



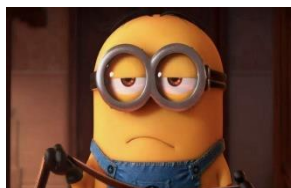
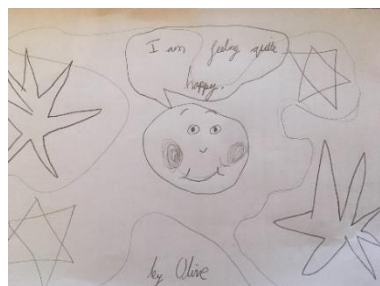
As part of our ongoing qualitative study to understand the family experience of COVID-19 in the UK, France and Italy, we have investigated how parents and children are feeling during the most recent lockdowns.

We have explored school and family life, entertainment, finances, Christmas and hopes for 2021.

For more details please contact info@redcresearch.com

A RANGE OF EMOTIONS IN THE LEAD UP TO CHRISTMAS

CHILDREN MISS NORMALITY



PARENTS IN 'GROUNDHOG DAY'



- Younger children seem to be **happier and more hopeful than older children and parents**, enjoying being back at school with their classmates and feeling less lonely as a result
- **Older children (11+)** have grown even more tired of **social distancing restrictions** as they are unable to do many activities with friends outside of school
- **School has been particularly difficult for children** with the introduction of masks and inability to mix or play with friends in different classes
- Whilst emotions vary amongst older and younger children, it's clear that they each miss having physical contact with friends and being able to make plans with them outside of school

- Parents express **feeling trapped**, finding it difficult to visualise a life without social distancing restrictions and doubtful things are going to improve anytime soon
- **They miss having variation within their routine** and wish they could spend free time with friends and extended family
- Parents now largely **view socialising online as more of a chore** rather than an enjoyable way of connecting with others
- The **colder and darker weather is making it more difficult for parents to entertain children** as they can't do as many outdoor activities: feel **overwhelmed and exhausted**
- More focus on **home improvements** given how much time is now being spent at home, and **food treats** to lift the family mood

"The first time I ate with people I met this year I discovered their faces, I had never seen them before"

Girl age 16yrs



"My son is definitely enjoying spending time around other kids at Nursery. He's coming home telling me who his best friend was today, who's been naughty and who he played with!"

Mum of boy age 4



"Family life is like it was in May - you go out with fear, you avoid many things, you don't see anyone, you wonder if we will be able to overcome this wave too"

Mum of boy age 11



PARENTS WANT TO CREATE A HOLLY, JOLLY, CHRISTMAS



- Even though there might be some changes to the way they celebrate this year, **parents are determined to make Christmas special for their children**
- Some parents have put **festive decorations up earlier** than they usually would in the hopes the Christmas spirit will boost the mood in their house
- Parents are doing **more online shopping** this year as getting in-store is proving difficult, so started **ordering gifts earlier in anticipation of a delayed postal service**
- However, parents have voiced that it's **not the volume of gifts they give their children that will make them happy, it's about finding items and creating experiences that they are really going to enjoy**
- Some parents have less people to buy for this year as their **wider network has reduced** e.g. no longer buying for a childminder because they no longer see them
- As **food remains an important part of Christmas celebrations**, menus will remain largely unchanged but the amount purchased may decrease considering the reduced amount of guests attending

"This year I really feel the need to give my children a good Christmas. Given the difficult situation, we need to make even more effort to find special and beautiful things" Mum of girl age 5

"I've told the children there won't be anything fancy like an Xbox or Playstation, I can't afford that. My sons are older now and can understand that it's about the day and not what they get" Mum of boys age 13 + 14

ESCAPISM THROUGH DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT

- Families are **spending more time at home due to the colder and darker weather**. Therefore, digital entertainment becomes a crucial source of distraction
- **Netflix, Disney+ and Amazon Prime Video continue to bring families together** as they did in the first lockdown, making regular movie nights possible and providing a selection of TV shows to follow
- **Linear TV has also been used to watch family friendly shows**, such as Strictly Come Dancing
- Children have been **discovering YouTube at a younger age**, most commonly searching for unboxing videos and toy related content e.g. Ryan's World and Lizzie's Toy Time
- **Video games are an important way for older children to remain connected to friends**, able to play together online and chat throughout the game. However, as they start to play video games more often (due to more time at home), they **become increasingly emotionally invested and attached**, which can cause tensions to rise with parents
- Popular video games include **Fortnite, Fifa and Minecraft**



ENTERTAINMENT AT HOME

"We spend a lot of time in front of the TV. We've renewed subscriptions to Netflix, Prime Video and Disney+" Mum of boy age 11

"If I make them turn their consoles off, they act like I've just chopped both their arms off" Mum of boys age 13+14

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2021?



- Families are hoping for a future in which they can **hug family without wearing PPE, catch up with friends without worrying and to be able to live spontaneously**
- **Parents express a strong desire to go on a family holiday in 2021**, eager to make up for cancelled plans and to experience different environments
- **The approval of a vaccine has made some families feel more confident about 2021**, with the return of normality seeming a little closer **However, parents in France are less trusting of the vaccine and are sceptical about its efficacy**
- **Planning for the future remains difficult** and parents are being cautious about making any firm commitments for 2021, adopting a **wait-and-see attitude**

“One thing the first lockdown taught us is to slow down and enjoy living in the moment without thinking too far ahead”
Mum of girl age 4



“Of course my immediate wish is that we get out of this health crisis. I also hope the children can take their masks off in the classroom, that we can resume a social life, as well as sports activities, etc”

Mum of girl age 15



“What we want most from 2021 is a really good holiday and we really hope that this will be able to happen. We haven’t made any plans whatsoever for next year yet”

Mum of 4 yr old

