

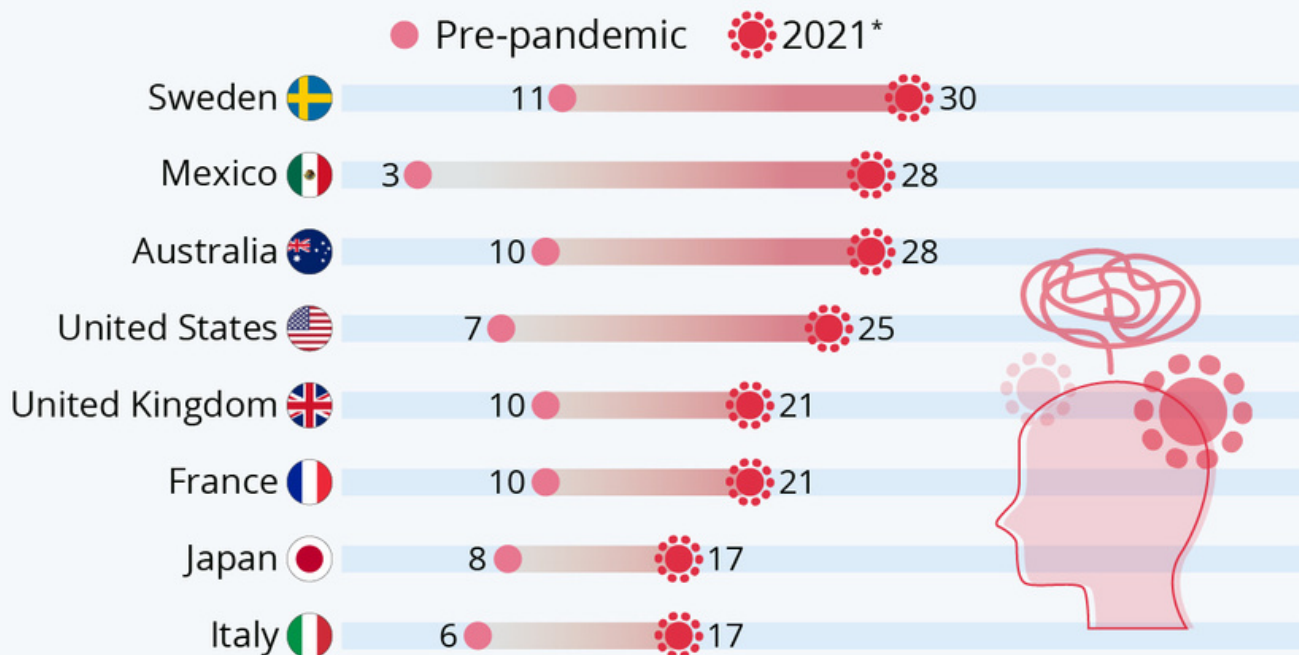
Covid-19's Effect on mental health

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The Enormous Mental Health Impact of Covid-19

Estimated prevalence of (symptoms of) depression among adults (in %)



* Figures for Australia, Italy, Japan, Mexico and Sweden are from 2020
Survey instruments used differ between countries and in some cases across years.

Source: OECD

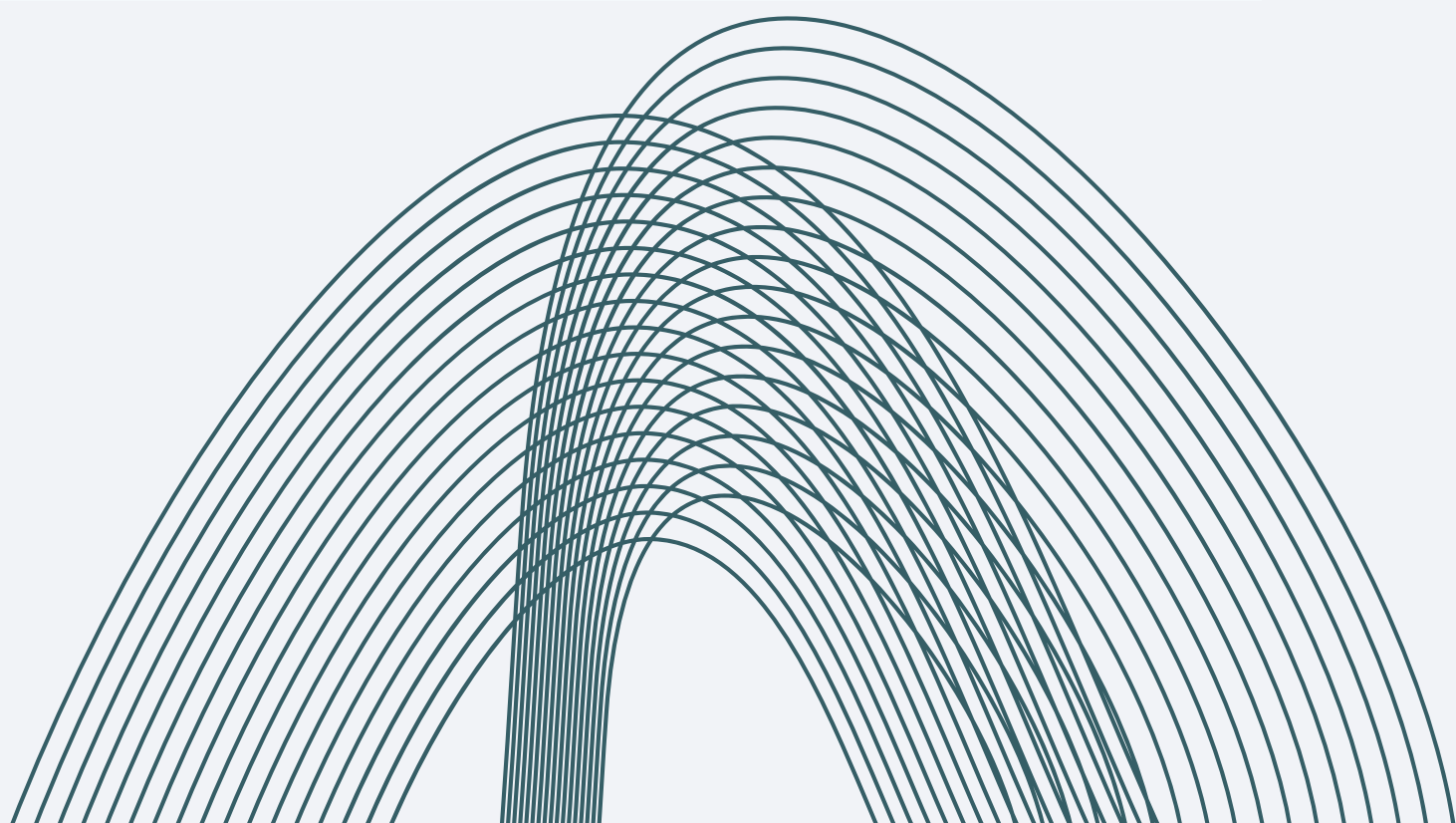


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THE SIGNIFICANT RISE IN MENTAL HEALTH CASES POST COVID

The Covid-19 Pandemic and subsequent lockdowns has seen a three fold increase in the cases of depression among Americans. The Main causes underlying these worsening mental health cases and the demographics most effected varies, with many of these root sources being preventable or treatable.

“These findings suggest that prevalence of depression symptoms in the US was more than 3-fold higher during COVID-19 compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals with lower social resources, lower economic resources, and greater exposure to stressors (eg, job loss) reported a greater burden of depression symptoms.

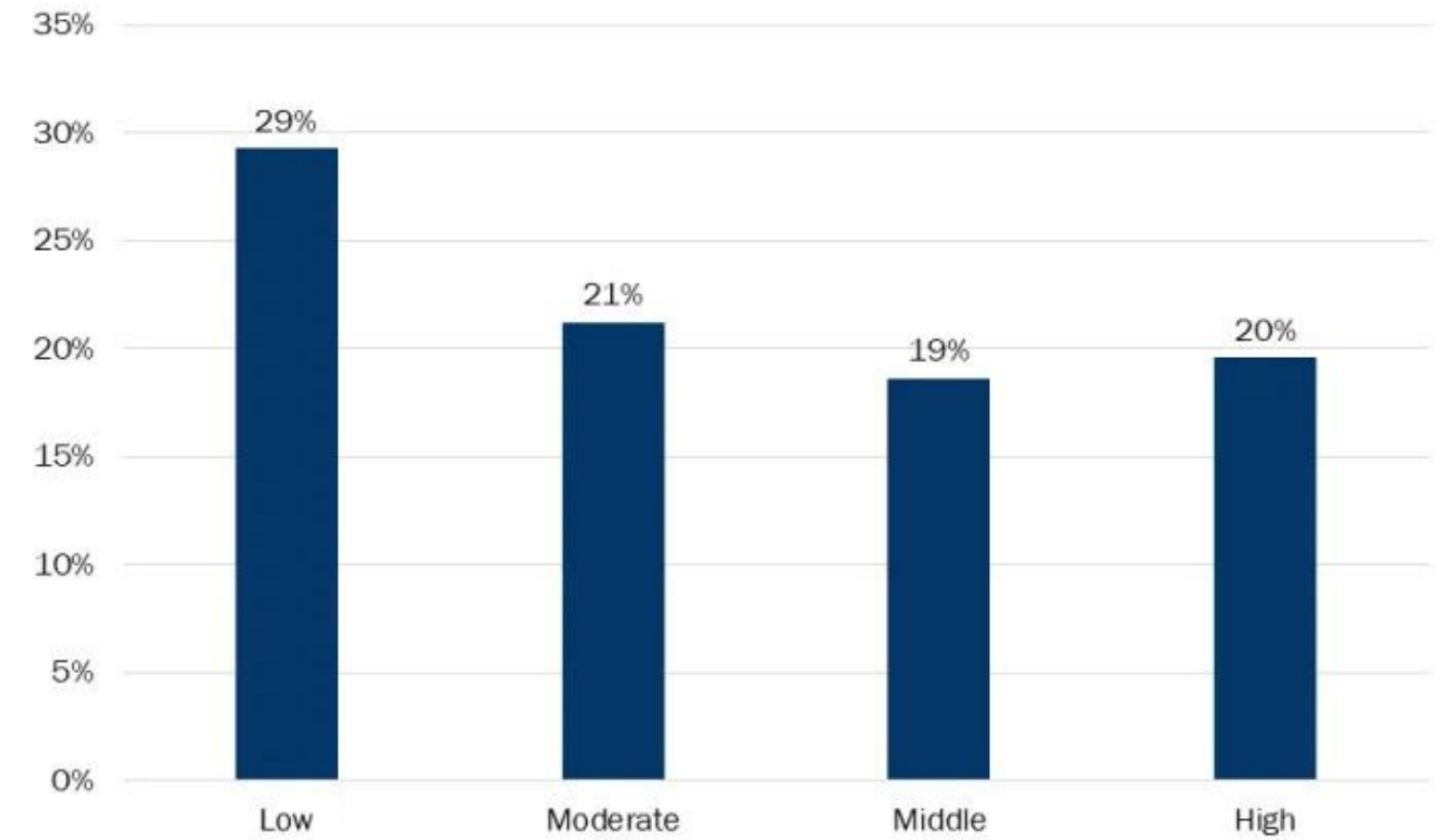


THOSE MOST EFFECTED

Unsurprisingly the demographic most impacted mentally by the pandemic has been lower income individuals, one study documented the effect with a recorded 47% of lower income participants having depression symptoms compared to 17% of the highest income participants. The pandemic has put major stress on those without sufficient savings who live paycheck to paycheck, with an estimated 15% of adults reporting they lost their job because of the initial outbreak. researchers suggest that further government supported safety nets could alleviate these stresses and also prevent future occurrences.

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Figure 2. Percentage of respondents reporting COVID-19-related job or income loss, by income



Source: COVID-19 Survey, Wave 1 (April 22–May 12, 2020), Social Policy Institute.

BROOKINGS

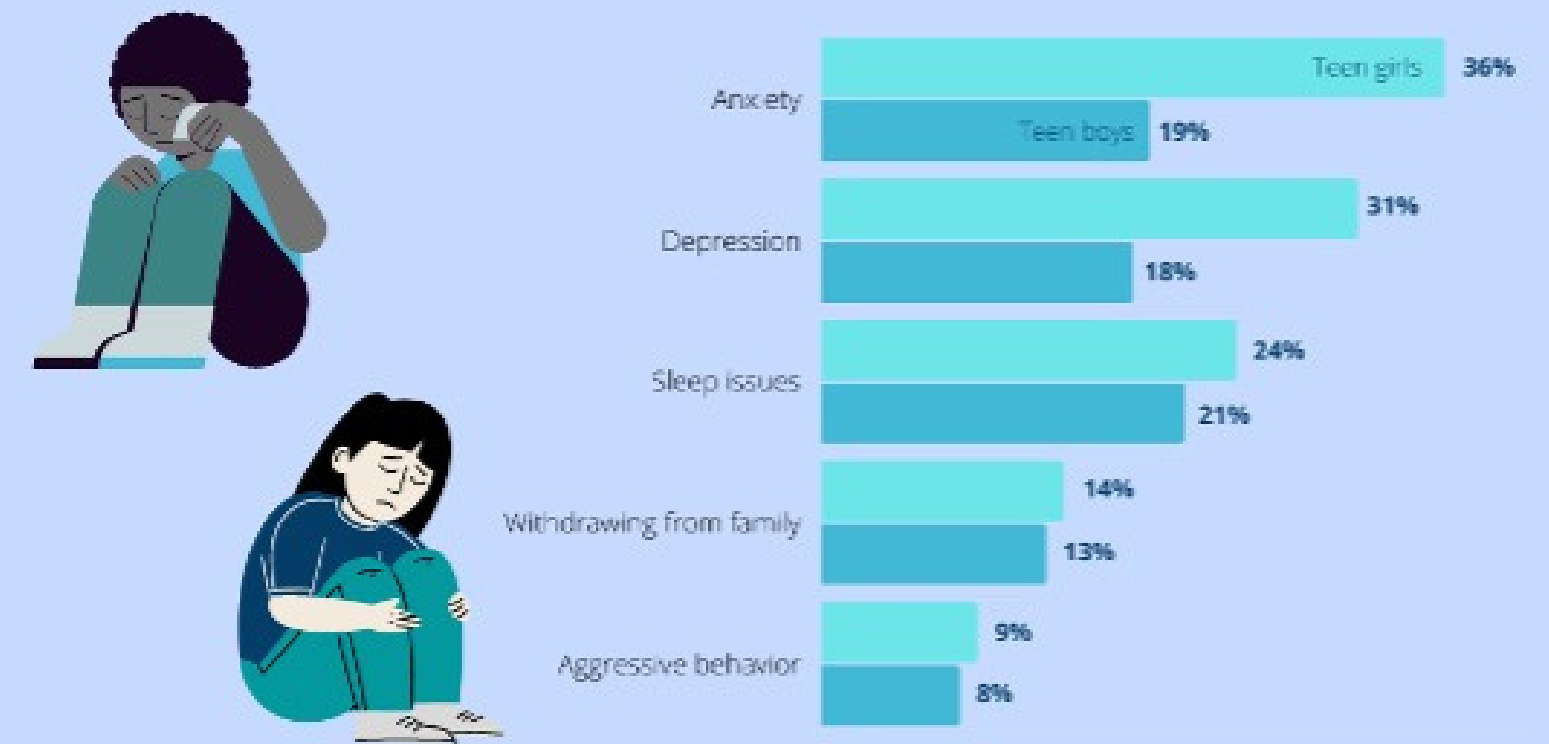


THE EFFECTS OF ISOLATION UPON CHILDREN

The CDC reported an increase of 24% in the proportion of mental health emergency visits by kids aged 5 to 11, and a 31% increase for those 12 to 17 years old. The mental health affects upon children while in lockdown are perhaps the most concerning due to how much youths are more in need of social stimuli's. With researchers saying youths are more likely to rely upon social validation as part of their mental health. Medical experts recommend increased training towards school faculty so they can potentially help children in need, and expanding youth mental health hospital associated programs into schools.

Effects of the pandemic on adolescent mental health

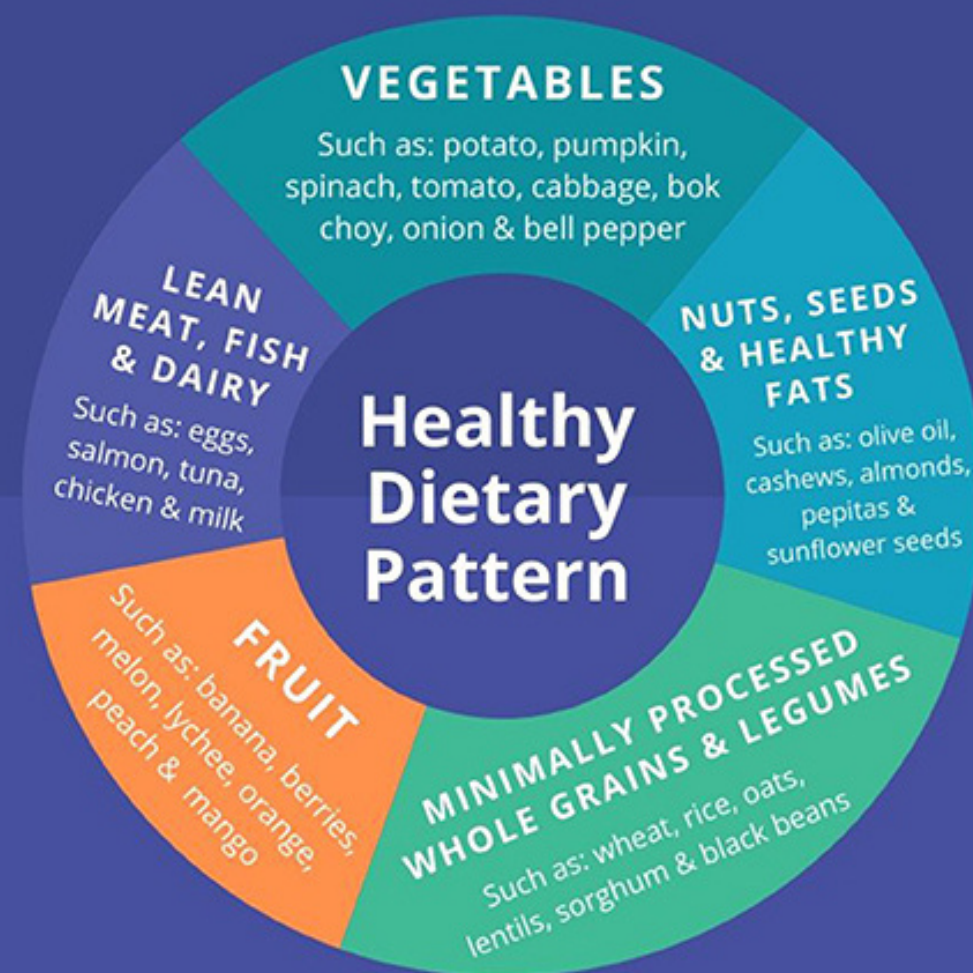
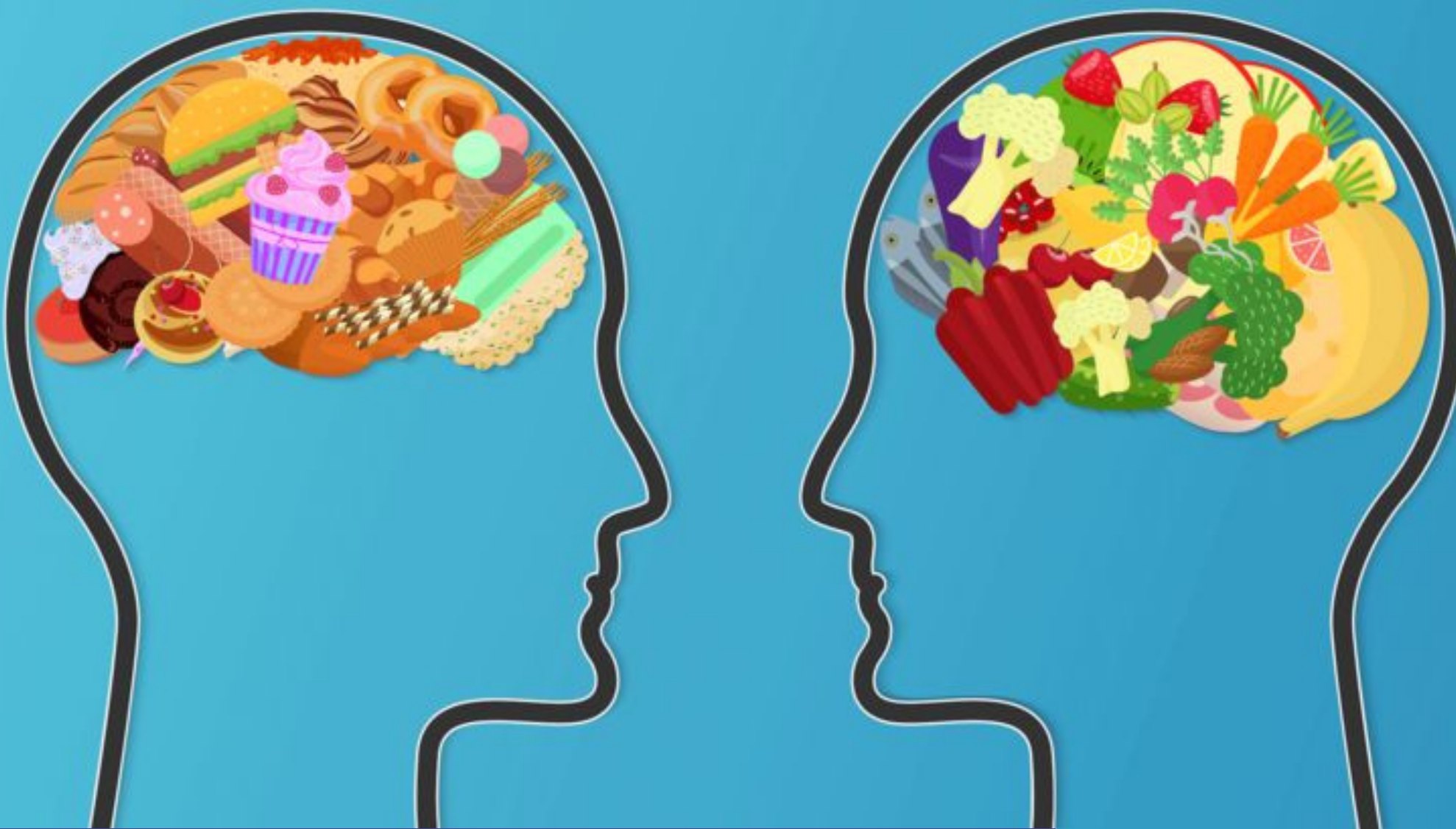
Percent of parents noticing a new or worsening mental health problem since the start of the pandemic



Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, 2021

THE EFFECTS OF DIET ON MENTAL HEALTH

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen 42% of US adults having gained weight, with an average of 29 pounds gained. Due to so many people being stuck inside because of school or work being online, they have been making unhealthy or overabundant eating patterns due to the boredom plus their usual outlets for physical exercise such as gyms being closed. One of the most overlooked aspects when discussing mental health is the factor that diet and food choice can have a much bigger effect than previously known. Nutritional psychiatrists recommend a diet similar to the Mediterranean diet, being plentiful in colorful vegetables, seafood, olive oil, and greens.



EFFECTS OF DIET ON MENTAL HEALTH



Eating healthy reduces your risk of depression by

25% - 35%

compared to diets high on sugar & processed foods

In a study where patients with depression symptoms were prescribed the diet, a third of them were found to have had all of their symptoms relieved. Their focus on diet choices as a main factor in mental health is supported by neuroscientists who compared brain scans of someone on the Mediterranean diet, and someone on a typical western diet of carb fat heavy foods. The western diet brain scan showed signs of shrinkage and possible cognitive decline.

BRAIN AND GUT LINK

Like your brain, the gut has its own nervous system, which sends information to the brain via the vagus nerve.

30%

reduction in the risk for major depression, dysthymia, and anxiety disorders by women who regularly consumed a whole diet consisting of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and high-quality meat and fish

50%

increased likelihood of depression in women who regularly consumed a diet high in refined or processed foods and saturated fats

11%

higher likelihood of good functional health by eating two more servings of fruits and vegetables a day

U3 Written component

The U2 annotated bibliography gave me a good baseline and viewpoint into what specific points I should address concerning the COVID pandemic's rise in mental health cases and depression. My powerpoint was centered around four main objectives, the first being where I introduce the topic of mental health becoming worse post pandemic, and the statistics to show how bad it really has gotten, such as a 3 fold increase in depression among Americans. This opening allows me to draw the audience in and gain their attention whether they are already invested in mental health awareness, or even if they have little knowledge about it they can now understand what the situation is really like. My next three objectives are to discuss and document the major causes of these rising depression numbers, this way the audience can potentially know how to help themselves or become invested in helping others by addressing these three main issues. The first cause addressed is the fact that those in lower economic categories are the ones most affected mentally post COVID-19 at 47%, while those in the highest economic categories having a much lower rate at 17%. This makes sense as millions of workers either lost their jobs permanently or their jobs were temporarily closed for long periods of time, leaving them with even less to live on if they were already living paycheck to paycheck. This part can make the audience contemplate possible solutions such as government safety nets that could make lower income people feel less stress at the thought of losing their jobs and going homeless.

The second major cause is addressing the impacts of isolation on children, providing a different point of view as opposed to the previous page addressing mainly adult workers. This time by viewing the situation on children we can see another viewpoint of a group most affected by COVID, with them losing in-person school and socialization to online classes, this can also gain the attention of youth and parents who have had to deal with this first hand. Such awareness could add support for higher mental health training for school workers to support students, or more resources for children's mental health institutions.

The final major cause will be discussing diets' effect on mental health, something that is mentioned much less when discussions are had on mental health and could be neglected by the majority of people. Due to COVID keeping many people inside indefinitely, this has caused them to develop bad eating habits as well as losing their outlets for physical exercise such as the gym or sports, this has led to 42% of US adults gaining weight. These weight gains plus unhealthy eating habits can be attributed as a big reason for many people's depression increases. This part can make the audience consider their own eating habits and how it might be affecting them mentally, as nutritional psychiatrists recommend a Mediterranean style diet and a rejection of western diet.