments from Partners & Spokespeople



Peter Babudu

Director of Impact, Youth Endowment Fund

"This report powerfully captures young people's concerns about how Covid will affect their lives for years to come. It's so important that we listen to young people's ideas on how we can build back better."



Kayleigh Wainwright

Director of Collective Action, UK Youth

"It's vital that we listen to the needs of young people highlighted in this research, and work together to take action to improve the aspirations for young people across the UK. Young people deserve to have access to the right support and opportunities to realise their hopes and dreams. At UK Youth, we commit to working collaboratively with others to make this a reality and giving young people the platform to get their voices heard."



Rennie Niven

Director, Violence Reduction Unit Scotland and Chair of the Hope Collective Steering Group

"We believe that every young person in the UK deserves hope and opportunity. For too long we have described our next generation in negative terms. We tend to focus on issues such as violence and addiction. These problems are built on a foundation of poverty and inequality, the Hope Collective aims to reframe that narrative."



Case studies of young people happy to discuss their experiences of the pandemic are available upon request. ISDN available for broadcast interviews with Co-op spokespeople.

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From 28th July - 10th August 2021, ICM Unlimited conducted an online survey, on behalf of Co-op, with 5,040 young people aged 10 to 25 years old in the UK. To ensure a representative sample, demographic quotas were set, and the data has been weighted back to the profile of 10 to 25-year-olds in the UK. It should be remembered that while the data has been weighted to be representative, a sample was interviewed and not the entire population.

About Co-op

The Co-op is one of the world's largest consumer co-operatives with interests across food, funerals, insurance and legal services. Owned by millions of UK consumers, the Co-op operates 2,500 food stores, over 800 funeral homes and provides products to over 5,100 other stores, including those run by independent co-operative societies and through its wholesale business, Nisa Retail Limited

Employing over 62,000 people, the Co-op has an annual turnover of £11.5 billion. As well as having clear financial and operational objectives, the Co-op is a recognised leader for its social goals and community-led programmes. The Co-op exists to meet members' needs and stand up for the things they believe in.