

Pandemic Parenting: A Crisis in Well-Being

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 HEALTHLINE MEDIA



Our survey of **1,041 Americans** confirms that mental well-being is in crisis — especially among parents and youth

Parents today need help, both for themselves and in cultivating well-being in their children.

Families are experiencing high levels of stress during COVID-19. And with so much of our lives spent online for the past 2 years, people are ready to take a step back from social media — especially parents, with more than half concerned about the impact on their kids.

With mental well-being closely tied to other areas of wellness, from nutrition to exercise, we see the need for health marketers from across industry verticals to embrace their role in helping parents and youth today.

How can we better shed light on lived experiences, create space for more open conversations, and provide actionable resources?

In this report, we share some of our key survey findings as well as need-to-know strategies for reaching and empowering those who need support.

Learn more on the new [Mental Well-Being Hub](#) from Healthline and Psych Central, which focuses on youth and parenting.



A majority of U.S. consumers are stressed or anxious

2 out of 3 people have recently felt stressed or anxious

Why?

33%

Relationships

35%

World events

34%

Work

38%

Physical health

34%

Mental health

54%

Money



TAKE THE NEXT STEP:

With money as today's leading stressor, emphasize the **affordability and accessibility** of your wellness solutions whenever possible.

The pandemic led to higher levels of anxiety and depression — especially for parents

40%

vs.

59%

of U.S. consumers
experience anxiety

of parents of
18–25 year olds

Why it matters now:

88% of people with anxiety say it started or got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic

28%

vs.

39%

of U.S. consumers
experience depression

of parents of
18–25 year olds

Why it matters now:

60% of people with depression say it started or got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic

Looking back at COVID-19:

December 2020

66% of U.S. consumers felt anxious or depressed due to the pandemic

April 2021

56% experienced stress and **49%** felt anxious due to the pandemic



TAKE THE NEXT STEP:

Parents of young adults need support right now. A **personalized approach** could allow your wellness solution to resonate more with the unique needs of this audience.

Quotes from new parents

Those first few weeks and months after you bring a baby home are already really stressful. The pandemic takes all of those things and **amplifies them by 100.**

Erin Edge

Editor in Chief, Healthline.com



Decreasing stigma toward mental health is incredibly important, especially when it comes to children. Imagine how difficult it must be for children who cannot articulate what is happening to navigate stress, anxiety, grief, and mental health conditions.

Natalie Rinehard

Brand Marketing, Healthline Media

Parents are concerned for their children — and worried about social media’s impact

55%

of U.S. parents have become more concerned about **their children’s mental health** over the past two years since the pandemic, *including*

69% of parents of 12–17 year olds

74% of parents of 18–25 year olds

55%

of parents are concerned about the **impact of social media** on their children’s mental well-being, *including*

65% of parents of 5–11 year olds

69% of parents of 12–17 year olds

65% of parents of 18–25 year olds

Is it time for a social media detox?

42%

of consumers think so — including 51% of parents of 5–11 year olds

41%

say they would think more positively of brands that encourage a detox — including 52% of parents of 5–11 year olds

TAKE THE NEXT STEP:

With audiences burned out, less can be more when it comes to social media. Consider how you can **support a detox** or screen break initiative for parents and kids.



Parenting with social media has impacted my overall well-being by constantly **comparing my experience with others**. I saw other babies his age sitting in their car seat without crying, gaining weight faster, and hitting milestones before us. It's taken a lot of boundary work as a parent to be able to enjoy my social media usage.

Mary Catherine Bookwalter
Social Media Manager, Healthline.com

Knowing that we aren't alone in these feelings has really helped my mental well-being. While social media portrays everything as perfect, I have found a great **community of other moms** going through these same challenges.

Maria Santucci
Director of External Communications,
Healthline Media



How are people addressing their stress now?

Among those experiencing stress and anxiety:

55%
watch movies & seek entertainment

50%
try to get better quality sleep

45%
spend time outside

42%
increase exercise

33%
improve nutrition

23%
reduce social media usage



Who is consuming mental health content online?

20% of the general population

32% of Healthline Media brand portfolio readers*

**in the 6 months prior to the survey*

What are Healthline readers looking for?

44% new skills and lifestyle changes to manage or improve mental health

37% help understanding their symptoms

28% help deciding whether they need to seek professional help

TAKE THE NEXT STEP:

People recognize that mental well-being is closely tied to other areas of wellness. Find your brand's **intersection with sleep**, in particular, to open up more ways to bring people rest and relief.

As a new parent, I quickly noticed after welcoming my baby how much **sleep and my mental well-being** depended on one another.

Mary Catherine Bookwalter
Social Media Manager, Healthline.com



Parenting during the pandemic was rough. **Self-compassion and grace** became essential to my survival toolkit. I have sticky notes with affirmations covering a wall in my office. I may not always feel like I am doing the best, but I am giving my best. I remind myself of that multiple time a day.

Faye McCray
Editor in Chief, PsychCentral.com



Take the next steps to reach families with solutions for mental well-being

1.

Mental well-being requires a **whole-person approach**. That opens the door for more brands to offer solutions, whether in exercise, sleep, nutrition, and other areas of wellness. Just remember that parents are pressed for time and energy, so accessibility is key.

2.

If your brand offers **insights and guidance** for mental well-being, focus on deep empathy and actionable solutions. Overwhelmed parents are looking for understanding, as well as realistic, small steps forward.

3.

The stakes are high for mental health. Ensure you leverage only **high quality and medically accurate information**. At the same time, you should present guidance in an accessible way.

4.

Take a second look at your **social media** approach. Right now, people are more focused on the downsides of social media than its benefits, and parents, in particular, would appreciate a break.

For more audience insights from Healthline Media, or to learn how to partner with us in supporting mental well-being, [get in touch!](#)

Source:

Healthline Media Survey on Social Media & Mental Health, March 2022, N= 1041 US Consumers

Healthline Media Mental Health Audience Needs Survey, October 2020, N= 3691 Healthline Site Users

Healthline Media Survey on Mental Health and Health Equity, April 2021, N= 1115 US Consumers

Healthline Media Landscape Segmentation Study, December 2020, N= 1577 US Adults

Comscore, Plan Metrix Multi-Platform, US Only, October 2021

About Healthline Media:

Healthline Media is the #1 digital health and wellness property, connecting 91 million people each month with expert content, communities, and partners that impact their road to well-being and create a stronger, healthier world. Learn more at [HealthlineMedia.com](https://www.healthline.com).

