

Civis Analytics fielded a survey with 747 Washington respondents on September 17-21, 2020. Below are some key takeaways from this wave's research.

Washington Highlights

School Reopenings

As schools reopened around the country, we continued polling about parent and school actions. 36.3% of parents of K-12 students in Washington say that they have disenrolled their children from the school they were originally supposed to attend this year in response to school reopening plans, slightly up from 32.8% of Washington parents in mid-August. However, this is lower compared to the 38.1% of parents across the US who say that they have disenrolled their children. Of those Washington parents that disenrolled their children, 52.3% enrolled their child or children in an online program, 28.0% enrolled in a private school, and 22.9% enrolled in a public school. 69.2% of Washington 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, down from the 84.0% of Washington parents who said in mid-August that they would re-enroll their children into the original school.

23.3% of Washington parents of K-12 students report that their children are attending all in-person classes, 65.3% report that their children are attending all remote classes, and 11.5% report a hybrid of in-person and remote.

The majority of Washington parents of K-12 students would be more willing to send their children to school if safety measures are taken (between 53.3% - 61.2% for each measure below), and slightly more think that their children's schools have been able to implement those measures at least somewhat successfully (between 63.5% - 69.3% for each measure). The safety measures that Washington parents believe their children's schools have been the most successful in implementing are increasing cleaning and disinfecting of facilities (69.3%) and providing masks and hand sanitizer to each student (68.1%). Those same safety measures that Washington parents report as being successful generally align with those that they thought would be the most likely to be successful when asked in the last wave.

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%, WA Margin of Error = 8.3%

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. 64.5% of Washington parents of high school seniors report that their child is planning to apply to four-year colleges this fall, down from 71.7% in mid-August; of those, 56.0% say they and their child feel ‘Very prepared’ to navigate the college financial aid process, while none say they feel ‘Not at all prepared.’ 76.3% of Washington parents of high school seniors say that their child has been in touch with a school guidance counselor to make plans for after graduation, on par with the 75.5% of parents of high school seniors in mid-August. This level is slightly less than 78.8% of parents of high school seniors across the US.

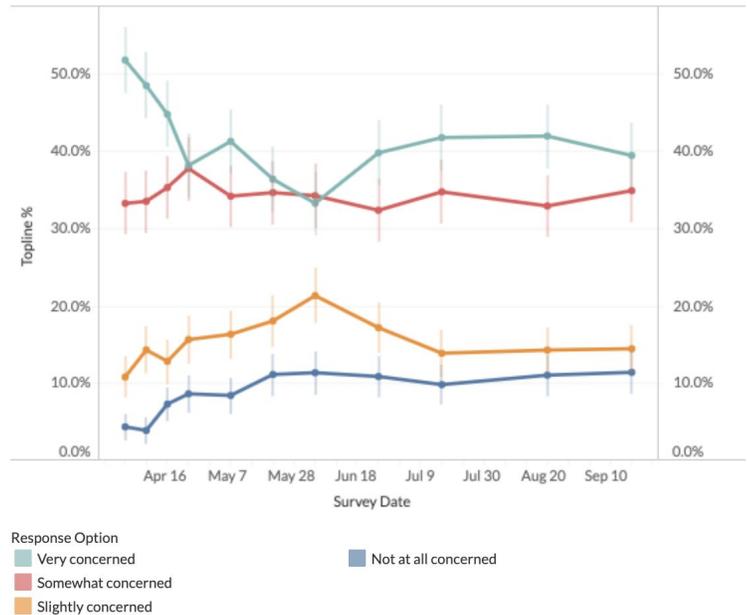
Attitudes toward Coronavirus

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

Overall, 39.4% of Washington adults say that they are 'Very concerned' about Coronavirus (COVID-19), down slightly from 41.9% reported in the last wave of research in August. Concern about Coronavirus (COVID-19) has remained fairly steady in Washington since mid-June.

Attitudes Concern Level in WA

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



50.4% of Washington adults are more concerned than before due to COVID-19 cases increasing in some areas, particularly around college campuses, compared to 44.4% who have maintained the same concern level and 5.2% who are less concerned than before. 41.9% of adults in Washington 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 federal government not setting appropriate guidelines for all campuses to follow (15.4%) and college universities not putting into place necessary precautions for students to return to campus (13.4%).

These reactions are similar to the reactions to surges in certain states last month, when Washington adults most commonly said the most important factor is people living in those states 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.

Almost half of Washington adults (46.4% in this wave) continue to feel that the steps their state has taken to slow the spread of the virus are appropriate given the serious nature of the crisis. Additionally, a smaller percentage of Washington adults reported feeling that they wished their state would do more to slow the spread of the virus than in the past two waves.

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%, WA Margin of Error = 4.3%

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, Washington adults continue to be largely in favor of preventative measures. 84.3% agree that social/physical distancing and shelter-in-place orders have been successful in slowing the spread of COVID-19, and 80.1% agree that social/physical distancing is difficult by worth it, while only 29.3% say they want to get back to normal, even if it means risking another outbreak.

In terms of coping behaviors, Washington adults have, on average, made time to relax on 4.2 days in the last week, spent time on social media on 4.1 days in the last week, and exercised 3.0 days in the last week. 77.0% of Washington adults have shopped for groceries at least once a week, whereas 8.2% have not left their home for grocery shopping in at least two weeks. This level of activity is up from activity in mid-April (65.9% of Washington adults buying groceries outside at least once a week), when most shelter-in-place orders were active. 49.7% of Washington adults have gone out for take-out at least once a week, whereas 23.5% have not left their home for take-out in at least two weeks. This level of activity is up from activity in mid-April (39.3% of Washington 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 Washington. Questions were fielded September 17-21, 2020 (747 respondents).