

BACK TO SCHOOL. BACK TO NORMALCY?

A BIG VILLAGE CARAVAN® SPECIAL REPORT

AUGUST 6, 2021

The new school year is right around the corner. Are we anywhere closer to normalcy than we were last year?

In two recent Big Village CARAVAN studies we asked Teens and Parents how they are feeling, what they're looking forward to, and their hesitations for the new school year.

Looking Back

36% of U.S. teens feel that school last year did not go well, indicating that **they had a difficult time adapting/experiencing challenges due to the pandemic.**

Only 16% of students say last year went 'Very Smoothly', with about the same level of issues encountered during any regular year.

Looking Forward

Among Girls Among Boys

*Significant differences by Gender

88% of U.S. teens are **looking forward to some aspect of the upcoming school year, with the most popular being:**

65%

Seeing friends every day

68% 63%

48%

Not having to do remote learning/over Zoom

53% 44%

43%

Getting their education 'back on track'

49% 38%

33%

Seeing teachers in person

33%

Getting dressed up for the school day

41% 24%

30%

Being able to participate in activities/clubs

34% 26%

29%

Being able to participate in sports/cheerleading

28%

Getting back to doing more complete/regular homework assignments

33% 23%

15%

Waking up earlier for the day

14%

Riding on the bus to/from school

13%

Being able to participate in band/chorus

On the other hand, when presented with some potential pitfalls of returning to school this year, U.S. teens are **dreading the possibility of the following, with 90% selecting at least one of:**

57%

Waking up earlier for the day

62% 52%

49%

Having to make in-class presentations

55% 42%

41%

The feeling of having to 'play catch up' after the disruptions of last year

46% 36%

39%

Having to do more complete/regular homework assignments

35%

Having to pay attention in class

34%

Having to think about new pandemic-related safety/social distancing measures

25%

Having to participate in gym class

31% 19%

22%

Concerns about bullying

25% 18%

19%

Getting dressed up for the school day

14%

Seeing teachers in person

14%

Riding on the bus to/from school

16% 12%

Conflicting Views

Parents vs Teens

Thinking about this school year, how concerned are you about the following right now?

Your child attending school and as a result bringing COVID-19 home

71%

Concerned (Net)

39%

Very Concerned

Attending school and as a result bringing COVID-19 home

57%

Concerned (Net)

27%

Very Concerned

Schools being able to remain open at full capacity

74%

Concerned (Net)

39%

Very Concerned

Schools being able to remain open at full capacity

55%

Concerned (Net)

19%

Very Concerned

Schools reopening safely

73%

Concerned (Net)

41%

Very Concerned

Schools reopening safely

52%

Concerned (Net)

21%

Very Concerned

Your child attending school and as a result contracting COVID-19

71%

Concerned (Net)

45%

Very Concerned

Attending school and as a result contracting COVID-19

51%

Concerned (Net)

22%

Very Concerned

From the Teens

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Agree (Net)

Strongly Agree

I feel like I understand the long-term purpose of my education

65% 28%

I am looking forward to a full year of attending school in-person

59% 32%

I feel engaged in my education

55% 18%

I plan to voluntarily wear a mask at school at least some of the time when the year begins

55% 33%

I am looking forward to this school year more than usual

51% 21%

I still feel behind in my education because of the pandemic

50% 22%

I wish my school would still offer remote learning this coming year

35% 17%

I am dreading this school year more than usual

33% 13%

I have reconsidered my career direction because of the pandemic

28% 11%

Inspired Shopping

Among Parents

Among Teens



Teens and parents were asked where they/their families find inspiration for back to school fashion, which shows evidence of a stark difference in fashion guidance:

TikTok

24% 54%

Instagram

30% 51%

YouTube

38% 48%

Online ads

37% 21%

Word of Mouth

32% 20%

Facebook

40% 12%

TV Ads

41% 12%

Magazines

18% 10%

Billboards

11% 4%

Mask Up!

Among Parents

Among Teens



78% of Parents think wearing masks/facial coverings should be considered for at least some members of the school community, even if they are vaccinated. The feeling is mutual among Teens as well, with **76%** agreeing.

Those that are considered 'most essential' for mask wearing include:

School nurses/health office staff

57% 63%

Lunchroom/Cafeteria staff

56% 62%

Students

56% 52%

Teachers

57% 51%

Maintenance staff/Janitors/Cleaning staff

51% 50%

Bus drivers

55% 48%

Office staff/School administration

55% 47%