

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Mental Health Needs

Overview

Since the onset of the pandemic, a growing body of research is emerging around COVID-19's effects on the mental health of adults, children, and youth in Ontario and around the world. In fact, in their recent outline of mental health research priorities related to COVID-19 pandemic, [Holmes et al. \(2020\)](#) assert that it is already clear that social and psychological impacts of COVID-19 are pervasive and may have lasting effects on community mental health.

The purpose of the data collected in this evidence brief is to summarize research and data pertaining to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on the mental health of children, youth and their families. Updates are being made to this document as new information is made available. Additionally, it will highlight, where available, evidence that indicates increase in complexity and acuity of mental health needs as a result of the pandemic.

Analysis

This data will be utilized as the child and youth mental health sector continues to respond during the ongoing pandemic and anticipates heightened and more complex mental health needs of children and youth as a result of COVID-19. As well, children & youth with pre-existing mental health conditions, those from lower-income families, and equity seeking or racialized groups, may face even higher risks that must be considered.

Before the pandemic, 28,000 children and youth were waiting as long as 2.5 years for mental health care. Indicators of more serious mental health issues are also emerging (ie. eating disorder increases) and greater needs are being reported by youth since the pandemic began. The associated impacts of social isolation as a result of school closures, availability of consistent support systems, regular routines, etc. are also of concern. Alongside mental health needs and access to services, potential increases in the complexity and acuity of many mental health conditions is a key policy issue in child and youth mental health. As a result, CMHO is interested in exploring key indicators within existing literature and research that demonstrates a growing trend toward complexity in mental health needs.

Inclusion Criteria

It is important to note that this evidence brief does not contain an exhaustive list of resources that explore the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, this brief is primarily interested in resources with a particular focus on child and youth mental health, or the mental health of parents. Further, while international research may be included, this brief is also particularly interested in data exploring the mental health impacts of the pandemic within Ontario, and in Canada more generally. Additionally, only resources from academic institutions, governments or other institutions are included in this brief. There is some data captured in the "other" as well.

COVID-19 and Indicators of Increased MH Needs and/or Complexity

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada (mostly QC/ON)	<p>Emerging New Psychiatric Symptoms and the Worsening of Pre-existing Mental Disorders during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Canadian Multisite Study</p> <p>Source: Online Survey distributed by authors (Robillard et. al). Data collection period: April 3 - June 23, 2020. (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: 19 January 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: 4,294 Canadians 16+ completed a questionnaire a month before the pandemic and during Wave 1</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Proportion of respondents without prior psychiatric history who screened positive for generalized anxiety disorder and depression increased by 12% and 29%, respectively, during the outbreak”. – 15-19% report increases in cannabis/alcohol use. – Worse psychological outcomes during pandemic vs. Pre-pandemic were associated with the following: female sex, younger age, lower income, poorer coping skills, multiple psychiatric comorbidities, previous trauma exposure, deteriorating physical health, poorer family relationships, and lower exercising. – Worsening anxiety and depression symptoms and suicidal ideation were significantly higher in clinical group (who had pre-existing conditions) than the control group (who did not).
Canada	<p>Examining the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on family mental health in Canada: findings from a national cross-sectional study</p> <p>Source: (Gadermann et. al) Data collection period: 14 May to 29 May 2020 (WAVE 1) Date published: 12 January 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: Online survey distributed by authors to 3000 adults across Canada and parents with children under 18 living at home. This represents 618 children.</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “44.3% of parents with children <18 years living at home reported worse mental health as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic compared with 35.6% of respondents without children <18 living at home” - More parents compared with the rest of the sample reported increased alcohol consumption (27.7% vs 16.1%) and stress about being safe from physical/emotional domestic violence (11.5% vs 7.9%) - 24.8% of parents reported their children’s mental health had worsened since the pandemic. - Parents also reported more frequent negative as well as positive interactions with their children due to the pandemic (e.g., more conflicts, 22.2%; increased feelings of closeness (49.7%)).
International (UK)	<p>The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals with eating disorders: the role of emotion regulation and exploration of online</p>	<p>Methodology: Authors collected qualitative and quantitative data from 207 (76 males) self-selected UK residents with self-reported ED, over the age of 18</p>

	<p>treatment experiences</p> <p>Source: Vuillier et al 2021 Data collection period: (WAVE 1) Date published: Jan 12, 2021</p>	<p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 83.1% of participants reported worsening of ED symptomatology (factors affecting symptoms differed between EDs). - Difficult emotions (such as fear and uncertainty), changes to routine, and unhelpful social messages were triggering for participants during the pandemic. - While some participants described employing positive coping strategies (such as limiting social media exposure), many reported using ED behaviors (among other maladaptive strategies, like alcohol use) to cope with the pandemic. - Loss of treatment support, feeling underserving of support and experiencing a 'detached connection' online were further exacerbating factors for these participants.
Canada	<p>Survey on COVID and Mental Health 1 (SCMH)</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN Data collection period: Sept - Dec, 2020. Will be repeated in May 2021. (WAVE 2) Date published: March 18, 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: An online survey of a random sample of Canadians. Screening tools were used to assess mental health symptoms.</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one in five (21%) Canadians screened positive for either: major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during Wave 2 - The most pervasive disorder was major depressive disorder, with 15% screening positive for it - Of those who screened positive for a disorder, 68% reported that their mental health had worsened since the start of the pandemic. - Similarly, those who reported that their mental health had worsened due to the pandemic were 4 times more likely to screen positively for a MH disorder

COVID-19 and Child and Youth Mental Health

Needs and Prevalence of mood disorders, PTSD, psychotic and personality disorders

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Ontario	<p>https://cmho.org/wp-content/uploads/Return-to-school-during-COVID19-Evidence-summary-for-community-service-providers.pdf</p> <p>Source: Radomski, et al. (2020) Data collection period: April 24 to May 8, 2020 (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: Unpublished</p>	<p>Methodology: An online survey distributed to 1300 youth and young adults (12 to 25) and 700 parents of children aged 4 to 25. Participants were asked to describe their experiences in the two weeks prior to taking the survey.</p> <p>Youth Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nearly 2/3rds of participants reported that their mental health had deteriorated during COVID-19 - young people were more likely to report a decline in mental health during the pandemic if they were: older, female, employed, from Northern Ontario, had few economic resources, or were already receiving mental health services - almost 92.4% of young people surveyed were interested in future mental

		<p>health supports or services</p> <p>Parents/Family Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 32.5% of parents expressed that they had already sought or were planning to seek mental health support due to the impact of COVID-19 on their daily life – Changes in parenting roles and responsibilities during the pandemic may have contributed to the ‘moderate-to-severe’ caregiver strain that 28.9% of respondents were feeling
Canada/Ontario	<p>https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/Two-Thirds-Of-Ontarians-Feel-Mental-Health-Impacts-Of-COVID-19-To-Be-Serious-And-Lasting</p> <p>Source: IPSOS (2020) Data collection period: April 28-30, 2020 (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: May 2020</p>	<p>Methodology: 1,002 residents of Ontario were surveyed online via the Ipsos I-Say panel, results were weighted to ensure the sample was representative of the Ontario population.</p> <p>Child & Youth Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2019, half of Ontario’s children and youth were at risk for mental health issues, with 30% being at high risk and 19% being at moderate risk of mental health issues - 45% of adult or young adult respondents indicated that their mental health deteriorated as a result of COVID-19 <p>Parents/Family Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 22% of parents reported an impact on their children as a result of increased tension in the household as a result of COVID-19 – 30% of parents reported that their child felt stressed to the point where it had an impact on their daily life and 24% reported that their child felt stressed to the point where they could not cope/deal with things – 14% of parents reported that their child felt depressed to the point that they could not cope/deal with things – 4% of parents reported that their child had seriously considered suicide or self-harm – 59% of parents reported behavioral changes in their child as a result of COVID-19
Canada/Ontario	<p>Health Behaviours of Ontario Secondary School Students during Wave 1 of the COVID-19 Pandemic</p> <p>Source: Public Health Ontario/ COMPASS Study (online survey) (WAVE 1) Data Collection Period: April and May 2020 Date Published: March 2nd 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: Longitudinal data from approximately 3100 secondary students (gr. 9-12) in Ontario (participants in COMPASS study after schools closed).</p> <p>Findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The most common coping mechanisms that students reported included spending time with family, exercising, staying connected with friends online, playing video games, and studying or working on school work. - Some students reported increased feelings of loneliness (55%), boredom (73%), stress (43%) and anxiety (38%) during the COVID-19 pandemic. - When asked about feelings related to COVID-19, 62% of students reported

		<p>feeling somewhat concerned, while 18% of students reported feeling very concerned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 71% worried about the health of their family members, 56% reported concern about the future, and 29% reported worry about their family being able to pay bills and expenses. - Only 4% of students reported that they connected with mental health professionals to cope during the first wave of COVID-19.
Canada/Ontario	<p>https://www.cymh.ca/en/projects/resources/covid-19/covid-19_pandemic_impacts_on_child_and_youth_mental_health.pdf</p> <p>Source: Henderson et al 2020 Data collection period: N/A (PRE-PANDEMIC) Date published: Unpublished preview</p>	<p>Methodology: A survey of 622 youth aged 14 to 28</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a statistically significant deterioration of mental health during COVID-19 with rates of anxiety and depression, among 14-28 year-olds being much higher among those with pre-existing mental health needs. - Half of all respondents with pre-existing mental health needs reported challenges and/or service disruptions in access to services and supports during pandemic
Canada	<p>Longitudinal trends and risk factors for depressed mood among Canadian adults during the first wave of COVID-19</p> <p>Source: Betini et. al 2021 Data Collection Period: April 15 – July 28 2020 (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: *not yet peer-reviewed*</p>	<p>Methodology: An online survey of 3,000 individuals representative of the Canadian population</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The prevalence of depressed mood during the pandemic was between 2 and 3 times the pre-pandemic rate (especially among young people), but it can change rapidly in response to social changes. - The odds of having a depressed mood were 2.62 times higher in young (18-24) than older adults (65+) - Odds of having a depressed mood also varied based on living in other provinces vs. living in Quebec (OR 1.64), feeling overwhelmed by health needs (OR 3.92), feeling lonely on a daily basis vs. Not feeling lonely (OR 16.65) and having financial concerns before and after the pandemic vs. Those who did not (OR 1.93).
Canada	<p>Canadian Perspective Survey Series 1 (CPSS)</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN Data collection period: March 29 - April 3, 2020 (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: April 24, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth were less likely to report excellent or very good mental health than other age groups since the onset of the pandemic - Youth aged 15-24 reported the greatest decrease in mental health of any age group during COVID-19 - There was a 20% decrease in young adults reporting 'excellent' or 'very good' mental health during pandemic compared to 2018 (down to 42% during pandemic from 62% in 2018)

Canada	<p>Survey on COVID and Mental Health 1 (SCMH)</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN Data collection period: Sept - Dec, 2020. Will be repeated in May 2021. (WAVE 2) Date published: March 18, 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: An online survey of 18,000 randomly sampled individuals across Canada. Respondents were not asked if their mental health symptoms were specifically linked to COVID – as such it is not clear that COVID caused these results</p> <p>Youth Findings (18-24)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth were more likely than any other age group above 18 to screen positively for mental health disorders during Wave 2. - positive screens for major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and probable PTSD were over three times higher among young adults than among older adults (65 and older). - one in four young women (24%) screened positive for at least one disorder, compared with 17% of young men. <p>General Findings (18 and older)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one in five (21%) Canadians screened positive for either: major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during Wave 2 - The most pervasive disorder was major depressive disorder, with 15% screening positive for it - Of those who screened positive for a disorder, 68% reported that their mental health had worsened since the start of the pandemic. - Similarly, those who reported that their mental health had worsened due to the pandemic were 4 times more likely to screen positively for a MH disorder.
Canada	<p>Canadian Community Health Surveys 1, 2, & 3 (CCHS)</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN Data collection period: Sept - Dec, 2020. (WAVE 2) Date published: March 22, 2021</p>	<p>Methodology: An online survey of over 120,000 Canadians (10,000 youth) randomly sampled.</p> <p>Youth Findings (12-17)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 27% of youth have worse mental health compared to the beginning of the pandemic (13% in September) - 17% of youth have better mental health compared to the beginning of the pandemic (26% in September) <p>General Findings (12 and older)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37% of Canadians have worse mental health compared to the beginning of the pandemic (up from 29% in September) - 10% of Canadian have better mental health compared to the beginning of the pandemic (11% in September) - 52% of Canadians have not had a change in their mental health since the beginning of the pandemic (58% in September)
Ontario	<p>Mostly Worse, Occasionally Better</p>	<p>Methodology: individuals 6-18 years old referred to mental health clinics for evaluation, individuals 6-18 with neurodevelopment concerns (ASD), children 0-5 in</p>

	<p>Source: Tombeau et al. 2021 (Sick Kids) Data Collection Period: April 15th – June 19th 2020 Date Published: Feb 26, 2021</p> <p>(PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1)</p>	<p>primary care, and individuals 6-18 at an urban science museum</p> <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70% of 6-18 year-olds surveyed in Ontario had their mental health worsen during the first wave of the pandemic (from parent-reports) - 20% of 6-18 year-olds surveyed had their mental health improve during the first wave - 67% of 2-5 year-olds had their mental health harmed in the first wave - 46% of 2-18 year olds saw their depression get worse and 43% saw their anxiety get worse during the first wave based on parent reports - Deterioration in depression, irritability, attention, and hyperactivity was highest in participants with ASD - deterioration in anxiety and obsession/compulsions was highest among participants with MH + ASD diagnoses. - Degree of social isolation kids face = the biggest predictor of mental health problems
Canada	<p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Middle to High Income Canadian Families with Young Children</p> <p>Source: Carroll et al. 2020 Data Collection Period: April 20th – May 15th 2020 Date Published: Aug 7th 2020</p> <p>(WAVE 1)</p>	<p>Methodology: 306 families were surveyed on their behavior since the onset of the Pandemic (including 552 parent participants and 406 children)</p> <p>Children and Youth Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 87% of children (4-8) experienced increases in their screen time since the onset of the pandemic, according to parents - 49% of children (4-8) experienced decreases in physical activity since the onset of the pandemic, according to parents - Parents were given the opportunity to give open-ended responses and one of the most common responses was a concern that children were misbehaving more during COVID. <p>Parent Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The average stress level reported by parents during the pandemic was 6/10 (10 being extreme stress) - 19% of mothers and 14% of fathers reported experiencing financial stress in the past month - Financial stability and homeschooling children were among the most popular factors identified as increasing parent stress.
Canada	<p>Community Child and Well-being Survey</p> <p>Source: Unicef/Canadian Index of Wellbeing/OTF Data Collection Period: May 5th – June 14th, 2021 Date Published: Forthcoming</p>	<p><i>Online survey for 9-18 year-olds in select areas around Canada. The survey will reveal how young people are experiencing mental health, life satisfaction, support from family, teachers, and friends during COVID-19.</i></p>

	(WAVE 3)	
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COVID-19 and Parents, Families

Needs and Prevalence of mood disorders, PTSD, psychotic and personality disorders among parents and family members of youth during the pandemic

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Ontario	<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Families with Children</p> <p>Source: McMaster University & Offord Centre for Child Studies</p> <p>Data collection period: May 5 – June 19 2020</p> <p>(PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: Sept 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 57% of caregivers reported symptoms that met the criteria for depression – compared with 2012 data from Stats Can. – This is 10x the average rate of mood disorders in adults over a 12 month period and more than 5x the lifetimes prevalence rates – 1/3 of caregivers reported moderate to severe levels of anxiety in the 2 weeks prior to responding to the survey – 37.5% reported an increase in alcohol intake – citing boredom, stress and change of schedules as factors – 87.9% of parents who reported cannabis consumption within the last 6 months indicated increased usage since the start of pandemic – Almost 10% of parents indicated increased verbal or physical conflict since the pandemic started – 40% of caregivers/parents reported deterioration in their children’s mood or behavior during the pandemic
Canada	<p>Stats Canada Parent Survey</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN</p> <p>(WAVE 1)</p> <p>Data collection period: June 9-22, 2020</p> <p>Date published: July 9, 2020</p>	<p><i>*This survey was not conducted with a random sampling design; results cannot be generalized to wider population (ex, most respondents were women and highly educated). *</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Almost 3/4s of parents (71%) were very or extremely concerned about their children’s opportunities to socialize with friends – more than half (54%) of parents were very or extremely concerned about their children’s loneliness or social isolation
Canada	<p>The COVID-19 Pandemic and Parenting in Canada</p> <p>Source: Vanier Institute for the Family</p> <p>Data collection period:</p> <p>(WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: June 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 2/3rds of parents were concerned about their children’s education and indicated that they would not be comfortable with children returning to school prior to September – Many parents were concerned about their children’s social engagement.
Canada	<p>HOW DO PEOPLE IN CANADA FEEL ABOUT COVID-19?</p>	<p><i>An online survey of 1,000 representative Canadians aged 18+ to determine the impact of the pandemic on adults and families.</i></p>

	<p>Source: UNICEF/Fuse Insights Data Collection Period: March, 2021 Date Published: April 27th, 2021 (WAVE 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Almost 9 out of 10 respondents believe the pandemic and its restrictions have affected people's mental health, not just their physical health. - Over half of parents have noticed a change in their kids' mental well-being over the course of the pandemic. - Three quarters of Canadians agree the pandemic is causing kids to miss out on key aspects of their childhood.
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COVID-19 and Adults/Data not age-disaggregated

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Ontario	<p>Interactive Opioid Tool: Opioid related morbidity and mortality in Ontario</p> <p>Source: Public Health Ontario. Data collection period: (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preliminary data from Ontario show that the number of confirmed and probable deaths from opioid-related causes increased by almost 50% from January (148) to May (220), 2020
Canada/Alberta	<p>Alberta COVID-19 Opioid Response Surveillance Report: Q2 2020.</p> <p>Source: Government of Alberta. Data collection period: (WAVE 1) Date published: 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beginning in March 2020, the number of harms associated with opioid use began to increase significantly, reaching record levels not previously seen - In the second quarter of 2020, there were 284 apparent unintentional poisoning deaths related to fentanyl in Alberta. By comparison, there were 130 of these deaths in the first quarter of 2020. - This is in conjunction with a decrease in the utilization of treatment and harm reduction services - The trend is likely due to the significant change in the population of patients accessing in-person services
Canada	<p>UVic Lifespan Survey</p> <p>Source: University of Victoria Date Collection Period: September 2020 (WAVE 1 - ONGOING) Date Published:</p>	<p>Under 34 (26.6% of total sample of 6629 participants from across Canada)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ~8% reported having severe depression, and ~12% reported severe anxiety during the pandemic. - 64% of Canadians currently experiencing suicidal thoughts have experienced an increase in suicidal thoughts. - 42% of Canadians who engaged in self-harm before the pandemic have experienced an increase in self-harm. - 26.9% reported increased alcohol use; 50.2% reported their alcohol use remained the same. 20.8% reported a decrease. - 45.3% reported increased drug use; whereas 42.5% reported their drug use remained the same. 10.3% reported a decrease.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having multiple mental health hotlines available 24/7 and having more widely available and easily accessible (potentially anonymous) emotional support online was reported to be factors that would be most helpful. <p>Overall results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Of participants under 21 (2.6% of sample), 51% reported anxiety, 19% reported panic, and 34% reported depression during the pandemic. Each of these findings were higher than the reported prevalence of these illness among any other age group. - Similarly, participants under 21 seemed to be most worried about mental health as a result of COVID-19 as compared to other groups; with worry levels decreasing by age group. - 62% of participants under 21, and 59% of participants aged 21-24 (4.9% of sample) reported worsened mental health, higher than other age groups.
Canada	<p>Mental Health Research Canada – 5th National Poll</p> <p>Source: Mental Health Research Canada Data Collection Period: February 2021 (WAVE 1 – ONGOING) Date Published:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey of 3005 Canadian adults (918 in Ontario). Four previous iterations of the survey were published. - Self-reported levels of anxiety (25%) (compared to 7% reporting high anxiety before the pandemic) and depression (17%) are at their highest, with an increase in both self-reported and diagnosed anxiety and depression. This means that the proportion of Canadians who have reported their level of depression as high has increased by 70% since the height of COVID’s first wave. - Social isolation is now the leading stressor having a negative impact on mental health. - Ontario residents were more likely to rate anxiety high (an 8 to 10 since COVID) (30%). - The economy remains a stressor for Canadians and is disproportionately affecting younger Canadians (18-34). - Since COVID-19 the number of Canadians accessing mental health supports has decreased significantly (19% accessing services since COVID vs 35% before COVID). - One-third of Canadians who handled stress well before are not able to do so anymore. - Younger Canadians, ages 18 to 34, are the group who tend to be the most vulnerable to a decline in mental health (23% vs. 35-54: 18%; 55+: 11% for those rating depression to be high – 8 to 10 since COVID). They are also less likely to be optimistic about their ability to recover and are less likely to be receiving treatment.
Canada	<p>Mental health among health care workers in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p><i>*18,000 healthcare workers from across the provinces participated in a survey on their mental health during Wave 2 of the pandemic.*</i></p>

	<p>Source: STATSCAN Data collection period: Nov 24 - Dec 13, 2020 (WAVE 2) Date published: Feb 2, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70% of healthcare workers reported worsening mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic - when asked to choose between five levels indicating how stressful most days were, 56% of healthcare workers chose one of the two highest levels - 77% of health care workers who reported working in direct contact with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 reported worsening mental health compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic - 62% of health care workers who did not work in direct contact with people, reported that their mental health was somewhat or much worse than before the pandemic - 77% of health care workers with restricted access to PPE reported worsening mental health, compared with 63% of those with unrestricted access to PPE
Canada	<p>Leger's Weekly North American Tracker</p> <p>Source: Leger/ Canadian Press Data collection period: May 7th - May 9th, 2021. Updated Weekly. (WAVE 2) Date published: May 10th, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 29% of Canadians reported good or excellent mental health as of Feb 2021, compared to 42% in April 2020 - 24% of Canadians reported their mental health being bad or very bad compared to the beginning of the pandemic - Ontarians are the most likely to have had worsened mental health (bad or very bad) since the onset of the pandemic, compared to any other province in Canada - Canadians are more likely to have had worsened mental health (bad or very bad) since the onset of the pandemic, compared to Americans
Canada	<p>Impact of COVID on Mental Health Surveys 1-7</p> <p>Source: CAMH/Delvinia Data collection period: May 2020 – Mar 2021 (WAVE 1 & WAVE 2) Date published: Interactive Dashboard</p>	<p><i>*An online survey given to 1000 Canadians above the age of 18 on the impacts of COVID on their mental health and substance use*</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The prevalence of anxiety and depression has decreased across all age groups compared to May 2020 results - The prevalence of depression has been consistently higher among adults with children in the household than children without any, since May 2020
Ontario	<p>CMHA Mental Health During COVID-19</p> <p>Source: CMHA/ Pollara Data collection period: Feb 19-22, 2021 (WAVE 3) Date Published: March 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ontarians reported to have worsening mental health as compared to Wave 2 (48% in Wave 2 to 35% in Wave 3). - Almost half of the Ontarians believe that COVID-19 played a major role in worsening of their mental health - The proportion of people who are experiencing high levels of stress (36%), anxiety (35%) and depression (17%) have increased since Wave 2. - For Ontarians, not seeing friends (78%) or extended family (74%) has been the most difficult to deal with, along with the uncertainty of the future (76%). - Ontarians are finding it more difficult to access mental health supports now than they did in Wave 2 (35% from 27%). - The percentage of Ontarians that find these supports helpful dropped significantly since Wave 1 (from 77% in Wave 1

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to 70% in wave 3).
Canada	<p>COVID-19's impact on mental health</p> <p>Source: Mental Health Research Canada/Pollera</p> <p>Data collection period: Aug 2020 – Feb 2021 (WAVE 1, 2 & 3)</p> <p>Date published:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 times more Canadians have experienced high levels of anxiety in during Wave 3 of the pandemic (23%) compared to before the pandemic (7%). - Over 2 times more Canadians have experienced high levels of depression in during Wave 3 of the pandemic (15%) compared to before the pandemic (6%). - 55% of Canadians reported that social isolation has impacted their mental health. This was the most common activity respondents identified as impacting their mental health. - 51%of Canadians reported that watching daily news of the pandemic impacted their mental health.
Canada	<p>Impact of COVID on substance use</p> <p>Source: CIHI</p> <p>Data collection period: March 1st – Sept 30th 2020 (WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: May 4th, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ED visits and hospitalizations for harm caused by alcohol, opioids, cannabis, and other stimulants combined increased by 5% compared to this period last year - For opioids and cannabis specifically, ED visits increased by 8% - Hospitalizations increased for all age groups - Males (8%) and individuals from low-income areas (14%) saw the highest increases in substance-related harm - Deaths increased in both ED (12%) and inpatient settings (13%) as well compared to the same period in 2019.

COVID-19 and Substance Use Among Youth

Needs and Prevalence of substance use for children and youth

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Ontario	<p>Preliminary Patterns In Circumstances Surrounding Opioid Related Deaths In Ontario During The Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>Source: ODPRN</p> <p>Data collection period: March 16 – June 30 2020 (Pandemic cohort); Dec 1 2019 – March 15 2020 (Pre-pandemic cohort) (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: Nov 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opioid related deaths have increased among individuals 24 and under during Covid (52 deaths) compared to pre-Covid (44 deaths). – Deaths increased more for individuals between the ages of 24 to 44, with 289 opioid related deaths pre covid, and 389 during covid. – Individuals 65 and older saw double the number of opioid related deaths during covid compared to pre-covid
Canada/Ontario	<p>From Risk to Resilience: and Equity Approach to COVID-19</p> <p>Source: Public Health Agency of Canada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covid disproportionately impacts substance users - Fears of contracting Covid cause people to use alone, decreasing the chance of intervention if they overdose - Physical distancing measures have also led to longer wait times, some sites saw several clients overdose while waiting in line.

	<p>Data collection period: CPSS March 29 – April 3 2020, CPSS 2 May 4- May 10 2020</p> <p>Date published: October 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Canada Perspectives Survey Series, individuals aged 15+ didn't change their substance use in the early days of the pandemic. - However, some Canadians reported increasing their use of alcohol (14%), cannabis (6.5%) or tobacco (3.3%). - Reported changes did not differ by sex, but people between the ages of 15 to 34 were more likely to report increased use of each. - Increase in substance use was also more likely among Canadians who reported having fair or poor mental health. - A second CPSS wave using the same data tools demonstrated that substance use continued to increase for alcohol (+ 5.2%), cannabis (+ 1.8%) and remained somewhat consistent for tobacco (0.6%). - These results suggest that for some Canadians, the indirect effects of COVID-19 have included increased alcohol consumption.
Canada/Saskatchewan	<p><u>Confirmed and Suspected Drug Toxicity Deaths.</u></p> <p>Source: Saskatchewan Coroners Service.</p> <p>Data collection period: (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Saskatchewan's deadliest year for overdoses (although cannot be directly linked to COVID) – Suspected 379 overdose deaths in 2020 (only in 2019) – Not all death investigations have been concluded
Canada	<p><u>What Does Adolescent Substance Use Look Like During the COVID-19 Pandemic? Examining Changes in Frequency, Social Contexts, and Pandemic-Related Predictors</u></p> <p>Source: Dumas et. al (2020)</p> <p>Data collection period: April 4th to April 13th 2020 (recruitment and data collection) (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1)</p> <p>Date published: July 18th 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1054 Canadian adolescents aged 14-18 (median age = 16.68; 805 female, 231 male, 12 non-binary; .6 no answer) completed an online survey about their reported alcohol use, binge drinking, cannabis use and vaping in 3 weeks before and directly after social distancing measures were put in place. - Overall, the percent of users decreased for most substances; however, the frequency of both alcohol and cannabis use increased. - 49.3% engaged in solitary use; but many engaged in use via technology (31.6%). - 23.3% were engaging in substance use face-to-face with others.
Canada	<p><u>Mental Health and Substance Use during COVID-19</u></p> <p>Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada, Leger & Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction</p> <p>Data Collection Period: two periods – Oct 13 (T1) – Nov 2 2020, and Nov 19 – Dec 2</p>	<p><i>*Data presented here from people reporting any lifetime mental health diagnosis (30% T1, 28% T2), people reporting any lifetime substance use diagnosis (6% T1, 5% T2), people reporting current mental health symptoms (59% T1 & T2), and people reporting current problematic alcohol or cannabis use (19% T1, 18% T2). Data weighted according to age, gender and region based on 2016 census.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canadian residents, 16+ - A total of n=2502 (T1) and n=1507 (T2) online surveys completed. - 40% of respondents reported strong mental health. - 14% of respondents reported severe depression symptoms; this was higher among those with substance use concerns (lifetime 39%, current 30%) or a past MH

	<p>2020 (T2) (WAVE 2) Date Published: ND</p>	<p>diagnosis (lifetime 32%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 51% (of lifetime substance use respondents and 41% of current substance use respondents reported having moderate to severe anxiety symptoms in T2 (compared to 24% of gen. Pop, same period). - 30% of lifetime substance use respondents reported seriously contemplating suicide since March in T2 (5% gen pop same period). - 46% of lifetime SUD and 44% of current SU in T2 reported increased alcohol use during the pandemic (29% of gen. pop in same period). - 54% of lifetime SUD and current SU respondents in T2 reported increased cannabis use during the pandemic, compared to 44% of the general population in the same period. - 53% of lifetime SUD and 51% of current SU reported being able to deal with COVID-19 related stress. This represented a slight decrease from T1 in both cases, and can be compared to 62% of the gen pop in T2.
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COVID-19 and Self-Harm + Suicidal Ideation

Needs and Prevalence of substance use for children, youth, and adults

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Provinces	<p>Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19: Wave 2</p> <p>Source: CAMH-UBC Data collection period: (WAVE 2) Date published: September 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19% of respondents aged 18-24 experienced suicidal thoughts or feelings during wave 2 of the pandemic. - 44% of Ontarian respondents (N=1137) reported that their mental health has deteriorated since the onset of the pandemic (60% among those aged 18-24 across provinces) - higher than any other province. - 13% of Ontarian adults (N=1137) had suicidal thoughts or feelings during the second wave of the pandemic - Higher than any other region in Canada - 28% of those who identify as LGBTQ+ - 27% of those with a pre-existing mental health condition
Canada	<p>IMPACT OF COVID ON SELF-HARM</p> <p>Source: CIHI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth aged 10-19 were 10% less likely to be admitted to the emergency department for self-harm compared to the same period (march-sept) during 2019.

	<p>Data collection period: March 1st – Sept 30th 2020 (WAVE 1) Date published: May 4th, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Females aged 10-19 were 9% less likely to be hospitalised for self-harm compared to the same period in 2019. This represents double the likelihood of males. - Males aged 10-19 were 18% less likely to be hospitalised for self-harm compared to the same period in 2019.
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COVID-19 and Mental Health Disparities

Mental Health disparities in COVID-19 MH impact

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
Canada/Ontario	<p>Preliminary Patterns In Circumstances Surrounding Opioid Related Deaths In Ontario During The Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>Source: ODPRN Data collection period: March 16 – June 30 2020 (PRE-PANDEMIC & WAVE 1) Date published: Nov 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There was a strong clustering of opioid-related deaths in neighbourhoods with the highest material deprivation, both before and during the pandemic. – During the pandemic, there was a significant trend towards more opioid-related deaths occurring in neighbourhoods with a higher ethno-cultural diversity. This trend was not observed in the pre-pandemic period, and is concerning as data emerges demonstrating that ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, particularly those in large urban centres, are also experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 infection and related death. – 44 opioid related deaths in the pre-pandemic cohort among those under 24 before the pandemic, and 52 opioid related deaths among those under age 24 in the pandemic cohort. – Increases in opioid related deaths were noted among all age-groups in the pandemic cohort, and were highest among those aged 25-44.
Canada	<p>Canadian Perspective Survey Series 1</p> <p>Source: STATSCAN Data Collection period: March 29 – April 3 2020 (WAVE 1) Date published: June 24, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 54% of Canadians aged 15+ reported excellent or very good mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. - However, several concerns were also associated with mental health. After considering the effects of socioeconomic and health characteristics, women, youth, individuals with a physical health condition and those who were very or extremely concerned with family stress from confinement were less likely to report excellent or very good mental health. - Individuals with higher education (i.e., a Bachelor’s degree or above), who were married or common law, or were living in a household with two people were more likely to report better versus worse mental health. - Respondents with children under 18 living in their household were less likely to report better mental health than those who did not have children. - 76% of those who felt that COVID-19 had a minor or no impact on their ability to meet financial obligations reported excellent or very good mental health, compared to 25% of those who reported a moderate or major impact. - Individuals with a compromised immune system as well as those with diabetes or a

		chronic condition affecting their lungs, heart, or kidneys were less likely to report better mental health (compared to worse mental health).
International (UK)	<p>Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2020: Wave 1 Follow Up to the 2017 Survey</p> <p>Source: NHS Data collection period: July 2020 Date published: Oct 2020 (WAVE 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased financial strain was strongly associated with child mental health. - Children with a probable mental disorder were more than twice as likely to live in a household that had fallen behind with payments (16.3%) than children unlikely to have a mental disorder (6.4%)

COVID-19 and Eating Disorders

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
International/US and Netherlands	<p>Early impact of COVID-19 on individuals with self-reported eating disorders: A survey of ~1,000 individuals in the United States and the Netherlands</p> <p>Source: Termorshuizen et. al Data collection period: April 8-May 6 2020 Date published: July 28th 2020 (WAVE 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The minimum age to participate without parental consent was 18 years in the US and 16 years in NL. - Participants with anorexia nervosa (US 62% of sample; NL 69%) reported increased restriction and fears about being able to find foods consistent with their meal plan. - Increases in binge-eating episodes and urges to binge among those with bulimia and binge-eating disorder (US 30% of sample; NL 15%) - Greater concern about COVID-19's mental than physical effects; marked increases in anxiety since 2019. - Those with histories of eating disorders worried about relapse related to COVID-19 circumstances. - Although many participants acknowledged and appreciated the transition to telehealth, limitations of this treatment modality for this population were raised. - respondents also noted positive effects including greater connection with family, more time for self-care, and motivation to recover.

<p>International/Germany</p>	<p>Bulimia nervosa in times of the COVID-19 pandemic—Results from an online survey of former inpatients</p> <p>Source: Schlegl et al 2020 Data collection period: May 1-8, 2020 Date published: Aug 7, 2020 (WAVE 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants were at least 13 years old, and female. - 49% of participants reported a deterioration in ED symptoms - One-third to half of patients with bulimia nervosa (BN) reported an increase in their bulimic symptomatology. - Depressive symptoms, general psychopathology, quality of life and therapy in patients with BN were negatively affected. - Relatively low use of e-therapy. - 62% reported a reduced quality of life - The frequency of binge eating increased in 47% of patients and self-induced vomiting in 36%. - Enjoyable activities, virtual social contacts with friends and mild physical activities were rated as the most helpful coping strategies among those most used.
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Other Information/Data

Academic sources speculating on further COVID-19 impacts

Jurisdiction	Source/Study	Data/Findings
<p>International/United States</p>	<p>COVID-19 and ED Pathology</p> <p>Source: Sharmer et al 2020 Data collection period: March – April 2020 Date published: Oct 24, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – $M_{age} = 19.7$ (age range not provided) – Undergraduates (N=295, female = 65.1%) with COVID-19 anxiety were found to be at an increased risk of ED pathology – COVID-19 anxiety may increase risk for ED pathology and may be specifically important in determining risk for ED pathology and compulsive exercise among individuals with lower intolerance of uncertainty.
<p>International/Canada, Mexico, US</p>	<p>Sprang, G., & Silman, M. (2013). Posttraumatic stress disorder in parents and youth after health-related disasters. <i>Disaster medicine and public health preparedness</i>, 7(1), 105– 110.</p> <p>Source: Sprang, G., & Silman, M. (2013) Data collection period: N/A Date published: 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – children who had been in quarantine exhibited symptoms of PTSD at rates 4 times higher than those of children who weren't. – Criteria for PTSD were met in 30% of isolated or quarantined children – 28% of parents who were quarantined met the criteria for PTSD diagnosis (compared to 7% of those not quarantined) – There was a significant relationship between PTSD symptoms of parents and children in the same family and for parents who met PTSD cut-off levels, 85.7% had children who also met clinical cut-off scores

<p>International/United Kingdom</p>	<p><u>Children and families responding to disaster and bereavement. In R. J. Ursano, C. S. Fullerton, L. Weisaeth, & B. Raphael (Eds.), <i>Textbook of disaster psychiatry</i> (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</u></p> <p>Source: Whaley G. J. L., Cohen W. L., Cozza S. J. (2017)</p> <p>Data collection period: N/A</p> <p>Date published: 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In the aftermaths of pandemics or disasters, children are also at elevated risk of harm due to their limited coping and emotional regulation skills
<p>International</p>	<p><u>https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/UN-Policy-Brief-COVID-19-and-mental-health.pdf</u></p> <p>Source: UN Sustainable Development group</p> <p>Data collection period: N/A</p> <p>Date published: 13 May 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – People with pre-existing needs, especially those with complex needs who may otherwise access intensive in-person supports or live-in/congregate housing, are at increased risk due to either a disruption in their regular service/support modalities or, for those with no alternative to live-in services, an increased risk of exposure – To deal with the stressors, people may resort to different negative ways of coping, including use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or spending more time on potentially addictive behaviors such as online gaming

Appendix: