

PLEY COVID-19 Key Findings Series Play

Play and Learning in the Early Years



Play and Friends



"Playing dead, playing doctors, pretend washing hands, pretend teacher enforcing social distancing"
(Age 7)

Most children's play activities have been impacted by the virus

"Pretending they are the Coronavirus in chase games"
(Age 9)

"Built model of virus out of construction toys"
(Age 6)

90% miss their friends

87% miss playing with other children

72% said play was affected by restrictions

34% have brought the virus into their play

"Made a hospital with patients, ventilator & test centre with Lego"
(Age 9)

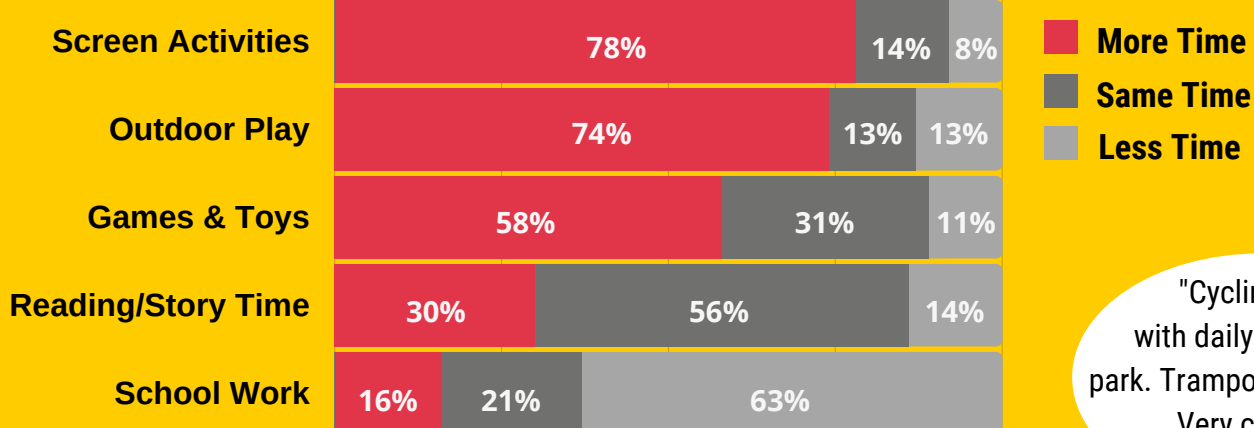


Changes in Play Activities



Compared to before the crisis:
Most children have spent **more time** playing outdoors, with games and toys and on screen activities

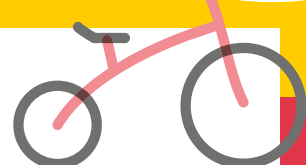
80% have gone for a walk in their neighbourhood at least once a week, with **Over a third** going for a walk everyday



"Cycling more with daily trips to the park. Trampoline is popular. Very content."
(Age 9)



Impact of Restrictions



Parents have reported positive and negative impacts on play:

"She is in front of the TV for 5-6 hours per day because I have to work. Before this she was in creche with other children. I take short breaks to play with her. She often looks bored and under-stimulated"
(Age 2)

"Although we as parents play with her I know she misses kids style of play a lot."
(Age 5)

"Plays on his own more now. Play has become more sophisticated, he has created whole worlds using blocks, animals, items from the recycling bin. The absence of massive structure & rushing in his day has given him an opportunity to just be & let his imagination run wild."
(Age 5)

"No football has been very hard for him"
(Age 10)

"Not having another child to play with means less pretend play/role play and more reading, building toys, board and card games."
(Age 6)

"More play with his siblings. Less arguing."
(Age 9)

About the PLEY Survey:
Data provided by 506 parents of children aged 1-10, collected online between May 21st and June 3rd 2020

This research was carried out by the Cognition, Development, and Learning Lab @MIC Limerick

