

Well-being of parents and children during the COVID-19 pandemic: A national survey ^[1]

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Excerpted from abstract

BACKGROUND: As the coronavirus disease pandemic spread across the United States and protective measures to mitigate its impact were enacted, parents and children experienced widespread disruptions in daily life. Our objective with this national survey was to determine how the pandemic and mitigation efforts affected the physical and emotional well-being of parents and children in the United States through early June 2020.

METHODS: In June 2020, we conducted a national survey of parents with children age <18 to measure changes in health status, insurance status, food security, use of public food assistance resources, child care, and use of health care services since the pandemic began.

RESULTS: Since March 2020, 27% of parents reported worsening mental health for themselves, and 14% reported worsening behavioral health for their children. The proportion of families with moderate or severe food insecurity increased from 6% before March 2020 to 8% after, employer-sponsored insurance coverage of children decreased from 63% to 60%, and 24% of parents reported a loss of regular child care. Worsening mental health for parents occurred alongside worsening behavioral health for children in nearly 1 in 10 families, among whom 48% reported loss of regular child care, 16% reported change in insurance status, and 11% reported worsening food security.

CONCLUSIONS: The coronavirus disease pandemic has had a substantial tandem impact on parents and children in the United States. As policy makers consider additional measures to mitigate the health and economic effects of the pandemic, they should consider the unique needs of families with children.

Region: United States ^[4]

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