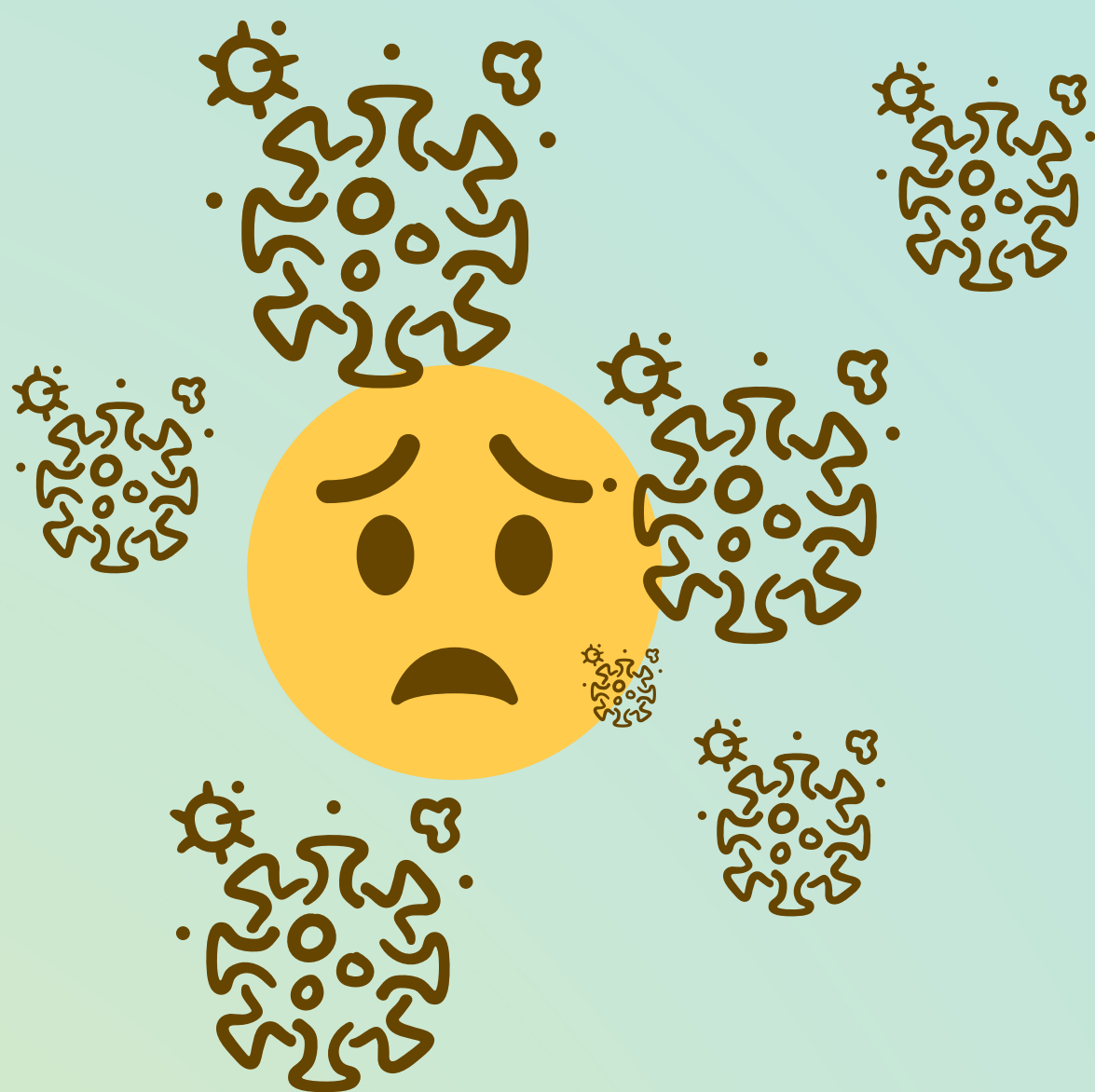


MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN 2021 COVID-19 PANDEMIC



More than 50% of
children reported
positive emotions

FEELINGS OF RESPONDENTS RETURNING
TO SCHOOL RANGED FROM BEING
'SCARED' TO BEING 'EXCITED'



Those afraid explained
they were worried about:

- BEING INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS
- BEING A VECTOR OF THE DISEASE
- PLACING THEIR FAMILIES AT RISK OF INFECTION

Positive feelings were
associated with:

- EAGERNESS TO SEE FRIENDS
- STARTING A NEW SCHOOL GRADE
- BEING BACK IN A ROUTINE



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COPING WITH COVID HEALTH PROTOCOLS AT SCHOOL



Department of Health guided COVID-19 protocols at schools

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DREW ON THESE HEALTH GUIDELINES TO PUT OUT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL



Children were well aware of COVID protocols in school

- THEY KNEW EVERYONE SHOULD WEAR A MASK
- SHOULD SANITISE THEIR HANDS REGULARLY
- MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING



Childrens' observation and views about teacher adherence

- CHILDREN WANTED ADULTS TO ADHERE AND MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR
- CHILDREN WERE DISTRESSED WHEN EDUCATORS PULLED DOWN THEIR MASK
- CHILDREN EXPECTED THE ADULTS AT SCHOOL TO PROTECT THEM FROM RISK OF CONTRACTING COVID



Effect of COVID health protocols on overall experiences of wellbeing

- MASK WEARING, SANITISING AND SOCIAL DISTANCES WERE CORE NEW PRACTICES
- CHILDREN NOTED THEY DID NOT LIKE THE CONSTRAINTS PLACED ON THEM DUE TO COVID PROTOCOLS
- COVID HEALTH PROTOCOLS CAUSED PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN



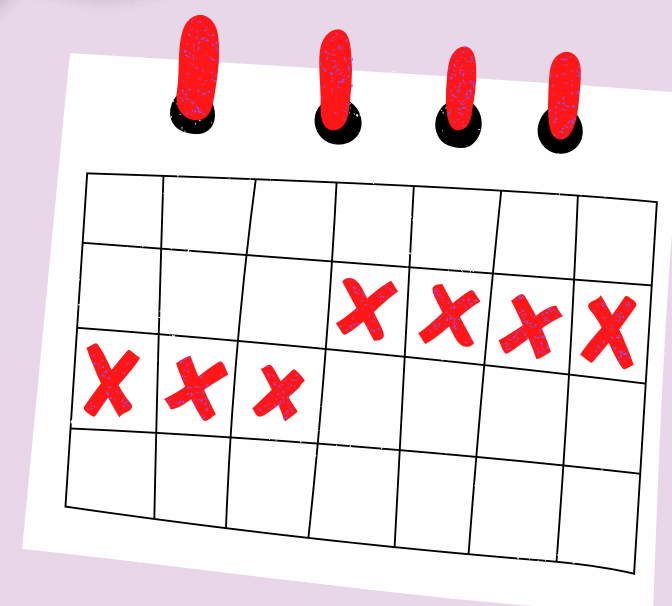
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CONCERNS ABOUT FINISHING OFF THE OLD YEAR AND STARTING THE NEW YEAR

In 2020 the National Department of Education announced curriculum changes

THE CURRICULUM WOULD BE TRIMMED FOR EVERY GRADE EXCEPT MATRIC



Children expressed their views on the trimmed curriculum

- CATCH UP PLANS IN 2021
- FURTHER BREAKS IN SCHOOL CALENDAR
- QUALITY OF EDUCATION RECEIVED
- PERFORMANCE IN FINAL EXAMS
- LEARNING IN STRESSFUL TIMES

Phased grade integration into schools in 2020

- SCHOOLS WERE ONLY ALLOWED TO OPEN IN LEVEL 3
- WESTERN CAPE MATRICULANTS AND GRADE 7 WERE THE FIRST TO RETURN TO SCHOOL



Children's beliefs about grade prioritisation for returning to school in 2021

- THE FIRST YEAR OF PRIMARY SCHOOL GRADE R AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADE 8 SHOULD BE GIVEN PRECEDENCE
- GRADE 11 RESULTS WERE NEEDED FOR APPLYING TO TERTIARY EDUCATION
- GRADE 12 WAS UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED AS PRIORITY DUE TO MATRIC EXAMS



ADAPTING TO DISTANCE LEARNING IN COVID TIMES

During the national hard lockdown remote learning was introduced

THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INTRODUCED DISTANCE LEARNING VIA MEDIA PLATFORMS SUCH AS RADIO AND TELEVISION



The impact of remote learning



- ALL LEARNERS NEEDED TO ADJUST TO COMPLETING MORE SCHOOL WORK AT HOME
- LITTLE EDUCATOR ACCESS AND MORE RELIANCE ON FAMILY MEMBERS OR TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT LEARNING
- MOTHERS, GRANDMOTHERS , AUNTS AND SISTERS WERE FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO AS THE PRIMARY LEARNING SUPPORT PERSONS

Technological support and equipment needed

- CHILDREN NEEDED ACCESS TO A SMART PHONE WITH COMMUNICATION APPLICATIONS
- CHILDREN NEEDED ACCESS TO WIFI OR LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA TO RECIEVE THEIR SCHOOL WORK
- CHILDREN RECEIVED WORKSHEETS AND CHATTED WITH EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL FRIENDS ON WHATSAPP



Distance learning required more autonomy from learners



- LEARNERS IN SENIOR GRADES NEEDED TO BECOME SELF-DIRECTED IN THEIR LEARNING
- CHILDREN NEEDED TO MANAGE THEIR SCHOOL WORK AND COMMITMENTS AT HOME SIMULTANEOUSLY
- CHILDREN HAD TO MOTIVATE THEMSELVES AND STAY ATTUNED TO THEIR MENTAL WELLBEING

