



## Impact Evaluation Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program

Parent Mid-term Survey, Spring 2020

To respond to the COVID-19 crisis, Stepping Stones has launched a “Home Classroom Program” to provide English lessons to children who are under home-quarantine. Around 600 children throughout China have joined this program thus far. To ensure the good quality of the teaching, Stepping Stones has developed a tailored curriculum and maintained the class size very small, with one volunteer teaching to around five students.

To assess the value and impact of the Home Classroom Program while it is still ongoing, a mid-term evaluation was conducted in April 2020. The evaluation consisted of an online survey questionnaire (on Wechat) completed by the beneficiaries' parents. A total of 237 parents took part in the survey, answering a variety of questions to assess, for example, their attitude towards English, online teaching and Stepping Stones' program, as well as their children's educational needs.

### 1. Children's education level & family situation

Although Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program provides online English lessons to primary school children of all grades - as well as to some middle school students -, the children of the parents who participated in the survey are mostly in the lower grades of primary school. As can be seen from the figure 1, 63% of their children are in grades 1, 2 or 3 and 36.6% in grades 4, 5 or 6.

The survey also dealt with families' situation and children's supervision during Stepping Stones' lessons. While most parents have reported that their children are often supervised by an adult - mainly by the mother - (Figure 2), 32.5% of parents (i.e., 77 parents) have also reported having not supervised their children during some lessons. The most obvious hypothesis to explain parents' lack of supervision is that many of them (56%) have continued to work during the current crisis, either from home or outside of home (Figure 3), thus not being able to always supervise their children.

Figure 1

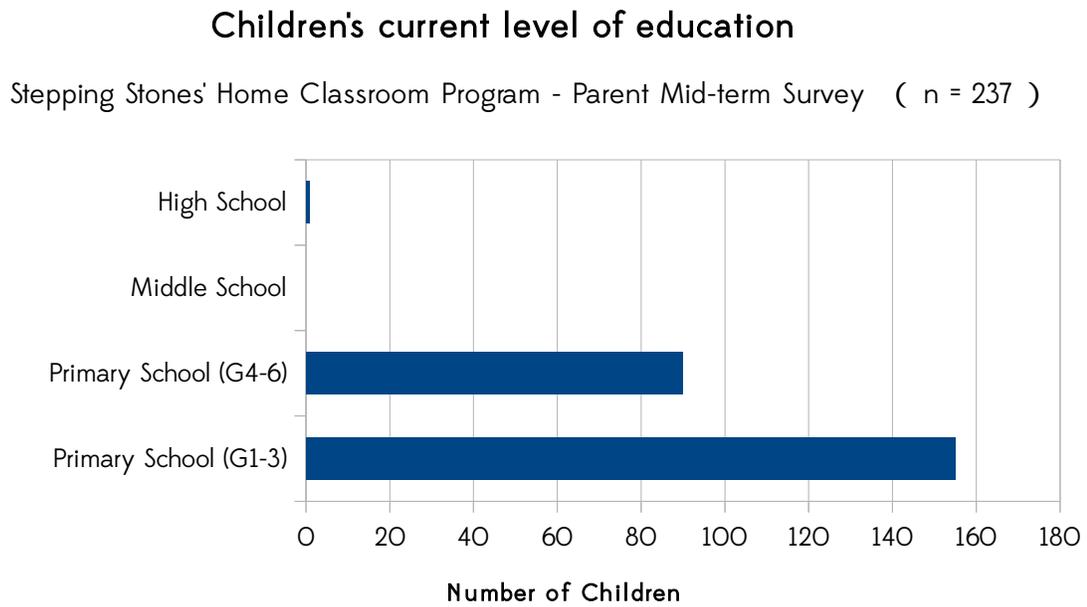


Figure 2

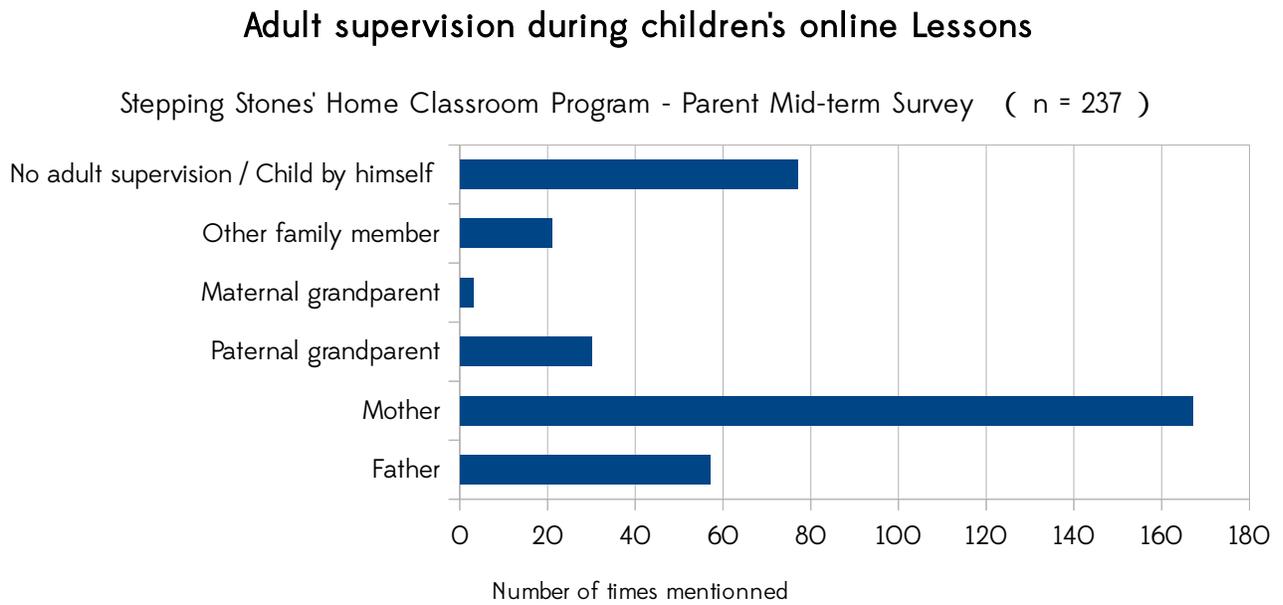
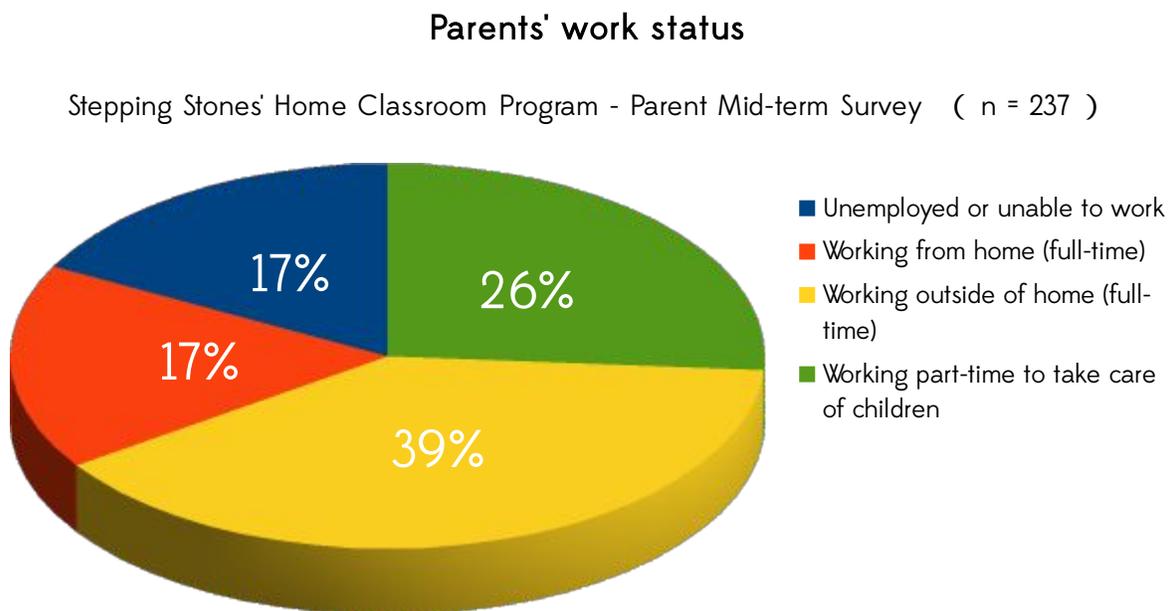


Figure 3



## 2. Children's educational needs & parent's confidence in English

Questions were also asked regarding children's difficulties in core subjects and their educational needs. On average, parents have reported that English, Chinese and maths pose a similar level of difficulty for their children. As can be seen from Figure 4, the percentages of surveyed parents who reported that their children find English, Chinese and maths "difficult" or "very difficult" are 36%, 39% and 40% respectively. At the same time, having extra lessons in all of these subjects are considered by parents to be important educational needs. For example, on average, more than 87% of parents considered extra lessons in English to be beneficial for their children (Figure 5)

As for the areas of English language children struggle the most in, the results indicate that they have difficulties in all areas, especially in speaking and grammar, for which respectively 36.7% and 56.4% of parents considered as being "difficult" or "very difficult" for their children (Figure 6).

The need for extracurricular lessons in English is reinforced by the low involvement of many parents in their children's English education. The Figure 7 outlines the parents' confidence in English. A noteworthy highlight is the significant proportion of parents (43%) feeling "not confident" or "unable" to help their children with English homework.

Figure 4

### Parents' assessment of their children's difficulties in English, Chinese & Maths

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )

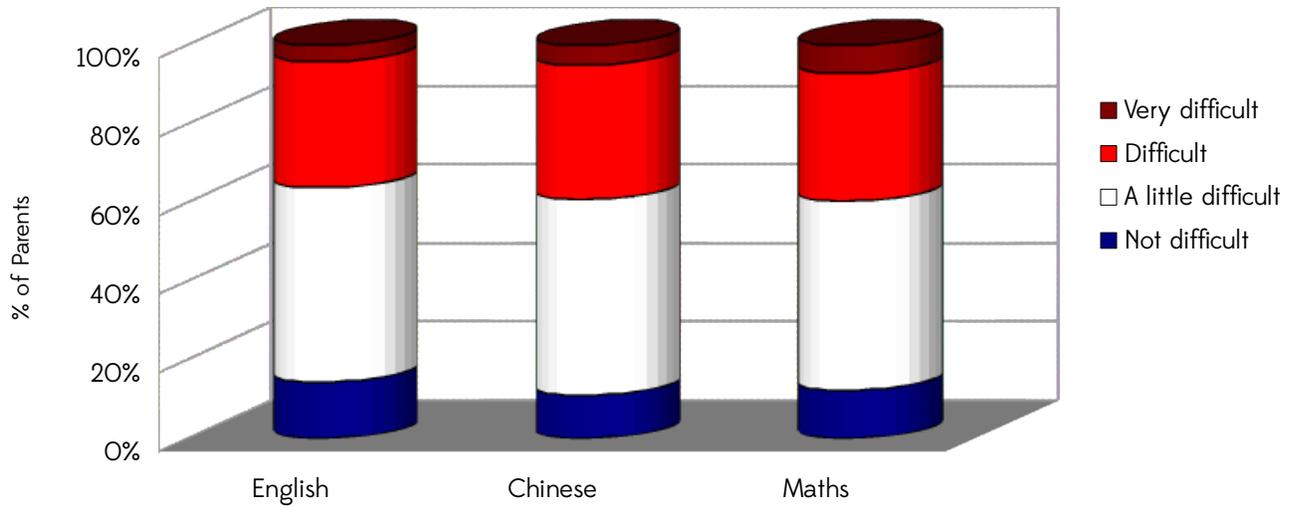


Figure 5

### Parents' assessment of their children's need to have extra lessons in English, Chinese & Maths

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )

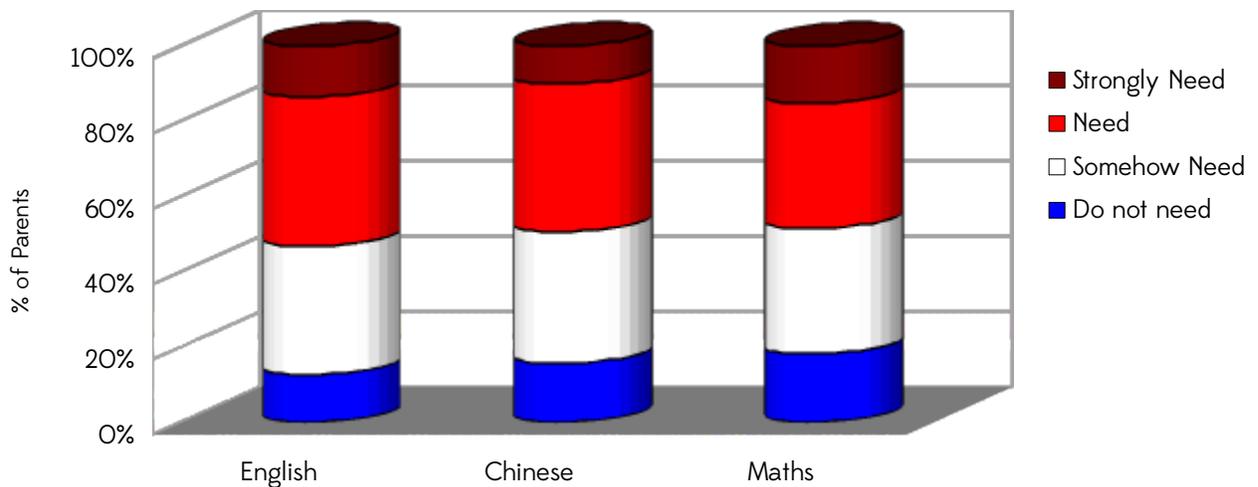


Figure 6

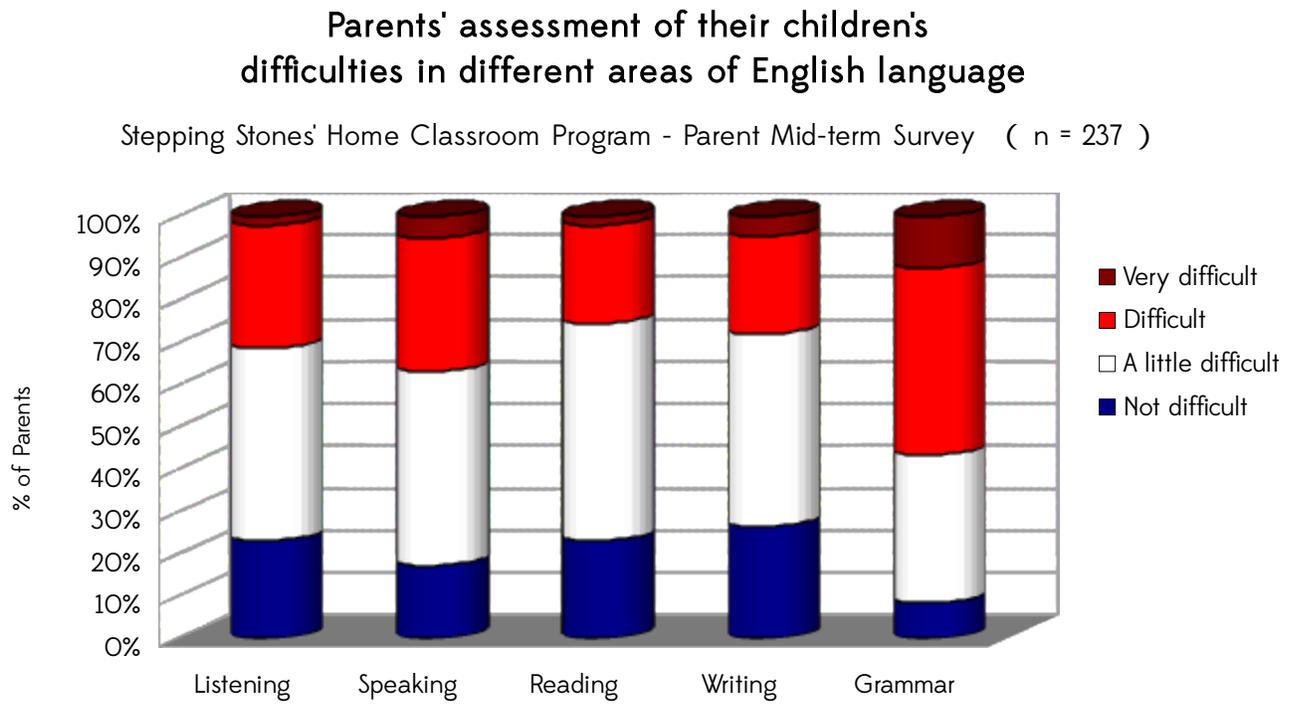
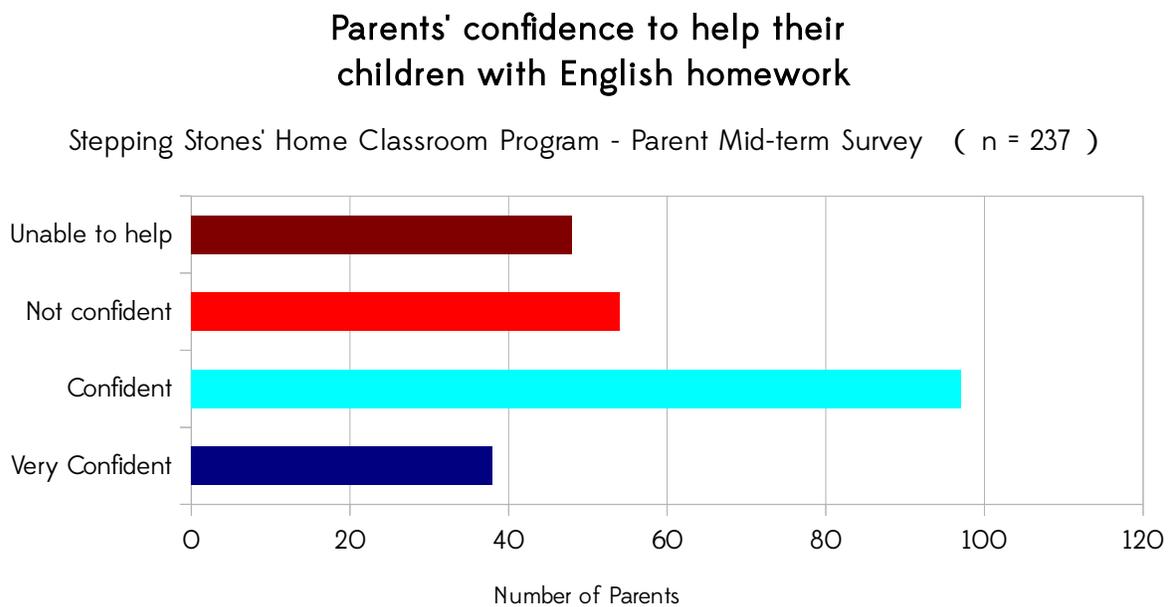


Figure 7



### 3. Attitude towards online teaching

On average, parents have a positive attitude towards online teaching, especially towards live classes (Figure 8). When asked about the benefits of online teaching (Figure 9), a majority responded that online classes "enable children to continue their studies at home during the crisis" (78%) and/or that they are "good to practice speaking and listening skills" (57.4%).

As for the length and frequency of online English lessons, a majority of parents (71.3%) would prefer at least 2 lessons per week (Figure 10), each lesson lasting either 30 minutes (53.2% of parents) or between 31 to 60 minutes (45.1% of parents) (Figure 11).

Figure 8

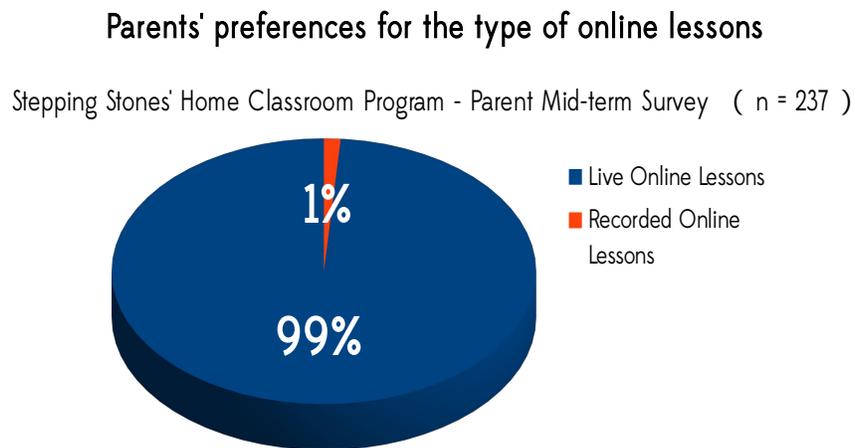


Figure 9

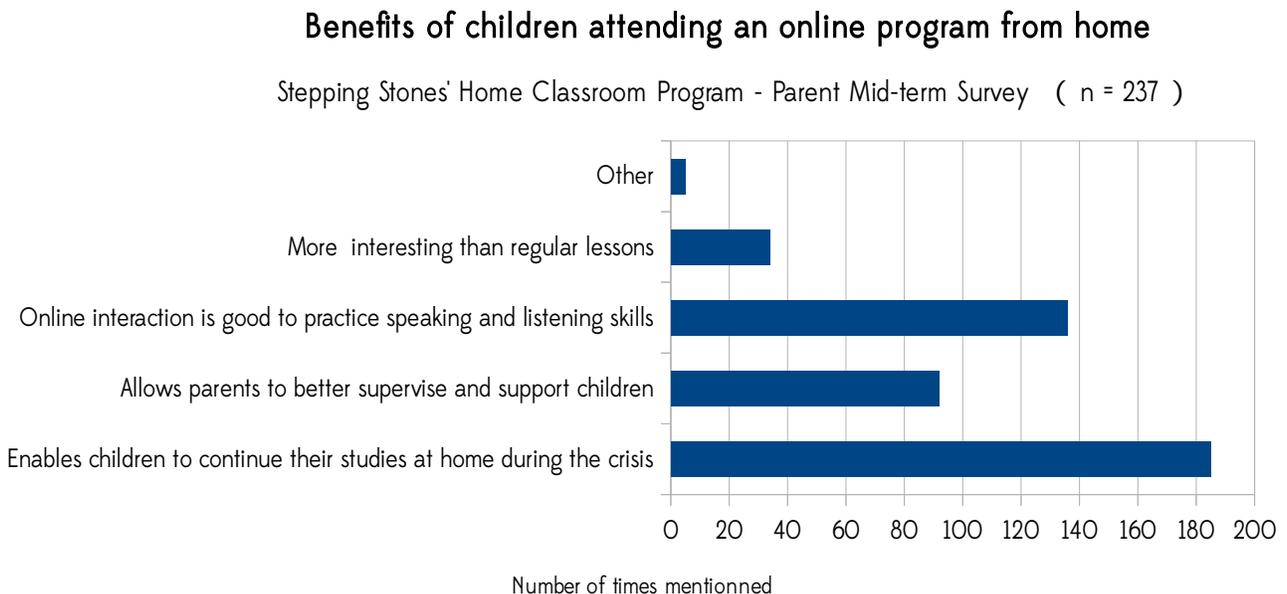


Figure 10

### Parents' preferences for the frequency of online English lessons per week

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )

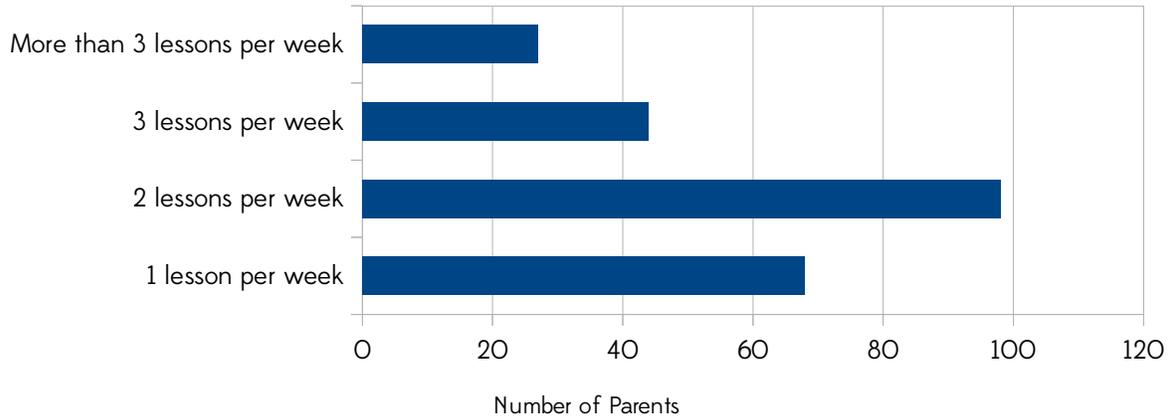
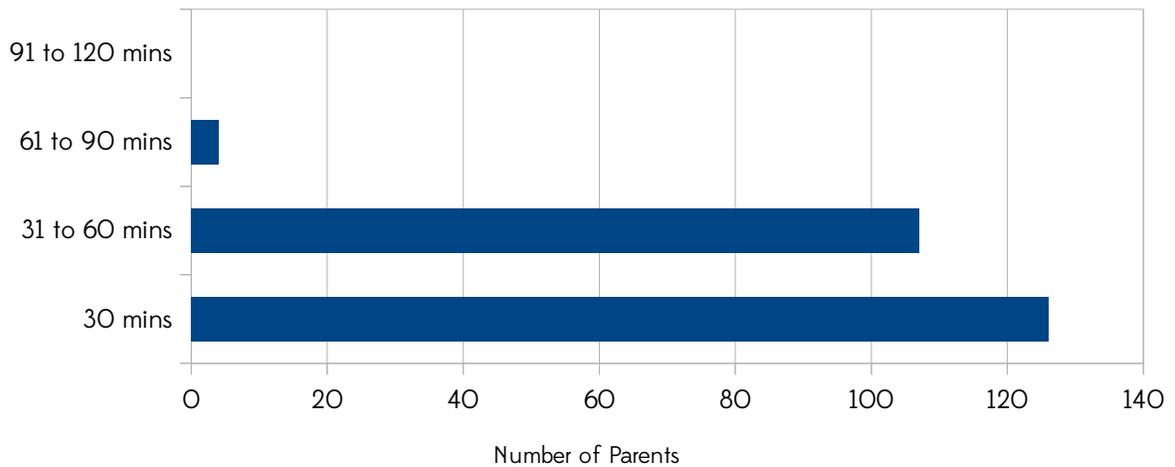


Figure 11

### Parents' preferences for the length of an online Lesson

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )



#### 4. Attitude towards Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program

The parents overall attitude towards Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program is extremely positive. More than 93% of parents think the program is "good" or "very good" (Figure 12), and of those whose children already attended an online program, 71.9% considered Stones' Home Classroom Program as a better program (Figure 13).

When asked what they liked most about Stepping Stones' online classes (Figure 14), the most frequent responses were: "everything"; "teacher's teaching techniques & curriculum"; "teacher's attitude (such as displaying kindness, patience, humor and motivating the children)"; and "interaction/communication with teachers (e.g., practicing oral English & asking or answering questions)". On the other hand, some parents (7.17%) did not like that classes were only conducted in English, which was sometimes too difficult for children. As for the problems encountered during the lessons (Figure 15), the most frequent responses were as follows: "children's difficulties to concentrate" (29.96% of parents); "Internet speed or connectivity issues" (25.31% of parents); and "children's vision problems due to excessive hours of screen time" (35.44% of parents).

Lastly, as can be seen from Figure 16, we are pleased to report that the vast majority of parents (87.34%) would like their child to continue attending Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program when the crisis will be over and the schools re-open.

Figure 12

#### What do you think of Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program?

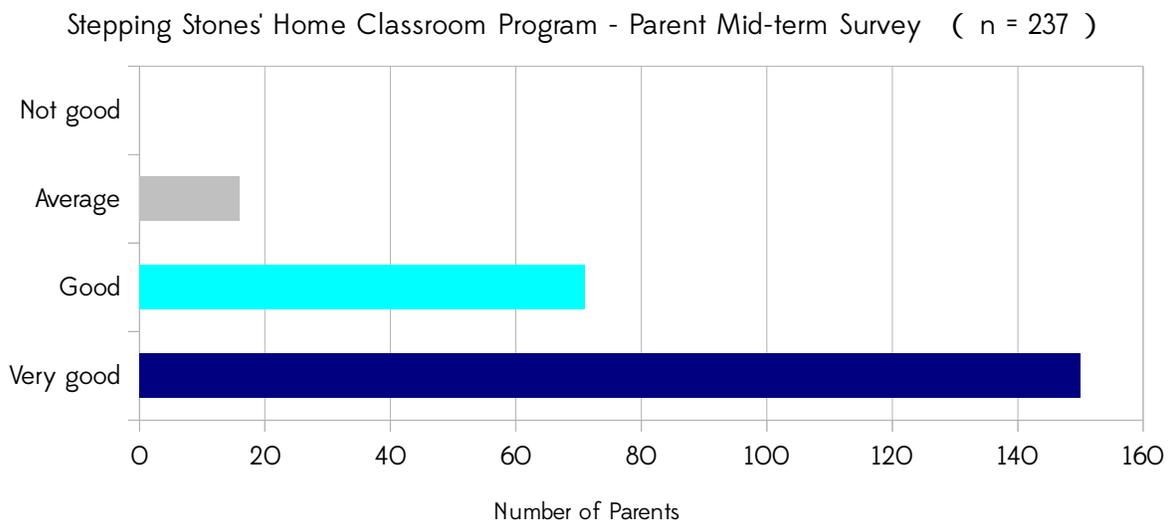


Figure 13

### How would you compare Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program to other online program(s) your child has attended?

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 64 )

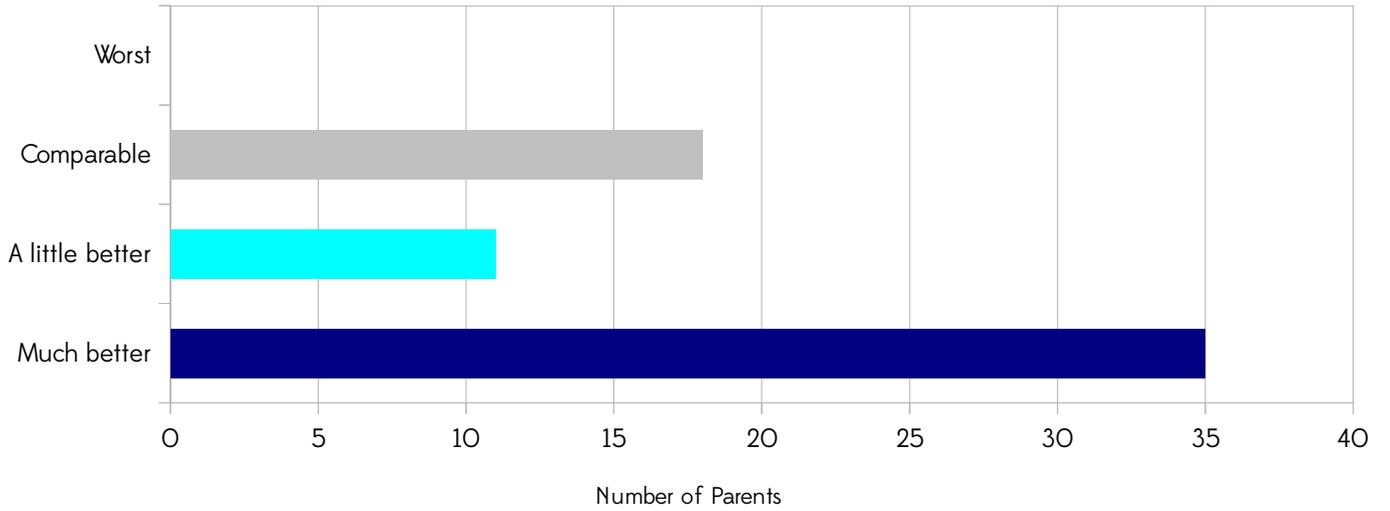


Figure 14

### What did you like the most and the less from the classes taught by Stepping Stones' volunteer teachers?

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term survey, 2020 (n = 237) - Verbatim Responses

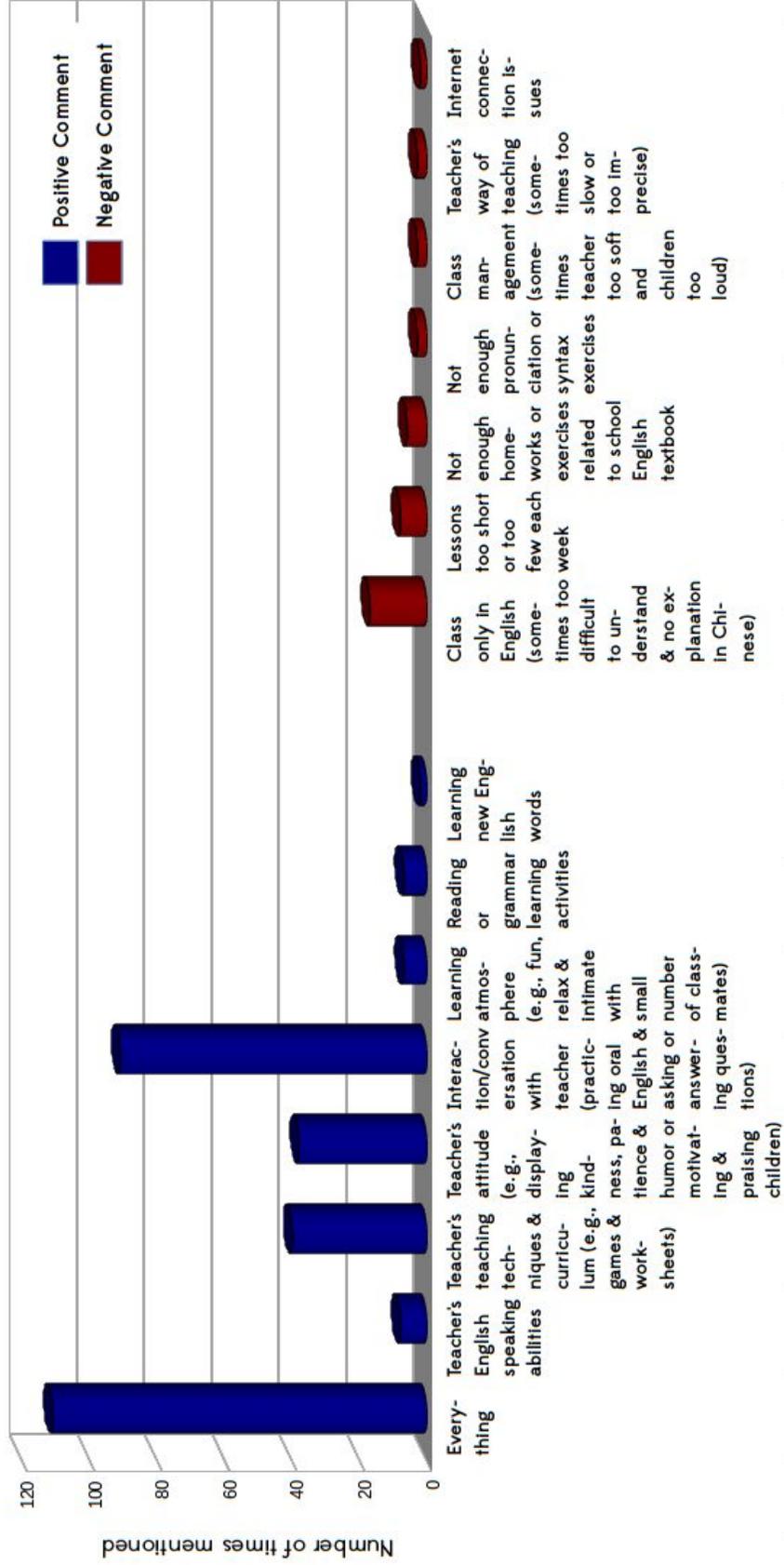


Figure 15

### What are the problems your children encountered during Stepping Stones' online lessons?

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )

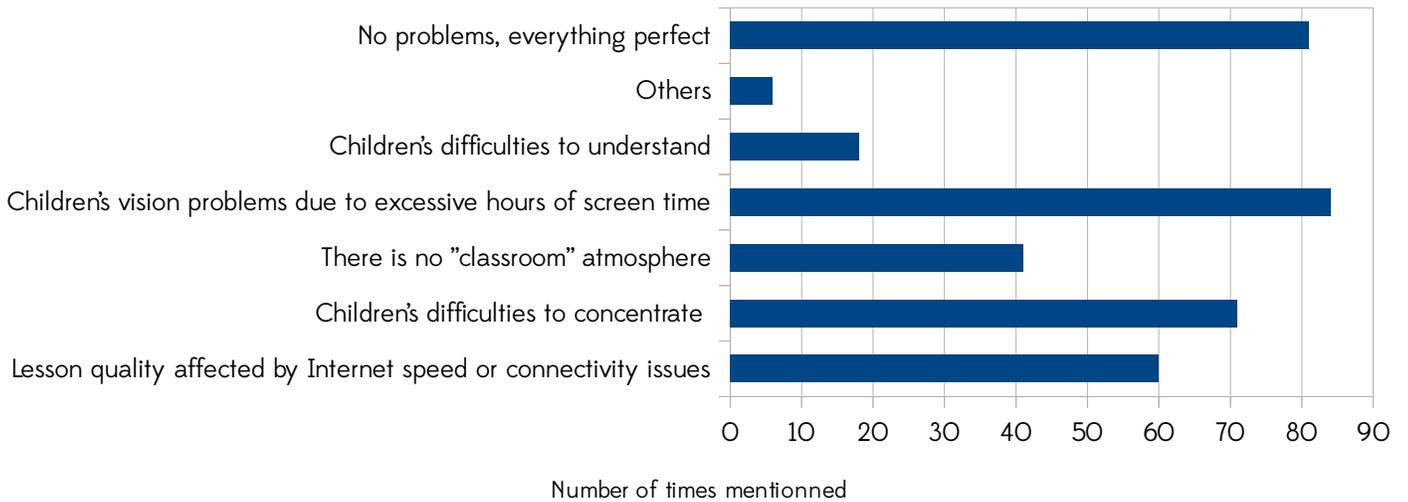


Figure 16

### When the crisis will be over and the schools re-open, would you like your child to continue attending Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program ?

Stepping Stones' Home Classroom Program - Parent Mid-term Survey ( n = 237 )

