

Teacher Life In Lockdown: shopping, parenting, and looking after your mental health!

You said: They did! ■■

Yesterday the education secretary Gavin Williamson announced [government funds for vulnerable pupils to access laptops and 4G, alongside a new package of daily lesson materials](#) from BBC Bitesize and the Oak National Academy. Your opinions were vital in making this happen.

In a series of questions, including some commissioned by [The Sutton Trust](#) and used in a [report out today](#), teachers (you!) clearly said your biggest concerns were around laptops and internet access, and that it would help to have a national online curriculum hub. This inspired the [Oak National Academy](#) collaboration to spring into action (more on how it happened, [here](#)). And gave several opportunities to lobby for tech funds. The government have now listened. Huzzah! Thank you for taking part.

1. Lockdown means lockdown

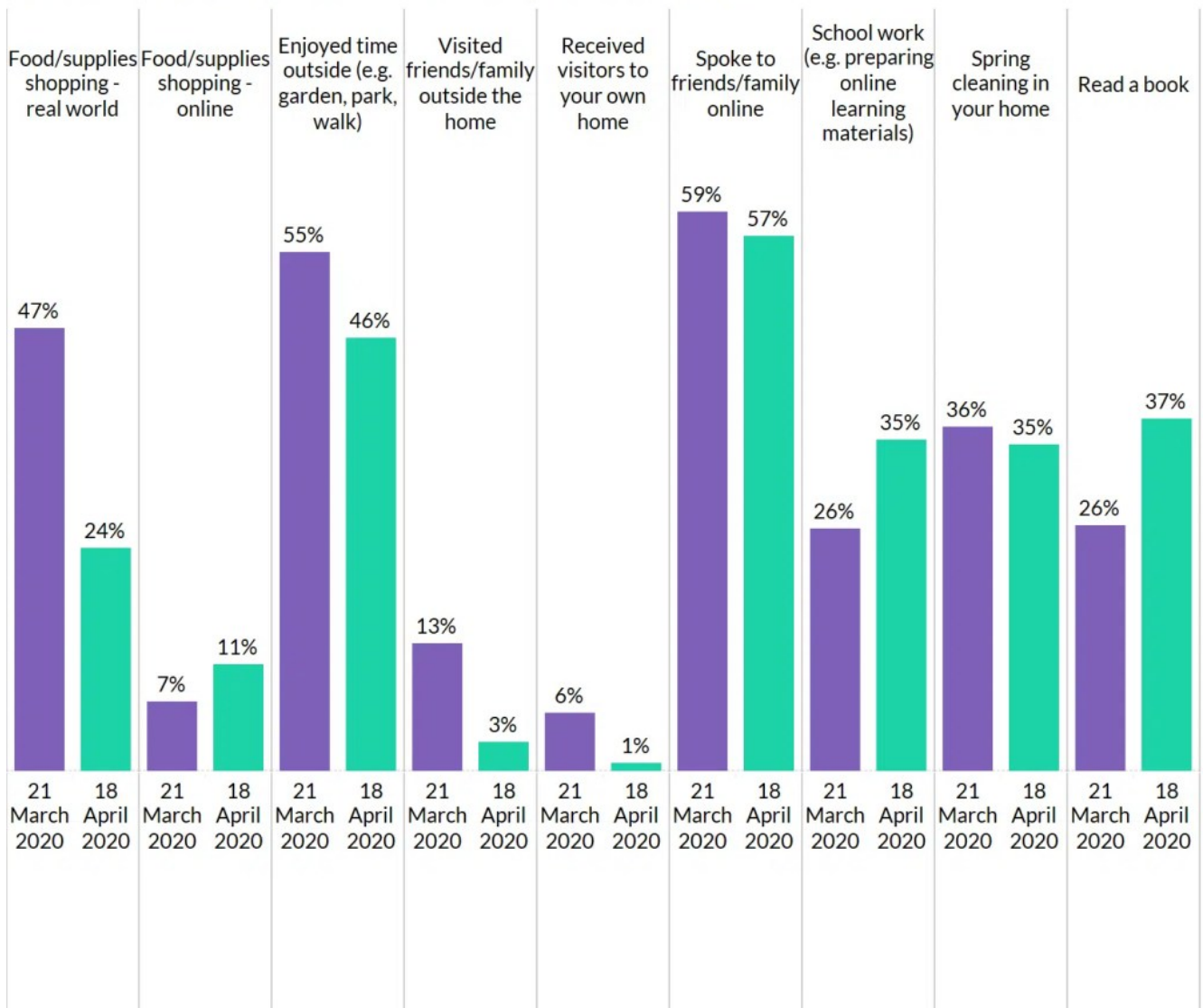
Life now is not what it was a month ago, and it was already weird a month ago! On Saturday 21st March, teachers knew that schools would be closed 'until further notice' but the UK was still 24 hours away from Boris Johnson appearing on telly to say we all had to STAY AT HOME.

What does this mean for daily life? The graph below shows what teachers did on the Saturday in March (just before lockdown, but after school closures) and what they did on the Saturday just passed (18th April).

Now, it appears that far fewer of you are going shopping – at least on a Saturday – and fewer people visited family or had people over to their house. The numbers being social in March were already small, but it's almost infinitesimal now.

As school is in session for everyone this week (distance or at home), more of you were preparing school work this past weekend, and more of you were reading a book (37% now compared to 36% last month). Are you running out of Netflix to watch, perhaps?

Which of the following have you done today? (Tick all that apply)



This is a tiny window into the way life is changing and we'll be keeping an eye on how it continues to change even further.

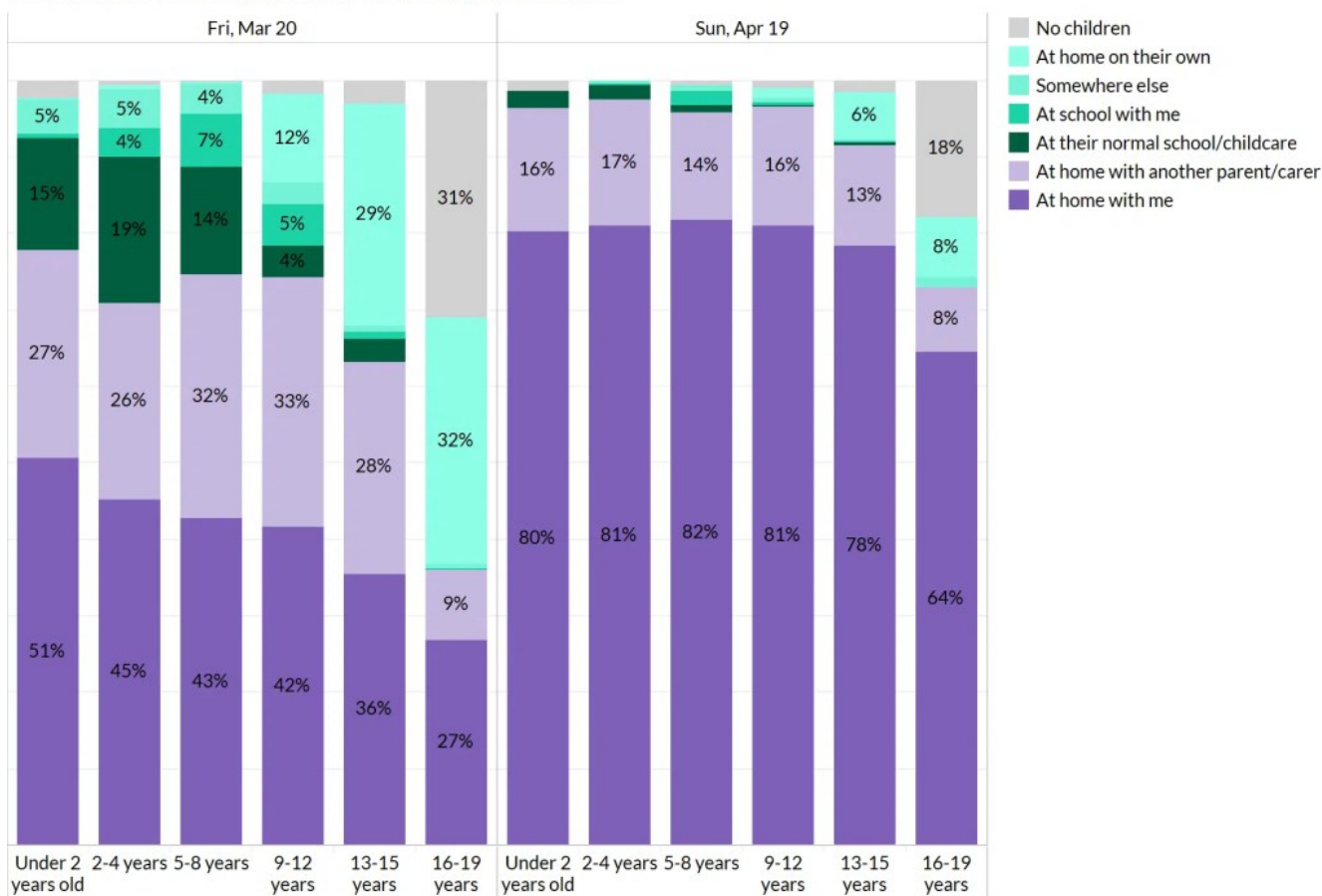
2. Who is teaching their classes and their own kids?

Being a teacher is difficult enough. Being a teacher while simultaneously also home educating your own children is a new-level of difficult! Who is saddled with this mighty task?

Back in March, on the first day of school closures, we asked teachers where their own children would be. You'll remember, lots of teachers had to go in on that day. At that time, (shown left in the graph below), around half of teachers said their child would either be in school/childcare, or with another parent.

Now, when we asked about today (20th April), nearly all teachers who are parents are at home with their children. The difference is particularly pronounced for very young children, who in March were still going to childminders or nurseries, and for older pupils (16-19) who were previously at home on their own.

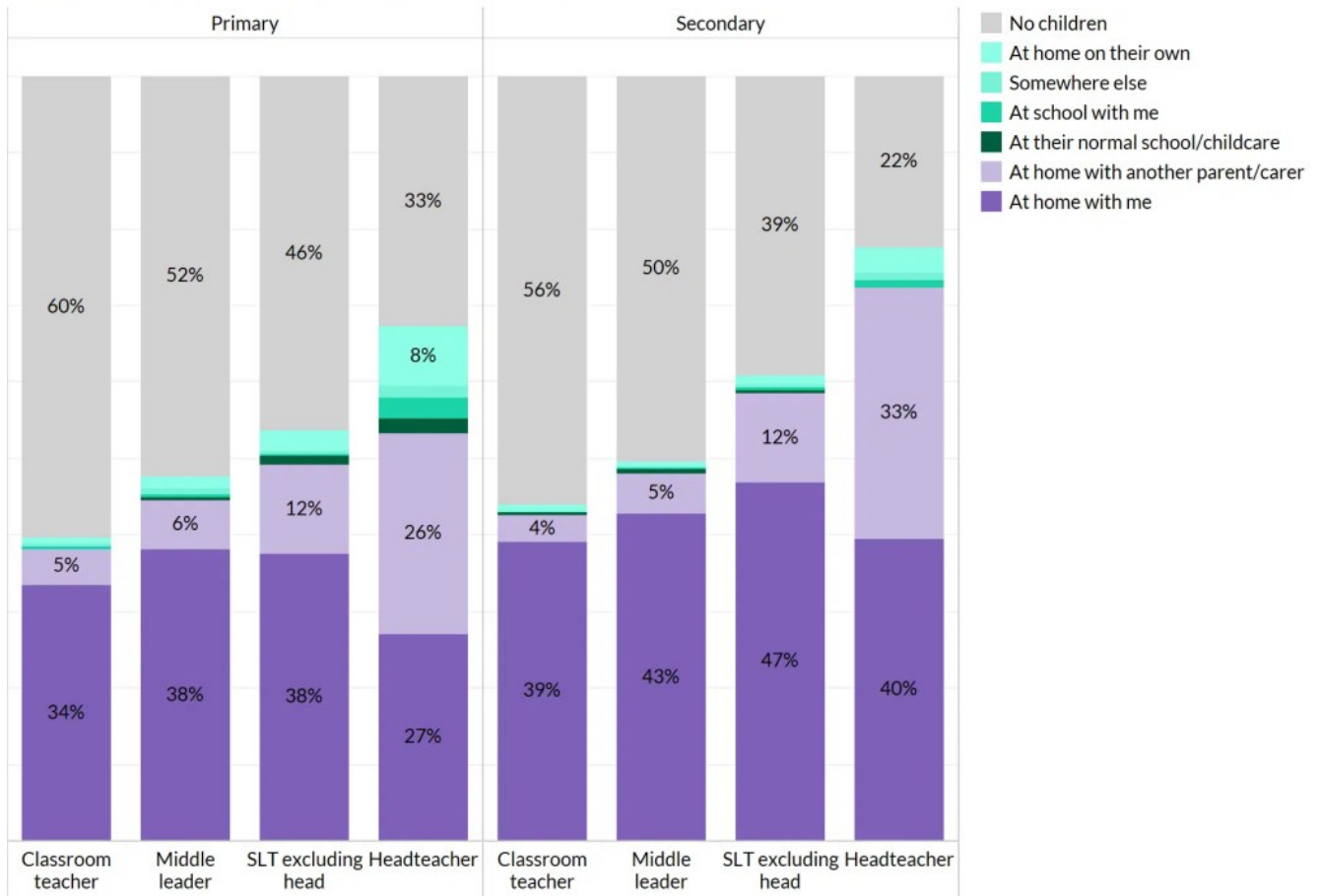
Report of childcare arrangements, by age of youngest child



In total, over a third of all teachers are educating their own kids whilst working. This needs to be borne in mind when thinking about partially re-opening schools. A teacher with kids in Years 4 and 6 can't easily return to teach Year 10! (Of course, the age of a teacher's child matters in all of this, but we estimate that over a quarter of all teachers have primary caring responsibility for a child under 13.)

What the graph below shows is that responsibility for children changes across job role, with those in senior leadership positions more likely to have children than those in the classroom. There has been talk of a phased return to normal life, in which younger people, who are less at risk of COVID-19, would be the first to go back to public places. But how easily can this work in a school where many aspects of life must be carried out by senior leaders? (For example, safeguarding)?

If you have children of your own, where will they be tomorrow (Monday)? (Tick the response that most closely applies to your youngest child)



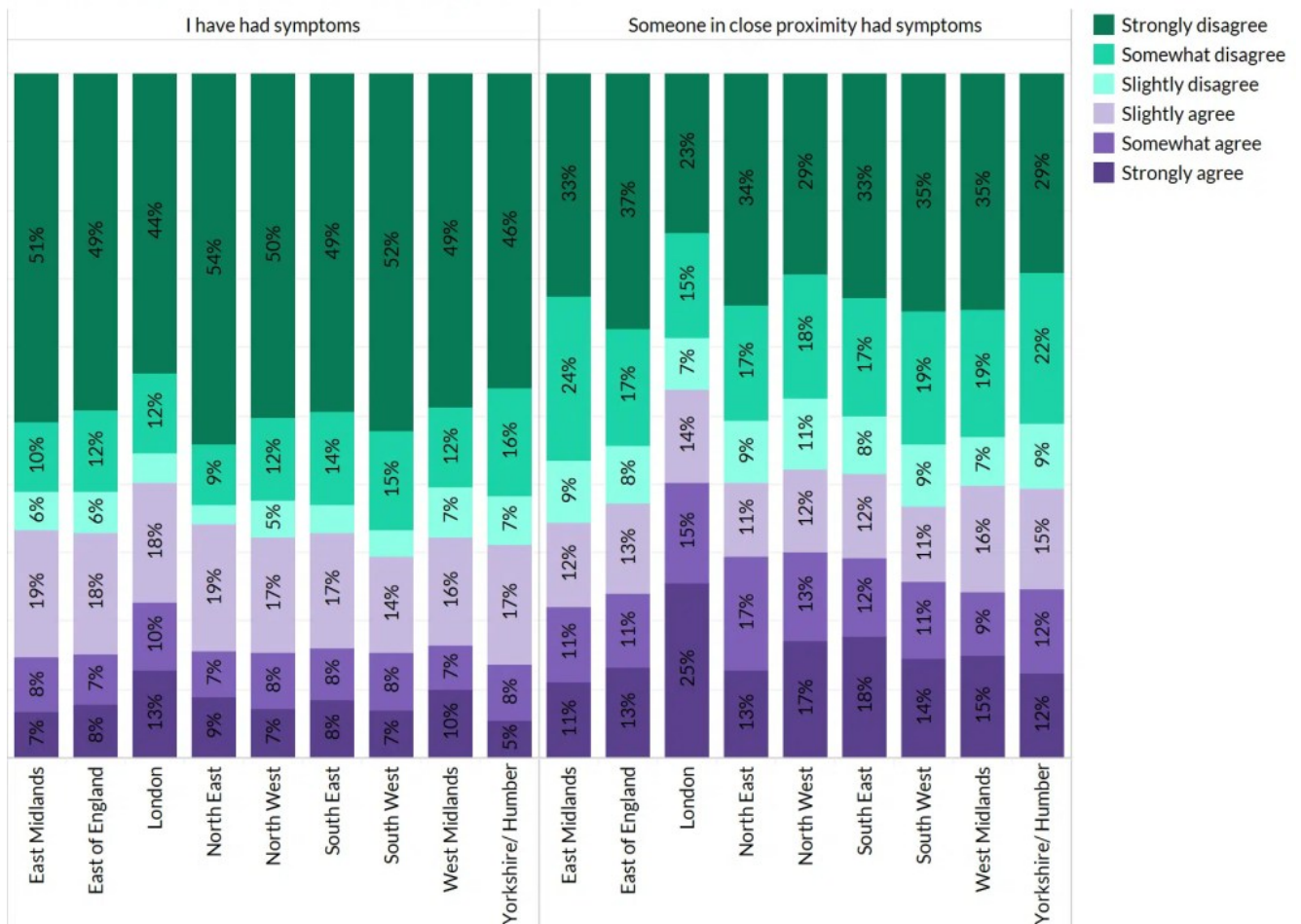
Ultimately, we have to remember that schools are not just full of children but of teachers too, and their home arrangements will matter as part of this return!

3. Where is Corona virus?

London is the COVID-19 hotspot in England. So, do teachers in the capitals have a greater chance of believing that they or someone close to them has had it? The graph below shows the perceptions of teachers that they, themselves, have had COVID-19 (left hand side of the graph) and perceptions that people they know have had symptoms (right hand-side). The higher the purple lines, the more that people in that region think they' or other people have had symptoms.

London has a slightly higher rate of people who believe they've had COVID-19 symptoms, and the same for close proximity. Across the rest of the country, the picture is broadly similar.

Perceptions of symptoms only slightly higher in London

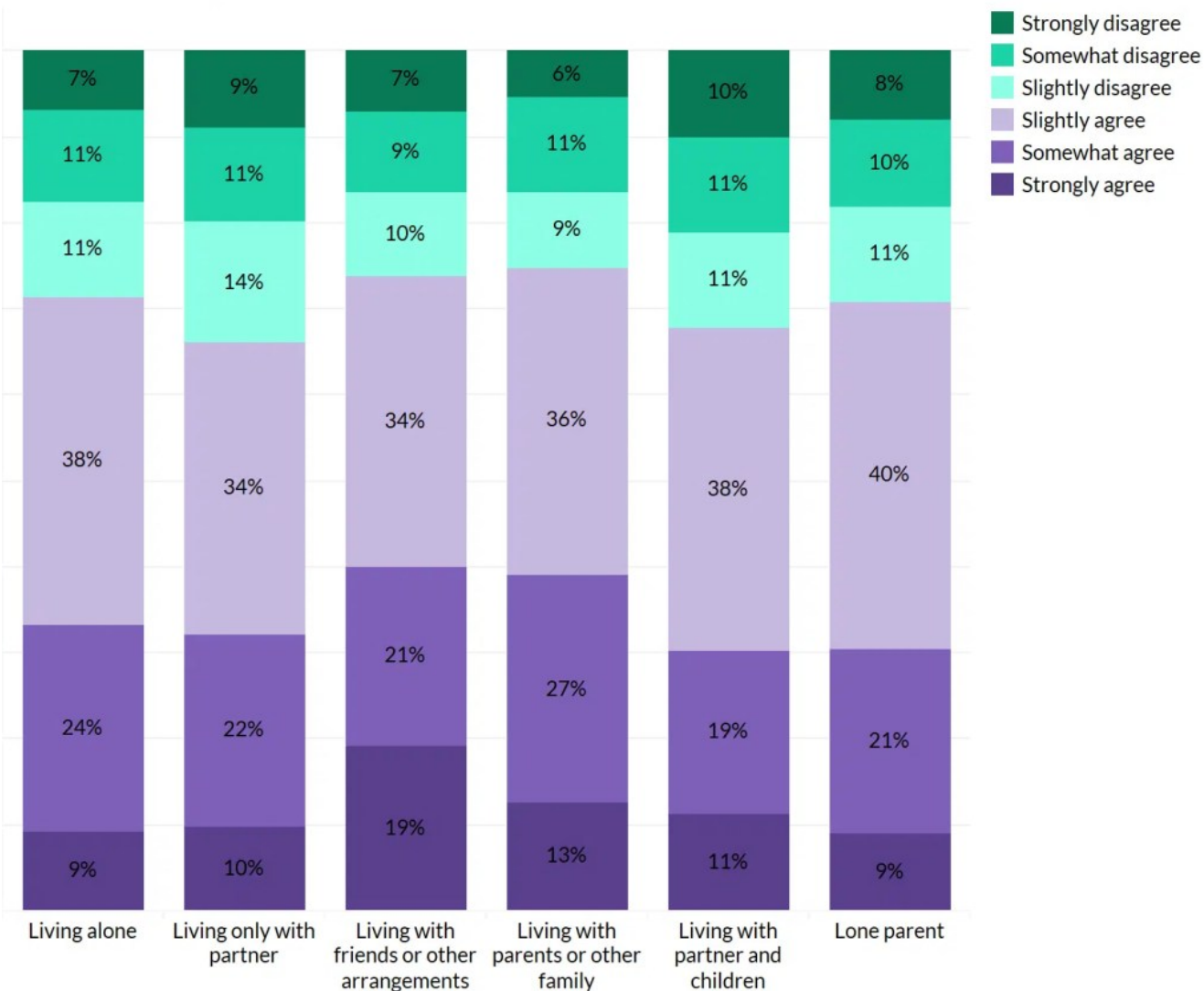


4. Who is struggling with lockdown?

What makes a lockdown more stressful? Being in a house-share or living with your parents! Although the difference is not gigantic.

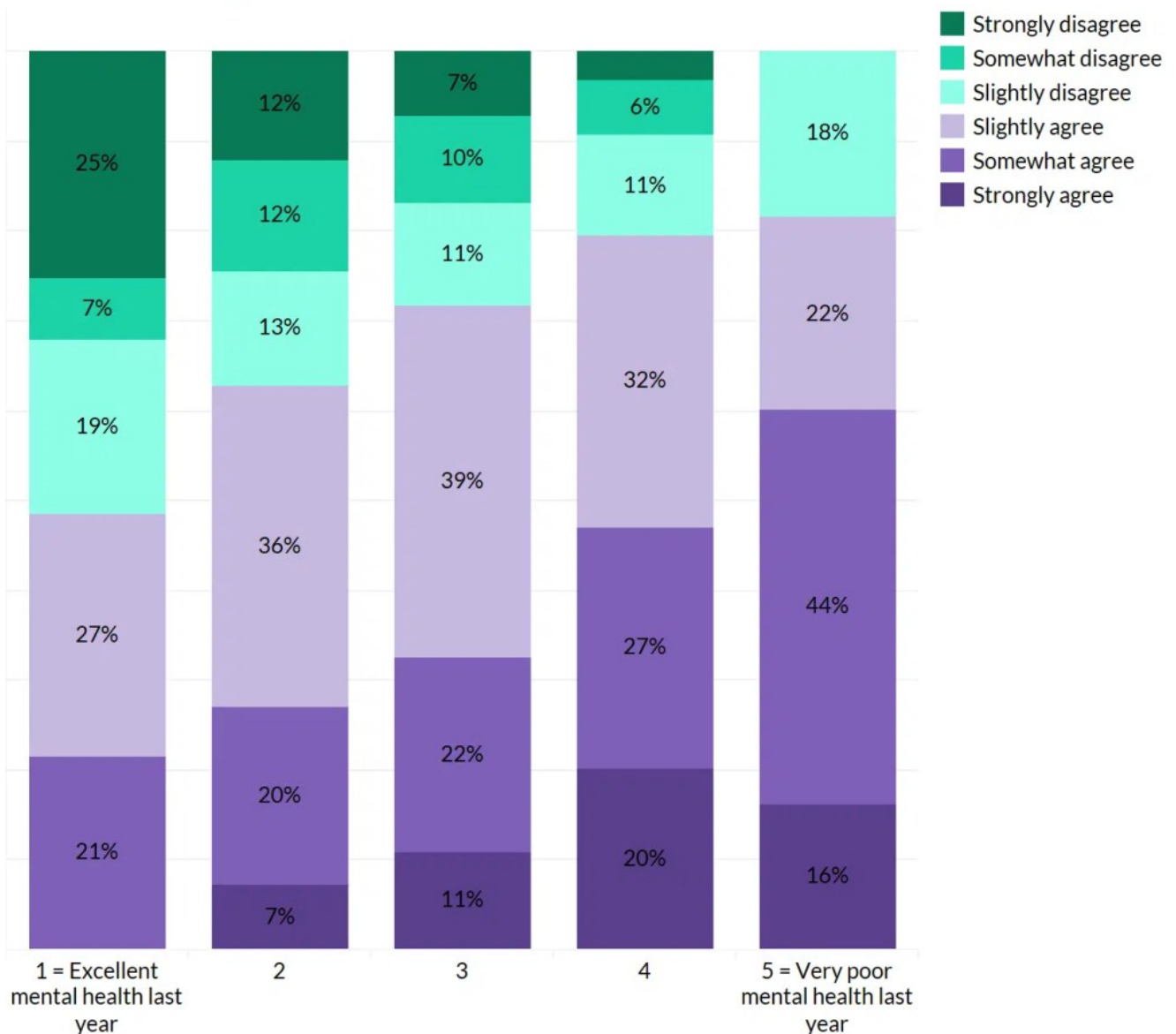
The graph below shows people with different living arrangements by the impact on psychological health. Almost 1 in 5 people living with friends strongly agreed that the outbreak had negatively affected their health, compared to just 9% of those living alone (or as a lone parent).

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has had a negative impact on my psychological health



Last autumn, we also asked a series of wellbeing questions. Using that data, and comparing it to now, we find that: teachers who self-reported poorer psychological health last autumn are also more likely to now feel that COVID-19 has harmed their mental health. This makes sense. If you are someone who already has a lot of positive mental health in store, then it will likely be easier to face any setbacks of this period. Note, however, that even 21% of people who had excellent mental health last year somewhat agreed there had been a negative impact.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has had a negative impact on my psychological health



Time for the tips...

- [Want to remember everything you've ever learned? Here's the algorithm you need to know...](#)
- [Can the current difficulties be an opportunity?](#)
- [How do you find meaning in difficult times?](#)
- [Connecting with parents and carers](#)
- [How to recruit during lockdown](#)