

Civis Analytics fielded a survey with 8,188 total national respondents on September 17-21, 2020. Below are some key takeaways from this wave's research.

National Highlights

School Reopenings

As schools reopened around the country, we continued polling about parent and school actions. 38.1% of parents of K-12 students across the US say that they have disenrolled their children from the school they were originally supposed to attend this year in response to school reopening plans, on par with 39.7% of K-12 parents in mid-August. Of those K-12 parents that disenrolled their children, 58.7% have enrolled their child or children in an online program, 26.8% have enrolled in a public school, and 22.0% have made plans to homeschool their student(s). 81.6% of K-12 parents who disenrolled their children say that they will re-enroll their children back into the original school once it is safe to do so, tracking with the 83.3% of K-12 parents who said in mid-August that they would re-enroll their children into the original school.

30.2% of US parents of K-12 students report that their children are attending all in-person classes, 51.4% report that their children are attending all remote classes, and 18.4% report a hybrid of in-person and remote.

Most parents of K-12 students would be more willing to send their children to school if safety measures are taken (between 55.0% - 62.8% for each measure), and even more think that their children's schools have been able to implement those measures at least somewhat successfully (between 70.0% - 80.5% for each measure). The safety measures that K-12 parents believe their children's schools have been the most successful in implementing are increasing cleaning and disinfecting of facilities (80.5%), providing masks and hand sanitizer (78.9%), and requiring sick students and staff to stay home (78.5%). In general, those same safety measures that K-12 parents report as being at least somewhat successful align with those that they thought would be the most likely to be successful when asked in the last wave. The one exception is enforcing social distancing; whereas in mid-August, parents were least confident in schools' abilities to implement social distancing in classrooms and hallways (64.0% thought it was likely that implementation would be successful), in this current wave, 78.1% of K-12 parents say their schools have been very or somewhat successful in implementing social distancing in classrooms and hallways.

How successful has your children’s school been in implementing each of the following safety measures? (% of K-12 parents who responded “Very successful” or “Somewhat successful”)

US Margin of Error = 2.6%

Safety Measure Implementation (% “Successful”)	US	FL	NY	OH	TX	WA
Provide masks and hand sanitizer to each student	78.9%	78.8%	91.5%	74.1%	83.2%	68.1%
Increase cleaning and disinfecting of facilities	80.5%	79.2%	89.0%	79.5%	84.3%	69.3%
Require sick students and staff to stay home	78.5%	79.2%	84.9%	77.2%	81.3%	67.3%
Avoid large gatherings (e.g. cafeteria lunch, assemblies)	77.5%	77.1%	87.7%	73.1%	78.6%	67.5%
Reduce the hours per day that a student is at school	70.0%	64.6%	85.2%	62.6%	68.0%	66.5%
Dismiss in-person class for 2-5 days if a student or teacher tests positive for coronavirus	71.9%	70.7%	85.9%	66.5%	72.7%	63.5%
Enforce social distancing in classrooms and hallways	78.1%	77.0%	92.5%	74.7%	78.0%	67.1%

Postsecondary Education Transitions

We have also continued polling about postsecondary plans of high school seniors as they returned to school. 72.7% of national parents of high school seniors report that their child is planning to apply to four-year colleges this fall, tracking with 73.2% of parents of high school seniors in mid-August; of those, 61.6% say they and their child feel ‘Very prepared’ to navigate the college financial aid process, compared to 2.3% who feel ‘Not at all prepared.’ 78.8% of US parents of high school seniors say that their child has been in touch with a school guidance counselor to make plans for after graduation, similar to 75.3% of parents of high school seniors in mid-August.

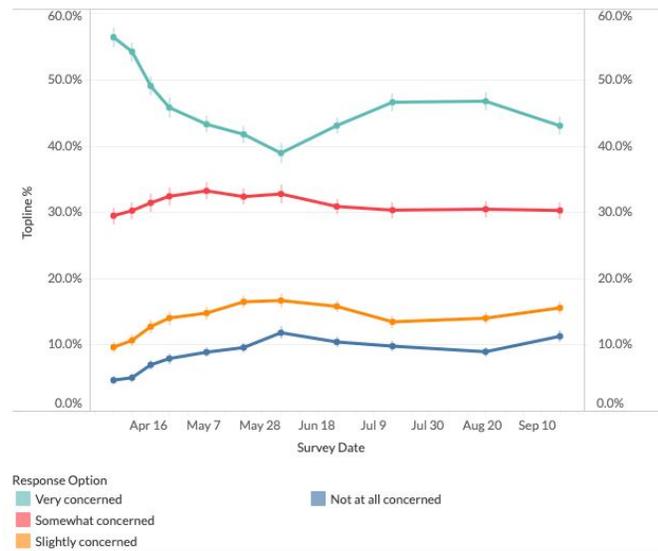
Attitudes toward Coronavirus

How concerned are you about Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Overall, 43.0% of US adults say that they are 'Very concerned' about Coronavirus (COVID-19), down slightly from 46.7% reported in our last wave of research in August. Concern about Coronavirus (COVID-19) is now back around June levels, after seeing an increase in concern in the US overall over June and July.

Attitudes Concern Level in US

Question Text: "How concerned are you about Coronavirus (COVID-19)?"



52.0% of US adults are more concerned than before due to COVID-19 cases increasing in some areas, particularly around college campuses, compared to 42.1% who have maintained the same concern level and 5.6% who are less concerned than before. 40.0% of US adults believe students being irresponsible and not following guidelines set by their college or university is the most important factor contributing toward the increase in COVID-19 cases around college campuses, followed by the college and universities not putting into place necessary precautions for students to return to campus (13.1%) and the spread of COVID-19 being unpredictable (also 13.1%).

These reactions are somewhat similar to the reactions to surges in certain states last month, when US adults said the most important factor is that people living in those states are not following guidelines for social distancing and wearing masks in public. The other top reported factors were state governments choosing to reopen too quickly and the federal government not setting appropriate guidelines for all states to follow.

In this most recent wave (September 17-21), there has been a slight shift away from thinking state actions have been insufficient. 32.3% of US adults now report that they wish their state would do even more (down from 37.1% in mid-August). 39.4% say the steps have been appropriate given the serious nature of the crisis, 15.3% say some of the steps are important, but overall they go too far, and 9.0% believe everyone is overreacting.

Which statement best reflects your feelings about closures, restrictions, and other steps that the state of [STATE NAME]* has taken to slow the spread of the virus?

* Each respondent was asked about their home state

US Margin of Error = 1.4%

State Order Reaction (% response)	US	FL	NY	OH	TX	WA
I wish they would do even more	32.3%	41.5%	31.5%	28.1%	37.0%	26.1%
I think the steps are appropriate given the serious nature of the crisis	39.4%	35.2%	42.5%	38.9%	38.4%	46.4%
I think some of the steps are important, but overall they go too far	15.3%	12.9%	14.6%	14.3%	13.3%	16.1%
I think everyone is overreacting	9.0%	6.8%	6.5%	13.3%	7.2%	8.0%

Overall, US adults continue to be largely in favor of preventative measures. 80.8% agree that social/physical distancing and shelter-in-place orders have been successful in slowing the spread of COVID-19, and 82.6% agree that social/physical distancing is difficult by worth it, while only 38.4% say they want to get back to normal, even if it means risking another outbreak.

In terms of coping behaviors, US adults have, on average, spent time on social media on 4.1 days in the last week, made time to relax on 4.1 days in the last week, and connected with family friends on 3.9 days in the last week. 79.5% of US adults have left the house to shop for groceries at least once a week, whereas 6.9% have not left their home for grocery shopping in at least two weeks. This level of activity is up from activity in mid-April (66.8% of US adults buying groceries outside at least once a week), when most shelter-in-place orders were active. 53.58% of US adults have gone out for take-out at least once a week, whereas 22.1% have not left their home for take-out in at least two weeks. This level of activity is up from activity in mid-April (42.5% of US adults leaving their home at least once a week for take-out), when most shelter-in-place orders were active.

Methodology: Responses were gathered through online web panels and weighted to accurately reflect the entire adult population of the United States. Questions were fielded September 17-21, 2020 (8,188 respondents).