

**Media Release**  
23 April 2020

## **RESEARCH REVEALS CONCERNS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Following the closure of schools, colleges and universities across Scotland, new research suggests almost half (49%) of young people in Scotland are concerned about exams and coursework while almost all (96%) worry about the impact of coronavirus on their future.

A new study commissioned by the Scottish Youth Parliament, YouthLink Scotland and Young Scot asked young people from every community in Scotland to share their concerns about COVID-19. Working in partnership, Scotland's leading youth organisations produced the LockdownLowdown report to identify what young people need from the Scottish Government, the NHS, local authorities and others in the future.

The research found that more than three-quarters (77%) of young people are concerned about their mental wellbeing and two in five (40%) young people are not confident accessing information on mental health and wellbeing.

While nine out of ten (91%) young people know how to access information, advice and updates around lockdown, 61% don't know where to access information on financial support. That comes at a time when almost three-quarters (70%) of young Scots are concerned about their financial situation.

More than 2,400 young people across Scotland took part in the research and many respondents stated that decision-makers should improve the impact on education while calling for restrictions to be stricter.

**Jack Dudgeon MSYP, Chair of Scottish Youth Parliament, said:** "Young people need reassurance that their life opportunities are not at risk. Before the pandemic, we already knew that young people were battling a mental health epidemic, with rates of depression and anxiety skyrocketing. The findings from LockdownLowdown reveal that 40% are moderately to extremely concerned about their own mental wellbeing. With their democratic mandate, Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament will work with decision-makers for the benefit of young people's futures in the context COVID-19."

**Tim Frew, CEO of YouthLink Scotland, said:** "The findings of the survey echo much of what we hear from youth workers across Scotland. Many young people are anxious about what life is like now and what it will be like post lockdown, and the impact of social isolation on their mental health and wellbeing. Youth workers will continue to find innovative ways to support young people through this uncertain time in their lives. It is not just the actions as a society we take now that will be crucial, young people deserve a commitment to the continuity of the services that support them post COVID-19."

**Louise Macdonald OBE, chief executive of Young Scot said:** "It's no surprise that young people can feel overwhelmed or scared by everything they're hearing about COVID-19, and the results of LockdownLowdown give us vital insight into what they are experiencing right now. At Young Scot, we will not waver from our commitment to young people and will continue to work tirelessly to provide relevant and accessible daily digital information. This will ensure that young people have all the information they need to make informed decisions and choices during these unsettling times."

The findings of the LockdownLowdown report will be shared with stakeholders who can

use the insights to feed directly into policy design and service provision in response to the pandemic.

Following on from this initial research, young people will be encouraged to keep submitting their questions and concerns on a weekly survey hosted on social media. This will track the key issues that are worrying young people in Scotland and Young Scot will respond to these insights and tailor daily digital information to ensure that young people have all the information they need.

Find out more information and access the full report [here](#).

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP)** is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. Their vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. SYP is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 12, which lays out young people's right to be listened to on the issues that affect them, and for their views to be given weight.

**YouthLink Scotland** is the national agency for youth work. They're a membership organisation representing more than 100 youth organisation members across Scotland, both voluntary and statutory, which supports over 300,000 young people. They champion the value of the youth work sector, challenging government at national and local levels to invest in youth work. In these challenging times of COVID-19, the youth work sector is pulling together and showing tremendous agility and resilience to respond to the pressing needs of young people and communities. They are making every effort to ensure youth work organisations are able to adapt and sustain during this period, to ensure young people continue to get the support they deserve.

**Young Scot** is the national youth information and citizenship charity for 11-26-year-olds in Scotland. They have been updating their dedicated website and social media channels seven days a week with the latest information for young people on COVID-19. This is helping to ensure that young people have quality-assured information on what's happening, the simple steps to take to help prevent catching COVID-19, and how to avoid spreading it to others. There's also information on mental health, and how to support others in the community. The information is shared on Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube.