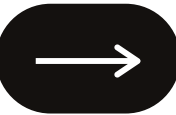




**FREE STATE PTA**  
**C O N L I V E**  
**AUGUST 12-14, 2021**

## The Kids Are Not The Same: How Parents and Schools Can Help Students Acclimatize As We Navigate A New, Covid World

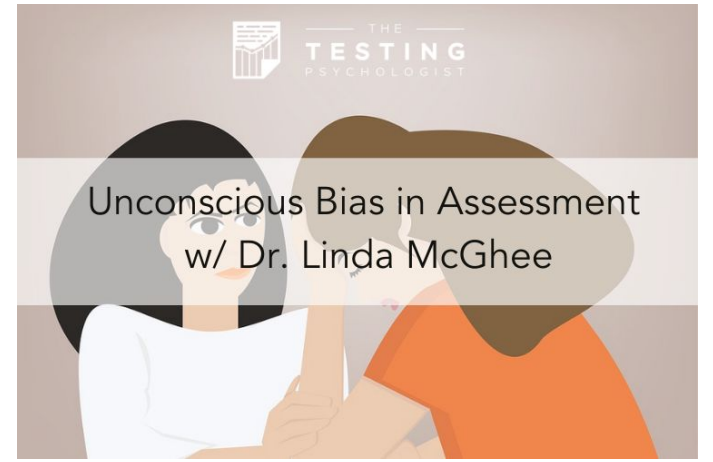
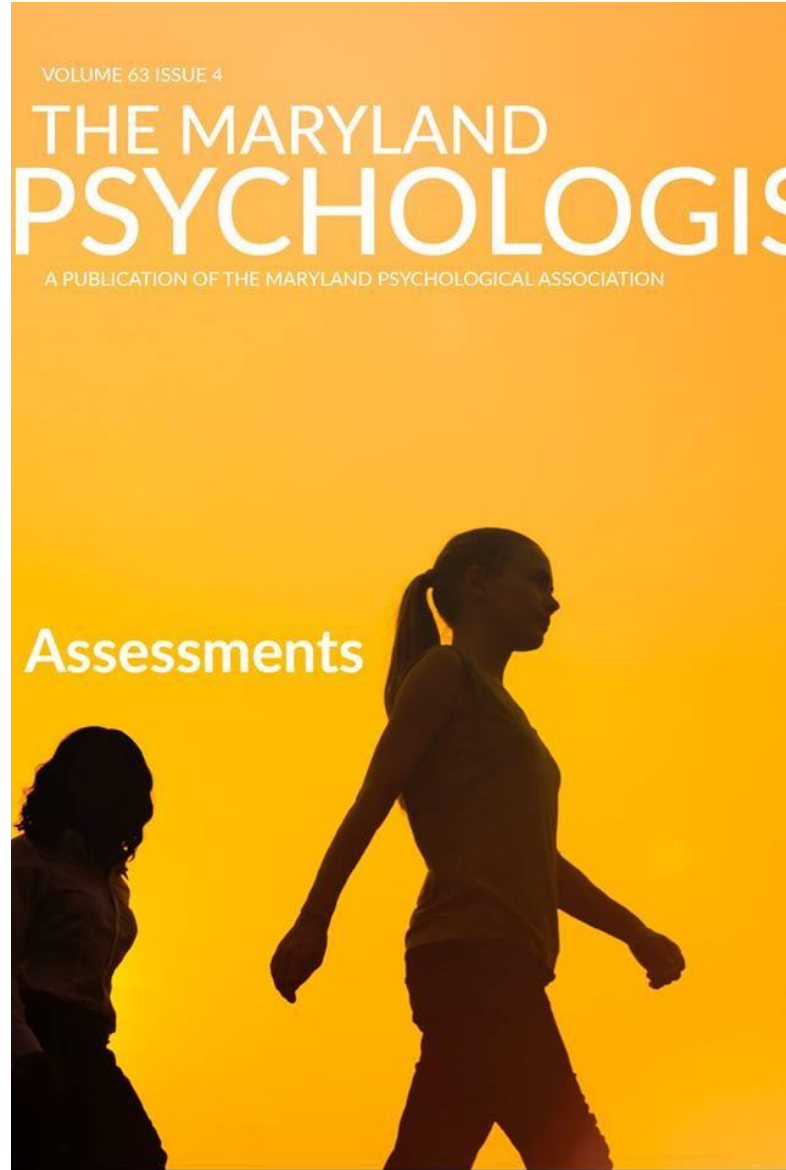
Linda Fleming McGhee, J.D., Psy.D.



## Dr. Linda McGhee

- Psychologist
- Founder of McGhee and Associates, LLC
- Radio Show Host-Good Mental Health
- Speaker and Writer





# Agenda

Far-Reaching Impacts of Covid  
Parenting and School-Based Solutions

# Covid Cases Children

- Children have always made up a small share of the nation's COVID-19 infections, serious illnesses, and deaths compared with other age groups, but some think that might change as society moves to the next stages of the pandemic.
- The nearly 4 million children diagnosed with COVID-19 so far account for 14% of cases, according to a [recent report](#) by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Children's Hospital Association (CHA).

# Death of Children

- Of the almost 600,000 deaths attributed to COVID-19 in the United States in just over 17 months, about 325 have been people under the age of 18, [according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).
- The CDC also reports that hospitalization rates are lower for children and adolescents than for adults, the CDC reports.

# Covid-Long Haul Children

- Evidence is also emerging about the long-term effects of COVID-19 on young people, including fatigue, headaches, and loss of the sense of taste or smell for months, as well as long-term brain loss.
- A study in the United Kingdom found that “it is becoming increasingly apparent that a large number of children with symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 are experiencing long-term effects, many months after the initial infection.”



# COVID And People of Color

- Nationwide, Black people have died at 1.4 times the rate of white people.
- We've lost at least 73,462 Black lives to COVID-19 to date. Black people account for 15% of COVID-19 deaths where race is known.
- Of those children killed by covid-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, more than **75 percent have been Hispanic, Black and American Indian children**, even though they represent 41 percent of the U.S. population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.





# Covid-Intersectionality

- However, socioeconomic status (SES) appears to be one important indicator, he said; **31% of those hospitalized with SARS-CoV-2 were considered as “low SES.”** As the study notes, **poverty is associated with poor health outcomes** and higher rates of pediatric ICU admissions in general.
- Oliveira said that many of these youths are likely getting COVID-19 from parents who are considered essential workers.

# Covid-Unique Presentations

- The researchers also discovered a sharp difference in the forms the virus took in these young patients depending on their race. The majority of COVID-19 patients presenting with severe respiratory issues were Hispanic teenagers with underlying health issues.
- On the other hand, nearly all of the youths presenting with multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS-C) — which appears two to four weeks after COVID-19 infection — were 7 to 9 years old and had no preexisting conditions. Black children and youth were more likely to present with MIS-C than respiratory COVID-19, they found.



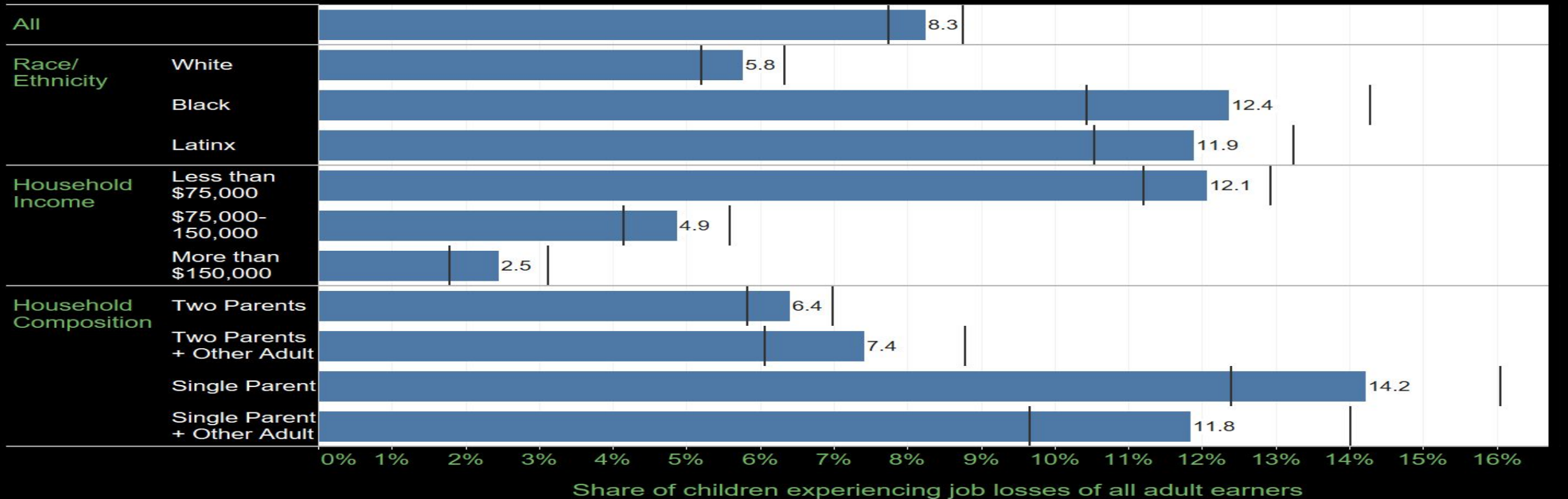
# Covid and Caregiving

- CDC- For every two Covid-19 deaths, one child faces the death of a parent or caregiver.
- Worldwide, 1.5 million children have lost a caregiver.
- Of those children, nearly 114,000 are from the U.S.(The Lancet).
- The U.S. ranks fourth with the most kids orphaned by COVID-19 deaths, behind Mexico, Brazil and India.



# Covid and Economics

Children Experiencing Job Loss of All Household Earners  
Between February and April 2020



Source: Authors' calculations from linked February-April Current Population Survey  
Note: Lines depict 95% confidence interval





# Covid-Economic Impacts

- Their families have suffered disproportionate economic setbacks as well, with Hispanic women and immigrants among the groups most affected by [job loss during the pandemic](#), according to the Pew Research Center.
- Young people in these hard-hit families are at risk for food insecurity, unstable housing, and even the effects of domestic violence, which rises during tough financial times.

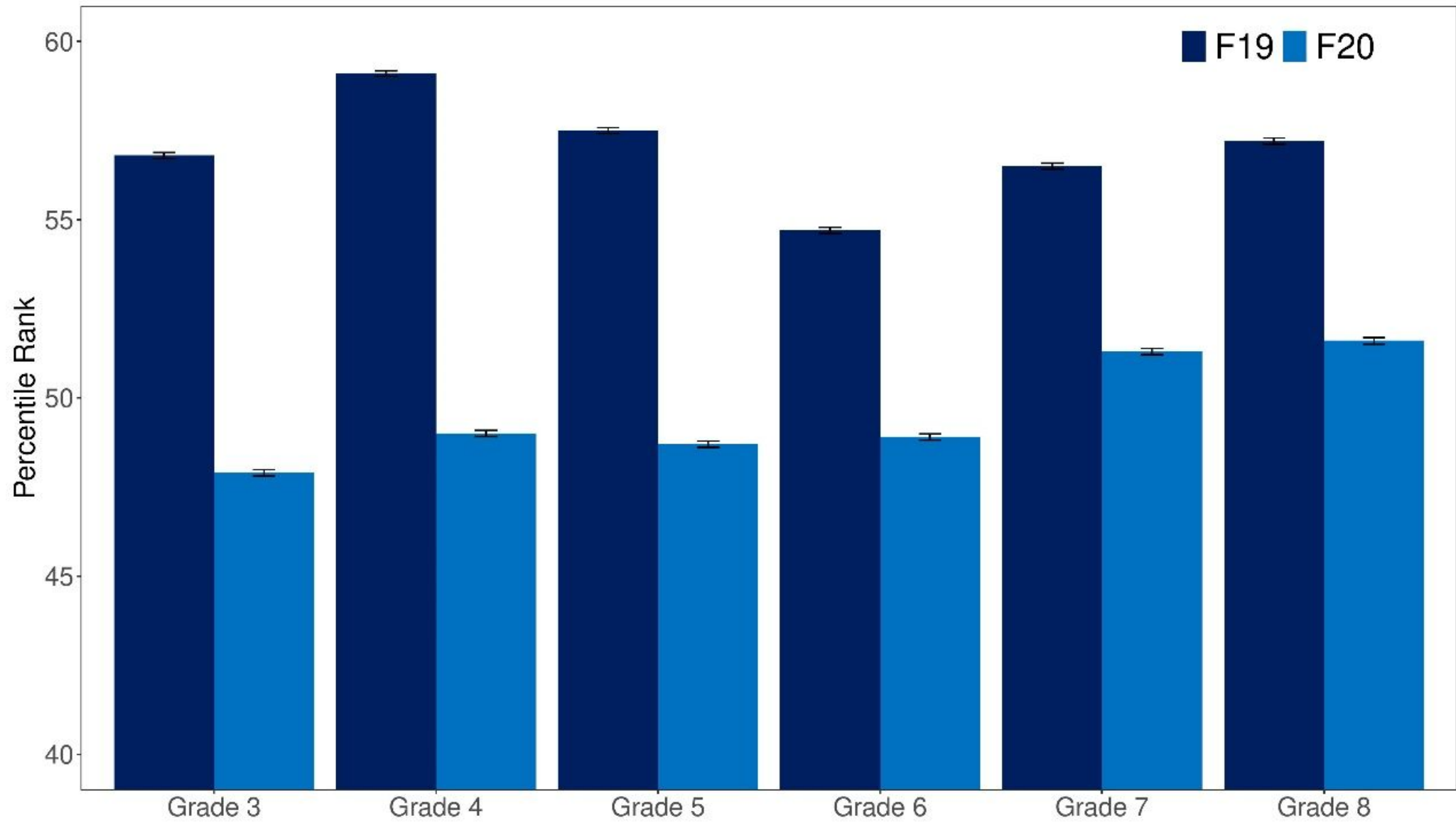


# Academic Impacts

- Brookings Study
  - Students in grades 3-8 performed similarly in reading to same-grade students in fall 2019.
  - While the reason for the stability of these achievement results cannot be easily pinned down, possible explanations are that students read more on their own, and parents are better equipped to support learning in reading compared to other subjects that require more formal instruction.

# Math - Well...

- The math achievement of students in 2020 was about 5 to 10 percentile points lower compared to same-grade students the prior year.
- Early studies before and during COVID-19 found that student progress on math programs decreases between January and May of last year.
- In low income zip codes the performance decreased even further



# Gains are smaller than previous years

- In almost all grades, the majority of students made some learning gains in both reading and math since the COVID-19 pandemic started, though gains were smaller in math in 2020 relative to the gains students in the same grades made in the winter 2019-fall 2019 period.

# Other Covid-Related Issues-Economic and Digital

- 83 percent of families with highest income are logging in everyday
- 38 percent of family from the lowest income quarter are logging into distance once a week or less
- Missing school and absenteeism affects reading grade retention, graduation and dropout rates.
- Remote learning exacerbated these income disparity
- Other groups being underserved are families who speak other language, children with disabilities or special needs learning problems, adhd. One study 40 percent of special ed students say they are not getting support.



# Challenges of Children in Covid

- **Changes in their routines** (e.g., having to physically distance from family, friends, worship community)
- **Breaks in continuity of learning** (e.g., virtual learning environments, technology access and connectivity issues)
- **Breaks in continuity of health care** (e.g., missed well-child and immunization visits, limited access to mental, speech, and occupational health services)
- **Missed significant life events** (e.g., grief of missing celebrations, vacation plans, and/or milestone life events)
- **Lost security and safety** (e.g., housing and food insecurity, increased exposure to violence and online harms, threat of physical illness and uncertainty for the future)

# School in the Backdrop of A Troubling Time

- Trauma
- Grief
- Loss of Routines, Celebrations, Closeness
- COVID-19
- Police Brutality and Civil Unrest
- Financial Hardships
- Mental Health Prior to COVID-19
  - 1 in 5 children mental health, behavioral, ADHD disorders
  - Only 20 percent getting help
  - Rate of Depression, Anxiety and Suicide all rising in the past decade
- CDC reports over 30 percent of Americans reporting symptoms of anxiety and depression

# Mental Health-The Negative Impacts

- According to the Census Bureau, during the Coronavirus, a third of Americans are showing signs of clinical anxiety or depression, the most definitive and alarming sign yet of the psychological toll exacted by the coronavirus pandemic
- Hospitalizations Are Up
- Drug and Alcohol Relapse Up
- Eating Disorder Relapse Up
- Child Abuse Reports Up

# Recent Study

- These studies reported that pandemics cause stress, worry, helplessness, and social and risky behavioral problems among children and adolescents (e.g., substance abuse, suicide, relationship problems, academic issues, and absenteeism from work). Interventions such as art-based programs, support services, and clinician-led mental health and psychosocial services effectively decrease mental health issues among children and adolescents.
- *Conclusion:* Children and adolescents are more likely to experience high rates of depression and anxiety during and after a pandemic.
- Salima Meherali , Neelam Punjani 1, Samantha Louie-Poon 1, Komal Abdul Rahim 2, Jai K Das 2, Rehana A Salam 2, Zohra S Lassi 3

# Mental Health of Children Declining

- More than **25% of high school students reported worsening emotional and cognitive health and over 20% of parents with children ages 5-12 reported similar worsening conditions for their children.**
- There has been **a large decline in pediatric mental health care usage** since the start of the pandemic. While access to mental health services via telehealth has increased, mental health services via schools likely decreased with closures.
- Among Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) beneficiaries under the age of 18, the number of children receiving **mental health services dropped by 50%** from February to October 2020.
- In addition to loneliness and isolation in light of public health safety measures, the **poor mental health of parents could be a contributing factor in negative mental health outcomes for children.**



# Loss of Social Contact

- Many school-aged students from kindergarten through college have experience the loss of crucial social contact.
- Proximity to others and relationships with peers is a key part of the maturation and socialization.
- In addition, teachers and other school personnel, often provide nurturing, mentoring and are often en loco parentis, a de facto parent replacement during the day.

# Children Making Decisions Beyond Their Developmental Capacity

- The pandemic puts an abundance of pressure on youth to make decisions that are developmentally precocious.
- For example, they are tasked with distancing from their peers so as to protect their families, elders and other loved ones.
- The lure of being away from their friends and much needed social contact often have led them to make decisions that are developmentally appropriate.
- Meaning that often break and bend rules to be with their friends, which is the level of decision-making appropriate to their age.

# Families Stressed

- These incursions on mental well-being are by no means limited to children and encompass the entire family system.
- A study from Vanderbilt's Center for Child Health Policy indicated that since last March, over one quarter of parents report that their mental health has declined and 14 percent report a worsening of the behavioral health of their children.

# Solutions And Strategies for Families and Schools



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# School Based Strategies

- School and Family Emphasis on Physical and Mental Health vs. Academics
- Schools consider school-wide screening on mental health
- Offer or Increase Social and Emotional Learning
- Classroom Conversations
- Check Ins Helped



# School Strategies

- Mental Health First Aid
- Increase Mental Health Professionals In Schools
  - Partner with Universities
- More school-based groups
- Contract Mental Health Providers
- Develop varied referral sources
- Secure Connections Through Extensive Referrals

# Parenting Solutions-Get Help

- Get Help Early
- Understand that MH Problems are Variable
- Length of Treatment
- Utilize School-Based Assistance
- Group Therapy
- Assuring that Child takes care of themselves
- The Nature Of Anxiety-Help Refusing
- Be Assertive With School On Child's Needs
- Talk About Child's Needs

# How do Parents Get Help?

- Get Referrals from Friends and Other Mental Health Professionals
- Be Persistent
  - Leave Messages
  - Email
- Get On Wait Lists
- Contact Insurance Company
- Some Therapist File Claims
- Consider Other Professionals
- Have Pediatricians Call Them
- HSAs
- Programs At Church and Community Groups

# Resources

- CDC developed this **COVID-19 Parental Resource Kit: Ensuring Children and Young People's Social, Emotional, and Mental Well-being**

# Thank You!



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