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### The Need for a Wellbeing Tool for Children

Ashley Avrani

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

Marisa Castano

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

Karolina Haladus

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

Karolina Haladus

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

Christie Liguori

*Binghamton University--SUNY*

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

Ashley Avrani, Marisa Castano, Karolina Haladus, Karolina Haladus, Christie Liguori, and Katherine Loughlin





## INTRODUCTION

- Well-being is defined as a sense of vitality and overall quality of life.
- External triggers can pose immense threats to overall well-being, particularly in children who are easily susceptible (Burkart et al., 2022).
- To demonstrate, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2019 and enforced isolation measures resulted in challenged mental, physical, and emotional health of children.
- COVID-19 has disrupted the psychosocial and physical aspects of children's lives overall (Fashi et al., 2021; O'Sullivan et al., 2021; Burkart et al., 2022).

## METHODS

- We have conducted a literature review on research pertaining to COVID-19 pandemic's impact on pediatric well-being.
- The studies we analyzed focused on numerous aspects of childhood well-being during the pandemic, including mental and psychosocial health, physical and sedentary behavior, and family functioning (Feinberg et al., 2021), (Burkart et al., 2022).
- We have developed a tool that assesses the overall quality of life, implementing pictures and simple language suitable for young children to easily comprehend

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOOL

- Binghamton University students visited elementary schools to administer the wellbeing tool.
- The tool was administered for three trials to measure tool efficacy.



## The Well-Being Tool

- There has been no prior existing tool to assess the wellbeing of a child.
- The Well-Being Tool is an instrument to measure the overall quality of life and daily well-being of the pediatric population.
- An application was created and administered to elementary school children. The questions consisted of selecting images from several choices, which indicate how the child currently feels.
- Appropriate utilization of pictures and simple language for comprehension.



## Research Findings on Child Well-Being and COVID-19

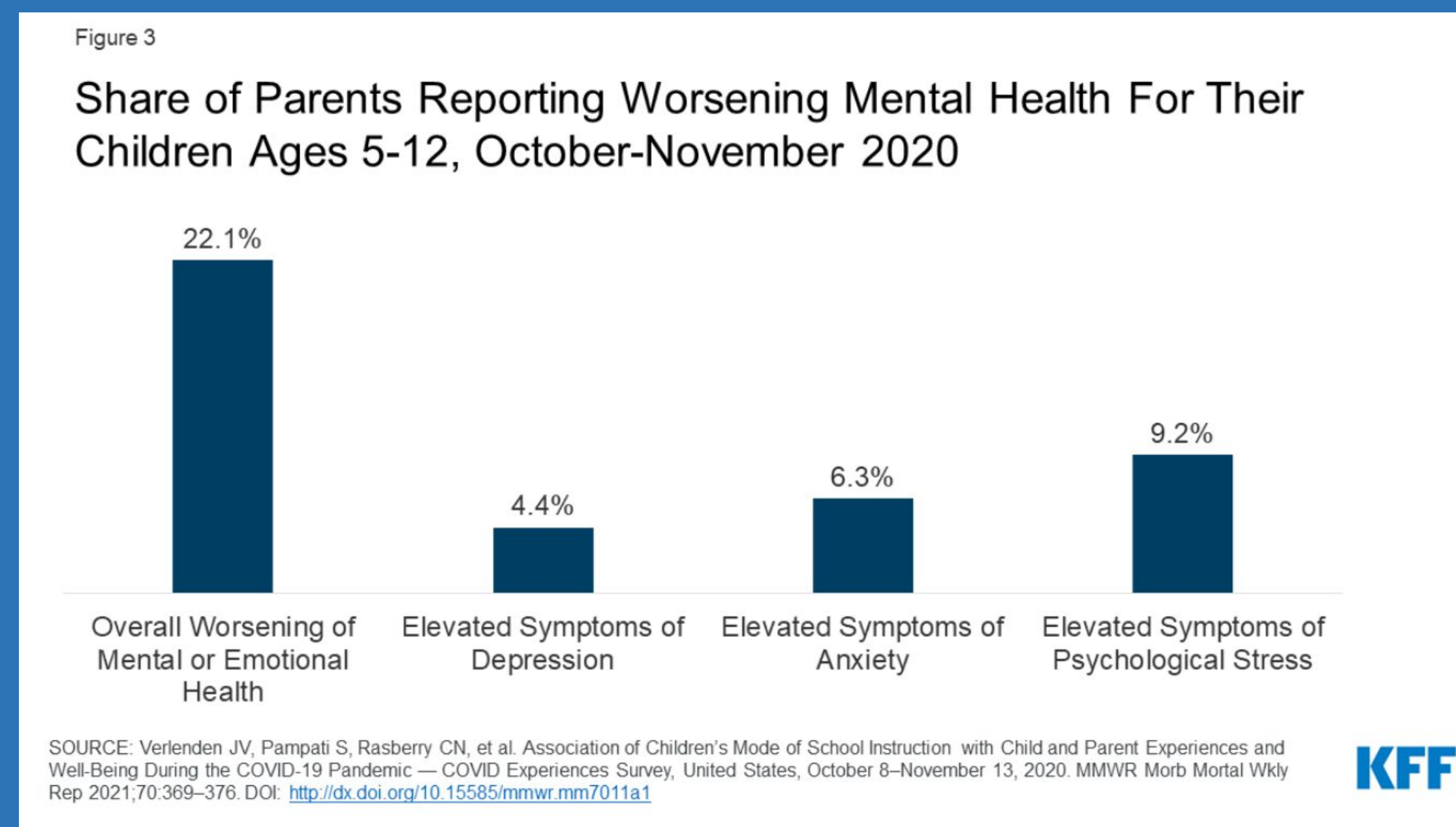


Figure 1: Share of Parents Reporting Worsening Mental Health For Their Children Ages 5-12, October-November 2020.

Nirmita Panchal, R. K., & 2021, M. (2021, May 25). Mental health and substance use considerations among children during the covid-19 pandemic. KFF. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/mental-health-and-substance-use-considerations-among-children-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Figure 1 displays the overall percentage of worsening child mental health reported by parents. The figure demonstrates a 22.1% increase in deterioration of emotion health, a 4.4% elevation in depressive symptoms, a 6.3% increase in anxiety, and a 9.2% raise in symptoms of psychological stress (Panchal, 2021).

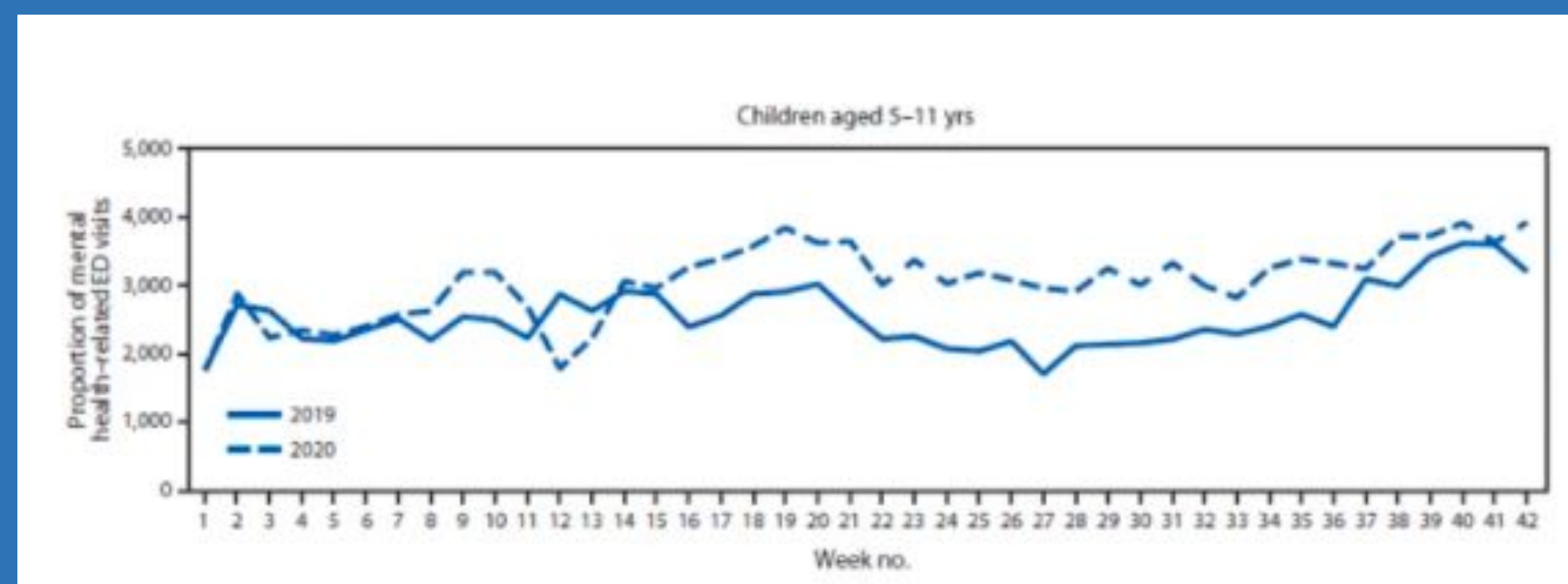


Figure 2: Mental Health-Related ED Visits of Children Ages 5-11 During 2019 and 2020

Figure 2 represents the spike in mental health-related hospital emergency department visits during peak COVID, as compared to a year prior to the outbreak. From March through October, the amount of mental-health related visits increased 24% for children ages 5 to 11.



## NEED FOR THE TOOL

Results of past studies demonstrate negative impacts of isolation and quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic (Nobari, et al., 2021; Gassman-Pines, A., et al., 2020). The literature review demonstrated:

- Parents reported that children were more **undisciplined, hyperactive, and had limited self-control capacity** (Di Giorgio et al., 2021).
- On average children's **sedentary behavior increased** by 79 minutes daily and daily physical activity decreased by 10 minutes (Burkart, S., et al., 2021).
- The rate of average monthly **BMI increase** and the percentage of **obese** adolescents were both found to have **increased** (Dunton, G., et al., 2020; Lange, S., et al., 2021).
- Children experienced **higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression** (O'Sullivan, K., et al., 2021).
- The proportion of pediatric **mental health emergency department visits increased** during the pandemic (Chadi, N., et al., 2021; Hill et. al, 2021).
- Adverse mental outcomes among children were provoked by experiences of social isolation and **loneliness** (O'Sullivan, K., et al., 2021).
- Self-efficacy alleviated mental health issues that were associated with the pandemic (Hussong et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a noticeable **decrease in child well-being**. As seen in prior studies, the youth population has experienced an increase in mental health and **behavioral issues** and a decline in physical wellbeing. This decline demonstrates a need for increased attention to child wellbeing. The proposed tool has been designed to measure children's overall quality of life in a standardized manner.

## REFERENCES

