

MANIFESTO FROM THE CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE OF CATALONIA ABOUT THE COVID-19 SITUATION

We are the National Childhood and Adolescence Counsel from Catalonia (Consell Nacional dels Infants i Adolescents de Catalunya, CNIAC) and because of the uncommon situation that the world is living due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have considered some thoughts and we are willing to express the opinion of the childhood and adolescence of Catalonia.

We realize that the facts and information are explained in an adult and complex way, making it difficult to its understanding to children and teenagers. The Government is not giving any real answer about our academic situation, and we are not aware when we will return to school or how are we going to finish this course. We are worried about our studies and full of doubts, and we think that our point of view is not being taken into account in this quarantine.

About the information given by the media regarding the COVID-19, children and teenagers have been missing explanations aimed at ourselves or adapted to the younger children. We believe that reality is not being well-portrayed by the media.

The quarantine is lengthy and tiresome. We, infants and adolescents, are feeling sadness and anguish about what will happen next because we have the sense of being ignored and abandoned. Like it has been mentioned before, we are concerned about our future and the consequences in our academics and daily life.

Quarantine is bringing some negative aspects. As children and teenagers, we share some of these concerns with adults, while having others of our own. Since we cannot go to school considering the isolation, we have the obligation of studying from home. Our academic responsibility is much bigger than before, and it is not easy to keep going on. Without an adult who can explain the contents, it is difficult for us to understand and study the lessons the same way as if we were in school. The faculties are doing their bests to help us, but often not being aware of the duty of self-teaching that now we have, causing distress and confusion.

We demand cohesion from the teachers, considering that in this situation all methods and ways of helping us understand the new contents are of vital importance. We emphasize that it is not a time to take advantage of the fact that there is no limit on the amount of homework that we get. Also, even though virtual lessons are a key element to keep going with our learning, the teachers should take into consideration those students who don't have the resources to assist these online classes. We request that their evaluation is considered in other parameters, comprehending their situation.

The number of tasks coming from the educative institutions is another of our bigger worries. We think that the homework is not being adapted to the circumstances, considering that they are being commanded following the conception that we have to be evaluated as if we were in school. It hasn't been contemplated that we are not used to work from home: a place we used to disconnect, transformed into a classroom.

Not everything is negative: we children and teenagers have ended up with positive things. We have discovered new hobbies and interests; we have learned to spend more time with our families and ourselves. There have been also changes in the Earth, like the improvement of the

air quality or the recovery of several ecosystems. These are good news for children and teenagers, people worries about climate change.

Despite we agree with the quarantining measures that the Spanish Government has taken, given that social distancing is the way to stop coronavirus from spreading among people, we believe that we haven't been taken into consideration when these measures have come into effect. We reiterate that we have no clue about our academic future, and information specifically aimed to children and teenagers is lacking, both from the media and the Government. We are also concerned about the situation of infants and adolescents who suffer domestic violence and abuse: this quarantine is forcing them to live with their aggressors, and it seems like the institutions have forgotten about them. And the absence of a protocol explaining which steps and protecting measures quarantined people have to follow when a member of their family has to leave the house because of its job worries us as well.

We want to bring up the following question: if dogs are allowed to go out because they need to move, why isn't the same excuse applied to children of ages between 2 and 6-7 years old, to whom move is also essential? The quarantine can affect the physical and psychological development of little kids, and like it has been considered when it comes to dogs, and always following the security protocols, children's health has to be watched over too.

The infants and adolescents of Catalonia feel sorry about the deaths of all those people who had been infected with the virus and we express our condolences to their families.

Lastly, we would like to thank the work and effort that the healthcare workers are doing, and also to all the scientists and institutions that are fighting to stop the COVID-19. We are aware that it is thanks to them that we can carry on.

Finally, we appreciate all children, teenagers and families who are respecting the quarantine, you are very brave!

Barcelona, 10 April 2020.

