

But first, here's why we do what we do.

We unravel the emotional state of consumers to help inform business decisions.

And as a rule of thumb, we like to look for opportunity in <u>unlikely places</u>.

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Today, that is the minds of kids.



THE IDEA

How were adults coping? It's been covered, plenty.

But what about the kids?

We weren't hearing much and saw an opportunity to explore how their worlds have been impacted too.

THE APPROACH

We decided to line up a series of Zoom focus groups with kids (ages 5-16) to find the truth, from their eyes.

The world that (just) one year ago sounded like a horror story,

is now our reality.

NO SCHOOL MOLHING NEW No friends No "normal" parents No gatherings No trips No help No restaurants No hugs No stimulation No sports No dates No vacations No theater No activities No shenanigans No play dates No thrill No teacher No end in sight No coach No stress No new friends No holding hands No parties No dances Nothing to do No grandparents No recess No graduation No smiles to see No direction Not leaving home No human interaction No clubs No guide No classes No gym No high fives No change No hanging out No travel No excitement No hustle No games No bustle

Situation No Fun

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OUR EXPECTATION

Layers of Grief

The "no fun" sentiment was certainly present. Quarantine has not been all rainbows and butterflies, but we did find a silver lining worth highlighting.

Besides, what a boring report this would be if we only found what we expected...





WE FOUND

Kids are feeling independent and confident.

With the changes that have unfolded, we predict long term impact to children's **independence** and with that comes improved self-esteem and increased confidence.



Confidence



a <u>feeling</u> of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.

Self-Esteem

overall <u>sense</u> of self worth or personal value; self-respect.



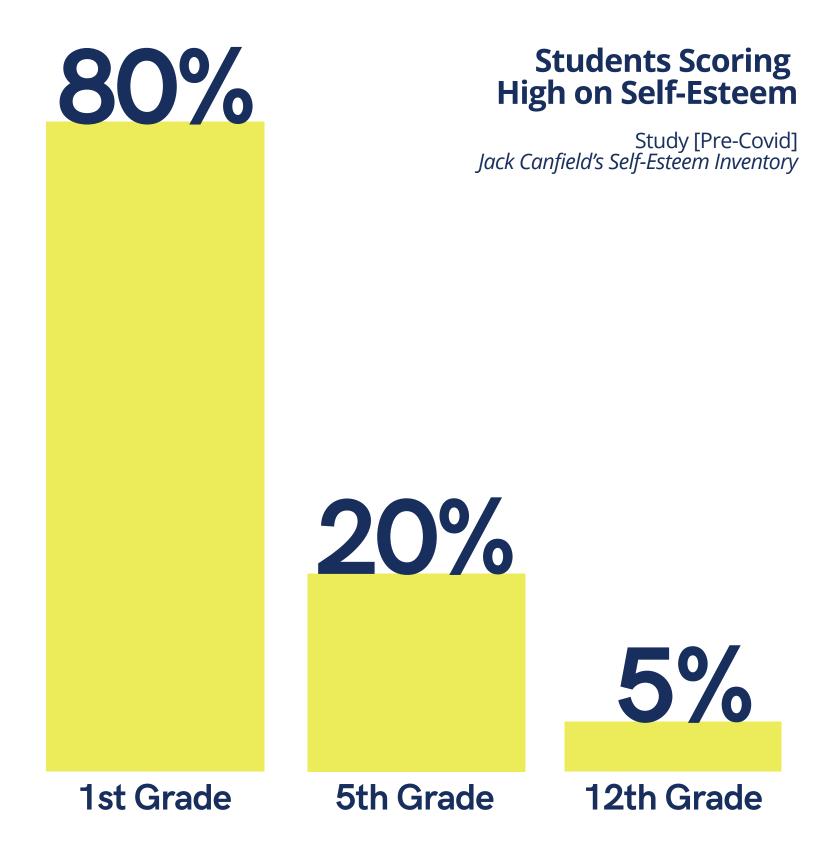
Independence

<u>freedom from</u> the control, influence, <u>support</u>, aid, or the like, of others.

INSIGHT

As a society, we have allowed kids' self-esteem to plummet.

Is it possible that by giving kids more activities, more stuff, and a "more exciting life" that we've negatively impacted this self-esteem?



Who is responsible for the development of self-esteem?

Jack Canfield Survey

78%

72%

INSIGHT

Ownership of building kids' self-esteem is a debated question.

But ultimately, self-esteem can only be created by the kid themselves. It's up to those around them to provide the environment for it to foster.

Our study examined what happened when both parents and teachers were less present this year.

[of teachers]
said parents
were
responsible

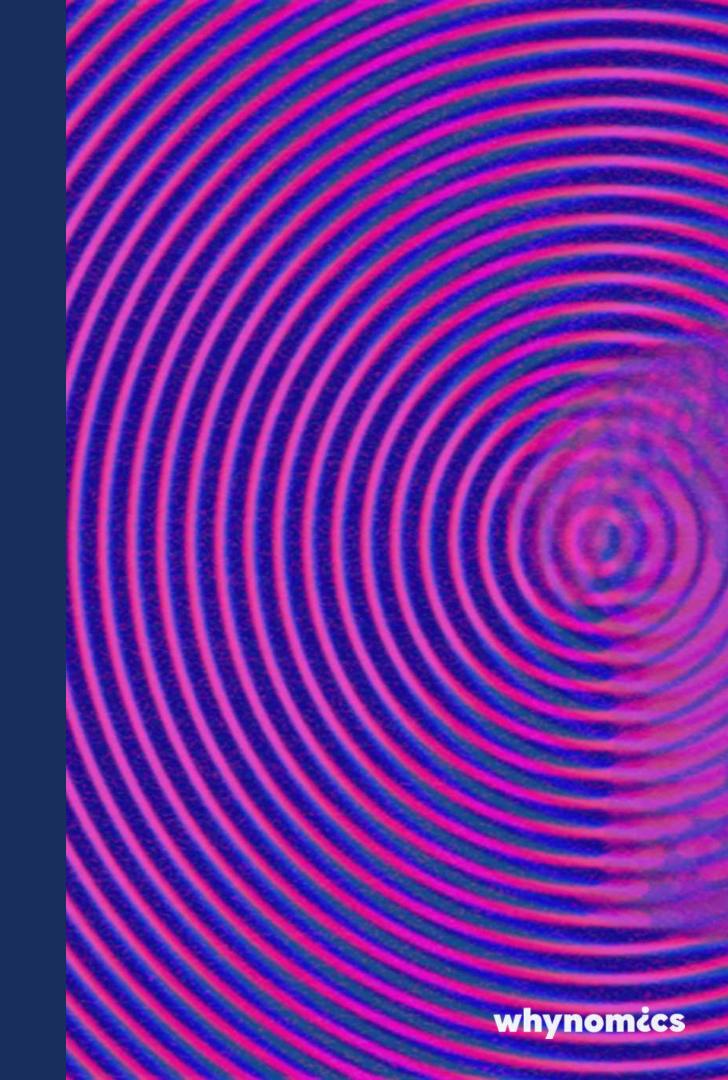
[of parents]
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IN OUR STUDY, WE UNCOVERED

The Perfect Storm

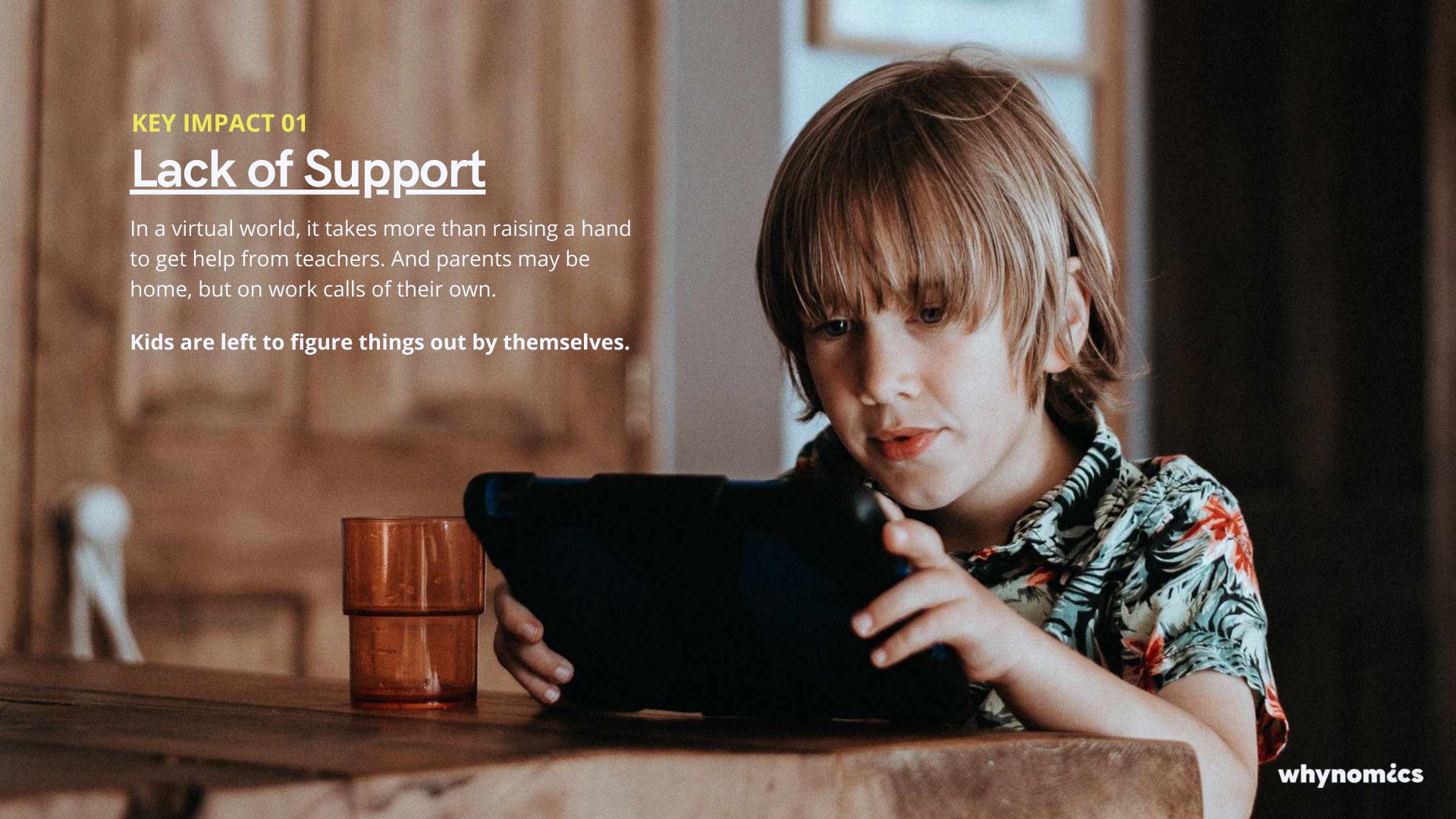
-that reversed the downward selfesteem spiral for some kids.

In the following pages we share the key insights from our research and how our findings represent big opportunity for brands willing to go against the status quo.



KEY AREAS OF IMPACT

- 01 Lack of Support
- 02 Socialization Adjustment
- 03 Boredom
- 04 Virtual Learning



They are frustrated through the process, but learning independence.

Required to abandon what school has always been, hesitations about their ability to succeed skyrocketed. However, these negative expectations were crushed as they began to prove themselves wrong. Excelling while doing it on their own, gave them a greater reason to believe in themselves.

"My mom has two doors, they're like soundproof doors! She can never hear me while she's working, even if I need something."

- Female, Age 9

"I was surprised that I could learn still while being at home ... and I was surprised I was able to actually do well."

- Female, Age 14

Forced to adjust and adapt, kids have had no choice but to be on their own.

"I'm not saying Covid was a good thing, but it has made me realize I can be more independent, and I can do things without failing."

Female, Age 14

Practice Makes Perfect Confidence

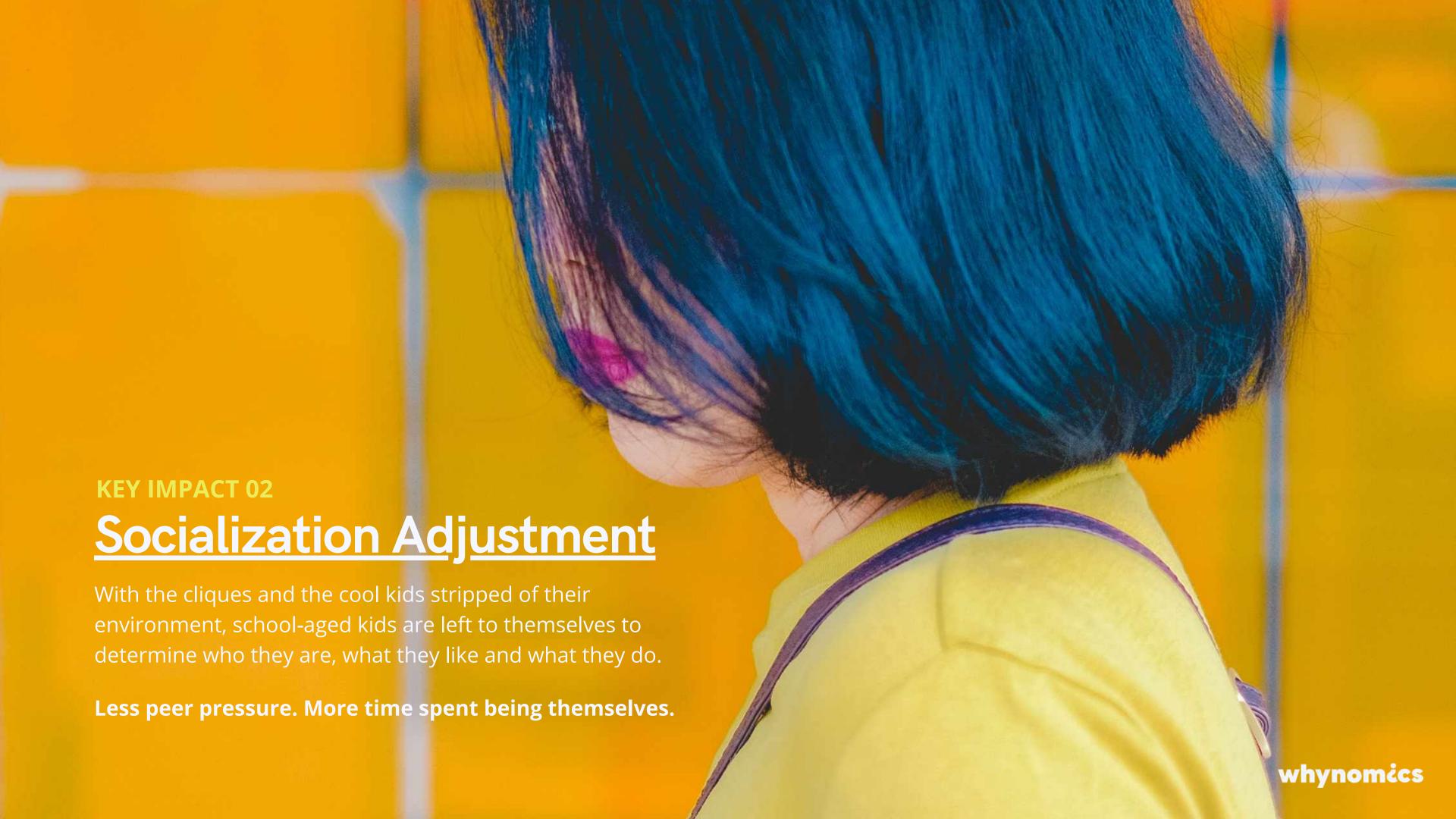


From cooking to schoolwork and finding entertainment to fill their days - for the first time, children of all ages have to first try to figure things out on their own, forging new skills and building confidence as they succeed.

With new-found time on their hands, kids are finding new hobbies, starting new activities and investing the hours to become better at those interests.

"They're experimenting with what works and what doesn't, learning along their way, all on their own."

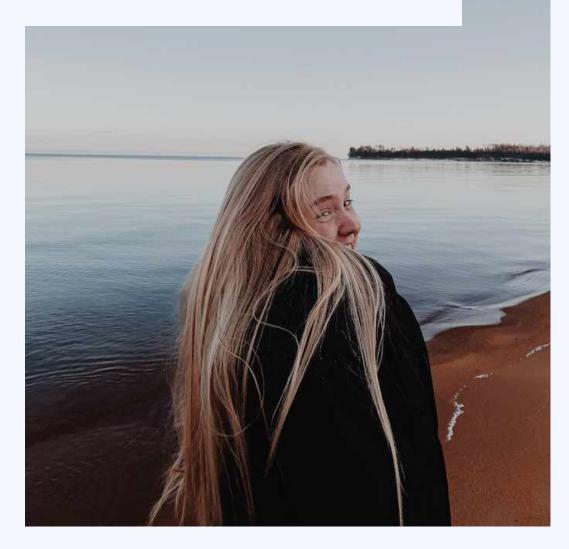
Mom (Ages 9, 11 and 13)



of girls aged 15-17 avoid normal daily activities, such as attending school, when they feel bad about their looks.

> Source: Brands in Action: Dove (Unilever) **Pre-Covid Statistic**

Teenage Years Take a Toll on Confidence



In a typical year you would make new friends, disconnect with old ones, experience a little drama, and through it all experience peer pressure in nearly everything you do.

For kids and teens in 2020 though, the pressure to fit in took a back seat as teens were surrounded by those who only want the best for them and found the opportunity to be themselves through and through.

"I've actually become really really close with my mom through all this. We game together, we walk the dog together everyday. She's really been there for me through all this."

Female, 16





"Cool" Doesn't Matter, Coping Does

In nearly every group, we heard drawing emerge as a Covid hobby. There's been an emerging trend of kids (and adults for that matter) utilizing art as a means to express themselves and their emotions, heightened by the pandemic.

Unimpacted by those around them, they're figuring out how to best deal with their struggles and find activities that genuinely make them happy.

"I was overwhelmed by how instinctively they are able to do what artist do, which is take the thing that's bother you inside and turn it into artwork."

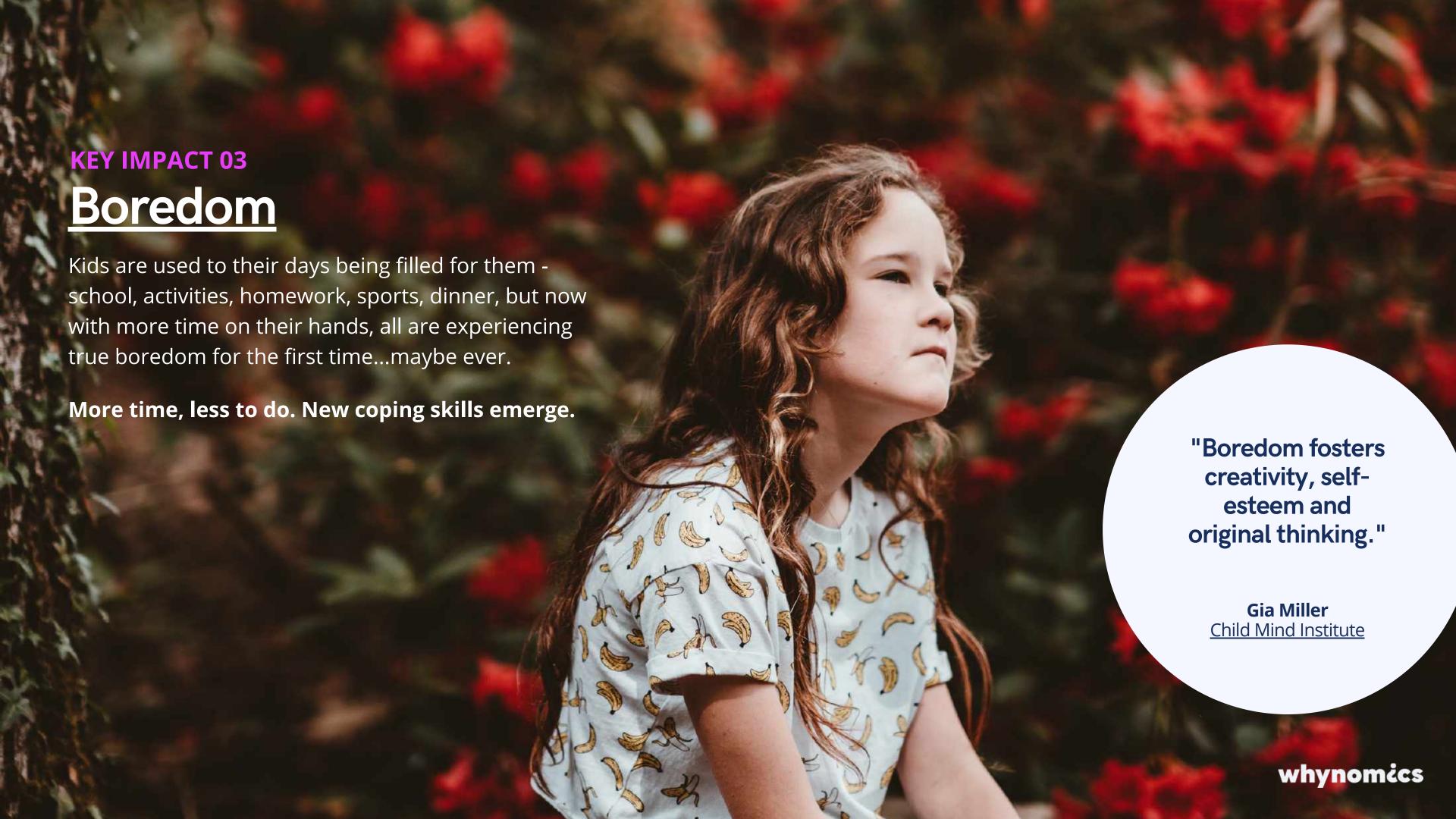
Dad

(Ages 5 and 7)



Story & Drawing from <u>NY Times</u> Diary

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Boredom leads to a positive outcome.

FINDING

When subjects did a boring activity followed by a task, they showed more creativity in completing the task.

Creativity Research Journal Study (2014)

FINDING

Subjects who did a dull task first were able to come up with more creative ideas afterward than people who did an interesting task first.

Academy of Management Discoveries Study (2019)

WE ASKED KIDS

How are you?

(But really think about it. Take a minute to truly consider how you feel.)





As we mentioned before, when kids are able to complete a task independently, they experience a self-esteem boost knowing they're capable.

Problem-solving is no different. In instances where activity after activity isn't planned for them, they innovate, ideate, and progress toward a more confident self - capable of handling down time.

"When a kid's brain is allowed to zone out, the problem-solving parts of the brain start communicating."

2018 Journal, National Academy of Sciences

"Help kids learn how to manage their boredom so they can develop independence and feel agency over their own happiness and well-being."

Stephanie A. Lee, PsyD

Senior Director of the ADHD and Behavior Disorders Center

"People's brains are looking for a certain baseline level of stimulation, so when it's bored, the brain tries to create stimulation."

Sara Dolan

Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Baylor University



VIRTUAL SCHOOL BENEFIT

Immediate Gratification

Many of the interactive virtual platforms give the kids the immediate gratification of knowing how well (or not) they did on a quiz, project or assignment. It forces them to explore why they didn't get it right in the moment, rather than days later when graded work is returned after it has been long forgotten.

Knowing whether they got it right or wrong, versus guessing.

Confidence in Action

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VIRTUAL SCHOOL BENEFIT

<u>Transparency</u>

Remote Learning has forced many teachers to go virtual with grades, giving kids the ability to be accountable and **take ownership of their academic standing**.

When they're doing well, there's a boost to their self-esteem. When they are not, its their decision to do something about it, creating an opportunity for independence.

"I see that I am getting good grades and conquering a majority of the assignments each day."

Male, Age 13

VIRTUAL SCHOOL OUTPUT

Behind the Screen Boldness

The screen ads a safety net for kids to be bold and speak their point of view amongst peers and teachers.

It may be the nature of their virtual upbringing or quite possibly their starvation for human interaction, but kids are speaking up, reaching out and creating connections that would have taken a great deal of bravery in a physical environment.

"I can hear my son waiting at the end of zoom calls, making personal connections with his teachers as everyone else closes out the call quickly."

Mom (Age 13)



INSIGHT

The very idea of school has been shaken up for the first time.

This has already led to areas of innovation that build independence, and in turn self-esteem in students – proving potential for an evolved education system.

SYNOPSIS

<u>Kids had no choice but to be</u> <u>independent through the last year.</u>

The confidence they've gained will grow with them for years to come.

IMPLICATION

Fundamental shifts in mindset are here to stay.

While many wait for a return to "normal," the winners in the years to come are already taking these changes and building them into their brands.

Ideation Into Real World Possibility

Application of an insight can look very different for each brand, so we led our own ideation session to see how this learning **could be** manifested by existing brands (*all hypothetical, of course*).

MASTERCLASS

Target teens and pre-teens, hyper interested in hobbies they've found over the last year. Take their newfound interests (let's say drawing), heighten their skills, then host a competition amongst them. With Gen Z interested, focused, and more confident than ever this would be an opportunity for Masterclass to align themselves with a new audience and build on an already emerging consumer mindset.

SECRET

Focusing on what's truly beautiful or powerful about young women, there's an opportunity to create a campaign around the confidence young women, teens or even pre-teens, can have when the peer pressure is removed. Their own perspectives are now feeding impressions of themselves. Interviewing young girls about what they've learned about themselves during 2020 would showcase far more optimism and appreciation of their unique qualities as compared to years prior.

After all, <u>Secret</u>, who's going to close the gender pay gap? Confident women.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn could build an initiative to establish personal brands for teens, starting now!

Typically, confidence isn't grown until much later on, which makes their college experience and networking to land their first job a pivotal step in identifying who they are, professionally.

With teen confidence up and a better connection to who one is, it can start so much earlier. If LinkedIn is there aiding their career before they ever start work, it will be a brand near and dear to their hearts as they sign their first offer, manage their first employees and start their own businesses.

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Let's Connect.

If you found this report valuable, just imagine what we can uncover for your business.

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