

A+ Students' perceptions, educational challenges and hope during the COVID-19 pandemic.

THE GIST: In this study, we explored the challenges and the good that may have come out of the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, we investigated students' mixed experiences with the pandemic, schooling, and social life— and how factors like hope may help protect individuals during trials. We surveyed 726 American students from 6th through 12th grade, and they reported three main challenges: 1) concerns about school, 2) COVID-19 and the safety of loved ones, and 3) the future. Through these times, students pointed to their relationships and social interactions as the best part of their lives, followed by school and hobbies. Those with more hope tended to feel more connected and secure during the pandemic.

THE TAKEAWAY: COVID-19 disrupted the lives of many US students, both in their school and home lives. The pandemic's influence was global, and its consequences may still be ongoing. Keeping some sense of routine and normalcy helped students through those times – we thrive with social connection and stability. In light of the pandemic, adults can be a great support for youth. We should build up the hope of youth today to make them strong for tomorrow. The pandemic was one trial that served as a reminder to reflect on goals for our lives. We can support each other in realizing our goals.