



Young People's Experiences During the COVID 19 Crisis

Local young people are hidden victims in this pandemic. They do not receive as much help as others as they are not seen as a priority during this crisis.

These young people are more likely to suffer serious hardship during the present situation as they are often in less secure employment with zero-hour contracts and in accommodation where landlords are refusing to reduce rents.

Many who are in education feeling unsupported and anxious of how their future is going to be affected.

As youth advocates, we feel it is our duty to be a voice for these people, raise awareness at the lack of support that is so desperately needed not just now but even after this pandemic. We conducted a local survey to find out exactly what is going on in Southampton and the results are shocking and hard to read. They highlight how vulnerable this group is with stories of the huge hardships they are facing with little or no support.

Something needs to be done about this **NOW**. We are urging the local council, colleges and universities, health and the government to reach out to Southampton's young people and give us the support we need and deserve. After all **WE** are the future.

Read the stories below! so far, we have a total of **40** responses most of which have been affected in more than one way. A total of **19** said their work has been affected which of course links to money as well, **15** wrote about loss of money and pay cuts. **13** wrote about their education suffering, **5** mentioned about housing and rents being affected and **10** mentioned how this pandemic has

affected their mental health. There are a few respondents that wanted to remain completely anonymous, so no information from them have been shared.

1. As a carer working in adult social care, I have clearly been affected many hospitals around the country are trying to free up beds this puts strain on adult social services and as a result my workload has doubled.
2. Care assistant in isolation having to take sick pay which is under half my weekly average wage.
3. Affecting my work situation as I am classed as vulnerable and I am waiting for a laptop to work from home.
4. My university has been closed and all exams have been changed with no idea what the alternative assessments are and when they will happen, I will also not get my results till later now which means I won't be able to start my job until a later date – affecting me severely.
5. Jasmine – I'm 24 years old, a few things, it's completely ruined university this year, my last essay has been changed so many times, I've had to move out of halls 5 months earlier than expected, I lost both my jobs in Southampton so that in itself has had a knock on effect to money and my mental wellbeing, I'm so skint, stressed out, then everyone at home are keyworkers and work for the NHS but I've tried to get a job and I don't seem to be getting anywhere, my mental health has taken a massive knock, all I want to do is sleep, I'm having to lean on my family for everything as I have £0 and it's not fair. I have got my summer job to fall back on, but I don't know its that's going to happen, but there is always someone worst off.
6. Well I have no income because I work at a bar, I can't afford to pay my university flat rent because my loan doesn't quite cover it and they just don't really care, my partner is taking a year out from university and he also lost his job so can't pay the rent at all and all they said to him was to contact HR which he hasn't heard from. I'm also stuck in Bedford with my family which isn't the end of the world but its making my anxiety really bad because my partner is all alone in Southampton with no family or even friends nearby if he was to get ill and need something – I haven't been able to sleep properly and my mental health is the lowest it's been in years.
7. No longer able to work
8. Affected but further information was provided

9. I have a 17-month-old, so therefore my work is being seriously impacted, I have to only work half my usual hours and I am in the fortunate situation that my work is willing to pay me in full.
10. I was a cleaner in a hotel and we currently have little hours, however the guests we have staying with us are NHS workers
11. Not able to carry out my job as required field data collection (drone pilot for coastal erosion surveys)
12. University has closed, placements are unavailable and in the suspected fall out after the job market will be closed.
13. First time mum currently on benefits, its affecting if and when I can shop it is affecting my mental wellbeing as I'm isolated.
14. My hours at work went down from 37.5 to 15 a week. On 0 hours contract.
15. Usually I am in full time work in retail – effective of 26th march store allows no further work until the pandemic is over. Unsure for how long but is looking to be end of May at the mo. Pay falls on April 11th to the government 80% scheme.
16. Affected, no information provided.
17. My daughter used your service and is struggling 12-week isolation.
18. My university has moved all online work and I have made the difficult decision to travel home to my home country, as I feel more comfortable being close to my family during all of this. Whilst I consider myself lucky to have been able to go home and have the technology and other tools I need to complete my coursework in this new normal, I have also found it incredibly difficult to leave the life I have gotten used to leading in the UK, especially because my departure was so sudden and I didn't get the chance to say goodbye to any of my university friends, some of which I will probably never see again
19. I am not getting the help needed as my college is shut
20. I'm a full-time university student, so my plans for my final year are gone I feel like I've been robbed of all the normal experiences and rites of passage that come with graduation. I can't work so I won't have money coming in besides the student loan and my landlord hasn't even bothered to reply to our text about lowering rent this month. The university keeps sending us emails about how unsettling this must be and how they want

to help but there's been no concrete changes or offers of support. I'm constantly stressed and tired and working and studying has lost all meaning.

21. Course shifted to online work; dissertation topic changed halfway through.
22. I cannot concentrate on my university work and I have lost all hours at work so I will not earn any money.
23. My college course is not being done from home. I was already behind and I'm really worried as I am a key worker so don't have time off at the moment to give it my all due to high demand for workers and I'm worried I might lose my place at university next year and be charged £3000 for it.
24. I'm currently in my second year of university, due to the university being shut I don't have access to the computer programmes I need to complete major projects and the only advice is to redo it and try and find my own way around it. Many of the teachers aren't providing their classes online following the timetable making it difficult to keep up due to my home situation (my mum has underlying health problems and is dependent on me throughout the day) I'm finding it hard to find the time in my day to do work. I'm unable to work a job due to COVID-19 as are my parents meaning I currently have no income, but I still have bills coming out. I struggle with anxiety and depression and the stress and these changes are making day to day really hard, accompanied by the fact that I don't feel very supported and the new outlines for our education aren't very structured with hand in dates for assignments not even being released nearly 3 weeks after they said they were being changed.
25. I got back from travelling at the beginning of march and now am unable to find a job as obviously no one is hiring. I have applied for loads. I have a years' experience and plenty of skills and now I'm likely to be unemployed for a very long time.
26. I have had to self-isolate so not been at work therefore my finances are struggling.
27. School closed, work is scary now (supermarket) scared of infecting elderly parents.
28. In less days a week

29. Hello. The coronavirus has hugely affected me. My house mate has been laid off from work which means I am faced with dealing with having to cover two lots of rent and council tax..... I've also lost my job and been put on furlough which means my salary and commission after tax was 3000 and it now going to be reduced to my basic pay of 1000..... thank you.
30. My work has been closed and so my union in my third year and although our deadlines have been pushed back, we are still unable to access the computers at the university that have our software that we need.
31. I've lost my job.
32. unemployed and backpacking atm. Its delayed a lot of my travel plans and meaning I am spending more money to be inside than I would have liked.
33. No work- less income, struggling to pay rent. Landlord will not reduce rent.
34. My part-time job has a zero-hour contract despite having the same weekly shifts for the last three years. This means I have now lost that income and have missed the rent payment this month. I now have to work at home for my main employment, with the same deadlines, despite work being disrupted and being unable to do parts of it.
35. Uni has closed, and its increasingly hard to get support on assignments. I was made redundant due to the tourism industry taking such a hard hit.
36. I have been made a furlough worker (as I work in a pub), I am unable to see others (my boyfriend, friends and family) which is affecting me mental. And finally, I am in a sort of limbo with my university work.

This is just the beginning; we plan to keep sharing our survey and gain more evidence and continue to campaign for the support that is needed.

It is upsetting to read the struggles other young people are facing. As you can see most respondents have more than one aspect of their lives changed by Covid-19. It is time to show some support and act **NOW**.