

The impact of COVID-19 on children, young people and families in Australia

During the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened some of the challenges faced by young Australians such as experiencing higher rates of psychological distress, job loss, and educational disruption.⁽¹⁾ The following statistics are current as of November 2021.

More than half

of young people aged 18-29 feel more negative about their future than before the pandemic.⁽⁴⁾



Mental health

The overall **top five** concerns related to COVID-19 raised by these children and young people were:⁽³⁾

42% of young people aged 13-17 say the pandemic and response had negatively affected their social connectedness.⁽¹⁾

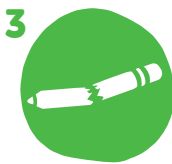
Psychological distress among 18-24s increased by **21%** since the start of the pandemic.⁽¹⁾



Mental health



Social isolation



Education impacts



Impacts on family life



Changes to plans and usual activities



Child safety

48,854

Australians under 20 were reported to have caught COVID-19.⁽²⁾ And there were 2 deaths of Australians under 20 due to COVID-19.⁽²⁾



Lost learning

46% of children and young people were at risk of adverse effects on their wellbeing by being physically disconnected from school.⁽⁴⁾

76% of adults with children had kept them home from school or child care due to COVID-19.⁽⁵⁾

1. Australia's youth: COVID-19 and the impact on young people 2021

2. Australian Department of Health - Coronavirus (COVID-19) case numbers and statistics

3. Australian Human Rights Commission - Impacts of COVID-19 on children and young people who contact Kids Helpline (2020)

4. UNICEF - COVID response: Australia's children and young people 2020-2021

5. AIHW Child protection in the time of COVID-19 2021

1800 061 000
barnardos.org.au

 **Barnardos**
Australia

The impact of COVID-19 on children, young people and families in Australia

Poverty and unemployment

1 in 5

people in the labour force (20% or almost 2.7 million) were either unemployed or underemployed.⁽⁵⁾

11%

of young people were not in education or employment.⁽¹⁾

1.1 million

children whose parents received the Family Tax Benefit were also receiving a Coronavirus Supplement payment.⁽⁵⁾

Nearly half of people aged 18-24 years reported being unable to pay their rent or mortgage on time.⁽⁴⁾

Youth Allowance unemployment recipients increased from around **86,000 to 171,000**.⁽⁵⁾

500,000 children were living in a single-parent family receiving the Parenting Payment and 500,000 children had a parent receiving the JobSeeker Payment.⁽⁵⁾

38%

of Australians who lost work were aged 15-24.⁽¹⁾

Family stress

Family law courts saw an increase in urgent parenting disputes during COVID-19.

39%

increase

in the Family Court of Australia and a

23%

increase

in the Federal Circuit Court.

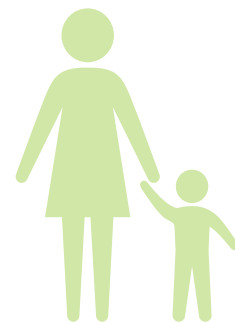
Poor parental mental health is a risk factor for child abuse and neglect and 2 in 3 adults experienced anxiety and worry due to COVID-19.

High mental distress of mothers of high-school-aged children (youngest child aged 12 to 18) increased from 9% in 2017 to **22%**.

High mental distress of fathers of primary-school-aged children increased from 9% to **33%**.

75%

increase in Google searches for family and domestic violence help during COVID-19, compared with the average for the previous 5 years.⁽⁵⁾



1. Australia's youth: COVID-19 and the impact on young people 2021

2. Australian Department of Health - Coronavirus (COVID-19) case numbers and statistics

3. Australian Human Rights Commission - Impacts of COVID-19 on children and young people who contact Kids Helpline (2020)

4. UNICEF - COVID response: Australia's children and young people 2020-2021

5. AIHW Child protection in the time of COVID-19 2021

1800 061 000
barnardos.org.au

 **Barnardos**
Australia