

14 MAY 2020

COVID-19 & Global Sport

Topline Data

global sport institute poll



Method: On behalf of the Global Sport Institute at Arizona State University, Latino Decisions implemented an international online survey of adults from April 18-27, 2020. Overall 750 respondents were interviewed for a margin of error of +/- 3.58%. The web survey was available in English in Australia, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States of America through Lucid. Final data were compared to the 2018 Census ACS demographic profile, the Department of Statistics of South Africa, Australian Bureau of Statistics, and United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics, to balance gender, age, education, and race/ethnicity so the resulting data matched the national demographic profile of each country. The average completion time for the poll was 9.24 minutes with a completion rate of 91%. The full results from the poll can be found at the Global Sport Institute's website: <https://globalsport.asu.edu/resources/global-sport-institute-poll-covid-19-global-sport>.

Highlights: COVID-19 & Youth Sports

Do you think the inability to play sports has caused your child stress or anxiety?

- **72% said “Yes”**
- **28% said “No”**

When your child’s organized sport is cleared to resume activity, which of the following statements apply to you: **I will not be putting my child back into organized sports due to concerns of catching coronavirus (COVID-19).**

- **62% said “Yes”**
- **38% said “No”**

When your child’s organized sport is cleared to resume activity, which of the following statements apply to you: **I will not be putting my kid(s) back into organized sports until there is a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.**

- **63% said “Yes”**
- **37% said “No”**

Additional Highlights

- Highest percentages of people across categories report their kids play 5 hours per week of organized youth sports, with 89-100% reporting postponed or canceled sports due to COVID-19.
- Highest percentages of people across categories, 59-93% report that yes, their kids are experiencing stress or anxiety due to postponed or canceled sports due to COVID-19, with people 60+ years old responding yes at higher rates than all other demographic categories.
- When asked how their kids are filling time normally spent training, “train on their own” and “recreational fun with family” were endorsed at highest percentages for most.
 - People in the United Kingdom also endorsed “Individualized Coaching” at higher percentages than people from other countries.
 - The United Kingdom respondents endorsed “Online Coaching” at higher rates than respondents from other countries.
- In terms of return to play, respondents largely replied that they would not put their kids back in sports after cleared to do so due to concerns over COVID-19. Higher percentages of males vs. females, younger vs. older, college vs. no college, and South Africans vs. other countries, and non-married vs. married responded this way.
- Not returning to play due to financial strains related to COVID-19 were more evenly split, with slightly higher percentages of males, married people, and people from the United Kingdom citing this reason.
- In general, respondents across all categories agreed that their kids would not return to sports until a vaccine is developed. Non-White respondents agreed with this condition at a higher percentage than White respondents, South Africans did so at higher percentages than those from other countries, males at higher percentages than females, older respondents at higher percentages than younger, and the lowest income bracket at higher proportions than higher income brackets.
- Respondents were split across demographic categories regarding adverse impact of COVID-19 on kids’ achieving next sports playing level.

Highlights: Resuming Live Sporting Events

Cancellation of sporting events is a necessary step to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

- **82% Agree**
- **5% Disagree**

Live sporting events should only be allowed to start after a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine is available.

- **54% Agree**
- **15% Disagree**

Sporting events should continue through the coronavirus (COVID-19), but without fans in attendance, and games should be livestreamed or put on television.

- **37% Agree**
- **37% Disagree**

Additional Highlights

- Non-White respondents affirmed that sporting events will forever be changed as a result of the pandemic at higher percentages than White people, South African and United States respondents agreed at higher percentages than other countries' respondents, as did people with kids vs. people with no kids.
- Highest percentages across categories previously attended 1/month or less.
- Highest percentage across all groups is "likely" to participate or attend live sporting events once they resume.
- Highest percentages endorse wanting hand sanitizer at every entrance, but heavily endorsed all safety precaution choices given. "no precautions needed" endorsed by less than 10% of respondents across categories.
- Young people and college grads have highest proportions of people using virtual reality to engage in sports.
 - People with kids had the highest percentage stating that they will consider using virtual reality to engage in sports.
- White respondents and people with kids had the highest percentage stating they will NOT consider virtual reality sports options, with people aged 60+ having the highest percentage of this response.

Highlights: Life Without Sport

Do you think the stoppage of sports has allowed you to appreciate the ways sports benefits you and your community?

- 18% said “A lot”
- 28% said “Some”
- 25% said “A little”
- 29% said “Not at all”

Additional Highlights

- The highest percentages of people reporting increased stress as a result of not having live sports were males, college grads, people 18-34, and people with kids.
- When asked, “Do you think the stoppage of sports has: allowed you to appreciate the ways sports benefits you and your community?” people in the United States responded “a lot” at higher rates than respondents in other countries.
 - Males did so at higher rates than females, 18-34-year olds did so at higher percentages than older respondents, and people with kids at higher proportions than people without kids.
- When asked about the impact of sports cancellation on well-being, increased anxiousness, depression, sense of isolation, anger, feeling the need to see a professional, adversely impacting romantic relationships, and interference with parenting, the response receiving the highest percentage of endorsement across all demographic categories was “not at all.” ***This is not the case for cancelled youth sports.**
- In terms of feeling isolated and feeling angry as a result of sports stoppage, respondents from South African endorsed “some” more than respondents from other countries, males did so at higher percentages than females, and younger people did so more than older people, and people with kids did so more than people without kids.
- Boredom as a result of the sports stoppage received more distributed responses, with non-White respondents, people from South Africa, males, and 18-34-year olds, selecting “a lot” at higher percentages than the other response choices and doing so at higher percentages than other respondents in their respective demographic categories.

Highlights: Sporting Events and Athletes

Athletes should still be compensated for cancelled games.

- **42% Agree**
- **25% Disagree**

Athletes' careers will be damaged by the delayed/cancelled seasons.

- **47% Agree**
- **21% Disagree**

Additional Highlights

- The majority of all respondents across categories agree that cancelling sporting events is necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and that sports leagues should suspend or delay their seasons but should continue once a vaccine is in place.
- Respondents across most categories generally endorsed athlete compensation for cancelled games. **South Africans endorsed athlete compensation in higher percentages than respondents in other countries. A higher percentage of non-White respondents agreed that athletes should be compensated compared to White respondents.**
- Higher percentages of people across demographic categories believe that athletes' careers will be damaged by cancelled seasons, with the highest percentage of agreement coming from South Africa, and from people with kids.
- Across groups, people were relatively evenly split regarding the continuation of sporting events without fans in attendance.
 - One difference was with regard to age, the group with the highest percentage endorsing this practice was the 18-34-year olds who contrasted with the oldest respondents who had the highest percentage disagreeing with this practice.

Highlights: Following Sports Online & On TV

How closely do you follow sports (local, semi-professional, professional) on television or by watching games on-line?

- **35% said “Very Closely”**
- **36% said “Fairly Closely”**
- **17% said “Not Very Closely”**
- **12% said “Not At All”**

How many hours do you spend online, on social media, watching TV in a given day since the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic?

- **35% said 0-3 Hours**
- **65% said 4-24 Hours**

When you are online, on social media, watching TV, about how much of that time are you following sports?

- **47% said 0-25% of the time**
- **24% said 26-50% of the time**
- **23% said 51-75% of the time**
- **6% said 76-100% of the time**

Additional Highlights

- South Africans dedicate the highest percentage of screen time to following sports, compared to Australia, United Kingdom, and United States (who all have similar sports-related screen time patterns).
- A higher proportion of males (compared to females) spend more than 50% of their screen time on sports-related content.
- Respondents in the youngest age group (18-34) spend the highest proportion of screen time on sports-related content. Specifically, 44% spend more than half of their screen time on sports content compared to 26% of 35-59-year olds and only 17% of 60+ year olds.
- A higher proportion of non-White respondents spend more than half of their screen time on sport content compared to White respondents.
- Respondents who do not have kids at home tend to spend less screen time following sports compared to those with kids.
- “Favorite sport to follow” is not a surprise according to breakdown by country, with American football selected by the highest percentage of United States respondents and American football, basketball, and baseball falling in the top 3 in that order.
- The highest proportion of people from South Africa and United Kingdom selected soccer as a favorite sport.
- Australians had the most evenly distributed selections of favorite sport with 6 different sports being selected as the “favorite” by more than 10% of respondents in that country.