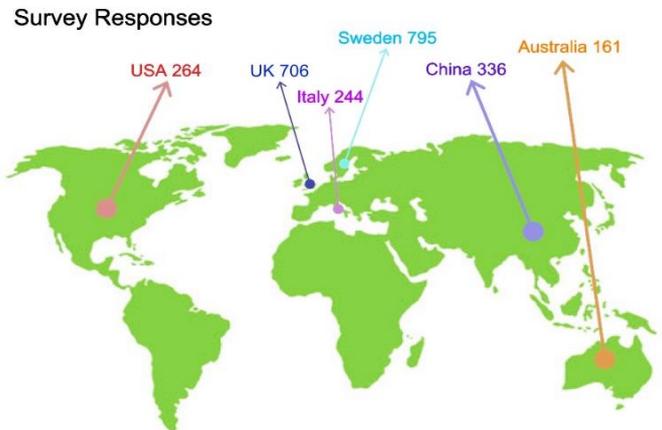


Families in Lockdown

We were delighted by parents' response to the survey we held last summer on child development in the COVID-19 pandemic: 2506 parents of 3 – 8-year-olds from six countries took part! In the UK sample, one in five households had someone suffer COVID-19 symptoms, almost half experienced a drop in parental income and three quarters experienced work-family conflict. We are so grateful that parents were willing to share their child's experiences with us despite these challenges...



New rules and increased childcare responsibilities.

One set of questions concerned children's responses to the new social distancing and hygiene rules. Our UK families told us that 90% of children did not understand the need for frequent hand washing, 86% needed to be reminded to keep 2 metres apart from others and 60% needed reminding about why they couldn't visit family and friends. We hope that children have now adjusted to all these rules – indeed, videos on social media that show toddlers treating everything they see as a hand sanitizer suggest that some little ones have really embraced our new way of life!

Women report higher stress

30%
Of women are slightly or much more stressed now than before

18%
Of men are slightly or much more stressed now than before

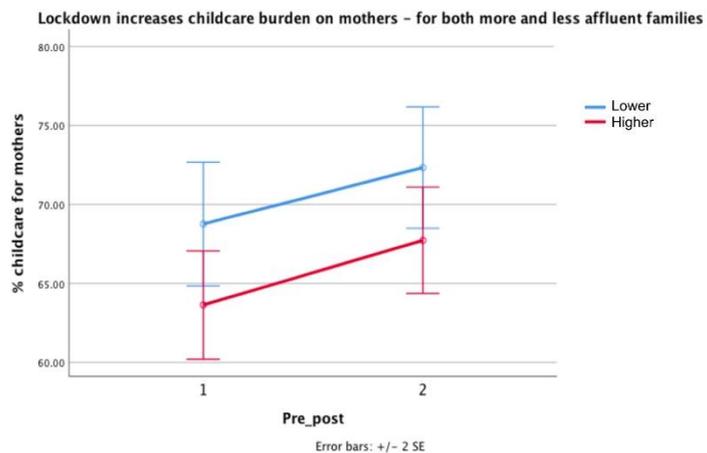
Source: The HSM COVID-19 and Work Survey, April – June 2020



Has lockdown taken women back to the 1950s?



EBS NEWS NIGHT



Consistent with findings from other studies (see left hand panel above), our UK results show that the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on mothers. We split our sample by family affluence and found that mothers in both more and less affluent families reported a significant increase in childcare responsibilities. In short, many mothers are now trying to combine being a 1950s style home maker whilst also holding down responsibilities for paid work. If you're feeling tired, think about that and give yourself a regular chance to put your feet up!

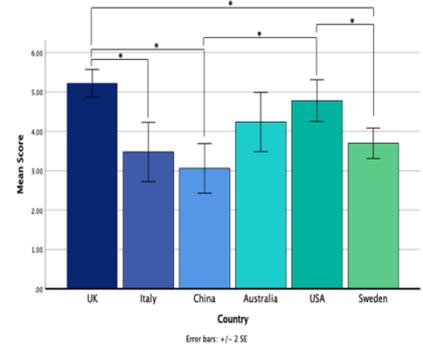
In our follow up survey, we hope to explore how things have changed or settled down over the past 9 months and so don't want to share information that might bias your responses. However, we are only following up the UK sample and so can share some interesting results about how children's experiences differed across the six sites.

Parental distress higher in the UK, US and Australia



Image from mndanderson.org

Parental distress showed some interesting between-site contrasts – with higher levels of parental distress being reported by parents in the UK, USA and Australia compared with Italy, China and Sweden. We are now examining how parental distress affects child outcomes and will share our results in another newsletter later this year.

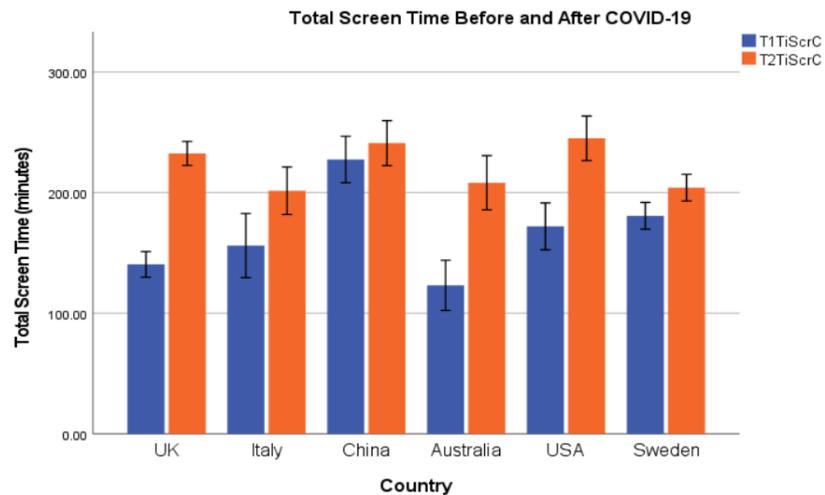


Increased screen use largely due to entertainment and learning apps

It feels like screens dominate our lives now, with many of us working from home. For children, screen time has also increased – this increase was evident in all of our sites except China, where pre-pandemic screen use was already high. Our site samples are not representative of their respective countries, but the pattern of changing screen use is similar across sites, with entertainment and learning app use both adding to the increase in total time.

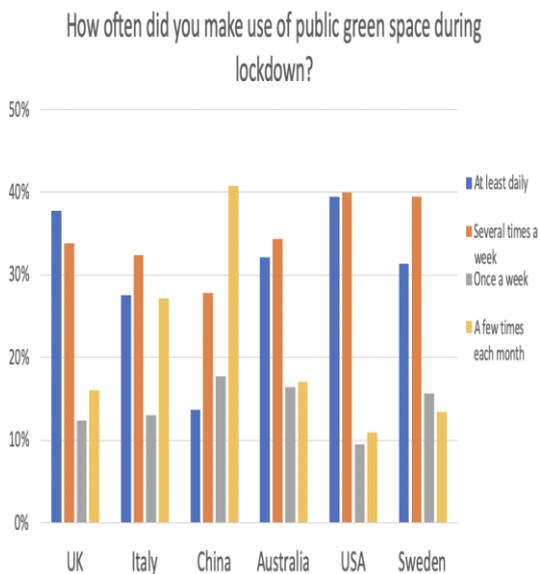
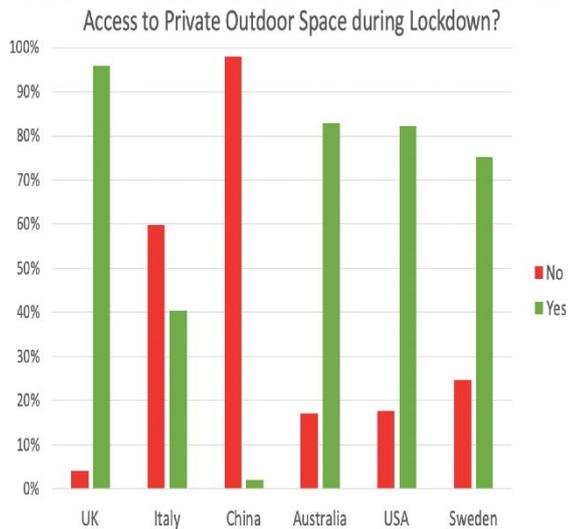


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UK children have more access to outdoor space, over a third of families using green spaces daily

The figure overleaf shows that children in the UK were more likely to have access to private outdoor space than children from the other five sites – with children from China least likely to have somewhere outside to play, followed by those from Italy.



Just under 40% of UK families made daily use of green space during Lockdown 1, which is comparable with the USA, Sweden and Australia. Interestingly, despite the stringent rules in Italy, their use of green space was almost as high, perhaps because outdoor living is central to the Italian lifestyle. In contrast, just 12% of Chinese children had daily use of green spaces.

We appreciate the difficulties many families are still facing and so would like to thank you very much for completing our follow-up survey. With the generosity of funding from Newnham College, Downing College, and the University of Cambridge Psychology Department, we hope our 'Thank you' £10 Amazon voucher helps to show our appreciation. You may also find the following links useful:

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11245/option-3-covid-advice-parents.pdf>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zkqtjsg>

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/11246/option-3-covid-advice-families2.pdf>