

Rosmini Community School
Young Social Innovators Team presents:

HOW OLDER PEOPLE COCOONING ARE COPING DURING COVID-19



HOW YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HELP!



Survey Report
Tuesday 19th May 2020



INTRODUCTION:

The current Covid-19 pandemic has changed all of our lives in many different ways. However, it has especially changed the lives of the elderly people within our society today. This info shows that half of the data we received came from people who were cocooning in their own home.

We are a group of Transition Year students from Rosmini Community School, Dublin who decided to embark on a Kindness to the Elderly Counts project. The aim of our project was to encourage young people to interact more with the elderly people of our society, and to try to, as much as possible, to eliminate the social isolation experienced by older people.

However, with the arrival of the current pandemic, our project has taken a new direction to meet the new, developing needs of the older members of our society. We have decided, as a group that, instead of planning events to try to help older people feel less isolated, that we should find out from the older people themselves how we, as young people and as members of society, can be of help and how we can support them while they are cocooning at home.

As part of this research, we decided to create and distribute a survey to members of retirement groups, parishes, local communities, and any older people whom we knew of. We encouraged any older person over the age of 50 to take part in our survey. We asked a number of questions to find out how older citizens were coping with cocooning, how they were finding the Government restrictions, and if, and how they were managing to stay in contact with their family, friends and neighbours. We also asked them what young people can do to help and support them through these difficult times.

The aim of this survey is to gauge from older people completing this survey what they would like young people to do to help lessen the impact that the current pandemic is having on them and their daily lives.

These are our findings from 120 older and elderly members of society who are cocooning, in Ireland.

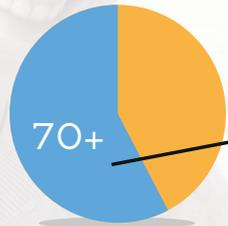


HOW ARE OLDER PEOPLE COPING?



Q1. What age are respondents?

Open to people aged **50+**



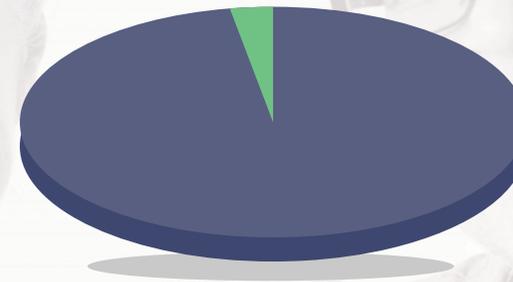
More than **50%** were over the age of **70**

23% of those completing the survey were 50–65 years old. **24%** of respondents were 65–70 years old.

More than half of the results came from people older than 70 years old.

This information shows that half of the data we gathered came mostly from people who were cocooning at home.

Q2. Where are older respondents cocooning?



- At home
- Nursing Home
- With Family
- Other

97% of respondents are cocooning at home.

The reason for this is because home is mostly likely the safest place to be in this pandemic as your interactions with other people are limited.



Q3. How are older people coping with the restrictions that have been put in place by the Government during the pandemic?

60% of people are coping very well



40% are doing the best they can to get by

There are older citizens whose lives would really benefit from the help and support of young people during the covid19 pandemic.

A smile, some gardening or just a friendly chat. Make their day, listen to their stories. After all, they are the reason we are here, aren't they?



Q4. How has Covid-19 affected their mental and emotional health?

35%

miss hugs from
grandchildren
and family



50%

are keeping
busy and
doing well



15%

are feeling a
little
stressed and
lonely



While half of respondents reported that they are doing well, **50%** of older people have experienced a negative impact of Covid-19 on their mental and emotional health. This includes the loneliness and stress of social isolation and not being able to have physical contact with close family members.

We encourage young people to reach out to older members of their community who are most at risk of experiencing this social isolation and loneliness. Be empowered to check in on them. Have a chat. Make them laugh and smile. Remind them that everything will be ok. All while adhering to the restrictions put in place by the Government to keep them safe and healthy.



The Impact of Covid-19 on the mental and emotional health of older people cocooning.

"It has been very challenging both mentally and physically as in not been very active at all. Not much, never mind interacting, mostly waiting on the time to pass by hoping we are another day closer until this comes to an end."

"I'm very lucky that my husband and I are pals and enjoy doing the same things. However I am missing being close to my children and grandchildren, especially giving them hugs. I find myself crying even as I write this."

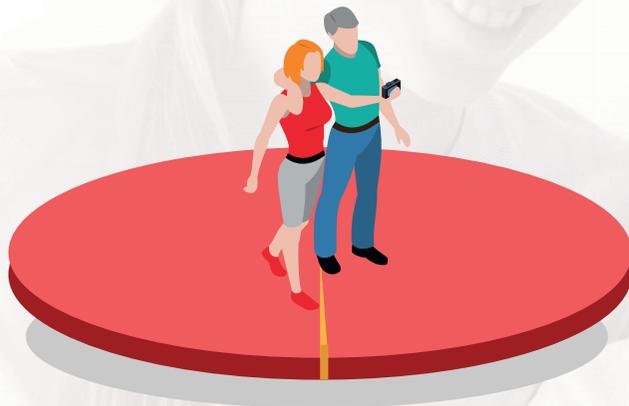
"Missing being able to meet friends for coffee/lunch/chats in person. This is a bit challenging mentally but not to a damaging extent. Also miss being able to get in the car and 'head off for the day' to scenic places or travel to the city for clothes/shoe shopping."

"It has made me realise how important it is to keep in contact with family and friends. I feel very lonely at times, but am usually able to keep busy especially in the garden when the weather is good. Evenings can be very lonely, just as well I have Netflix."

"Good days and bad days. Just want things to get back to normal."



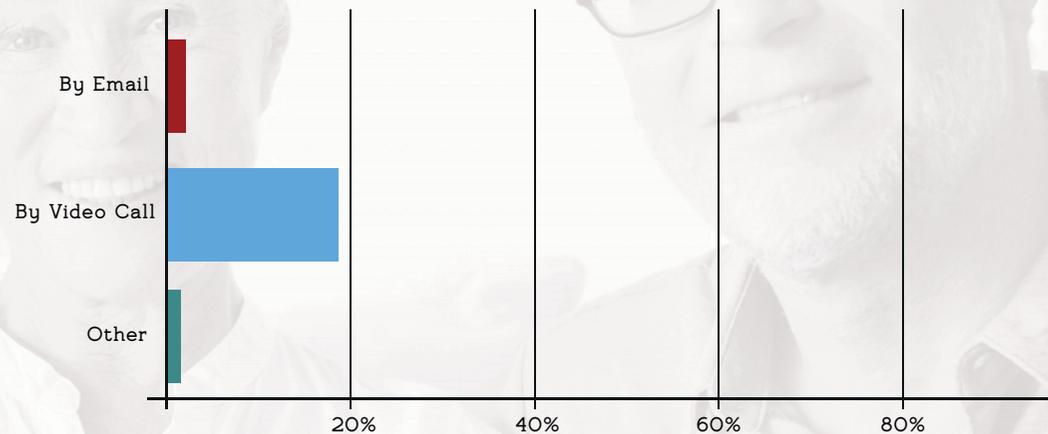
Q5. Have older people been able to keep in contact with their family, friends, and neighbours?



99%

of people are keeping in contact with family, friends and neighbours.

Q6. How have older citizens been keeping in contact with the people close to them?



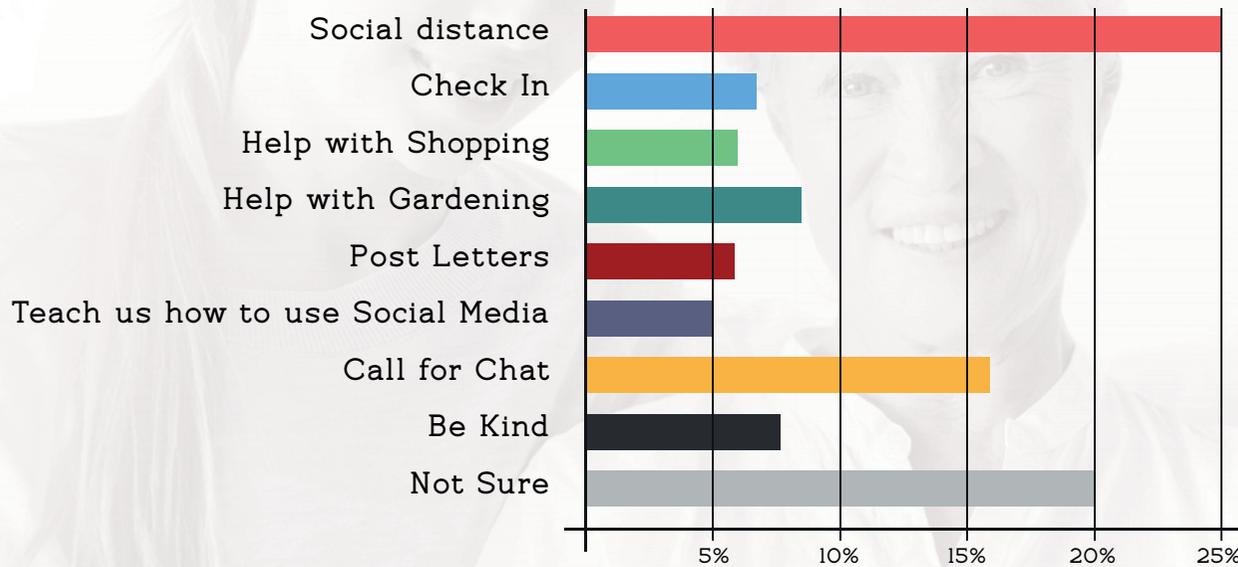
75% of older people are keeping in contact with others by phone.

18.1% of respondents are doing so through video call.

Since the average age of the people who completed this survey is 70yrs+, they might not be fully aware of how technology works and would be more familiar with making a phone call over using an application such as Facetime to communicate.



Q9. What would older citizens cocooning like to see young people in their community do to make them and others feel less isolated?



These results show that our elderly community wants the best for us all, but they are at high risk and just want to ensure their safety. It is also important for them to get their exercise. They do not want to live in fear or have the feeling of being judged by going outside.

Lend a helping hand, or have a quick conversation to check up on your elderly neighbours, or the elderly in general.

“Check in on us”

“joggers force us to move out of their way and contaminate us with their breathing”

“just be kind”



ARE THEY RECEIVING ENOUGH HELP DURING COCOONING?



97% felt they have enough support

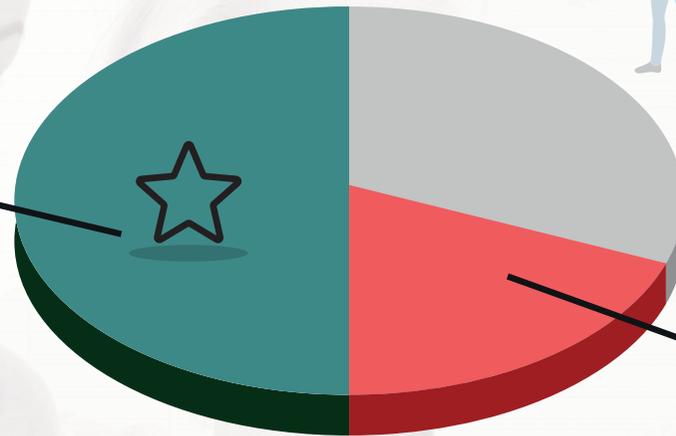


Keep in mind, these people have lived through decades, experienced troubled times, so a historical moment like this will not affect them the same way it would affect younger people. They would have developed more survival skills, per say and are more likely to be positive and calm.

THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE



50%
responded
'very good'



20%
responded
'adequate'



meanwhile ...

As you can see, many think that the level of support given during the Covid-19 crisis is 'very good'. The aim of our Young Social Innovators project is to change that to 'excellent' using the data extracted from this survey!

We are here to empower young people to reach out and support the elderly citizens of Ireland so that they feel less isolated and stay more connected in these difficult times.

MESSAGE TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN IRELAND

More than half of the responses were positive and gave great advice. 20% of the responses offered advice on how young people could improve on staying home and keeping physical distance.

How can we help?



Smile, wave, make eye contact and be friendly.



Call your family members over the phone on a regular basis.



Do not be afraid to have a chat with older members of your community while social distancing.



Contact local communities who can put you in touch with volunteer groups so you can help.



Help older people cocooning at home with jobs, shopping and mowing the lawn.



Understand that not all older people cocooning are comfortable with strangers so just be kind and respectful when asking if they need help.



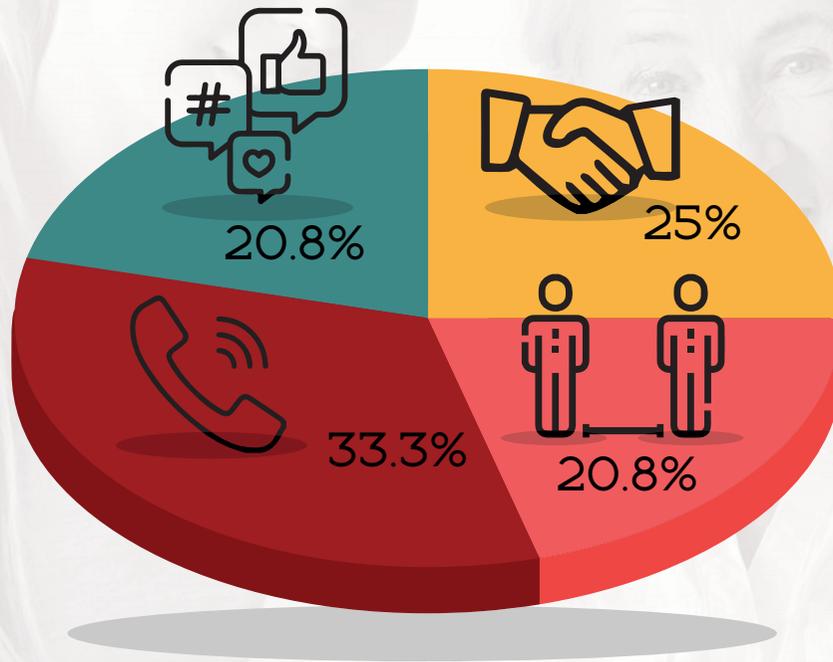
Keep in mind our older citizens are wise and would love to have people to give advice to.



Check in on the elderly in your area often.

All of these are brilliant points. And ready to be put out there.

WHAT CAN YOUNG PEOPLE DO TO HELP



Help Locals



Social Distance



More communication with the elderly



Survey respondents felt appreciation for young people and their hard work.

WHAT CAN YOUNG PEOPLE DO TO HELP



Useful suggestions from older people cocooning as to how you can help?

"Be considerate to them when they are out walking. Keeping social distance."

"Contact the local Community Coordination group in each County or Age Friendly Ireland 046 9097413 in Meath County Council who are coordinating this work nationwide."

"You can learn so much by listening to older people."

"Try to show interest and be patient with older people who might be a little bit slower than you."

"Try to show interest and be patient with older people who might be a little bit slower than you."

"Don't be afraid to ask if an older person needs help and please follow all the health guidelines as this is the most important thing they can do."

"Don't be afraid to approach older people (while keeping your distance of course,) just chat, we can be interesting and informative and funny as well. Just like everybody else. I admire you for being interested in supporting the older generation. Thank you so much."

"Make contact with older people in your area, give them your phone number and let them know you are there to help."



**Rosmini Community School Young Social Innovators
Team Members from Transition Year Class 2020:**

Jessica Birjoveanu
Sophie Burnett-Keogh
Zack Costello
Sarah Hannigan
Abbie Healy
Lucia Lopez
Sean McDermott

Teaching Staff:
Chris Gueret
Maria Markey

With thanks to Enortondesign, Dr. Trudy Corrigan (DCU).

This project was inspired by our events and intergenerational outreach with members of the Trinity Active Retirement Group and the residents of Nazareth House Nursing Home.



Survey Report
Tuesday 19th May 2020

