

Community Conversations: NJ's COVID-19 Storytelling Project

Participant 571

Written Interview collected March 30, 2021

Translated June 7, 2021

Interview Question (written): How has your life changed since March as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

P: 1) Work and economic income have decreased, less liberty to go out.

I: What were the main or most trusted sources you received information about COVID-19 from? How did you act upon the information you received? Have you developed any new sources of information?

P: 2) Received information from community groups, tv news, new sources of information arise like flyers and opinions of community members, or groups of friends from social media. We complied with the recommendations from the information received.

P: 3) Relied on all social media for information.

I: What was the hardest/biggest challenge for you or your family during/amidst COVID-19?

P: 4) Greatest challenges were the lack of income to cover home expenses.

I: Please describe any challenges you faced in accessing technology or digital resources during the pandemic.

P: 5) Difficulty with accessing resources because some internet pages did not have a way to translate the information into another language and there were times where we had to use the translator.

I: What was the hardest/biggest challenge for you or your family during/amidst COVID-19?

P: 6) The economic part was the biggest challenge because I only had enough to cover the main thing, which was rent. I am actually behind on the electricity bill.

I: In what ways did you address the challenges of COVID-19? What challenges do you expect will remain post-COVID-19?

P: 7) Relying on my job, even if it's just for hours, let's hope that it remains. A challenge that may remain is trying to find a better job once everything returns to normal.

I: Who were your allies? Who were you able to lean on?

P: 8) Our allies were community centers and family friends.

I: What were your greatest sources of strength? Where/when did you feel less strong?

P: 9) Greatest sources of strength were our children who we took care of to not get sick/infected. Felt less strong when we kept hearing that there was no cure and that every day there were more deaths and more people contracted the virus.

I: What brought you/Where did you find happiness?

P: 10) Spending more time at home with my family brought happiness.

I: What brought you/Where did you find sadness?

P: 11) Losing my job and not being able to go out freely when everything was closed brought sadness.

I: What were your greatest disappointments as a result of the pandemic?

P: 12) Children without social contact because schools are closed. Stressed mother with depression because of the lack of a job and not being able to go out.

I: What surprised you about the pandemic?

P: 13) I was surprised that some people don't acknowledge how serious the virus is and continue to expose themselves.

I: What are your greatest fears moving forward?

P: 14) Going forward, fears not being able to find a job, contracting the virus and spreading to her family.

I: Please describe one act of kindness that was done for you.

P: 15) Organizations donated food to us throughout the pandemic.

I: Please describe one act of kindness that you did for someone else.

P: 16) One of my co-workers contracted the virus and I left her part of the food I received. Only contact I had with her was through the phone.

I: Did you have any conversations with healthcare or other service providers about COVID-19? What did this conversation look like? Who said what?

P: 17) Had a lot of concerns and questions but with no answer.

I: What COVID-19 resources are you aware of, or have you benefited from?

P: 18) Received free information regarding COVID vaccines at some centers.

I: Do you know where you can get tested for COVID-19?

P: 19) Close to my home was a park and community center for COVID tests.

I: What have you learned, or where have you received information about COVID-19 vaccine development?

P: 20) Learned about the COVID vaccine through television. Even though we are vaccinated we must continue to follow biosafety controls.

I: When a vaccine for COVID-19 is made available to the public, would you choose to receive it? Why or why not?

P: 21) Yes, would get the vaccine for protection of me and my family.

I: Do you think that all communities have been treated equally during COVID? Were there populations who were favored over others?

P: 22) Communities were not treated equally, some were favored.

I: Who do you think was left out of NJ's emergency COVID response? Why were they left out?

P: 23) Families who passed away from COVID and had no family members to claim their remains

I: What do you think NJ could have done better?

P: 24) NJ should've had a lockdown from the initial time it heard the virus was in the state.

I: If there was one thing that you or someone else could have done differently, what would it be?

P: 25) Something I would've done different is save money for food.

I: Is there anything else you would like to share that was not asked?

P: 26) Families with low-resources/ low-income were greatly impacted, precisely undocumented communities because they didn't receive the stimulus funds.