

IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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DISCLOSURES

I have no relevant financial relationships with the manufacturers of any commercial products and/or providers of commercial services discussed in this presentation.

SETTING THE STAGE

Current research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth is ongoing and data is limited.

Much of what is reported is based on modeling and “best guesses” on what the future may hold for our youth.



PRE-PANDEMIC

- Before the pandemic, youth were already in a mental health crisis

PRE-PANDEMIC



- 37-39% of children have a behavioral or emotional disorder diagnosed by age 16

PRE-PANDEMIC



- 17.8% developmental disability
- 9.5% with ADHD
- 7.4% with a behavior problem
- 7.1% with anxiety
- 2.5% with ASD

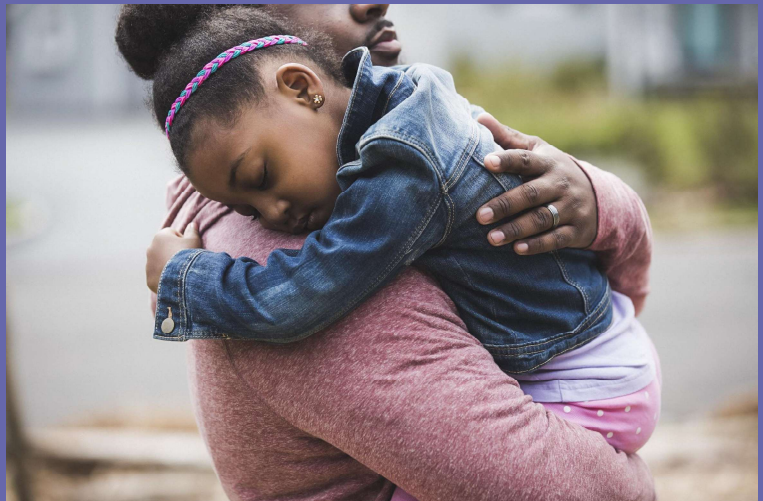
PRE-PANDEMIC

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among US youth and young adults
- There was a 41% increase in suicide rates among youth and young adults from 2000-2017

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Nearly 1 in 7 children lived in poverty

71% are children of color



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Grief/loss
- Delay in academic progress
- Decreased access to health care
- Food insecurity
- Financial insecurity
- Housing insecurity
- Isolation
 - Decreased physical activity
 - Increased screen time



LOSS

- A recent modeling study extrapolates that, globally, between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2021, more than 1.1 million children experienced the death of a primary caregiver
- In the US, 40,000 children have lost a parent to COVID-19
- Disproportionately impacts African American children



LOSS

Children who have lost a parent are more than twice as likely to show impairments in functioning at school and at home, even 7 years later



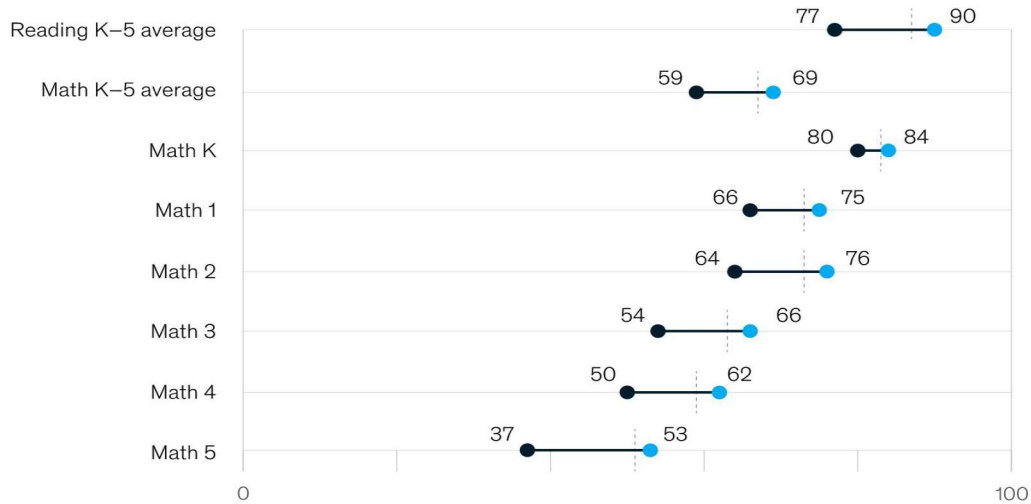
SCHOOL

During the pandemic, 1-3 million children never enrolled in school, showed up, or logged in for at least 1 year

Most students are falling behind, but students of color are faring worse.

Amount students learned in the 2019–20 school year, % of historical scores¹

● Schools with >50% students of color ▫ All schools average ● Schools with >50% white students



¹Percent of an "average" year of learning gained by students in 2019–20 school year, where 100% is equivalent to historical matched scores over previous 3 years. Source: Curriculum Associates

SCHOOL


Grade failure is associated with:

- Dropping out of school
- Substance use
- Suicidal ideation
- Risky sexual behaviors
- Violent behaviors




SCHOOL

Grade failure negatively impacts:

- Self-esteem
 - Attitudes towards school
 - Social adjustment
- 



ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

- Loss of health insurance
 - Delayed routine medical visits
 - Drop in vaccination rates
- 



ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

- Delay in screening and identification of developmental disorders and other medical conditions
- Delay in referral to early intervention services (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.)



FOOD INSECURITY

- Nearly 18% of households with children reported food insecurity at the beginning of the pandemic, rising to 28% by October 2020



FOOD INSECURITY

“Household food insecurity has insidious effects on the health and development of young children, including increased hospitalizations, poor health, iron deficiency, developmental risk and behavior problems, primarily aggression, anxiety, depression, and attention deficit disorder.”

(Cook & Frank, 2008; Whitaker, Phillips, & Orzol, 2006).



HOUSING INSECURITY

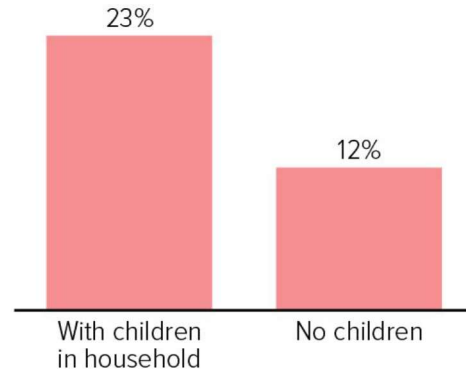
The pandemic places youth at increased risk of homelessness

- Financial strain during economic recession
- Unable to “couch surf” due to pandemic/quarantine precautions
- Decreased access to resources due to school and office closures

HOUSING INSECURITY

Over 1 in 5 Renters Living With Children Were Not Caught Up on Rent

Share of adult renters who said household is not caught up on last month's rent, October 2021



Note: Chart excludes renters who did not respond to question.

Source: CBPP analysis of Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey tables for September 29–October 11, 2021

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

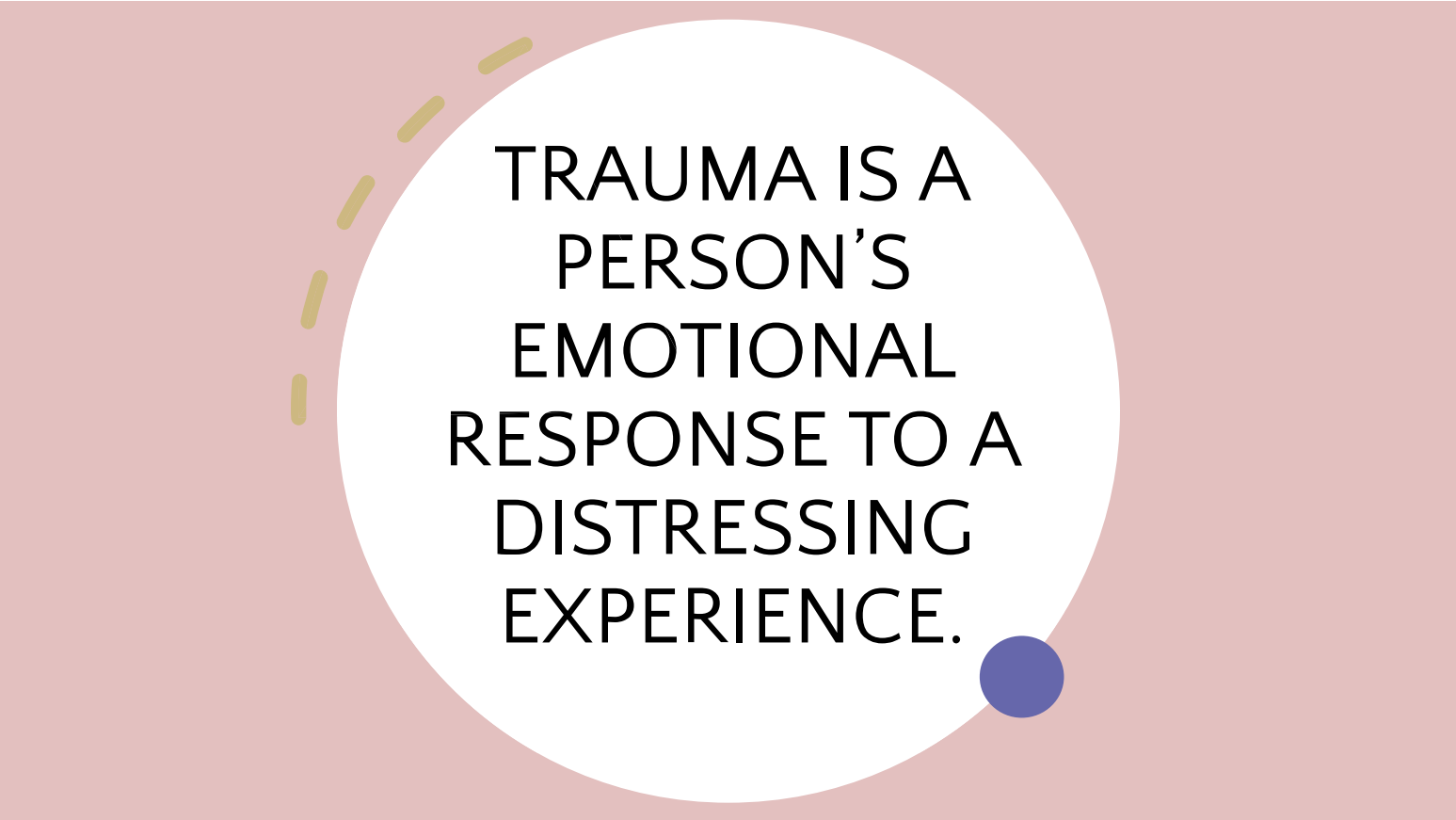
SCREEN TIME

- There was a 50–70% increase in internet use during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - 50% of the time was spent engaging on social media in 2020
- Social media engagement increased 61% during the first wave of the pandemic.



SCREEN TIME

- Lower physical activity levels
- Less outdoor time
- Sleep disturbance
- Anxiety
- Trouble with concentration
- Depressive symptoms
- Loneliness



TRAUMA IS A
PERSON'S
EMOTIONAL
RESPONSE TO A
DISTRESSING
EXPERIENCE.

MENTAL HEALTH

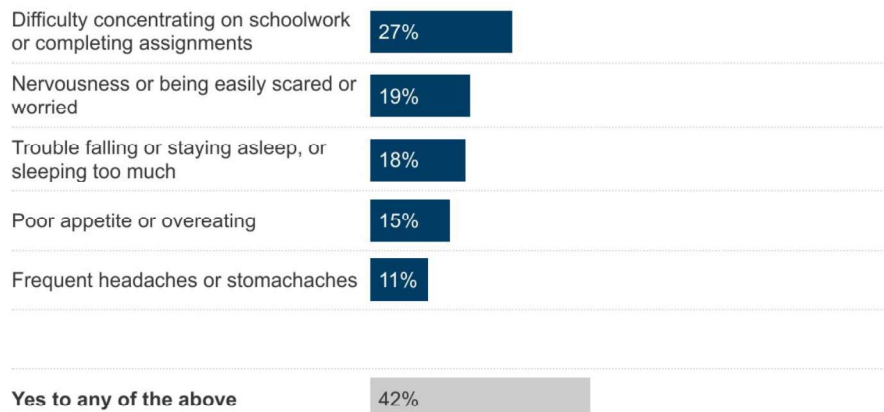
January 1, 2020, through March 8, 2021:

- 20.5% of children reported anxiety
- 25.2% of children reported depression

Figure 4

Four In Ten Parents Say At Least One Of Their Children Has Experienced A New Negative Symptom Since The Pandemic Began

Percent of parents who say that, in the past 12 months at least one of their children has experienced the following since the pandemic, and were not experiencing it before the pandemic began:



NOTE: See topline for full question wording.

SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor: Parents And The Pandemic (Jul. 15-Aug. 2, 2021).

**KFF COVID-19
Vaccine Monitor**



MENTAL HEALTH

- In 2021, 37% of high school students reported they experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 44% reported they persistently felt sad or hopeless during the past year



MENTAL HEALTH

- More than half (55%) reported they experienced emotional abuse by a parent or other adult in the home, including swearing at, insulting, or putting down the student.
- 11% experienced physical abuse by a parent or other adult in the home, including hitting, beating, kicking, or physically hurting the student.

MENTAL HEALTH

31% increase in the proportion of mental health-related ED visits among adolescents 12-17 years old in 2020

HOW DO DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, AND TRAUMA DISORDERS PRESENT IN YOUTH?

Irritability

Withdrawal

Oppositional behaviors

Somatic complaints

Insomnia

Low motivation

Low energy



MENTAL HEALTH AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

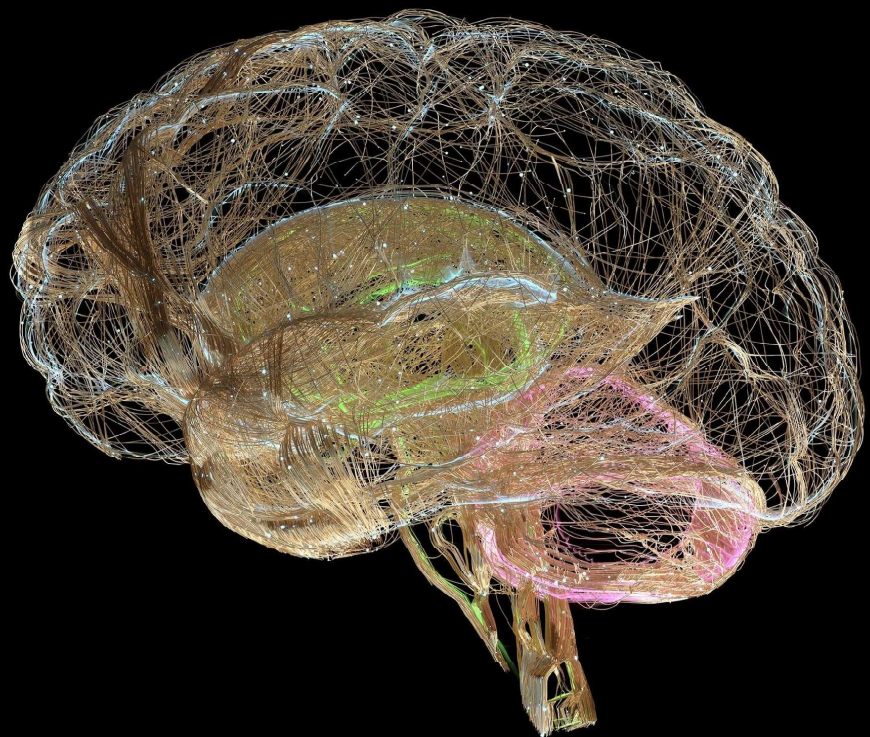
- 70% of justice-involved youth have a diagnosable mental health disorder
- Entering juvenile carceral facilities can exacerbate mental health disorders
- During the pandemic, many youth detention facilities significantly reduced mental health services



STRESS AND THE BRAIN

Toxic stress

- Strong, frequent, or prolonged adversity without adequate adult support
- Disrupts development of brain architecture
- Increases risk for stress-related disease and cognitive impairment



CHILDREN ARE RESILIENT

With appropriate support, children are expected to recover and meet developmental expectations cognitively, socially, and emotionally



RESOURCES

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