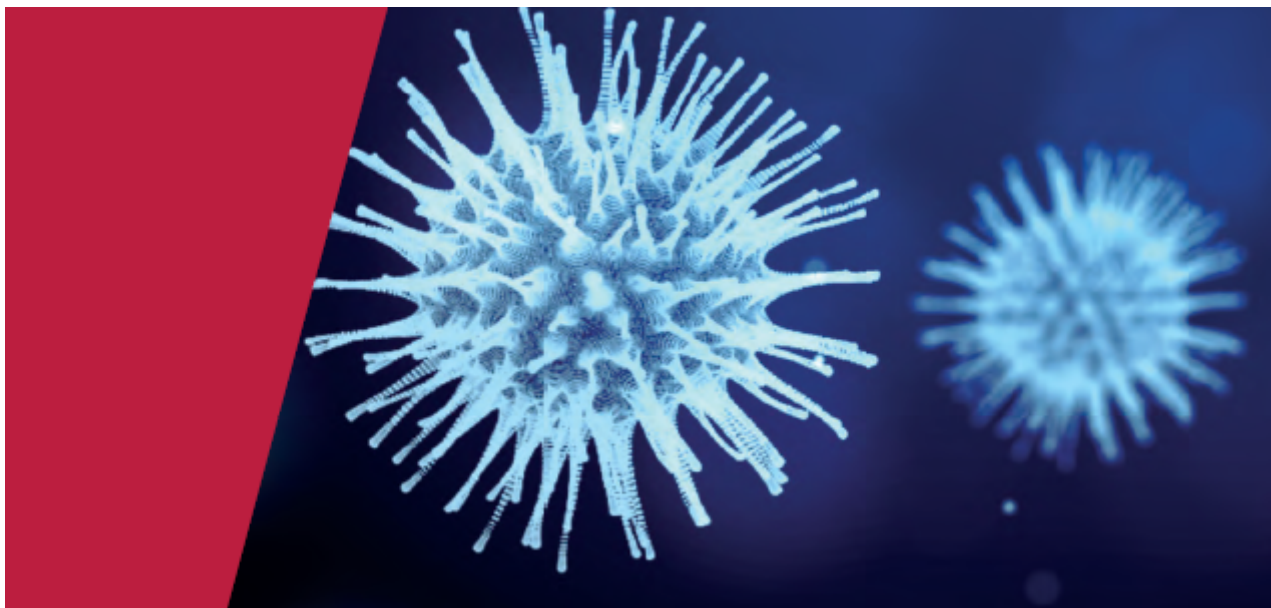


Learning at home: distance learning solutions and child development during the COVID-19 lockdown

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School closures, forcibly brought about by the COVID-19 crisis in many countries, have impacted children's lives and their learning processes. There will likely be substantial and persistent disparities between families in terms of educational outcomes. Distance learning solutions adopted by schools have been heterogeneous across countries, within countries and between school levels. As a consequence, most of the burden of children's learning has fallen on their parents, with likely uneven results depending on the socio-economic characteristics of the family. Using a real time survey data, collected in April and early May 2020 in France and Italy, we estimate child fixed effects models to analyze how the lockdown has affected parents' evaluations of their children's emotional wellbeing and of their home learning process. The analysis also focuses on the role played by online classes, or other interactive methods, on children's home learning and emotional status. We find that the Spring 2020 lockdown had a stronger negative effect on

boys, on children attending kindergarten (in Italy) or secondary school (in France), and on children whose parents have a lower education level. We also find that the increase in the time spent in front of screen is correlated to worse learning progresses and emotional status, while the opposite is true for the time spent reading. The use of interactive distance learning methodologies, which has been much more common in Italy than in France, appears to significantly attenuate the parents' negative perception of the impact of lockdown on the learning progress of their children.

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