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CANADA



# OH CANADA: HOW DO YOUTH FEEL ABOUT THEIR COUNTRY TODAY?

Prepared by the Association for Canadian Studies, June 29, 2020

# INTRODUCTION

- The Association for Canadian Studies, in partnership with Experiences Canada, recently invited children between the ages of 12 and 17 to participate in an online survey.
- Youth across the country were asked how they felt about Canada, their personal identities, diversity, discrimination, as well how they are coping with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The survey aimed to better understand how recent events are affecting youth to inform social policy.

# METHODOLOGY

## Quantitative Responses

- Web survey via Survey Monkey platform
- Administered from June 12-25, 2020
- 344 responses from 12 to 17 year olds across Canada
- Probabilistic margin of error of  $\pm 5\%$

## Qualitative Responses

- Web survey via Survey Monkey platform
- Administered from April 29-May 5, 2020
- 1191 responses from 12 to 17 year olds across Canada

# SOURCES OF PRIDE FOR YOUTH IN CANADA

- Universal health care, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and multiculturalism are the top sources of personal and collective pride for Canadian youth.

1. Universal health care – 97%

2. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms – 92 %

2. Multiculturalism – 92%

3. Official languages and bilingualism – 89%

4. The Canadian Armed Forces – 78%

5. The Canadian flag - 77%

6. The national anthem – 67%

7. CBC/Radio Canada – 58%

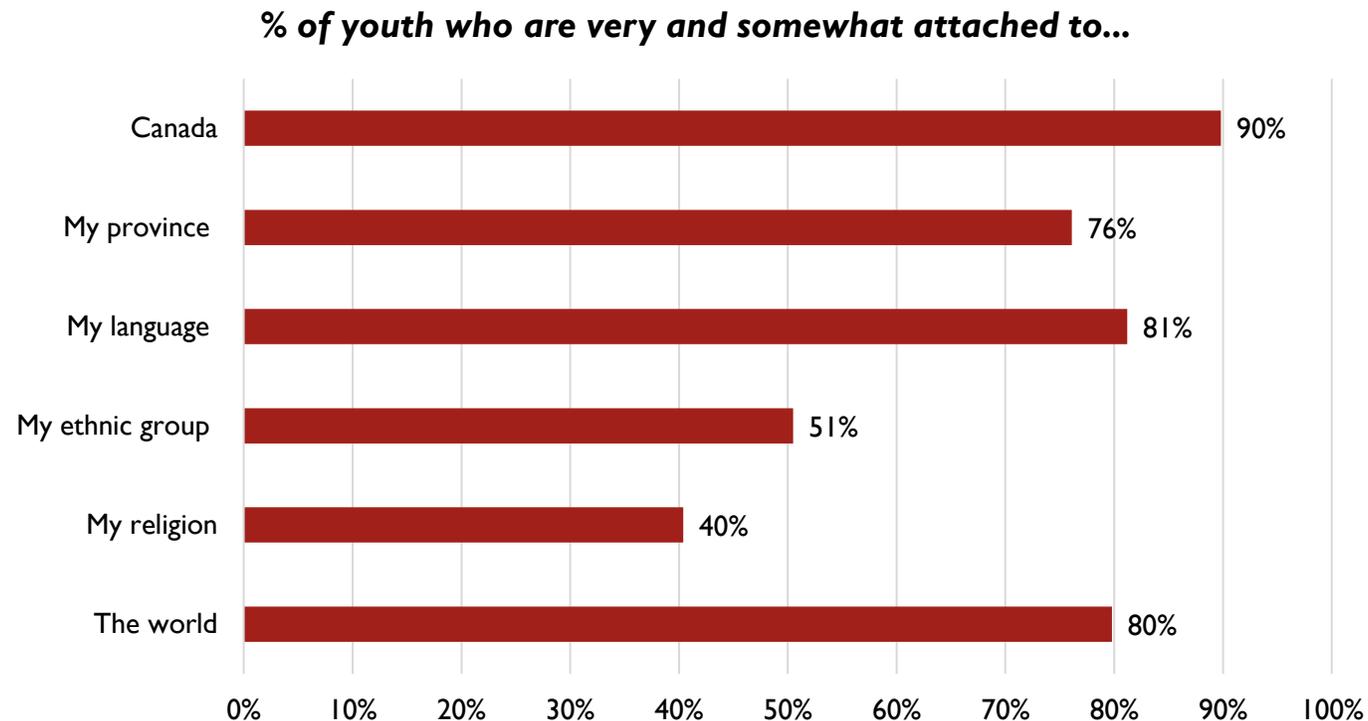
8. Hockey – 55%

9. The beaver – 50%

10. The Monarchy – 40%

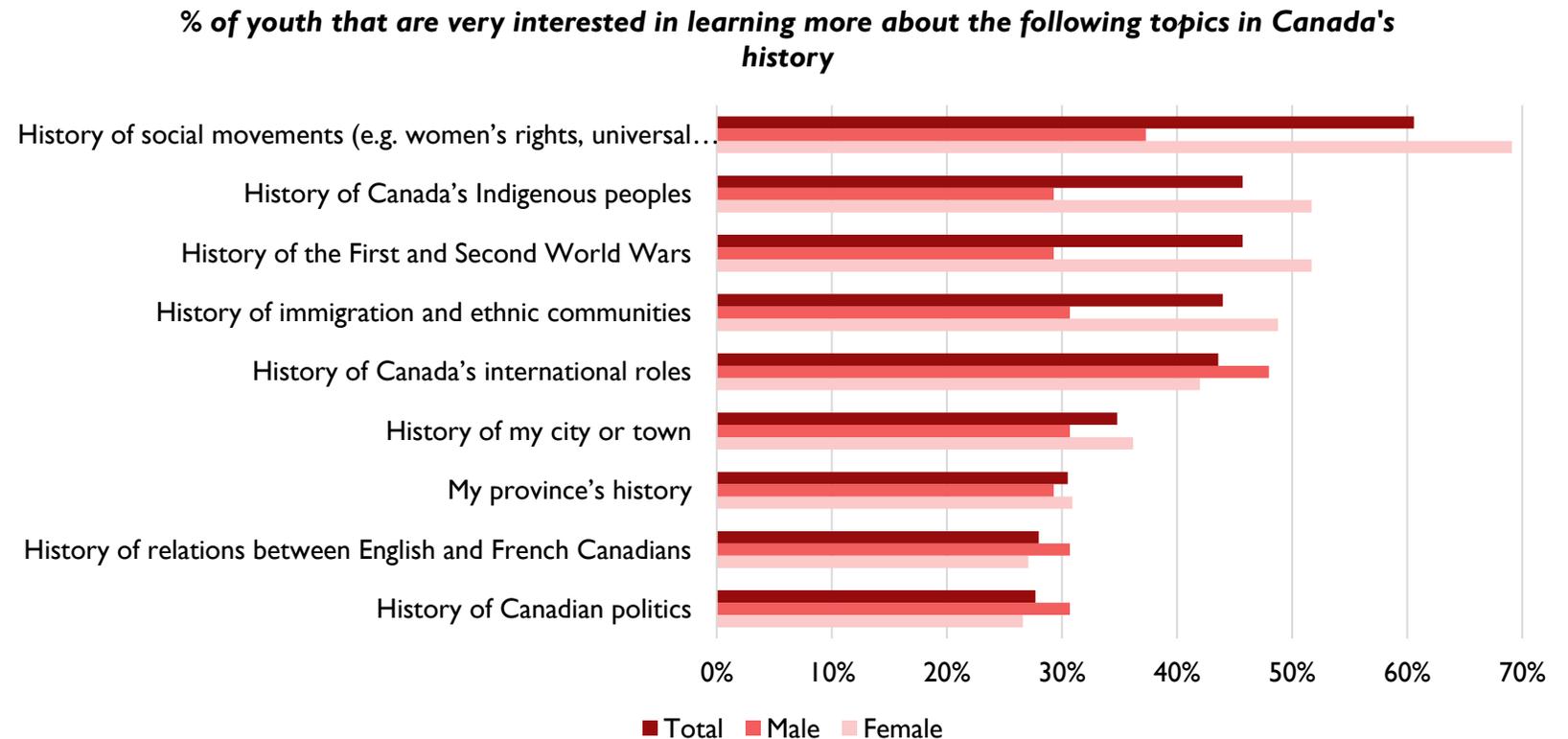
# LEVELS OF ATTACHMENT FOR YOUTH

- Canadian youth are most attached to Canada, followed by their language and then the world.



# LEARNING ABOUT CANADIAN HISTORY

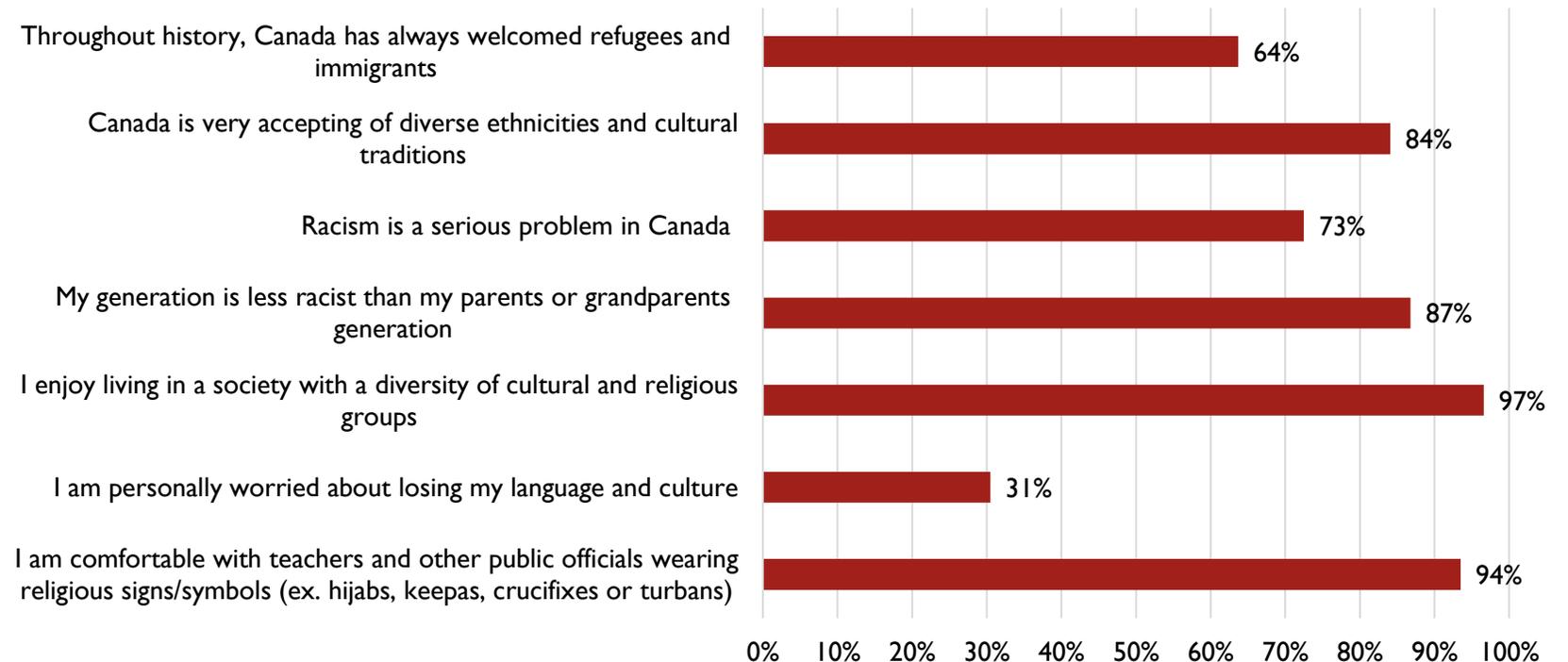
- Canadian youth appear to be the most interested in learning more about Canada's history of social movements (61%).
  - Girls are the most interested in this topic (69%).
- Boys are the most interested in learning more about the history of Canada's international roles (48%).



# PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISCRIMINATION IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

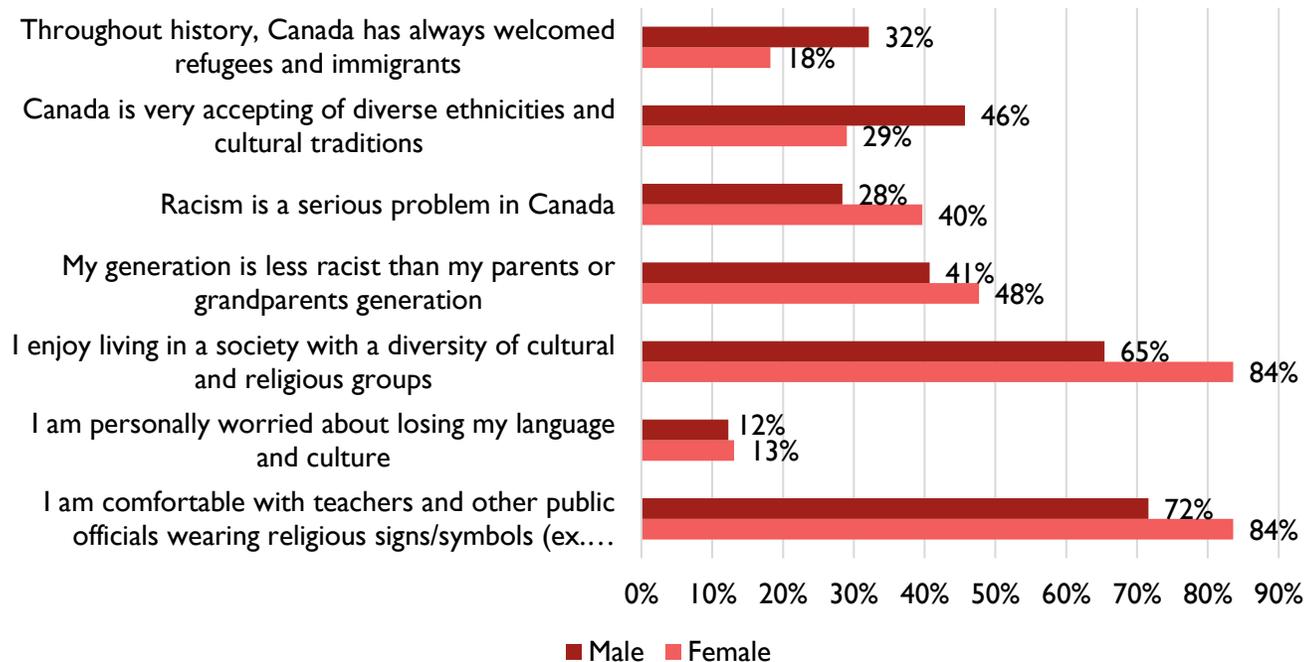
- 64% of youth believe that Canada has always welcomed refugees and immigrants.
- Almost 75% of respondents believe that racism is a serious problem.
- Over 90% enjoy living in a diverse society and are comfortable with teachers and public officials wearing religious signs/symbols.

**% of youth that agree with the following statements**



# GENDER: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISCRIMINATION IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

**% of youth that strongly agree with the following statements**

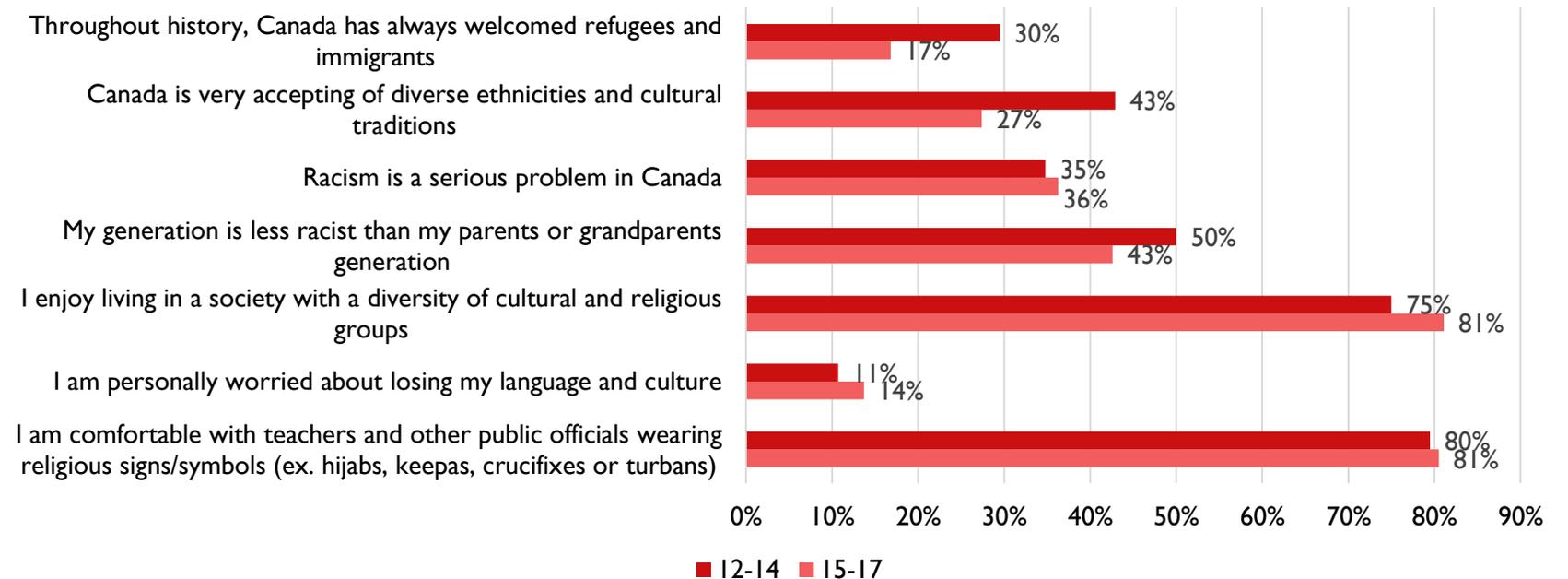


- Boys are more likely to strongly agree that Canada has always welcomed refugees and immigrants and that Canada is a country very accepting of diversity.
- Girls are more likely to strongly agree that racism is a serious problem and that the current generation is less racist than their parents.
- Over 80% of girls strongly enjoy living in a diverse society and are comfortable with teachers and public officials wearing religious signs/symbols.

# AGE: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISCRIMINATION IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

- 12-14 year olds are significantly more likely to strongly agree that Canada has always welcomed refugees and immigrants and that Canada is a country very accepting of diversity.

**% of youth that strongly agrees with the following statements**

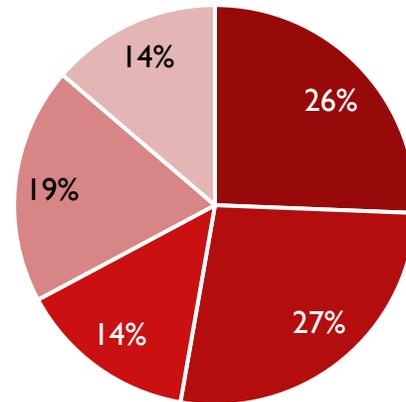


# THE FACE OF RACISM TODAY

- Youth responses when asked to think about the future and how life will be different, better or worse:
  - *“I’m concerned about the increase in racism.”*
  - *“COVID-19 will create more racism in our world.”*
  - *“I think the xenophobia surrounding Asians has been a lot worse because of the pandemic which makes me scared.”*

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MENTAL HEALTH

**Total respondents reporting a negative impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on youth mental health**



■ A lot ■ Some ■ A little ■ Very little ■ Not at all

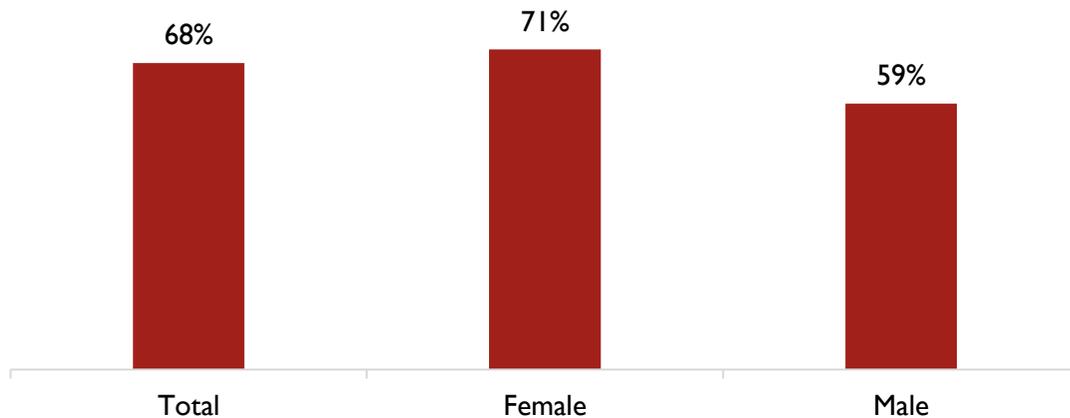
- Over 50% of youth report that COVID-19 has had a lot or some negative impact on their mental health.

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# EXPLORING YOUTH FRIENDSHIPS

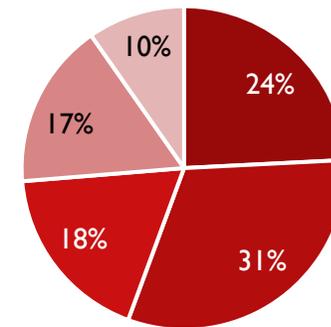
- Girls are more likely to have friends that share the same cultural background than boys.

*% of youth that strongly and somewhat agree that most of their friends share the same cultural background as themselves*



- Over 50% of youth report that COVID-19 has had a lot or some negative impact on their friendships.

*Total respondents on whether COVID-19 has had a negative impact in their relationships with friends*



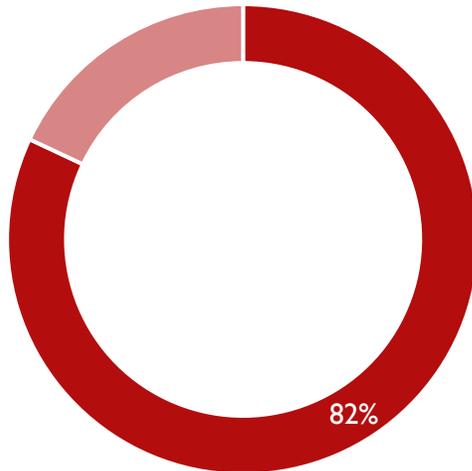
■ A lot ■ Some ■ A little ■ Very little ■ Not at all

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON FRIENDSHIPS

- *“People might avoid new friendships/relationships out of fear.”*
- *“I think it might be hard to start making new friends as I move to university, due to people maybe not trusting each other.”*
- *“I will be really glad to see my friends [...] again.”*
- *“I miss my friends and I miss all the plans that we never got to do. I know through this I will learn to appreciate the time that I do have with friends.”*

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

**% of youth who said COVID-19 had a lot or some negative impact on their extra-curricular activities (sports teams, dance, music)**

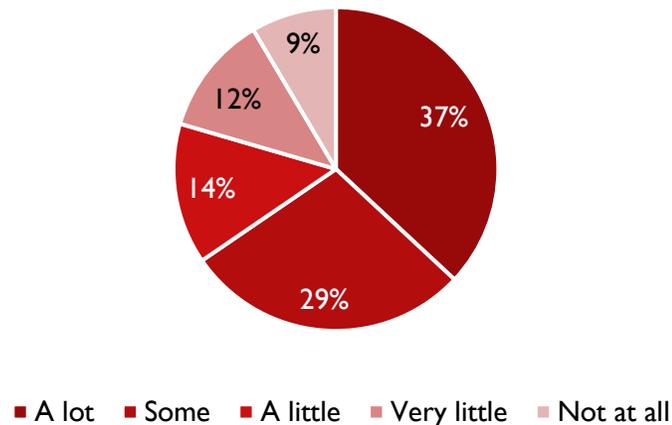


- 82% of youth report that COVID-19 has had a lot or some negative impact on their extra-curricular activities.
  - *“Social distancing has allowed me time to focus on my music and creativity.”*
  - *“I miss playing sports.”*
  - *“I may need to take a gap year to make up for this year where I didn’t get the volunteer experience I need for university.”*
  - *“I might not be able to get a scholarship for sports which could impact my plans.”*

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCHOOL YEAR

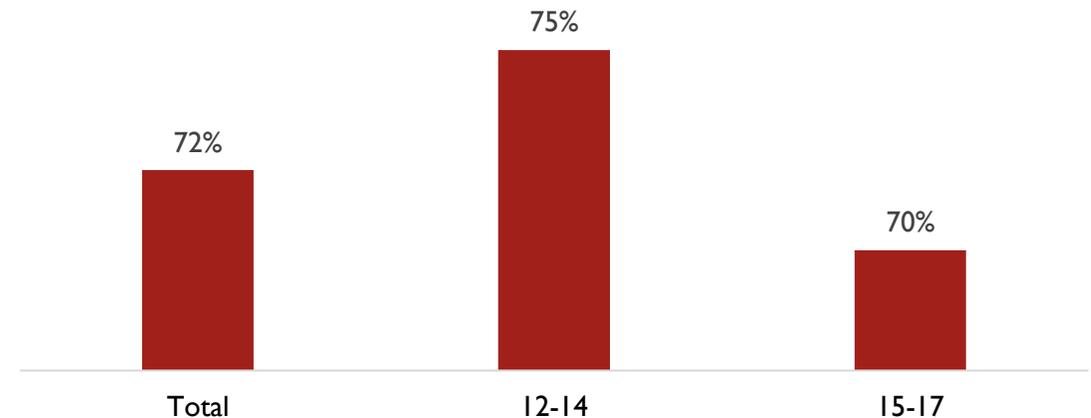
- Over 60% of youth report that COVID-19 has had a lot or some of a negative impact on their school year.

**Total respondents on whether COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their school year/academic success**



- Youth between the ages of 12-14 believe they are doing a better job at getting their school work done from home compared to the older cohort.

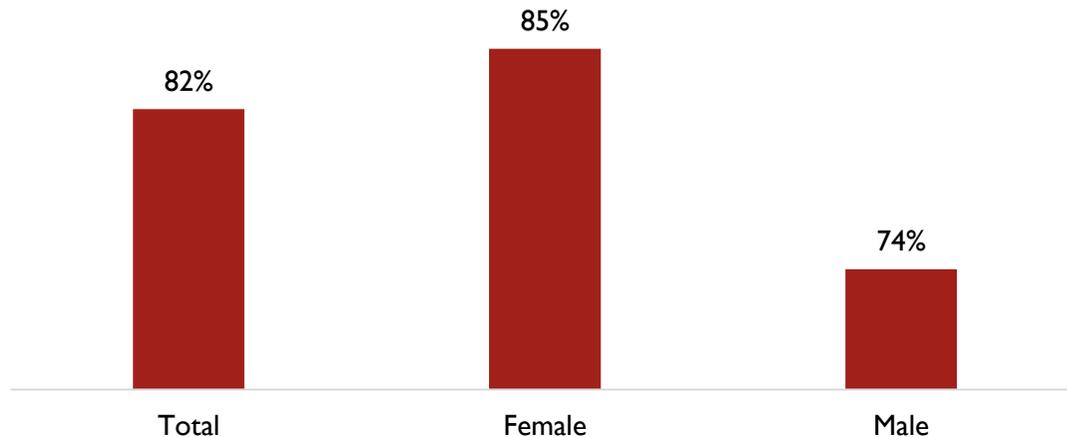
**% of youth that strongly and somewhat agree that they are doing a good job getting their school work done from home since the beginning of the pandemic**



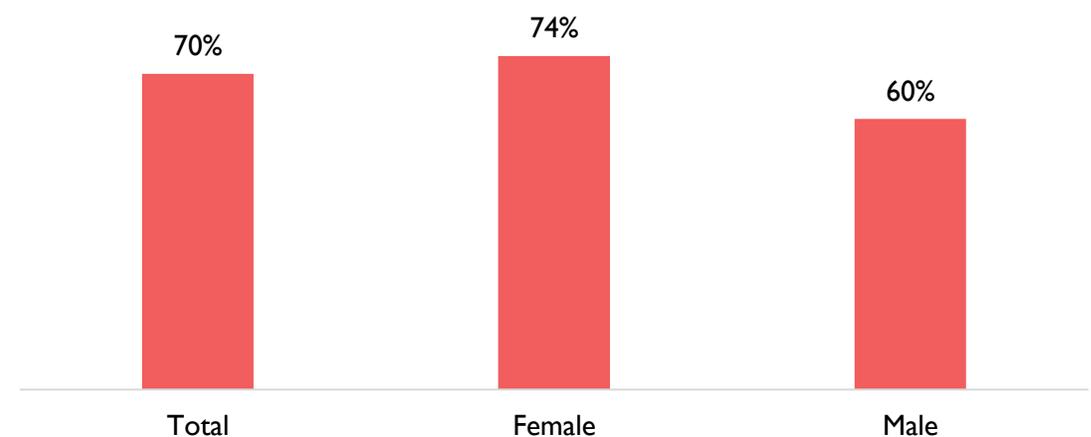
# RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN THE FALL

- Girls are significantly looking more forward to going back to school than boys (11 percentage points).
- Girls are also more worried about not being able to return to school than boys (14 percentage points).

*% of youth that strongly and somewhat agree that they are looking forward to going back to school in September*



*% of youth that are very and somewhat worried about the possibility of not being able to return to classes in the fall*



# THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL

- *“...right now our futures don't seem to be a priority for our educators. The lessons are put online but there is little accountability from either us or the staff.”*
- *“Maybe now that teachers know they can teach online we could have one day a week of learning from home.”*
- *“[We should] re-think how important smaller classes/schools are.”*
- *“I considered dropping school courses because it was too much to handle which would lead me to not complete school & not get into the college I want & (in my head at least) it would spiral to nothing ever working out & being a burden on my mother & never amounting to anything or helping anyone.”*
- *“I will have terrible grades this year.”*
- *“We had struggles going into the whole online learning distribution and now I think we might have trouble going back to school as well. I know I will not be going back even if schools reopen until there is not a single case of COVID-19 left in Canada.”*
- *“I feel like they're going to make school extremely unenjoyable when we go back. No being near friends no moving rooms no nothing. I won't want to go.”*
- *“I feel robbed of my last year in high school.”*



- *“This pandemic has made us value what we have.”*
- *“People will be more thankful of the time we have with each other and being more grateful of physical touch and having the presence of people you care about in your life available to you whenever you need.”*
- *“I think we have learned to value interaction, and I think family and friends will be no longer taken for granted.”*
- *“I think it’s the change that will help motivate everyone to fix the world at least a little bit.”*
- *“Because of this pandemic, I’ve been given the opportunity to get enough sleep, go for walks in the morning, spend more time with my sister, and focus on my mental and emotional well-being. I hope that in the future I’ll be able to continue living like this even when there is school, and I’m excit[ed] to see my friends again when it’s all over.”*

## STORIES OF HOPE

Thank you

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