



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: June 18, 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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Surveys on economic issues show substantial gains as the pandemic fades in the United States, with consumer sentiment climbing, work hours at small businesses up, layoffs and firings down and job-loss worries at a new pandemic low.

Vaccination rates, for their part, remain largely stagnant in the latest polling.

Another new pandemic-related poll this week finds nearly one in four parents hesitant to send their child back to fully in-person classes, as well as limited interest in the use of summer school, in-person tutoring and longer school days to address pandemic-related learning losses. Other studies describe hardships experienced throughout the pandemic, especially among Black and Hispanic people; calculate the number of “life years” lost to the coronavirus in 2020; and reveal an alarming jump in suicide attempts among teenage girls.

A global poll tracks broad impacts of the pandemic on workers in 116 countries. We also cover results from 11 other countries this week – Brazil, Canada, Chile, Germany, Great Britain, India, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, the Philippines and Russia.

### Vaccines

In the only national poll with new vaccination uptake numbers, 79 percent of adults say they’ve received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine, largely unchanged from two weeks ago (77 percent) ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/26-6/7](#)). Uptake estimates in this survey have been higher than in other polls, as well as from the [CDC](#), which puts it at 65 percent.

In a mid-May poll, six in 10 parents of children age 16 to 18 planned to have their child vaccinated or already had done so. It was 53 percent among parents of children 12-15 and an identical 53 percent of parents of children younger than 12, given vaccine authorization for that age group. This largely aligns with results reported [last week](#).

Majorities favored requiring students to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in order to attend classes in the fall, ranging from 51 percent for middle school students to 56 percent for high school students and 61 percent for college students ([Gallup 5/18-5/23](#)).

## Consumer Attitudes

Consumer sentiment reached a new pandemic high, driven by an improvement in ratings of the national economy and the buying climate to their highest levels in nearly 15 months. Optimism about the economy's direction also is up – nearly four in 10 say it's improving, up 18 percentage points since December to the most since late 2019 ([CCI](#)).

## Employment Impacts

A number of indicators show an improving job situation for workers:

- Twelve percent of small businesses report an increase in the total number of hours worked by paid employees, the most in a year. Ten percent report a decrease in hours worked, matching the pandemic low ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/31-6/6](#)).
- In April (the most recent data available), separations initiated by employers (i.e., layoffs and firings) dropped to their lowest since December 2000. At the same time, the number of people voluntarily quitting their jobs reached the most since 2000 ([BLS](#)).
- The share of Americans who think someone in their household will lose employment income in the next four weeks continues to drop, from four in 10 in spring 2020 to 27 percent at the start of this year to 13 percent now ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/26-6/7](#)).

While two in 10 small businesses report a decrease in revenues, that essentially matches the pandemic low. Fourteen percent say they'll need to obtain financial assistance or additional capital in the next six months, a pandemic low. As many report an increase in operating revenues in the past week, a numerical high since last June. And 19 percent say their business has returned to normal operations, a high in available data since August. Thirty-two percent expect it to take more than six months to get back to normal, a pandemic low ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/31-6/6](#)).

See the State Results section, below, for more on small business impacts.

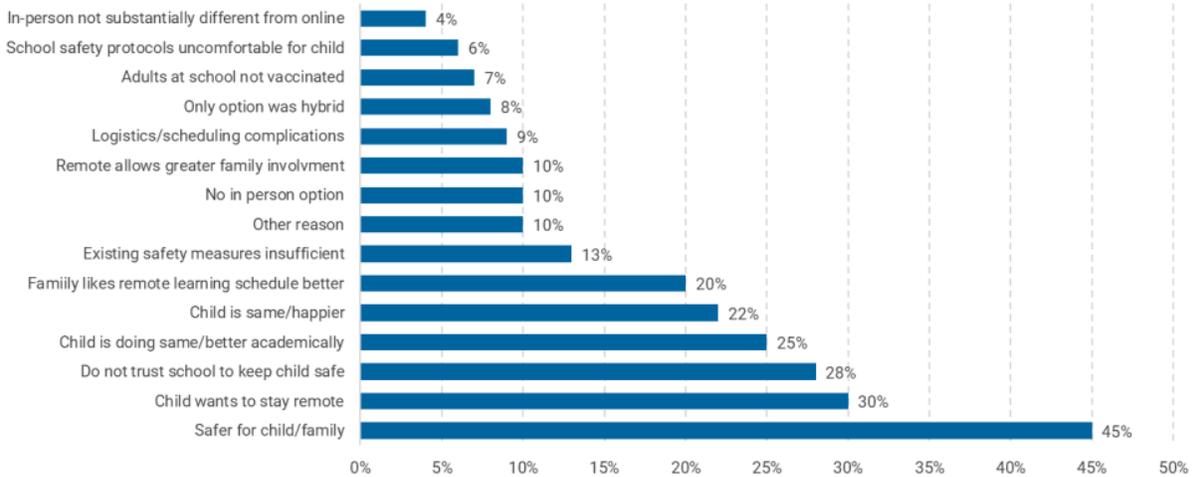
## Impacts on Education

As of late May, three in 10 K-12 parents indicated their child still was attending school fully remotely. Of them, just one in 10 said their child school had no in-person option. Among other reasons tested, 45 percent thought remote learning was safer, three in 10 said their child wanted to stay remote, 28 percent did not trust the school to keep their child safe, a quarter said their child was doing the same or better academically while remote, 22 percent said their child was the same or happier in remote learning and two in 10 preferred a remote learning schedule.

Looking across reasons (multiple could be selected), 27 percent of parents mentioned something related to child fit (e.g., their child was happier at home), rather than safety; 28 percent mentioned reasons related to safety, but not fit; and a third mentioned both.

FIGURE 1

**K-12 parents' reasons for not sending their child to in-person schooling in April-May of 2021**



**Source:** USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research's Understanding America Survey.

**Note:** Data collected between April 14, 2021 - May 25, 2021 from a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults.

Nearly a quarter planned to continue with remote education in the fall (10 percent) or were unsure about sending their child to in-person school (14 percent). Hesitancy peaked among Black parents, at 38 percent, and also was higher among lower-income parents and those with less education, compared with others ([Brookings](#); [USC UAS 4/14-5/25](#)).

Asked about learning opportunities experts have proposed to make up for pandemic-related learning losses, K-12 parents express limited current use and muted interest. Specifically:

- A third said their child’s school was offering summer school. Of them, a quarter said their child was signed up to participate. Among those whose schools were not offering summer school, just 16 percent said their child would participate if it were offered.
- Roughly a quarter apiece said their child’s school offered in-person tutoring during school (27 percent) or after school (27 percent). Of them, 34 percent said their child participated in tutoring during school, as did 29 percent after school. Among those without tutoring options, 30 percent said they would enroll their child in tutoring during school and a quarter would take advantage of after-school tutoring, if available.
- Fewer – 17 percent – said their child’s school offered learning pods; of them, 38 percent said their child was participating. Among other parents, a quarter said they would enroll their child in a learning pod if offered.

Most potential policy changes for the 2021-2022 school year also received tepid support. The exception was allowing students to repeat their 2020-21 grade level – 64 percent of parents supported that. Fewer than a third backed the use of pass/fail rather than letter grades (29 percent), a longer school year/shorter summer vacation (23 percent), longer school days (19 percent) or promoting students even if they don’t meet the requirements (15 percent).

Parents were more positive about incorporating technology-based practices into the next school year. Eighty-two percent said schools should offer remote tutoring, 80 percent favor remote parent-teacher conferences and three-quarters think students should be able to communicate with their teachers electronically. Seventy-three percent apiece said schools should use online platforms to store, organize and distribute class materials and should pivot to remote school when the weather is bad or if schools need to be closed for another reason. Majorities also said students should be able to submit assignments online (63 percent) and that more reading materials should be available online (59 percent) ([The74](#); [USC UAS 4/14-5/25](#)).

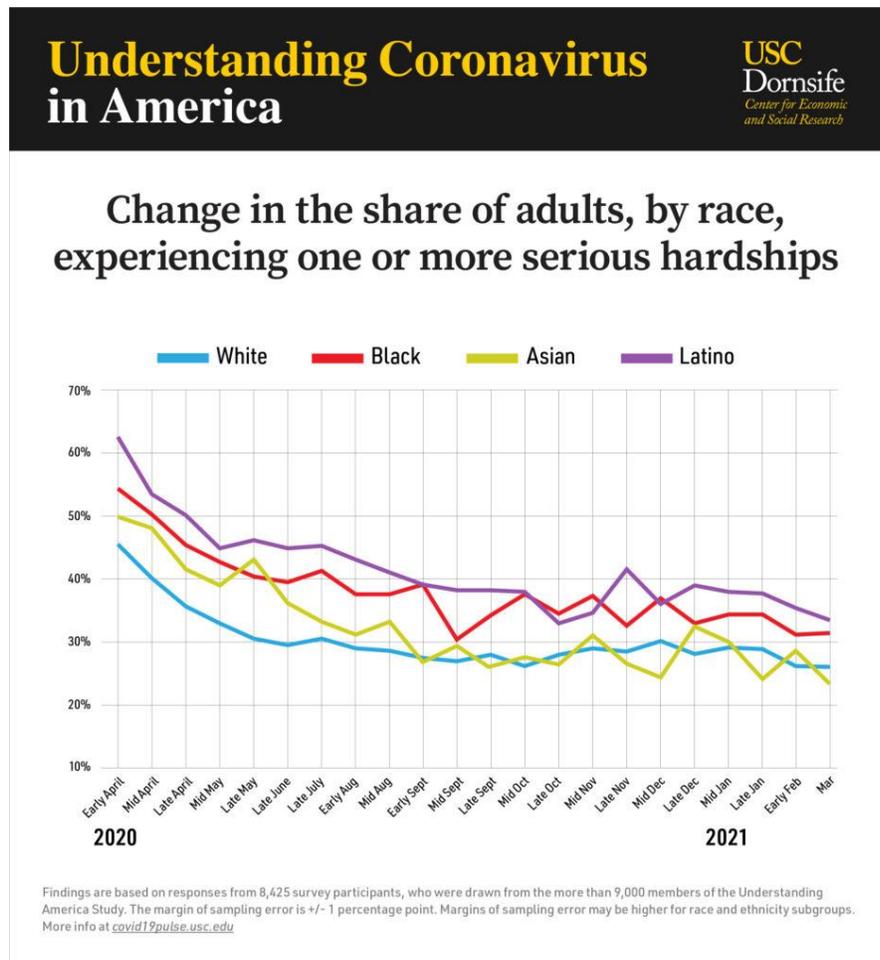
**Pandemic Hardships**

An analysis of longitudinal data from April 2020 to March 2021 finds that eight in 10 Americans experienced at least one of nine economic, psychological or health-related hardships during the pandemic. Most common was financial insecurity (48 percent), followed by symptoms of high stress (37 percent), COVID-related discrimination (37 percent) and moderate to severe psychological distress (36 percent). Three in 10 said they’d experienced food insecurity at some point since April 2020 and nearly two in 10 missed one or more rent or mortgage payments.

Experience of these hardships has declined – in April 2020, amid lockdown restrictions, half reported experiencing at least one of these hardships; by March 2021 that had declined to 28 percent. For example, the share of adults facing food insecurity dropped from 18 percent in April 2020 to 7 percent in March 2021, while the share experiencing moderate to severe psychological distress dropped from 16 to 10 percent.

Over the course of the pandemic, nine in 10 Latinos reported facing at least one serious hardship, as did 86 percent of Black people, 80 percent of Asian people and 76 percent of white people. Although reports of hardships have declined

across all races/ethnicities, the share of Latino and Black people facing hardships remained much



higher. In addition, three in 10 Latino and Black people know someone who had died of COVID-19, compared with 17 percent of white people and 12 percent of Asian people ([UAS USC 4/1/20-3/30/21](#)).

### Lost “Life Years”

A new analysis calculates the number of “life years” lost due to COVID-19 – a statistic that takes life expectancy as well as mortality into account (e.g., if a person with a life expectancy of 80 dies at 60, they have lost 20 “life years”). It finds that in 2020 alone, the coronavirus caused an estimated loss of nearly 5.5 million years of life in the United States. That’s more than the number lost in a typical year to all accidents combined, including traffic accidents, drowning, firearm accidents, drug overdoses and other poisonings.

Looked at another way, the average COVID-19 death in the United States in 2020 resulted in a loss of 14 life years, somewhat lower than the average number of years lost per diabetes and cancer death (17 years each), and far fewer than the number of years lost per accidental death (31 years) ([Pew](#)).

### Suicide Attempts

A CDC report finds that suspected suicide attempts increased sharply among teenage girls during the pandemic. The authors analyzed trends in National Syndromic Surveillance Program data, finding that the mean weekly number of emergency department (ED) visits for suspected suicide attempts increased 26 percent among girls age 12-17 in July-August 2020 and 51 percent in February-March 2021, compared with the same periods in 2019. Among teenage boys, visits for suspected suicide attempts increased by 4 percent in February-March 2021.

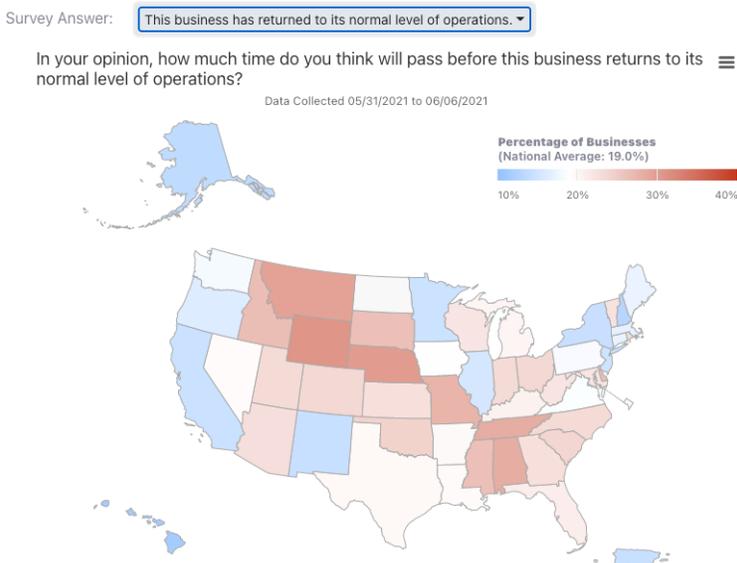
The NSSP data include approximately 71 percent of the nation’s emergency departments in 49 states (all except Hawaii). Results were restricted to EDs that reported consistently throughout the study period and had at least one or more visits for suspected suicide attempts (41 percent of those that reported consistently). The authors stress that a comprehensive approach to reduce suicide risk is needed, including training for community and school staff on how to detect and respond to suicide risk, increasing adolescents’ social connectedness and coping skills, and boosting economic supports for families ([CDC 1/1/19-5/15/21](#)).

### Government Response

Sixty-eight percent of Americans approve of how President Biden is handling the pandemic, including 43 percent of Republicans, 57 percent of independents and 95 percent of Democrats ([AP-NORC 6/10-6/14](#)). Six in 10 continue to support the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 stimulus plan passed earlier this year, essentially unchanged since April ([Monmouth 6/9-6/14](#)).

### State Results

The small business climate shows substantial statewide variability. For example, the number reporting that they've returned to their normal level of operations peaks in Wyoming and Nebraska (both 30 percent), Montana (29 percent), Tennessee and Alabama (28 percent) and Missouri (27 percent); it drops lower in many states in the Northeast and West as well as Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The share reporting it'll take more than six months to reach normal operations is highest in Hawaii (50 percent), Puerto Rico (46 percent), New Jersey and Alaska (both 44 percent).



The share reporting an increase in the number of hours worked by paid employees is highest in Alaska and New Hampshire (both 20 percent), North Dakota and Wyoming (both 19 percent), South Dakota, Nebraska and Wisconsin (all 18 percent). The share reporting fewer paid hours peaks in Hawaii (16 percent) and Oregon (15 percent) ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/31-6/6](#)).

Just 4.4 percent of small businesses nationally say that in the past week they required employees to have proof of COVID-19 vaccination before physically coming to work. That jumps to 19 percent in Puerto Rico, far more than in any state. It's 8 percent in California and New York, 7 percent in New Jersey and 6 percent in Maryland and Oregon ([U.S. Census Bureau 5/31-6/6](#)).

### Global Impact on Workers

A poll in 116 countries on the state of the “global workplace” finds that 53 percent of workers overall temporarily stopped working at their job or business in 2020 as a result of the pandemic, half received less money than usual from their employer or business, 49 percent worked fewer hours and a third lost their job or business entirely. More broadly, 45 percent of people (workers and nonworkers alike) said their lives had been affected “a lot” by the pandemic.

Workers’ reports of negative emotions – worry, stress, anger and sadness – reached record highs in 2020 amid the pandemic. Forty-three percent globally reported experiencing a lot of stress the previous day, up from 38 percent in 2019; 41 percent experienced worry during a lot of the previous day, up from 35 percent; a quarter experienced sadness, up from 21 percent; and 24 percent experienced anger, up from 20 percent.

There was wide regional variability in these impacts. For example:

- Half or more in the Middle East and North Africa (54 percent), the United States and Canada (50 percent) and South Asia (49 percent) said their own life had been affected a lot by the pandemic. That dropped to 22 percent in Australia and New Zealand.
- In South Asia, half of workers said they lost a job or business and two-thirds had to temporarily stop working. In Western Europe, by contrast, just 6 percent of workers lost a job or business and a quarter temporarily stopped working.
- The number of employees reporting a decline in working hours peaked in sub-Saharan Africa (62 percent), Southeast Asia (61 percent) and Latin America and the Caribbean (57 percent), vs. a third or fewer in East Asia (33 percent), Australia and New Zealand (29 percent) and Western Europe (also 29 percent).
- Fifty-seven percent of employees in the United States and Canada reported experiencing a lot of stress in the past day, higher than any other region and up 8 points since 2019.
- The largest increases in daily worry occurred in Eastern Europe (+12 points), East Asia (+12 points) and the United States and Canada (+10 points). In contrast, worry decreased by 10 points in South Asia.
- Daily sadness increased by 10 points from 2019 to 2020 in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Eastern Europe, but decreased by 11 points in South Asia.

Globally, negative emotions increased more among women and younger employees than their counterparts. For example, in the United States and Canada, daily stress among female workers increased 11 points to 62 percent. And in Eastern Europe, the percentage of younger employees who reported experiencing anger in the previous day doubled from 2019 to 2020 ([Gallup](#)).

### Other International Results

In India, a third report having received at least one shot of a coronavirus vaccine, up from a quarter in late May. An additional 51 percent plan to get vaccinated, while 8 percent are undecided and 8 percent rule it out. In terms of potential barriers to uptake, a quarter disagree that vaccines are compatible with their religious beliefs and two in 10 say that the country in which the vaccine was manufactured would have an impact on their uptake. Fifty-three percent are afraid that they or someone in their family may catch the coronavirus, easing in recent weeks but about double its level in February. Roughly three-quarters think the government is handling the coronavirus situation well, improved since early May though still off this year's peak, 83 percent in February ([CVoter 6/16](#)).

In Chile, six in 10 have confidence in the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, up 11 points since April, and 56 percent trust the Sinovac vaccine, up 7 points. Confidence in the AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine, by contrast, is down 17 points to just 28 percent. About three-quarters (77 percent) of Chileans report having received at least one vaccine dose, including 59 percent who have gotten two doses. Five percent rule out getting the vaccine completely.

Views on the vaccine rollout generally are positive. About three-quarters are confident that there will be enough vaccines for everyone and that vaccines will be distributed in a timely manner. Fewer are confident the vaccines are effective at protecting against the coronavirus (50 percent) or will not have negative side effects (47 percent), and just 36 percent think they will bring an end to the pandemic. Forty-four percent support extending the country's "state of exception" past June 30, 23 percent prefer to maintain it until June 30 and 27 percent think it should end immediately. Fewer than half, 41 percent, approve of how the government is handling the pandemic, down from a peak of 58 percent in February ([Cadem 6/9-6/11](#)).

In Germany, six in 10 think the restrictions in their country are appropriate, up 21 points since early May. A quarter think they go too far and 13 percent say they don't go far enough. In terms of the country's vaccine rollout, roughly half (53 percent) support eliminating the prioritization of high-risk groups, vs. 43 percent opposed. Germans are roughly split on opening vaccinations to children age 12-15. Politically, the coronavirus no longer is the top issue among German voters – 28 percent cite the environment and climate protection, followed by 19 percent apiece for immigration, social justice issues and the pandemic ([ARD-Infratest 6/7-6/9](#)).

In Brazil, 46 percent say President Jair Bolsonaro is mainly responsible for the coronavirus crisis in the country, steady since late March. Fewer blame people who do not follow social distancing measures (17 percent), governors (15 percent) or mayors (8 percent). Among those who hold Bolsonaro responsible, 78 percent disapprove of how he's handled his job ([PoderData 6/7-6/9](#)).

In Russia, 17 percent say they're vaccinated against the coronavirus, up 6 points since April. An additional 38 percent would like to get vaccinated, leaving 42 percent who do not intend to get the vaccine. Among them, reasons include insufficient research (8 percent), fear of side effects (8 percent), lack of trust in the vaccine (5 percent) and seeing it as unnecessary (4 percent). Six in 10 Russians assess the country's mass vaccination campaign positively, and a similar share, 61 percent, think they'll be able to get vaccinated if they want to do so ([VCIOM 6/7](#)).

In the Netherlands, 55 percent of adults have received at least one shot of a vaccine, including 22 percent who've received two doses. An additional 11 percent have made an appointment and two in 10 say they're likely to do so, leaving 10 percent hesitant. Six in 10 adults think children age 12-17 should be vaccinated; this drops substantially for vaccination of children younger than 12.

Two-thirds support current coronavirus measures in the Netherlands, up from 56 percent in early May. Support for economic measures also has increased, up 8 points to 56 percent. At the same time, about two-thirds are in favor of loosening (47 percent) or ending (18 percent) restrictions altogether. In terms of adherence, 69 percent say they maintain 1.5 meters distance from others, down 25 points since January; and 38 percent wear a mask outdoors, down 29 points. Once restrictions are lifted, the Dutch are most looking forward to not having to wear masks anymore (67 percent), going to a restaurants (65 percent), taking vacations abroad (59 percent) and being able to touch or hug others (52 percent) ([I&O Research 6/4-6/7](#)).

In Canada, nearly six in 10 adults oppose (33 percent) or somewhat oppose (26 percent) allowing students who refuse to get a coronavirus vaccine to attend school in person. Opposition peaks at

69 percent of adults 55 and older, compared with just more than half of younger adults ([CTV/Nanos 5/5-6/2](#)).

In Great Britain, eight in 10 have received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine and more than half (55 percent) have received two doses. While vast majorities continue to wear a face masks when outside of their home (96 percent) and wash their hands when returning from a public place (86 percent), adherence to other social distancing measures has eased. Sixty-eight percent say they maintained social distance with people outside of their home in the past week, down 6 points since late May and 20 points since early April, before lockdown restrictions eased. Seventy-two percent avoided physical contact with people outside their home, down from 85 percent in early April. Sixty-five percent say they met with people outside their household outdoors in the past week, up 12 points since last week. Half say they met someone indoors, essentially unchanged since late May ([Office for National Statistics 6/2-6/6](#)).

In additional results from a mid-May poll in Japan (also [covered here](#)), 47 percent of adults say they would get vaccinated immediately if it became available at no cost. An additional 40 percent would wait and see, 6 percent would not get it and 5 percent already have received it. Two-thirds say the government is largely responsible for the country's lagging vaccine rollout and about half think the government hasn't put much effort into the vaccination effort. Most, 67 percent, rate the government's handling of COVID-19 poorly; 61 percent lack trust in Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga to handle the pandemic ([Asahi Shimbun 5/15-5/16](#)).

In the Philippines, in additional results from a late-April/mid-May poll, three-quarters of adults said they always used a face mask when outside of their homes in the past month, 67 percent reported always washing their hands several times a day, 58 percent said they always kept physically distanced from other people outside their homes and 53 percent reported having always used a face shield in public places, each little changed from September 2020. The poll, also covered in [last week's summary](#), finds that face mask use and frequent hand washing were significantly lower among those less worried about catching COVID-19 ([SWS 4/28-5/2](#)).

In a late March poll, 63 percent of Ukrainian adults said they would get vaccinated against the coronavirus if it were free of charge, peaking at 71 percent of those older than 60. Among those who planned to get vaccinated, 83 percent said it was to avoid getting sick and 66 percent not to infect others. In deciding whether to get the vaccine, 64 percent said they trusted their family doctor in the decision, peaking at 72 percent of adults over 60. At the time of the poll, 71 percent considered the pandemic a threat to themselves and to their families ([InfoSapiens 3/20-3/25](#)).

In Israel, a study suggests that widespread vaccination of adults can help protect unvaccinated children. It found that, on average, for each 20-point increase in the share of 16- to 50-year-olds vaccinated in a community, the share of unvaccinated children younger than 16 to test positive for the virus fell by half. The study used data from Israel's second largest healthcare maintenance organization in 177 communities from Dec. 9, 2020, to March 9, 2021 ([Milman et al., 2021](#)).

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

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