



COVID-19 Survey Summary: May 21, 2021

The following is a summary of social, behavioral and economic survey research on COVID-19 released in the past week, as compiled for the Societal Experts Action Network ([SEAN](#)). Most surveys cited in this report are available in the [SEAN COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

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The pace of COVID-19 vaccinations has slowed as most of those who want to get the shot now have gotten at least one dose, while a substantial share remains steadfastly resistant.

Coronavirus-related polls released this week also show continued improvement in Americans' mental health, with reported symptoms of anxiety and depression dropping to new pandemic lows. On the economic front, Americans' ratings of their own finances and their expectations for the economy's future both reached their highest in more than a year.

Newly released results from two January polls detail the impact of the pandemic on public K-12 schooling from the perspective of parents and teachers. Another shows that while parents were broadly satisfied with telehealth visits for their children during the pandemic, when it comes to future check-ups, most would prefer to return to in-person visits.

Other analyses show an urban-rural gap and state-level variability in vaccination rates and an increase in unintentional overdose deaths in San Francisco following the implementation of a stay-at-home order. We also include international surveys this week from Brazil, Canada, Chile, Great Britain, India, Japan, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine.

Vaccines

Several polls align to show that the pace of vaccination has slowed considerably as most of those who want to be inoculated have gotten at least one dose:

- Six in 10 say they've received a vaccine and 14 percent say they'll do so, both essentially unchanged since mid-April. A quarter continue to say they will not choose to be vaccinated, rising to 44 percent of Republican men ([NPR/PBS/Marist 5/4-5/10](#)).
- Similarly, roughly three-quarters in daily tracking continue to say they have or likely will get vaccinated. The share who've received at least their first dose has hovered around six in 10 for close to two weeks ([USC UAS 5/19](#)).

- A third survey has a higher estimate of the number of Americans who've received at least one dose, 75 percent, but it too shows a slowdown – a 5-percentage point increase since late April compared with a 22-point jump in March ([U.S. Census Bureau 4/28-5/10](#)).

Separately, more than eight in 10 think it's a good idea to provide vaccine doses to other countries that need them. Just 12 percent call this a bad idea ([NPR/PBS/Marist 5/4-5/10](#)).

Vaccine Effectiveness and Disparities

An interim CDC analysis examines the real-world effectiveness of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines among healthcare personnel at 33 sites in 25 states. The authors find that the vaccines were 82 percent effective against symptomatic COVID-19 more than two weeks after the first dose and 94 percent effective more than one week after the second dose, adjusting for age, race/ethnicity and underlying medical conditions. These findings are consistent with other observational studies, providing further evidence of the vaccines' effectiveness ([CDC 1/21-3/21](#)).

Another report examines vaccine disparities between rural and urban residents. In county-level vaccine uptake data from mid-December to mid-April in 49 states and Washington, D.C., 39 percent of adults in rural counties received at least one vaccine dose, vs. 46 percent in urban counties. The urban-rural gap in vaccination held regardless of age or gender. More rural than urban adults needed to travel outside their home county to get the shot, 15 vs. 10 percent. The authors stress that the disparity can delay progress in stopping spread of the virus and urge steps to address vaccine hesitancy and access in rural areas ([CDC 12/14/20-4/10/21](#)).

Masks

In a survey conducted before the CDC's latest loosening of its mask-wearing recommendations, half of Americans said they wore a mask or facial covering most places even if it was not required, 42 percent wore a mask in public when required and 9 percent normally did not wear a mask. The partisan gap was wide – all Democrats said they wear a mask in most places even if not required (75 percent) or when required (25 percent). Among Republicans, a quarter reported wearing a mask even when not required, 55 percent when required and 21 percent said they generally did not wear one ([NPR/PBS/Marist 5/4-5/10](#)).

Mental Health

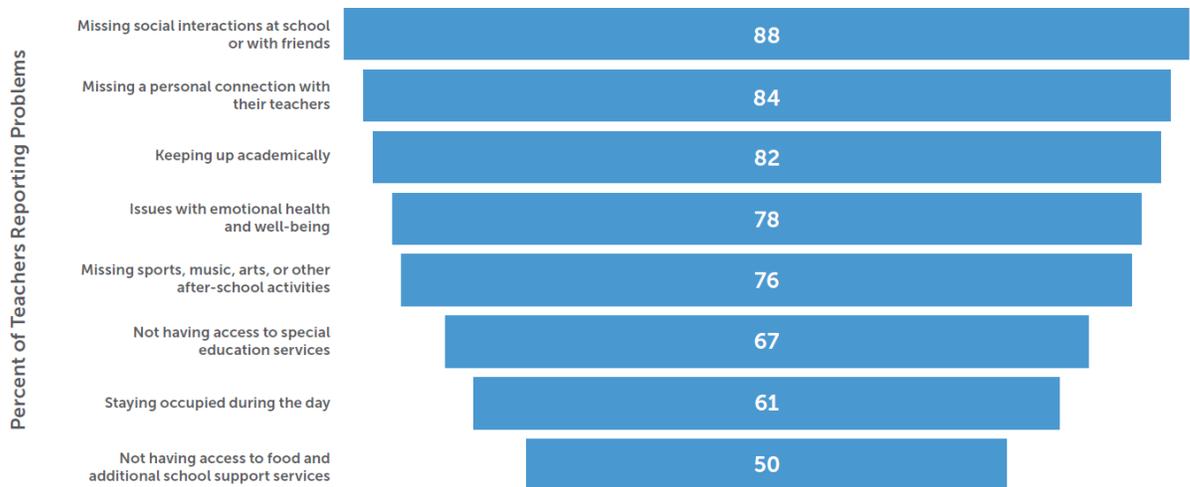
The [National Center for Health Statistics](#) reports that the share of Americans with symptoms of anxiety and depression continues to drop. Twenty-two percent in the latest data report symptoms of depression and 26 percent report symptoms of anxiety; three in 10 have had symptoms of either or both. All are down steadily since late January to pandemic lows, but remain elevated nonetheless; before the pandemic, just one in 10 had symptoms of anxiety or depression ([U.S. Census Bureau 4/28-5/10](#)).

Impacts on K-12 Education

Newly released results from a January poll document the broad impact of the pandemic on K-12 teaching and learning:

- At the time of the survey, 43 percent of K-12 public school teachers said they were teaching virtually only, 18 percent were teaching in person and 39 percent were in a hybrid setting. Among public school parents, 59 percent said their child attended fully remote school, 16 percent were in person and 23 percent in a hybrid model.
- Eighty-two percent of teachers said it'd been difficult for their students to keep up academically. Forty-five percent of parents had the same concern for their own child. Those with suboptimal internet access were dramatically more likely to say their child had problems keeping up academically.
- Of eight topics tested, at least half of teachers said each one posed a problem for their students, with missing social interactions with friends (88 percent) and missing personal connections with teachers (84 percent) topping the list. Roughly four in 10 teachers and parents alike rated missing social interactions as the single biggest problem.

How big a problem has the pandemic created for your students in each of these areas?



- Two-thirds of teachers said their ability to work with students' individual learning needs had worsened since the pandemic began.
- By a 3-1 margin, parents were more likely to say their partnership with their child's teachers was weaker rather than stronger since the pandemic. This was particularly true for parents whose child was in full-time remote learning.
- Only about a third of teachers and parents alike rated their school highly for helping students with pandemic-related social-emotional challenges and working with students' individual interests, strengths and challenges.

- Compared with 2019, there was a sharp drop in teacher satisfaction – 23 percent said they were very satisfied in their professional role as educator, down from 34 percent.

However, the survey also found positives: Roughly eight in 10 parents and teachers with children in online classes rated teaching academic content online as at least somewhat effective (however far fewer, 28 and 19 percent, respectively, said it was very effective). Most parents and teachers also rated their school positively for ensuring students have computer, internet and software access and support as needed (63 and 71 percent, respectively) and communicating about how it was operating in the pandemic (56 and 58 percent, respectively) ([Digital Promise 1/5-1/19](#)).

Workplace Impacts

As of April, a slim majority of workers in the United States said they'd done their job remotely at least 10 percent of the time in the past week, ranging widely from 72 percent of white-collar workers to 14 percent of blue-collar workers. These rates have been essentially stable since the fall, after declining from peaks in April 2020, when many workplaces were shut down.

In combined data from October through April, eight in 10 or more workers in four occupation categories worked remotely at least sometimes: computer-oriented or mathematical fields (86 percent); life, physical or social sciences (86 percent); arts, design, entertainment or media (81 percent); and financial services, insurance, real estate or consulting (80 percent).

Other occupational categories with high remote-work rates included legal work (74 percent); education, training or library work (69 percent); architecture/engineering (67 percent); community or social services (60 percent); and clerical or office work (56 percent). This measure of remote work was sharply lower in sales (36 percent); healthcare (33 percent); construction or mining (16 percent); installation, maintenance or repair (15 percent); transportation (14 percent); service work (9 percent); and manufacturing or production (8 percent).

People working remotely at least 10 percent of the time said by a 2-1 margin that they'd prefer to continue doing so as much as possible ([Gallup April](#)).

Children's Telehealth Visits

In newly released results from a January poll, nearly seven in 10 parents said their child had a healthcare visit since the pandemic began – 80 percent in-person, 8 percent virtual and 12 percent both.

Among those whose child had a virtual visit, 57 percent said it was suggested by their provider or the only option offered. Thirty-four percent said it at least partly reflected concerns about coronavirus exposure and a third said it was at least partly because it was more convenient. Reasons for the virtual visit included check-ups (32 percent), minor illnesses (22 percent), mental health (15 percent) and follow-up for a chronic condition (15 percent).

Almost all parents whose child had a virtual visit were satisfied with the experience and said all their questions were answered (92 percent apiece). However, 11 percent reported technical

problems with the visit. A quarter said their child also needed to be seen in-person for the same issue.

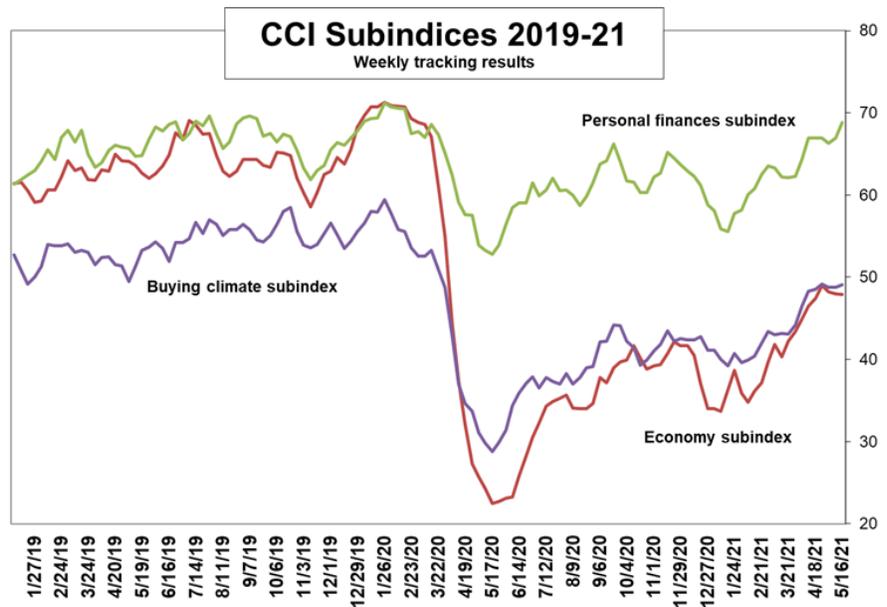
In the future, when it comes to minor illnesses, a majority of parents (54 percent) said they either prefer virtual visits or have no preference; 46 percent preferred in-person visits. It was about a 50-50 split for mental health visits. However, roughly three-quarters preferred in-person visits for check-ups (77 percent) and specialist care (74 percent).

Fifty-nine percent expressed concern that a provider would not be as thorough in a virtual visit as in person and 48 percent were concerned their child’s problem would not be able to be addressed virtually. A quarter worried about possible technical problems ([C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital](#)).

Economic Impacts

Americans’ ratings of their personal finances advanced to entirely erase their pandemic losses, lifting a weekly measure of consumer sentiment to a 13-month peak. Economic expectations gained as well, to their best in 15 months.

Overall, the Consumer Comfort Index reached 55.3 on its 0-100 scale, its highest since March 2020. That’s up 20.6 points from its nearly six-year low last May – recouping about three-quarters of its total pandemic losses. It’s up a sharp 10.9 points this year alone, on track to nearly double its largest annual gain on record ([CCI 5/16](#)).



Impacts on 2020 Graduates’ Employment

A new analysis of [Bureau of Labor Statistics data](#) from January through October 2020 documents the pandemic’s toll on job prospects for recent college graduates. Sixty-nine percent of adults age 20 to 29 who graduated from college with a bachelor’s degree or higher in spring 2020 were employed, 9 points lower than a year previously. Labor force participation declined from 86 to 79 percent ([Pew](#)).

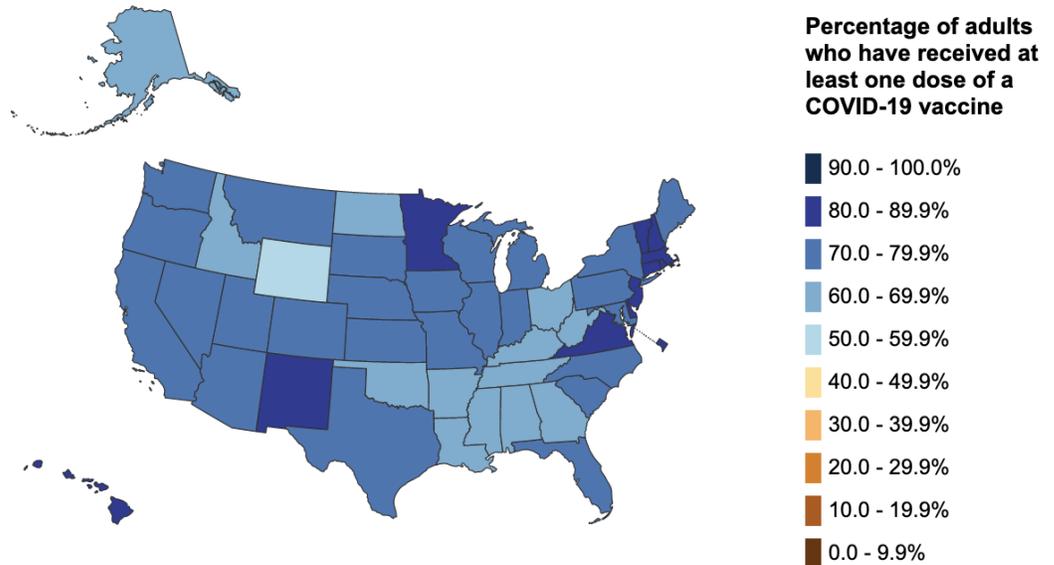
Government Response

Two-thirds approve of how President Biden is handling the pandemic, essentially unchanged since late March ([NPR/PBS/Marist 5/4-5/10](#)).

State and Local Results

Vaccination rates continue to vary considerably by state. More than eight in 10 in the District of Columbia (86 percent), Massachusetts (85 percent), Connecticut (84 percent), New Mexico and Delaware (both 83 percent), Hawaii, New Jersey and Vermont (all 82 percent) and New Hampshire (81 percent) have gotten at least one shot. By contrast, in Wyoming, where vaccine hesitancy is high, fewer than six in 10 have gotten a shot. Vaccination rates also are comparatively lower in many states in the Southeast and Midwest ([U.S. Census Bureau 4/28-5/10](#)).

Estimated Vaccination Rates by State: April 28 - March 10, 2021
Hover over a state to view the percentage of vaccinated adults in that state.



In other state results, in New Hampshire, majorities support requiring students at public universities and colleges (57 percent) and high schools (56 percent) in the state to be vaccinated in order to attend in person. Despite an end to the statewide mask mandate, mask use continues to be high in public, but has eased some since December – 83 percent say they always wear a mask while shopping at a grocery store or pharmacy, down from 89 percent, and 69 percent always wear a mask when getting takeout, down from 75 percent. Two in 10 always wear a mask when socializing with family or friends, down from 32 percent in December.

Comfort engaging in public activities has increased substantially since March, including eating outdoors at a restaurant (91 percent, up 10 points), going to a barbershop or hair salon (84 percent, +9), eating at a restaurant sitting inside (72 percent, +15), going to a bar or pub (51 percent, +10), going to a gym or health club (51 percent, +12), going to a movie theater (49 percent, +15), going to a college or professional athletic stadium (46 percent, +14) and going to a large concert (37 percent, +7) ([UNH 5/13-5/17](#)).

Aligning with [previously reported results](#), a new analysis of overdose deaths in San Francisco before and after the initial COVID-19 shelter-in-place order there found a 50 percent increase in weekly median overdose deaths. In the 8.5 months before the order, 365 people died of overdoses involving fentanyl, heroin, medicinal opioids, methamphetamine or cocaine. This rose

to 537 deaths in the 8.5 months after the order. Deaths attributable to fentanyl increased as a proportion of the total, from 62 to 72 percent. Fatal overdoses among people experiencing homelessness doubled ([Appa et al., 2021](#)).

International Results

In India, where cases and deaths continue to climb, nearly three in 10 say they have gotten at least one dose of a vaccine, 57 percent plan to be vaccinated, 9 percent say they won't get it and 6 percent still are deciding. Fifty-seven percent agree that they are afraid that they or someone in their family may catch the virus, unchanged since last week, but far higher than before the surge. Just fewer than half agree that the threat from the virus is exaggerated, the fewest since last fall.

Seventeen percent report seeing flu-like symptoms in themselves, their family or their neighbors, steady in recent weeks but up from fewer than one in 10 in mid-April. More than a third say someone in their family or area has had COVID-19 compared with fewer than two in 10 in mid-April. Two-thirds agree that the Indian government is handling the coronavirus well, roughly where it's been in recent weeks, but down from more than eight in 10 pre-surge ([CVoter 5/19](#)).

In Japan, support for holding the Tokyo Olympics this summer has been cut in half in the past month, from 28 to 14 percent. More than eight in 10 think the games should be postponed again (40 percent, up 6 points) or canceled (43 percent, up 8 points). Six in 10 say that if the Olympics are held, no spectators should be allowed entry, up from 45 percent in April; a third say spectator numbers should be limited and just 3 percent say full spectator capacity should be allowed. Nearly three-quarters were unconvinced by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's remarks that the Olympics can be held securely and safely ([Asahi Shimbun 5/15-5/16](#)).

In Chile, 65 percent have received a coronavirus vaccine, up 6 points in the past week. Fifty-five percent have received two doses. Thirty-eight percent are in favor of ending the curfew after this weekend, rising to 54 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds. Overall, 32 percent favor delaying it to 11 p.m. and 29 percent prefer to keep it at 9 p.m. Forty-five percent approve of the government's handling of the pandemic, up 14 points from a month ago ([Cadem 5/12-5/14](#)).

In Brazil, a quarter say they have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, including 92 percent of those age 60 and older. Two-thirds intend to be vaccinated, 8 percent do not. The share who think the pandemic is out of control in the country has dropped sharply from 79 percent in March to 53 percent now. Eight in 10 have at least some fear of being infected; those who are very afraid has declined 6 points since March to 49 percent. A quarter say they already have had the virus, including 18 percent who say their diagnosis was confirmed by testing.

Eight in 10 think the Senate acted well when opening a commission of inquiry into the federal government's actions during the pandemic. However, 57 percent think it will not produce any results. Eighty-seven percent think the new reduced emergency aid is insufficient ([Datafolha 5/11-5/12](#)).

In Great Britain, seven in 10 have received at least one vaccine dose, including a third who have received two doses. Nearly all – 95 percent – either have or intend to get vaccinated. Nineteen

percent met up indoors with someone outside their household or bubble in the past week, up 9 points in the past week; 57 percent met up outdoors with someone outside their bubble, essentially unchanged. Seventy-nine percent say they always or often maintain social distance when meeting up with people outside their household or bubble, down from 84 percent last week.

Four in 10 say they'd be more likely to attend an organized event if they were required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test. However, seven in 10 would be less likely to attend if they had to spend an extra two hours in the venue for a socially distanced exit. No social distancing, having to wear a face covering during the entire event and not being able to buy or eat food also made most adults less likely to want to attend an event ([Office for National Statistics 4/28-5/9](#)).

In Sweden, a third say they're vaccinated, up from 4 percent in early March, and an additional 55 percent say they will get vaccinated when offered. Just 4 percent say they will not get vaccinated. Seven percent are unsure, down from 13 percent in March. Seventy-one percent say they wear a face covering when in public to some extent, up from 55 percent in February. That includes 27 percent who always or often do so, up 11 points. Sixty-three percent completely agree that they keep at least one meter away from others when outside their home, down 9 points from its peak in late January. Nearly six in 10 say they've been tested for active COVID-19 and a quarter have been tested for COVID-19 antibodies ([Novus 4/26-5/9](#)).

In Turkey, where new restrictions recently were put in place, roughly six in 10 think the intercity travel ban (61 percent) and curfew (59 percent) were right. However, majorities think it was wrong to prohibit selling products other than basic food and cleaning products in chain stores (56 percent) and to ban the sale of alcohol (56 percent). More than three-quarters think it is wrong that there are no restrictions on tourists ([Istanbul Economics Research 5/5-5/7](#)).

In Canada, seven in 10 say their neighbors are following public health guidance to social distance from others as much as possible, down from eight in 10 last March. More than seven in 10 say it was at least somewhat easy to find information on vaccine booking, availability and locations. Far more are uncomfortable than comfortable with Canadian athletes taking part in the Tokyo summer Olympics in July, 59-36 percent ([CTV/Nanos 4/29-5/3](#)).

In Ukraine, just a quarter think the country's healthcare system can cope with vaccinating the population against the coronavirus; 44 percent do not think so and 31 percent think it can partially cope, essentially unchanged since March. Half (49 percent) say people around them do not take precautionary measures against the coronavirus ([R&B Group 4/23-4/30](#)).

Additional U.S. and international poll results are available at the [COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

Summary for SEAN by [Langer Research Associates](#).