

SEPTEMBER 2020

# YOUTH IN PANDEMIC: THE KIDS ARE NOT ALRIGHT

The evolution of youth's attitudes and behaviors and  
how brands can help shape the future

**information**  
**desk**

insights from

**VICE** media  
group

## YOUTH IN PANDEMIC: CHECK IN

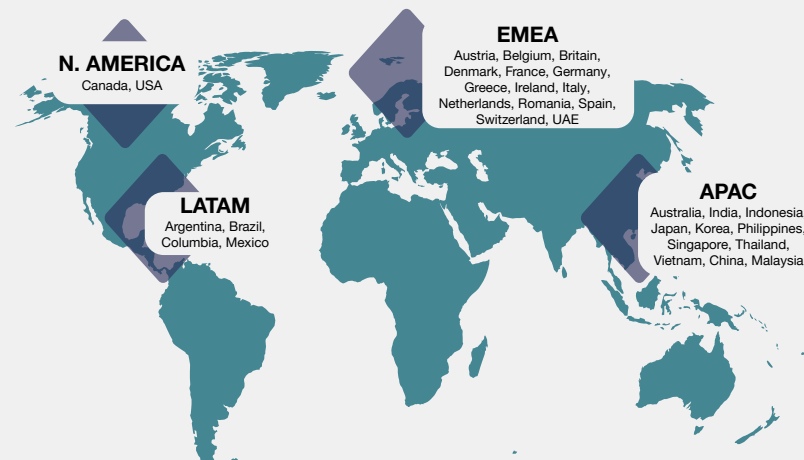
VICE Media Group is tracking the evolution of youth's attitudes and behaviors over time to determine the pandemic's lasting impact on the world.

## METHODOLOGY

Online quantitative studies were fielded via VICE, Refinery29, and i-D websites and social channels to track youth's responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional qualitative questions fielded to VICE Media Group's proprietary insights communities, VICE Voices and Mad Chatter.

## MARKETS



Youth in Pandemic  
Check in I

Youth in Pandemic  
Check in II

Youth in Pandemic  
Check in III

**n=9,360**

MARCH  
(GLOBAL)

**n=4,041**

JUNE  
(GLOBAL)

**n=1,000**

SEPTEMBER  
(US & UK)



Category Deep-Dives

**Menu for the  
Post-COVID Future**

APRIL-MAY

**Spotlight on the Future  
of Entertainment**

APRIL-MAY

**Re-imagining  
Home**

APRIL-MAY

**Prescription for the  
post-COVID future**

MAY-JUNE

**Love After  
Lockdown**

MAY-JUNE



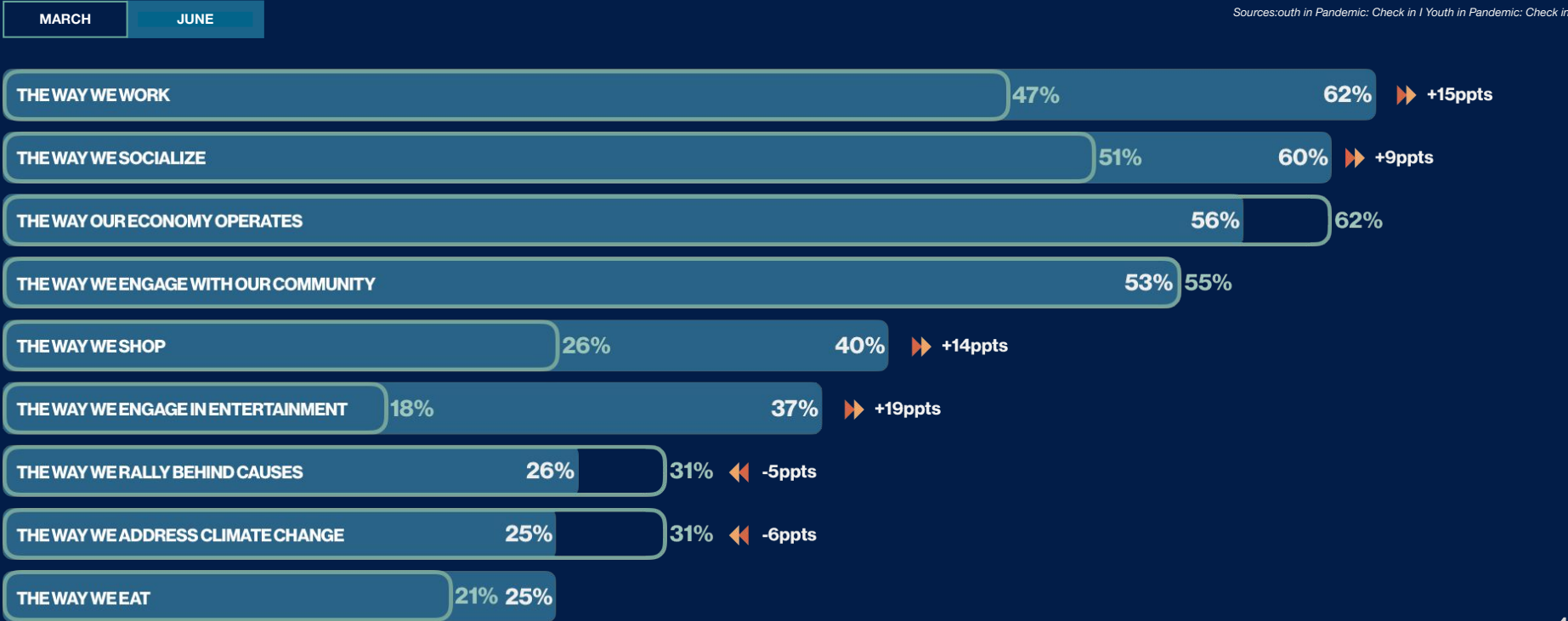
**THE FUTURE  
AIN'T WHAT IT  
USED TO BE**



# Youth predict monumental societal shifts, especially in how we engage with the economy and each other.



Q: What do you imagine will be the most lasting societal change after this pandemic?



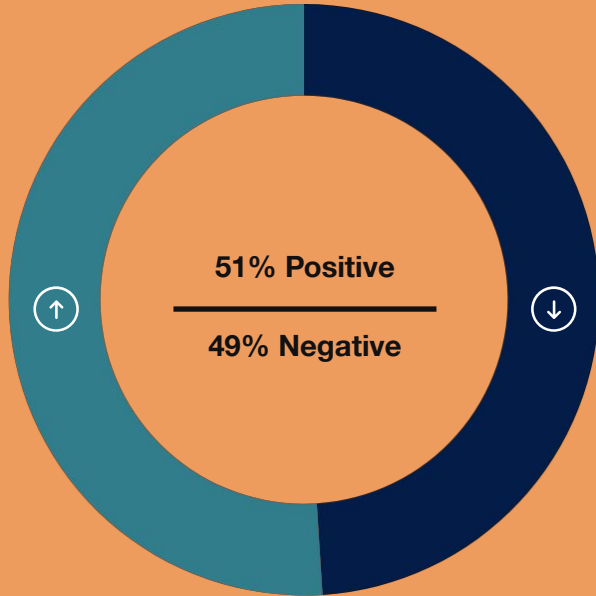


# The global impact of these changes remains uncertain.

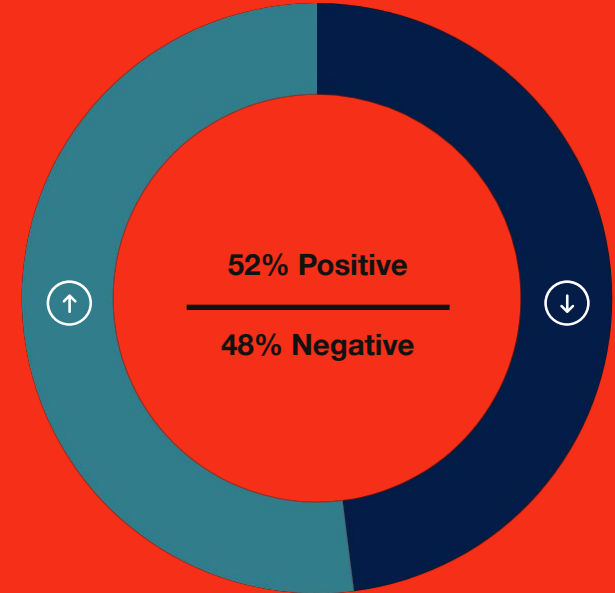


Q: Do you feel Coronavirus will have a positive or negative long-term impact on society and culture?

MARCH



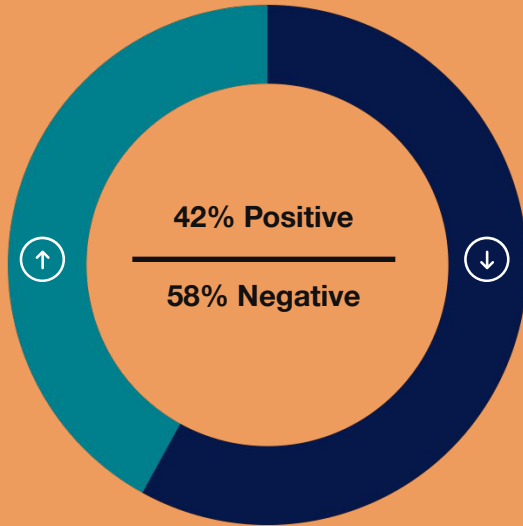
JUNE



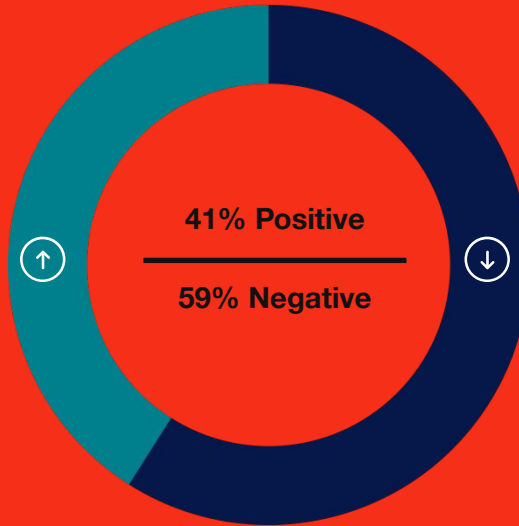
# In the US, the future looks bleak.

→ Q: Do you feel Coronavirus will have a positive or negative long-term impact on society and culture? (US-only)

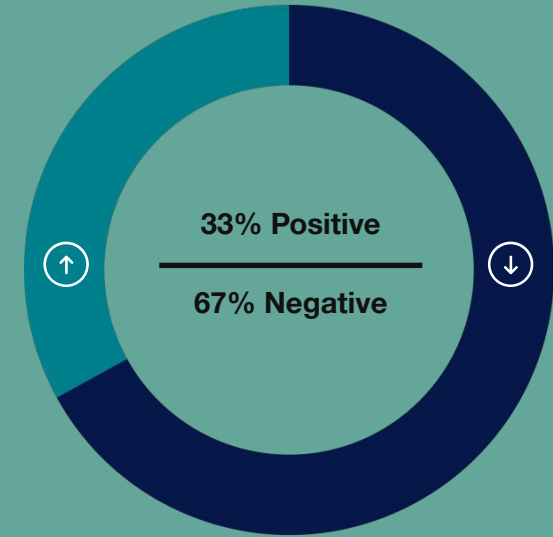
MARCH



JUNE



SEPTEMBER

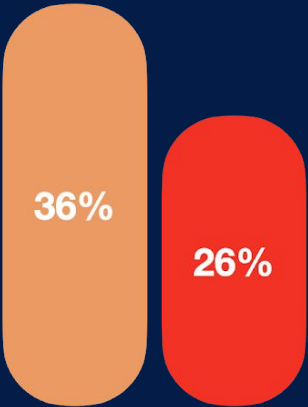


# Around the world, hope for a better future is deteriorating.

→ How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

% answering high/very high

- MARCH
- JUNE



EMOTION LEVEL AT NORMAL

HOPEFULNESS

“

[My overall state of wellbeing is a 1/10 due to] racism, COVID-19, job loss, the struggle with the state of the world.

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, CANADA



# They see a future plagued with fear and lost opportunity.



## Fear without end

“

I work in a school that is open 5 days per week and all students are in school, no remote learning. It feels as though it's inevitable that I will get sick. I feel hopeless in every aspect in my life. I don't feel like anything is going to get better any time relatively soon. And I am having a really difficult time adjusting to our "new normal".

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US

“

The longer we go in the year, the more I feel the virus' impact on almost every aspect of life. And it sounds like a second wave will be coming.

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US

Not knowing when Covid will come to some sort of end and when we will all be some kind of safe again.

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, UK



## Dreams derailed

“

Plans have all been scuppered both short and long-term with regards to my career, my personal dreams, my relationship. Dating will be so different in the future and that makes me less hopeful for finding a partner and having children when I had planned.

GEN Z WOMAN, CANADA

“

The coronavirus makes it less likely that my family, friends, and myself will survive into the future. Climate change threatens any human future at all. Not worth it to have kids or a career. Just trying to enjoy life one day at a time.

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US

# They've lost faith in leadership and one another.



## Distrust in government

“

I don't trust the government to help or make good decisions regarding the pandemic, millions are still out of work and there's no additional financial help, crime is increasing, police are still killing unarmed black people, Trump is trying to discredit the election, the country seems to be heading towards a more fascist state.

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US

“

The government's lack of direction in leading the country through the pandemic

MILLENNIAL MAN, UK

The current political climate does not foster hope for younger generations. We've been shown time and time again that we want change but it will never come through our elected representatives.

MILLENNIAL MAN, US



## Distrust in one another

“

Realizing how many people in this country simply cannot be bothered to care about other people has made me less hopeful than ever about our future. How can we address huge, systemic, serious issues like racial injustice, climate change, or voting rights when we cannot even get people to put a freakin mask on their face when they go to the store to keep their neighbors from DYING!?!

MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US

“

No one is coming to save us and I'm not sure we are willing or able to save ourselves.

MILLENNIAL MAN, US

The change in people's attitudes from helping each other to only caring about themselves

GEN Z WOMAN, UK

# WE'RE IN THE MIDST OF A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Brand need: Help consumers take care of themselves.



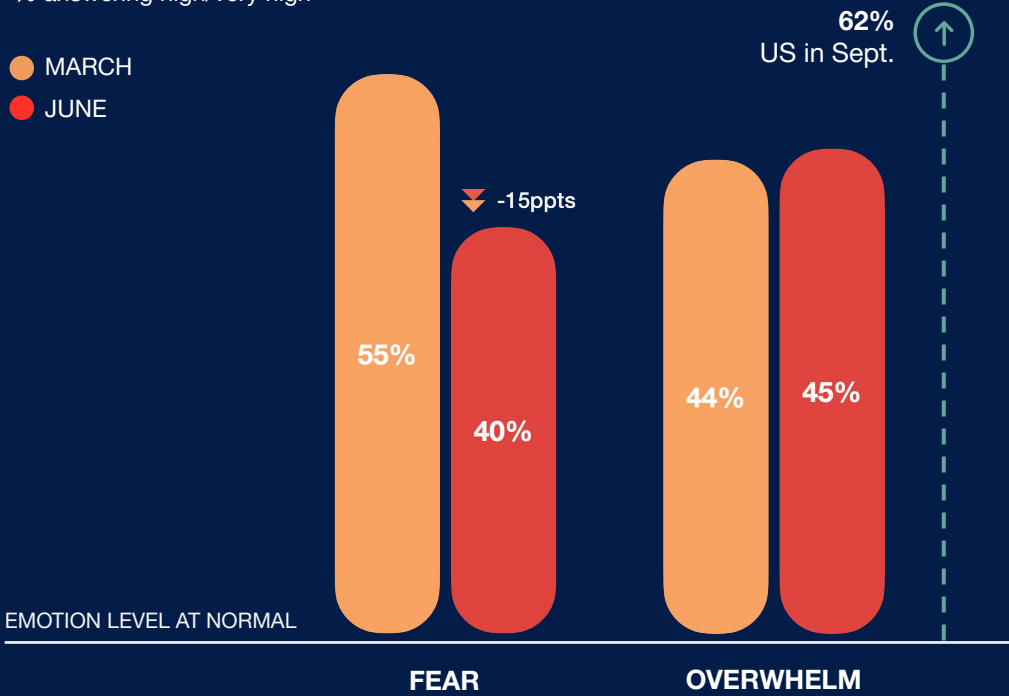
# The initial shock of COVID-19 has subsided, but youth still feel overwhelmed.



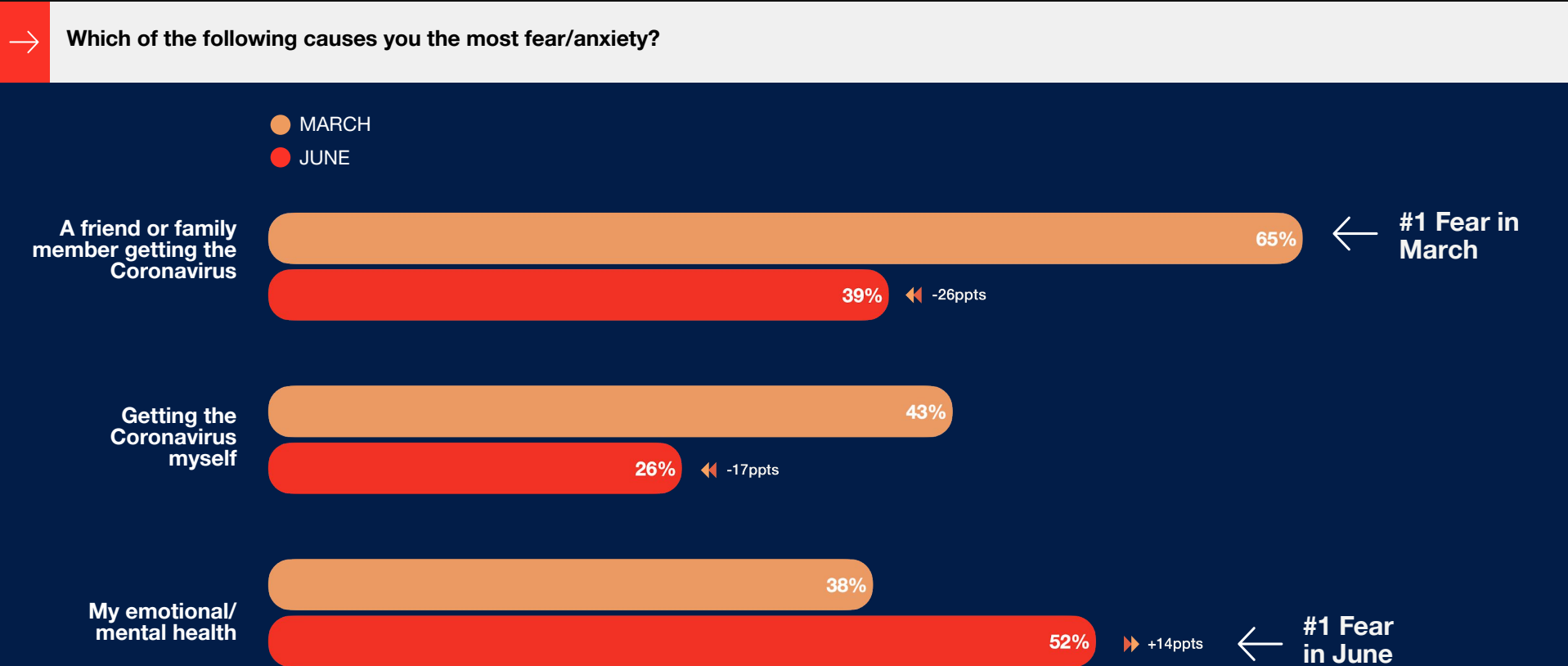
How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

% answering high/very high

- MARCH
- JUNE



# Their fear has shifted from the virus to their mental health.

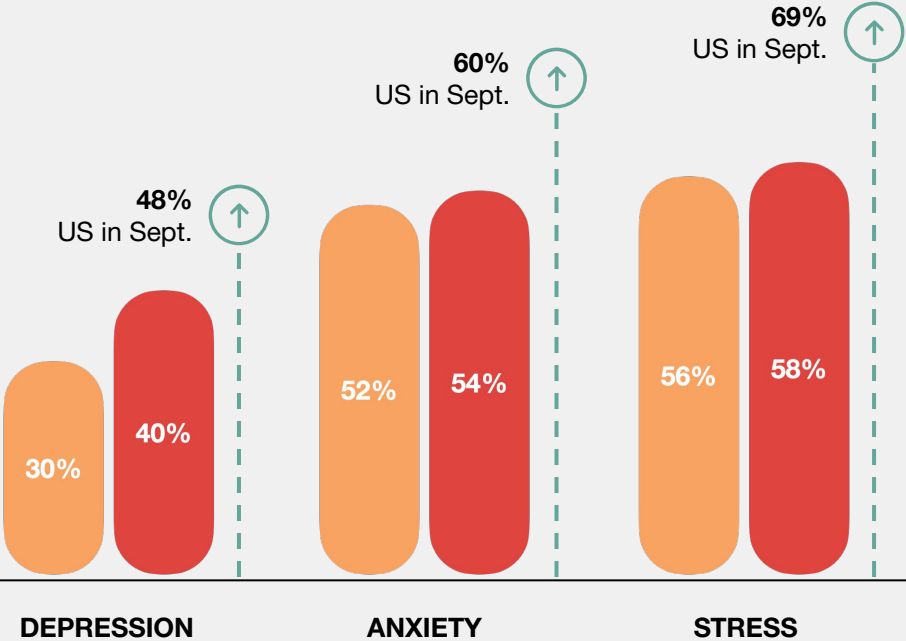


# Mental health has become a chronic struggle for many.

→ How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

% answering high/very high

MARCH  
JUNE



EMOTION LEVEL  
AT NORMAL

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II



AS SEEN ON VICE

Self-Care Tips for  
Black People Who Are  
Really Going Through  
It Right Now

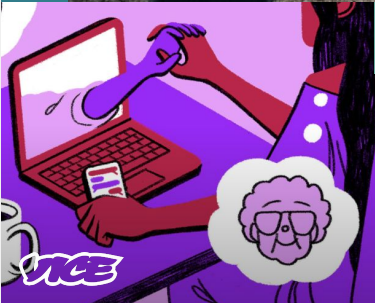
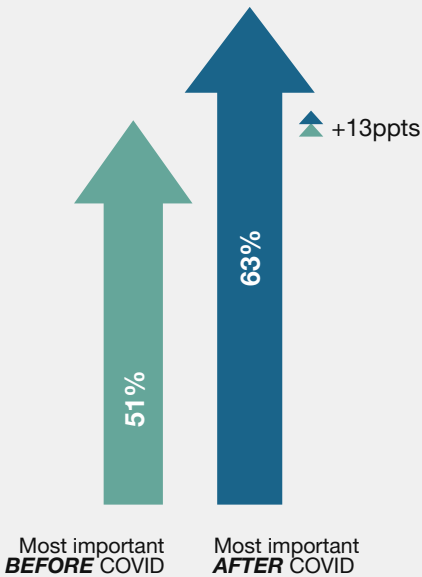
1,315% above benchmark

# Our wellbeing will depend on our mental and emotional health.

→ Most important aspects of Wellbeing ( 9-10 ratings on a 10-point scale)

#1

Emotional wellbeing will be the *most* important aspect of health & wellness after COVID-19.



AS SEEN ON VICE




**What to Do When Everyone Needs Support but You're Only One Person**

234% above benchmark

# Youth are recognizing the need for self-care and implementing it.

→ Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected and maintain your wellbeing?

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II

|   |  | MARCH | → | JUNE  |
|---|--|-------|---|---|
|  | Added or increased a meditation practice                 | 12%   |   | <b>18%</b><br>▲ +6 ppts<br>+11 ppts LATAM                 |
|  | Spoke to a coach or therapist                            | 3%    |   | <b>13%</b><br>▲ +10 ppts<br>+14 ppts LATAM<br>+15 ppts NA |
|  | Downloaded or increased my use of a mental health app(s) | 6%    |   | <b>11%</b><br>▲ +5 ppts<br>+6 ppts APAC                   |

SELF-CARE NET SCORE: 17% 30% ▲ +13 ppts





# OUR RELATIONSHIPS ARE AT STAKE

Brand Need: Provide tools for meaningful and safe experiences.



# Physical separation has left young people feeling lonely and disconnected.

→ How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

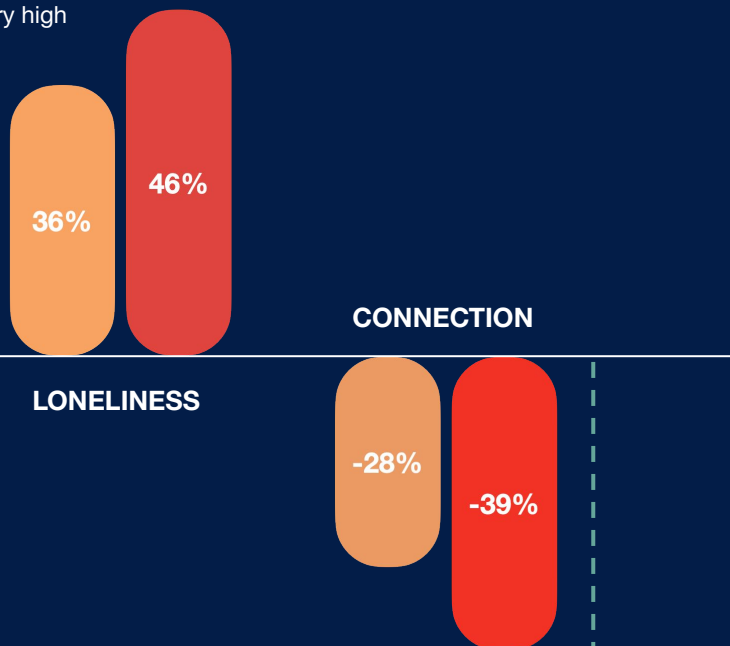
% answering high/very high

● MARCH  
● JUNE

EMOTION LEVEL  
AT NORMAL

LONELINESS

CONNECTION



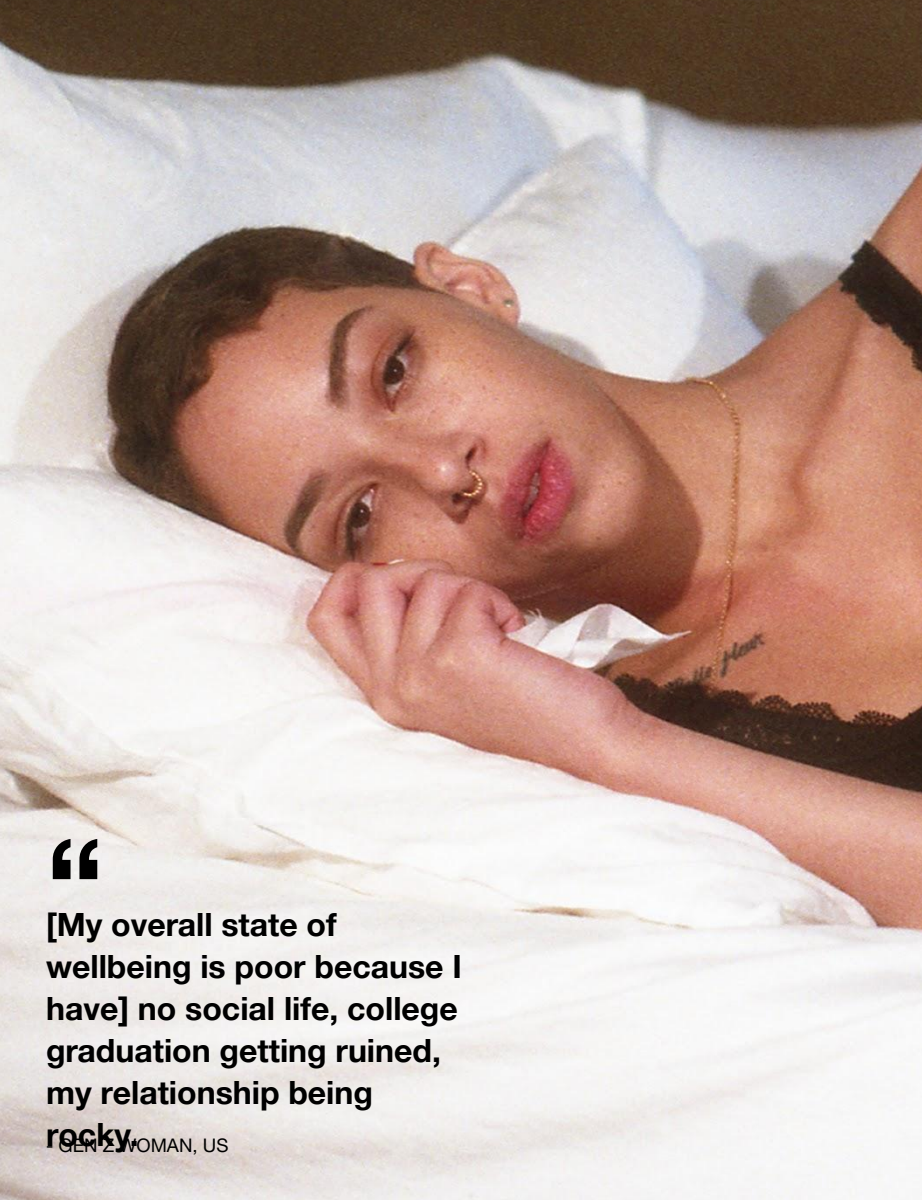
↓ -61%  
US in Sept.

“

I miss my friends very much - the social contact like being able to hold each other.

- GEN Z WOMAN, CANADA

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II



“

[My overall state of wellbeing is poor because I have] no social life, college graduation getting ruined, my relationship being rocky.

GEN Z WOMAN, US

# They are worried about the status of their relationships.

2X  2.4x for Gen Z



AS SEEN ON R29

Quarantine Might Be Ruining Your Relationship. Here's How To Save It

1,659% above benchmark








Young people are 2x more likely to be feeling **fearful / anxious about their relationships** in June 2020 compared to March 2020.

# Virtual experiences have kept them connected throughout the pandemic.

→ Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected and maintain your wellbeing?

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II

|   |   | MARCH | → | JUNE             |
|---|---|-------|---|------------------|
|    | Increased the amount I use social media               | 47%   |   | 45%              |
|    | Reached out to someone I haven't spoken to in a while | 31%   |   | 38%              |
|    | Hosted or joined a virtual hangout                    | 22%   |   | 34%<br>▲ +12 pts |
|    | Created a new group chat or chain                     | 15%   |   | 16%              |
|  | Downloaded or increased my use of a dating app(s)     | 6%    |   | 11%<br>▲ +5 pts  |

 AS SEEN ON R29

**The Best Care Packages  
For Bridging Social  
Distance**

3,181% above benchmark



# Virtual connection is not a direct replacement for in-person connection.



What contributed to your low wellbeing score?

“

I don't know how long it'll be before I see friends or family again. I also haven't touched a person in almost three months, and I don't know when I will again, which is really strange.

- MILLENNIAL WOMAN, IRELAND

**WELLBEING SCORE: 5/10**

“

I live alone, work from home and I haven't seen anyone I know in weeks.

- MILLENNIAL MAN, BRITAIN

**WELLBEING SCORE: 2/10**

“

I miss my boyfriend, who is in France. I have not seen him since February and I do not know when we'll meet again.

- MILLENNIAL WOMAN, ITALY

**WELLBEING SCORE: 5/10**

“

So hard to get motivated to exercise in lockdown. Have tried my dance studio's online classes but it's not the same as in person.

- MILLENNIAL WOMAN, AUSTRALIA

**WELLBEING SCORE: 5/10**



# No matter how much they miss it, returning to social experiences induces anxiety.



How do you feel about returning to social experiences when social-distancing mandates are lifted?



60%

▲ 68% NA  
▼ 51% EMEA

of young people foresee themselves experiencing **social anxiety** as things reopen



AS SEEN ON VICE

How to Gracefully Ask for a Little Space—Or Just Say 'No'—During a Pandemic

144% above benchmark

# Social experiences will be reserved for the most meaningful people and places.

| → They'll seek closer romantic relationships.  | → They'll bring entertaining home.  | → They'll prioritize their favorite places.  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>64%</b><br><br>of those single & dating will seek <b>more meaningful connections</b> after the pandemic.<br><br>(35% will be less open to flings) | <b>7in10</b><br><br>feel most comfortable getting together <b>with a few people at someone's home</b> after restrictions are lifted<br><br>(#1 social experience they're most comfortable with) | <b>TOP 3</b><br><br>The Top 3 places they're most excited to return to:<br><br><div><div>#1</div> Their favorite bars</div> <div><div>#2</div> Their favorite neighborhood restaurants</div> <div><div>#3</div> Their go-to coffee shops</div> |

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II; Menu for the Post-COVID Future

“

Isolation and quarantine has helped me see who my real friends really are and who actually wants to be in my life and whose attention I was just chasing after.

- GEN Z MAN, UNITED STATES

“

I will go out with who I consider important.

- GEN Z MAN, ITALY

“

My husband and I have had a chance to reconnect and have more meaningful in-depth conversations throughout the day.

- MILLENNIAL WOMAN, CANADA



# WE'RE BORED OUT OF OUR MINDS

Brand Need: Entertain us, please.

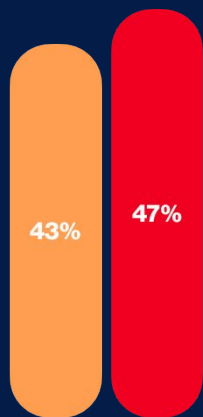
# Boredom has become the norm.

→ How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

% answering high/very high

● MARCH

● JUNE



EMOTION LEVEL  
AT NORMAL

**BOREDOM**

“

Quarantine has been a calm, relaxing time for me... but also lonely - nothing to do, a lot of boredom and therefore no force to move.

- GEN Z WOMAN, GERMANY

“

[My wellbeing is suboptimal due to] the repetitiveness of my days, boredom and fatigue.

- GEN Z WOMAN, ITALY



Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II

# Entertainment is the go-to cure for quarantine boredom.

→ Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected and maintain your wellbeing?

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II

|  |  | MARCH                                      | → JUNE                                     |
|--|--|--|--|
|   | Participated in online gaming            | 28%<br><small>(37% Men; 19% Women)</small> | 29%<br><small>(39% Men; 20% Women)</small> |
|   | Downloaded a new social media app(s)     | 14%  | 17%  |
|   | Subscribed to a new streaming service(s) | 14%  | 23%<br>▲ +9 pts                            |
|  | Attended a virtual concert or event      | 13%  | 22%<br>▲ +9 pts                            |

 AS SEEN ON R29

Games To Play Online  
With Your Friends While  
We're All Stuck At Home

1,127% above benchmark

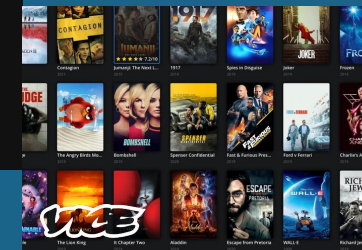


ENTERTAINMENT NET SCORE: 50% 59% ▲ +9 pts

# This increased reliance on at-home entertainment will become ingrained in culture.

[Legendary Piracy App Popcorn Time Comes Back From the Dead During Coronavirus](#)

917% above benchmark



What do you imagine the world of entertainment will look like after the pandemic?

Top Predictions for Gaming

MORE PEOPLE WILL VIEW GAMING AS A WAY TO STAY CONNECTED WITH OTHERS.

#1

GAMING WILL BECOME AN EVEN BIGGER PART OF CULTURE.

#2

PEOPLE WILL PLAY MORE GAMES, PERIOD.

#3

Top Predictions for Shows/ Movies

EVERYONE WILL HAVE AT LEAST ONE STREAMING SERVICE IN THEIR HOME.

#1

MOST PEOPLE WILL HAVE **MULTIPLE** STREAMING SERVICES IN THEIR HOMES.

#2

THE WAY SHOWS/MOVIES ARE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC WILL CHANGE.

#3

# WE LACK PURPOSE

Brand Need: Help us find meaning in our daily lives.

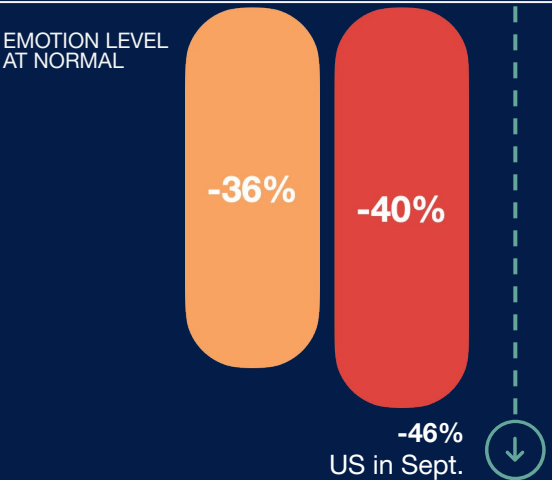
# Youth feel unfilled.

→ How would you describe your emotions today compared to an average day before COVID-19?

% answering high/very high

- MARCH
- JUNE

## PURPOSEFULNESS



“

I have everything I need, but lack a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

- MILLENNIAL WOMAN, US






Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II



# Creativity has helped them discover a new sense of purpose.

→ Have you taken any of the following actions in order to stay connected and maintain your wellbeing?

Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II

|   |                                    | MARCH | → | JUNE             |
|---|------------------------------------|-------|---|------------------|
|  | Experimented with new recipes      | 28%   |   | 48%<br>▲ +20 pts |
|  | Taken up or gotten back to a hobby | 31%   |   | 39%<br>▲ +8 pts  |
|  | Learned a new skill                | 18%   |   | 29%<br>▲ +11 pts |

 AS SEEN ON VICE

People All Over the World Are Making Frothy 'Dalagona' Coffee, Thanks to Quarantine

6,860% above benchmark



CREATIVITY NET SCORE:

54%

69% ▲ +15 pts

They're tapping creativity to enrich all aspects of life.

THEIR RELATIONSHIPS

45%

Will be more open to creative ways of dating after the pandemic



AS SEEN ON VICE

**Brands Are Giving Away Their Secret Recipes Because of Coronavirus**

1,207% above benchmark



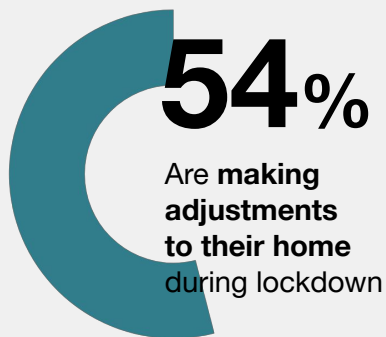
Sources: Youth in Pandemic: Check in I; Youth in Pandemic: Check in II; Menu for the Post-COVID Future; Spotlight on the Future of Entertainment; Re-imagining home

THEIR FOOD

1 in 3

Describe their current relationship with food as "creative."

They're tapping creativity to enrich all aspects of life.



35% Get more creative with the home space

27% Start home repairing

24% Start a new home project

1 in 4

Are playing / wanting to play more creative / arts games

20%

Believe that more people will view gaming as a source of creativity after COVID-19.

THEIR HOMES

THEIR GAMES

# New Directions

There has been a drastic shift in how consumers feel, which is starting to permanently impact how they live their lives. We believe brands can help them through this moment and into a better future.



01

With the future unknown and hope diminishing, help young people focus on what they can control here and now.

02

Be mindful of emotional wellbeing in all things you do - from products and services to corporate policies. Self-care will be the driving force behind many consumer decisions.

03

Enhance the virtual experiences that are here to stay, and help make in-person interactions even more meaningful.

04

Find new ways to entertain - topics, formats, distribution, etc.

05

Cultivate creativity within the company and among consumers to help people find purpose and meaning in their daily lives.



SEPTEMBER 2020

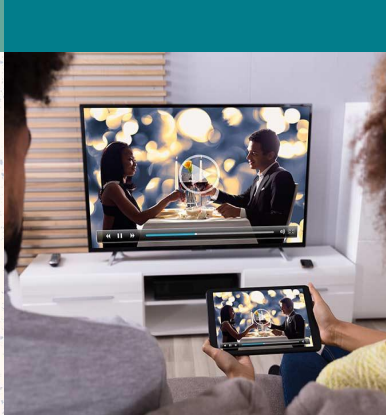
# Content Integration Opportunities

Content Partnership Opportunities

**VICE** media  
group

N.A. Brand Strategy

LOOKING AHEAD TO A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD,  
**WE SEE FIVE MAIN CATEGORIES THAT WILL BE IMPACTED**



Health &  
Wellness

Entertainment

Tech &  
Telecom

Home

Food &  
Beverage



# Mental health has never been more important

COVID-19 has caused more than just a physical health crisis, it has brought about a mental health crisis as well.

# #1

Emotional wellbeing

Is the #1 most important aspect of health & wellness after COVID-19 (+13% over the course of the pandemic)



**VICE Media Group can position your brand as a tool to help them take care of their mental health.**

## [VICE Guide to Healthcare](#)

To help audiences take care of themselves, we're bringing a practical, honest, and no-BS guide to navigating insurance, care, and well-being. Spanning expert advice, how-to's, and first-hand storytelling, we'll provide the resources they need to access the wellness tools to help prep them for the future.

## [R29 Shelf Care](#)

While audiences hold off on relationships to take care of themselves, we can showcase your brand as the self care tool they need to incorporate into their daily routine as we explore how the things on our shelf can soothe and create a sense of normalcy in tumultuous times.



# Streaming will become universal

Even the last holdouts to the streaming revolution are being converted, solidifying the power of streaming for entertainment brands.

## #1

The top prediction for shows & movies is that everyone will have at least one streaming service in their home.



**VICE Media Group can help your title stand apart among all other streaming options. We'll make your show/movie the must-see for our streaming savvy audience.**

### [VICE Entertainment Update](#)

We'll highlight your title in the VICE Entertainment Update, our weekly report on all things culture, including show premieres, music drops, award shows and the most highly anticipated movie releases.

### [R29 The Mention](#)

We'll make your latest release a part of our weekly Live chat show, The Mention. R29 editors can get fans excited about your premiere by teasing the show's themes and talking about its stars, while driving viewers to stream on your platform.

# Virtual connection is here to stay

Audiences have unlocked new ways to virtually connect. After the pandemic, we can expect to see these habits continuing.

73%

Have used social media, apps and other virtual ways to keep them connected throughout the pandemic



**VICE Media Group can show how your tech products are powering the new way we connect.**

## [VICE The New Normal](#)

Our daily lives have changed. The New Normal captures the massive shifts happening in our homes, families and throughout society right now. We can show how your tech product is powering these shifts and giving us a new sense of normalcy.

## [R29 Single Files](#)

Virtual connection is a pivotal part of dating. We'll showcase how your product is powering connection in this time in Single Files, personal essays of what the single life looks like. We'll explore people's experiences and how they've used technology in new and interesting ways to form relationships.

# Home is an investment in yourself

We used to have other spaces to occupy our time. Now, with most of our time spent at home, audiences are more eager to invest in creating a space that reflects their style, comfort and creativity.

# 54%

Are making adjustments to their home during lockdown



**VICE Media Group can make your brand the go-to destination to find the products they need to make their home a place of comfort.**

## [VICE Motherboard Makerspace](#)

MOTHERBOARD is partnering with influencers to guide viewers through simple, useful DIY tutorials filmed in their own homes. Using products from your brand, these influencers will show users how to remake their home spaces to meet their tech needs.

## [R29 Sweet Digs](#)

We give viewers a peek inside the homes of the coolest women we know. We'll position your brand as their trusted resource that helped bring their design vision to life and created at-home oases for relaxation.

# A new generation of chefs

Previously thought of as a generation without the cooking skills of their parents, young people have taken the time at home to learn skills and recipes they'll use for a lifetime.

## +20%

More young people have said they have experimented with new recipes since the start of pandemic (28% in March vs. 48% in June)



**VICE Media Group will make your products must-have ingredients for their next recipe.**

### [VICE MUNCHIES How To](#)

Our hit series, MUNCHIES How To, features the world's leading chefs showing off their skills and their personality. We can integrate your product within one of their masterful creations.

### [R29 Money Diaries](#)

In R29's fan favorite series, Money Diaries, we ask our users to anonymously report on how they spend their hard-earned money. We'll show how much they spend on your product and other ingredients to be featured in the dishes they're making for the week.





THANK  
YOU

information  
desk

insights from  
**VICE** media group