

New APA poll shows sustained anxiety among Americans

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According to a new public opinion poll released today by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), concern about COVID-19 remains high, especially concern over loved ones, and more people are reporting

mental health impacts from pandemic than last year. Parents are especially concerned about their children's mental well-being.

Americans are more anxious about family and loved ones catching the coronavirus (64%) than about catching the virus themselves (49%). Moreover, concern toward family and loved ones catching the virus has increased since last year, from 56% then to 64% now. Hispanics/Latinos (73%) and African Americans/Blacks (76%) are more anxious about COVID-19 than whites (59%).

More than four in ten Americans (41%) say they are more anxious than last year. While still substantial, that is down from just over 60% last year. Young adults, ages 18 to 29 (49%), and Hispanic/Latinos (50%) are more likely to say they are more anxious now compared to last year. Those 65 and older (30%) are less likely to say they feel more anxious than last year.

"This poll shows that even as vaccines become more widespread, Americans are still worried about the mental state of their children," said APA President Jeffrey Geller, M.D., M.P.H. "This is a call to action for policymakers, who need to remember that in our COVID-19 recovery, there's no [health](#) without mental health."

"While most people, including most children, will likely adapt and recover well as we emerge from the pandemic, we know from previous research that for some, the mental health impacts of this trauma and distress will continue to have repercussions into the future," said APA CEO and Medical Director Saul Levin, M.D., M.P.A. "We need to be prepared to help those who need it in the coming months and years."

More than four in 10 adults (43%) report the pandemic has had a serious impact on their mental health, up from 37% in 2020. Fifty nine percent of younger adults are more likely to report a serious impact on their

mental health due to the pandemic. More than half (54%) of 30 to 44-year-olds also report a serious mental health impact; fewer [older adults](#) (24%) report serious mental health impacts.

Slightly fewer Americans report that the coronavirus pandemic is affecting their day-to-day life now compared to a year ago, such as problems sleeping (19% down from 22%), difficulties concentrating (18% down from 20%) and fighting more with loved ones (16% down from 17%). The percentage of adults consuming more alcohol or other substances/drugs than normal, increased slightly since last year from 14% to 17%. Additionally, 33% of adults (40% of women) report gaining weight during the pandemic.

Concern About Children's Mental Well-being

Concern over the mental wellbeing of children and teens is clearly an important issue for parents. More than half of adults (53%) with children under 18 in their household say they are concerned about the mental state of their children and almost half (48%) say the pandemic has caused mental health problems for one or more of their children, including minor problems for 29% and major problems for 19%. More than a quarter (26%) of parents say have sought professional mental health help for their children because of the pandemic.

Nearly half (49%) of parents surveyed who have [children](#) under 18 say their child has received help from a mental health professional since the start of the [pandemic](#). Among those receiving help, 23% say they received help from a [primary care](#) professional, 18% from a psychiatrist, 15% a psychologist, 13% a therapist, 10% a social worker, and 10% a school counselor or school psychologist. More than one in five parents have had trouble scheduling appointments for their child with a [mental health](#) professional.

COVID-19 Vaccines

Just over three-quarters (76%) of Americans say they have been or intend to get vaccinated; 22% say they don't intend to get vaccinated; and 2% didn't know. Among those who do not intend to be vaccinated, the primary concern (53%) is about side effects of the vaccine. Other reasons for not getting vaccinated include believing it is not effective (31%), believing the makers of the vaccine aren't being honest about what's in it (27%) and fear/anxiety about needles (12%).

The full results are [available here](#). The new findings come from an APA-sponsored [online survey](#) conducted March 26—April 5, 2021, among a sample of 1,000 adults 18 years of age and older. The equivalent margin of error is +/-3.1 percentage points.

More information: APA 2021 Public Opinion Poll: Topline Results: [www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/ap ... -2021-annual-meeting](http://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/ap...-2021-annual-meeting)

Provided by American Psychiatric Association

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