

Experiences of Families During COVID-19



Addiction and Mental Health SCN, April 2022



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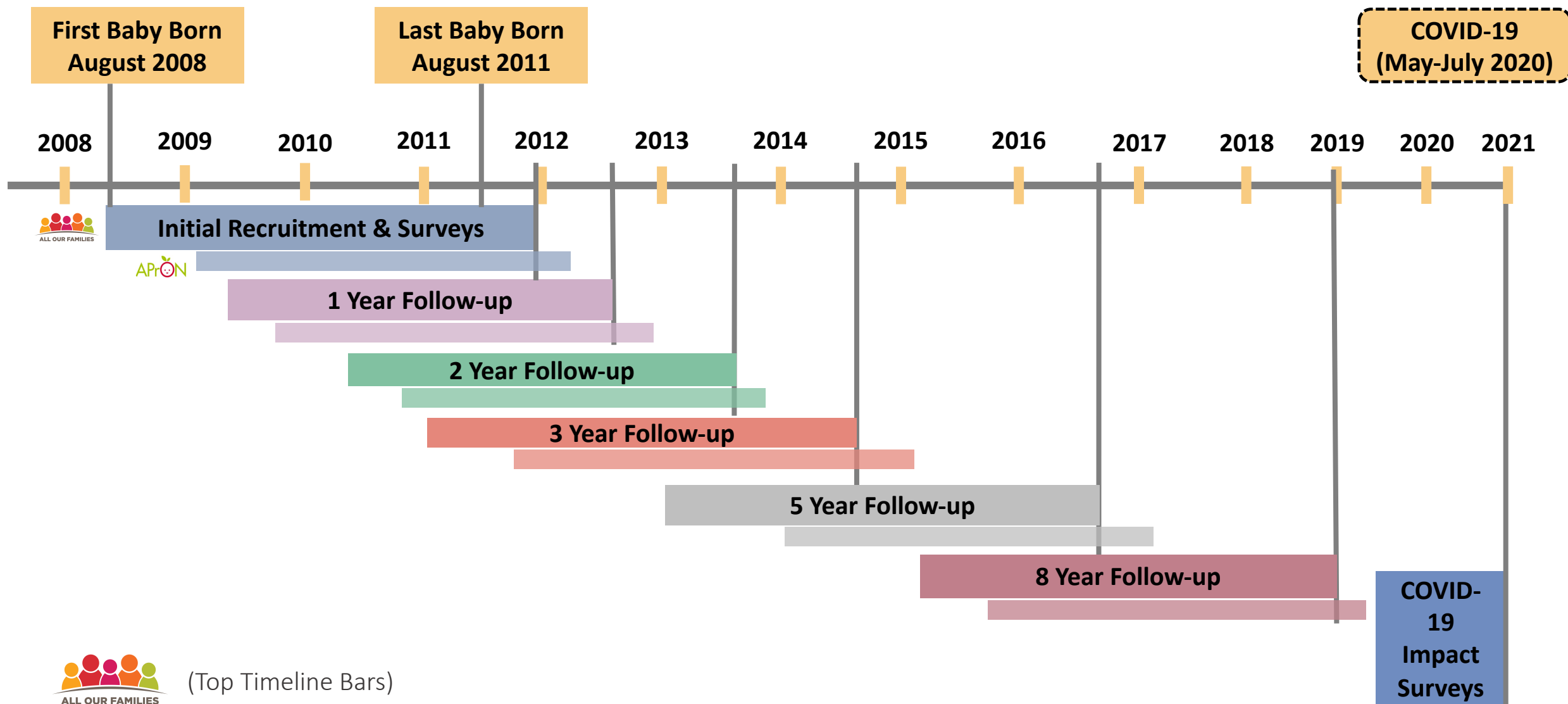
Learning Objectives

To better understand...

1. How families are coping mentally, socially and financially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. How youth are experiencing the pandemic in terms of sleep, screen time and mental health.
3. Individual, family, and community-based strategies to build resilience during the pandemic.



All Our Families Study Timeline



(Top Timeline Bars)

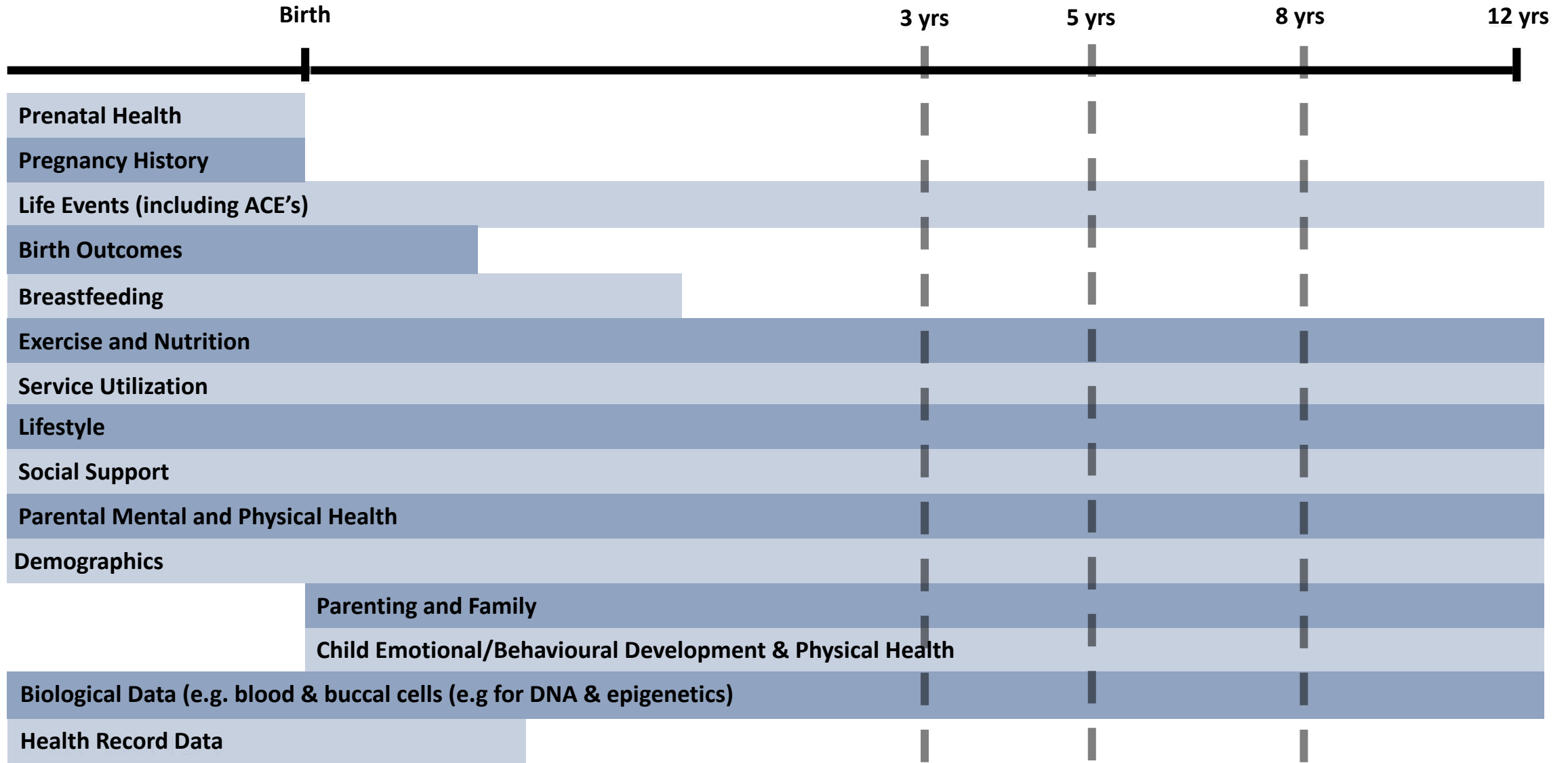


Alberta Pregnancy
Outcomes and Nutrition

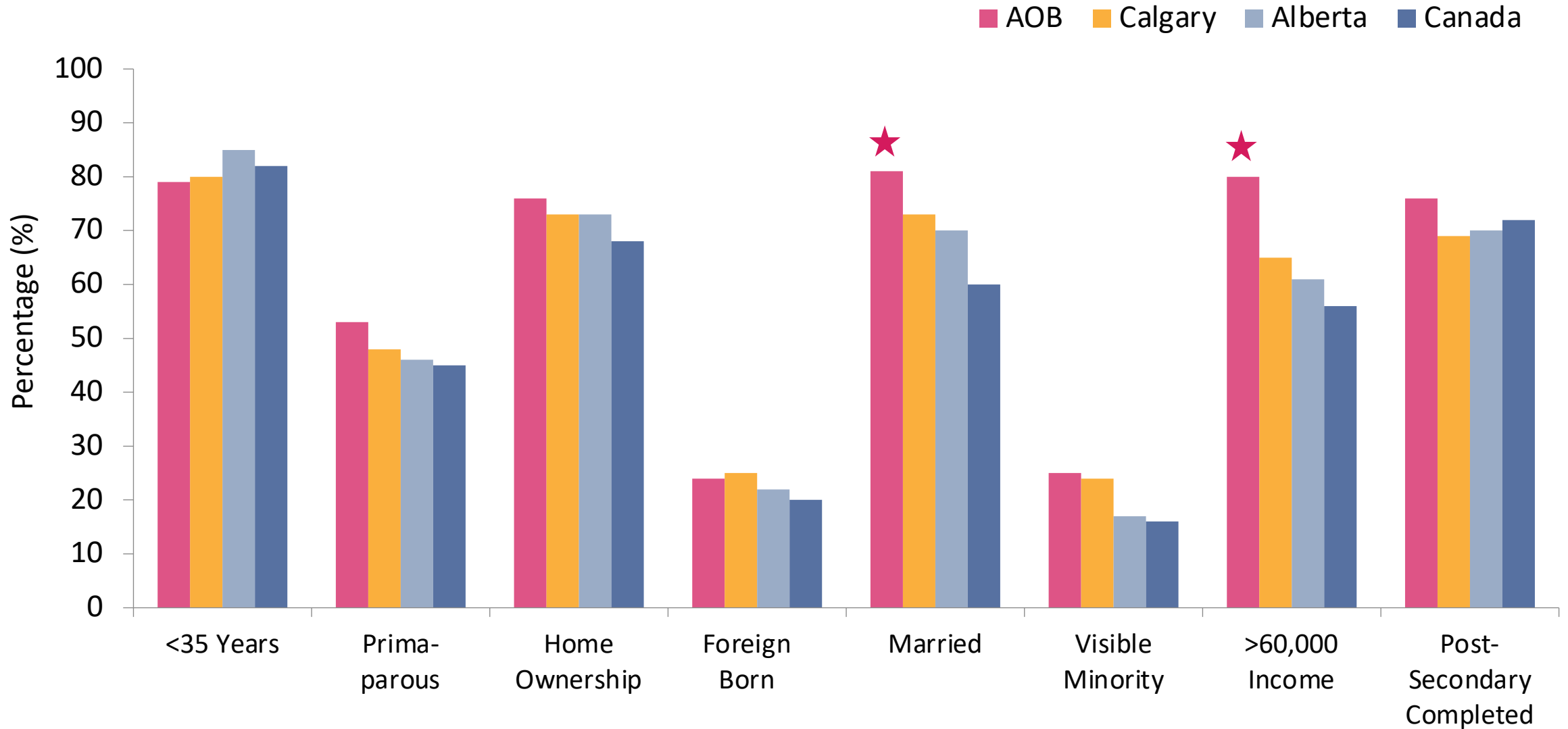
(Bottom Timeline Bars)



All Our Families Study Data

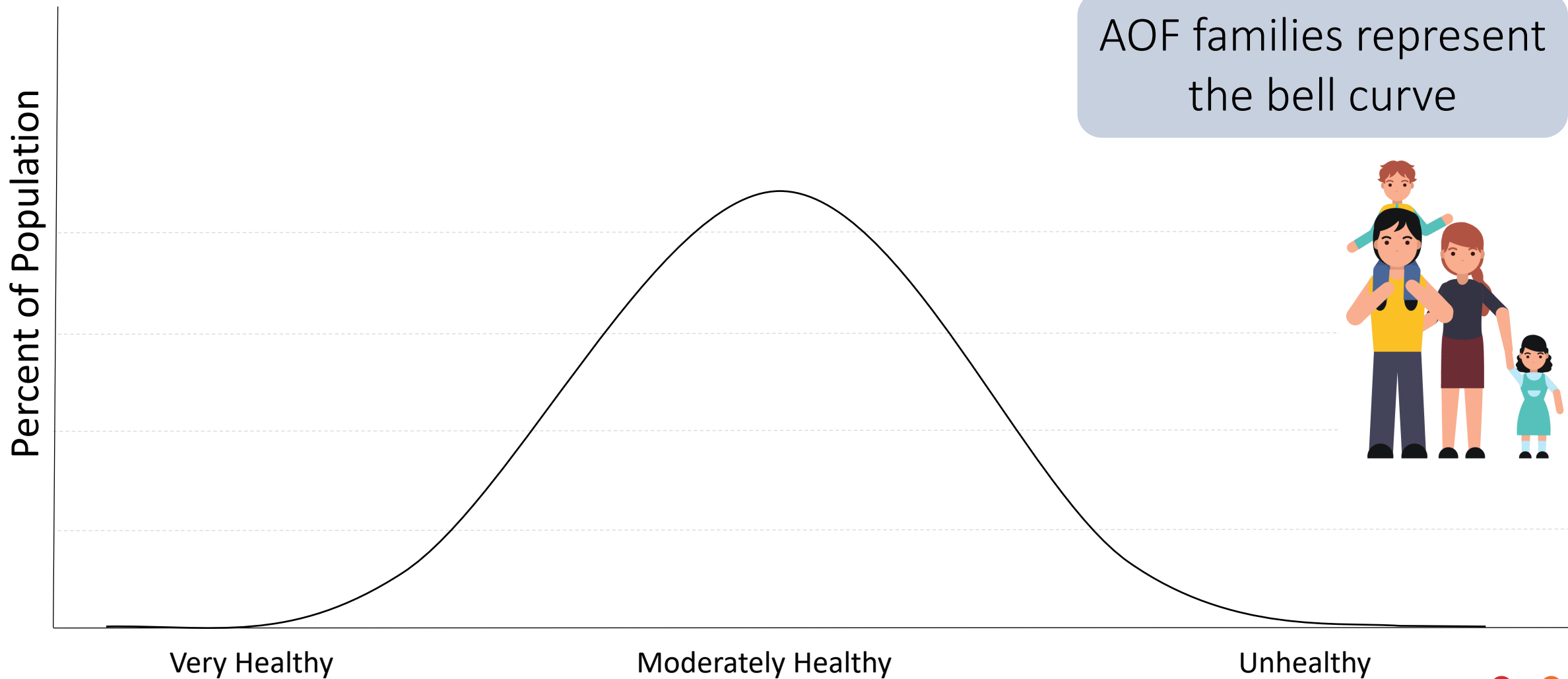


AOF Demographic Comparisons



Population Health Perspective

AOF families represent the bell curve



COVID-19 in Alberta (Year 1)



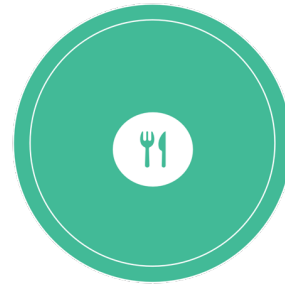
March 5, 2020
First COVID-19 Case



March 15, 2020
State of Emergency
All in-person school cancelled



April 23, 2020
COVID-19 Peak
Gathings >15 people restricted



May 13, 2020
Relaunch #1
Restaurants and retailers may re-open



June 12, 2020
Relaunch #2
Additional businesses (e.g., theatres, libraries) may re-open



September, 2020
Public Schools Open
7 schools report COVID outbreaks by mid-Sept



December 8, 2020
Business Closures (e.g., fitness, hair dresser, social venues)



December 15, 2020
COVID-19 Vaccines Provided to healthcare workers

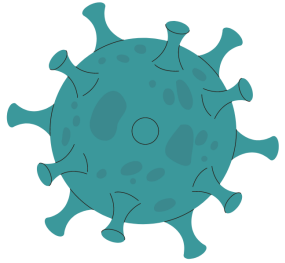


March 8, 2021
Some sport, performance, retail, library and event allowances



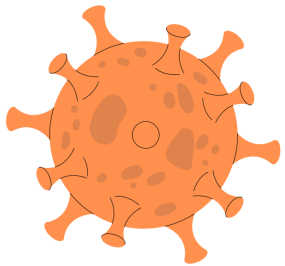
April 29, 2021
Closure of schools (move on-line) and indoor gyms "Stay Home"

COVID-19 Surveys (Maternal and Child Response)



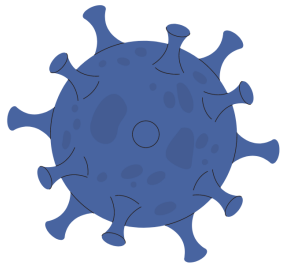
Survey 1: May – June 2020

- Mothers (N=1815)
- Youth (N=893)



Survey 2: March – April 2021

- Mothers (N=1361)
- Youth (N=1045)



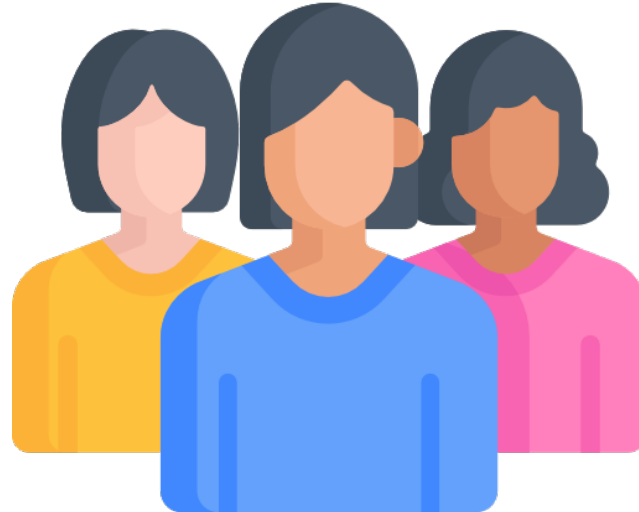
Survey 3: Nov 2021 – Jan 2022

- Mothers (N=1280)
- Youth (N=1034)



What Did Mom's Tell Us?

(Maternal Survey Results)



Financial Impacts



35%

Of Mothers Lost Their Job or Had Their Hours Reduced in the First Year of the Pandemic

35%

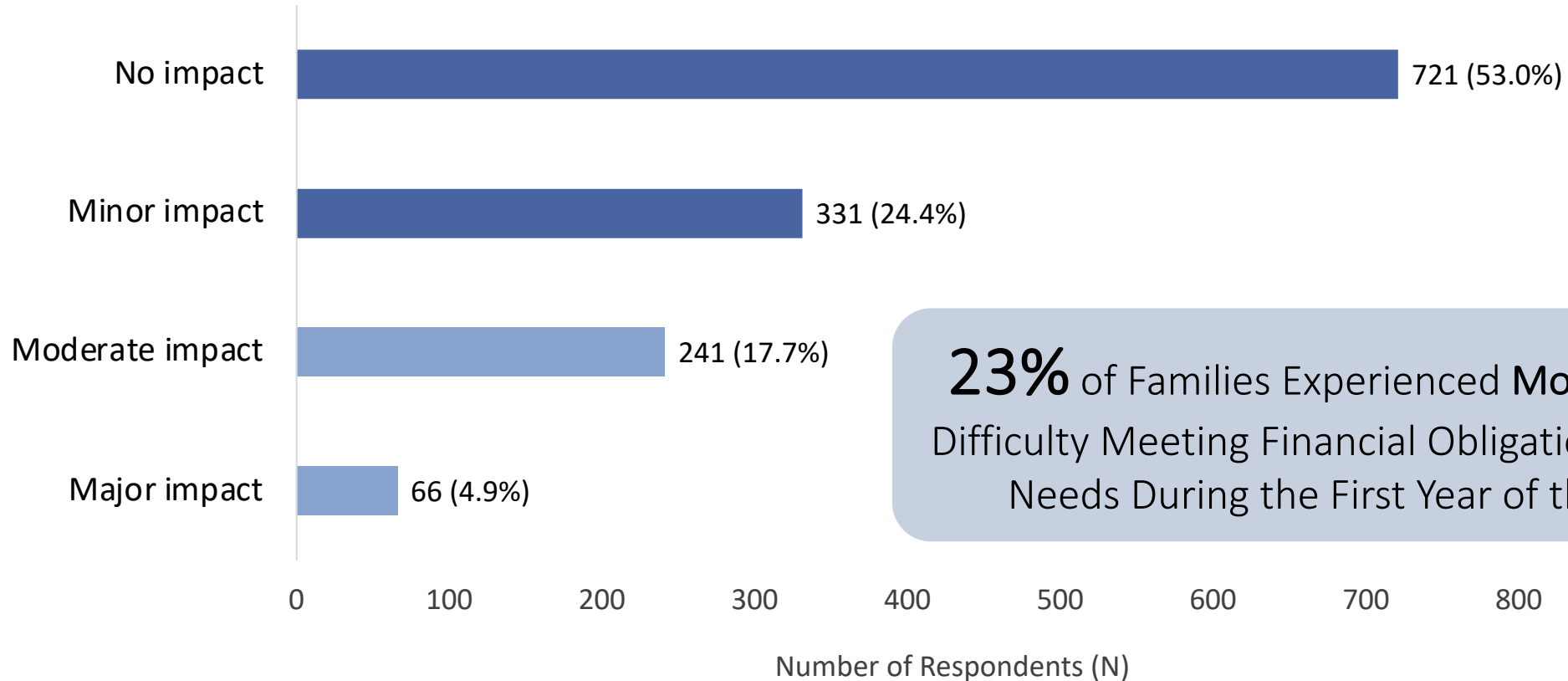
Of Partners Lost Their Job or Had Their Hours Reduced in the First Year of the Pandemic

15%

Of Families saw Both Partners Lose Their Job in the First Year of the Pandemic

Financial Impacts

Impact of COVID-19 on Ability to Meet Financial Obligations:



23% of Families Experienced **Moderate to Major** Difficulty Meeting Financial Obligations and Essential Needs During the First Year of the Pandemic



1% of families often and 6.6% sometimes experienced **food insecurity** during the first year of the pandemic

Maternal Mental Health



↑ **Depression** (next slide, 15% → 33%)

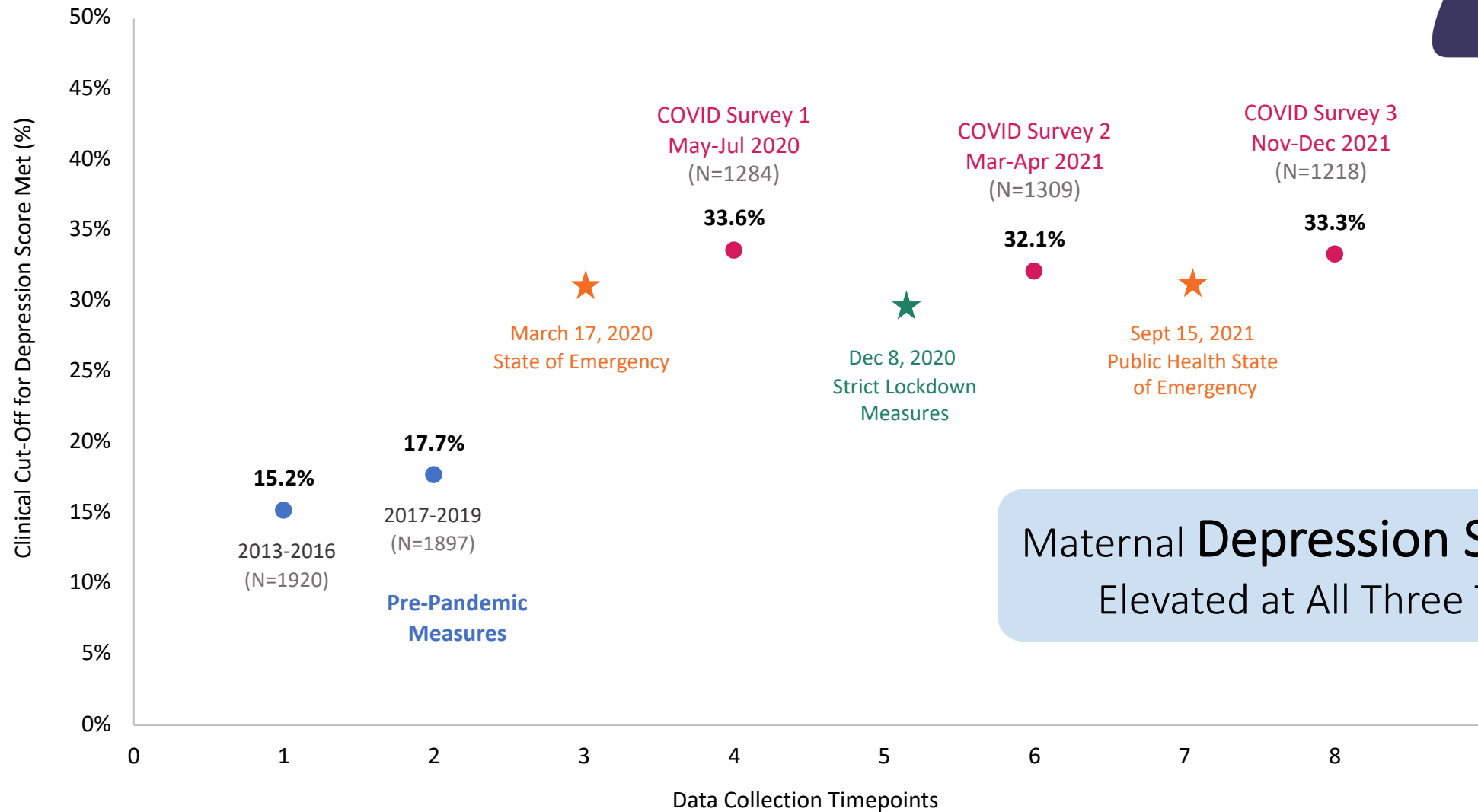
2x

↑ **Anxiety** (following slide, 11% → 34%)

3x

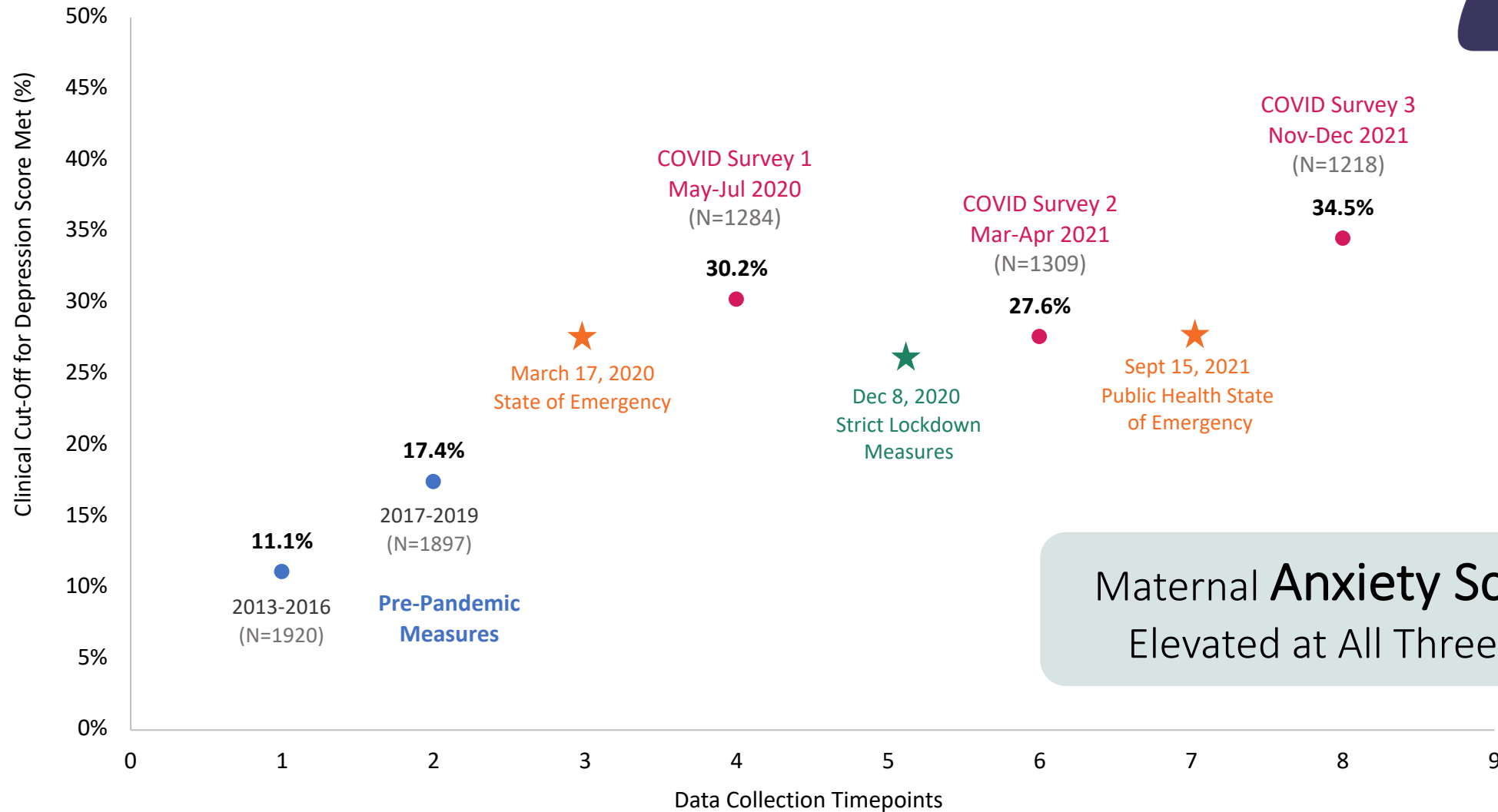
- Stress perception was slightly higher than population norms (mean 15.2 (SD 6.9) at Time 2, adult norms 12-14 depending on age (SD 6))
 - **18.6%** of mothers exhibited **high perceived stress** (scores >22)

Maternal Depression



Maternal Depression Scores Remain Elevated at All Three Time Points

Maternal Anxiety



Maternal Anxiety Scores Remain Elevated at All Three Time Points

Maternal Substance Use



Number of Mothers Who Reported Yes	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Currently consume alcohol	1262 (70.3)	847 (62.6)	771 (60.2)
Binge drink (>=4 drinks) at least once in the past month among drinkers	494 (39.7)	255 (30.3)	309 (24.2)
Use of cannabis in the past month	179 (10.0)	148 (10.9)	*
Use of recreational drugs, other than cannabis, in the past month	6 (0.3)	6 (0.4)	19 (1.5)

- Number of mothers consuming **alcohol decreased** from Time 1 (May-June 2020) (70%) to Time 2 (Mar-Apr 2021) (63%) to Time 3 (Nov 2021 – Jan 2022) (60%)
 - **Binge drinking also decreased** from Time 1 (40%) to Time 2 (30%) to Time 3 (24%)
- Approximately 10% of AOF mothers used cannabis (first year of pandemic)
 - Amount of cannabis use not captured at Times 1 and 2
- Very few mothers used recreational drugs (<1% in first year of the pandemic), but this value did triple at Time 3 (1.5%)

*297 (23.1%) of mothers used cannabis within the past year

- 158 (12.3%) less than monthly
- 35 (2.7%) about monthly
- 44 (3.4%) about weekly
- 60 (4.7%) 1+ times/day



WHY Did Mother's Use Cannabis?

1. To help relax (N=152, 11.9%)
2. To help **sleep** (N=151, 11.8%)
3. To help **pain** (N=79, 6.2%)
4. To help **anxiety** (N=97, 7.6%)
5. To help **depression** (N=30, 3.2%)
6. For enjoyment (N=142, 11.1%)

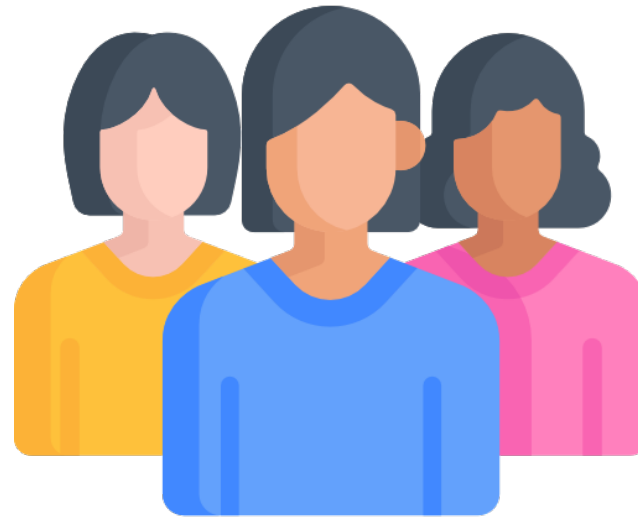


Mothers were asked to share a **strategy** that helped when times were difficult:

Exercise,
Get outside

Ask for help

Connect with
friends and
family



Meditation

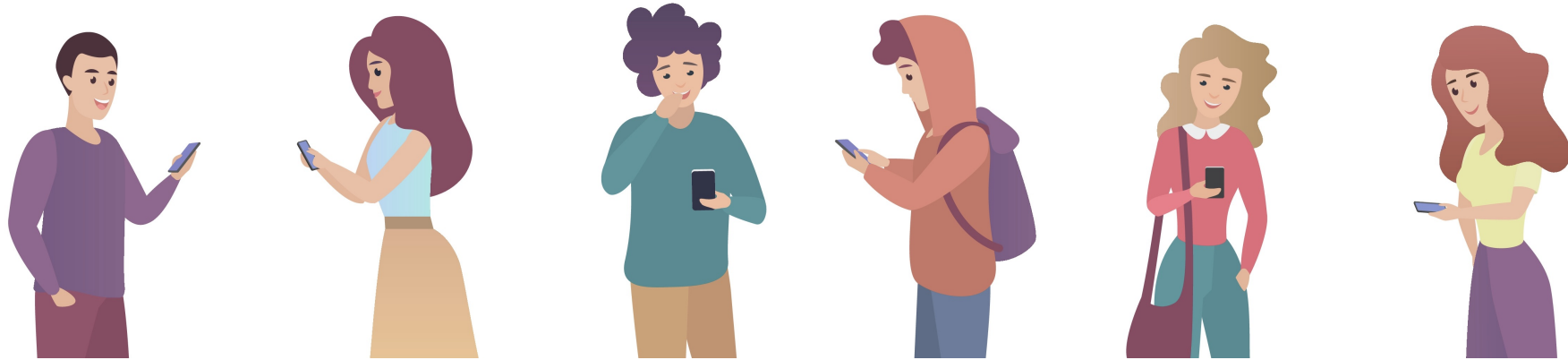
Counselling

Deep breaths and
time-outs away
from others

“Just keep going. You get up, you get dressed, you stay off social media, you avoid the news and “just keep swimming.””

What About Youth?

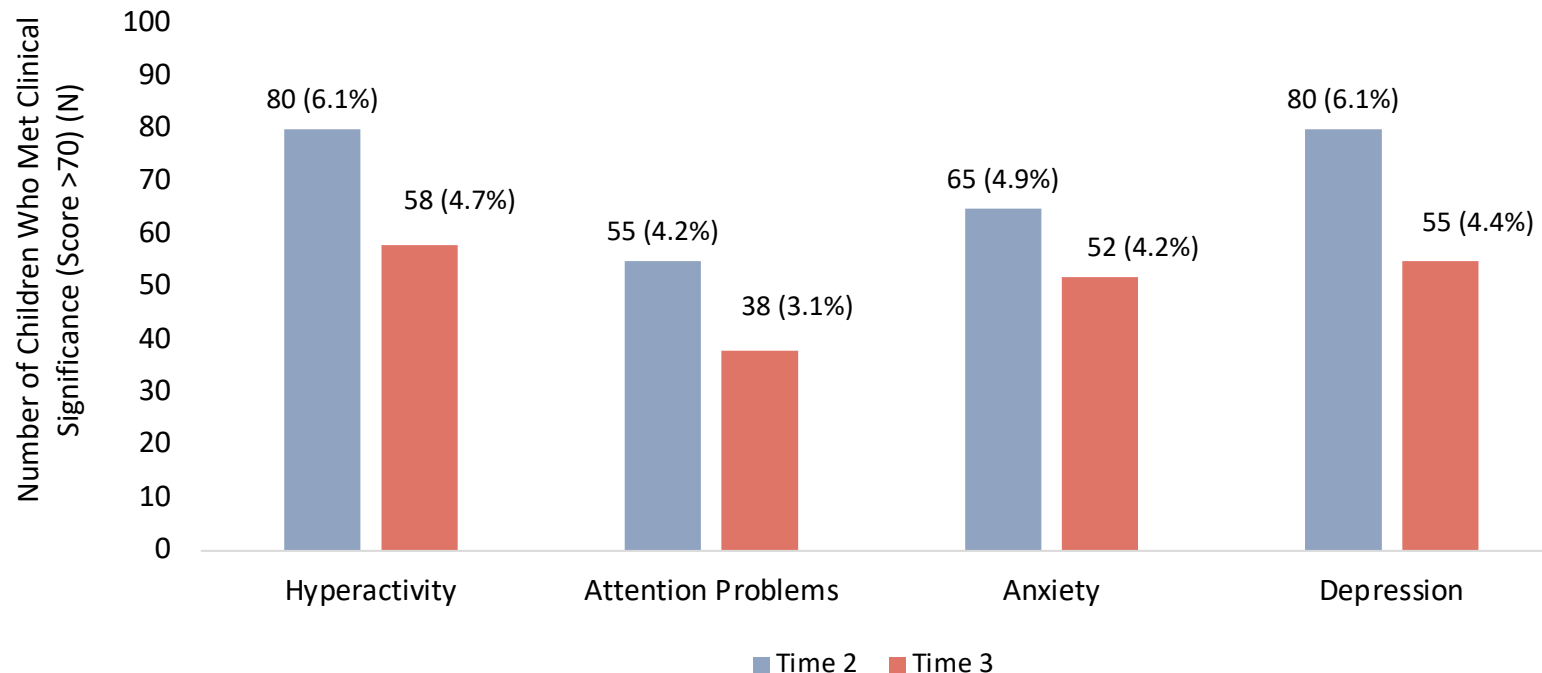
(Maternal and Youth Survey Results)



Youth Functioning (According to Mom)



- Fewer children met criteria for clinical significance on the BASC-3 at Time 3 (Nov 2021-Jan 2022) than at Time 2 (Mar-Apr 2021) (BASC3 not completed at Time 1)

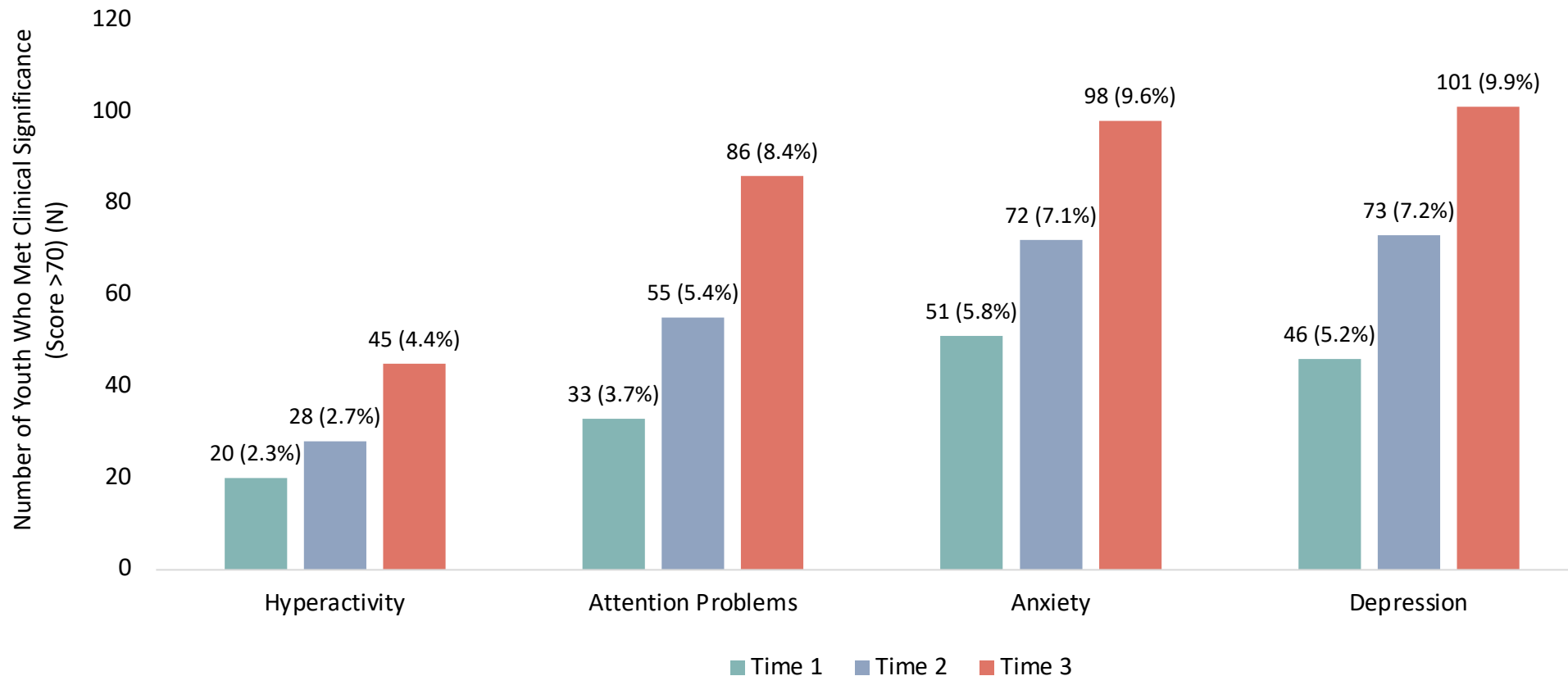


Youth Functioning (According to YOUTH)



	Sample Size (N)	Mean Age (SD)	Age Range (Years)
Time 1	893	10.3 (0.77)	9-11
Time 2	1027	10.9 (0.78)	9-12
Time 3	1034	11.6 (0.76)	10-13

MORE children met criteria for clinical significance on the BASC-3 at each progressive timepoint through the pandemic

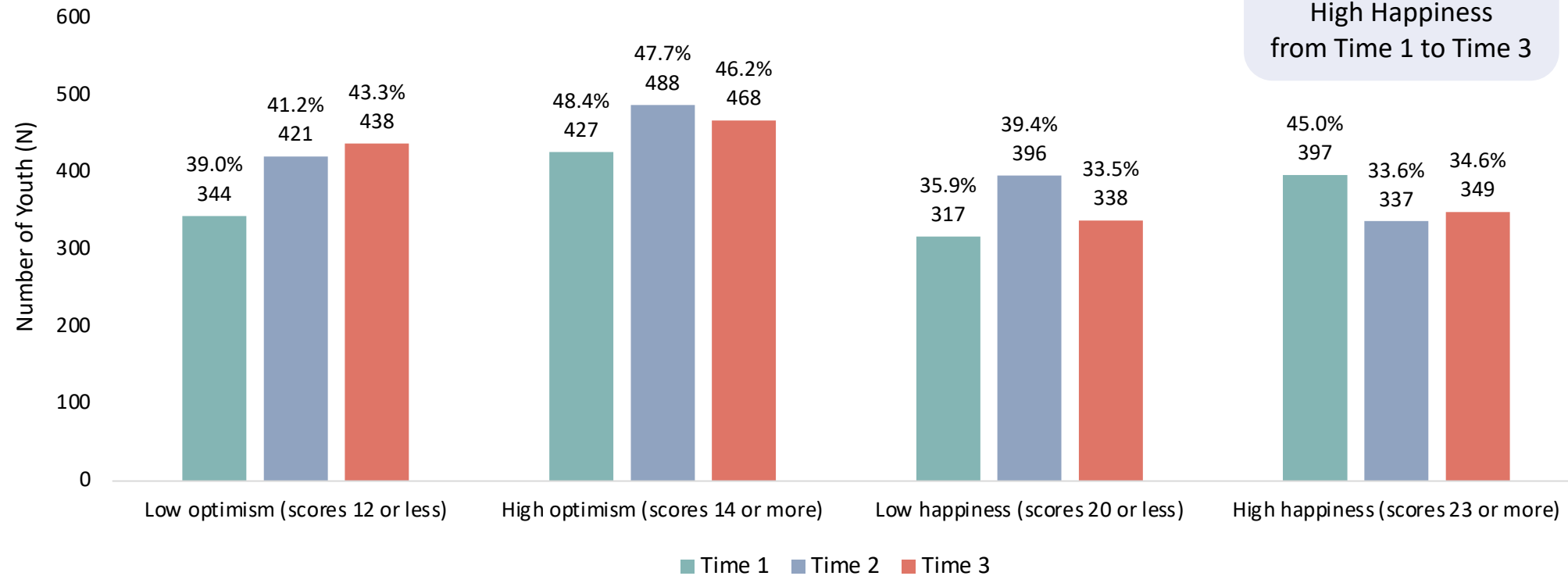


Youth Well-Being (According to Youth)

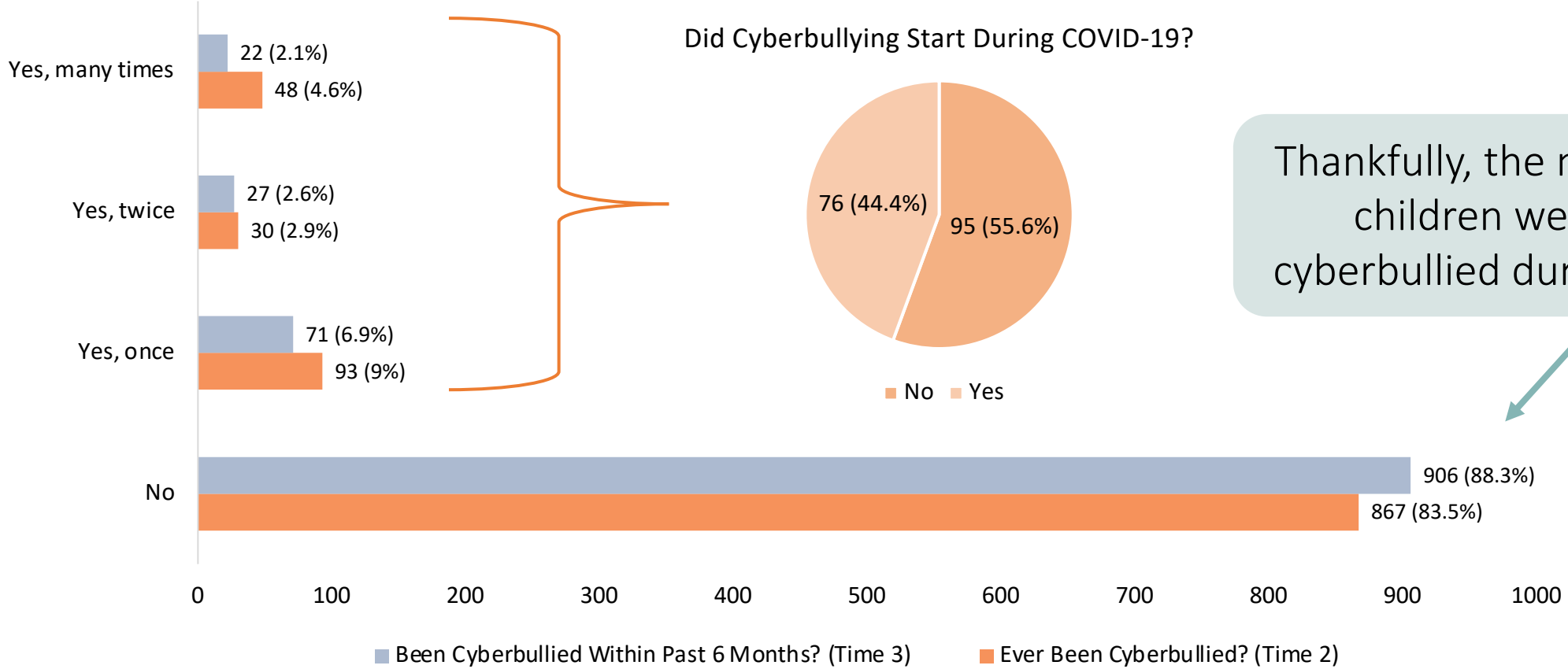


	Optimism		Happiness	
	Mean (SD)	Range	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Time 1	12.6 (2.5)	3-15	20.8 (4.2)	5-25
Time 2	12.5 (2.6)	3-15	20.5 (4.5)	5-25
Time 3	12.3 (2.9)	3-15	20.4 (4.7)	5-25

10% decrease in number of children in High Happiness from Time 1 to Time 3



Cyberbullying During COVID-19



Thankfully, the majority of children were not cyberbullied during COVID

Youth Screen Use (According to Mom)



YES

Child Meets Screen Use Guidelines

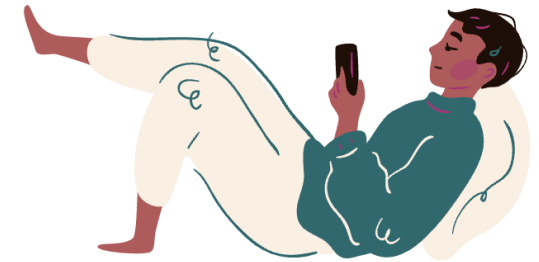
- Time 1 (28.1%)
- Time 2 (37.5%)
- Time 3 (30.7%)



NO

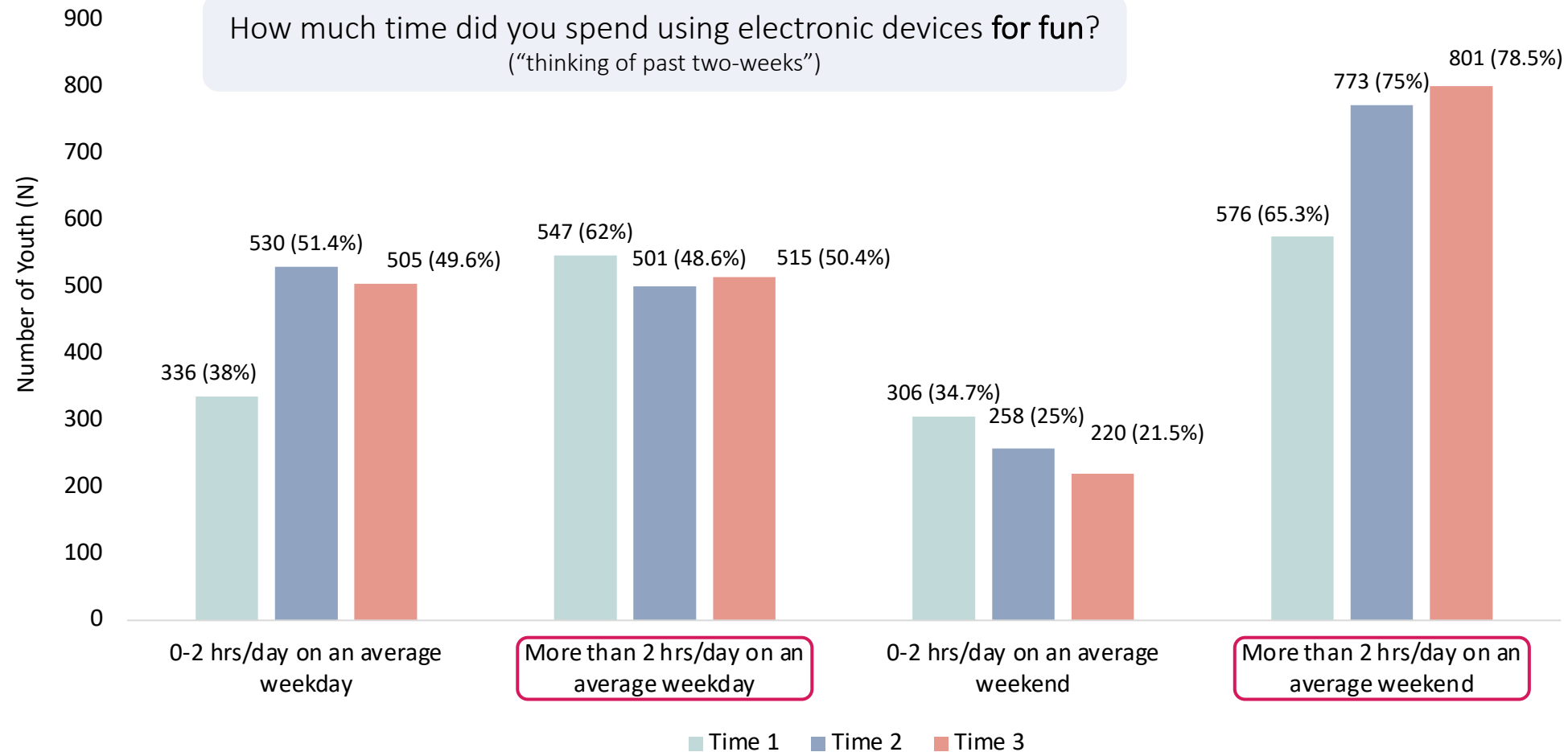
Child Does Not Meet Screen Use Guidelines

- Time 1 (71.9%)
- Time 2 (62.5%)
- Time 3 (69.3%)

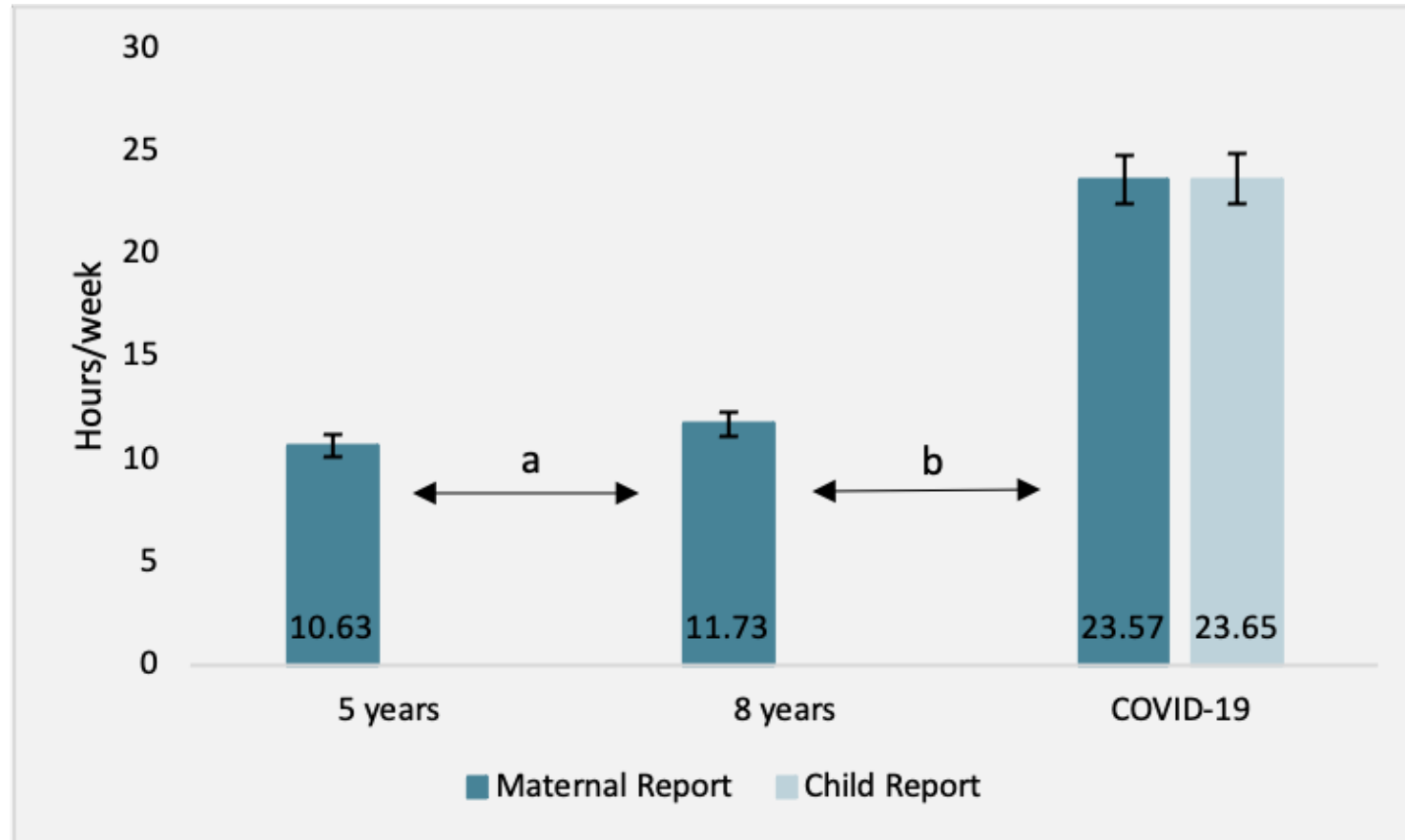


More children met screen use guidelines at Time 2 (1 year into the pandemic) than Time 1 (3 months into the pandemic) or Time 3*

Youth Screen Use (According to Youth)



Youth Screen Time Increased During COVID-19



Youth and Media Plans

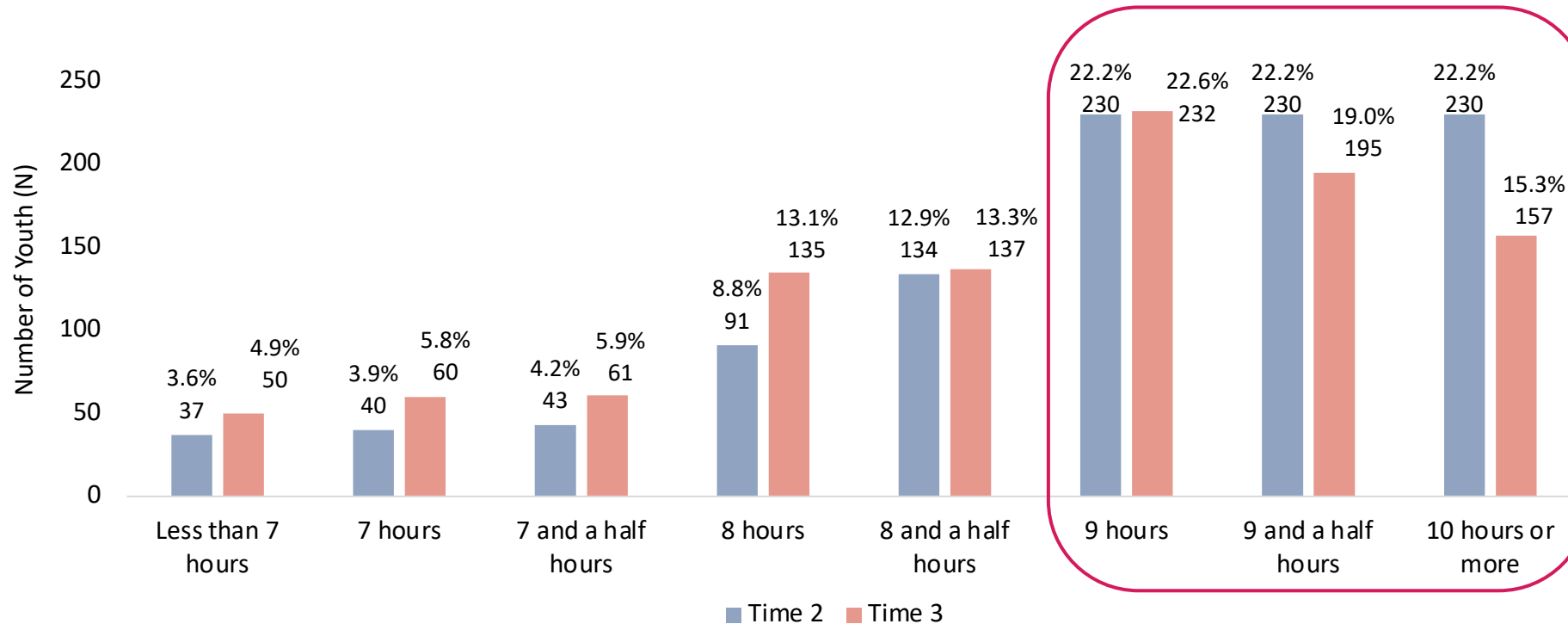


- Family media plan reduced screen use (6 hours per week)
- Children who use screens for **social connection** had **lower overall** screen time

Youth Sleep (According to Youth)



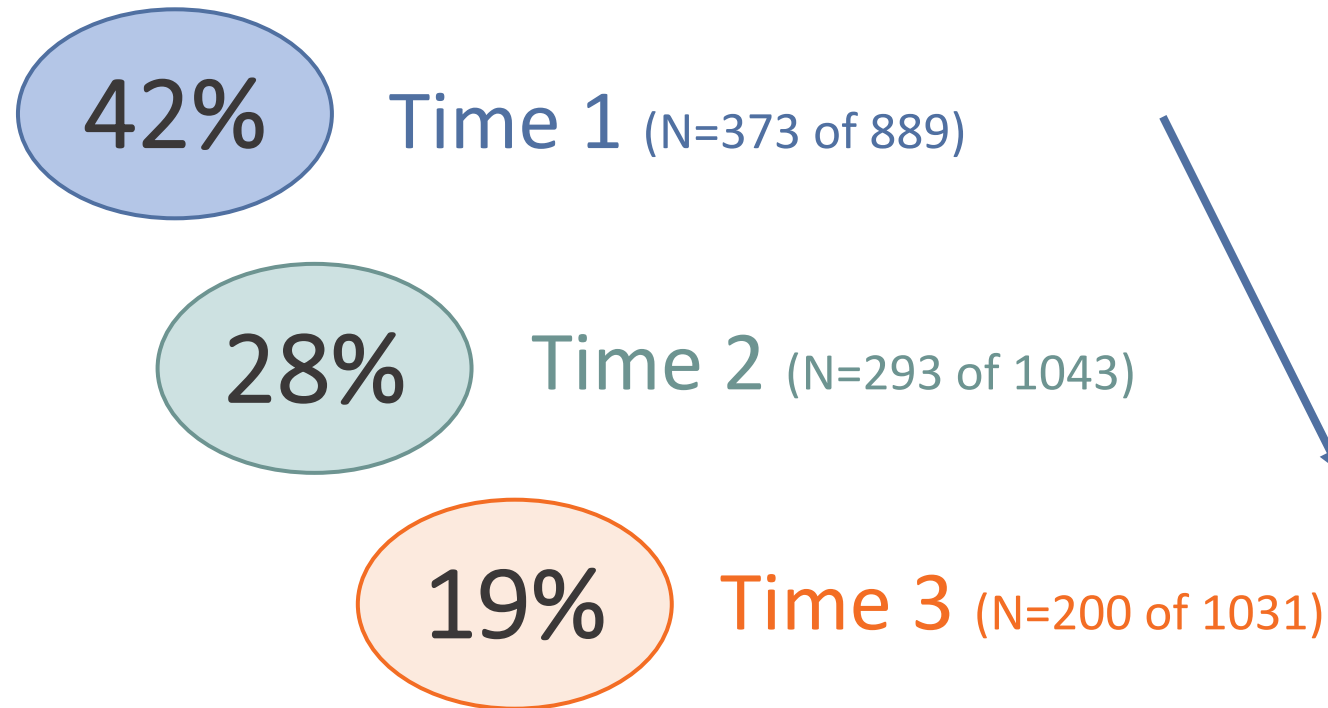
- Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines recommend 9 to 11 hours of sleep each night for children 5-13 years old (mean age 10.9 years at Time 2 and 11.6 years at Time 3)
 - Fewer children were getting 9+ hours of sleep each night at Time 3 (57%) compared to Time 2 (67%)



Youth Physical Activity



- Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines recommend **at least 60 minutes** of moderate to vigorous physical activity and several hours of light physical activity **each day**



Decreasing trend of youth meeting movement guidelines from early pandemic (Time 1) to late pandemic (Time 3*)



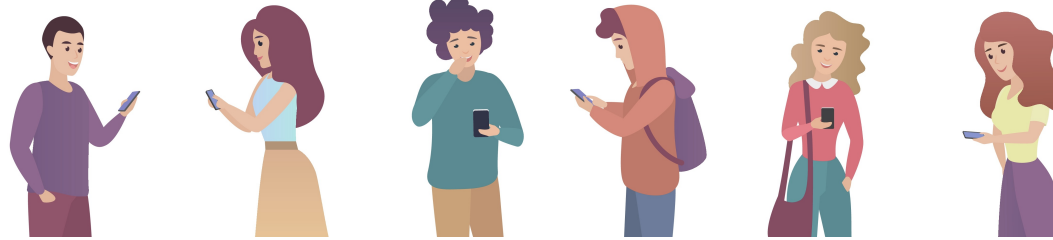
During COVID I also got depression.

I feel like it is not gonna end.

It has been very boring.

What Did Youth Tell Us?

COVID has been hard but we're getting through it.



I like spending more time with my family than before COVID started.

COVID restrictions are exhausting but I am not afraid of COVID, just restrictions.

I have been bored at home without friends and no social media.

Lessons Learned

- Families are struggling
 - These data support what we've been hearing in popular media and anecdotal conversations
- Structure, routines and social connections can help mitigate impacts on families
- Families are tired → COVID survey response rates were lower than previous AOF data surveys
- Next steps
 - Linking survey data to AHD to examine trajectories of mental health and service use, and examine wider impacts of the pandemic using mixed methods



Ideas for Support: The 3 R's



Routines- sleep, meals, recreation, school, screens

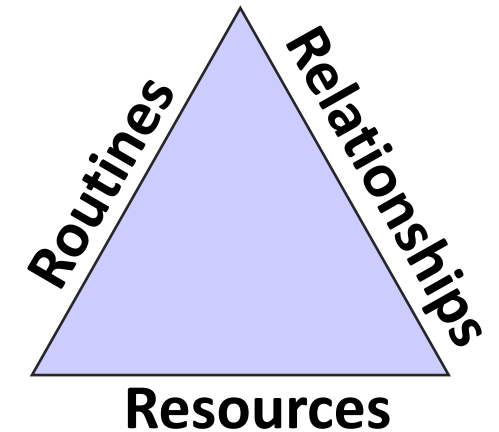
- > *Reduces decision making fatigue which frees resources for complex decisions, helps children thrive*

Resources- financial and structural (e.g. childcare)

- > *Reduces physiologic stress, enables job stability, facilitates skill development*

Relationships – commit to social connections

- > *Increases oxytocin, normalizes experiences, increases belonging, improves mood*



Media Plans: allourfamiliesstudy.com/covid19

Have a “Social Snack”



Brief, informal (and safe) positive interactions that contribute to happiness, sense of belonging and identity



Examples of Social Snacking:



- Neighbours saying hello or waving to each other
- Barista smiling, making eye contact or having a brief conversation with customers
- Smiling with your eyes over your mask



Source: unsplash.com



Source: unsplash.com

Remember, You Are Not Alone



Be Kind to Yourself

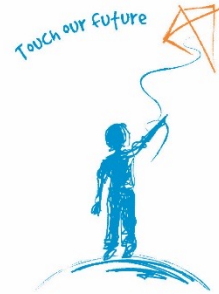


THE STRESS BUCKET



source: <https://www.rowanhousecentre.co.uk/>

Acknowledgements



ALBERTA CENTRE FOR
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SSHRC  CRSH



Alberta Health
Services



CIHR IRSC



Canadian Foundation on
Fetal Alcohol
Research



QUESTIONS?

