



THE NEEDS OF  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
DURING COVID-19

APRIL 2020

# THE DIANA AWARD\_

## Supporting Young People During Covid-19

The Diana Award is proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. 'Change' *for* and *by* young people is central to all our work.

Our flagship Award programme recognises the young people driving selfless change across the world; our Anti-Bullying work encourages young people to drive changes in attitudes and behaviours within their communities, and our Mentoring scheme guides change for some of the UK's most vulnerable young people.

The Covid-19 crisis has created a time of significant change and uncertainty, and young people are predicted to be significantly impacted (The Children's Society, March 2020).

It is more important than ever that the voices and needs of young people are central to the work of The Diana Award, as well as the wider youth and charity sectors and the government. For this reason, we sought to understand the needs of our users at this time and how we can adapt to meet their needs.

By gathering the insights of young people and their gatekeepers, we sought to determine to what extent our services would still be helpful during this time, and the key areas in which young people currently need our support.

Covid-19 may have changed so much already, but we remain firm in our commitment to support young people to change the world.



# REACHING YOUNG PEOPLE & Their Gatekeepers

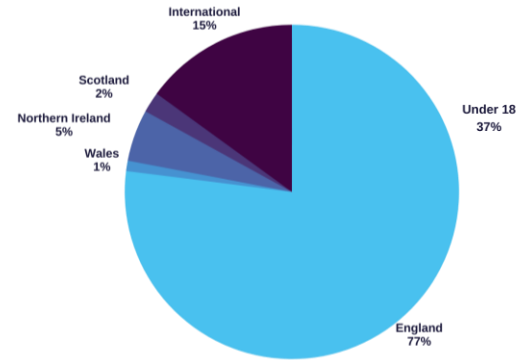
Between 27<sup>th</sup> March-5<sup>th</sup> April 2020, The Diana Award assessed the needs our young people by surveying our Diana Award recipients, and the staff leads for our schools-based Anti-Bullying and Mentoring programmes.

We had 208 responses to the surveys, which were shared in our newsletters and directly with schools. 55 Diana Award recipients, 151 Anti-Bullying staff leads, and 2 staff leads at schools on our Mentoring programme completed the survey.

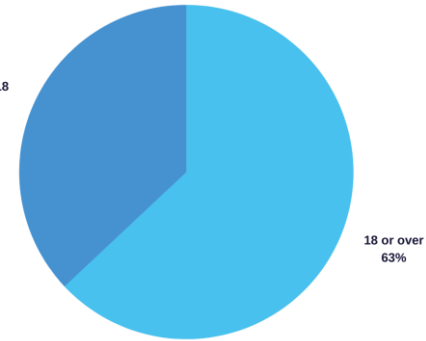
We estimate that responses from Staff Leads reflect the interests of at least 1500 young people who are supported by The Diana Award (each staff lead works with a team of approx. 10 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors or Mentees).

When considering their understanding of the wider school (Avg. Primary = 282; Avg. Secondary = 986; DfE, 2019), this reach is likely to be considerably higher (43,000-145,000 young people).

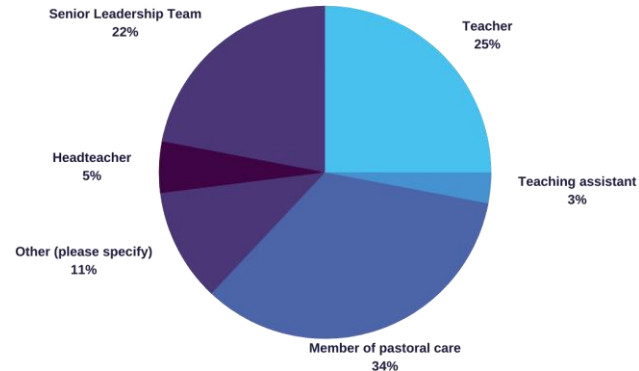
Regions of all responses



Age of Diana Award recipient respondents



Role of School Staff Lead respondents



Most of our Anti-Bullying & Mentoring work is carried out in England and the rest of the UK, while a large proportion of our Diana Award recipients are International.

The Diana Award started to present Awards to 18-25 year olds in 2019, and the majority of responses were from last year's recipients.

Trends varied little by age, region or role.

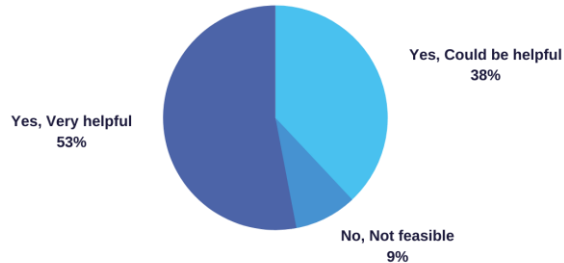


# SUPPORT NEEDED

## By Young People

We found a strong continued need for our services. Across all surveyed, 91% said yes, they would find our services helpful at this time. The majority (53%) reported it would be very helpful.

11% of school staff leads said it wouldn't be feasible, largely due to a lack of contact with young people on the programme.



Our findings show that our young people still want and need our support through these recent changes in their lives.

To ensure our youth-led work continues to meet the evolving needs of our young people, we asked young people and their gatekeepers which support areas we should prioritise.

The top 5 priority areas for our young people right now are:

- **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**
- **SOCIAL & COMMUNITY ACTION**
- **ONLINE SAFETY**
- **FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**
- **PRODUCTIVITY**



# TOP 5 PRIORITIES

## Of Young People

### 1. MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 85% of young people surveyed, and 98% of staff working with young people in schools feel Mental Health and Wellbeing is a High Priority.

“People need to be in better mental shape than ever before because staying in four walls for long tends to disrupt your sleep patterns, health and mental stability.”

– Diana Award recipient

“A small, daily activity that students (and staff and parents) could build into their daily routine...to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing.”

– Support request from a School Staff Lead

### 2. SOCIAL & COMMUNITY ACTION

- 70% of Diana Award recipients surveyed feel Social & Community Action is a High Priority.
- More than half (58%) of young people who responded are currently able to continue the work for which they received their Diana Award, delivering or participating in online classes or spreading their message on social media and in online publications.
- 42% felt they were not currently able to continue their work, due to facing barriers ranging from feelings of isolation and helplessness, to being unable to fundraise or host events in person .



# TOP 5 PRIORITIES

## Of Young People

### 3. ONLINE SAFETY

- 88% of school staff felt Online Safety is a High Priority topic for their young people, and 80% of Diana Award recipients considered it a Medium-High Priority area.

“I am concerned about bullying which will be happening at this time via social media... As well as the impact this will be having on the students’ mental health when they haven’t got their usual support system around them from school.”

– Member of pastoral care

### 4. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

- 73% of school staff reported that Family Relationships should be a High Priority area when developing support for young people.
- Supporting young people and their families to navigate changes in family dynamics and maintain mental wellbeing is key, particularly for young people already facing challenges at home, such as care experienced young people or those with special educational needs.

“Advice for parents and coping with the situations that are normally tackled by teachers”

– Support request from a Senior Leadership Team



# TOP 5 PRIORITIES

## Of Young People

### 5. PRODUCTIVITY

- More than half (55%) of Diana Award recipients considered Productivity support to be a High Priority for them at this time (93% in total reported it as Medium-High).
- Our young people remain highly motivated to stay active mentally and physically during this time, especially as they continue to face pressures at school and work that would benefit from positive productivity habits.

“Blogs and short pieces of information... of ways to continue self-care, productivity and other topics.”

– Support request from a Diana Award recipient.

### OTHER

Young people also saw Empowering Minority Groups as an important priority in the current climate, and this drive was particularly strong in our International community (“High Priority”: 42% across all, 57% in International responses).



# THE DIANA AWARD'S RESPONSE\_

Our findings not only show that our users still want our support, but that young people would benefit most from support on:

- Protecting their mental health and wellbeing
- Continuing to engage in social & community action
- Staying safe online
- Promoting healthy relationships within their household
- Maintaining productivity while at home.

Having listened to the voices of our young people, we are collaborating across our Award & Development, Anti-Bullying and Mentoring programmes to adapt our services to meet their needs. We are:

- Producing new online blogs and support articles, on topics such as how to stay mentally well, how to change the world from home, how to manage your productivity.
- Creating new and updated digital resources that can be used by young people, parents and educators to stay safe online, maintain digital wellbeing and promote positive family relationships.
- Spreading positivity and engaging young people through social media. Our 30 Days of Kindness Challenge, TikTok Tuesdays and Feel Good Fridays on Instagram promote wellbeing and provide advice. We continue to elevate stories of changemaking young people through our blogs.
- Taking our in-person training and events online, adapting live sessions into pre-recorded video content and hosting online webinars for young people and their support networks.





WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT  
YOUNG PEOPLE

# WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE\_

More than ever before, we are committed to supporting young people as they face the greatest challenge of our time. But we know we simply cannot do it alone.

We are keen to work with other organisations and businesses to collectively support our young people both through Covid-19 and beyond. We want to hear from you if you would like to support, collaborate or partner with us. Please email us at [partnerships@diana-award.org.uk](mailto:partnerships@diana-award.org.uk)

As one Diana Award recipient told us:

“It seems like a good time for youth across the world to connect with one another, from learning from each other to working together to solve this global pandemic.”

Let's follow their lead.

Best wishes,

**Tessy Ojo, CEO The Diana Award**





T

H

A

N

K

—

Y

O

U