

Mental Health for Teachers and Staff

Liz Cox, Polk County Health Services

Impacts of COVID:

- ▶ Kids at home
- ▶ Changes in learning/teaching
- ▶ Social isolation
- ▶ Loss of routine
- ▶ Lack of sleep
- ▶ Either being completely alone and isolated or never having time alone to decompress
- ▶ Disconnection from support system



Mental Health Consequences of Disasters

- ▶ Short term: Depression, Loneliness, Anxiety, Sleeplessness, Sadness, Grief
- ▶ Long term: Chronic Depression, PTSD, Anxiety Disorder
 - ▶ Greater Risk:
 - ▶ Middle-aged
 - ▶ Minority ethnic status
 - ▶ Low social supports/poor relationships
 - ▶ Worrisome
 - ▶ Avoidance coping
 - ▶ Prior trauma history

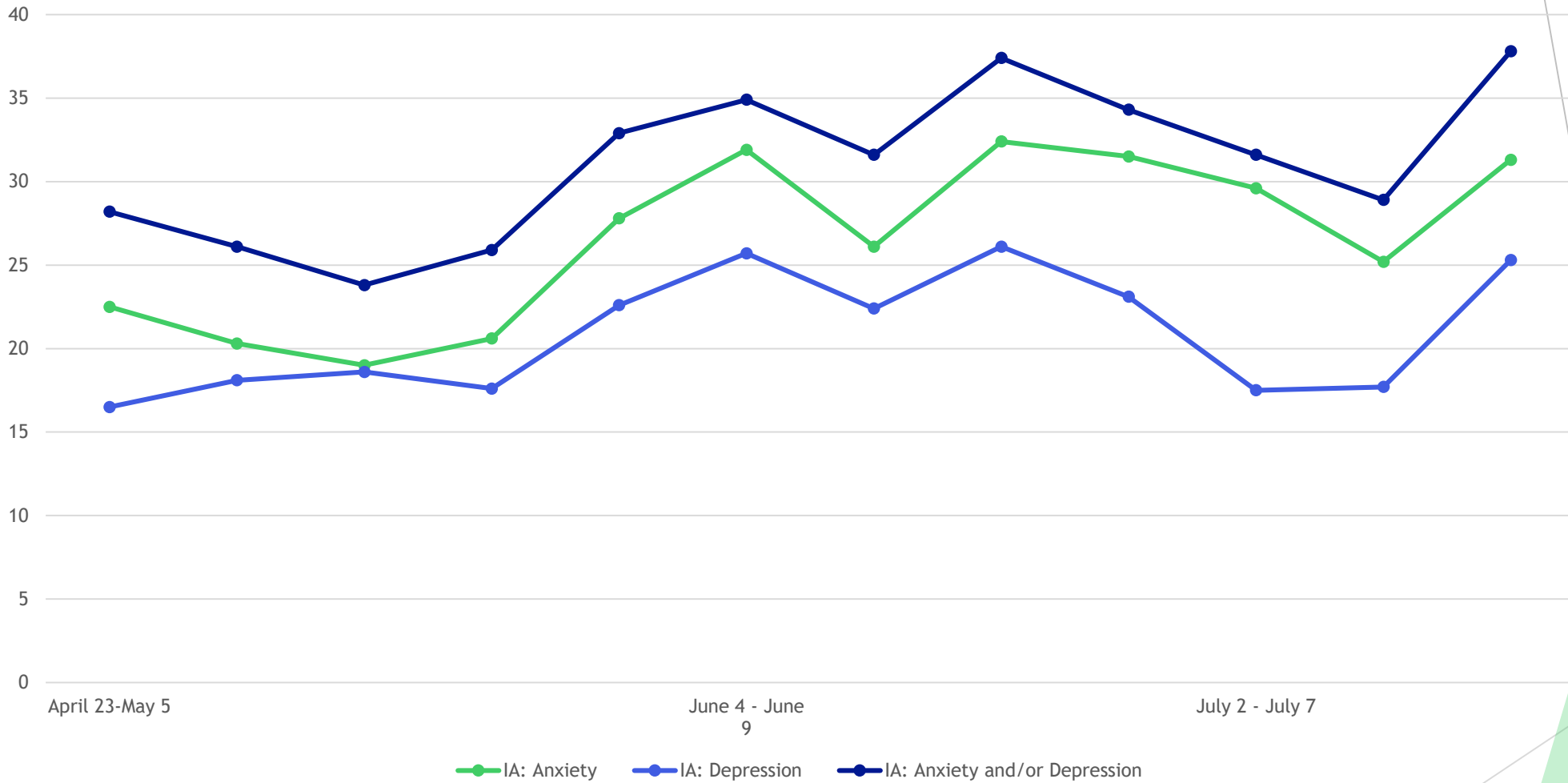


Depression and Anxiety in COVID

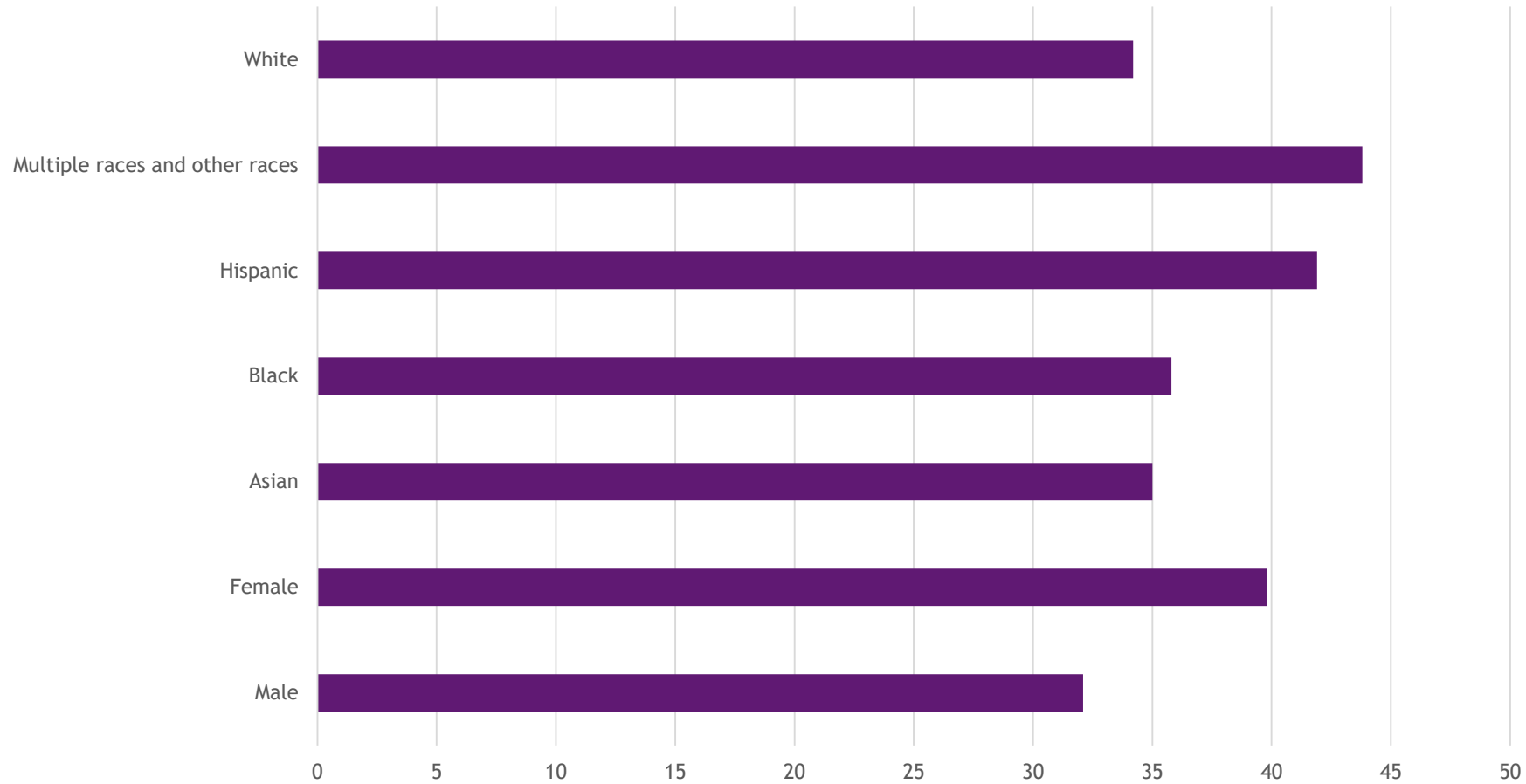
National Data (Age 18+)	2019 (Apr-Jun)	2020 (Apr - Jul)
▶ Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder	8.1	31.8
▶ Symptoms of Depressive Disorder	6.5	25.9
▶ Symptoms of Anxiety and/or Depressive Disorder	10.9	36.7

Iowa		
▶ Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder		26.5
▶ Symptoms of Depressive Disorder		20.9
▶ Symptoms of Anxiety and/or Depressive Disorder		31.1

Indicators of Anxiety or Depression - Iowa

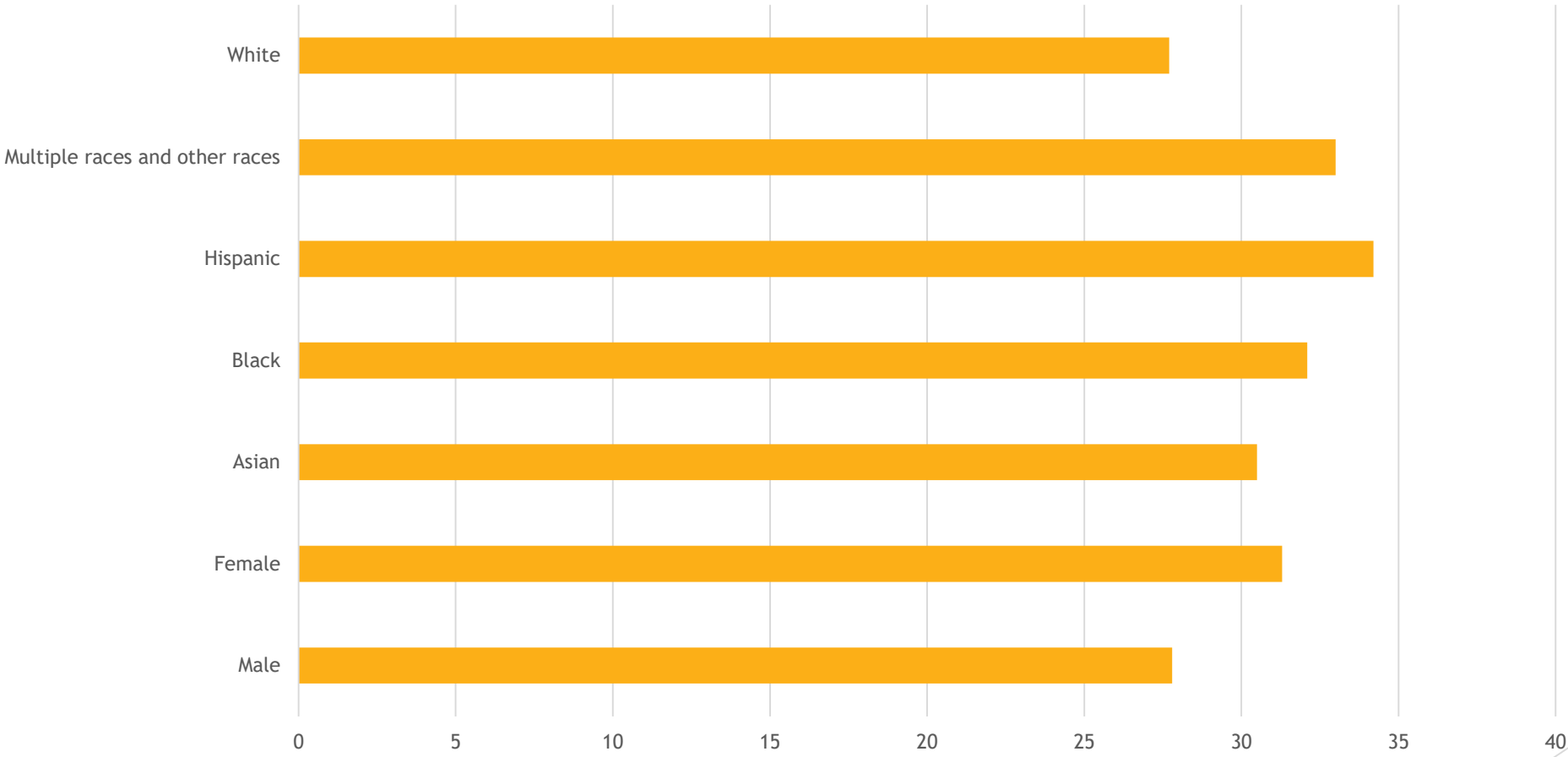


Anxiety July 21, 2020



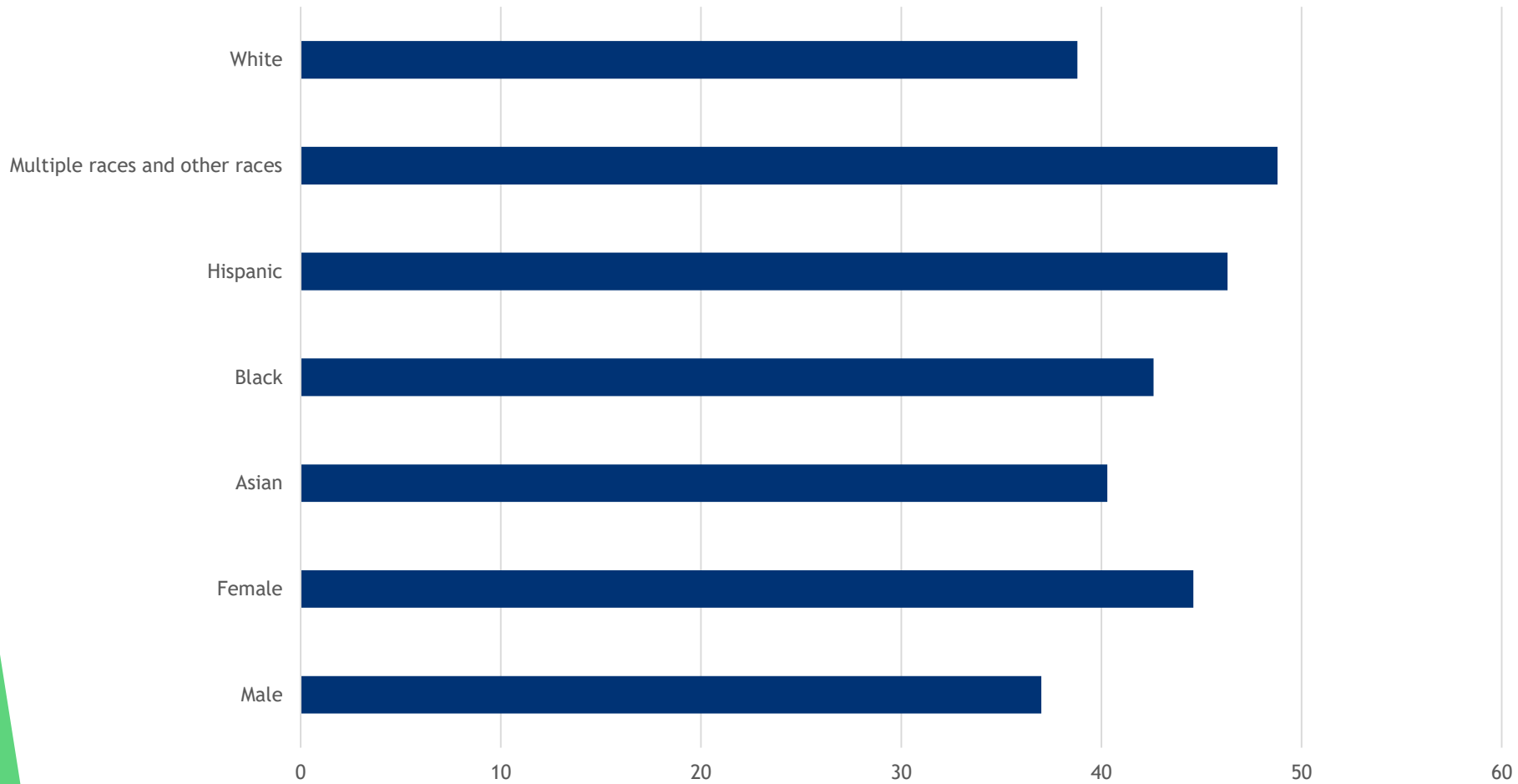
National Center for Health Statistics - Household Pulse Survey

Depression July 21, 2020



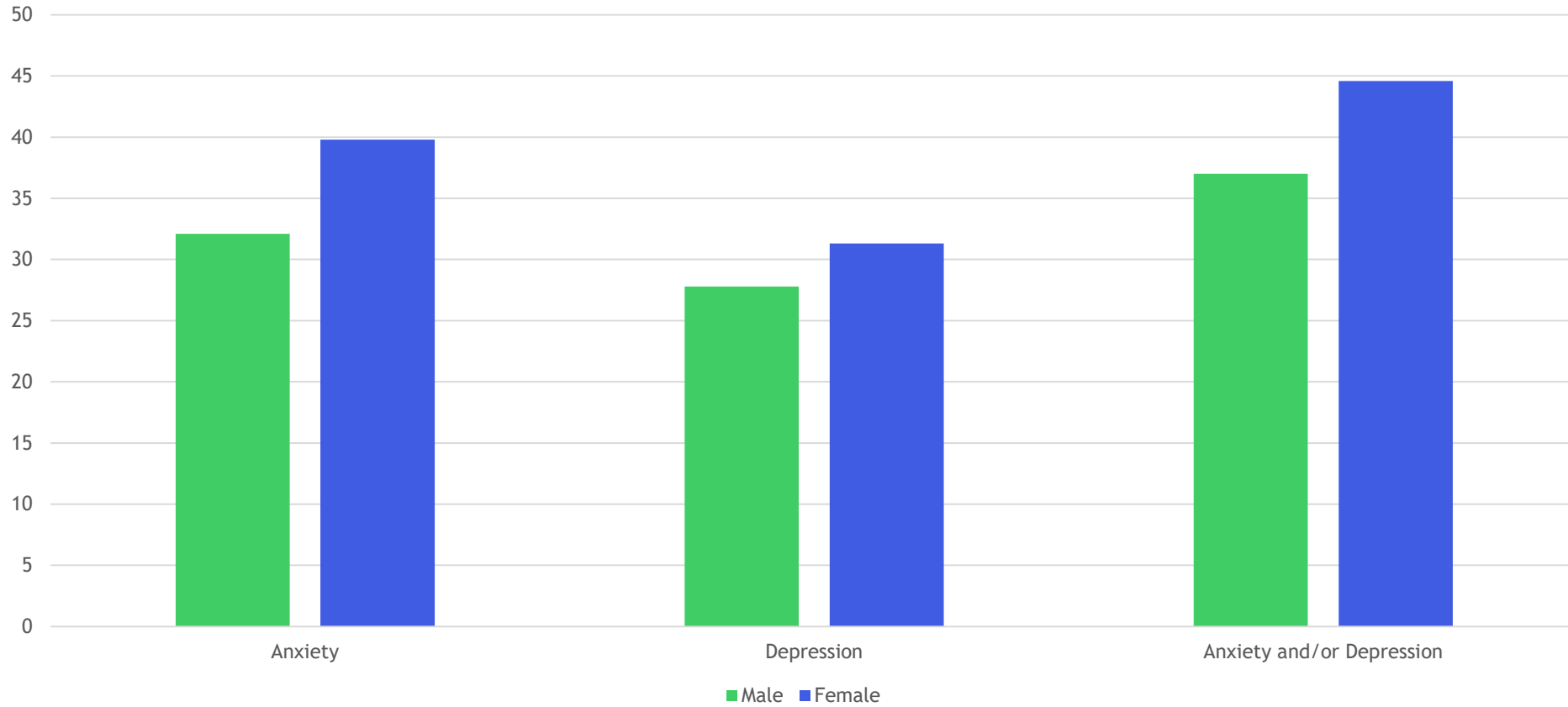
National Center for Health Statistics - Household Pulse Survey

Anxiety and/or Depression: July 21, 2020



National Center for Health Statistics - Household Pulse Survey

Anxiety and Depression: Males and Females (Survey ending July 21, 2020)



Coping with Long-Term Stress

Negative

- ▶ Turning to drugs, alcohol or other substances
- ▶ Negative self-talk
- ▶ An unbalanced diet, little sleep, too much caffeine
- ▶ Lashing out at others
- ▶ Avoiding thoughts and feelings with your phone, tv, etc.
- ▶ Overloading yourself with work

Positive

- ▶ Create a routine for yourself
- ▶ Plan meals, exercise & time to decompress
- ▶ Talking to a counselor, friend, faith community
- ▶ Practice yoga, meditation or deep breathing
- ▶ Music, reading, painting
- ▶ Playing with kids or pets

Resilience

The ability to cope and thrive despite difficult situations

- ▶ Learning to ask for help
- ▶ Learning to accept help
- ▶ Expressing feelings
- ▶ Working as a team
- ▶ Appreciating cultural and ethnic heritage
- ▶ A sense of belonging
- ▶ Showing empathy



Better Recovery – What to say when...

Questions

- ▶ “How has the pandemic affected your sense of safety? If it has, what can we do to help?”
- ▶ “Do you have any concerns about being able to handle what's going on in your life, deal with your stress reactions, or do your work? What are some things that you have done to cope that have been helpful in the past, or have been helpful recently? What else could we do that would help?”

Statements

- ▶ “There are no set rules for working through something like this. Be patient with yourself.”
- ▶ “We'll make it through this together. We value you and the work you do. Be sensitive to those around you. Talk when you need to; listen when you can.”

Actions

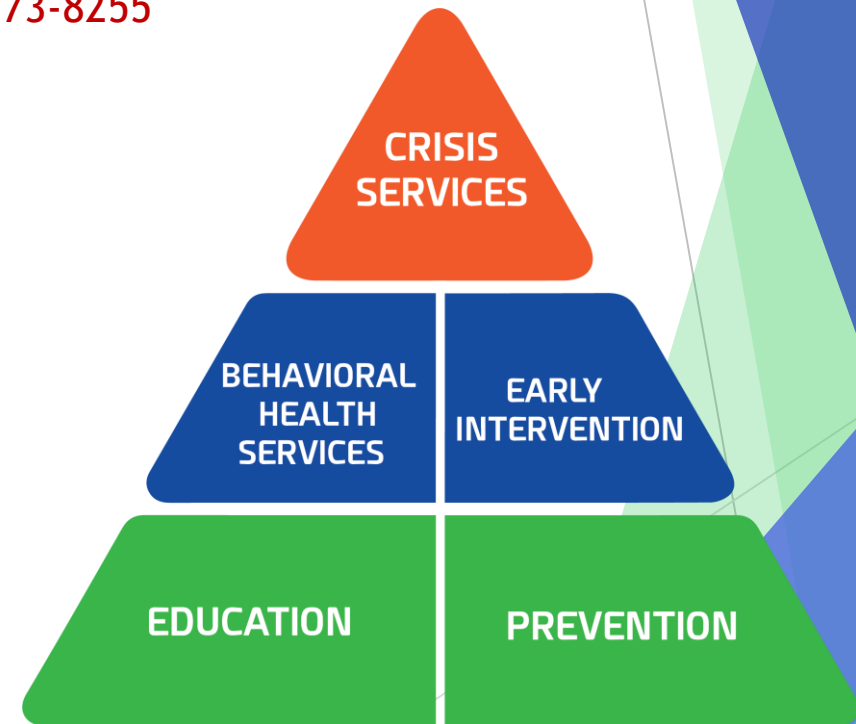
- ▶ Encourage others to speak frankly about their experience, their reactions, and their concerns. Discuss the importance of self-care.
- ▶ Check in regularly. Share optimistic news. Increase positive encouragement, reinforcement, and gratitude for everyone's contributions

Mental Health Spectrum of Support

- ▶ Polk County Psychiatric Urgent Care Clinic - Broadlawns
- ▶ UnityPoint Clinic Mental Health
- ▶ National warmline: [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org), 1-800-273-8255

- ▶ Your Life Iowa: yourlifeiowa.org
 - ▶ Text: (855) 895-8398
 - ▶ Iowa: 211 x 8
- ▶ National Parent Helpline - 855-427-2736
- ▶ Counselors and Therapists - Telemedicine
- ▶ Workplace support - HR Teams

- ▶ Self-care
- ▶ Mental Health First Aid/Stress First Aid



Resilient Schools

Integrate resilient practices in schools

- ▶ Create safe spaces to connect
- ▶ Recognize overcoming challenges together

Leadership

- ▶ Identify staff members to lead mental health support implementation
- ▶ Include mental health in return-to-learn planning

Leverage Community Partnerships

- ▶ Readily available list of mental health providers, counselors, therapists
- ▶ Identified space for Telehealth/Teletherapy

Communication

Self Care



CARE FOR YOUR CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY

A PROJECT BY 
virusanxiety.com



BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

1. Pause. Breathe. Notice how you feel.
2. Take breaks from COVID-19 content.
3. Make time to sleep and exercise.
4. Reach out and stay connected.
5. Seek help if overwhelmed or unsafe.

POLK COUNTY
HEALTH SERVICES

SUPPORTING YOUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH:

- control the controllable
- make time for self-care
- practice self-compassion
- set reasonable expectations
- create a dedicated work space
- don't be afraid to reach out for help

POLK COUNTY
HEALTH SERVICES

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HEALTH SERVICES

Making a Family Plan

* BE INFORMED * MAKE A PLAN * BUILD A KIT * GET INVOLVED *

DISCUSSION GUIDE TO MAKING A PLAN WITH YOUR FAMILY

There's no one more capable of planning for your situation than you!

Creating a family plan is an important component in emergency preparedness. Starting the conversation can feel overwhelming. Use this framework to help guide your family's process in creating a plan that meets the unique needs of you and your loved ones.

Preparing for the meeting

1. Set the stage for the Family Plan Discussion

Set the stage for your family's response plan discussion. Set aside a specific time and day to work through your plan as a group. **Allow up to 45 minutes or an hour for the discussion.** It's best to avoid late-evening conversations when people may be feeling tired or stressed from a long day. Be sure everyone involved in the conversation has plenty of notice of when the conversation will be and the goals of the conversation.

2. Logistics for the meeting

At the time of the meeting, gather as a group in an area of the home that is comfortable. Turn off all cell phones, TV's and other distractions. Since the conversation may be emotional, plan to have tissues on hand and water to drink. Snacks are helpful but not required.

- ✓ Water for everyone
- ✓ Tissues
- ✓ Snacks (optional but recommended)
- ✓ TV and cell phones off

3. Ground rules for the group

As you start the discussion, you may want to review some basic ground rules to keep the conversation productive.

- Everyone has a chance to be heard
- Not everything needs to be solved in this meeting, we can always revise our family plan
- Give everyone permission to take a time-out from the discussion and regroup when it seems appropriate

Ask if everyone agrees to these ground rules, and whether anyone has additional ground rules to add. Write them here:

* BE INFORMED * MAKE A PLAN * BUILD A KIT * GET INVOLVED *

MAKE A FAMILY PLAN WORKSHEET

There's no one more capable of planning for your situation than you!

Where to go...

1. Isolate at home in separate area from others
2. Stay at a Department Designated Facility
3. Family may relocate to another family home or safe location
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

What to take...

1. Personal Items, toiletries, medications, sanitizers, tissues,
2. Several sets of uniforms, foul weather gear and comfortable clothing
3. Cell Phone, laptop or other electronics with chargers
4. First Aid Kit, radio, flashlight
5. Snacks
- 6.
- 7.

How to keep in contact...

1. Set up a Zoom, Facetime, or Messenger Meeting or social media chat functions to send messages to each other
2. Use electronics to participate in distance activities, helping with homework, eating a meal together, reading a book together, playing a board or word game, exercise together, listen to music or dance.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Burnout Screening Tool

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE (PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some-questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never **2=Rarely** **3=Sometimes** **4=Often** **5=Very Often**

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
- _____ 11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a [helper].
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
- _____ 25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

Thank you!

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Website: <https://pchsia.org/COVID19>

Facebook & Twitter: @PolkHealth

Professional Quality of Life Scale (burnout screening tool):

https://www.proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_3-2012.pdf

Taking Care of your Behavioral Health During an Infectious Disease Outbreak: <https://tinyurl.com/y9r324mt>

Supporting Your Staff During COVID-19 Pandemic: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_leaders_support_staff.asp

Household Pulse Survey: National Center for Health Statistics:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/pulse/mental-health.htm>

Making a [Family Plan](#)



“We need to focus on our educator wellbeing. In addition to the stress of trying to learn a whole new way of implementing education, they are now even more in a position of taking on the secondary traumatic stress they are experiencing with their students.”

**-Sharon Hoover, PhD
Co-Director, National Center for School Mental Health**