



National Parents Union: Coronavirus Impact Survey Findings Week #1: April 27–29, 2020

Top Concerns and Hardships Facing Parents of Public School K–12 Students

- Nearly six in 10 parents say they worry a lot or some about someone in their family getting the coronavirus (59%), making sure their children stay on track so they are ready for the next grade (59%), and their children missing important social interactions (58%).
- More than half worry about school closures having a negative impact on their children’s education (55%) and about how the situation is affecting their children’s or their own mental health and emotional wellbeing (51%).
 - Parents of elementary school children are the most likely to say they worry about school closures having a negative effect on their child’s education (61%) compared to middle (54%) or high school parents (53%). They are also the most likely to say they worry about figuring out what to do with their kids during the day (53%).
- When asked about the one or two greatest hardships they have faced due to the spread of the coronavirus, emotional and social concerns outrank even economic woes. Feeling down or anxious (25%) and being unable to see friends and family (22%) top the list of those the two most commonly mentioned greatest hardships. Seventeen percent say being unable to go about their daily routine has been a hardship, and 15% cite difficulty helping their children with schoolwork and learning.
- Forty-six percent of parents say they worry a lot or some about making ends meet, and 14% say that losing a job or income is one of the greatest hardships they have faced due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Experiences with School Closures and Remote Learning

- The most common resources parents say schools are offering to help their children continue learning during school closures are emailed assignments (50%) and live online classes with their teachers (46%). About three in 10 (31%) say their children’s schools are offer laptops or tablets for students to take home, but few say their schools are offering hot spots or high-speed internet access for students at home (7%).
- Strong majorities parents feel schools are doing a good job providing support and resources for their children to continue learning (74%) and feel confident about their own ability to help their child continue learning (85%). At the same time, four in 10 (40%) feel their children are learning less during this time than they normally would.
 - While elsewhere in the survey, elementary school parents are the most focused on needing more support in helping their child stay engaged and learning, they are no less likely to feel confident in their own ability helping their child learn compared to parents of other grade level children.
- A plurality of parents say that their child is doing less schoolwork (38%) than normal, while a third (32%) say their child is doing the same amount and 27% say they are doing more work.

- Parents asked about their elementary school child are more likely to say their child’s workload has decreased (43%) compared to other grade levels.
- Of the 19% of parents surveyed who say their child has a disability for which they normally receive specialized instruction or therapy (n=99), 40% say their child is not currently receiving any of that support.
- Most parents across household income levels feel their family has the resources and technology they need to help their children continue learning.
 - However, those with household incomes of less than \$75,000 are less likely to say they have what they need than those with higher household incomes (73% vs. 93%, respectively).

Supporting Parents: What They Need, and How They Are Using Financial Relief Payments

- The top thing parents say would be most helpful to them right now is help keeping their children engaged in good activities (46%), followed by high speed internet access (31%) and more information about how to support their children’s learning (28%).
 - “Help keeping my children engaged in good activities” is top of the list for parents of all grade levels, but elementary school parents are the most likely to say they need support keeping children engaged (52%), followed closely by middle school parents (48%) and trailed more distantly by high school parents (37%).
- About two in 10 say it would be helpful to have paid time off (22%), more tablets or computers in the house (20%), or more money to spend on necessities (20%).
 - Families with three or more children are significantly more likely than other parents to choose “more money to spend on necessities” (32%) and “more tablets or computers in the house” (32%) as the supports they would find most helpful.
- The most common ways parents say they have used the coronavirus relief payment are to buy groceries and basic household supplies (27%), put it into savings (27%), or to pay for utilities, phone bills, or internet service (23%).
 - Thirty-four percent say they have not received a coronavirus relief payment, including 37 percent of parents without a bachelors’ degree and 39 percent of parents living in small towns or rural areas.

Family Activities and Social Connection During the Outbreak

- Fifty-nine percent of parents say they are spending more time cooking, baking, or preparing meals as a result of the coronavirus situation and school and business closures, and 53% say they are spending more time doing activities with their children for fun.
- Half of parents say they are spending more time guiding their children through lessons provided by their school and helping their children with homework assignments.
 - This is particularly the case for elementary school parents, 62% of whom report spending more time walking children through lessons, compared to 48% of middle school parents and 41% of high school parents. Elementary parents are also more likely to say they are creating lessons outside of what they get from school.
- Thirty-six percent of parents say they have spent more time communicating with friends and family outside their household as a result of the coronavirus situation and school and business closures, and 42% say this has not changed. Twenty-one percent say they have been communicating with friends and

family less. Forty-two percent say they have spent less time talking with their neighbors, though nearly as many (41%) say the amount of time they spend talking with neighbors has not changed.