



COVID-19 Survey Summary: May 6, 2022

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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Even with cases more than doubling in the past month, just about a third of Americans think the United States is facing a new wave of coronavirus infections, with concerns about the virus holding near their lowest since last summer and optimism about the pandemic's end still high.

Separately, as the FDA deliberates authorization of Moderna's vaccine for children younger than five, fewer than a fifth of parents with a child that age say they'd get their child vaccinated right away. Most say they don't have enough information about the vaccine's safety.

Surveys released this week also find steep declines in mask requirements in the workplace and in schools. Regardless, nearly nine in 10 workers say they personally feel safe from the virus and as many parents say the same for their children, albeit with broad racial/ethnic differences.

With nearly one million U.S. deaths recorded, one poll also shows racial and ethnic disparities in another area – knowing someone who died from the coronavirus, peaking at 71 percent among Black adults vs. 47 percent among whites.

A new report documents losses in student math achievement scores during the pandemic, particularly among students in high-poverty schools and those that were remote for most of the 2020-21 school year. Another finds a range from half to nearly two-thirds expressing trust in pandemic information from Joe Biden, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the FDA and the CDC, all down compared with December 2020, especially among Republicans.

A New York City poll also is included in this week's summary, along with international polls from Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Japan.

Concerns & Outlooks

New daily coronavirus cases have more than doubled nationwide since early April to about [65,000](#) per day, still far fewer than at the height of the Omicron surge but also likely an [undercount](#) given to increased reliance on at-home testing. Among Americans who've ever tested positive for the virus, one in five says it was via an at-home test ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

Hospitalizations linked to the virus have risen moderately in the past few weeks, while new coronavirus deaths have held steady after falling sharply since early February ([CDC](#)). Deaths, a lagging indicator, are [projected](#) to rise over the next four weeks for the first time in months.

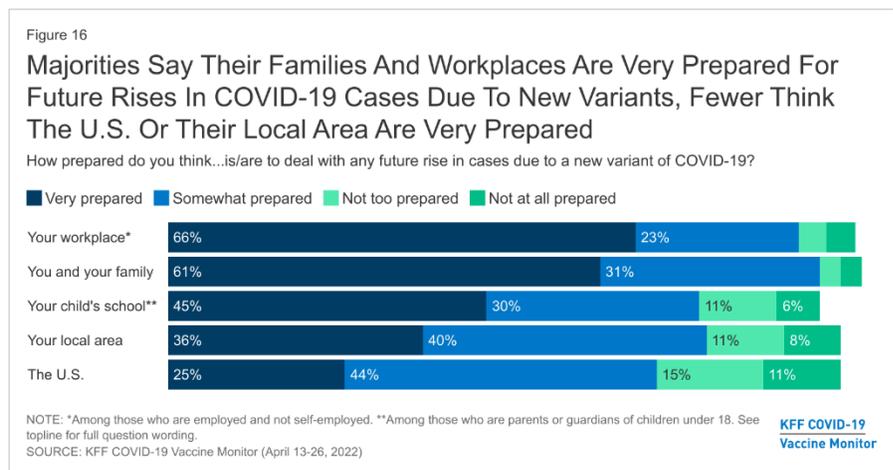
Despite those rising case counts, just 35 percent of Americans think a new wave of infections is hitting the United States; 50 percent don't think so and 14 percent are unsure. Few, 6 percent, have observed a rise in cases among the people they know in the past 30 days. Instead, 62 percent say they've seen fewer cases; 21 percent, about the same ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

Nearly half of registered voters say the coronavirus is completely (12 percent) or mostly (34 percent) controlled in the United States, up from about one in five in January to the most since a year ago. Forty percent say it's somewhat controlled, leaving 12 percent who say it's not at all under control, down from 41 percent in January.

As such, worries are comparatively low. Fifty-five percent of voters in one poll are extremely or very concerned about the pandemic, down from 72 percent in mid-January to the fewest in data since August ([Fox News 4/28-5/1](#)). In another, 38 percent of adults overall are very or moderately concerned about getting the coronavirus, down from 55 percent in mid-January to the fewest since July ([CDC 4/17-4/23](#)). And 92 percent feel at least somewhat protected from getting seriously ill with the virus, including six in 10 who feel very well protected ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

As in previous polls, few consider the coronavirus the most important issue facing the country. It's named as a top issue by 5 percent, vs. 50 percent who cite the economy ([CNN 4/28-5/1](#)). Seventy-three percent, moreover, are generally optimistic that the United States is nearing the end of the pandemic, unchanged since February ([NPR-PBS-Marist 4/19-4/26](#)).

Looking ahead, 61 percent say they and their families are very prepared for a future rise in cases due to a new variant; 66 percent of employed adults say the same for their workplace. Fewer parents, 45 percent, think their child's school is very prepared; 36 percent of adults overall say the same for their local area and just 25 percent say so for the United States in general ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).



Government Response & Policy

Approval of Biden's handling of the pandemic is 53-42 percent in one poll, 51-43 percent in a second, 51-48 percent in a third and 49-47 percent among registered voters in a fourth, each up

from career lows in January and February ([NPR-PBS-Marist 4/19-4/26](#), [ABC News/Washington Post 4/24-4/28](#), [CNN 4/28-5/1](#), [Fox News 4/28-5/1](#)).

Forty-seven percent of adults think the U.S. government is doing about the right amount to control the spread of the virus, with the rest splitting between saying it's doing too much (26 percent) or too little (27 percent) ([CNN 4/28-5/1](#)). Going forward, more think the Democratic Party will do a better job dealing with the coronavirus than the Republican Party, 37 vs. 25 percent, steady since October ([NPR-PBS-Marist 4/19-4/26](#)).

In terms of mask policy, 51 percent of registered voters “think it is time to remove mask mandates” for travelers on airplanes, trains and buses, up 12 points since late February; 45 percent think it's not yet time. Results are similar to a poll covered [last week](#).

Sixty-three percent of voters think it's better to keep immigration restrictions that “enable the U.S. to block migrants from entering the country based on public health concerns” in place than to remove them ([Fox News 4/28-5/1](#)). In another poll, 57 percent of adults overall say it's not the right time to end restrictions “that allowed U.S. border officials to turn migrants who have reached the United States, including those seeking asylum, back to Mexico or their home countries immediately because of the public health crisis” ([CNN 4/28-5/1](#)).

Vaccines

Three-quarters of adults report having received at least one vaccine dose, largely steady since November and similar to other [recent polls](#). Forty-seven percent of adults overall report having received at least one booster dose, including 73 percent of those likely to be eligible.

Estimates from the [CDC](#), based on administrative data reported to the agency, remain very different, estimating initial uptake among adults at 89 percent and booster uptake at 49 percent among fully vaccinated adults. The agency notes troubles linking first, second and third doses due to deidentified data.

In polling results, initial booster uptake has levelled off since February. Among vaccinated adults who are eligible for a booster shot but have yet to get one, 56 percent say it's because they feel they have enough protection from their initial vaccination or a prior infection, 45 percent say they don't want one and 39 percent don't think boosters are effective ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

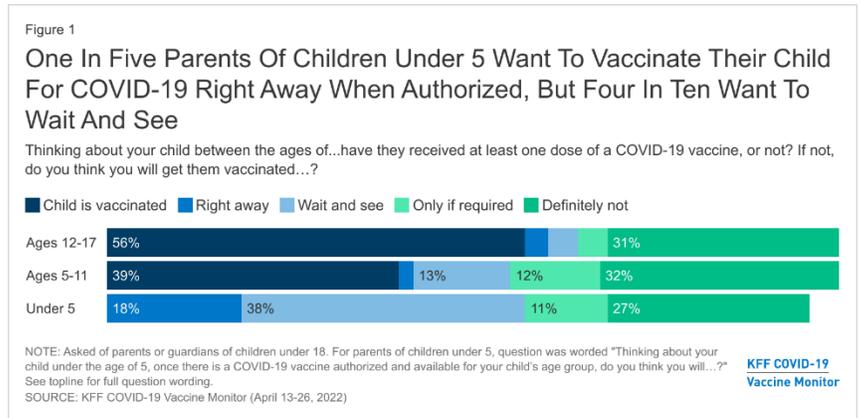
Vaccinations Among Children & Adolescents

Fifty-six percent of parents with children age 12-17 say their child has been vaccinated, steady since January. Fewer parents with children age 5-11, 39 percent, say the same, up gradually since it was authorized in late October.

Moderna requested FDA authorization for its vaccine for children younger than five last [week](#). Before the request, few parents with children that age, 18 percent, planned to get their child vaccinated right away once authorized. A plurality, 38 percent, planned to wait and see how it

works. Eleven percent said they'd only get their child vaccinated if it were required and 27 percent ruled it out altogether.

Fifty-six percent of parents with a child younger than five said they do not have enough information about the safety and effectiveness of the coronavirus vaccines for children that age. Sixty-four percent also said the FDA's decision to [delay authorization](#) of the vaccine for young children did not impact their confidence in the vaccine's safety. Of the rest, slightly more said the delay made them more rather than less confident, 22 vs. 13 percent ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).



Employment

Job growth remained strong last month, with the U.S. economy adding 428,000 jobs in preliminary data, about matching revised estimates of March job growth. At 3.6 percent, April's unemployment rate approached its level in February 2020 (3.5 percent), regaining more than [90 percent](#) of jobs lost at the onset of the pandemic.

Other pandemic impacts continue to wane. Last month, 7.7 percent of employed adults said they teleworked because of the pandemic, down from 10.0 percent in March; the equivalent of 1.7 million said they were unable to work because their employer closed or lost business due to the pandemic, down from 2.5 million; and the equivalent of 586,000 said they were prevented from looking for work because of the pandemic, down from 874,000 ([BLS 5/6](#)).

Chart 1. Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, April 2019 – April 2022

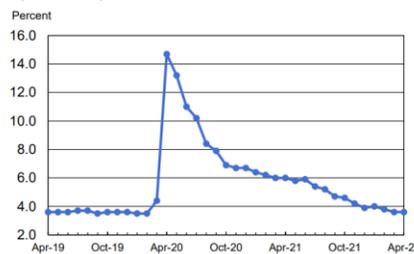
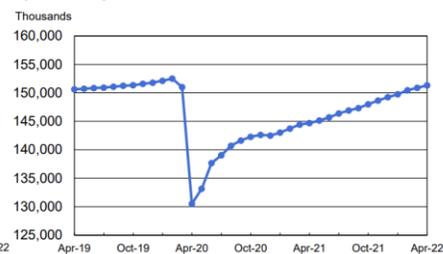


Chart 2. Nonfarm payroll employment, seasonally adjusted, April 2019 – April 2022



Nearly nine in 10 employed people who work outside their home feel very (55 percent) or somewhat (33 percent) safe from the coronavirus while at their workplace. Sixty-three percent of white workers feel very safe, compared with 48 percent of Hispanic workers and 31 percent of Black workers. Higher-income adults and those who work in office settings also are more apt than their counterparts to feel very safe.

Most no longer regularly wear a mask at their workplace, including 43 percent who report never having worn a mask at work in the past month and 19 percent who did so only some of the time. Thirty-eight percent wear a mask always or most of the time. Again there are differences among

demographic groups, with Black, Hispanic and lower-income workers more apt to wear a mask than white and higher-income workers ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

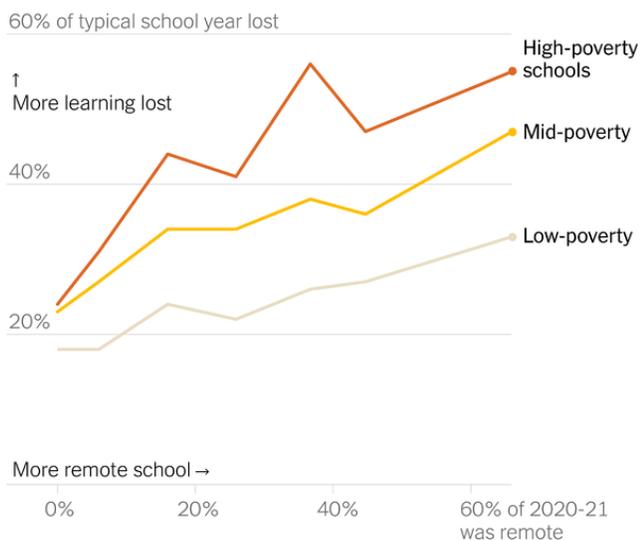
Back in January, [59 percent](#) of workers whose job could be done at home said they worked from home all or most of the time. Newly released results from the same survey find that two-thirds of these workers often used video calling or online conferencing services; an additional 17 percent did so sometimes, 7 percent hardly ever and 11 percent never. Seventy-four percent said they were “fine” with the amount of time they spent on video calls ([Pew 1/24-1/30](#)).

K-12 Education

Eighty-four percent of parents think their child is at least somewhat safe from exposure to the coronavirus while at school, though only about half as many feel their child is very safe. Black and Hispanic parents are less apt than white parents to feel their child is very safe from the coronavirus, 33 vs. 55 percent.

The share of parents who say their child’s school requires all students and staff to wear masks has fallen steeply since the start of the 2021-22 school year, from 69 percent to 16 percent. A third of parents whose child is not required to wear a mask say their child usually wears one at school regardless.

Learning loss in math from fall 2019 to fall 2021



School policies generally are well received: Seven in 10 parents think their child’s school is doing about the right amount to protect kids from the coronavirus, vs. too much (11 percent) or not enough (18 percent) ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)). Eighty-two percent agree that their child’s school has handled the pandemic well and 88 percent agree their child’s teachers have done the best they could given pandemic circumstances ([Ipsos-NPR 4/7-4/13](#)).

Pandemic Learning Loss

Schools that held mainly remote learning in 2020-21 sustained larger declines in student math achievement than those operating mainly in person, according to an analysis of testing data from 2.1 million students in grades 3-8 in 49 states and Washington, D.C. Students who spent most of their time learning remotely in 2020-21 lost about 50 percent of a typical year’s worth of math learning in the pandemic period, with greater time spent learning remotely associated with greater learning loss.

The negative effects of remote learning were more pronounced in high-poverty schools, and such schools spent more weeks in remote instruction in 2020-21 than low-poverty schools, further widening achievement gaps ([NYT 5/5](#), [Harvard University](#), [NWEA](#)).

A survey finds that parents' assessments of their child's school progress have improved in the second year of the pandemic. Roughly nine in 10 parents say their child is on track or ahead of where they should be in math and science, reading and writing, socialization and communication skills and mental health, each up 5 to 11 points compared with February 2021. Seventy-one percent disagree with the statement "my child dislikes school more now than before the COVID-19 pandemic," up from 61 percent in February 2021 ([Ipsos-NPR 4/7-4/13](#)).

Information Sources

Doctors are most trusted when it comes to providing reliable information about coronavirus vaccines, with 85 percent of Americans expressing at least a fair amount of trust in their personal doctor. About as many parents, 83 percent, trust their child's pediatrician.

Majorities have at least a fair amount of trust in vaccine information from the CDC (64 percent) and the FDA (62 percent), while roughly half trust state government officials (54 percent), Dr. Anthony Fauci (53 percent) and Biden (49 percent). Trust in the CDC, FDA, Fauci and Biden has declined since December 2020, particularly among Republicans ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#)).

Coronavirus Deaths & Excess Mortality

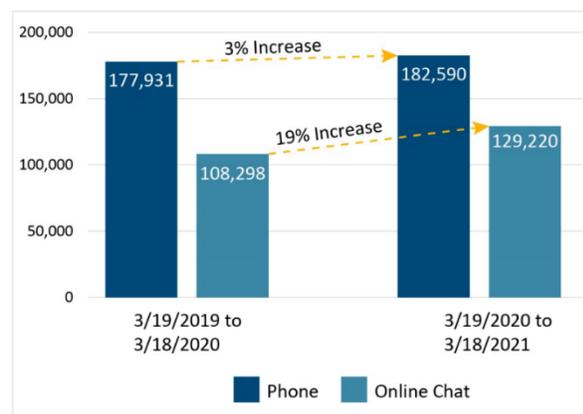
The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 14.9 million excess deaths occurred worldwide in 2020 and 2021, either directly from the coronavirus or indirectly from the pandemic's broader impacts (e.g., on healthcare access, among other impacts). That compares with 5.4 million officially reported coronavirus deaths during this time ([WHO 5/5](#)).

With the United States nearing [one million](#) coronavirus deaths, the share of Americans who report personally knowing someone who died from the virus ranges from 43 percent in one poll to 52 percent in another ([KFF 4/13-4/26](#), [NPR-PBS-Marist 4/19-4/26](#)). One reports large disparities by race and ethnicity, ranging from 71 percent of Black people and 57 percent of Hispanics to 47 percent of whites ([NPR-PBS-Marist 4/19-4/26](#)). As noted [last week](#), age-adjusted coronavirus death rates are higher among Indigenous Americans, Latinos, Pacific Islanders and Black people compared with whites and Asians.

Domestic Violence

An analysis of data from the National Domestic Violence Hotline finds little change in the number of contacts who reached out by phone in the first year of the pandemic, but more via online chat – up 19 percent from pre-pandemic levels. The report hypothesizes that victims in close proximity to their abusers may have preferred a more private option to contact

Figure 2: Communication Methods for the Periods Before and During the Pandemic



the hotline, but also notes that the use of online chat has grown rapidly since it was introduced six years ago ([OIG 4/27](#)).

Local Results

Seven in 10 New York City registered voters say riders on mass transit should be required to wear masks and 77 percent say they'll do so even if not required. Two-thirds are confident the city's economy will fully recover from the pandemic, though only a quarter are very confident. Only 2 percent call the coronavirus the most urgent issue facing the city, tied for last in a list of 10 items. More approve than disapprove of how Mayor Eric Adams is handling the pandemic, 53-37 percent ([Quinnipiac 4/28-5/2](#)).

International Results

In Chile, concern about catching the coronavirus increased 6 points in a week, to 32 percent, after falling to its lowest since the onset of the pandemic. That's still far below its peak during the Omicron surge, 61 percent ([Cadem 4/27-4/29](#)).

A third of Brazilians think the pandemic is over; 57 percent think not. Forty-seven percent of those who approve of President Jair Bolsonaro think the pandemic has ended, compared with 24 percent of those who disapprove of his work ([PoderData 4/24-4/26](#)).

In Mexico, just 6 percent call the coronavirus the most important problem facing the country, down from 22 percent in January to the fewest in data since December 2020. Seven in 10 say the government has done a good job handling the vaccination rollout, largely steady since the start of the year ([El Financiero 4/1-4/2, 4/22-4/24](#)).

In Japan, 33 percent are worried about a potential seventh wave of coronavirus infection; 50 percent are concerned, but not as much as earlier in the pandemic; and 17 percent are not concerned. The public splits, 35-34 percent, on the coronavirus measures implemented by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, with 31 percent undecided. About two-thirds report having received a booster shot and an additional 14 percent say they'll get one soon ([Mainichi Shimbun 4/23](#)).

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

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