

Children's Worlds National Report

South Korea



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1. Introduction

1.1 Context and population

Population

As of 2020, the population of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) is about 51 million.¹

Geography

South Korea is located on the southern half of the Korean peninsula in East Asia. South Korea is bordered to North Korea by land². By sea, South Korea is facing Japan across the East Sea and China across the Yellow Sea. For administrative purposes, South Korea is divided into 17 provinces.

Children

In 2021, the number of children and youths between the ages of 0 and 18 years were about 8.2million, which consists of approximately 15.8% of the South Korean population. The number of children between the ages of 6 and 11 is 2.7 million, which is about 5.2% of the total population.

Religion

The 2015 census shows that 44% of the population practices a religion. There are three dominating religions in South Korea—Protestantism, Buddhism, and Catholicism. About 19.7% of the population are Protestants, 15.5% are Buddhists, and 7.9% are Catholics.³

Ethnicity

The vast majority of the South Korean population are ethnic Koreans. Recently, the number of foreigners migrating to South Korea has been increasing. Especially, the number of multicultural families defined as a family that consists of a native Korean and a foreign-born spouse has increased substantially. As of 2020, approximately 3.9% of the population are estimated as being foreign-born.⁴

¹ Statistics Korea (http://www.index.go.kr/potal/main/EachDtlPageDetail.do?idx_cd=1009)

² Korea.net ([South Korea – Summary : Korea.net : The official website of the Republic of Korea](https://www.korea.net/NewsRelease/summary/summary.nsf?symbol=2019020101&tblId=DT_1PM1502&conn_path=I2))

³ Statistics Korea (http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1PM1502&conn_path=I2)

⁴ Statistics Korea (http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1JA1610&conn_path=I2)

Context of COVID-19 in individual country contexts

In Korea, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on January 3, 2020, and as of the end of May 2022, the cumulative number of confirmed cases was about 18 million, with an incidence rate of 34,961 per 100,000 population. So far, the cumulative number of deaths due to COVID-19 is about 24,000, with a fatality rate of 0.13%. Korea was one of the most successful countries in preventing and controlling COVID-19 cases among OECD countries for two years in 2020 and 2021. In Korea, COVID-19 remained stable in 2020, except for two large-scale outbreaks in Daegu and the Seoul metropolitan area centred on religious facilities. However, from November 2020 to January 2021, a pandemic occurred with an average of more than 1,000 confirmed cases per day nationwide. Since then, the number of confirmed cases has gradually decreased, but with the spread of delta mutations in July 2021, a nationwide pandemic with more than 1,000 confirmed cases per day again occurred. This epidemic peaked at over 600,000 per day due to the emergence of omicron mutations in March 2022, and then gradually decreased, and the number of new confirmed cases in June 2022 remains below 10,000. Korea's COVID-19 fatality rate as of June 2022 is 0.13%, which is very low compared to other countries.

In the case of South Korea, the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 and the intensity of the COVID-19 quarantine policy were not proportional to the period since the outbreak of COVID-19. Before the outbreak of Omicron mutation, there were far fewer confirmed cases than after the outbreak of Omicron, but the quarantine policy was stronger. Although there was no lockdown, South Korea has implemented social distancing, a ban on gatherings, and self-quarantine for confirmed cases and close contacts.

This survey was conducted from July 22 to August 20, 2021. The COVID-19 situation in Korea during this period was due to the spread of the delta mutation, and the average daily number of confirmed cases for 7 days was between 1,500 and 1,800.

The biggest difficulty Korean children faced during the COVID-19 period was 'lack of care'. Due to the COVID-19 quarantine measures, there were more days when children were not going to school, day care centers, and kindergartens, resulting in difficulties in caring for children. According to 'Social Trends in Korea 2021' published by the National Statistical Office of Korea, 36.2% of households had difficulties in caring for children in March 2020. In particular, the 'lack of care' was more severe in dual-income households and low-income families.

Schools in Korea usually begin the new school year on March 2. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, all schools across the country had postponed the opening of school, and this situation continued for one month in March 2020. Online school started sequentially in April 2020, and offline school started sequentially starting with the high school 3rd on May 20th. The reopening of all grades was implemented only on June 8, 2020. Since then, students alternated school attendance and remote schooling with online classes during the second half of 2020. After that, in areas with high population density and high cases of COVID-19, school was suspended or the proportion of online classes was increased. In areas where there weren't much cases, students were asked to attend face-to-face classes. During this period, if a confirmed case occurred at the school, the school was closed and school was suspended.

As of March 2, 2022, all schools, irrespective of region, have returned to normal schooling. However, depending on the situation within the school, it is possible to switch to online classes at the discretion of the principal. As of June 28, 2022, about 12% of children aged 0-9 and about 13% of children aged 10-19 have been confirmed with COVID-19. However, the number of deaths due to COVID-19 was very small; 22 people between the ages of 0-9 years old and 10 people between the ages of 10-19 years have died of COVID-19.

1.2 Sampling: Strategy and outcome

The Korean sample was designed to include fifth-grade elementary school students across the country. The target was 1,500 students in 5th grade of elementary school nationwide. We utilized quota sampling method, using gender (Male vs. Female), regional size (Metropolitan cities, Mid-size cities, rural area), and regional areas (Seoul, Gyeonggi-Incheon, Gyeongsang, Jeolla, and Chungcheong area) as control characteristics. Thus, 30 cells were created based on these three criteria.

To avoid under sampling, which may occur when using quota sampling, 30 samples were first allocated to 12 cells (Rural areas in Gyeonggi-Incheon, Gyeongsang, Jeolla and Chungcheong, Metropolitan cities in Jeolla and Chungcheong (6 regional size) * gender (2 cells)). The remaining sample were then distributed to the entire cells using quota sampling strategy. By using this approach, we were able to ensure that the composition of the sample reflects the population, and that the level of statistical power is obtained when making group comparisons.

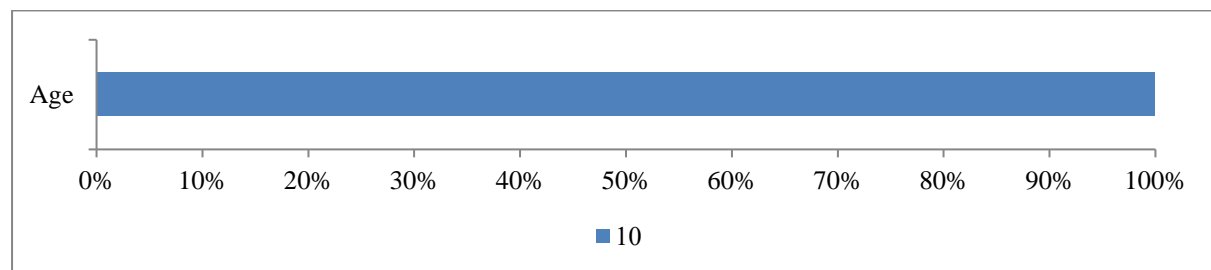
The survey was conducted according to the target number of samples on each cell allocated to the sample, and 1,500 children in the 5th grade of elementary school participated in this investigation. By gender, 767 (51.1%) were male and 733 (48.9%) were female. This survey was conducted from July 22 to August 20, 2021.

2. Results

2.1 About you: Q1-2, Q5-10

Table 1: 1. How old are you? (%)

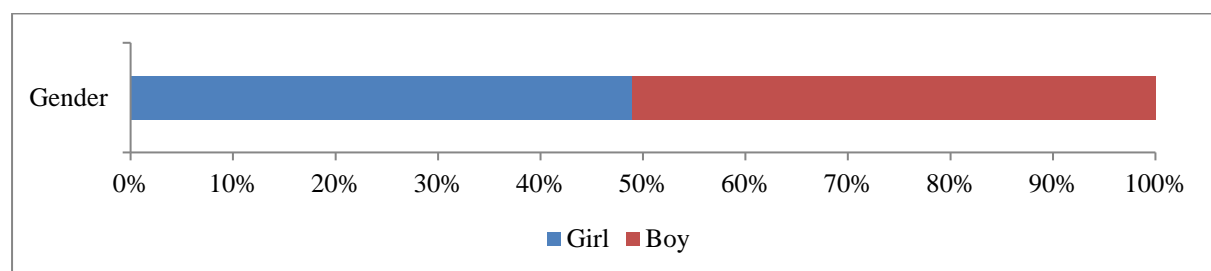
Item	10YO
How old are you?	100.0



All children (n=1,500) were 10 years old. In Korea, the sampling age was 10 years when designing the study.

Table 2: 2. Are you? (%)

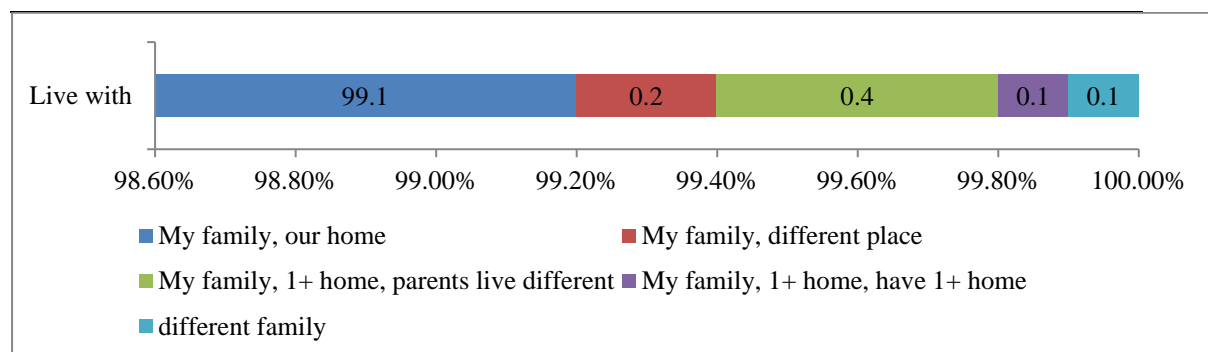
Item	Girl	Boy
Are you?	48.9	51.1



The proportion of male and female children in the study was 48.9% female and 51.1% male.

Table 3: 5. At present, whom do you live with?

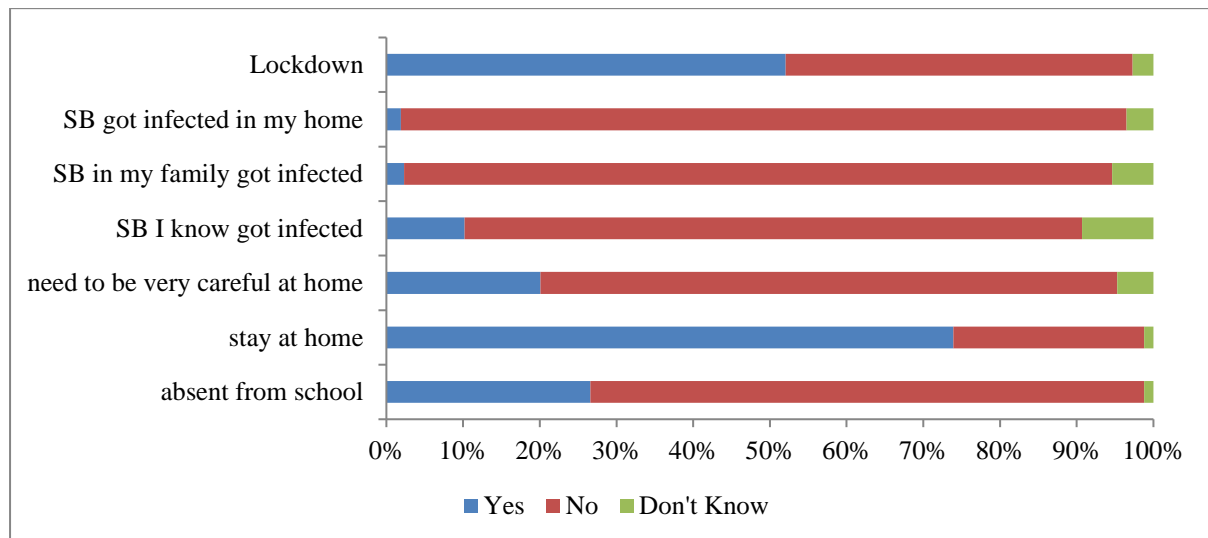
Item	Whom do you live with?
With my family, in our home	99.1
With my family, but at a different place (not at our regular home)	0.2
With my family, but in more than one home, because my parents live in different homes	0.4
With my family, but in more than one home, because my family has more than one home	0.1
In residential care	-
In a family different than mine	0.1



When asked about who they are currently living with, the vast majority of the children answered that they were living 'with my family, in our home' (99.1%). Next, 0.4% of children who answered that they live with their family, but their parents live separately and live in more than one home, 0.2% of children who live with their family at a different place (not at our regular home), and those who live with their family but live in multiple houses and children living with other families each accounted for 0.1%.

Table 4: 6. Tell us how you are during the COVID 19 pandemic... (%)

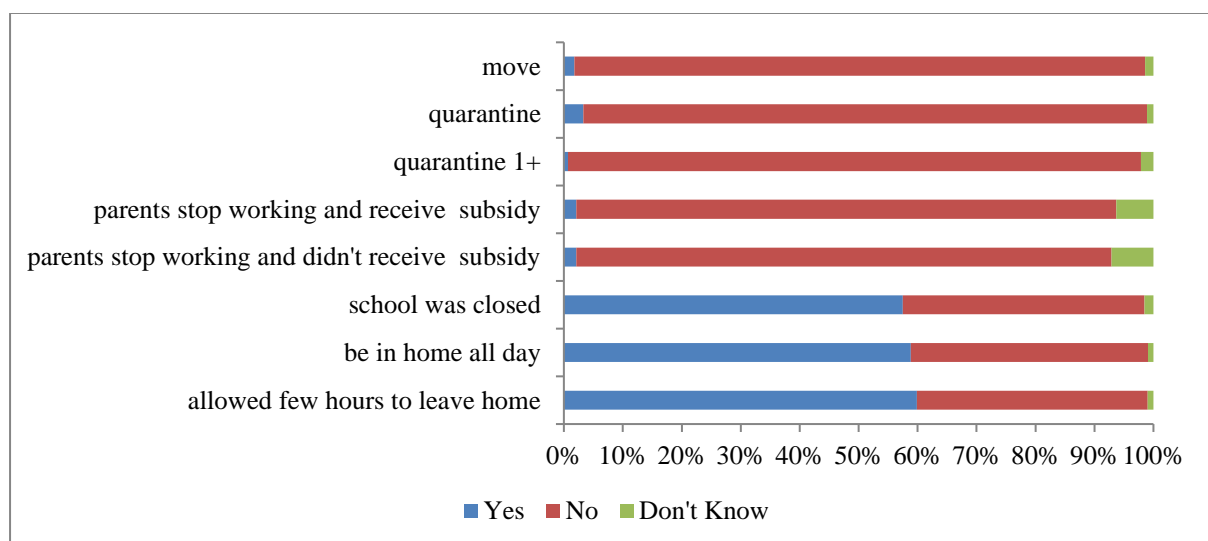
Item	Yes	No	Don't know
Everybody in my city/town/village was in lockdown for many days	52.1	45.3	2.7
Me or somebody in my home got infected with Coronavirus	1.9	94.5	3.5
Somebody in my family (not living with me) got infected with Coronavirus	2.3	92.3	5.4
Somebody I know got infected with Coronavirus	10.2	80.5	9.3
At home we had to be very careful because somebody was considered at high risk of getting very ill if they got infected with the Coronavirus	20.1	75.2	4.7
I had to stay at home for many days	73.9	24.9	1.2
I could not attend school for many days	26.6	72.2	1.2



During COVID-19, 73.9% of children said they had to stay at home for a long time, 52.1% of children experienced Lockdown, and 26.6% of children did not attend school for a long time. In terms of COVID-19 infections, 2.3% of family members, not living with the child, were infected with the coronavirus, and 1.9% of the children or a person living with them were infected.

Table 5: 7. Please rate how accurate the following are about your situation during COVID19 pandemic... (%)

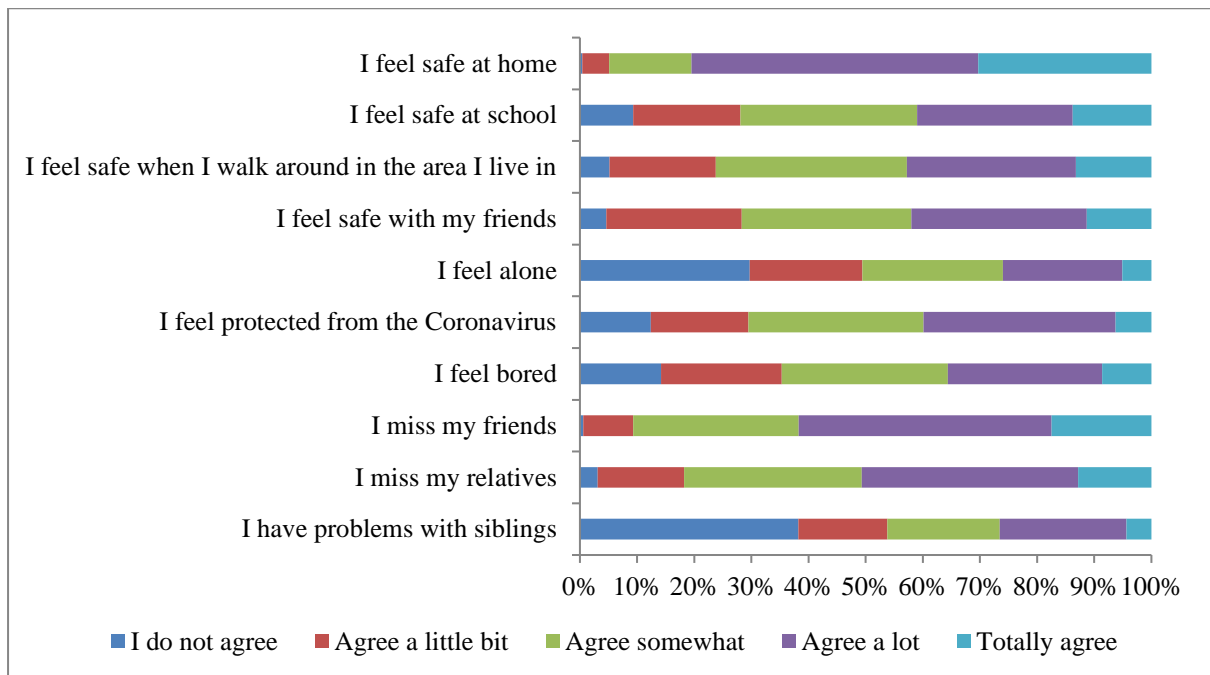
Item	Yes	No	Don't know
My family had to move to another home	1.8	96.8	1.4
I had to be in quarantine once	3.3	95.7	1.1
I had to be in quarantine more than once	0.7	97.2	2.1
At least one of my parents was forced/had to stop working and receive money from the government	2.1	91.6	6.3
At least one of my parents was forced to stop working and did not receive money from the government	2.1	90.9	7.1
My school was closed during lockdown	57.5	41.0	1.5
There were times where I had to be in my home all day (including the garden, yard or balcony, if you have) because of the Coronavirus	58.9	40.3	0.9
There were times where I was only allowed to leave my home for a few hours during the day because of the Coronavirus	59.9	39.1	1.0



About 60% of all children said that they had limited time to go out (59.9%), had to stay at home (58.9%). Similar proportion of children responded that their school was closed due to COVID-19 (57.5%). Less than 3% of children were quarantined, had a parent who lost their jobs, or had to move because of the coronavirus.

Table 6: 8. I Feel... (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I feel safe at home	0.4	4.7	14.4	50.2	30.3
I feel safe at school	9.3	18.8	30.9	27.2	13.8
I feel safe when I walk around in the area I live in	5.2	18.6	33.4	29.6	13.2
I feel safe with my friends	4.6	23.7	29.7	30.7	11.3
I feel alone	29.7	19.7	24.6	20.9	5.1
I feel protected from the Coronavirus	12.4	17.1	30.7	33.6	6.3
I feel bored	14.2	21.1	29.1	27.0	8.6
I miss my friends	0.6	8.7	29.0	44.2	17.5
I miss my relatives	3.1	15.1	31.1	37.9	12.8
I have problems with siblings	31.7	12.9	16.3	18.4	3.6



Children generally felt safe. The proportion of children who answered that they were safe at home was 80.5%⁵. Moreover, the sense of safety in school, residential area, and friends was relatively high at 41.0%, 42.8%, and 42.0%, respectively. In terms of COVID-19, 39.9% of children agree that they are being protected from coronavirus.

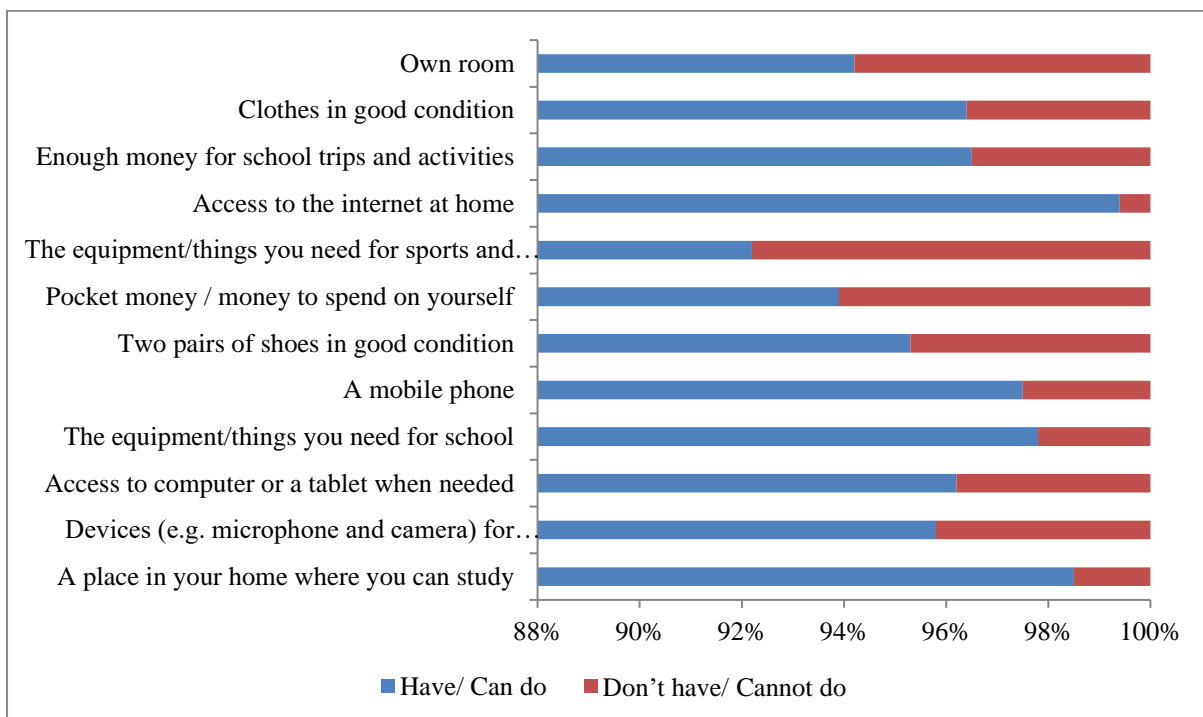
A large proportion of children missed their friends (61.7%) and relatives (50.7%). A noticeable proportion of children felt negative emotions such as boredom (35.6%) and loneliness (26.0%). Twenty-two percent of children said they had problems with their siblings.

Table 7: 9.Which of the following do you already have or can you do? (%)

Item	Have / Can do	Don't have/ Cannot do
Own room	94.2	5.8
Clothes in good condition	96.4	3.6
Enough money for school trips and activities	96.5	3.5

⁵ Children were considered to be in agreement with the statement if they responded “totally agree” and “agree a lot” for each item.

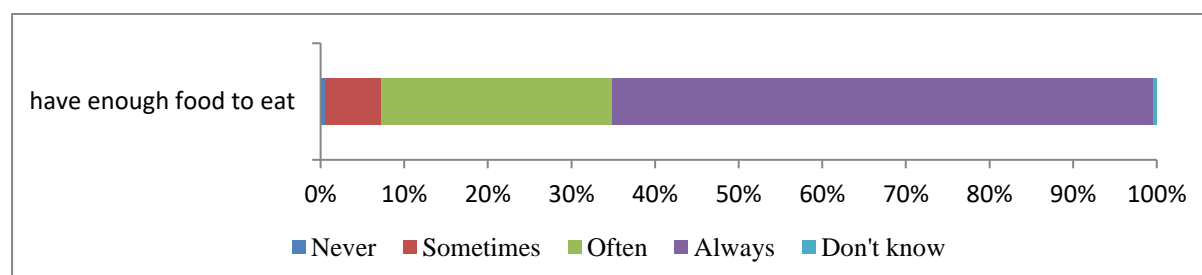
Access to the internet at home	99.4	0.6
The equipment/things you need for sports and hobbies	92.2	7.8
Pocket money / money to spend on yourself	93.9	6.1
Two pairs of shoes in good condition	95.3	4.7
A mobile phone	97.5	2.5
The equipment/things you need for school	97.8	2.2
Access to computer or a tablet when needed	96.2	3.8
Devices (e.g. microphone and camera) for video-classes	95.8	4.2
A place in your home where you can study	98.5	1.5



We asked how much children own and use various items, such as clothes, sports equipment, pocket money, computers, mobile devices, and personal space in their life. Although there are some variations by item, more than 95% of children answered that they have and can use what they need. Internet access at home (99.4%), having a place where they can study (98.5%), and having things needed at school (97.8%) were the highest in the order. On the other hand, equipment for sports and hobbies (92.2%) and pocket money (93.9%) showed relatively lower responses.

Table 8: 10. Did you have enough food when the COVID19 was at its worst? (%)

Item	Never	Someti mes	Often	Always	Don't know
Did you have enough food to eat?	0.6	6.6	27.6	64.8	0.4



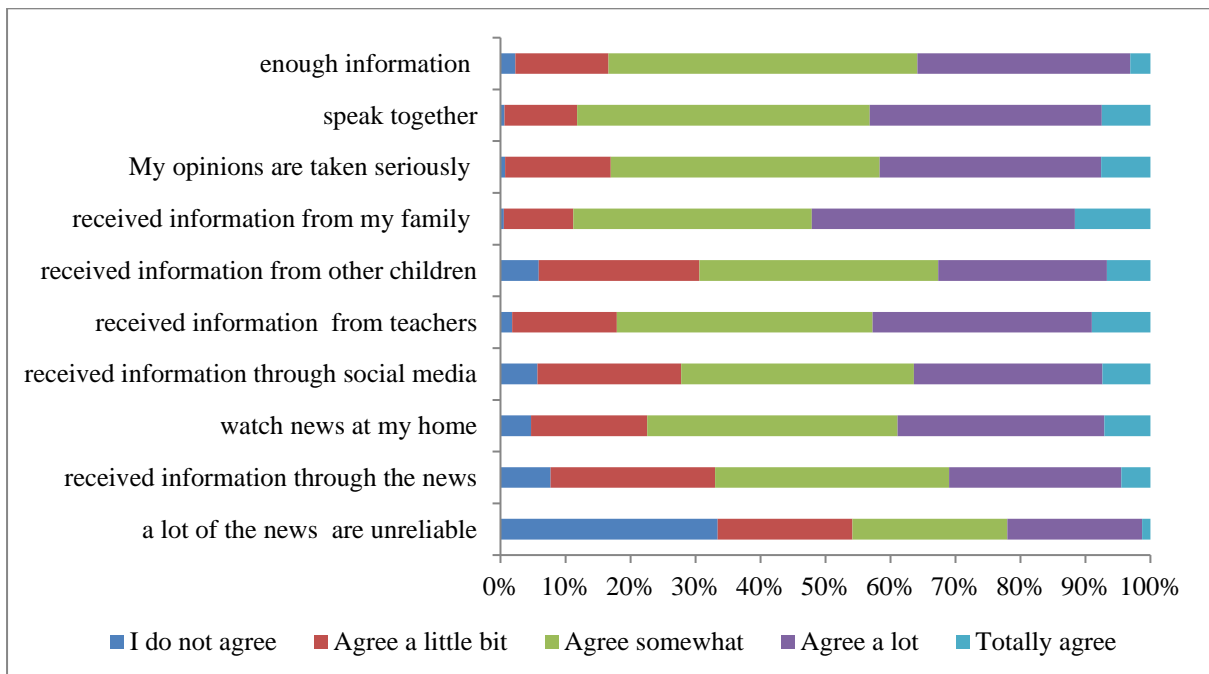
When asked if they had enough food during the peak of COVID-19, most children said they had enough ('always had enough' 64.8% and 'often had enough' 27.6%).

2.2 Your life during the Coronavirus: Q11-14

Table 9: 11. How strongly do you agree with the following statements? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I have enough information about the Coronavirus	2.3	14.3	47.5	32.7	3.1
We speak together about the Coronavirus in my home	0.6	11.2	45.0	35.7	7.5
My opinions about the Coronavirus are taken seriously in my home	0.7	16.3	41.4	34.1	7.6
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus from my family members or caregivers	0.5	10.7	36.7	40.5	11.6

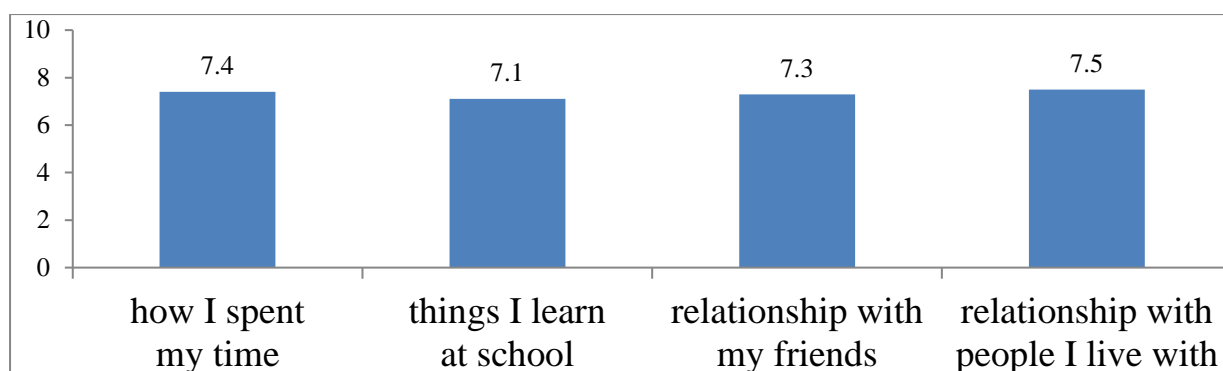
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus from other children	5.9	24.7	36.7	25.9	6.7
I received a lot of information about Coronavirus from teachers	1.8	16.1	39.3	33.7	9.0
I received a lot of information about Coronavirus through social media (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc.)	5.7	22.1	35.8	29.0	7.4
We watch news about the Coronavirus at my home	4.7	17.9	38.5	31.8	7.1
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus through the news	7.7	25.3	36.0	26.5	4.5
I think that a lot of the news about the Coronavirus are unreliable	33.4	20.7	23.8	20.7	1.3



It was found that children were well informed about COVID-19 (83.3%) and talked to each other about it at home (88.2%)⁶. They mainly learned information from family members or caregivers (88.8%), teachers (82.0%), and the news (67.0%).

Table 10: 12. How satisfied were you with your life before the COVID19 pandemic?

Item	<i>m(sd)</i>
With how I normally spent my time	7.4(1.3)
With The things I used to learn at school	7.1(1.6)
With the relationships I had with my friends	7.3(1.5)
With the relationships I had with people I live with	7.5(1.4)



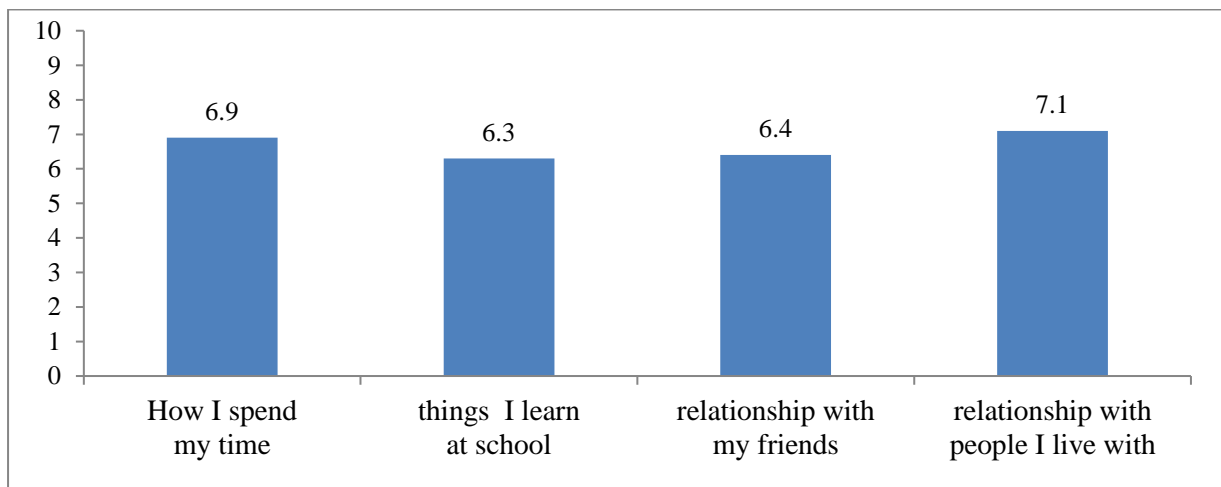
Prior to COVID-19, children's satisfaction with life was highest in the order of relationships with family members living together ($m=7.5$), time use ($m=7.4$), and friendships ($m=7.3$), while their academic satisfaction ($m=7.1$) was relatively low.

Table 11: 13. How satisfied are you with your life during the COVID19 pandemic?

Item	<i>m(sd)</i>
How I normally spend time	6.9(1.7)
With the things I learn at school	6.3(2.0)

⁶ Children were considered to be in agreement with the statement if they responded “totally agree” and “agree a lot” for each item.

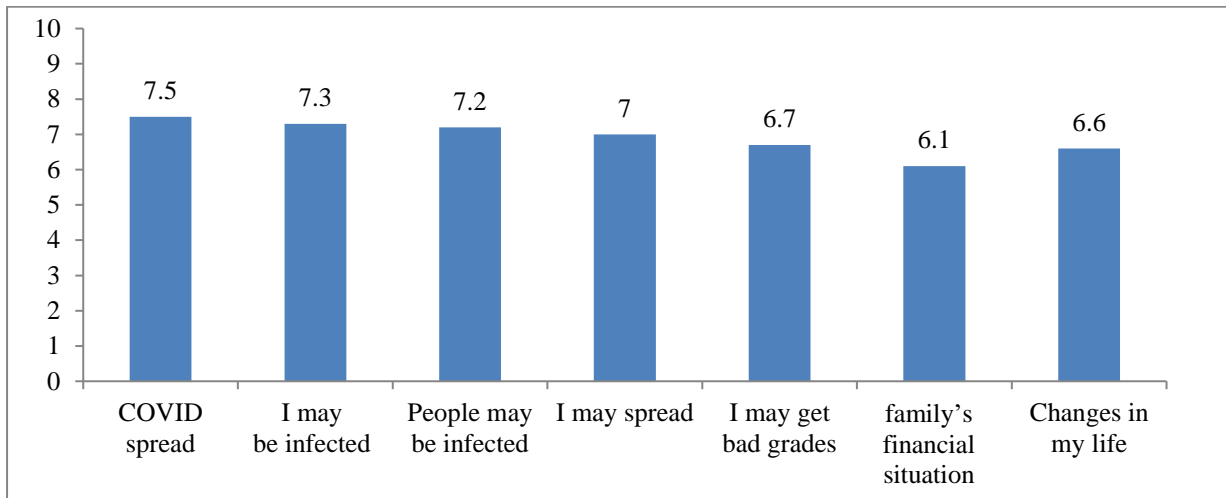
With the relationship I have with my friends	6.4(1.9)
With the relationships I have with people I live with	7.1(1.7)



After COVID19, there was a noticeable decrease in children's satisfaction with life when compared to before COVID-19. When ranked by highest level of satisfaction, relationships with family members living together ($m=7.1$), time use ($m=6.9$), and friendships ($m=6.4$) followed by academic satisfaction ($m=6.3$), which was the least satisfied item. It appeared to be on the low side, showing a similar trend to life satisfaction before COVID-19. Comparing before and after COVID-19, there was a significant decrease in friendship (0.9) and academic satisfaction (0.8).

Table 12: 14. In the past month, how worried were you about the following?

Item	$m(sd)$
COVID19 spread	7.5(1.7)
I may be infected with COVID19	7.3(1.8)
People may be infected with COVID19	7.2(1.8)
I may spread COVID19 to others	7.0(1.9)
I may get bad grades from school because of COVID19	6.7(2.0)
My family's financial situation during COVID19.	6.1(2.2)

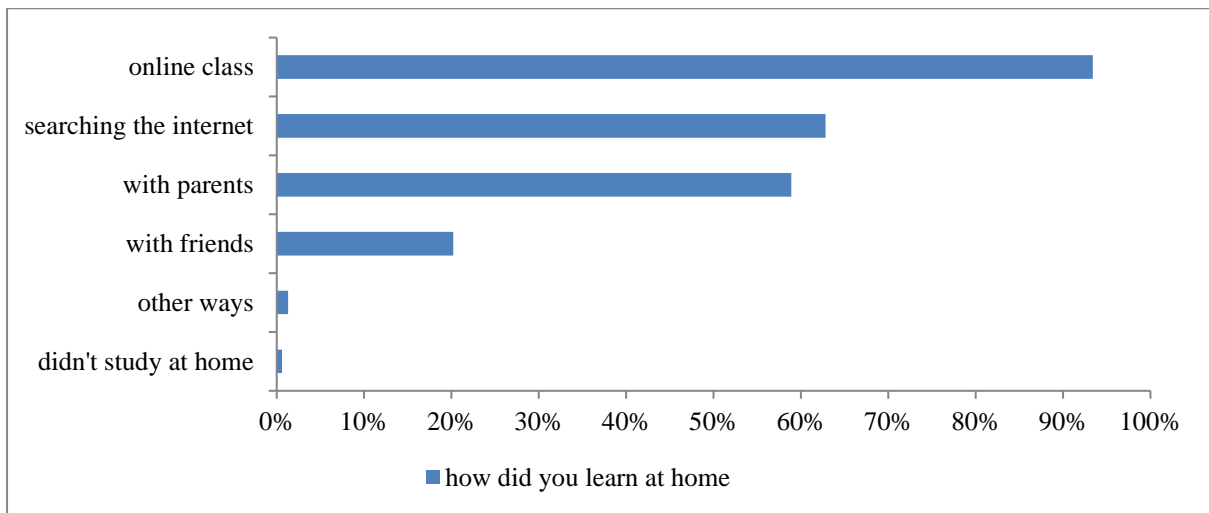


In relation to COVID-19, children have been concerned over the past month about the spread of COVID-19 ($m=7.5$), the fact that they ($m=7.3$) and others ($m=7.2$) may become infected. There were less concerns about the economic situation of their families ($m=6.1$).

2.3 School and relationships: Q16-19, Q22-23

Table 13: 16. How did you study at home during the school lockdown? (Choose all). (%)

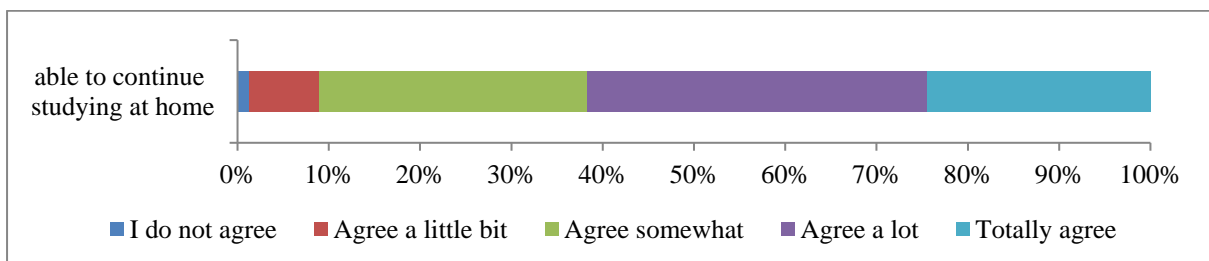
During the Coronavirus, when schools were closed, how did you learn at home?	
Online classes with teachers	93.4
Learning by searching the Internet	62.8
Learning with parents or people that are looking after you	58.9
Learning with my friends	20.2
Other ways	1.3
I did not study at home	0.6



When looking at the types of children's home-based learning during the lockdown period, the proportion of online classes was the highest (93.4%), followed by learning through internet searches (62.8%) and learning with parents or guardians (58.9%). There was very few responses indicating that they did not study at home (0.6%).

Table 14: 17. How much do you agree with the following statement? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I was able to continue studying at home during school lockdown due to COVID19	1.3	7.7	29.3	37.2	24.5

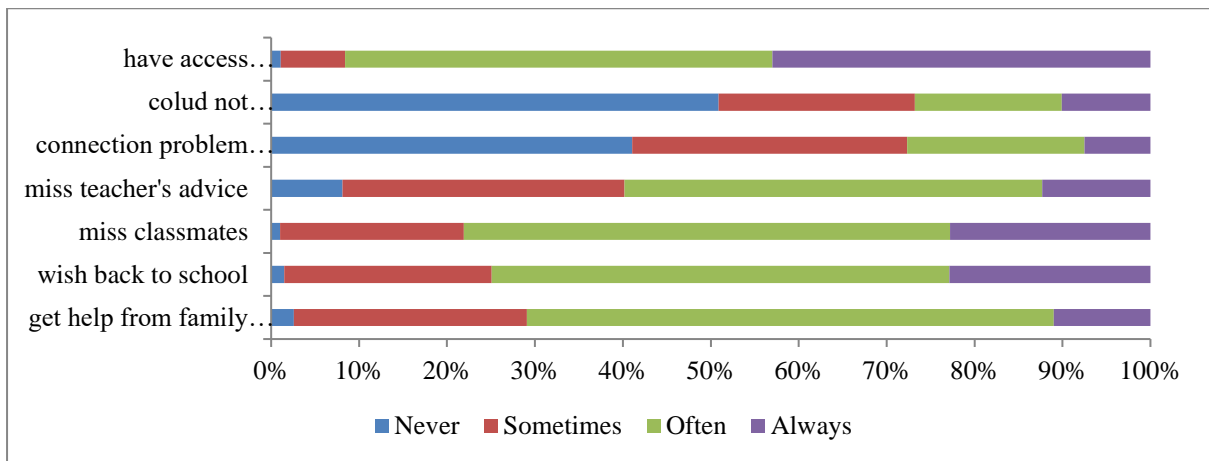


When asked whether they were able to continue studying at home, 61.7% (agree a lot and totally agree) responded that they were able to continue their studies. There were only

1.3% who responded that they were not able to continue studying at home. Thus, we found that there is little evidence for serious difficulties in the continuation of their studying at home during COVID-19 school lockdown.

Table 15: 18. Please, answer the following questions. During Coronavirus... (%)

Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often did you have access to the Internet?	1.1	7.3	48.6	43.0
How often did it happen that you could not access the Internet for an entire day?	50.9	22.3	16.7	10.1
How often did you have problems with the Internet connection while having a class over web?	41.1	31.3	20.2	7.5
How often did you miss your teacher's advice?	8.1	32.1	47.5	12.3
How often did you miss your classmates?	1.0	20.9	55.3	22.8
How often did you wish that you could go back to school?	1.5	23.6	52.1	22.9
How often did your parent or a sister/brother help you with schoolwork?	2.6	26.5	59.9	11.0

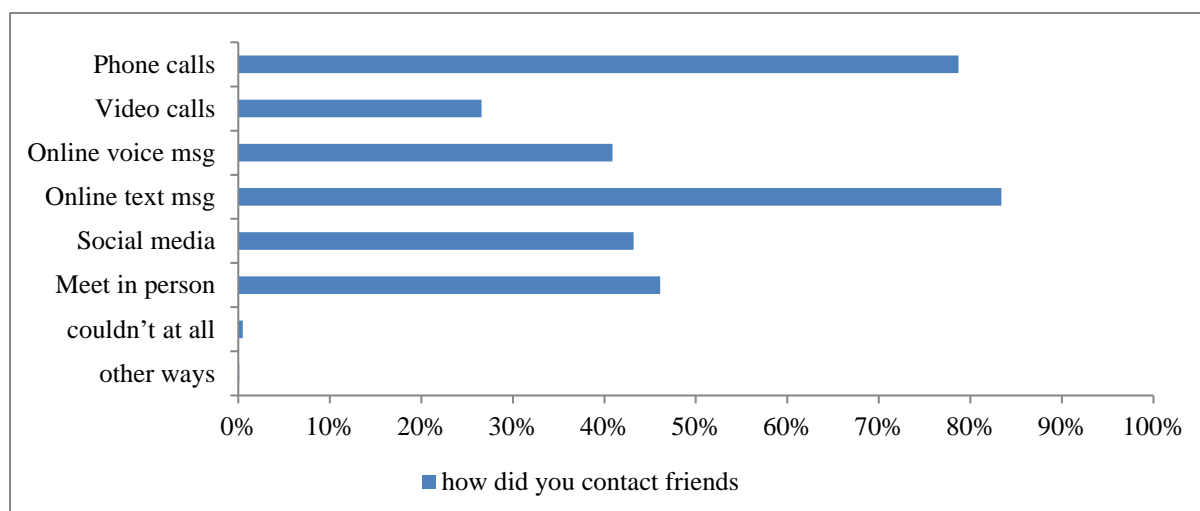


During the COVID-19 period, most children reported that they had good internet access (91.6%)⁷. On the other hand, there were some cases where it was difficult to use the Internet (26.8%) or it was difficult to access the online class (27.7%). Regarding school life, many children answered that they miss their friends (78.1%), school life (75.0%), and teachers (59.8%).

Table 16: 19. How did you contact your friends when the COVID19 was at its peak? (Choose all). (%)

During the Coronavirus, when schools were closed, how did you learn at home?	
Phone Calls	78.7
Video calls	26.6
On-line voice messages	40.9
On-line text messages	83.4
Social media (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok or any other)	43.2
Meeting each other in person	46.1
Could not contact at all	0.5

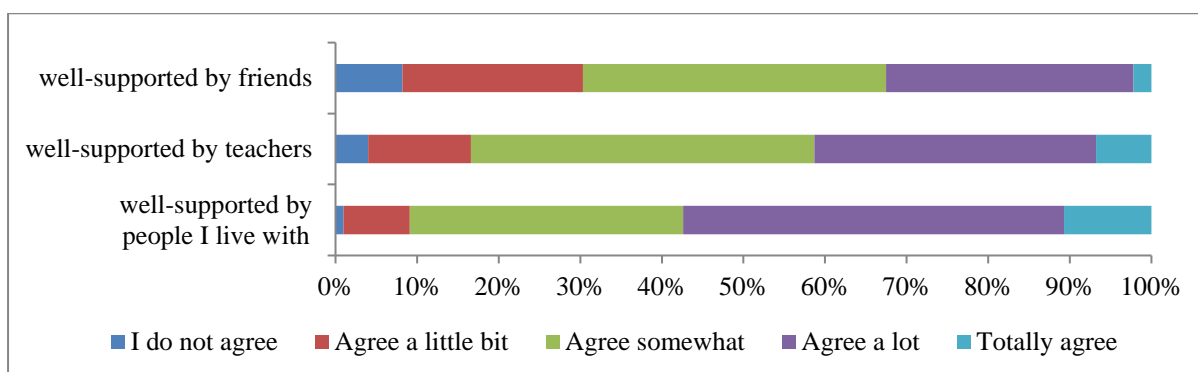
⁷ Children were considered to be in good condition if they responded “often” or “always” for each item.



During the peak of COVID-19, children said they contacted their friends through online text messages (73.4%), phone calls (78.7%), social media (43.2%), online voice messages (40.9%), and video calls (26.6%). Meanwhile, 46.1% of children answered that they had met in person, and 0.5% did not contact them at all.

Table 17: 22. *How much do you agree with the following statements? (%)*

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
During the Coronavirus, I felt well-supported by some of my friends	8.2	22.1	37.1	30.3	2.2
During the Coronavirus, I felt well-supported by some of my teachers	4.0	12.6	42.1	34.5	6.8
During the Coronavirus, I felt well-supported by some people I live with	1.0	8.1	33.5	46.7	10.7

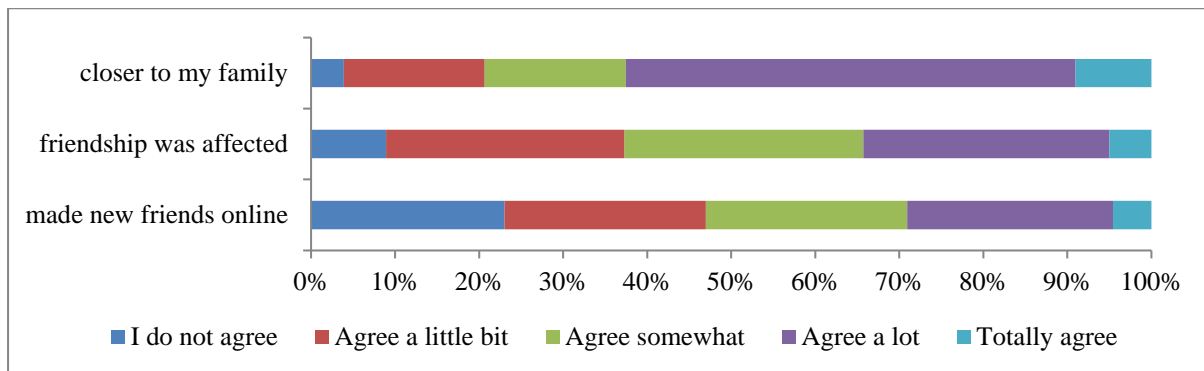


When looking at the degree to which children were supported during the COVID-19 period, a majority of children reported that they were well-supported by their family (57.4%), teachers (41.3%), and friends (32.5%), suggesting that family support played an important role in children’s lives during this period⁸.

Table 18: 23. How much do you agree with the following statements? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
During the coronavirus, I became closer to some members of my family	2.8	12.1	40.0	38.6	6.5
My relationships with my friends was affected during the Coronavirus	7.7	24.5	38.2	25.3	4.3
I made new friends with other children online during the Coronavirus	21.7	22.6	28.3	23.1	4.3

⁸ Children were considered to be in agreement with the statement if they responded “totally agree” and “agree a lot” for each item.



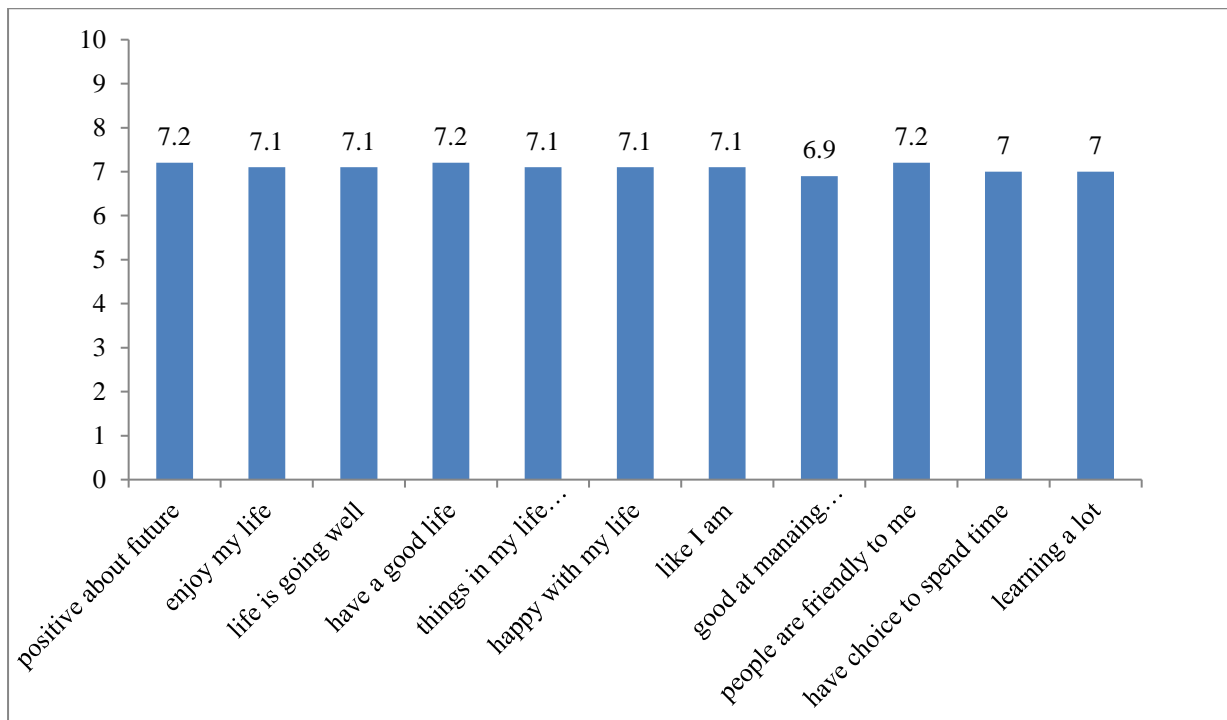
Children’s relationships have also changed according to changes in the surrounding environment. During COVID-19, children became close to their family members (45.1%), while a large proportion children reported that their relationships with friends (29.6%) were affected⁹. However, some children were able to make new friends online (27.4%) during this period.

2.4 How do you feel about life: Q24-28

Table 19: 24. Tell us how much you agree with the following statements about your life

Item	<i>m(sd)</i>
I enjoy my life	7.1(1.6)
My life is going well	7.1(1.6)
I have a good life	7.2(1.6)
The things that happen in my life are excellent	7.1(1.6)
I am happy with my life	7.1(1.6)
I like being the way I am	7.1(1.6)
I am good at managing my daily responsibilities	6.9(1.6)
People are generally friendly towards me	7.2(1.5)
I have enough choice about how I spend my time	7.0(1.5)
I feel that I am learning a lot at the moment	7.0(1.7)
I feel positive about my future	7.2(1.5)

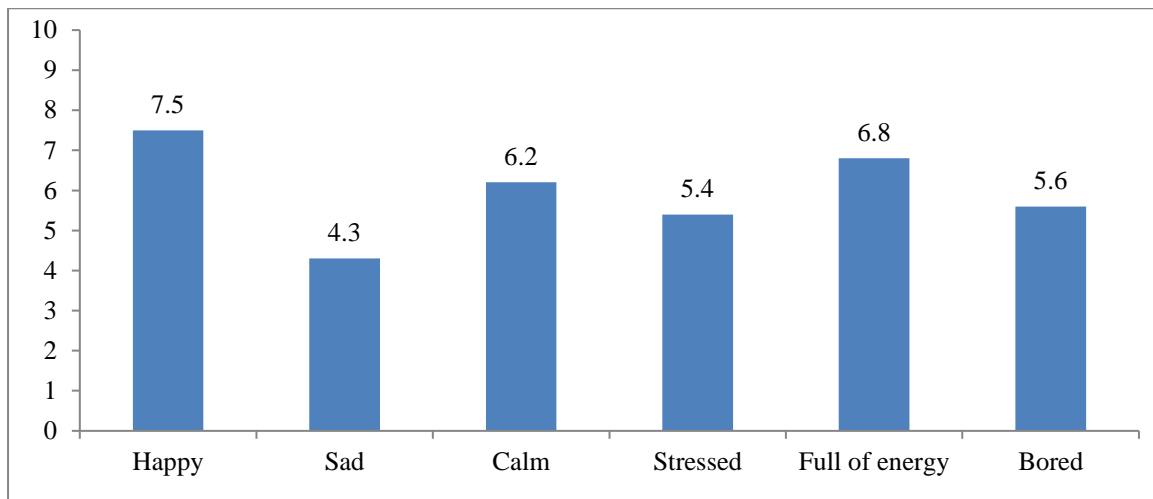
⁹ Children were considered to be in agreement with the statement if they responded “totally agree” and “agree a lot” for each item.



With regard to life satisfaction, children were found to be somewhat satisfied overall. However, it is noteworthy that the scores only range around 7 points. They were living a good life ($m=7.2$), people were generally friendly ($m=7.2$), and they felt positive about the future ($m=7.2$). They showed relatively low satisfaction with the question that they are doing their job well every day ($m=6.9$).

Table 20: 25. Last two weeks: How often feeling ...

Item	$m(sd)$
Happy	7.5(1.6)
Sad	4.3(2.3)
Calm	6.2(2.0)
Stressed	5.4(1.9)
Full of energy	6.8(1.8)
Bored	5.6(2.1)

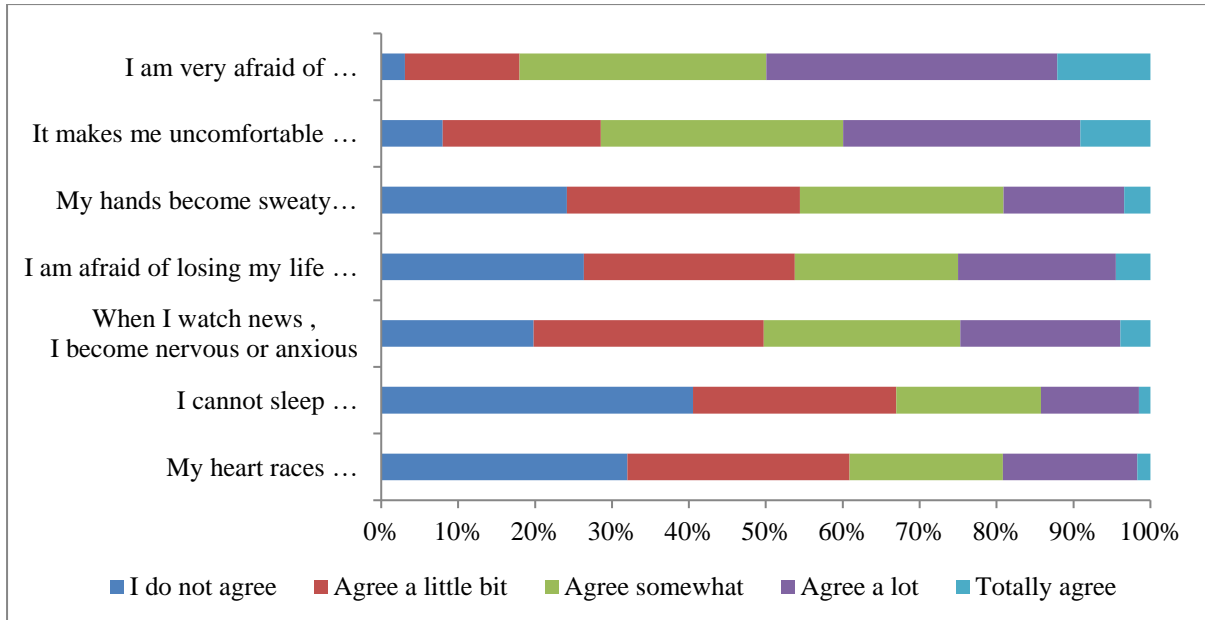


In the past two weeks, the children felt relatively happy ($m=7.5$) and full of energy ($m=6.8$). However, negative emotions such as boredom ($m=5.6$) and stress ($m=5.4$) scored mid-point. On the other hand, children felt relatively low levels of sadness ($m=4.3$).

Table 21: 26. How much do you agree with the following statements? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I am very afraid of the Coronavirus	3.1	14.9	32.1	37.9	12.1
It makes me uncomfortable to think about the Coronavirus	8.0	20.6	31.5	30.9	9.1
My hands become sweaty when I think about the Coronavirus	24.1	30.3	26.4	15.7	3.4
I am afraid of losing my life because of the Coronavirus	26.3	27.4	21.2	20.5	4.5
When I watch news and stories about the Coronavirus on the TV and social media, I become nervous or anxious	19.8	29.9	25.5	20.8	3.9
I cannot sleep because I'm worrying about getting the Coronavirus	40.5	26.4	18.8	12.7	1.5

My heart races (beats very fast) 32.0 28.9 19.9 17.5 1.7
 when I think about getting the
 Coronavirus



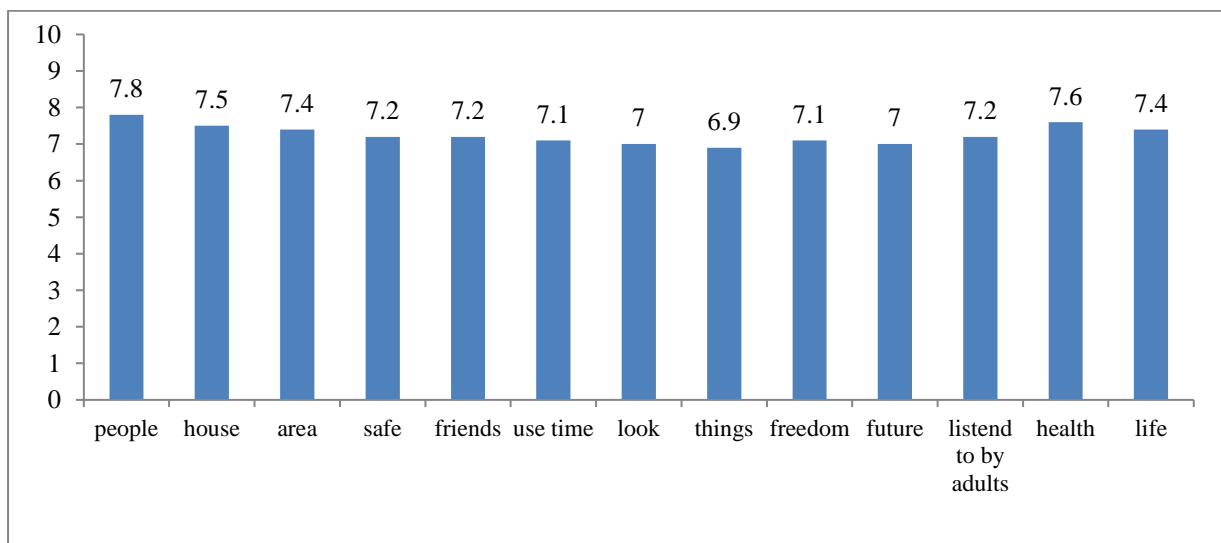
Children were physically and psychologically experiencing anxiety and discomfort about COVID-19. In terms of discomfort related to COVID-19, children responded that they were afraid of Coronavirus (50.0%) and uncomfortable thinking of Coronavirus (40.0%)¹⁰. Approximately 24% of children reported that they are afraid of losing their lives because of Coronavirus, and becomes nervous and anxious when watching related news.

Table 22: 27. How satisfied are you with the following in your life?

Item	<i>m(sd)</i>
Satisfaction with: The people you live with	7.8(1.3)
Satisfaction with: The house you live in	7.5(1.6)
Satisfaction with: The area where you live	7.4(1.5)
Satisfaction with: About how safe you feel	7.2(1.5)
Satisfaction with: Your friends	7.2(1.5)

¹⁰ Children were considered to be in agreement with the statement if they responded “totally agree” and “agree a lot” for each item.

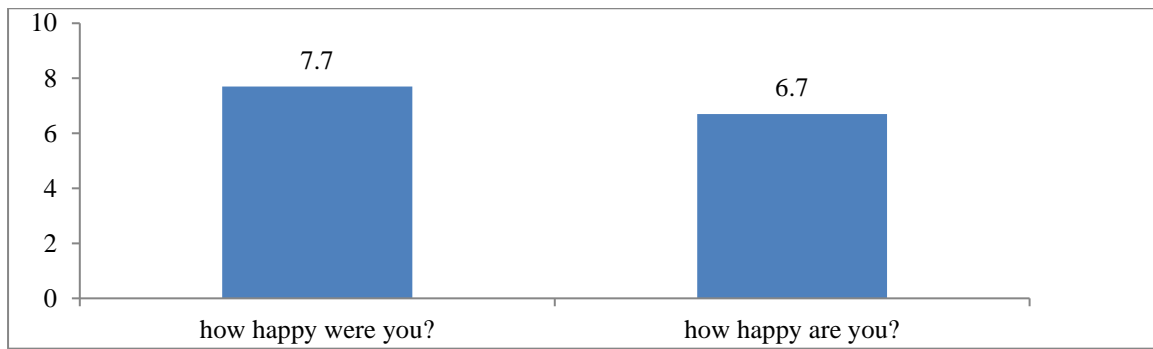
Satisfaction with: How you use your time	7.1(1.5)
Satisfaction with: The way you look	7.0(1.6)
Satisfaction with: The things you have	6.9(1.7)
Satisfaction with: The freedom you have	7.1(1.5)
Satisfaction with: What may happen later in your life	7.0(1.5)
Satisfaction with: How you are listened to by adults in general	7.2(1.6)
Satisfaction with: Your health	7.6(1.4)
Satisfaction with: Your life as a whole	7.4(1.4)



When children were asked about their satisfaction with life, their satisfaction with people ($m=7.8$), health ($m=7.6$), and home ($m=7.5$) was moderate. On the other hand, satisfaction with what they currently have ($m=6.9$), appearance ($m=7.0$), and future ($m=7.0$) was relatively lower than other items among Korean sample.

Table 23: 28. How happy you were/are you before/during the COVID 19 outbreak?

Item	$m(sd)$
Thinking about how your life was before the Coronavirus, how happy were you with your life as whole?	7.7(1.3)
Thinking about how your life now during the Coronavirus, how happy are you with your life as whole?	6.7(1.5)



Children were asked about their happiness level before and after COVID-19. The happiness level before COVID-19 was 7.7 points, but the happiness level during the COVID-19 period was 6.7 points, which decreased by 1 point.

3. Conclusions

This study was conducted from July to August 2021 and included 1,500 10-year-old children. The main findings are summarized as follows:

First, although no official lockdown has been implemented in Korea, half of the children responded that they were unable to leave their homes for a while due to COVID-19. One in four children said they did not go to school. School closure seemed to have influenced the quality of children social relationships, resulting in closer relationship with family and changes in relationships with their friends.

Second, the vast majority of Korean children did not experience material hardship during the pandemic. More than 99% of Korean children were able to connect to the Internet at home, and 97% of children in 5th grade had a mobile phone. It seems that less than 1% of children had no food to eat during the COVID-19 period.

Third, most of the children studied at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, and only 0.6% said they did not study at home at all. Most children were able to continue their learning through online classes (93.4%) during the lockdown period.

Fourth, the children also communicated with their friends online. Most of the children answered that they received support from their families, and the proportion of children who answered that they received support from teachers and friends was also high.

Fifth, when Korean children's life satisfaction were compare before and after COVID-19, we noticed that their subjective well-being has deteriorated. The Korean team is exploring the major factors and gaps associated with this deterioration of subjective well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this, we plan to analyze whether the decline in subjective well-being is a phenomenon that occurs in all children or whether inequality in the decline of subjective well-being exists for specific groups of children.