



# How the pandemic has shaped children's mental health

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MAY 4, 2022

Several colorful triangles of various sizes and colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, purple) are scattered across the bottom right of the slide.

**Magellan**  
HEALTHCARE®



20 and 9

14 and 26



67






Among 9th-12th  
graders in 2021:

- **20%** seriously considered suicide
- **9%** attempted

CDC APRIL 2022

A young girl with dark hair tied back, wearing a blue patterned headband, a white tank top, and white shorts, is sitting on the ground against a stone wall. She has a sad expression on her face. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a green field and a fence.

Among students  
who seriously  
considered suicide:

- **14%** felt close to people at school
- **26%** did not

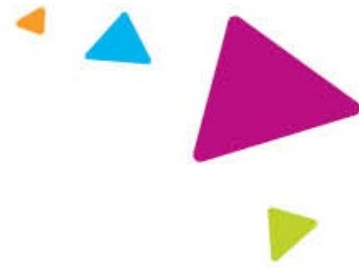
CDC APRIL 2022

67 children in  
Georgia took  
their own lives  
from January-  
November  
2021

*FRESH TAKE GEORGIA, “GEORGIA  
LAWMAKERS PUSH FOR SUICIDE  
PREVENTION EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS”*



# Blueprint for this session



**>> What?**

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**>> Why?**

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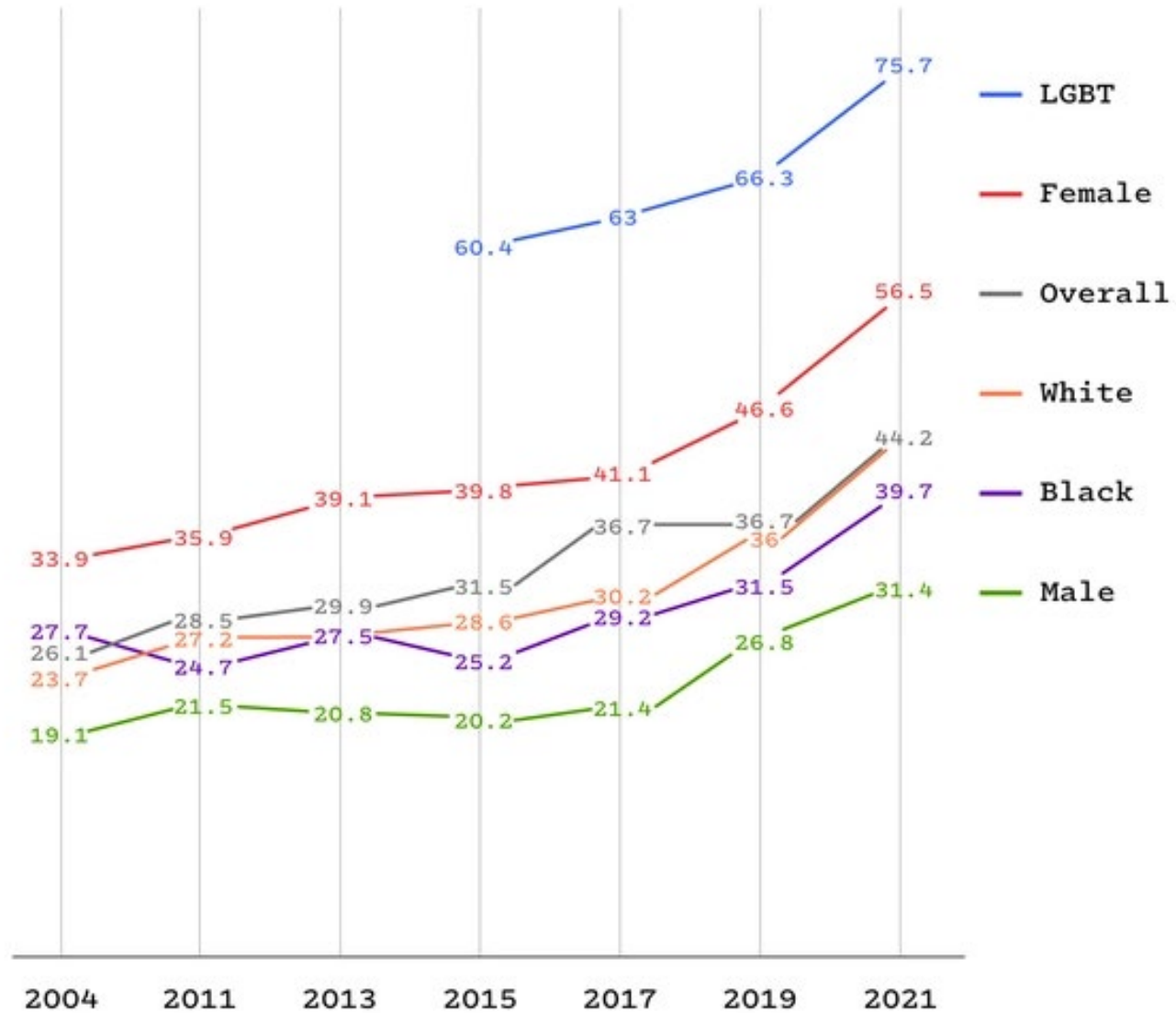
**>> How?**

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The slide features a light blue horizontal band across the middle. Above and below this band are several triangles in blue, purple, and magenta, some pointing left and some right, creating a modern, abstract design.

What do the data tell us?

# Percent of high-school students feeling persistently sad or hopeless



The slide features a light purple rectangular background in the center. Above and below this rectangle, on a white background, are several triangles in blue, purple, and magenta. Some triangles are partially cut off by the edges of the slide.

Why is this happening?



# Why American Teens Are So Sad

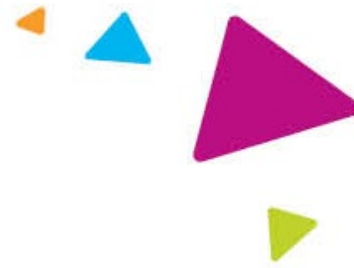
Four forces are propelling the rising rates of depression among young people.

By Derek Thompson



# It's not just COVID

- Social media use
- Sociality is down, and weight is up
- World stressors and doomscrolling
- Modern parenting strategies, helicopters and tiger moms
- Unmitigated risk factors



# Social media use



- 2012—share of Americans owning a smartphone surpasses 50%, and social media begins its climb
- Social media is strongly associated with worse mental health during sensitive life periods
- Instagram's own words: "Instagram made them worse"

# Epigenetics

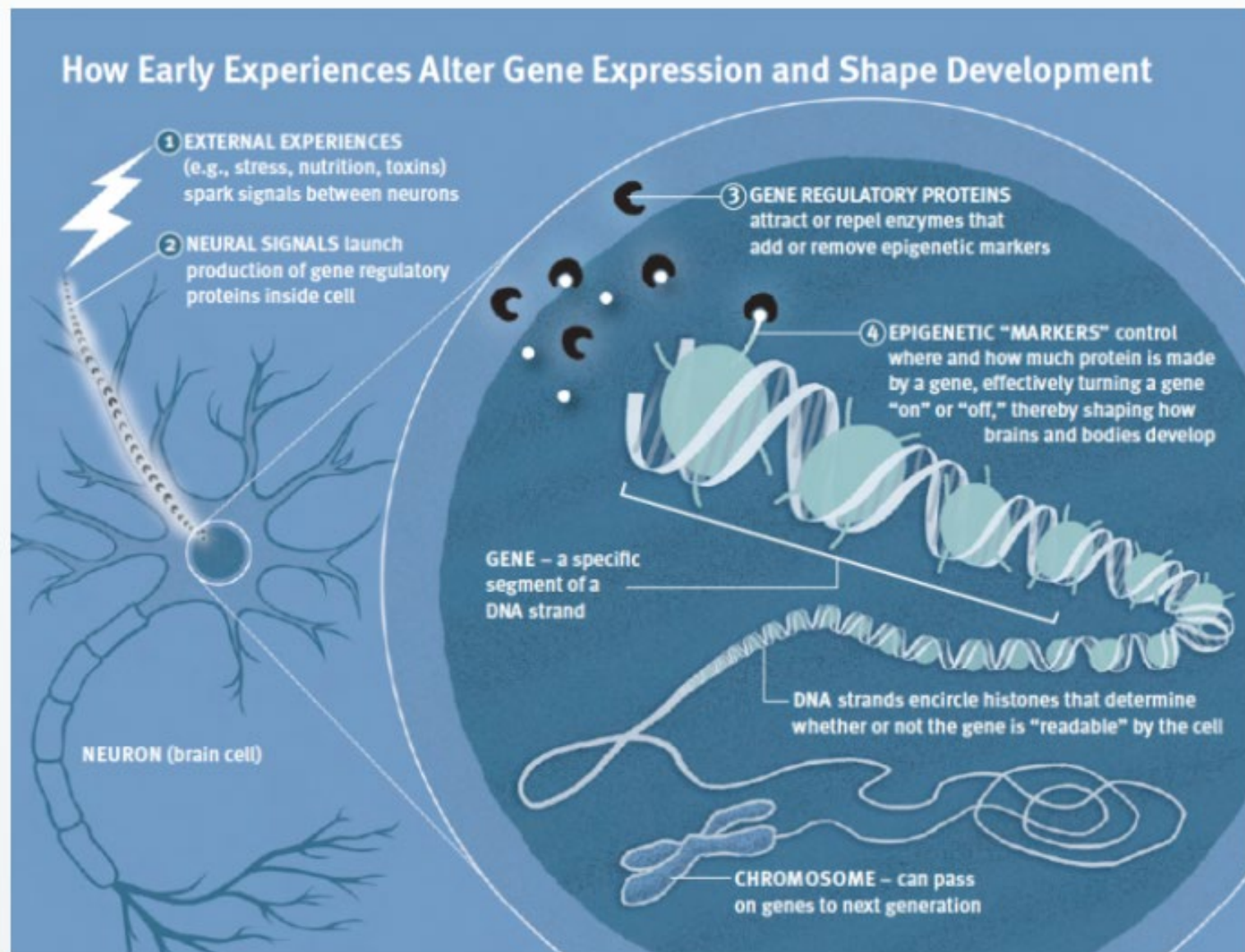
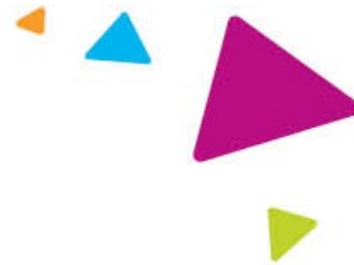


Illustration by Betsy Hayes. Credit: Center on the Developing Child.

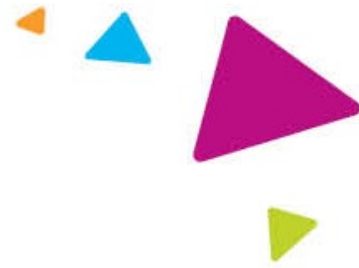


## The Welfare Effects of Social Media<sup>†</sup>

By HUNT ALLCOTT, LUCA BRAGHIERI, SARAH EICHMEYER,  
AND MATTHEW GENTZKOW\*

*The rise of social media has provoked both optimism about potential societal benefits and concern about harms such as addiction, depression, and political polarization. In a randomized experiment, we find that deactivating Facebook for the four weeks before the 2018 US midterm election (i) reduced online activity, while increasing offline activities such as watching TV alone and socializing with family and friends; (ii) reduced both factual news knowledge and political polarization; (iii) increased subjective well-being; and (iv) caused a large persistent reduction in post-experiment Facebook use. Deactivation reduced post-experiment valuations of Facebook, suggesting that traditional metrics may overstate consumer surplus. (JEL D12, D72, D90, I31, L82, L86, Z13)*

# Social media, media and pro-social behaviors



## All news is bad news

And the really bad news is that it's your fault



Matthew Yglesias

Jun 8, 2021

♡ 179

💬 167



(SAM CRAFT/AFP via Getty Images)

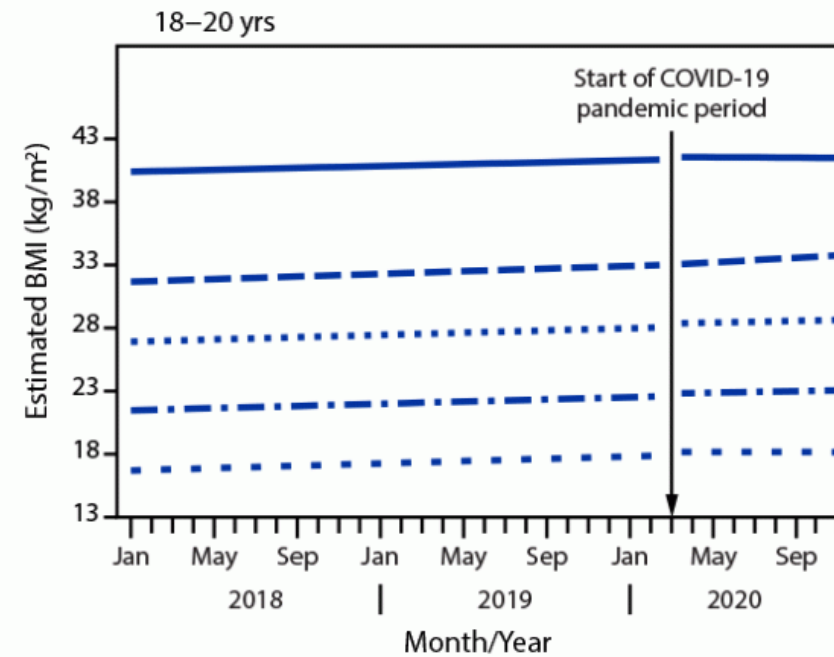
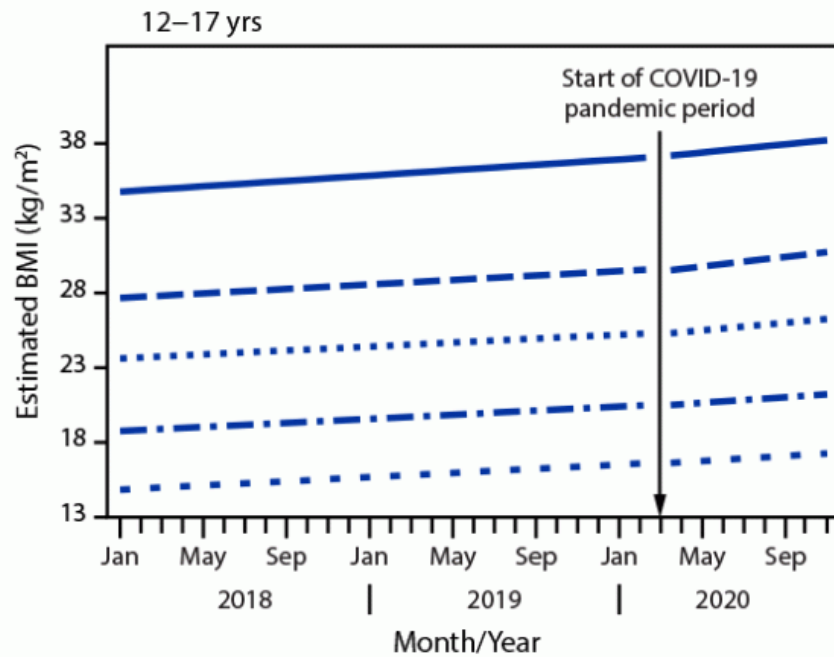
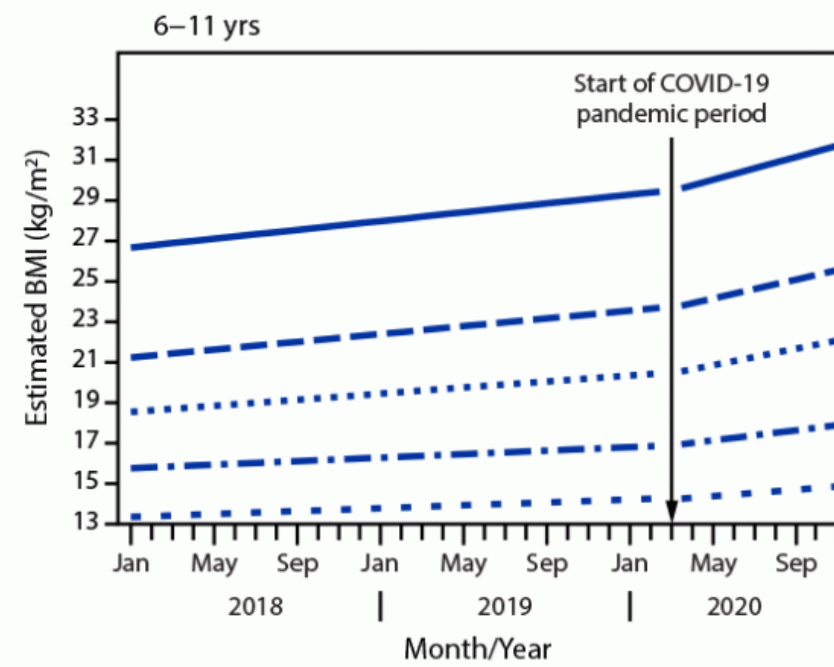
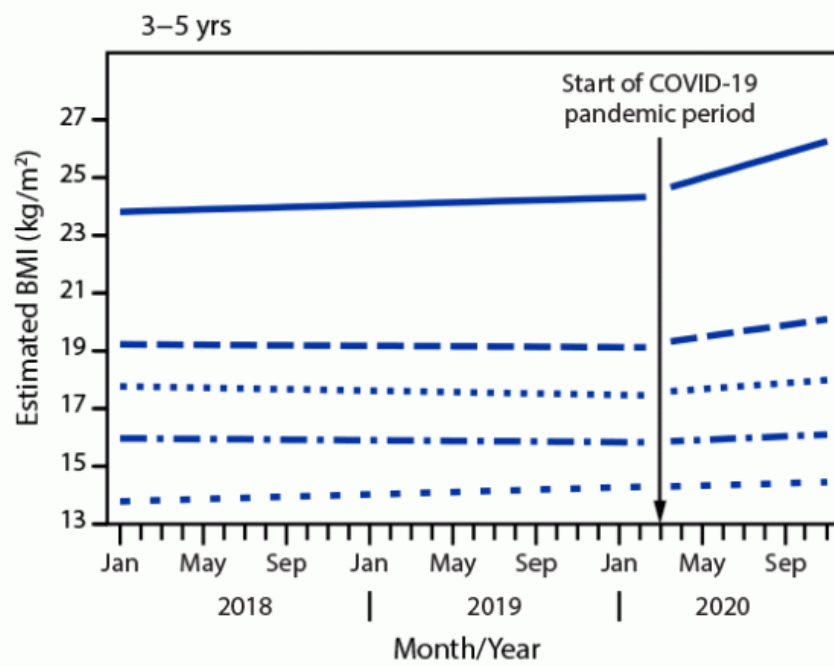


# Longitudinal Trends in Body Mass Index Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic Among Persons Aged 2–19 Years — United States, 2018–2020

Weekly / September 17, 2021 / 70(37);1278–1283

*Please note: This report has been corrected. An [erratum](#) has been published.*

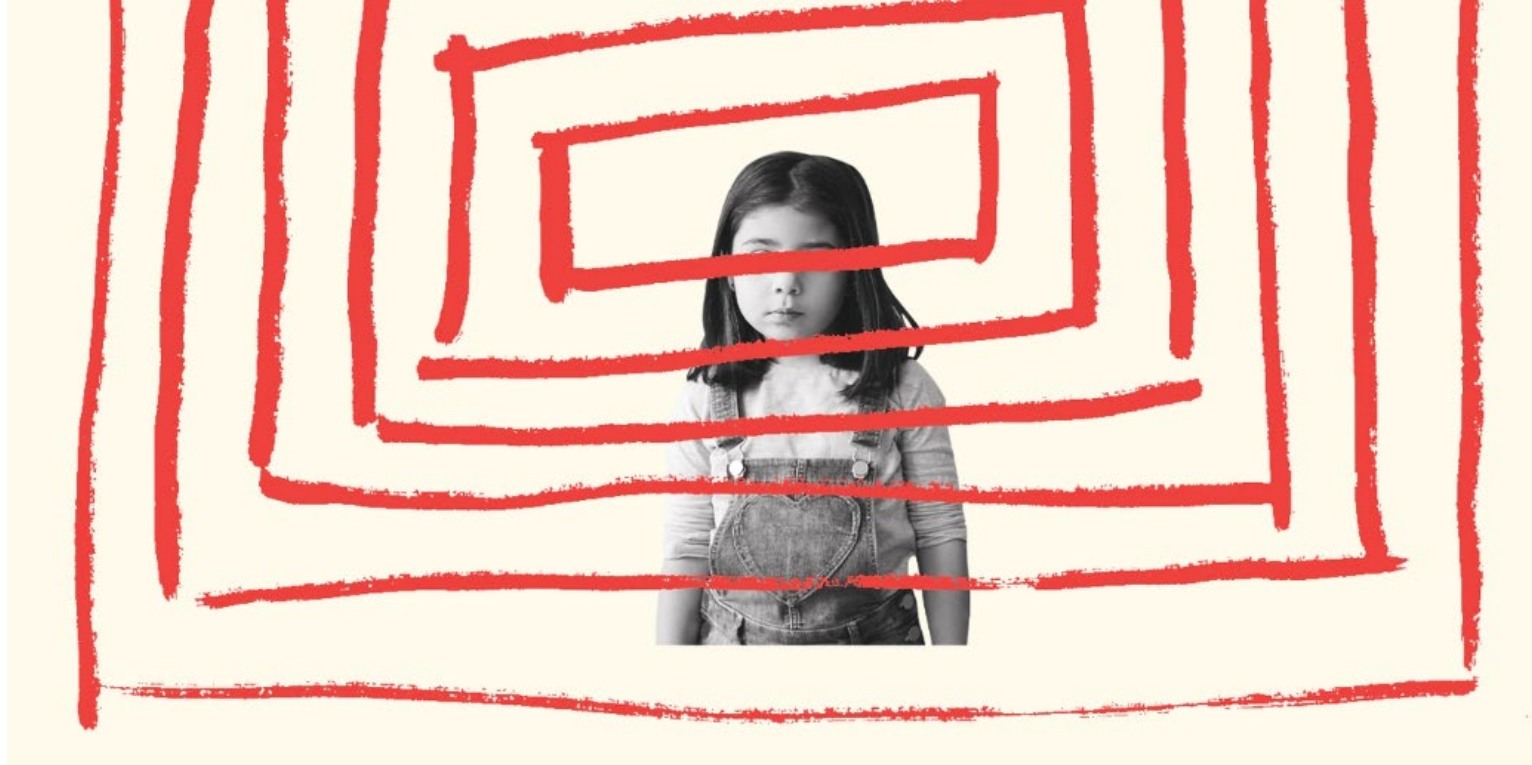
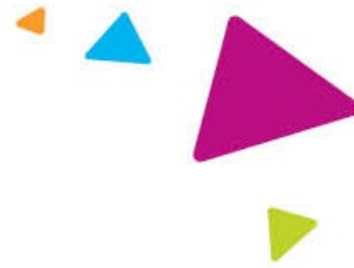
Samantha J. Lange, MPH<sup>1</sup>; Lyudmyla Kompaniyets, PhD<sup>1</sup>; David S. Freedman, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Emily M. Kraus, PhD<sup>2</sup>; Renee Porter; DNP<sup>3</sup>; Heidi M. Blanck, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Alyson B. Goodman, MD<sup>1</sup> ([View author affiliations](#))



— Severe obesity — Moderate obesity ... Overweight - - Healthy weight - - Underweight



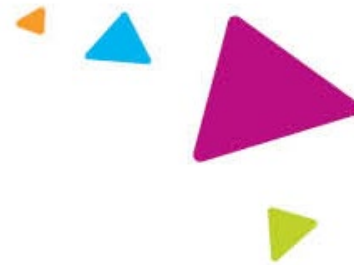
# Anxious kids, anxious parents and resiliency



on: Oliver Munday; Kampus / Shutterstock

FAMILY

## WHAT HAPPENED TO AMERICAN CHILDHOOD?



GAREY RAMEY

*University of California, San Diego*

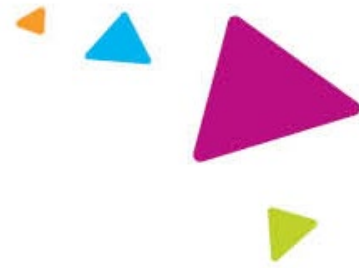
VALERIE A. RAMEY

*University of California, San Diego*

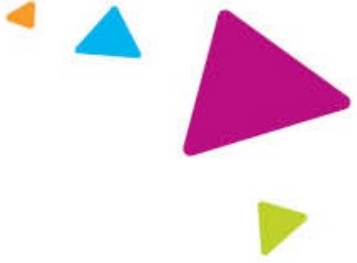
## *The Rug Rat Race*

**ABSTRACT** After three decades of decline, the amount of time spent by parents on childcare in the United States began to rise dramatically in the mid-1990s. This increase was particularly pronounced among college-educated parents. Less educated mothers increased their childcare time by over 4 hours per week, and college-educated mothers increased theirs by over 9 hours per week. Fathers showed the same patterns, but with smaller magnitudes. Why would highly educated parents increase the time they allocate to childcare at the same time that their returns from paid employment have skyrocketed? Finding no empirical support for standard explanations, such as selection or income effects, we argue instead that increased competition for college admissions may be an important factor. We provide empirical support for our explanation with a comparison of trends between the United States and Canada, across ethnic groups in the United States, and across U.S. states.

# Why risk factors matter



- One or more mental or substance abuse problems
- Impulsive behaviors
- Undesirable life events such as being bullied or recent losses, such as the death of a parent/guardian
- Family history of mental or substance abuse problems, especially a parent with opioid use disorder
- Family history of suicide
- Family violence, including physical, sexual, or verbal or emotional abuse
- Past suicide attempt
- Gun in the home
- Imprisonment
- Exposure to the suicidal behavior of others, such as from family or peers, in the news, or in fiction stories

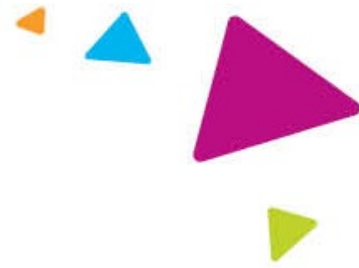


# *All shall be well*

- SBIRT
- Recognize
- Treat
- Services
- Schools
- Social media interventions



# The Nuggets



- Know the risk factors
- Model the right behaviors
- Screen and identify
- Support
- Take the smartphone away, or give it a daily break
- Family time
- Normalize feelings
- Activity
- Treat, Treat, Treat



Original Investigation | Nutrition, Obesity, and Exercise

## Association of Children's Physical Activity and Screen Time With Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Pooja S. Tandon, MD, MPH; Chuan Zhou, PhD; Ashleigh M. Johnson, DrPH; Erin Schoenfelder Gonzalez, PhD; Emily Kroshus, ScD, MPH

### Key Points

**Question** What is the association of children's physical activity and screen time with mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Findings** In this cross-sectional national survey that included 1000 school-aged children in the US, children who engaged in more physical activity and less screen time had better mental health outcomes as measured by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire.

**Meaning** These findings suggest that physical activity and screen time may be targets for promoting children's mental health during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Impact on behavioral health<sup>4</sup>

There was a **27%** increase in behavioral health outpatient care compared to pre-pandemic levels. **63%** of all behavioral patients were female (vs. 48% pre-COVID), with females seeking care at higher rates than males across all age and ethnic groups. **45%** of those seeking behavioral care were under 30.

➤ **18%** under age 18 (18% more than pre-COVID)

➤ **27%** ages 18-29 (33% more than pre-COVID)

**Virtual behavioral health services are making a positive impact in the workplace.<sup>8</sup> Almost half (49%) of behavioral telehealth users reported higher productivity at work. Behavioral telehealth users reported taking fewer sick days.**

**45%**

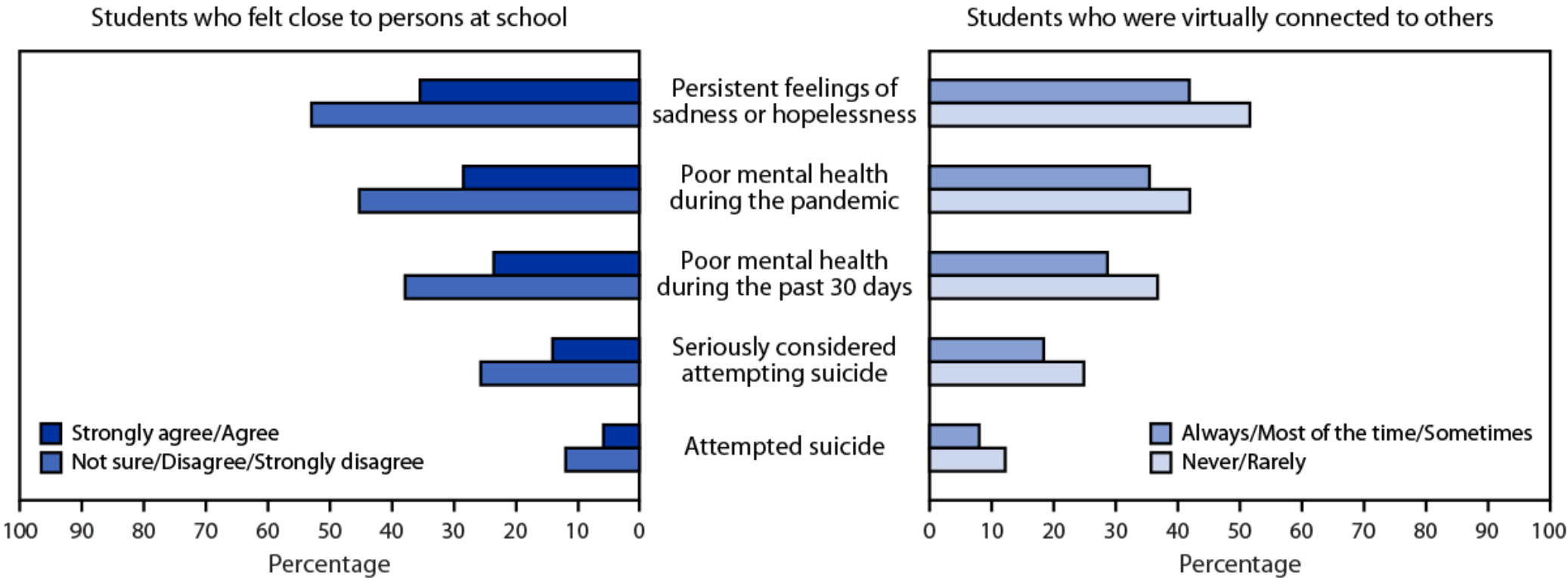
decrease in missed workdays  
of behavioral telehealth users

**28%**

decrease in missed workdays  
of non-users



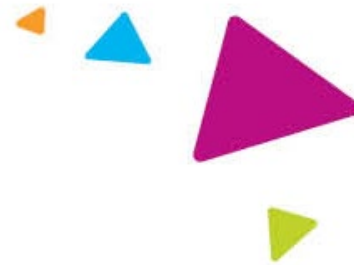
**FIGURE. Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, perceptions of mental health, and suicidal thoughts and attempts among high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic, by feeling close to persons at school\* and being virtually connected† — Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey, United States, January–June 2021**



\* All comparisons of having felt close versus not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree they felt close were significantly different, based on *t*-test analysis ( $p < 0.05$ ).

† All comparisons of being connected versus never or rarely felt connected were significantly different, based on *t*-test analysis ( $p < 0.05$ ).

# Therapy works



Journal of the American Academy of  
**CHILD & ADOLESCENT  
PSYCHIATRY**

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
CHILD & ADOLESCENT  
PSYCHIATRY  
WWW.AACAP.ORG

**NEW RESEARCH** | VOLUME 59, ISSUE 3, P362-372, MARCH 01, 2020

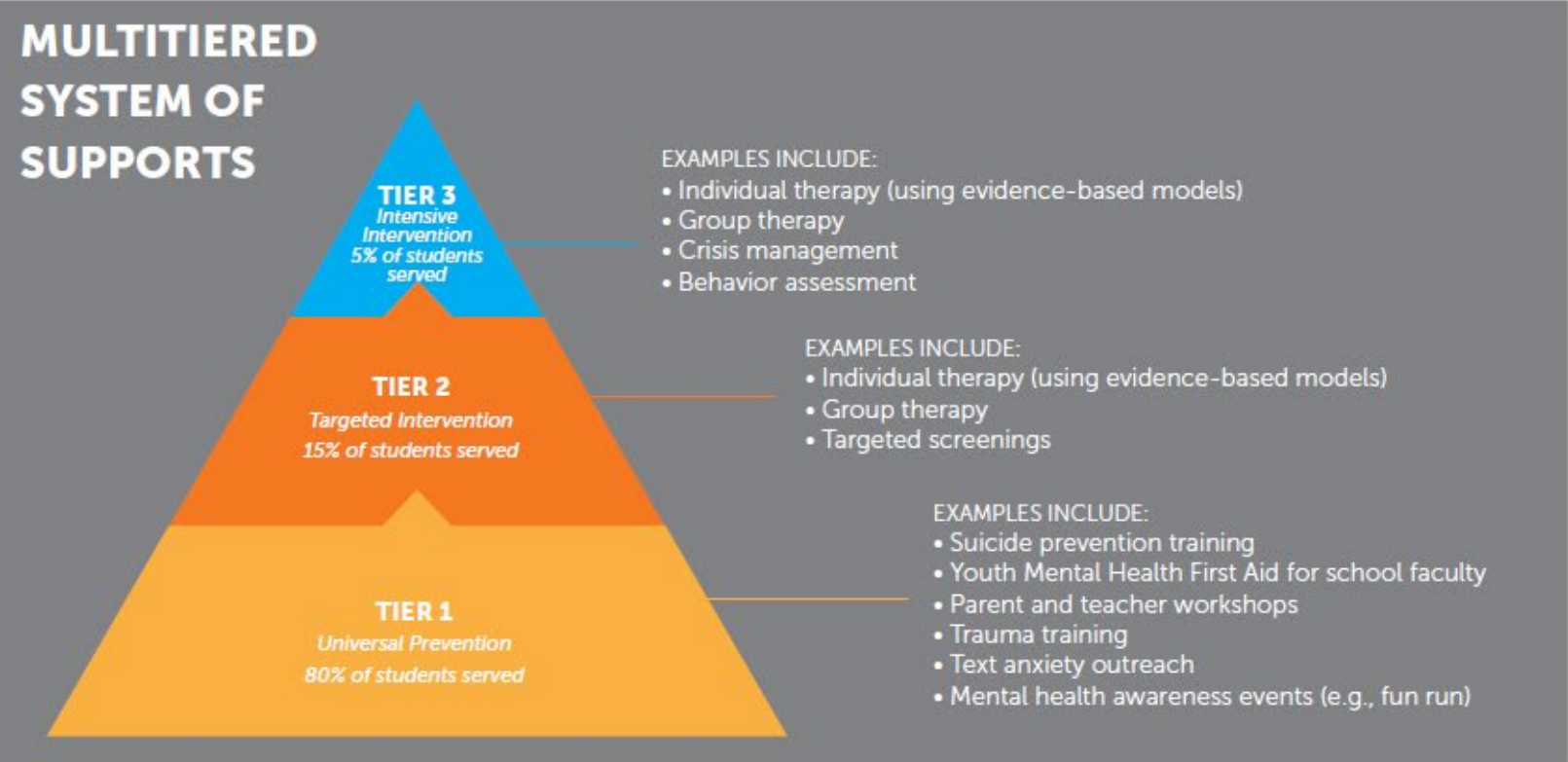
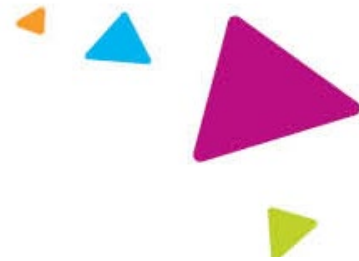
## Parent-Based Treatment as Efficacious as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Childhood Anxiety: A Randomized Noninferiority Study of Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions

Eli R. Lebowitz, PhD   • Carla Marin, PhD • Alyssa Martino, MS • Yaara Shimshoni, PhD •  
Wendy K. Silverman, PhD

Published: March 06, 2019 • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2019.02.014> •



# Access to care works: Apex program



*Comprehensive school-based mental health increases the chance that teachers and clinicians will identify students with untreated mental health needs and avoid misdiagnoses.*

*Students who appear to have a mental health disorder but are actually experience another challenge (e.g., family instability, severe hunger, trouble with vision) are more likely to be properly tested.*

# And so does legislation

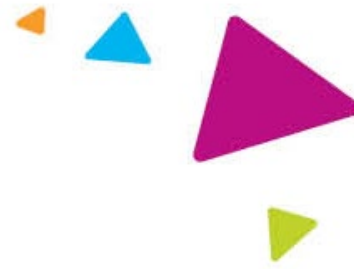


Gov. Brian Kemp, alongside Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan (far left), Speaker of the House David Ralston (second from left), and First Lady, Georgia House of Representatives Mrs. Sheree Ralston (third from left), signed the Mental Health Parity Act into law on April 4, 2022. Photo by Zoe Seiler.

**THANK YOU!**



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