

ISOLATION INSPIRATION

Education leads to bright futures, but during this pandemic, is the future still bright for our young citizens?

July 15th 2020



The Hub

Discovery Kids & Youth

The Hub Kids & Youth is your window into young people and the world they live in. Combining customer insights with our kids & youth industry knowledge to help our clients current and prospective move forwards and fuel change

VOLUME 3 OF OUR ISOLATION INSPIRATION SERIES SHONE A LIGHT ON SOME OF THE BRANDS YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TURNING TO DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD, INCLUDING EDTECH.

AS WE SURPASS THREE MONTHS IN LOCKDOWN, DISCOVERY HAS COLLECTED THE VIEWPOINTS OF CHILDREN, PARENTS & UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, TO GET THEIR PERSPECTIVES & EXPERIENCES OF HOME SCHOOLING / EDUCATION DURING THE PANDEMIC, AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

SCHOOL CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

“ *Home schooling? Bad. Teachers, AKA mum, gets annoyed all the time (Boy, 10yrs)*

It's overwhelming, it's like I'm feeling my way around in the dark. The schools needed to find their feet too (Parent) ”

It's a challenge! Parents, young people (and teachers) are having to adapt to new routines and changing dynamics - parents suddenly need to adopt the role of teacher and teachers are facing extra complexities as they try to teach their classes remotely.

Parents are up against the authority figures that are real school teachers in their kids' minds – and, as demonstrated by the quote, it's can be a frustrating experience for all parties. After weeks' of trying to make schooling at home happen, we've heard from some parents that they have actually 'given up' trying to get their kids to take it and them seriously.

Structured, teacher led lessons help with engagement, but can be difficult to schedule and administer, relying on device access at precise times. However, the situation is highlighting to children and parents the challenging job that being a teacher is – the skills, knowledge and often patience that is required!

There may be a new found respect that the profession has seen slowly erode over the years.



“ *I've been doing History, Geography, English and Maths...it's sometimes quite hard. We've been using BBC Bitesize, Oak National Academy, Spelling Shed, DT Rockstars” (Boy, 8yrs)*

I've used BBC Bitesize with my 10 year old - there's something simple about it that i like (Parent) ”

Digital is creating opportunities to learn remotely, to engage with teachers and classmates at least occasionally, to take exams instead of missing them altogether.

Our previous newsletter talked about EdTech tools like Kahoot and Quizlet, but children themselves are talking more about websites such as BBC Bitesize, Purple Mash which hosts activities, creative tools, programs and games based around the curriculum and Oak National Academy, which is an online resources hub often mentioned. Also reported are specific subject websites, such as Times Tables Rockstars, Spelling Shed and White Rose Maths.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND EDUCATION

“

I haven't engaged properly in the materials, as I just feel sort of removed from it. It's so different when you're not in the same environment with your peers and you're just sat at home...you feel detached
(Female, 19yrs, Uni Student)

”

When it comes to university students, uncertainty is the operative word. They are trying to make the best of the situation, using the time to revise without as many distractions, get outside, read more. But they also report that effective study is harder without the structure of in person lectures and interactions with tutors and other students. Motivation has long been a struggle for many Uni students, and remote life doesn't help. Some might thrive with a remote approach, but we know that there is no equal substitute for face-to-face human interaction...it provides motivation and encouragement.

Our opinion is that **dynamic online approaches to teaching** these young people, will be crucial...especially when being at university is as much about the experience as it is the degree they get at the end of it....and especially given the cost of going to university is on average £9000 a year now!



We also see one of the key challenges for colleges and universities being how they will be able to demonstrate value for money when students aren't getting the service / experience they signed up for. This is a concern expressed by one of the students we spoke to below.

“

Students have been dealt a particularly bad hand because of Corona. I've lost all my work, and all the tuition I paid for, the facilities on campus...universities saying that they'll go online instead of actual lectures...it's a waste of our tuition and it's unacceptable. We should all defer.
(Male, 20yrs, Uni Student)

”

It's easy to forget that universities are very much businesses - but they are a type of business that relies heavily on international investment from students coming from overseas and many have been struggling financially for years. This means reduced staff - the lecturers and tutors that students are paying to be taught by, reduced pay and potentially less quality lessons.

Understanding students' plight is important - as one solicitor online discussed, students should look in to what their rights are (as they do have them!) if they do not feel they are getting what they paid for and that their studies and academic attainment are being impacted



As an insight agency that works a great deal with young people, our concern for students in the UK is what the long term impact will be on this generation of 'pandemic' youth - surely it is inevitable that grades, career prospects and well being will be impacted, as they are forced to adapt to a new university model (now and possibly into 2021) and an economy that potentially, has been negatively effected worse than previous recessions.

Does this mean fewer job prospects and opportunities to take internships, build CVs, get part-time jobs, and engage in other rights of passage, such as travel? And undoubtedly, just like school pupils, students from less advantageous backgrounds will feel the fallout more keenly.

“

I'm concerned about the future because all the internships that were meant to be happening over Easter and the summer, have either been cancelled or moved online, and so there's a lot of uncertainty surrounding that. I want to use my time in the summer holidays as well as I can and boost my CV, but there are not many opportunities.

”

(Female, 19, Uni Student)

Interestingly though, stats as of July 2020 on university applications, are showing that there has been an increase in applications compared to this time last year. But we wonder how many students who were due to start this September will review the current situation and choose not to go.

When it comes to school children, we are curious to see what teachers notice in way of development and attainment when they all return in September, how they respond and what they might need in way of support.

SO, IS THE FUTURE BRIGHT? WELL, THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN!



WHAT NEXT?:

FOR EDUCATORS AND BUSINESSES PROVIDING SERVICES FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR, THE CURRENT CLIMATE IS GREAT TIME TO STRESS TEST DIGITAL (AND NON DIGITAL) OFFERINGS AND UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF YOUNG AUDIENCES

Discovery has a long history of carrying out research in the education and learning sector, speaking to a range of audiences - let us be your guide to students, teachers and department heads in schools, FE Colleges and Universities. If you don't know what they are thinking you cannot plan an appropriate change in strategy to best meet their needs

We've delivered actionable insights for education providers, publishers, awarding organisations, and media companies providing educational resources/services, to help them make beneficial changes for their audiences and drive growth

There are recurrent themes that have emerged when we've carried out research in the education space or when researching educational services/resources aimed at young people and the adults in their lives

Young people are digital natives, so the best resources do digital well - video, short form content, and apps are a must

Usability is everything - easy to find, easy to use and navigate

Young users aren't loyal to services / resources that aren't performing

Making the mundane interesting is important to engage: Relevant channels and content executed in interactive ways

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