

Participant 3

I: on record you give me permission to record you?

P3: Yes, it is fine

I: Who lives in the family/household?

P: When there is some kind of social problems the social worker usually calls us, they usually are in desperate need of place of safety. Most of the time the place of safety becomes more permanent, like foster care. This occur as circumstances are usually very bad at their homes.

I: do you have any of your own children as well?

P: Yes, I have two children and my sister has two children.

I: Can you share with me what you feel were some of the biggest changes that you had to deal with during the COVID-19 pandemic?

P: definitely school. The school was really a big challenge. At the time the children did not attend school at all. We was in need of resource such as an printer and computer. To be honest I used my phone to download all the children's work. At night I would make each child their own list of work that was needed to be done. The next day I became the teacher, and they needed to attend class from 8 till 14. I am very proud to say that the when the children went back to school, the teacher were very impressed by all our children's progress. And this without any technology and wifi. All my children passed their grades.

I: How did the adults care for the children needs during this time?

P: This was a challenge as well. For example, we usually receive food from a lodge on Mondays, that was taken away. Most of our donations stopped. So we needed to make a plan between my mom's pension and some of the children's grand money.

I: how many children receive grand money?

P: we receive grand money for eight children.

I: who had a lot more children at that time.

P: Yes, we had a lot more children at that time.

I: You did not work at that time

P: No, and my husband was laid off work. He was a mechanic at a private business, and he was laid off.

I: How did you managed this change, regarding your husband not going to work?

P: The first few weeks was very tough. But he was very hands on with the children, and always helping me to get them ready and organise their things.

I: How did you cope during this time

P: The worst part for me was, I had a very small baby. We struggled to go to the shops, we struggled to buy diapers at that time, and when we did go outside, we were very worried that we would get sick, or make the children sick.

I: Can you tell me how you and your family cared for the children in the household during the COVID-19 pandemic

I: Please tell me how routines and responsibilities changed

P:

I: How did you feel about all the changes in the caring of the children?

P:..

I: Who did you ask or go to for help and/or who offered help to you during the COVID-19 pandemic?

P:

I: How did you keep in touch with extended family, friends, neighbours, church, or religious support?

P: My mom. My mom is my support always.

I: How did you stay in contact with other people

P: We had telephonically contact, But also not that much as it was to expensive to make phone calls.

I: How did your children understand COVID-19? (What did it mean to them? How did they make sense of it?)

P: for the very small ones, I feel they never really understood it. For my grade four children (6-12 years old). They found it very very difficult. Things happened very quickly for them, and they were confused why they are out of school now. It was more an emotional fight with them. They also struggled the most to do school work and home work. For the high school children, it was easier, they understood the situation and accepted what they needed to do. There were times where they actually

enjoyed the situation, and said “my mom can homeschool us more often”

P:

I: Who did your children speak to about their feelings during COVID?

P: The children talked about their feelings to me and my mom. It depended on the type of relationship we each had with the children.

I: One of the biggest things that changed for children, was when they had to school from home. Can you share how your child may have experienced this? (What was challenging? What did they enjoy about this? Were they able to keep up with the work?) Please motivate your answer.

P: I registered on an online program that help mom that do homeschool. We went on with that programs. The primary schools only sent work much later in time. I just felt that we can not wait on the schools, and let the children get behind.

I: what did the children enjoyed about this?

P: I think the individual attention they got from me they really liked. I think they liked the change of someone else giving the work. I sat with the children and explained things over and over till they really understands it, that would not really happen in the classroom. I was just to scared they need to go back to school and they have no idea what is going on.

I: what was the most difficult?

P: to be home schooled especially for the younger ones. To be out of school routines is very difficult for them

I: How did you and the family cope with having to monitor and supervise the children’s schooling during this time? (What was challenging? What worked well? How did you have to adapt your household to accommodate schooling and working from home?)

P: I think we really dealt with it good. It was easy for us to deal with everything that needs to be done. How our children were split when they got back to school, the girls went to school one day and the next day the boys went to school. The girls enjoyed this very very much. They children actually enjoyed this, much more than it was bad for them. They were much sadder when they needed to go back to a normal school routine.

I: Do you think your child missed out on anything during the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you please explain further? (Aspects

such as not being able to play with friends; extramural/cultural activities, not being able to see extended family, such as grandparents and/or cousins could be included)

P: Definitely. The school curriculum was made smaller. So when everything came back to normal the children struggled with the workload. It was seen in their results. Last year was a difficult academic year for all of them.

I: Were they able to keep in touch with their friends from school and how were they able to do so?

P: The children had absolutely no contact with their school friends. They did not call each other they did not video call each other. The older children found this difficult, as they were use to go to the mall or do something over weekends. But completely stopped.

I: Did the behaviour of the child or children change during the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, please explain.

P: My children of the ages 10 and 12 were much more emotional. They cried a lot over things they would usually not cried over.

I: Please describe your family's financial position during the COVID-19 pandemic

P: my first thought is faith, there is just no other way. We only had my sister's salary, my mom's pension, and our children's SASSA money. We definitely experienced covid time a great difficulty regarding our finances. Especially because all our donations stopped.

I: Please elaborate on how the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted your family's financial position (such as financial difficulties; how and where you coped and/or found support) and how these may have impacted the child/children and caring for them.

P: It was rough on my husband as he sees himself as a provider. And during this time, he could not provide anything. But for I am so used to money that are not coming in consequently. Emotionally you will beat up yourself if you do not make peace with it. The only way to deal with it to believe and to trust that we will survive and will be provided for. Our biggest coping meganism was our religion.

I: How did this affect the children?

P: For the children who was 10 and 12, it was the hardest. Like I said they were very emotional. They cried for long periods and over things they would usually not cry over. For the older children, they just missed socialising with their friends.

I: What did you struggle with in terms of resources

Our biggest concern was food. We needed to make a plan, and what we did was to give breakfast a little bit later in the day, and then we made a late lunch/ early supper. So we had two meals a day and not three. In this manner we were able to stretch our food resources a little.

I: If there were difficulties, what were the main things that were lacking (such as enough food and necessities; technology for the children's learning or entertainment; resources that the children usually received at school such as school feeding)

P: definitely food. We also did not have a printer, computer or wifi. So we always tried to buy data for our phones so that the children were able to receive their work and download whatever they needed to download.

I: What were your worries or concerns about these difficulties, especially in relation to the children?

P: Both me and my mom had covid during this time. One of our children were admitted to hospital because of covid. At that time my mother had to stay with her at the hospital, and then one of children at home also got sick with covid. So main worry was if they all are going to be okay? What is going to happen if we all need to go to hospital, what is going to happen to the children at home, who is going to take care of them, who is going to make them food and make sure they have everything they need.

I: How did the children feel about or cope with these difficulties

P: All the children were very worried about my mother or they call her grandma. Because if grandma is not well everyone else is moody and worried about her. Everything just feel wrong and out of place when she is sick.

Everyone was really worried that grandma can get covid very bad, because she do not have a good immune system to begin with, because

of previous health issues. We really was scared that she could die of covid.

I: Please describe the employment situation of yourself and the rest of your household during the COVID-19 pandemic

P: as discussed above my husband was retrenched and after covid restrictions got lighter they were not able to take him back. So he was without work for a long time. But he got a new position, luckily.

During hard lockdown, as mentioned we only had my mom's pension fund, eight children's sassa money and a small salary from my sister.

I: Biggest changes

The meals we had to change to two meals per day. The children did not receive any luxuries regarding candy and cold drinks

1. Please elaborate on changes, difficulties, or positive factors (such as loss of work, working from home, changes in working hours) and how these may have impacted the child/children and caring for them

I: how did these new changes impacted the children overall

P: I have to say, yes it was bad times, but we had something to learn from this, lessons like, things can be takes away very quickly, and we have to be grateful every day for the thing we do have. In the end things turned out for the better. The children showed great resilience, they learned how to bounce back from a bad situation.

P: Something else

I: I think our children learned to live better high genic lives, that in the long run will keep them healthy.