

## Student Mental Health Survey (September 2020)

Active Minds surveyed 2,051 students regarding the impact of COVID-19 on their mental health in September 2020.

### Key Findings Summary (All Students)

- Unsurprisingly, mental health has worsened over the course of the pandemic. Almost 75% of respondents reported their mental health has worsened, worsened somewhat, or worsened significantly since the beginning of the pandemic. High percentages of respondents have experienced stress or anxiety (87.03%), disappointment or sadness (78.06%), or felt lonely or isolated (77.47%) during the pandemic. For many respondents, stress (84.25%), anxiety (82.35%), sadness (73.23%), and depression (60.7%) have all increased since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Students are resilient! Two thirds of students (66.89%) reported an increase in supporting others with their mental wellness. Respondents reported having received information from their institution regarding mental health (66.41%), academic policies (82.5%), and healthy coping strategies (49.15%). Three quarters of respondents (77.72%) feel optimistic or hopeful about their school-related goals and future job prospects. Majority of respondents indicated they know where to seek professional mental health services if they need immediate help (71.09%) and they know where to advise a friend to go if they need professional mental health services (69.77%).
- Institutions of higher education are constantly changing. According to respondents, 62.46% of students planned for a combination of in-person on-campus courses and online courses, yet upon survey completion in September 2020 only 42.81% of students were receiving their instruction this way. At that point in time, 51.24% of students were receiving all academic instruction online and 1.27% had changed their fall academic plans as a result of COVID-19.
- Respondents have used variety of coping strategies during the pandemic. Those most commonly used were virtual interaction with friends (68.31%), in-person interaction with friends (53.92%), being around pets (53.88%), and receiving support from their families by living at home (40.27%).
- COVID-19 hasn't just affected student's mental health. 55.83% of respondents report their daily level of physical activity has decreased or significantly decreased.

### Data:

*\*\*Data points with an asterisk (\*) indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in how college students vs high school students answered the question. For comparison purpose, college students are defined bachelor degree seeking student and high school students are defined as students pursuing a high school diploma.*

#### 1. About the Students:

**Table 1.1 What type of diploma or degree are you currently pursuing?**

	Number of students	% of total students
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	<b>1277</b>	<b>62.26%</b>
<b>High school students</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>10.97%</b>
Master's degree	213	10.39%
Associate's degree	102	4.97%
Doctorate degree	136	6.63%
No degree or diploma	28	1.37%
GED/high school equivalency	21	1.02%
Professional degree	49	2.39%

## **2. The Impact of COVID-19:**

**Table 2.1 How has COVID-19 impacted your mental health?**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
Worsened significantly	18.28%	18.09%	20.00%
Worsened somewhat	23.35%	23.41%	20.44%
Worsened	33.20%	34.46%*	23.11%*
Unchanged	17.55%	17.46%	21.33%
Improved	3.61%	3.29%*	6.22*
Improved somewhat	2.93%	2.58%*	5.33%*
Improved significantly	1.07%	.70%*	3.56%*

**Table 2.2 In which of the following additional ways, if any, has COVID-19 impacted your life? (select all that apply)**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
Stress or anxiety	87.03%	88.80%	80.00%
Disappointment or sadness	78.06%	79.40%*	74.22%*
Loneliness or isolation	77.47%	77.76%*	76.00%*
Financial setback	43.93%	47.85%*	18.67%*
Relocation	27.55%	34.14%*	4.89%*
Illness and/or had to isolate/self-quarantine	18.33%	18.95%	16.00%
Loss of a loved one	8.92%	8.14%*	10.67%*
Take care of sick loved one	6.14%	5.64%	4.00%
None of the above	4.24%	8.89%*	2.66%*

**Table 2.3 What has been most stressful, if anything, for you during COVID-19 overall? (choose one)**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
Feeling disconnected from friends and/or loved ones	21.06%	20.20%	24.44%
Uncertainty regarding the unknown	15.21%	16.76%*	9.78%*
Having trouble focusing on studies and/or work	14.58%	14.10%	14.67%
Finding joy while coping with the pandemic	9.46%	9.16%	12.00%
Uncertainty related to my academics	8.68%	8.93%	9.33%
Having your basic needs met (i.e. food, housing, job, and/or financial security)	7.12%	7.36%*	1.78%*
Fearing I and/or a loved one will contract COVID-19	7.31%	7.75%*	4.00%*
Feeling unhappy in my living space	6.09%	6.42%	7.56%
Unable to participate in specialty activity	4.73%	4.15%*	9.33%*
Limited access to mental health services (i.e. therapy or medication)	2.24%	2.04%	2.22%
Other	2.00%	1.96%	1.33%
I have not experienced any stress	1.51%	1.17%*	3.56%*

Other responses included: relationship issues, transition to online learning, concerns about loved ones getting sick or for those who are essential workers, job prospects, uncertainty/fear for the future, relocation to a new environment, feeling physically restricted, disappointment from missing commencement or needing to end study broad early or to consider postponing college

**3. Living Under Stay-At-Home Orders:**

**Table 3.1 During this time, with whom are you having the most interaction? (choose one)**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
Parents	34.03%	33.99%*	44.44%*
Siblings	12.09%	9.63%*	30.22%*

Significant others	16.87%	16.05%*	3.56%*
Friends	12.63%	12.53%	16.44%
Roommates	18.72%	23.18%*	1.33%*
Educators	1.71%	1.72%	.89%
Other	3.95%	2.90%	3.11%

Other responses included: no one, co-workers, children, pets, internet friends, non-parent family members (grandparents, cousins, in-laws, etc.)

#### **4. Resource Needs:**

**Table 4.1 There are many coping strategies that students have used to support their mental wellness during COVID-19. Please indicate which of the following you have benefitted from during COVID-19. (select all that apply)**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
Virtual interaction with friends	68.31%	68.68%*	68.44%*
In-person interaction with friends	53.92%	57.56%	47.56%
Being around pets	53.88%	56.15%	46.67%
Familial support provided by living at home	40.27%	42.13%	28.89%
Virtual mental health services	26.82%	28.43%	23.56%
Involvement with campus student groups	21.79%	25.37%*	13.78%*
Increased privacy	20.48%	20.13%*	26.67%*
Increased financial support from your institution	12.19%	13.08%*	3.11%*
Other	4.19%	3.92%	4.89%

**5. Future Direction:**

**Table 5.1 On a scale of 1-10, how hopeful are you about achieving your school-related goals and your future job prospects (1=not at all hopeful, 10=extremely hopeful)?**

	All Students	College Students	High School Students
10 (extremely hopeful)	17.21%	16.37%	14.67%
6-9 (hopeful)	60.51%	61.24%	58.89%
5 (neutral)	9.17%	9.40%	11.11%
2-4 (unhopeful)	11.41%	11.90%	14.22%
1 (not at all hopeful)	1.71%	1.10%*	3.11%*