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In late November last year, the Chinese city of Wuhan saw the first cases of an unknown lung disease, which would later be called COVID-19, caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. The virus, known colloquially in many countries as “corona”, spread across large parts of the world within just a few weeks, triggering a pandemic the like of which had not been seen in a century. National governments responded at varying speeds and with varying degrees of strictness, but for most of them it was clear that children should no longer be going to school, to day care, or to after-school care in this situation, but should be staying at home – a situation for which neither parents, nor schools, nor the children themselves were prepared. What does this mean for children? The first studies on the situation of children and families are already available (vom Orde). In other areas, there has been confirmation (e.g. in reports from children’s telephone helplines) of the suspicion that children can sometimes suffer great emotional distress in these times of family isolation (Pütz), and that the need to balance working from home and home schooling strains families to their limits (Kinateder). An international study in 42 countries has examined in detail how children are faring, how they are dealing with the situation, what worries and fears they have, and what role media play. At the peak of the lockdown, children were surveyed via online questionnaire, permitting a preliminary comparison by world regions (Götz et al.). Many similarities emerge, but also specific impacts (Asgari, Hussein, Borzekowski). Above all, however, the study shows that information and knowledge help to combat fears.

This makes age-appropriate information programmes, such as those offered by children’s television, especially important. Summaries from Europe (Baranowski, Asseraf), Asia (Yoshida, Baharrudin) and North and Latin America (McGregor, Carmona) show the speed and commitment with which broadcasters all over the world have reacted. At the same time, the coronavirus crisis is presenting the children’s television industry with new challenges, and various productions have had to be halted (Steemers & Götz). A crisis can unleash creativity, as demonstrated not only in professional children’s television, but also in internet memes (Pauliks) and various forms of aesthetic expression (vom Orde) – and even professionals could derive inspiration from some of these approaches. Every crisis is also an opportunity, though in this situation children in particular need our support in facing the biggest challenges (see e.g. Fröhlich-Gildhoff). This issue of *TelevIZion*, on the subject of children, media, and COVID-19, sums up what this might mean in concrete terms.

**Children, COVID-19 and the media**

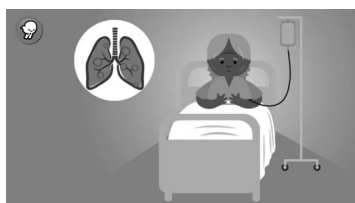
An international study in 42 countries inquired children’s perception of the coronavirus crisis, their knowledge on COVID-19 and the role the media play in this.

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**How safety measures can leave children unsafe**

An IZI study asked 15 counsellors from child and youth helplines in Germany about how the coronavirus crisis is affecting the situation of children and their counselling work.

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Screenshot from Vienitos © Vienitos Culturales

Responses to the coronavirus in children’s media in Latin and South America

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Screenshot from www.imgur.com

Memes of the virus: social criticism of the corona pandemic on the internet

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**How European public broadcasters have responded to the COVID-19 crisis with children’s content**

The article summarizes how different European broadcasters adapted their programme offer for children as a result of the coronavirus and the closure of schools and daycare centres.

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**“Keep the energy”**

31 producers of children’s TV from 21 countries were asked to provide insights into their strategies about how they are dealing with the current COVID-19 crisis.

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