

Covid-19 Parent Stress & Resilience

A SURVEY

The Covid-19 Parent Stress and Resilience Survey was assembled in order to learn about the experiences of parents and families in the Lethbridge area as they respond to the ongoing realities of Covid-19. This survey is a follow-up to the initial Covid-19 Isolation Parent Survey. The data from this survey will be used to make recommendations regarding supports and services during the ongoing pandemic and in future crisis situations.

Surveyed Participants

The income of the households surveyed averaged between **\$4,100 to \$6,000** per month.

This survey had **134 total participants** and among them they have **274 total children.**

The children averaged **6.5 years of age**, with a low of 2 months and a high of 22 years.

What's happened since Covid-19 hit?

Health

- 17%** have experienced the death of someone close to them since March 1, 2020.
- 21%** have someone in the household who has had significant health treatments postponed due to Covid-19.
- 16%** of families have lost health or medical benefits.

Finances / Employment

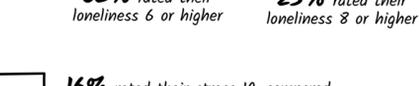
- 65%** of those accessing counselling lost access during lockdown, only 50% of those have been able to reaccess.
- 9%** have left work to care for children or other relatives.
- 75%** of those who had employment impacted by Covid-19 have not returned to their previous employment status.
- 23%** of households have someone collecting CERB.
- 65%** of partners who had employment impacted by Covid-19 have not returned to previous employment status.

STRESS

Top 5 Stressors

- Education for my child(ren)
- My child(ren)'s return to school
- Parenting
- Finances
- Employment

Loneliness Scale



Stress Scale



Stress Related Behaviours

Stress related behaviours are experiences or actions that are related to increased levels of stress - either indicating high levels of stress or contributing to increasing overall stress.

Stress Related Behaviours in Adults



marks the top five recorded in this survey

- #3 Feeling worried about social situations beforehand**
 - Thoughts or worries about yourself dying
 - Thoughts or worries about your loved ones dying
 - Thoughts or worries about death in general
 - Worrying that regular body experiences are symptoms of Covid-19
 - Having no real sense of the future or having trouble imagining the future
 - Frequent and/or unexplainable crying
- #4 Feeling worried about social situations while you are with others**
 - Trouble paying attention or difficulty concentrating
 - Lack of energy/unexplainable fatigue
 - Inability to control anger/frustration
 - Muscle tension/soreness
 - Sleep disturbances (trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, restlessness at night, unsatisfying sleep, nightmares)
- #5 Irritability**
 - Trying to control the people around you
 - Excessive worry or concern when separated from the people you feel closest to
 - Increased arguments with partner
- #2 Worries about getting sick**
 - Increased arguments with children
 - Withdrawing from friends or family
 - Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyable
 - Tendency to people please
 - Frequent headaches
 - Feeling lost
 - Racing thoughts
 - Trouble sitting still
 - Zoning out/losing time
- #1 Feelings of loneliness**
 - Frequent headaches
 - Frequent and/or unexplainable crying

11.3

Average number of stress behaviours per adult

Stress Related Behaviours in Children



marks the top five recorded in this survey

- #1 Expressions of loneliness**
 - Stomach aches/nausea
 - Self-soothing behaviours (rocking, pacing, visible tics, repetitive behaviours, bouncing, etc.)
 - Picking behaviours (picking at body, face, pulling hair)
 - Acting below their age
- #4 Feeling worried about social situations beforehand**
 - Feeling worried about social situations while they are with others
 - Thoughts or worries about dying
 - Thoughts or worries about their loved ones dying
 - Thoughts or worries about death in general
- #5 Worries about getting sick**
 - Worrying that regular body experiences are symptoms of Covid-19
 - Zoning out/losing time
 - Feeling lost
 - Tendency to people please
 - Having no real sense of the future or having trouble imagining the future
- #3 Irritability**
 - Racing thoughts
 - Trouble sitting still
 - Trouble paying attention or difficulty concentrating
 - Lack of energy/unexplainable fatigue
 - Inability to control anger/frustration
 - Muscle tension/soreness
 - Sleep disturbances (trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, restlessness at night, unsatisfying sleep, nightmares)
 - Trying to control the people around them
 - Excessive worry or concern when separated from the people they feel closest too
 - Increased arguments with parents
 - Increased arguments with siblings
 - Withdrawing from friends or family
- #2 Frequent temper tantrums**
 - Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyable

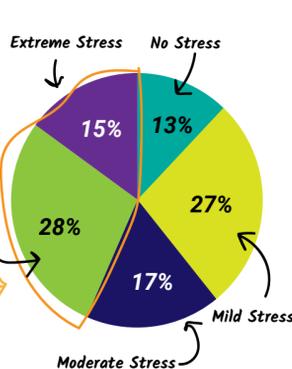
7.4

Average number of stress behaviours per child

Overall, we found a **291%** average increase in number of stress behaviours from pre-covid to now.

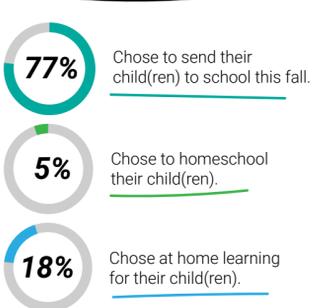
Stress Related to School

How much stress did the decision to return to school cause?



43% report that the decision regarding return to school caused much or extreme stress.

Who's Going Where?



I was satisfied with the support I received in helping my child(ren) finish the school year.

- 21% Strongly Agree
- 22% Agree
- 18% Neutral
- 21% Disagree
- 18% Strongly Disagree

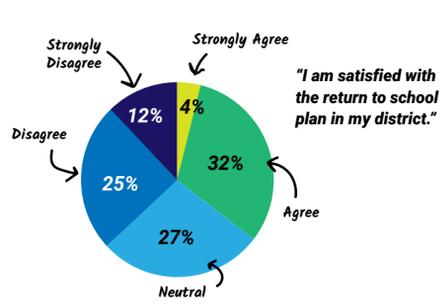
I have been satisfied with the communication provided about school programming in the fall of 2020.

- 11% Strongly Agree
- 32% Agree
- 20% Neutral
- 25% Disagree
- 12% Strongly Disagree

CAN YOU HEAR ME?!

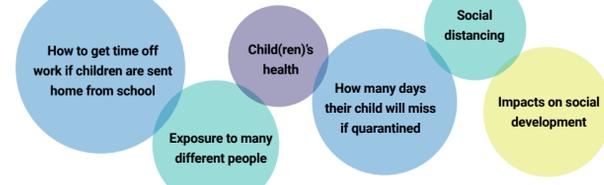
When asked who they would have liked to hear their concerns many participants identified that they would have liked the provincial government, their MLAs, and their local school districts to have been more responsive to their concerns.

38% Feel as though their needs and concerns regarding their children's schooling have been heard.



"I am satisfied with the return to school plan in my district."

Top concerns with return to school:



RESILIENCE

Resilience refers to the ability to adapt to or overcome challenges. Resilience factors are internal and external experiences, attitudes, and relationships that support an individual's ability to respond to stress and adversity.

Top five resilience factors present in the population:

- I know how to comfort my child(ren) when they are upset.
- In our household we express our feelings safely.
- I know what my family needs to be healthy during this time.
- My family is able to work through disagreements respectfully.
- Looking back over the last 6 months of the pandemic, I believe that my family has adjusted well to the changing circumstances.

Most infrequently reported resilience factors:

- My child(ren) are currently involved in community activities that they enjoy (dance, church groups, sports, etc.)
- When I am fearful or worried, I find it easy to calm myself down.
- I believe that I have control over what is happening in my life.
- My child(ren) are able to maintain strong relationships with the important people in their lives.
- My family has established a daily routine.

Many families in the Lethbridge area have been finding opportunities over the last 6 months to strengthen their family relationships and adjust to the changing circumstances of the pandemic. The greatest challenges lie in suddenly tackling parenting in isolation from the supports and relationships that previously aided parents in their daily childcare, education, and general parenting tasks. Having a strong community and relationships outside of your household are key to supporting parents and children. As we move forward through the next stages of the pandemic, the room for growth lies in strengthening community ties and focusing on ways to reduce parents' overall stress. Parents' wellbeing is crucial for the wellbeing of kids.

Please reach out to buildingbrainstogether@gmail.com if you need support in connecting to the community or coming up with creative activities for your kids!



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