

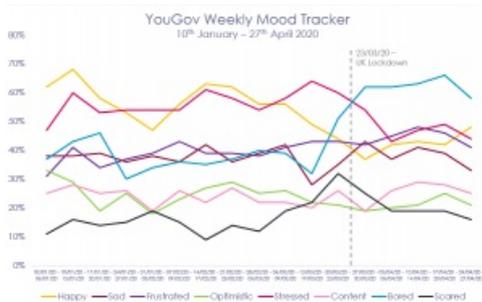
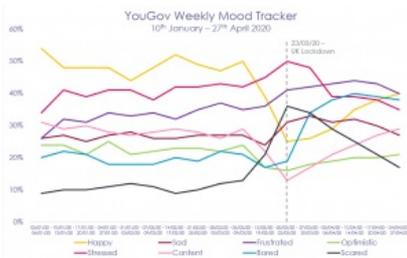
The Lockdown Diaries – Focus on Gen-Z

[COVID-19](#) [DATA](#) [INSIGHT](#)

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How are people feeling?

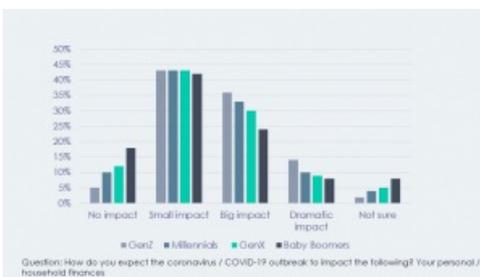
Frustration, boredom and stress remain the predominant feelings for people in the UK this week, but these feelings are now slowly on the decline. Levels of happiness are slowly increasing, and levels of contentment are almost back to pre-pandemic levels. However, the pandemic doesn't affect everybody equally. Boredom is much higher for those between 18 and 24. This audience – Gen-Z -are also more likely to be stressed than the wider population, with many facing uncertainty about their futures; Gen-Z are the most likely to see a change in their working circumstances as a result of COVID-19.



18-24-

year-olds

We are also seeing a slightly more positive outlook. For the first time since lockdown begun, only a minority of people think that the worst is still to come; a sharp decline from last week. Despite this, the worst of the financial impact is yet to happen. GfK's April consumer confidence shows that consumer confidence is at -34 – only 5 points higher than the lowest ever level recorded in 2008. 31% of people say that COVID-19 will have a big or dramatic effect on their finances and 85% of people in the UK think there will be a big or dramatic impact on the UK economy as a whole. Globally, Gen-Z can expect to be the most impacted group financially. 17% of them have temporarily been laid off or placed on furlough, 10% have lost their job and 50% have had a pay cut and/or their working hours reduced. (Source: Global Web Index (global data)).



School's out and summer's cancelled

Below, we consider the Gen-Z lockdown experience, the implications and the opportunities that these might offer your brand.

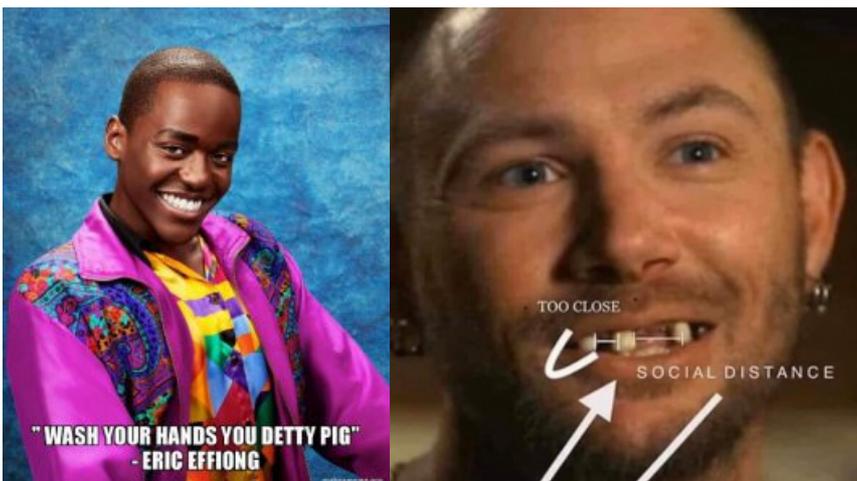
- Schools, colleges and universities closed on 20th Summer exams are cancelled and, as university offers had already been made, those with predicted grades have been left without another chance to prove themselves. This has led to many feeling uncertain about their future. 60% of students reported that their career confidence has been impacted because of coronavirus. They don't want to be the generation remembered as the one's who had it easy.
- Those who have applied to colleges or uni are determined to start this autumn with 86% continuing their applications as planned. However, some 44% of prospective 2020 undergraduate students are now considering an online course provider instead of a traditional course for their future education.
- Students are prioritising their education over their health. 78% of 18-24 year olds reported that they were confident that they would recover well if they caught coronavirus. They're not in the age group most at risk and so their health is less of a concern than their futures.
- Young people have given up their education as part of lockdown, but don't feel like their contributions towards the pandemic have been acknowledged.

(Source: Future Creatives, Student Hut COVID-19 White Paper, UCAS, Trendence, YouGov)

Memes over MPs:

- The government's key messaging around social distancing initially **failed to connect** with young people, especially as the earlier messaging suggested that young people were immune to the virus. Consequently, Gen-Z were slower to react, with concern about contracting coronavirus reaching 58% of 16-24s in the last week of March.

- Lack of trust – fewer than 1 in 5 students have confidence in the government's response to the crisis, having felt unengaged or uninformed by the government in the past. However, 85% of 18-24s said that they would adhere to government advice even if they disagreed with the policies or found them pointless. Young people have responded by using their own creativity to educate and police those around them.
- Meme messages – Social media plays a big role in how young people receive and share news on the virus. Memes became an important communication tool for those turning to social media to learn more about COVID-19, while also helping to provide light relief in the wake of a crisis. Dark humour and content which makes Gen-Z laugh has proven far more likely to be engaged with or shared than official government comms.



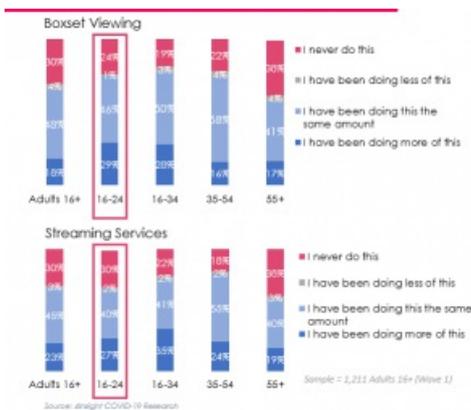
During the first week of lockdown, memes became a key communication tool, with public health announcements in the form of memes being the most shared type of posts (37.5%) on social media. Teenagers are increasingly turning to TikTok. UK daily active users increased by 33% in the first 11 weeks of 2020, largely driven by Gen-Z. Videos using the hashtag #coronavirus had 5.5. billion total views on the app. TikTok challenges are encouraging users to be more creative while alleviating boredom.

(Source: Future Creatives, Student COVID-19 White Paper, Kantar, YouGov, The Guardian, Voxburner 2020 Youth Trends Report)

Isolation-Ready

- Gen-Z are better equipped for lockdown than other generations because they were hyper-connected before isolation and are used to maintaining virtual friendships and relationships with people. These skills mean that they are an untapped resource that society can turn to for upskilling in living in a more virtual world.
- Gen-Z are consuming media in a more communal way – whether it's gaming, which has seen a 121% search increase for multiplayer games since January 1st, or streaming shows together through apps like Netflix Party and House Party. Overall, young people are surviving the lockdown by clocking up large amounts of screen-time each day.
- Gen-Z were quick to notice the trend of showcasing unrealistic lockdown expectations on social media. As a generation, they can spot fake news and will call out unrealistic messaging so it's important that brands use authentic messaging.

(Source: Captify Impact Study: The Remote Controller)



During lockdown, boxset bingeing has increased across all

age categories, but younger viewers are 56% more likely to be bingeing series than the average adult.

Live TV has also seen an uplift with more young people turning into linear TV to stay informed and distracted. More than 4 in 10 claimed to be doing this more than before.

Conclusion:

If you paused spend at the start of the pandemic, now might be a good time to start thinking about re-engaging with your audience, particularly if you can ease points of tension.

Now, more than ever, purpose and understanding your audience's experience of the crisis will be essential to getting the tone right.

Remember that it's possible that what you were doing before is still relevant; a lot of behaviours have remained the same.

Brands that want to be useful as well as active in this time should work with young creatives and creators in order to identify the brand's role and to help develop the campaign and messaging that people will best connect with and which will be the most impactful.

You can read the full report [here](#).

COVID-19 DATA INSIGHT