

Responses to the Covid-19 Pandemic: Anxiety, Isolation, Dispute, and Support

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July 15, 2021

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Background:

LSU Post-Katrina Research
on Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience

Data Basis:

7,000 interviews in main *Household Survey*

ca. 100 interviews with *Neighborhood Association Leaders*

Ethnographic research with over 200 groups

ca. 150 *Videotaped* in-depth interviews: 400-500 hours

LSU Post-Katrina Research

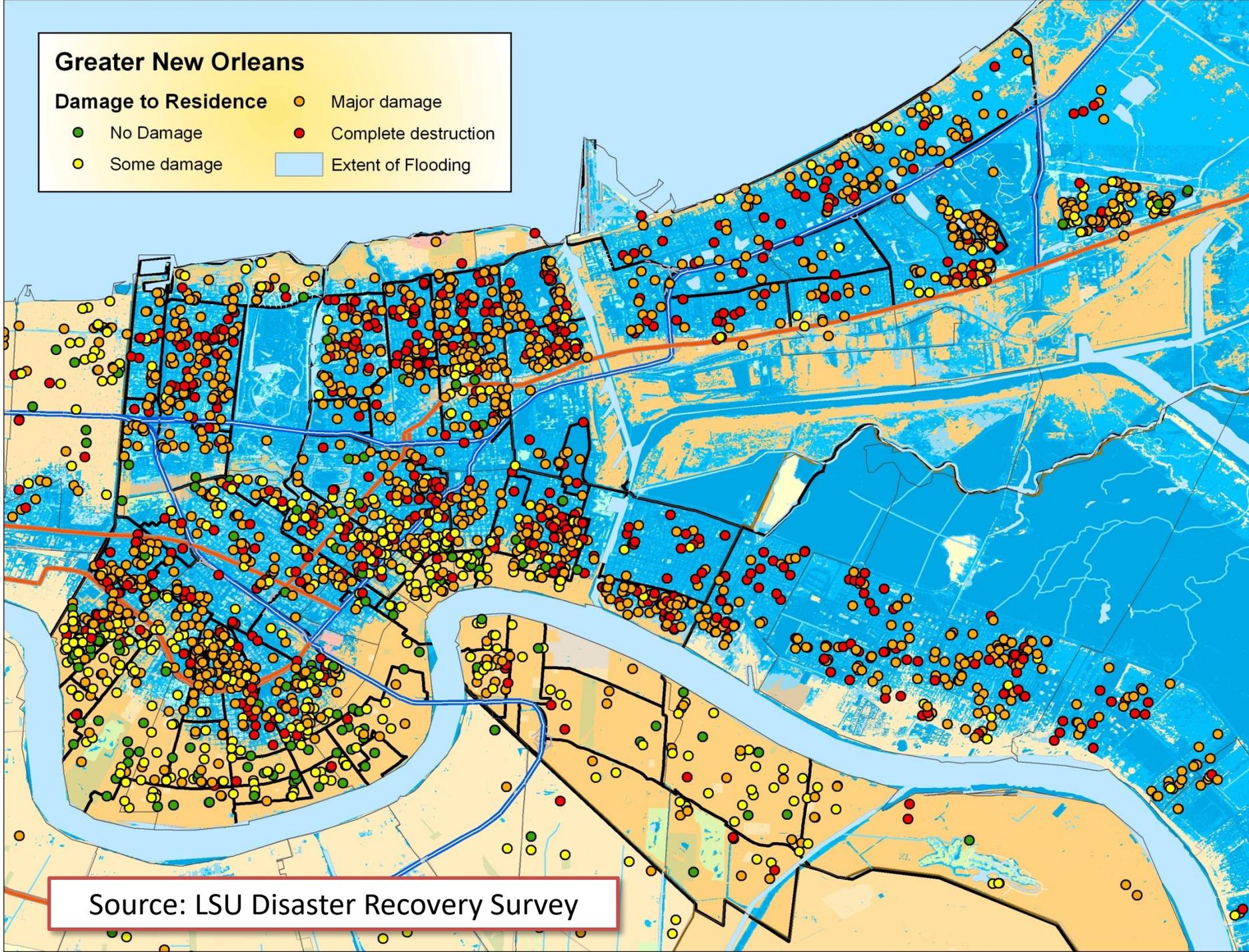
on Disaster Recovery & Community Resilience

Map of Flooding & Damage

Greater New Orleans

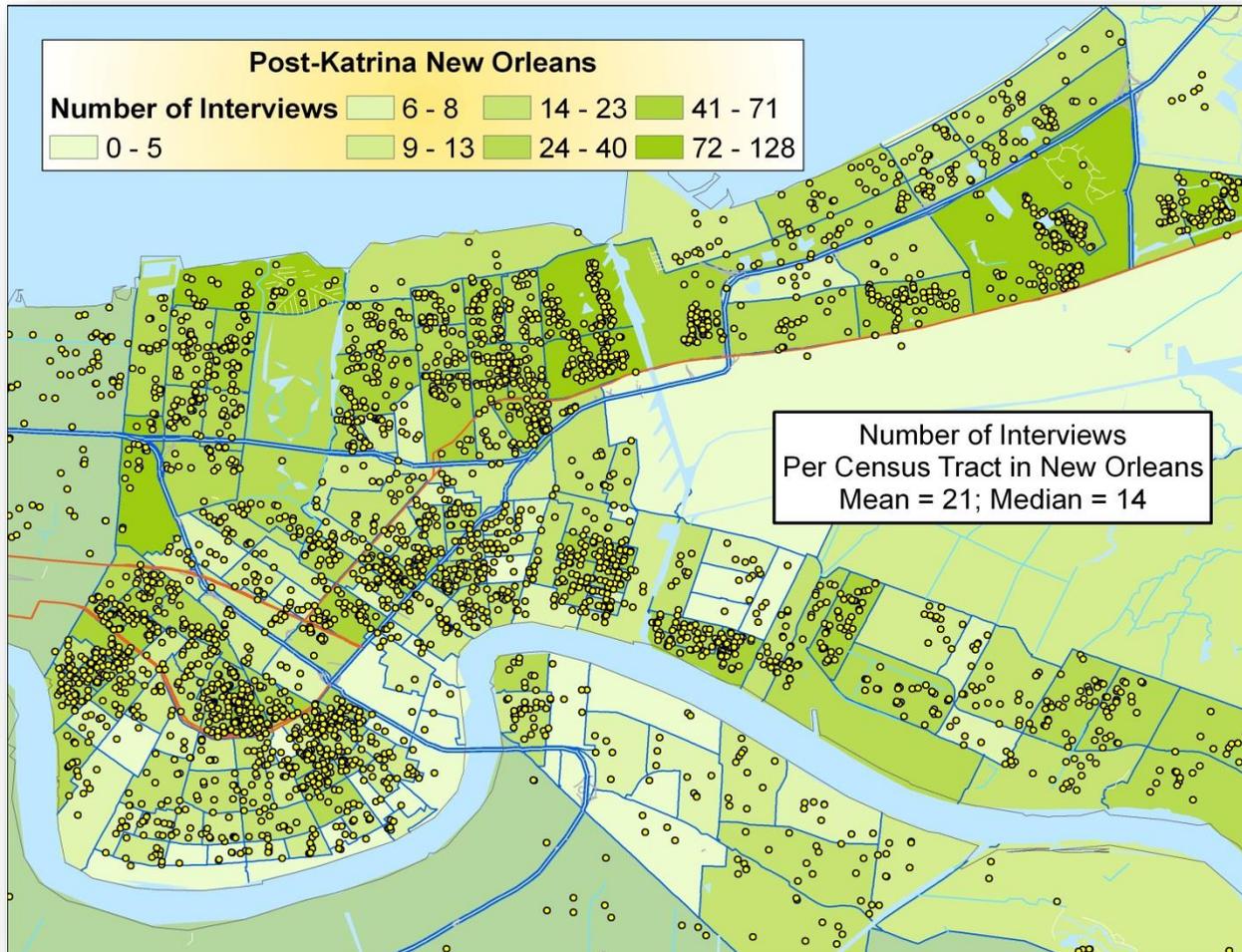
Damage to Residence

- No Damage
- Some damage
- Major damage
- Complete destruction
- Extent of Flooding

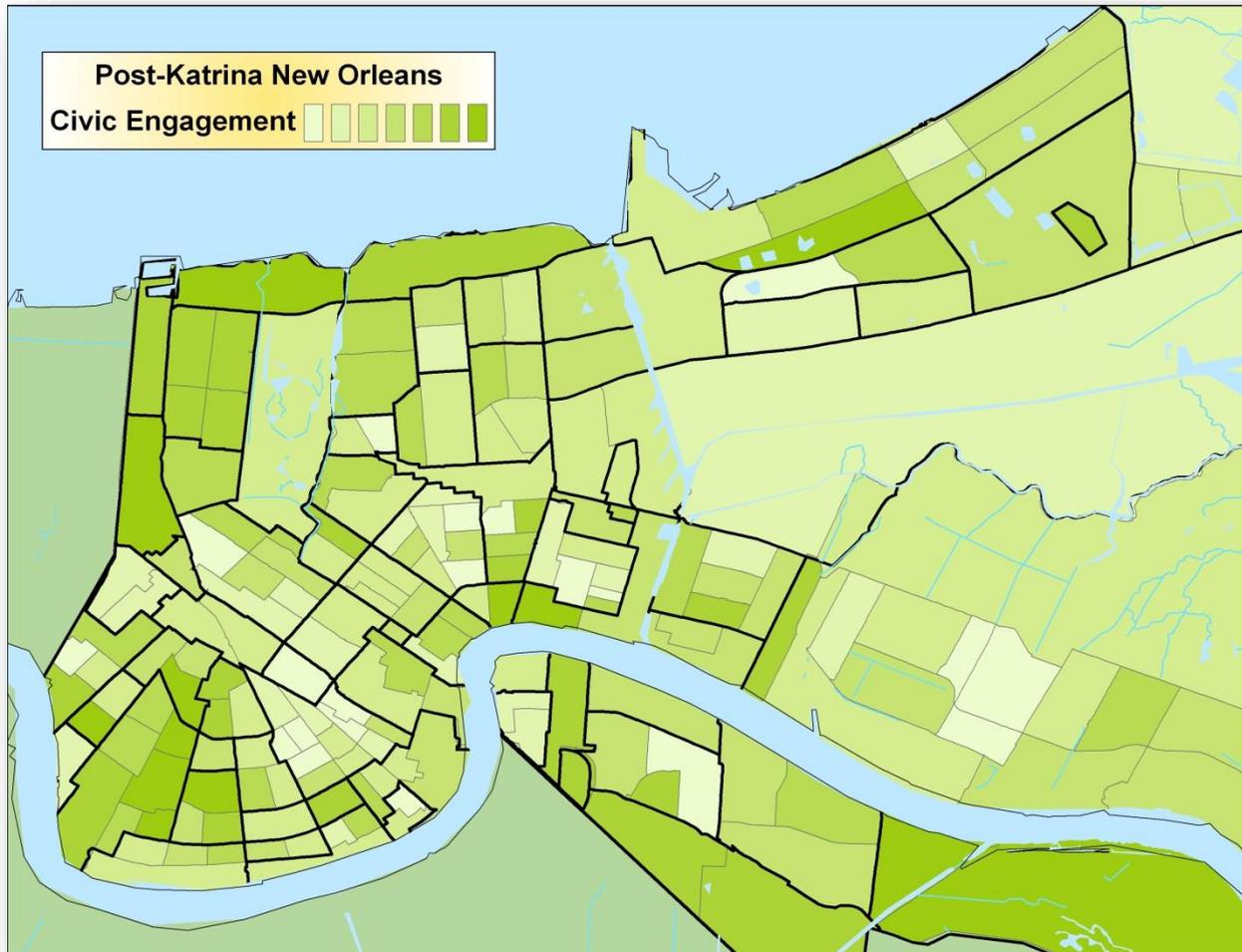


Source: LSU Disaster Recovery Survey

We aggregated 7,000 survey responses to the census tract level to conduct aggregate analyses.



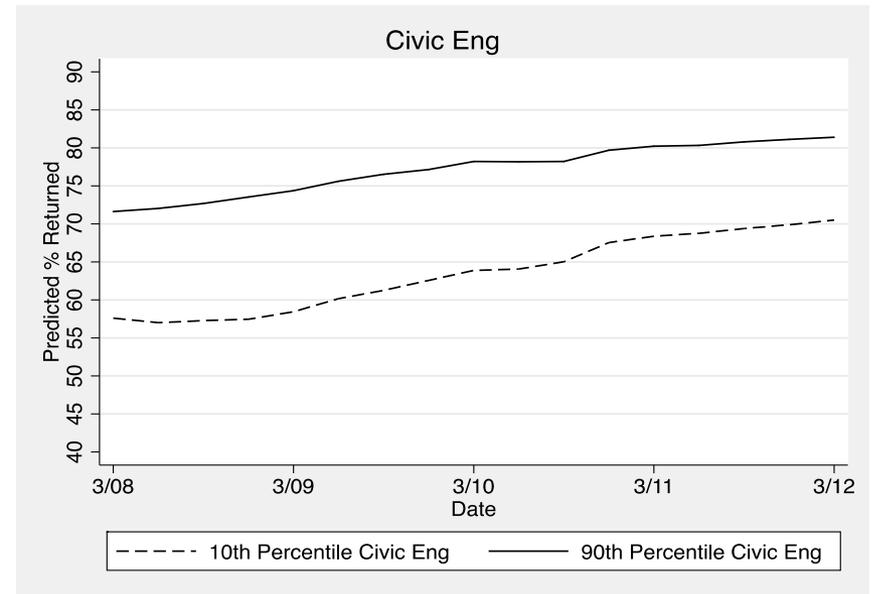
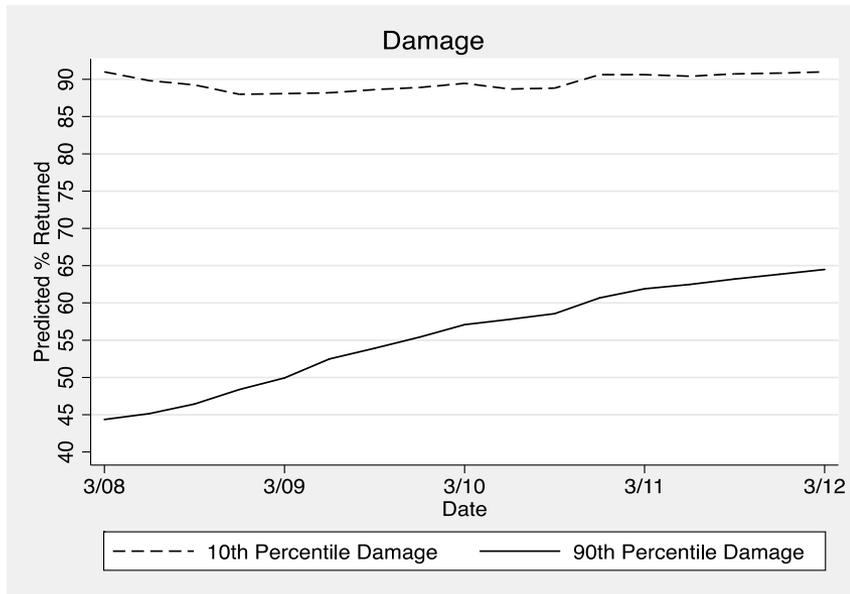
Example Analyses: Civic Engagement Aggregated to Census Tracts.



Aggregate Data Analysis

Low Damage & Civic Engagement

Promote Repopulation per Census Tract*



*Net Effects from multivariate time-series models

When does Civic Engagement help?

And when doesn't it?

Goals are:

Outcome	Adversarial		Mixed	Cooperative		
	Crime	Airbnbs	Blight	Repopulation	Foreclosures	Employment
Passive		x				
Rootedness		x				
Faith-based engagement		x				
Social Trust	x				x	
Bonding Networks						
Bridging Networks	x	x				x
Active			x	x	x	x
Civic Engagement			x	x	x	x

LSU Covid-19 Research

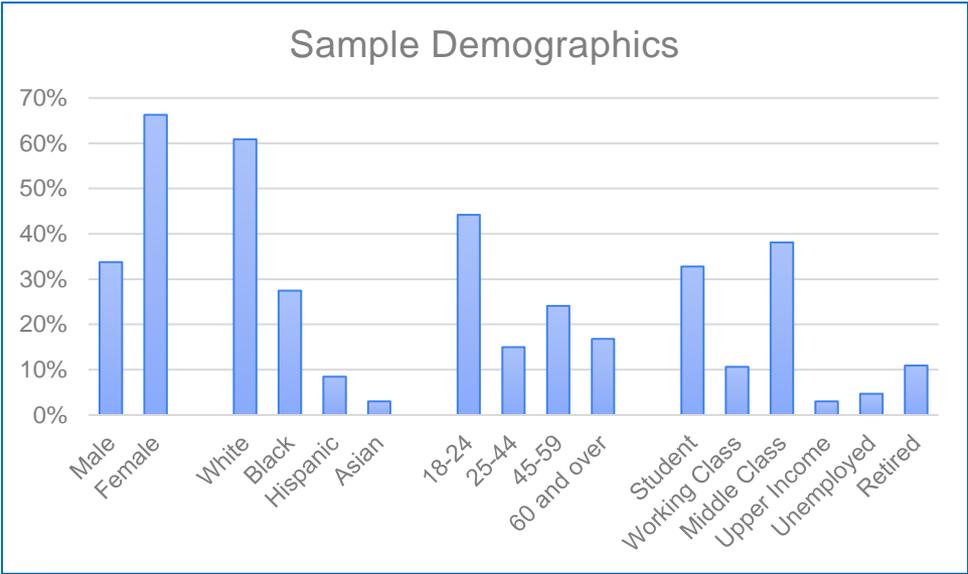
Through the lens of Disaster Response and Community Resilience

Data Basis:

- 336 In-Depth Qualitative Interviews in the general public, weighted toward Louisiana & New Orleans
(conducted by LSU undergraduates)
- Ca. 25 In-Depth Qualitative Interviews with Community Leaders in New Orleans (conducted by PI)

Interviews with the General Public

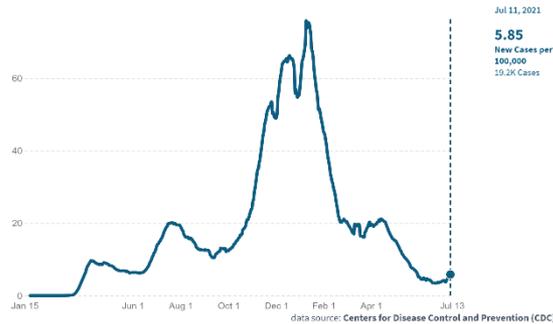
Number of Interviews	
Pre-NSF	44
Wave 1	91
Wave 2	122
Wave 3	79
Total	336



Daily New Covid Cases in the U.S., Louisiana, Nola, Baton Rouge

Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Deaths and Tests*

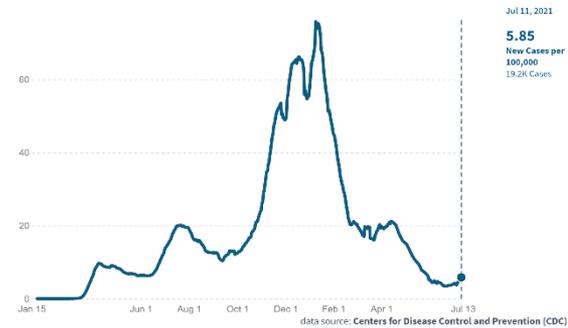
In the United States, on July 11 2021, there were 5.85 newly reported COVID 19 cases per 100,000 people.



*Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and tests, 7-day moving average. This series uses the data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Negative numbers may appear if corrections to official statistics are made that, on net, reduce the daily count relative to new events.
last updated: July 15, 2021 next update expected: July 16, 2021

Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Deaths and Tests*

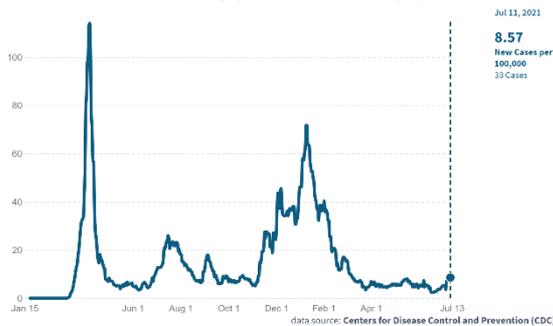
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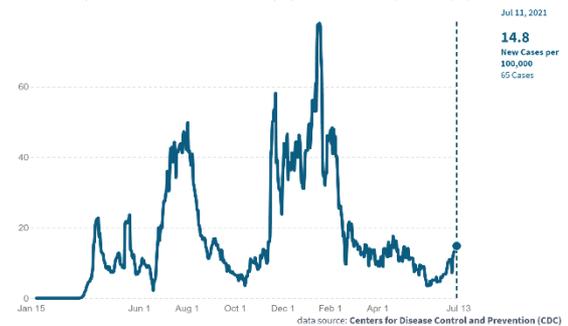
In Orleans, on July 11 2021, there were 8.57 newly reported COVID 19 cases per 100,000 people.



*Confirmed COVID-19 cases, deaths and tests, 7-day moving average. This series uses the data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Negative numbers may appear if corrections to official statistics are made that, on net, reduce the daily count relative to new events.
last updated: July 15, 2021 next update expected: July 16, 2021

Daily Reported COVID-19 Cases, Deaths and Tests*

In East Baton Rouge, on July 11 2021, there were 14.8 newly reported COVID 19 cases per 100,000 people.

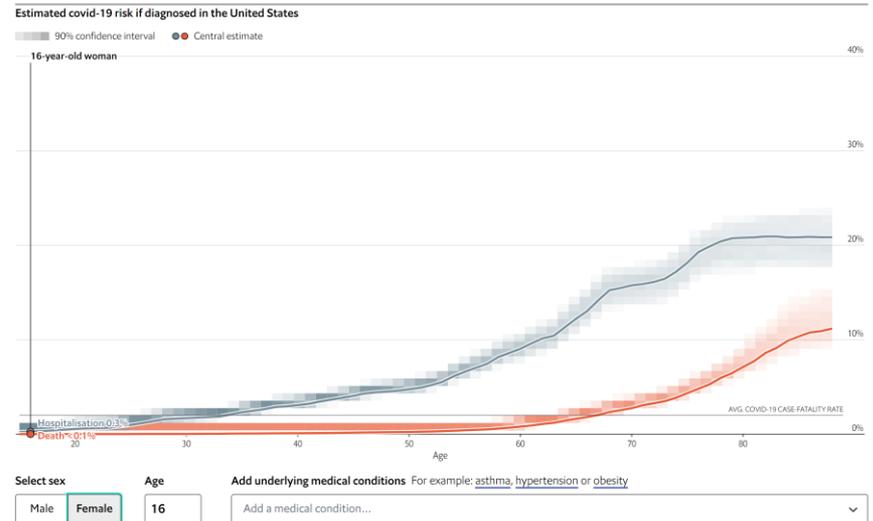
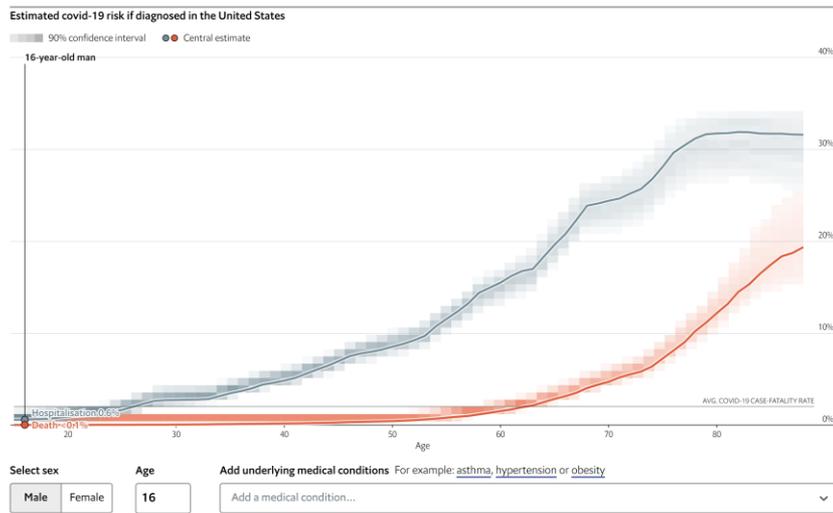


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last updated: July 15, 2021 next update expected: July 16, 2021

Source: Raj Chetty's Economic Tracker

Risk of Covid by Age & Gender

Older people and men have higher risk of infection & death

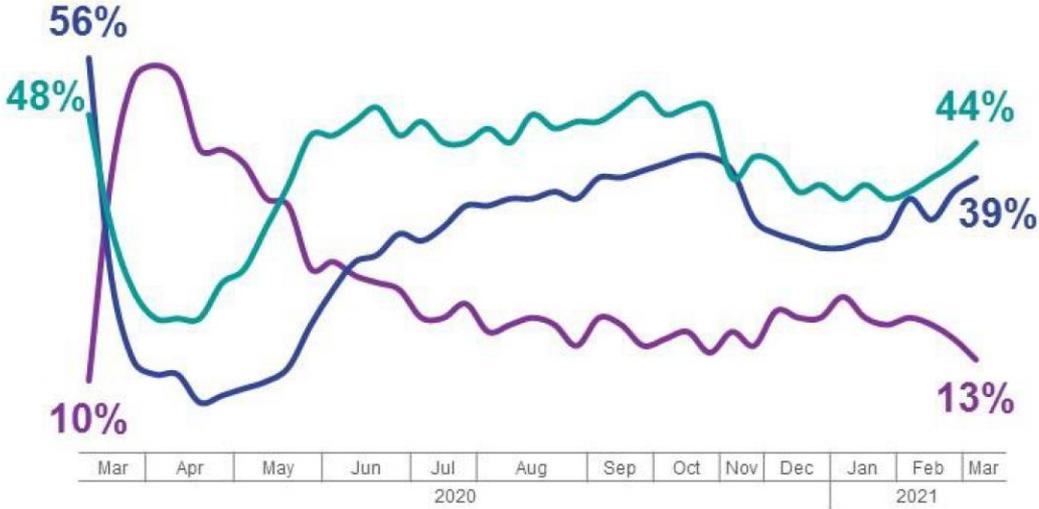


Source: The Economist, 3/11/21

Precautions shot up at the beginning of the pandemic, but as the vaccine emerged and infection rates went down, precautions declined

Percentage of Americans who have _____ in the last week

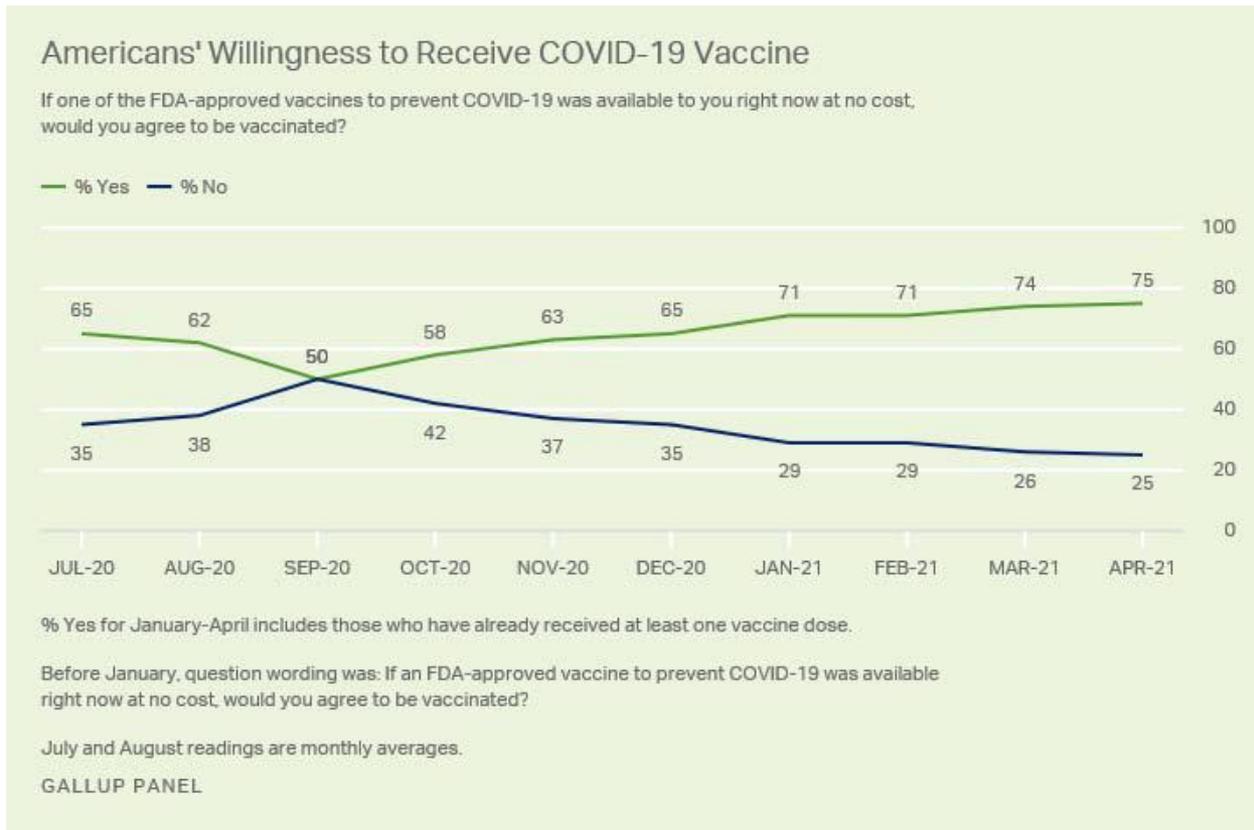
- Gone out to eat
- Visited friends or relatives
- Self-quarantined/Stayed home and avoided contact with others



© 2021 Ipsos

Source: Ipsos

Americans' willingness to get the vaccine rose from mid-2020 to mid-2021



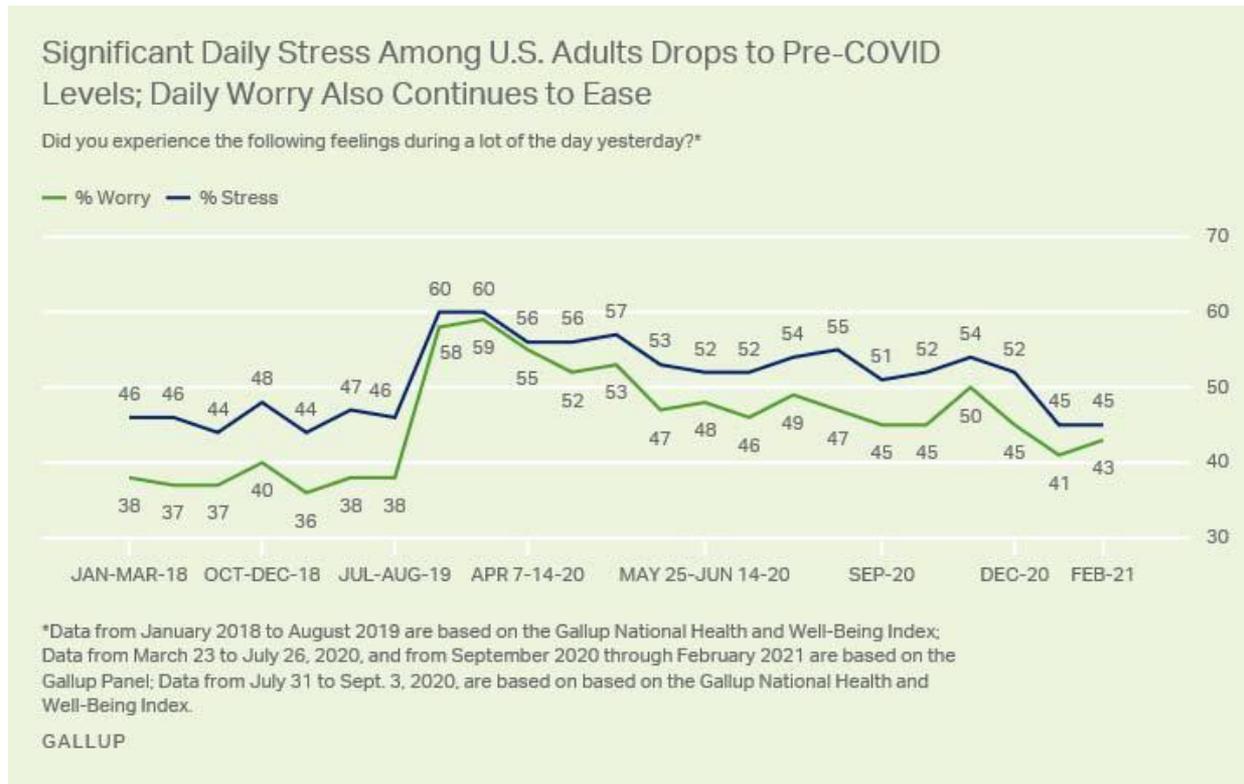
Source: Gallup

Precautions.

By late 2020/early 2021, began to attend social gatherings and do things they had stopped doing earlier in the pandemic.

- "I've been to a football game."
- "Most of the people I hang out with, they agree with how they should respond to it. I think we're all kind of over it."
- "Getting outside more often compared to the first wave, and not just limited to grocery shopping. I also went to the mall, travel to other places."
- "More social gathering but we still practice social distancing during our Halloween party."
- "I think people are tired of it and I understand that. I think if you're in a certain age bracket or you have certain pre existing conditions, that gives people more pause to not do those sorts of things."
- "I'm very much in favor of [opening up], because education is extremely important, and so is the economy. While the disease may be harmful to some, the economy is a very big factor to all our livelihoods. You have to weigh that. Personally, I think that is important. Otherwise, you would shut down for the flu or for stomach bug or any other disease that has been out in our public for years. We don't do that so why are we doing it now?"
- "[Students returning to school in college] is a little more dangerous. Because college students are going to have parties. No matter what rules are in place, we're going to have parties."

Signs of worry & stress shot up in spring 2020, but slowly declined to pre-pandemic levels by winter 2021



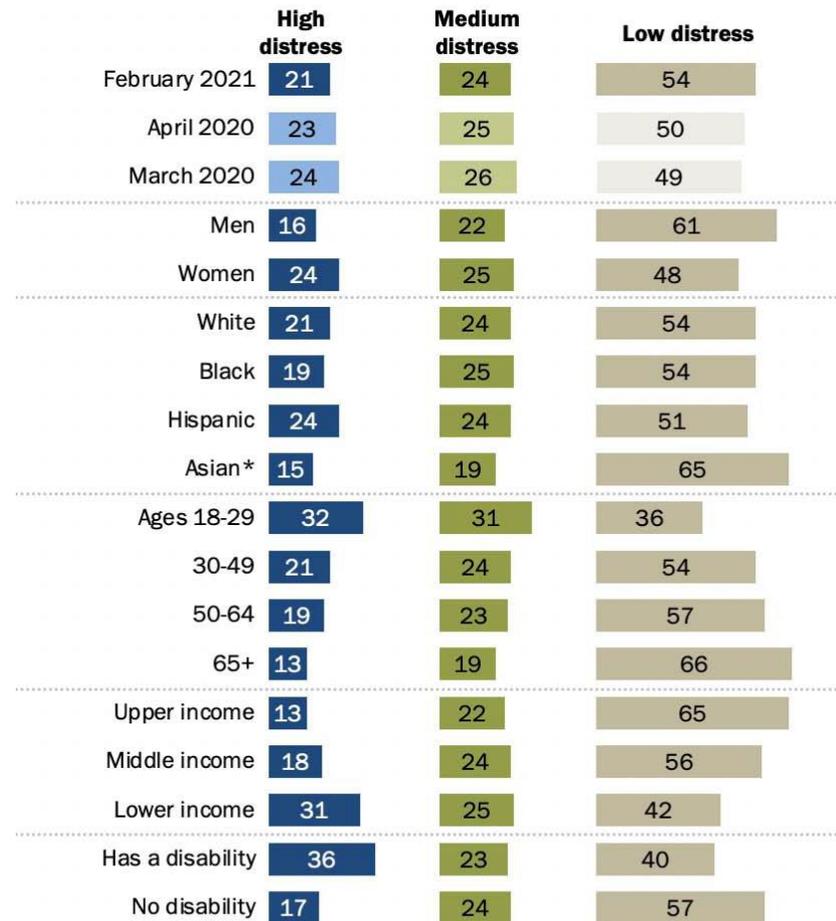
Source: Gallup

Psychological distress was higher among women, young people, lower income, unemployed, Democrats. But race and ethnic differences were not as big.

Source: Pew, 2/16-21/2021

Income, age and gender are associated with higher levels of psychological distress

% of U.S. adults who fall into each category of psychological distress

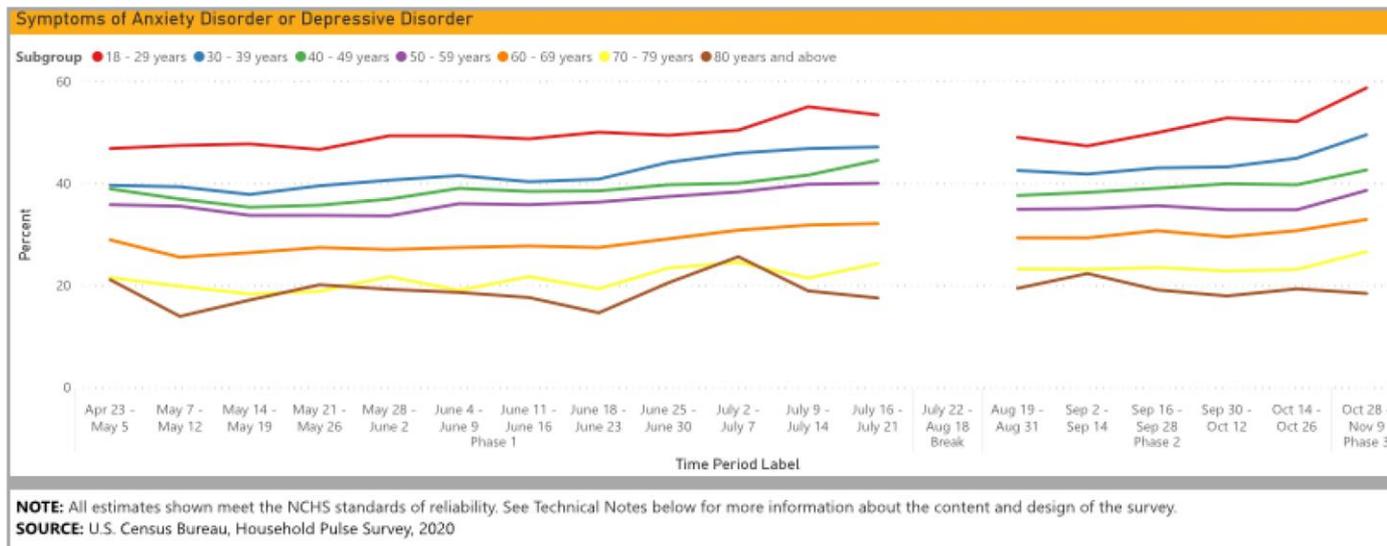


*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

Note: Additive psychological distress scale based on responses to five standard measures of psychological distress adapted from GAD-7, CES-D, Impact to Event Scale-Revised. Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are non-Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2019 earnings.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 16-21, 2021.

Younger people have more signs of psychological distress

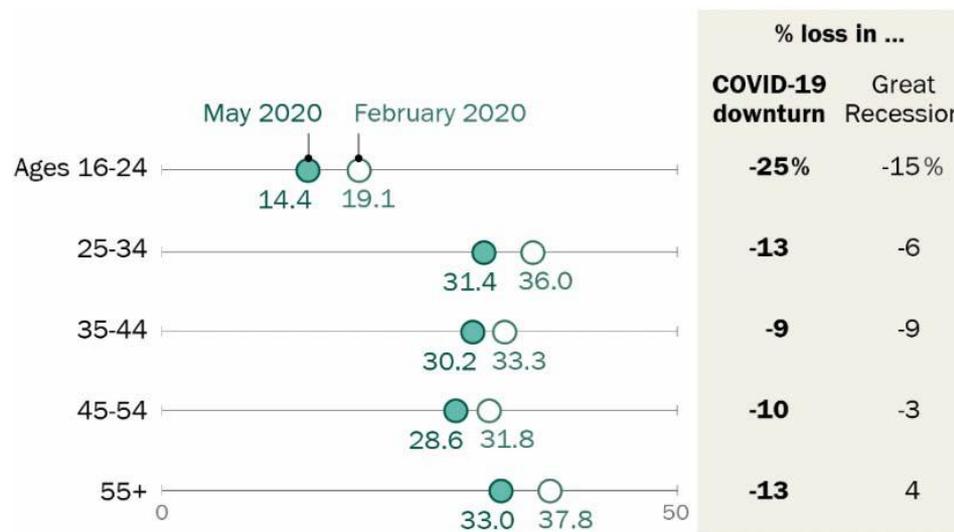


Source: U.S. Census Household Pulse survey

Younger people are also more likely to have lost jobs

One-quarter of young adult workers have lost their jobs in the COVID-19 downturn

Employed workers, in millions



Note: Estimates refer to employed workers ages 16 and older, nonseasonally adjusted. Estimates for 2007 and 2009 refer to the fourth quarter of each year. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Source: Pew

Psychological distress.

Earlier in the pandemic, People worried about isolation and loneliness caused by quarantining. Similarly, people expressed a sense of disorientation, or odd hard-to-express feelings.

- "There's been a great loss of sense of time. What time of the day it is, how did it get to suddenly be time for me to be cooking dinner again? You know, I thought it was three it's actually six. What day of the week it is, what day of the month it is. It was very shocking to me yesterday when I got up and I looked at my phone and it was the second to last day of the month of April and I literally recoiled and did a double take because I had no idea how we suddenly ended the month."
- "I definitely would say that my mental health has taken a big hit. But I've just been trying to journal and kind of talk with my close friends."
- "I'm cut off from my family. The loneliness comes from not being able to have the freedom that I used to have. I used to just go out there and I walk on the walk track that's right behind my house, but when it looks like it's too many people out there, I'm afraid to go out there. I want my freedom back. Yeah, I feel like caged in."

Psychological distress.

With the vaccinations underway, negative feelings & experiences, appear to be less significant but are still present

- "At the beginning of the pandemic, because I was in the hospital, I was petrified, didn't know if I was gonna live or die. Then when I got out the hospital, my husband died, so I was very alone. Throughout the process of going through the grieving process, I've developed a better relationship with families and friends. I have a stronger sense of survival because of this. I interact with others more. I do it because I like people, I'm a people person, but I know that I can't do it the way that I used to. I interact more with people in various ways. Then try to be creative and come up with ways to interact even more so. ... I do not feel lonely anymore. I did initially, but most of that was because of grief, going through the stages of bereavement. Now, I am full of family, friends, and love ones so I feel much better."
- "I'm more worried. The people continue not to wear their mask, not to stay six feet apart. They're coming together in groups, and partying... Some people still believe that COVID-19 is not real. That bothers me because as a victim of corona, a survivor of COVID-19, then I know that it is very much real."

Psychological distress.

Some people have even found benefits of social distancing, like having more time to slow down, reflect, and be creative.

- "Yeah. When it first happened, the first couple of days, it gave me a chance to relax, to tune in on some things. But as it progressed, it did become stressful seeing the world around us: the lockdown, how everything started to shut down. It becomes stressful at that point. As time went on, it did give me a chance to focus on some things. I started back writing, something I used to do when I was younger. As I grew older I started to doubt whether my work was actually good or not, so I've laid out for a while. When the Coronavirus hit, there was nothing to do so it brought me back to that area of writing and brainstorming. It was the point where I start to become really creative and start to get back in that mode of being inspired by watching different TV shows and movies. Yeah, it was like recentering, it brought me back to the core of things. Before the virus, the world is just like go, go, go, moving at a fast pace. You don't stop to realize and appreciate things. The virus forced us to stop and take a look at different things. It reconnected me to my core."

Worries & dangers: Crime

People were worried about problems in their neighborhoods, especially rising crime

- “I sleep with a weapon near me. For the first time in my life, I've come close to carrying a weapon in my truck, but I haven't yet.” (interviewee was 76-year-old man)
- “The police are being furloughed here in our city so there is less police presence, which has had an increase in crime. We haven't seen it right here in our neighborhood but it definitely has had a negative impact on the city.”
- “Where I live in New Orleans, a lot of times it takes the police a while to come whenever a crime has happened. Yes, I do you worry about that.”
- “I've been crying. I've seen some stuff go down in my neighborhood, especially now because I've seen stuff very close, I've seen shootings happen at a very close scale. I get certain times where I have to get down all of a sudden because somebody's shooting. At this point, I'm used to it. That's one of the things being from certain parts of New Orleans. I'm not so concerned about the crime, but at the same time you have to watch yourself, environment, and surroundings.”

Interpersonal conflict

Public tension: people disagreed about certain precautions (e.g., whether to wear a mask in public or practice social distancing) but people tend to avoid direct conflict

- “I was at Best Buy. I wasn't six feet apart from this from this lady and we were both wearing masks. We had our mask on and as far as I know, masks work. I wasn't six feet apart from her, but she told me to back up. I don't know that kind of aggravated me a little bit because it kind of bothered me. I felt like we were both wearing masks, none of us are going to get COVID and that's pretty much the end of the story. Everything's was gonna be alright. I guess because I wasn't six feet apart, it kind of put her on edge. I feel like some people are more on edge than others.”
- “So this can be actually a very sensitive topic. I do think that there's an increased tension.”
- [tension between restaurant employees and customers] “There's usually a lot more people in the wait, which becomes a hassle because then people are just hanging around. You gotta tell them to go outside. They get angry.”
- [avoidance of confrontation with strangers in public] “Outside the hospital setting, they might get a dirty look or two, but nobody confront someone and says "put it up." I think the kind of person who'll flagrantly not wear a mask isn't somebody you want to confront anyway, they'll likely to just go off. So we leave them alone, but we walk around them. We avoid them.”

Interpersonal conflict

Tensions between the generations and in the family

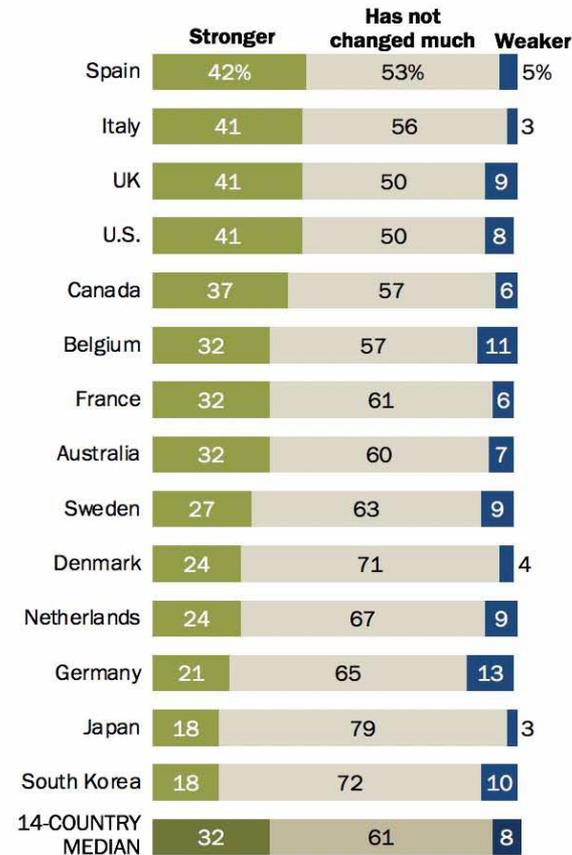
- "People in those age groups that are young find, irresponsibly, there's minimal risk. Even if they're asymptomatic they don't care because of their self indulgence."
- "What I worry that college students, some, I'm not going to see all, there's some that won't take it serious enough thinking that it won't happen to them and become not careful and cautious about their surroundings and who they're with and who they been around. Not taking the social distancing, not washing their hands, and not wearing their mask. That's my concern."
- Example of age & family life. The interviewee is a student who is living at home & they're caught in middle of conflict between their parents (the parents disagree about covid response). Remain neutral or side with one parent? "But then I do know even just between my family, during the pandemic, my dad wanted me to travel by plane to go on a vacation and my mom didn't think that it was right. Both of their opinions kind of coming through me took a toll on me, and neither of them were going to get mad at me for going or not going. But I could tell my mom thought it was irresponsible and she was mad at my dad for putting me in that position, then my dad thought that it was completely fine and he was irritated that my mom was working me up about it and stuff like that. So I do think that it changes how people think of their friends, and I think that it changes how they interact with each other."

Covid has tightened family bonds in many countries (summer 2020).

Source: Pew, Summer 2020

Many in countries hit hard by COVID-19 say the pandemic has tightened family bonds

% who say their relationship with immediate family members has become ___ as a result of the coronavirus outbreak



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. In Australia and Canada, the question asked about "COVID-19." In Japan, it asked about "the novel coronavirus," and in South Korea, it asked about "Corona19."

Source: Summer 2020 Global Attitudes Survey. Q2c.

"More Americans Than People in Other Advanced Economies Say COVID-19 Has Strengthened Religious Faith"

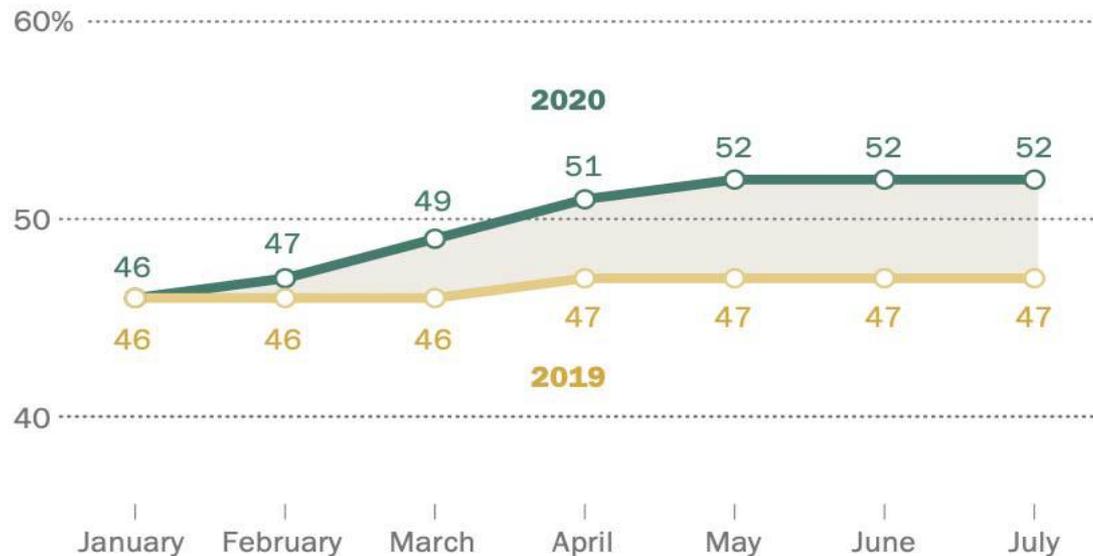
Covid has tightened family bonds in many cases

- "I have been able to soak up extra time with my family that I wouldn't have had because I would have been at school."
- "Well, everybody's thinking, "bad, bad, bad!" But the positive side to this whole thing if you can find one, I'll say it's bringing families together. Immediate families. I have so enjoyed. I can't speak for them because I probably would not get it right. But we have enjoyed having the girls here together. Amery home early, and then Tilly. Of course, when all together my mother's here and we've done a lot of fun things. We've cooked a lot together. We've had dinner a lot together. We've been outside. We've swam, we've laid out, spend a lot of time together. We've played games. We've tie-dyed, we've painted, we've worked in the yard, planted flowers—which is one of the really great things is still going on, people are still loving the plant mark in the yard. I think it's slowed people down. And it has made them realize, that there's more important things and rushing around in life. So that's a positive to it. And I've enjoyed every second of that aspect of it."
- "I definitely think that my relationships have gotten a lot stronger, especially since I had to spend six months with just my mom and my sister. Yeah."

By the same token, more young adults are living back with their parents

COVID-19 disruptions associated with a large increase in the share of young adults living with parent(s)

% of 18- to 29-year-olds in U.S. living with a parent



Note: "Living with a parent" refers to those who are residing with at least one parent in the household.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019 and 2020 Current Population Survey monthly files.

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Community Assistance

New and inventive ways of coming together

- Some people didn't see any. "If you think about it, Hurricane Katrina is kind of a great example where we had this horrible event that occurred here. But people could come together you know, you have your neighbors, fed your neighbors, everybody got together and grilled what was in their freezer that they were going to lose anyway and fed whoever needed to eat and you can't do that now. So the way that we that we have traditionally gotten through things like this is basically the one thing you can't do now."
- "Yeah, a good example is response to the hurricanes and the provision of food, all the massive drive thru operations for distributing food to people that need it. To distribute needed items via drive thru format."
- "Yeah, we experienced that after Katrina, here in New Orleans where everybody did come together in person to help and I would say that I see more people on the next door neighbor app offering to help out elderly neighbors, bring them groceries and do things for them. And I think that we will see that increasing, the more confident people get about going out."
- "Oh god yes. And yes, I can't even say that enough. There have just been a ridiculously amounts of work being done by the community. ... We had restaurants and just businesses everywhere, sending treats and sending lunch and dinner to the nurses around the clock, to the health care workers, even the ones who are at home. We're getting free meals, you know, just come." (registered nurse at hospital)
- "People organize more events online to help people with whatever they need whether that be mental health or other social services."
- "Social injustice has brought people together in a different way. I've seen a lot of people on social media outlets that have been using their platforms as a way to raise awareness. I've had people that added me into groups on Facebook with thousands of other black theatre artists, so it's brought people together so we can all help each other get through what's called a difficult time for us."

Community Assistance

Community organizations assisting others

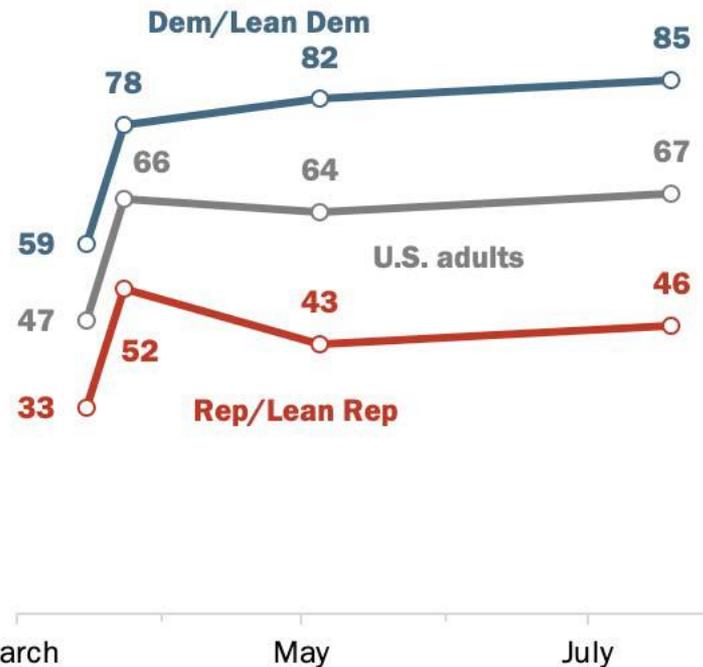
- “The service organization that I belong to, we donated Thanksgiving meals to families that are in need, worked with some other community agencies to make sure that the kids have the proper things that they need at home when they were taking zoom classes. We also were able to periodically provide food, pay rent, utility bills, those kinds of things.”
- “We had grown a garden when the corona started and started with chickens so we would give people some eggs and fruits and vegetables.”
- “We did hurricane relief drives throughout the hurricanes that hit Lake Charles and we've gathered a bunch of supplies for those people and brought it down to them and help them fix up their houses. I also, during Thanksgiving, for my job, went around and picked up Thanksgiving baskets for each of the properties that we own and deliver them to Baton Rouge Food Bank.”
- "Religious organizations have helped. Rotary Clubs and business community organizations have done a lot of outreach for COVID."
- "Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America, they're kind of like mentors and counselors for the kids. We've had people bring food for the kids - food drives, clothing drives. We've had some financial donations."
- “I got a letter in the mail one day, and it was filled with cards from people who make cards as a hobby. They heard that I had cancer from a distant relative. I got about, I don't know, 25 or 30 cards from people that I don't know. I'll get a message on Twitter or Facebook, saying that I've been put on a prayer list in another state, churches that I don't go to have me on prayer lists.”

Partisanship.
Democrats see Covid as a health danger far more than Republicans, but parties don't differ much in assessment of threat to the economy

Source: Pew

Far more Democrats than Republicans see COVID-19 as major threat to the health of the U.S. public

% who say the coronavirus outbreak is a major threat to the health of the U.S. population as a whole ...



Source: Survey conducted July 13-19, 2020.

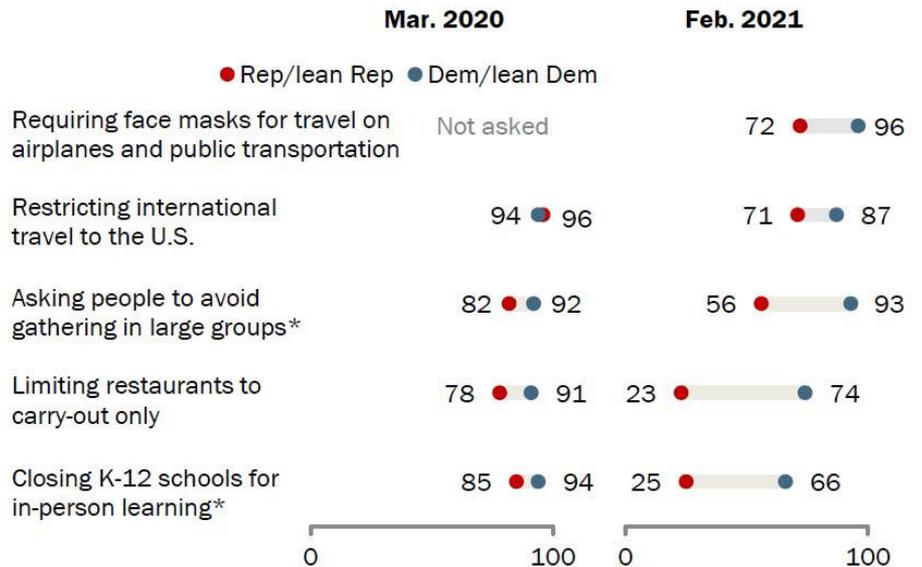
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Partisanship.
Democrats are much more likely to take precautions than Republicans, and more likely to want or get vaccines

Source: Pew

Republicans and Democrats are far more divided on ways to address coronavirus than at start of outbreak

% of U.S. adults who say each of the following are necessary to address the coronavirus outbreak



*See Topline for details on wording differences between Mar. 2020 and Feb. 2021 surveys.

Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 16-21, 2021.

"Growing Share of Americans Say They Plan To Get a COVID-19 Vaccine – or Already Have"

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Partisanship.

People feel that health issues have been politicized and don't like that.

- “This year is the ugliest year I've ever seen. I think there are a lot of people using this pandemic for both sides and the way that they think - we'll get votes in a few days. I'll be interested to see, after the election, the runoff, the lawsuits, and all the ugliness, it's going to come, how do we get back together again, as a society?”
- “COVID is so tacky tacky. It came out of nowhere. Then people relate healthcare to COVID. Whenever you're talking about health care, the politicians always talk about COVID in health care. They shouldn't even be talking about COVID politically. Everyone should just drop politics in general and should just try to find a solution to fix this pandemic, to overcome this pandemic.”
- “Another main thing is that wearing a mask is being very politicized. People are connecting wearing a mask to the Constitution, where they are declining to wear a mask, because it limits their freedom that is stated by the Constitution that everybody has. I think that it shouldn't be that way.”
- “I believe that the healthcare system has really become politicized.”
- “They're using it as a political initiative. This is serious. This is not about politics. This is about life and death, that's what this is about. Life and death.”

Partisanship.

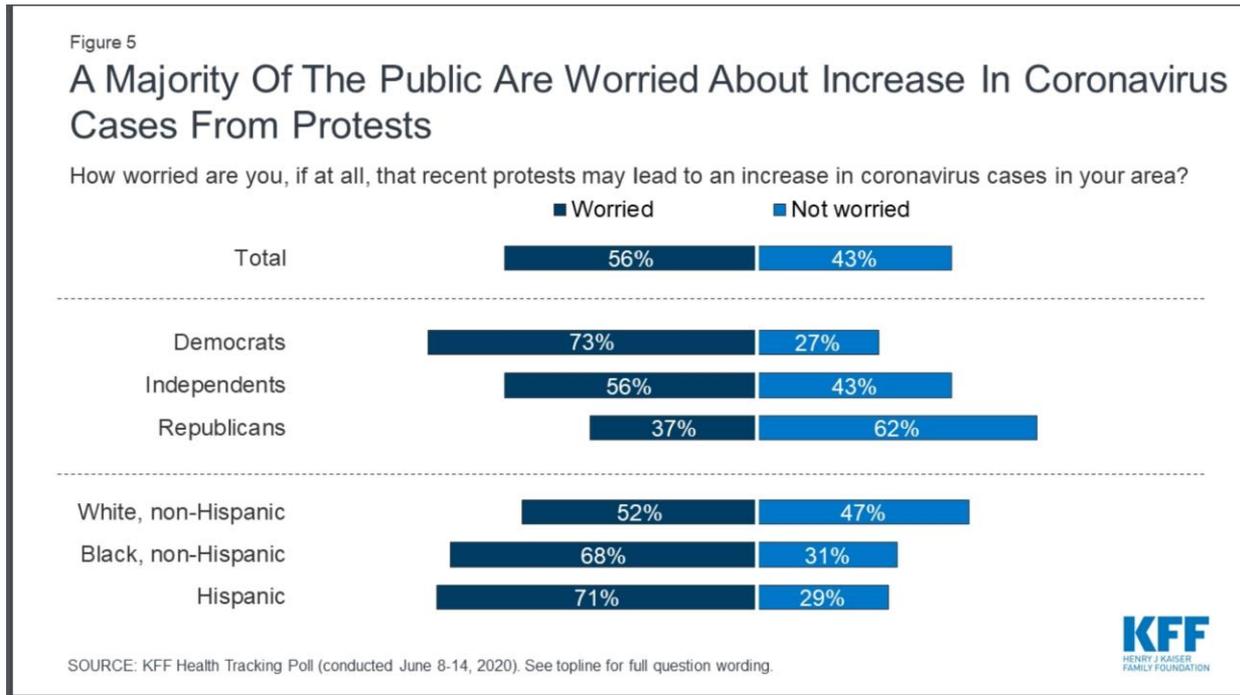
Trust in information, news media, social media, & politicians is highly partisan. There is widespread distrust of information.

- “That is a lot of information. I don't do social media very well. I kind of quit taking on the news. I know that sounds terrible, but it doesn't really have a lot of good things to say. Unless they change to tell me something good, I'm okay with that.”
- “I think, right now, we have a serious problem with the media. Are they telling the stories they need to tell? I think they're so focused on telling the stories they want to tell and trying to tell us how to think.”
- “One month they tell you masks aren't effective then the next they tell you that they are effective, and they just seem to contradict. Every month they just go back and forth. They can't seem to make up their mind. Government officials or even mainstream media, they just seem to cause more fear and panic than a sense of calm or unity or agreeance. It seems like no one knows how to handle the situation.”
- “I definitely do not trust. I guess I semi trust the general gist of the information that is given. It's Twitter, probably a lot of stuff is a little misconstrued.”

Race, BLM, Demonstrations.

Most people are worried about an increase in Covid cases from the demonstrations.

It is heavily partisan, but notably, minorities are more worried than whites.



Source: KFF

Race, BLM, Demonstrations.

Blacks are worried about an increase in Covid cases from the demonstrations. They also worry about discrimination due to masking.

- "I saw something somebody posted somewhere that black people are going through two pandemics, COVID-19 and racism."
- "It's always the right time to fight for what was right. During Corona, I don't think so. I'm not gonna pick a side, because I'm not completely sure."
- They said, "don't worry you don't need to wear masks." I wasn't [concerned]. When I go in public spaces, my grandma gave me a bandana. The bandana is nice and all but it's... I'm Black. Wearing a bandana around your face makes you look like a robber. Being Black and looking like a robber isn't really.. I don't need to get shot is what I'm saying. So it's kind of in my list of worries."
- But many whites also see danger. "I think it's definitely there was an increase just because if you're getting that many people together that often because like, protests are still going on so like there's people meeting up pretty regularly. I think no matter how many - if all of them wear masks and all of them sanitize and stuff, I think there's still going to be an increase." (white female college student)

Race, BLM, Demonstrations.

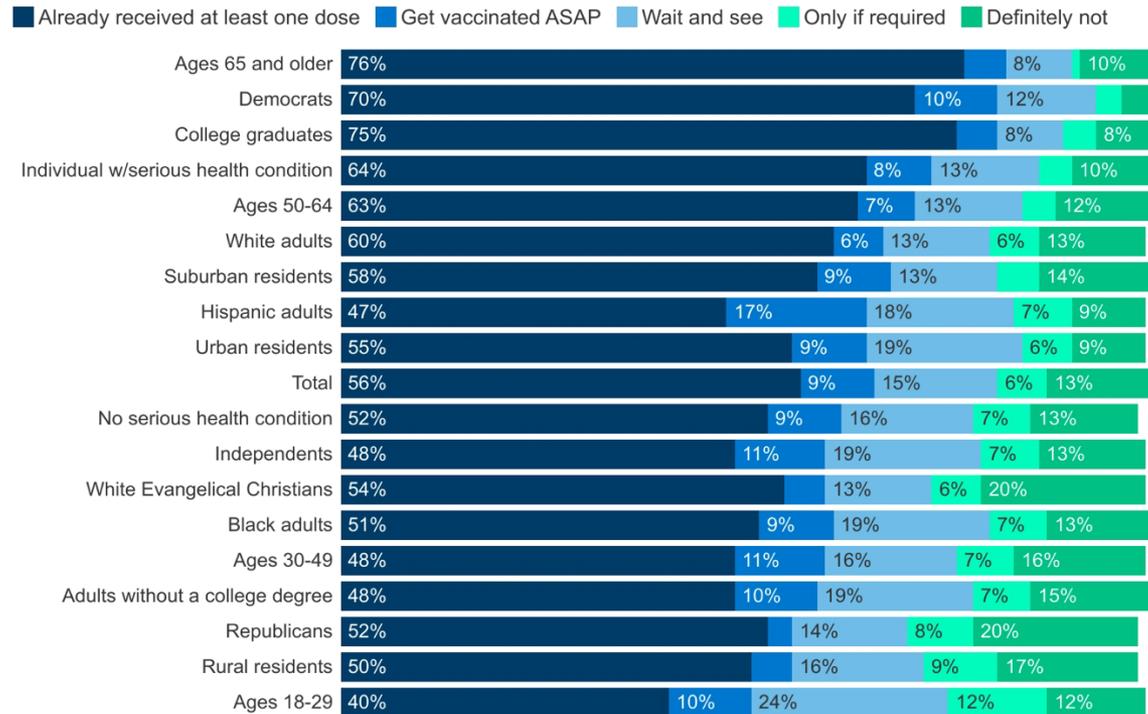
There is also a strong sense of community and support/responsibility, of caring for others within the community.

- “Because we all have a response. To protect each other. And if that was the goal, then that was what my mindset was. It's never about me individually. It's more about me, helping my community because New Orleans was hard hit with not just the virus, but the amount of people that was dying in this city.”
- "And the amount of support that I've seen at the protests that I've attended by non-black people has been incredible. I know that it's a sense of community. ... But, I know here, the sense of community, it runs deep. ... But we look out for each other. We look out for the kids in our block in our neighborhood, and that type of thing. And you see people come together very quickly here, because maybe, maybe it's because we have such a large black community in the city."

Americans' willingness to get the vaccine varies across social groups

Majorities Across Demographic Groups Are At Least Somewhat Open To COVID-19 Vaccine; Older Adults, Democrats Most Enthusiastic; Younger Adults, Republicans Least Enthusiastic

Have you personally received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or not? When an FDA authorized vaccine for COVID-19 is available to you for free, do you think you will...?



NOTE: See topline for full question wording.
SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (April 15-29, 2021)

Race, Medicine, Vaccines.

There is also distrust of medicine & vaccines due to past history of unethical treatment of black population.

- “It depends. I talked about the Tuskegee Syphilis experiment and if it was to come out, I wouldn't take it, because it's in it's early stages of coming out and they have to test it.”
- “Let me ask the million dollar question. There's people saying they want us to take this vaccine. The answer of the question of trust is the foremost concern because if you trust them, then there's no problem, we should take the vaccine. It's not like these institutions that are telling us what to do haven't lied to us before. It's hard to know. I was just watching the interview about this and it made so much sense because they're basically saying stay inside the house only, don't leave. We got this. We're gonna help you out. It's like, "Okay, do I want to trust this?" Before even more, because they hadn't tried to ease restrictions yet. Before, you couldn't really deny it really. You had to accept it and live with that reality because that's what most people were doing. But it's inconclusive. I don't know if I trust it.”

In-Depth interviews with New Orleans community leaders.

Examples

- Many of them learned disaster response after Hurricane Katrina.
- Some of the emergent organizations from that time are now established mid-level nonprofits. (And some even complain about new emergent organizations!)
- Some of these mid-level nonprofits have developed innovative connections to block-level neighborhood leaders.
- These connections form a kind of “From the Firehose to the Capillaries” structure. The mid-level organizations bring massive amounts of food or other supplies into the city, and the neighborhood leaders help distribute it to needy people who might otherwise be missed.
- In all cases, leaders are highly cognizant of infection risks and take extensive precautions to keep everyone safe.

Thank you

Responses to the Covid-19 Pandemic: Anxiety, Isolation, Dispute, and Support

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