

THE MENTAL HEALTH OF 2S/LGBTQIA+ YOUTH (15- 24) IN CANADA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

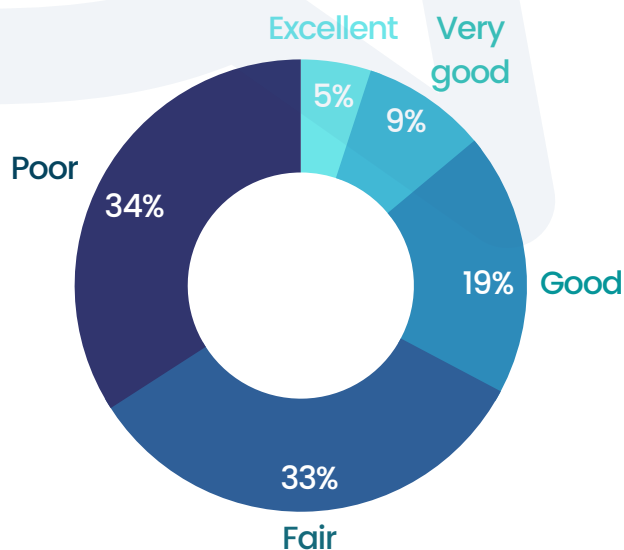
RESULTS FROM THE I STAND OUT! SURVEY

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many economic and social disruptions, both for the general population and marginalized communities. More specifically, 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth were particularly vulnerable as their access to education, equal economic opportunities, and health services was particularly compromised. Additionally, the pandemic made it harder for 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth to connect with their affirming social networks and/or 2S/LGBTQIA+ resources and spaces.

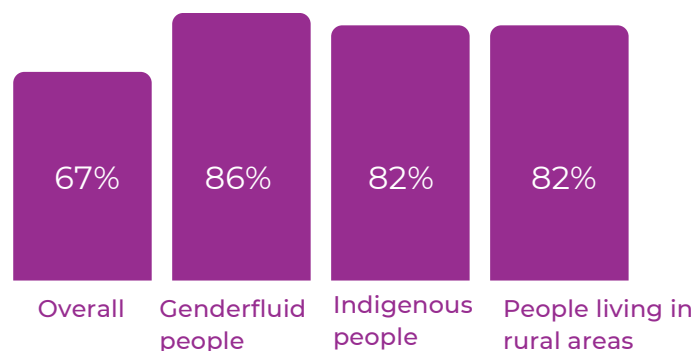
"I stand out!" is an online survey that aims to better understand the mental health issues of 2S/LGBTQIA+ 15-24 youth living in Canada. The survey was developed in collaboration with members of the Jeunes Chercheur.e.s Queer program, a research capacity building program for youth of the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community. Data was collected anonymously between November 2021 and January 2022, 18 months after the beginning of the pandemic. The survey had 3,668 respondents.

MENTAL HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT

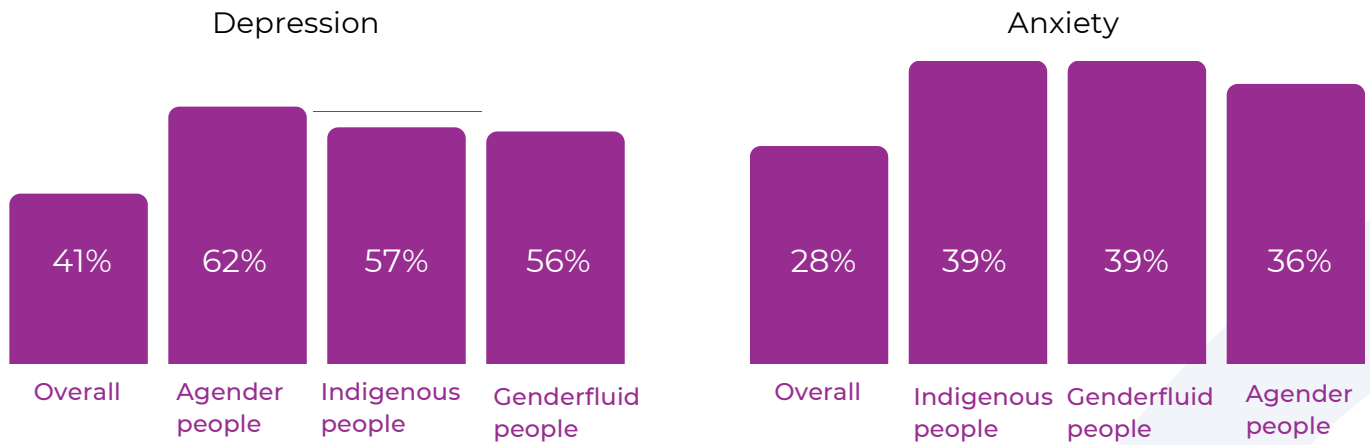
Two participants out of three (67%) assessed their mental health as fair or poor at the time of completing the survey.



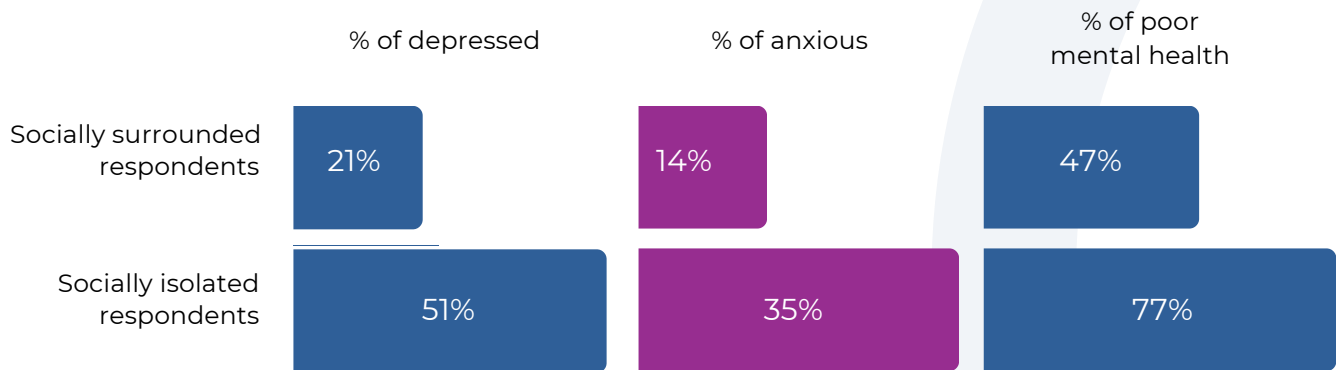
The following sub-groups of respondents were more likely to report their mental health as poor or fair:



41% of respondents screened positive for severe depression and 28% of respondents with severe anxiety. Depression and anxiety were measured with the validated PHQ-9 and GAD-7 questionnaires. The following sub-groups of respondents were more likely to report depressive symptoms and anxiety:



Two out of three 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth (67%) reported being socially isolated when they completed the survey. Respondents who were socially isolated reported depressive and anxiety symptoms, as well as poor or fair mental health in greater proportion.



IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH

When asked if they had experienced negative impacts due to COVID-19

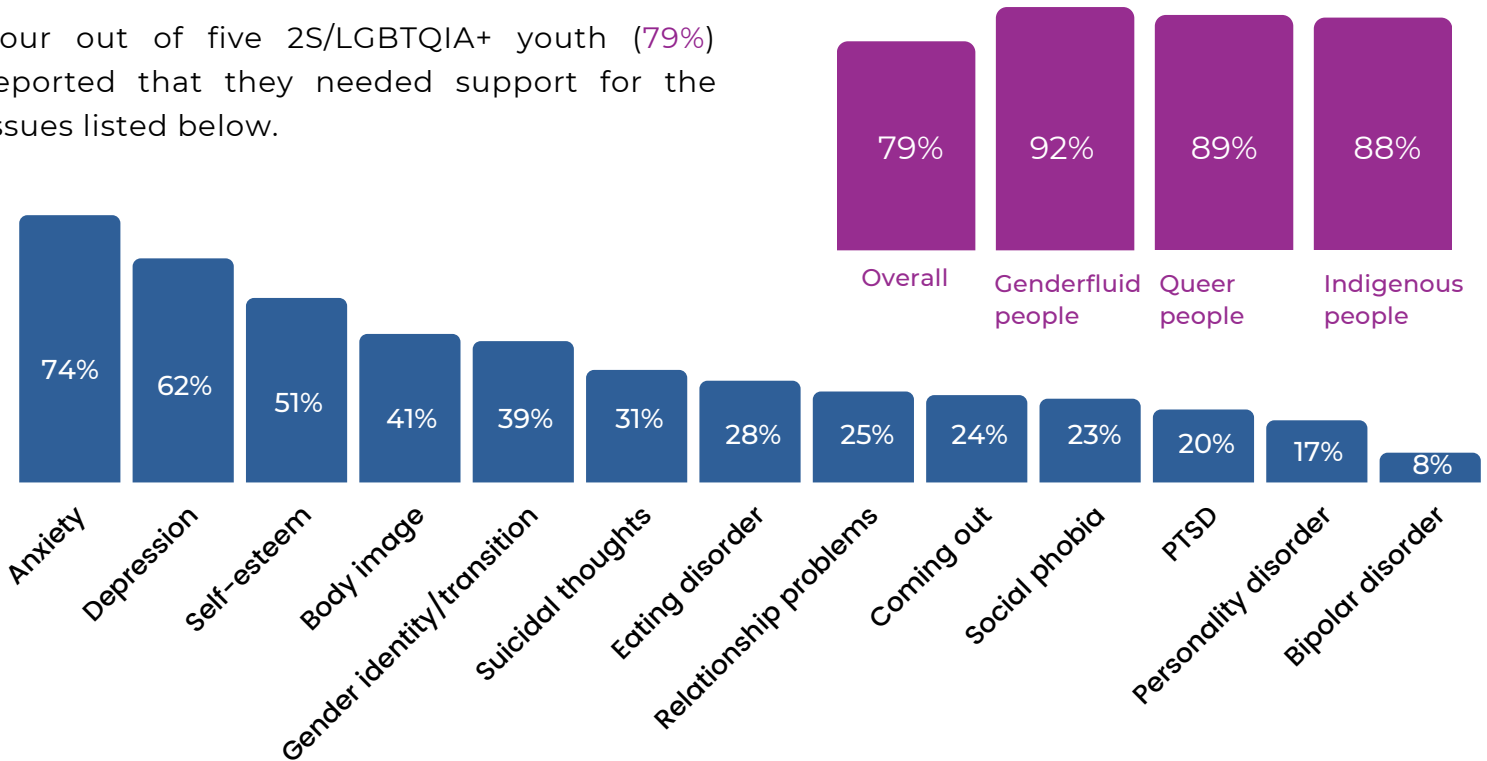
69% of respondents reported that their mental health had deteriorated.

39% mentioned that their access to mental health services deteriorated.



MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Four out of five 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth (79%) reported that they needed support for the issues listed below.



WHY THIS MATTERS

This report provides a portrait of the mental health of 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth living in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth reported their mental health as poor or fair. The majority of respondents also mentioned that both their mental health and their access to mental health services deteriorated since the beginning of the pandemic. More so, nearly 3/4 of 2S/LGBTQIA+ described needing professional help with their mental health. As such, this study highlights the need for culturally safe and easily accessible support services for 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth. Thus, more research is needed to better understand the long-term impacts of the pandemic on this population and to better understand the barriers that 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth face when accessing mental health services.

For more information about the "I stand out!" survey, please visit Qollab.ca or reach out to us at qollab@espum.umontreal.ca

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