



TO: Emily Lockwood, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
FROM: Amy Simon and Naser Javaid, Goodwin Simon Strategic Research
DATE: October 14, 2020
RE: Key Research Findings on COVID Youth Survey Wave 2

This memo summarizes key findings from a nationwide online survey of 1,272 Black, Hispanic, and lower-income white youth, ages 15- to 21-years old, conducted by Goodwin Simon Strategic Research (GSSR) from September 22nd to September 30th, 2020. The memo compares these survey findings to results from two similar surveys that GSSR previously conducted, one among 1,305 young people ages 15- to 21-years old from August 8th to August 16th, 2020, and another among 2,638 young people ages 15- to 21-years-old from September 16th to September 22nd, 2019. A detailed description of the methodology is at the end of this memo.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- **Many respondents are worried they themselves or an immediate family member might catch the coronavirus, and Black and Hispanic respondents are more likely to be worried than are white respondents.** Additionally, more respondents are worried about a family member catching the virus than they are about catching the virus themselves catching the virus, which comports with previous findings from qualitative research.
- **Many respondents are assisting their families by providing care for younger or older people in their homes or using income they earn from work to help their families pay for necessities.** While many respondents report they were primarily using their income to help support their families prior to the coronavirus outbreak, more respondents—especially those from *very low-income* households—report that is the primary way they use their income from work in the COVID-era.
- **Being close to home and family is an important consideration for many respondents—especially in the COVID-era—when they are considering whether to attend college.** At least a third of respondents in every race and gender subgroup say staying close to home and family is or would be *much more important* now than before the coronavirus outbreak.
- **Almost four in ten (39%) respondents are concerned the coronavirus pandemic will affect their future job or career prospects.** Black male and Hispanic male respondents are the mostly likely to be concerned, while white male respondents are the least likely.
- **A majority of respondents report their ideas for the kind of job or career they want in the future have changed, or are likely to change, due to the coronavirus pandemic.** Black and Hispanic respondents are more likely than white respondents to say their plans have definitely changed.
- **A narrow majority of respondents continue to be optimistic they can achieve the kind of life they want in the future.** However, levels of optimism are still lower compared to 2019.

- **More respondents feel clear about their future career goals than did in the first (August) wave of the survey.** However, levels of clarity are lower than in 2019.
- **In this September poll, more respondents than in the August poll feel like they know both what they want to do for their job or career and the steps they need to take to get there.** The proportions of Black female and Black male respondents who feel this way are back at the higher 2019 levels.
- **Many respondents are actively taking, or soon plan to take, an online training program to develop new skills for their current or future work or career.**
- **The vast majority of respondents have engaged in some type of online learning since the COVID-19 pandemic started.** However, there are significant differences in the type of online learning respondents have had—live and interactive or pre-recorded and non-interactive—by gender and school level.
- **Many respondents feel both the quality and the experience of their education are worse during this COVID-era. There are, however, significant differences by race.** These current experiences are also shaping respondents' perceptions about how the coronavirus will impact the quality and experience of their education in the future. A smaller portion report that their education quality has increased during this COVID-era.

DETAILED KEY FINDINGS

Many respondents are worried they themselves might catch the coronavirus, but more respondents are concerned that someone in their immediate family will catch the virus. Black and Hispanic female respondents are the most likely to express concerns about both themselves and someone in their family catching the coronavirus.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents are *extremely* (20%) or *very worried* (16%) they might catch the coronavirus themselves. By contrast, 49 percent of respondents are *extremely* (27%) or *very worried* (22%) someone in their immediate family might catch the virus. Based on previous qualitative research from this summer, the difference between the proportion of respondents who are worried for themselves and the proportion who are worried for their family members reflects their lived experiences, and the fact that many respondents have older parents or grandparents, some of whom are already in poor health or are otherwise members of at-risk populations.

Hispanic (40%) and Black (36%) respondents are more likely to be extremely or very worried they might catch the coronavirus than are white respondents (31%). While the proportion of respondents who are *extremely worried* someone in their immediate family might catch the virus are similar across race (30% of Hispanic, 28% of Black, and 25% of white respondents), Hispanic female respondents (35%) and Black female respondents (31%) are noticeably more likely to be *extremely worried* than are their peers in other race and gender subgroups.

There are also noticeable differences by income. While similar proportions of lower-income (36%) and higher-income respondents (35%) express feeling extremely or very worried they might catch the coronavirus, almost half (48%) of respondents from *very low-income* households feel this way.

Notably, 41 percent of lower-income Hispanic and 39 percent of lower-income Black respondents are extremely or very worried they may catch the coronavirus—a significantly higher proportion than the 29 percent of lower-income white respondents who feel this way.

Similarly, 35 percent of respondents from *very low-income* households are *extremely worried* someone in their immediate family will catch the virus, compared to 27 percent of respondents from both *low-income* and *middle-income* households, and 26 percent of respondents from higher-income households. However, there are not any statistically significant differences by race and income on this measure.

COVID continues to have an impact on young people's lives, and many respondents are assisting their families by providing care for younger or older people in their homes or using their income to help with necessities.

In Wave 2, 42 percent of respondents are providing care for someone younger (33%) or someone older (11%) – or both (2%) – at home. These proportions are virtually identical to the results in the Wave 1 survey, when 41 percent of respondents were providing care for someone younger (32%) or someone older (14%) – or both (3%).

Also similar to the Wave 1 survey findings, the responsibility of providing care for others in the home continues to fall more on the shoulders of Black (45%) and Hispanic (44%) respondents than it does white respondents (36%). In Wave 1, 43 percent of Black, 45 percent of Hispanic, and 36 percent of white respondents provided care for other people in their household.

As in Wave 1, respondents from higher-income households (54%) are significantly more likely to report caring for someone else in the home than are respondents from lower-income households (40%). Importantly, although the only higher-income respondents allowed to complete the survey are Black and Hispanic, this difference is not simply a reflection of race: more Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income households (43%) are providing care for someone than are white respondents from lower-income households (34%), but both of those proportions are significantly lower than the proportion of (Black and Hispanic) respondents from higher-income households who are providing care.

Unlike in Wave 1, roughly similar proportions of 15- to 16-year old (40%), 17- to 18-year old (43%), and 19- to 21-year-old (42%) respondents report they are providing care for someone else in the household. However, respondents ages 15- to 16-years old (5%) are significantly less like to be providing care for someone older than them than are 17- to 18-year old (15%) and 19- to 21-year old (13%) respondents.

Additionally, more respondents are using income they earn from work to help support their family now than did prior to the coronavirus outbreak. Thirty-one percent (31%) of respondents report that pre-COVID they primarily used the money they earned from work to help support their families with things like housing, groceries, clothes, and transportation. Black respondents (34%) are the most likely to report this was the primary use of their income pre-COVID, compared to 31 percent of Hispanic and 28 percent of white respondents. Black male (38%) and Hispanic male (37%) respondents are also significantly more likely than their peers in other race and gender subgroups to report this was the primary use of their income pre-COVID. An additional 34 percent of respondents report they primarily used the income from their work to support themselves pre-COVID, while 21 percent used that income as extra spending money and 12 percent saved or otherwise put the money aside

In the COVID-era, 37 percent of respondents—including 40 percent of Black respondents, 38 percent of Hispanic respondents, and 34 percent of white respondents—report they primarily use the money they earn from work to help support their families with things like housing, groceries, clothes, and transportation. The largest difference between the COVID and pre-COVID era is a 12-percentage

point jump for both Black female (42% during COVID compared to 30% pre-COVID) and Hispanic female (36% during COVID compared to 24% pre-COVID) respondents.

Interestingly, even after accounting for race there is little difference in the proportion of respondents from lower-income households and from higher-income households that report primarily using the income they earn from work in the COVID-era to support their families. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income households, 35 percent of white respondents from lower-income households, and 38 percent of Black and Hispanic respondents from higher-income households report they are primarily using income from their work to support their families.

However, these figures mask the significant proportion of respondents from *very low-income* households (54%) who are primarily using their income to help support their families in the COVID-era (pre-COVID the figure is 42% for these respondents). In other income levels, no more than 39 percent of respondents (from *low-income* households) report using the money they earn from work to support their family during the COVID-era.

The desire—or need—to be physically close to family may be impacting respondents' future education plans. Although many respondents feel it is or was important to stay close to home and family when they are (or were) considering attending college, at least a third of respondents in every race and gender subgroup say staying close to home and family is (or would be) *much more important* now than before the coronavirus outbreak.

Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents say it is or was *extremely* (27%) or *very important* (19%) to stay close to home and family when they are (or were) considering attending college. There are not any differences by gender, and only small differences by race: 49 percent of Hispanic respondents, 45 percent of Black respondents, and 43 percent of white respondents say this is or was an *extremely* or *very important* consideration.

There are, however, differences by income: 46 percent of respondents from lower-income households say staying close to home is or was an *extremely* (26%) or *very important* (20%) consideration, but 56 percent of respondents from higher-income households say this is or was an *extremely* (37%) or *very important* (19%) consideration.

When asked if they feel like staying close to home and family to attend college is or would be more important now than before the coronavirus outbreak, 58 percent of respondents report it is or would be *much more* (35%) or *somewhat more important* (24%). There are only small differences by gender, race, and by race and gender. Indeed at least one-third of respondents in every race and gender subgroup say staying close to home is or would be *much more important* now than before the coronavirus outbreak (the low is 33% among white female respondents and the high is 36% among Black female respondents).

While 54 percent of respondents who provide care for someone else in their home report staying close to home is or was an *extremely* (32%) or *very important* (22%) consideration when considering attending college, it is very notable that 63 percent of these respondents also say staying close to home is or would be *much more* (40%) or *somewhat more important* (24%) now than before the coronavirus outbreak. Although 56 percent (33% much more important, 22% somewhat more important) of respondents who do not provide care for someone else at home also feel staying close to home is more important now than before the coronavirus outbreak, the difference between these groups of respondents in the COVID-era is statistically significant.

Almost four in ten (39%) respondents are *extremely* (20%) or *very concerned* (18%) the coronavirus pandemic will affect their future job or career prospects. Although there are not significant differences by gender, there are significant differences by race.

Black (41%) and Hispanic (41%) respondents are more likely than white respondents (35%) to report they are extremely or very concerned about the effect the coronavirus will have on their future job or career prospects. Black male (45%) and Hispanic male (43%) respondents are the mostly likely to be concerned, while white male (31%) respondents are the least likely.

While similar proportions of respondents from lower-income (40%) and higher-income (42%) households feel concerned, there is a sizeable difference between respondents from *very low-income* households and other respondents. Forty-nine percent (49%) of *very low-income* respondents are either *extremely* (33%) or *very concerned* (16%) their future job or career prospects are being impacted by the coronavirus, compared to 38 percent of respondents from low-income households and 39 percent of respondents from middle-income households.

Additionally, white respondents from lower-income households are somewhat less likely than other respondents to be *extremely concerned* about the coronavirus affecting their future job or career prospects. Seventeen percent (17%) of these respondents are *extremely concerned*, compared to 20 percent of Black respondents from lower-income households, 24 percent of Hispanic respondents from lower-income households, 27 percent of Black respondents from higher-income households, and 23 percent Hispanic respondents from higher-income households.

Interestingly, currently having a job does not mitigate concerns about future job or career prospects—and actually heightens it. Respondents who are currently working full-time (30%) are significantly more likely to be *extremely concerned* about the coronavirus impacting their future career prospects than are respondents who are working part-time (20%) or who are not working (17%).

Respondents who are providing care for someone in their home are also significantly more likely to report feeling *extremely concerned* (27%) than are their peers who are not caring for others in the home (16%). However, this may reflect the fact more Black and Hispanic respondents provide this type of care than do white respondents, and that they are also more concerned about the coronavirus affecting their future job prospects.

A majority of respondents report their ideas for the kind of job or career they want in the future have changed, or are likely to change, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents report their ideas for the kind of job or career they want in the future have *definitely changed* (25%), or *are likely to change* (26%), because of the coronavirus outbreak.

There are not any notable differences between male (25% definitely changed, 27% likely to change) and female (25% definitely changed, 25% likely to change) respondents, but Black (28%) and Hispanic (27%) respondents are significantly more like than white respondents (19%) to say their plans have *definitely changed*.

Across race and gender, white female respondents (44%) are the least likely to say their plans have changed or are likely to change; the proportions for other race and gender subgroups range from 51 percent (Hispanic male respondents) to 54 percent (Hispanic female and Black male respondents).

There are significant differences across income, but also income and race. Respondents from higher-income households (35%) are significantly more likely than respondents from lower-income households (24%) to report their plans have definitely changed. Additionally, Black (28%) and Hispanic (27%) respondents from lower-income households are significantly more likely to report their ideas for the kind of job or career they want in the future have definitely changed because of the coronavirus outbreak than are white respondents from lower-income households (19%).

There are also significant differences by age. Younger respondents ages 15- to 16-years old (19%) are much less likely than respondents ages 17- to 18-years old (27%) or respondents ages 19- to 21-years old (28%) to report their ideas about their future job or career have definitely changed.

As is the case with concerns about future job prospects, currently having a job does not mitigate the likelihood respondents' ideas about their future job or career have changed. In fact, respondents who are working full-time (39%) are noticeably more likely to report their future plans have definitely changed than are those who are working part-time (28%) or those who are not working (18%).

Notably, those who work full-time and are in school are also more likely than their peers to report their future career plans have definitely changed. Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents who attend a two-year college and work full-time report their future plans have definitely changed, compared to 35 percent of respondents attending a two-year college and working part-time and 19 percent of respondents attending a two-year college and not working. Among respondents who are attending a four-year college or university, 35 percent of those who are working full-time report their future plans have definitely changed, compared to 30 percent of those who are working part-time and 15 percent of those who are not working.

Despite changing career plans or concerns about their future career prospects, a narrow majority of respondents continue to be optimistic they can achieve the kind of life they want in the future, although levels of optimism have dropped compared to 2019.

Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents are either *extremely* (26%) or *very optimistic* (27%) they can achieve the kind of life they want in the future. This is a slight increase from Wave 1, when 50 percent of respondents felt *extremely* (26%) or *very optimistic* (24%) but still is below the level of optimism in 2019—when 67 percent of respondents were *extremely* (34%) or *very optimistic* (33%) about achieving the kind of future life they want.

There are only minimal differences by gender: slightly more male (27%) than female (25%) respondents report feeling *extremely optimistic*, while slightly more female (29%) than male (25%) respondents report feeling *very optimistic* about achieving the kind of future life they want.

However, Black respondents (31%) are more likely than their Hispanic (25%) and white (22%) peers to feel *extremely optimistic*, while Hispanic respondents (30%) are noticeably more likely to feel *very optimistic* than are Black (23%) or white (27%) respondents. In addition, Black female respondents (33%) are the most likely to feel *extremely optimistic*, followed by Black male (28%) and Hispanic male respondents (28%), while white female (21%) and Hispanic female (22%) respondents are the least likely to feel *extremely optimistic*.

There are also differences in levels of optimism by income, but these differences are accounted for when race is taken into account. Black respondents from lower-income (31%) and higher-income (40%) households are significantly more likely to report they feel *extremely optimistic* about achieving the kind of life they want than are Hispanic respondents from lower-income households (24%), Hispanic respondents from higher-income households (28%), or white respondents from lower-income households (22%).

Respondents who are currently working are also more likely to be optimistic about achieving the kind of life they want than are respondents who are not working. Thirty-four percent (34%) of respondents who are working full-time and 28 percent of respondents who are working part-time are *extremely optimistic* about achieving the future life they want, compared to 23 percent of respondents who are not working.

Relatedly, among respondents who are currently working, those who are working more than one job (36%) are significantly more likely to report feeling *extremely optimistic* about achieving the kind of life they want in the future than are those who are working one job (26%).

A higher proportion of respondents in Wave 2 report feeling clear about their future job and career goals compared to Wave 1, although the proportions remain lower than in 2019, both overall and across every race and gender subgroup.

Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents feel their goals and ideas about their future job or career are *very clear*, and another 31 percent feel these goals are *somewhat clear*. These figures are noticeably higher than in Wave 1—when only 27 percent of respondents felt their goals were *very clear* and 29 percent felt they were *somewhat clear*—but are still lower than in 2019 (43% very clear, 32% somewhat clear).

In Wave 2 of the survey, similar proportions of female (37%) and male (33%) respondents report feeling *very clear* about their future career goals and ideas. There are significant differences by race, however, and more Black respondents (42%) than Hispanic (36%) or white (27%) respondents feel *very clear* about these future goals.

Respondents who are working full-time (47%) are also significantly more likely than respondents who are working part-time (36%) or who are not working (32%) to feel *very clear* about their future career goals.

Across race and gender subgroups, the largest jump from Wave 1 is among Black female respondents, 45 percent of whom feel *very clear* about their future goals now compared to 28 percent in Wave 1. There is also a 13-percentage point increase among Hispanic female respondents who feel *very clear* about their future job and career goals, from 26 percent in Wave 1 to 39 percent in Wave 2. There were also single-digit increases among Black male (31% in Wave 1 to 38% in Wave 2), Hispanic male (26% to 33%), and white female (22% to 27%) respondents. However, the proportion of white male respondents who feel *very clear* about their future career goals dropped slightly, from 30 percent to 28 percent.

There are also differences around future goal clarity by income, but, once again, these are accounted for by race. Forty-four percent (44%) of respondents from higher-income households feel their future job or career goals are *very clear*, compared to 35 percent of respondents from lower-income households. However, white respondents from lower-income households (26%) are significantly less likely to feel very clear about these goals than are Black (42%) or Hispanic (38%) respondents from lower-income households, and there are only minimal differences between Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income (40%) and higher-income (44%) households.

There is also a noticeable increase in the proportion of respondents who feel like they know both what they want to do and the steps they need to take to achieve their job and career goals, compared to Wave 1; the proportions of Black female and Black male respondents who feel this way are back at the higher 2019 levels.

Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents report *I know what I want to do for my work or career, and I also know most of the specific steps I need to take to get there*, a noticeable increase from Wave 1 when 33 percent of respondents felt this way. As was the case in Wave 1, there is no difference by gender—39 percent of both female and male respondents report feeling this way. And while this is an increase from Wave 1 (33% for both male and female respondents), it is still below 2019 levels (45% for female respondents, 48% for male respondents).

Unlike in Wave 1, however, there are now significant differences by race: Black respondents (48%) are significantly more likely to feel they know what they want to do for their career and the steps they need to take to get there than are Hispanic (35%) or white (34%) respondents.

There are also increases from Wave 1 across most race and gender subgroups. In Wave 2, fully 50 percent of Black female respondents feel they know what they want to do and the steps they need to take to get there, a substantial increase from Wave 1 (31%) and the same level as in 2019. Forty-six percent (46%) of Black male respondents report feeling this way, an 11-percentage point jump from Wave 1 (35%) and only one point lower than in 2019 (47%). While more modest, there are also increases among Hispanic female (38% in Wave 2, up from 36% in Wave 1) and Hispanic male respondents (33% in Wave 2, up from 30% in Wave 1). There is also a six-percentage point jump among white male respondents—up to 40 percent from 34 percent in Wave 1—but there is a slight drop among white female respondents, down to 30 percent from 32 percent in Wave 1. Aside from Black female and the minimal difference for Black male respondents, these proportions are still below the 2019 levels for each race and gender subgroup.

There is also a large difference in the proportion of respondents from lower-income households (39%) and higher-income households (52%) who feel they know both what they want to do for their career and the steps they need to take to get there. While there is no difference between white (34%) and Hispanic respondents (34%) from lower-income households who feel this way, there is a noticeably larger proportion of Black respondents from lower-income households (50%) who do. However, when it comes to higher-income respondents, similar proportions of Black (49%) and Hispanic (53%) respondents report they know what they want to do and how to get there. (As a reminder, white respondents have to be from lower-income households in order to complete the survey.)

As was the case in Wave 1, working full-time is also an important experience that positively contributes to respondents' feelings around the clarity of their future pathways. More than half (53%) of respondents who are currently working full-time report they feel they know what they want to do for their career and the steps they need to take to get there. By comparison, 41 percent of respondents who are working part-time and 35 percent of respondents who are not working feel this way. These are all increases from Wave 1, when 47 percent of respondents who were working full-time, 34 percent of those working part-time, and 32 percent of respondents who were not working felt they knew both what they wanted to do and the steps they needed to take to get there.

Many respondents are actively taking, or soon plan to take, an online training program to develop new skills for their current or future work or career.

Almost half (47%) of respondents report they are taking (25%) or soon plan to take (22%) an online training program to develop new skills for their current or future work or career.

In general, and across racial subgroups, male respondents are more likely than female respondents to report they are currently taking this type of program. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of male respondents, 32 percent of Black male respondents, 29 percent of Hispanic male respondents, and 25 percent of white male respondents report they are currently taking this type of training program.

By contrast, 22 percent of female respondents, 23 percent of Black female respondents, 23 percent of Hispanic female respondents, and 21 percent of white female respondents report they are taking this type of training program.

The difference between genders is much smaller for those who plan to take this type of course: 23 percent of male respondents and 21 percent of female respondents report they plan to take a program or course like this soon. However, white respondents (18%)—and especially white female respondents (16%)—are the least likely to report they plan to take a course like this soon. By comparison, 24 percent of both Black and Hispanic respondents—including 23 percent of Black female and 24 percent of Hispanic female respondents—report they will soon take an online upskilling program.

There are also differences by income as well as income and race. Respondents from higher-income households (42%) are much more likely to currently be taking this type of program, compared to only 23 percent of respondents from lower-income households. Interestingly, there are also differences by income level among lower-income respondents: 31 percent of respondents from *very low-income* households are currently taking an upskilling program, compared to 19 percent of respondents from *low-income* and 24 percent of respondents from *middle-income* households. Hispanic (40%) and Black (39%) respondents from higher-income households are significantly more likely than their lower-income peers (23% and 26%, respectively) to currently be taking this type of program. Additionally, Black respondents from lower-income households (26%) are more likely to be taking an online upskilling program than are their Hispanic (23%) or white (21%) peers.

Although the data cannot definitely say whether or not this is the case, it is possible that many of the respondents who are taking these types of programs are doing so for reasons related to their current work or career: 44 percent of respondents who are currently working full-time and 31 percent of those who are working part-time report they are currently in this kind of program, compared to just 13 percent of respondents who are not working.

The vast majority of respondents have engaged in some type of online learning since the COVID-19 pandemic started, although Black and Hispanic respondents are more likely to have had only online instruction. However, there are smaller differences in the types of online learning respondents have engaged in.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents report they have taken only online classes (64%) or a mix of online and in-person classes (20%) since the COVID-19 pandemic started. Female respondents (67%) are slightly more likely than male respondents (61%) to have only taken classes online since the pandemic started.

Notably, Black respondents (65%) are more likely than white respondents (53%) to report they have only taken online classes since the pandemic started, and Hispanic respondents (72%) are the most likely to report this is the case. White respondents (29%) are much more likely than Black (17%) or Hispanic (14%) respondents to report they have experienced a mix on online and in-person classes since the start of the pandemic.

Income is also a factor, and Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income households (72%) are significantly more likely to report they have only taken classes in an online setting than are Black and Hispanic respondents from higher-income households (58%).

When it comes to the type of online learning respondents have been engaged in, 42 percent report their online classes have been live and interactive, 22 percent report their classes have been pre-recorded or some other type of non-interactive format, and 32 percent report they have had both

interactive and non-interactive online classes. Male respondents (46%) are significantly more likely to report having only live and interactive online classes than are female respondents (38%), but there are no statistically significant differences by race.

Respondents who are in high school (48%) are also significantly more likely than those who are attending a two-year (40%) or four-year (35%) college or university to report having only live and interactive classes. Conversely, 28 percent of respondents attending a two-year and 30 percent of respondents attending a four-year college or university report they have only had non-interactive classes, while only 14 percent of respondents who are in high school report this is the case.

Notably, there are only minor differences by income. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents from lower-income households and 40 percent of respondents from higher-income households report having only live and interactive classes, while 33 percent and 27 percent of respondents from lower- and higher-income households, respectively, report having had a mix of interactive and non-interactive classes.

Many respondents feel both the quality and the experience of their education is worse during this COVID-era. Their current experiences are also shaping their perceptions about how the coronavirus will impact the quality and experience of their education in the future.

Forty percent (40%) of respondents feel the quality of the education is worse now than before the coronavirus outbreak, while 44 percent feel the experience of their education is worse now than before the coronavirus outbreak. Female (42%) and male (40%) respondents are at similar levels in feeling the quality of their education is worse now, but female respondents are much more likely than male respondents to feel the experience of the education is worse now (48% compared to 42%).

There are also interesting differences by race. While the proportions of respondents who feel the quality of their education is worse is lower among Black respondents (37%), it is similar for Hispanic (42%) and white (43%) respondents. Black respondents (30%) are also significantly more likely than Hispanic (17%) or white (21%) respondents to say the quality of their education is better than before the coronavirus outbreak.

When it comes to the experience of their education, Hispanic respondents (48%) are more likely than Black (40%) or white (44%) respondents to feel it is worse now than before the coronavirus outbreak. However, once again Black respondents (33%) are significantly more likely than Hispanic (21%) or white (26%) respondents to say their educational experience is better now.

Among Black and Hispanic respondents, income is also a very important factor. These respondents from higher-income households are much more likely to feel the quality (37%) and experience (41%) of their education are better now than are Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income households, 21 percent of whom feel the quality of their education is better and 24 percent of whom feel the experience of their education is better. By contrast, Black and Hispanic respondents from lower-income households are significantly more likely to feel the quality (42%) and experience (48%) of their education are worse now than are Black and Hispanic respondents from higher-income households, 30 percent of whom feel the quality of their education is worse and 33 percent of whom feel the experience of their education is worse.

There are also significant differences based on whether respondents are working full-time, part-time, or if they are not working. Respondents who are working full-time are significantly more likely to feel both the quality (49%) and experience (50%) of their education are better now than before the coronavirus outbreak. By contrast, 25 percent of respondents who are working part-time and only 11 percent of respondents who are not working feel the quality of the education is better now, while

28 percent of respondents working part-time and 18 percent of respondents who are not working feel the experience of their education is better now.

Although not as stark, there are also differences in respondents' perceptions about the quality and experience of their education based on whether or not they are providing care for someone else in the home. Thirty percent (30%) and 36 percent, respectively, of respondents who are providing care in the home feel the quality and experience of their education are better now than before the coronavirus. Conversely, among respondents who are not providing care for someone other than themselves, 17 percent feel the quality of their education is better now and 19 percent feel the experience of the education is better. It is important to note, however, that larger proportions of respondents who are providing care feel the quality (38%) and experience (39%) of their education are worse now than feel they are better.

What are some things respondents think are worse now about the quality and experience of their education? As the quotes below illustrates, respondents point to things such as the absence of hands-on learning, a decrease in the amount of instruction, and difficulty focusing in an online environment when asked what makes the quality or experience of their education worse now than before the coronavirus outbreak.

"I'm missing laboratory since they are hands-on."

- Hispanic female survey respondent, age 21, lower income

"We don't get the same amount of instruction or work, so I'm not getting everything that I need."

- White male survey respondent age 16, lower income

"It's harder to focus online. Easy distractions."

- Black female respondent, age 20, lower income

However, as the quotes below show, some respondents feel the quality and experience of their education are better because they are able to be alone—which allows them to avoid distractions—or learn at their own pace, while others feel that moving to an online environment has spurred some teachers to improve the quality of the instruction they are providing.

"I focus more by myself."

- Hispanic female survey respondent, age 16, lower income

"I feel [the quality] is better because the teachers are more organized they are comfortable with the online learning and information is easier to teach."

- Black male survey respondent, age 18, higher income

"I can learn the way I want at my own pace and schedule."

- White male survey respondent, age 17, lower income

Respondents' current educational experiences are also shaping their perceptions about how the coronavirus will impact the quality and experience of their education in the future. Thirty-four percent (34%) of Black respondents feel the quality of their education in the future will be positively affected—that it will be better—by the coronavirus outbreak, compared to 27 percent of Hispanic respondents and 28 percent of white respondents. By contrast, 30 percent of Black respondents, 39 percent of Hispanic respondents, and 33 percent of white respondents feel the quality of their education in the future will be worse. (25% of Black respondents, 22% of Hispanic respondents, and 28% of white respondents feel the quality of their education will be about the same.)

Similarly, 37 percent of Black respondents feel their future education experience will be better, while 26 percent of Hispanic and 25 percent of white respondents feel this way. However, 35 percent of Black respondents, 40 percent of Hispanic respondents, and 35 percent of white respondents feel the quality of their education in the future will be worse. (18% of Black respondents, 24% of Hispanic respondents, and 27% of white respondents feel the experience of their education will be about the same.)

CONCLUSION

This survey is the second of four surveys GSSR is conducting this fall to track how Black, Hispanic, and lower-income white youth are being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic—especially their attitudes and feelings around their future career and life goals. The next survey, which will take place in October 2020, will once again help provide further insight into how these young people are adapting to an unprecedented global phenomenon few could imagine having to navigate.

APPENDIX: ONLINE SURVEY METHODOLOGY

GSSR conducted three separate nationwide online surveys among young people ages 15- to 21-years-old, with the first survey conducted in September 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the second survey conducted during the pandemic in August 2020, and the third also conducted during the pandemic in September 2020. Parents or guardians of youth under age 18-years-old provided written consent prior to minors participating in the surveys.

In the surveys, Black and Hispanic respondents of all income levels were eligible to complete the survey. By contrast, white respondents were eligible to complete the survey if they self-identify as growing up in a household with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes. White respondents unsure of their annual household income were eligible to complete the survey if they report growing up in a *very low-income*, *low-income*, or *middle-income* household.

Pre-COVID-19 Survey (September 2019)

GSSR conducted a nationwide online survey among 2,638 young people ages 15- to 21-years-old from September 16th to September 22nd, 2019. Respondents include:

- 370 white females, 386 white males
- 486 Black females, 451 Black males
- 499 Hispanic females, 398 Hispanic males
- 528 youth ages 15-16
- 676 youth ages 17-18
- 1,434 youth ages 19-21

Among Black respondents, eight percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 24 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 50 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and 15 percent report growing up in *high-income* (11%) or *very high-income* (4%) households. Seventy-five percent (75%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes, and 18 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (7% are unsure).

Among Hispanic respondents, seven percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 25 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 52 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and 14 percent report growing up in *high-income* (12%) or *very high-income* (2%) households. Seventy-seven percent (77%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes and 15 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (8% are unsure).

Among white respondents, ten percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 28 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, and 56 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households. Ninety percent (90%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes. The remaining ten percent of white respondents are unsure of their specific annual household income, but nevertheless report growing up in *very low-income*, *low-income*, or *middle-income* households.

The margin of error for n=2,638 respondents is +/- 1.9 percentage points and is higher for subgroups. Please note that due to rounding, a sum may appear to be one point more or less than its parts.

COVID-19 Survey Wave 1 (August 2020)

GSSR conducted a nationwide online survey among 1,305 young people ages 15- to 21-years-old from August 8th to August 16th, 2020. Respondents include:

- 209 white females, 204 white males
- 203 Black females, 205 Black males
- 204 Hispanic females, 220 Hispanic males
- 272 youth ages 15-16
- 390 youth ages 17-18
- 643 youth ages 19-21

Among Black respondents, seven percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 16 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 54 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and 15 percent report growing up in *high-income* (12%) or *very high-income* (3%) households. Seventy percent (70%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes and 18 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (12% are unsure).

Among Hispanic respondents, six percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 20 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 59 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and ten percent report growing up in *high-income* (7%) or *very high-income* (3%) households. Sixty-six percent (66%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes and 23 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (11% are unsure).

Among white respondents, ten percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 24 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, and 53 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households. Eighty-six percent (86%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes. The remaining 14 percent of white respondents are unsure of their specific annual household income, but nevertheless report growing up in *very low-income*, *low-income*, or *middle-income* households.

The margin of error for n=1,305 respondents is +/- 2.7 percentage points and is higher for subgroups. Please note that due to rounding, a sum may appear to be one point more or less than its parts.

COVID-19 Survey Wave 2 (September 2020)

GSSR conducted a nationwide online survey among 1,272 young people ages 15- to 21-years-old from September 22nd to September 30th, 2020. Respondents include:

- 209 white females, 207 white males
- 206 Black females, 206 Black males
- 208 Hispanic females, 203 Hispanic males
- 345 youth ages 15-16
- 364 youth ages 17-18
- 663 youth ages 19-21

Among Black respondents, nine percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 19 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 49 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and 16 percent report growing up in *high-income* (12%) or *very high-income* (4%) households. Seventy percent (70%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less

than \$75,000 before taxes and 20 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (10% are unsure).

Among Hispanic respondents, six percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 21 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, 53 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households, and 13 percent report growing up in *high-income* (11%) or *very high-income* (2%) households. Sixty-seven percent (67%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes and 20 percent report growing up in households with an annual income of \$75,000 or more before taxes (13% are unsure).

Among white respondents, eight percent report growing up in *very low-income* households, 25 percent report growing up in *low-income* households, and 56 percent report growing up in *middle-income* households. Eighty-five percent (85%) report growing up in households with an annual income of less than \$75,000 before taxes. The remaining 15 percent of white respondents are unsure of their specific annual household income, but nevertheless report growing up in *very low-income*, *low-income*, or *middle-income* households.

The margin of error for n=1,272 respondents is +/- 2.7 percentage points and is higher for subgroups. Please note that due to rounding, a sum may appear to be one point more or less than its parts.