



Impacts on Youth



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Key messages:

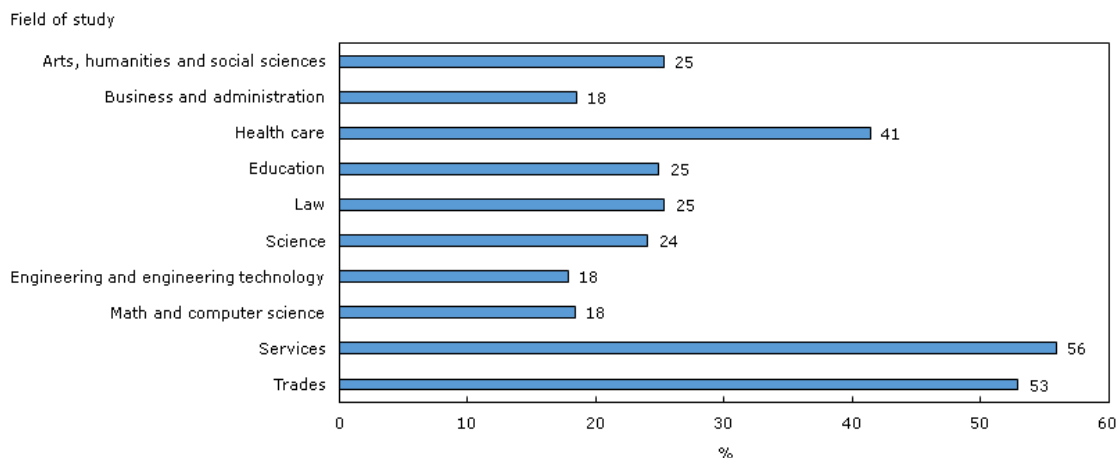
- Post-secondary students were impacted academically and financially by COVID-19.
- Impacts of the pandemic on youth employment may be felt for years to come.
- All these factors likely contribute to lower mental health among youth and increased use of substances.
- Youth are less concerned about the risks of COVID-19, but are still willing to take necessary precautions to avoid spreading the virus.

COVID-19 disrupted postsecondary studies – more so for those in services, trades and health care

Early in the pandemic, 26% of postsecondary students responding to a crowdsource survey (100,000 participants) indicated their education was disrupted – impacts varied by discipline.

- Students in programs related to services (56%), trades (53%), or health care (41%) were hardest hit.

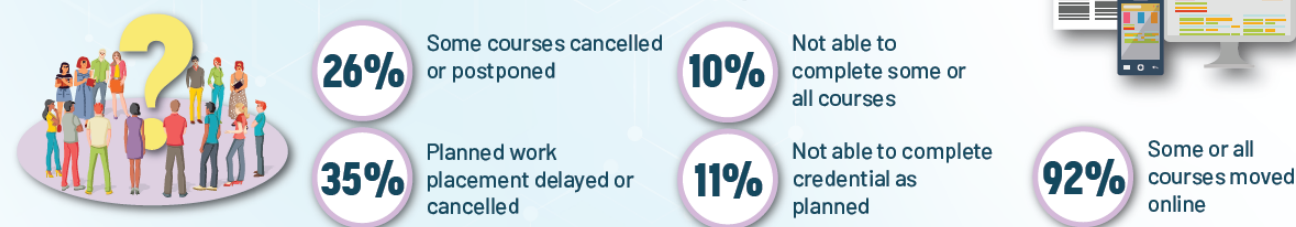
Proportion of participants reporting having some courses cancelled or postponed this term, by field of study



Source: Statistics Canada, Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on postsecondary students.

For many students, academic work was delayed, postponed or cancelled.

Proportion of participants who reported the following academic impacts:



Source: Impacts of the COVID pandemic on post secondary students.

Almost all participants (92%) reported that they had some or all of their courses moved online.

- Among respondents taking online courses, 7% reported they were unable to complete some or all of these courses.
- Once again, rates were higher among services (10%), trades (13%), and health care (9%) compared with science and education (6%).

Postsecondary students are also very concerned about their financial situation

Early on in the pandemic, postsecondary crowdsource survey respondents said they were very or extremely concerned about their financial situation – even after the announcement of the Canadian Emergency Student Benefits (CESB)...

- Using up savings – 73% (before CESB); 61% (after CESB)
- Paying for tuition next term – 56% (before CESB); 48% (after CESB)
- Having to take on more student debt – 73% (before CESB); 61% (after CESB)

Many students reported experiencing labour market disruptions.

Participants with **jobs** or **job prospects** at the beginning of March who reported employment changes:



Source: Statistics Canada, Impacts of the COVID pandemic on post secondary students.

64% of the Class of 2015 still had not fully paid their debt **3 years** after graduation

Percentage of graduates¹ with student debt at graduation, by level of study, class of 2015



Financial impacts of COVID could affect students' ability to pay their debts.

- Based on results from the most recent *National Graduates Survey*, for every \$1,000 of income earned, 0.2% of student debt was repaid.
- Factors associated with slower debt repayment included a larger debt at graduation, being a single parent, reporting a disability and being a landed immigrant or a member of a visible minority group (college graduates only).

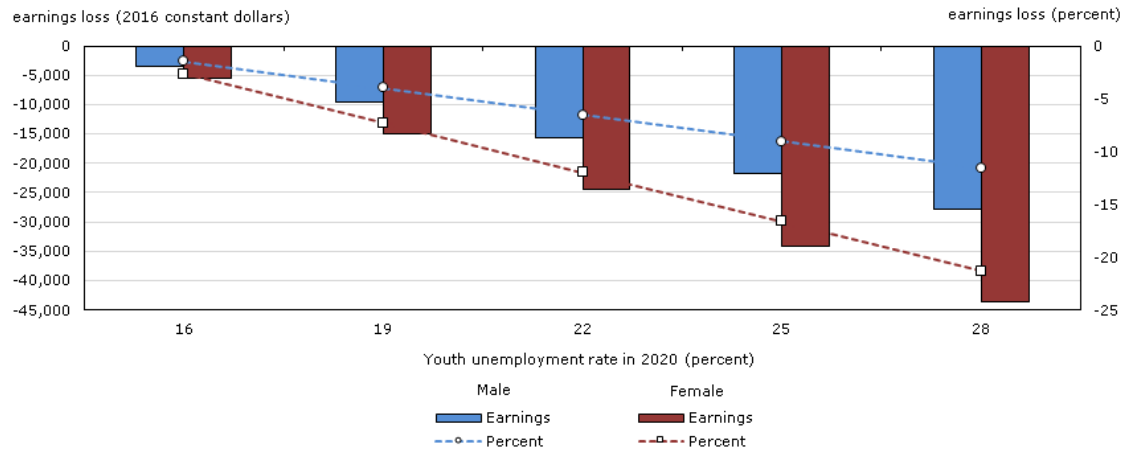
Source: Statistics Canada, National Graduates Survey, 2018.

Impacts of the pandemic on youth employment may be felt for years to come

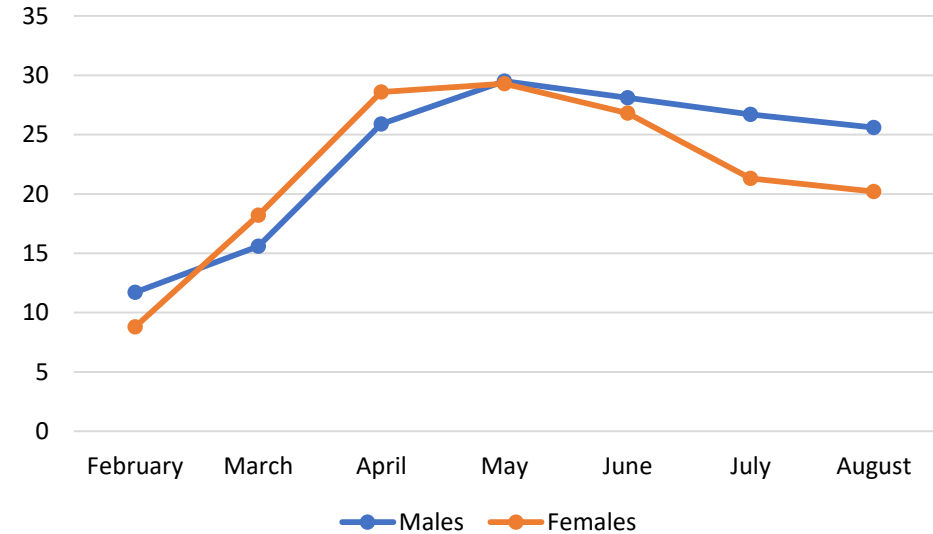
Youth employment was severely impacted by the shutdowns – the percentage of 15 to 24 years olds working declined from **58% in February** to just over **38% in April** – by August, it had partly rebounded to just over 49%.

However, recent employment gains among youth have all been in part-time work. **Full-time work among young Canadians has decreased** since April and is **down almost one-quarter from pre-pandemic levels**, reflecting losses among young women.

Cumulative five-year earnings loss after graduation due to economic downturn
(Bachelor's degree graduates in 2020 by gender)



Unemployment rate, 15 to 24 year-olds, Canada, February to August 2020



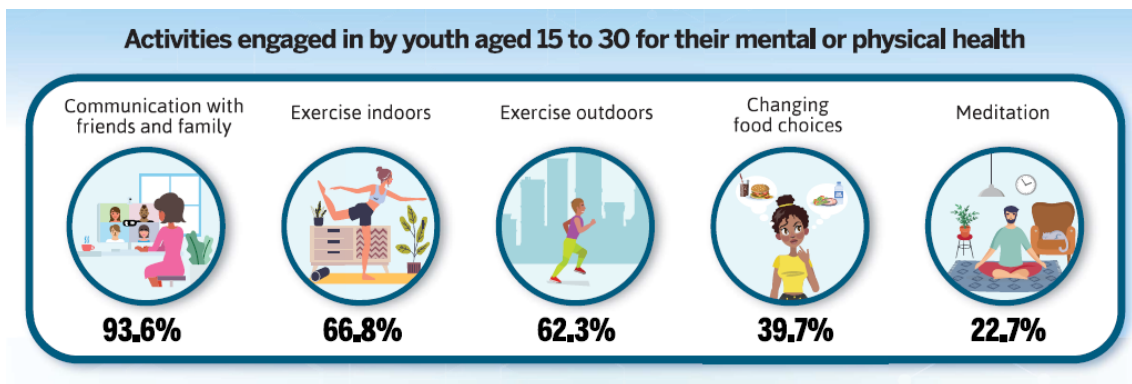
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

The Class of 2020 could lose between \$23,000 to \$44,000 in cumulative earnings over the next five years if this year's annual youth unemployment hits 28.0%.

- Losses are estimated to be between about \$8,000 to \$15,000 if the youth unemployment rate is at 19.0%
- This could have impacts on the ability of graduates to repay their debts.

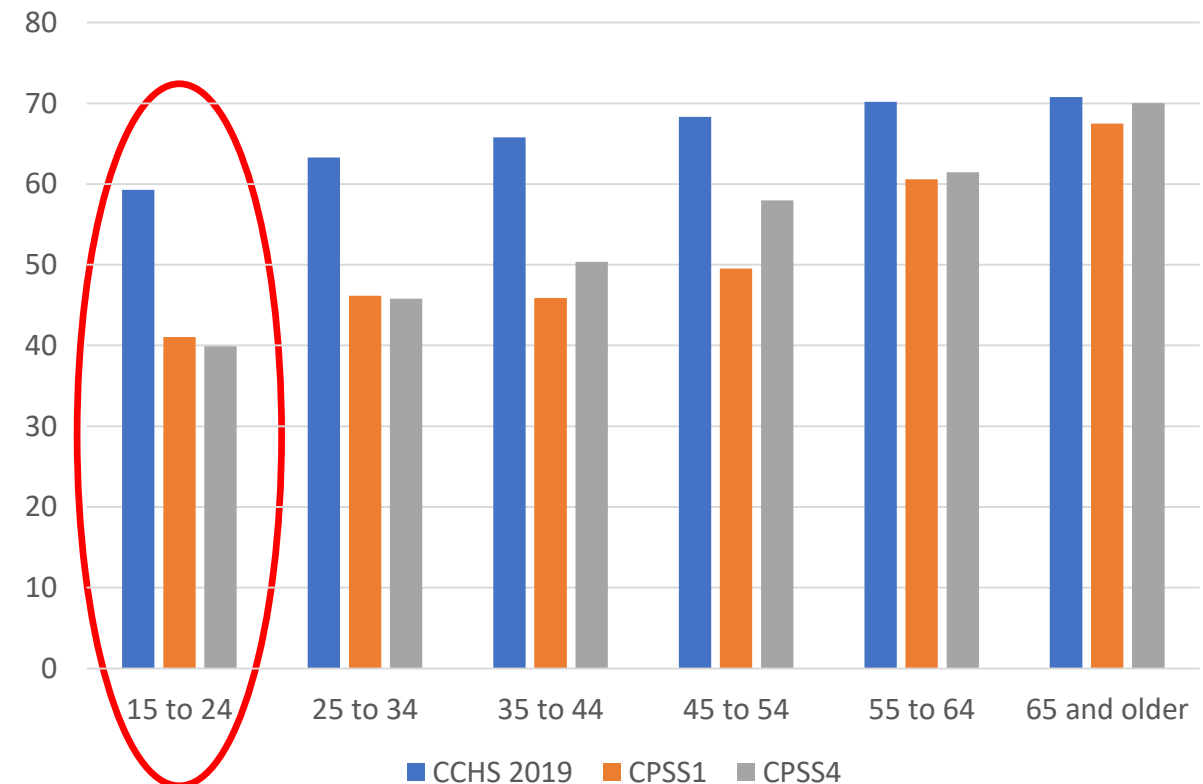
All these factors likely contributing to lower mental health among youth – they have experienced the greatest declines since the start of the pandemic

- Prior to COVID, youth were at risk for poor mental health.
- Since COVID, youth most impacted by mental health declines since COVID - those age 15 to 24 reporting the greatest declines in mental health - **20 percentage point reductions from 60% (2019, pre-COVID) to 40% (July 2020)** of those reporting excellent or very good mental health.



Source: Statistics Canada, Impacts of COVID – impacts on mental health.

Proportion of Canadians reporting excellent or very good mental health pre and post COVID by age group, Canada, 2019, March and July 2020

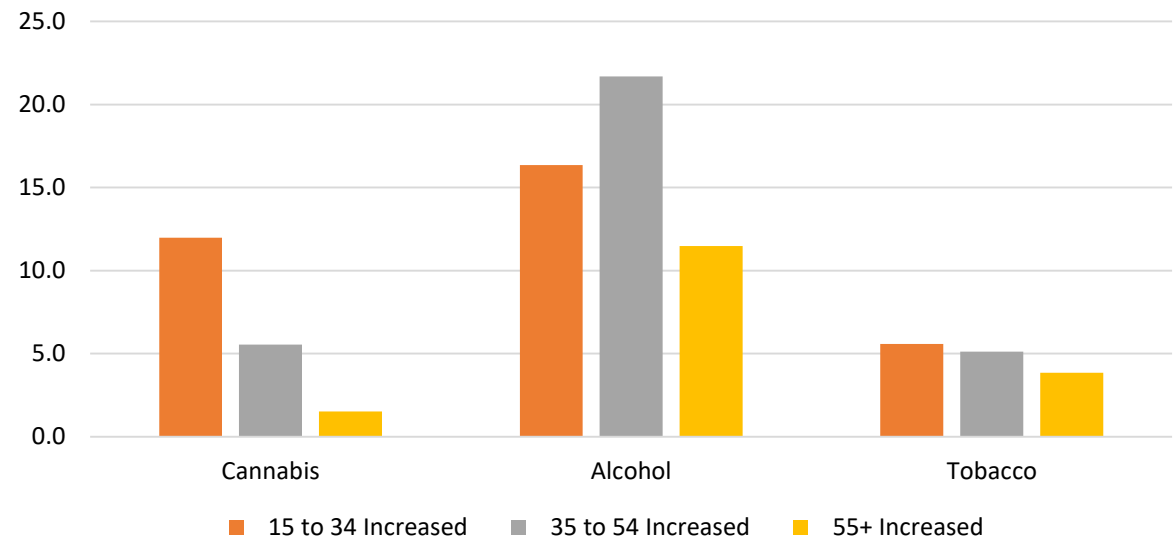


Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2019; Canadian Perspectives Survey, Series 1 and Canadian Perspectives Survey, Series 4.

Youth are also more likely to have increased their use of substances – particularly cannabis

- Poor mental health has been shown to be associated with increased use of substances during the pandemic.
- Youth aged 15 to 34 continue to be most likely to have increased their use of cannabis during the pandemic – 12 %.
- Prior to COVID, **14%** of Canadians report consuming cannabis – the rate was 24% among youth (15 to 24 years of age).

Proportion of Canadians reporting an increase use of substances during COVID-19 by age group, July 2020

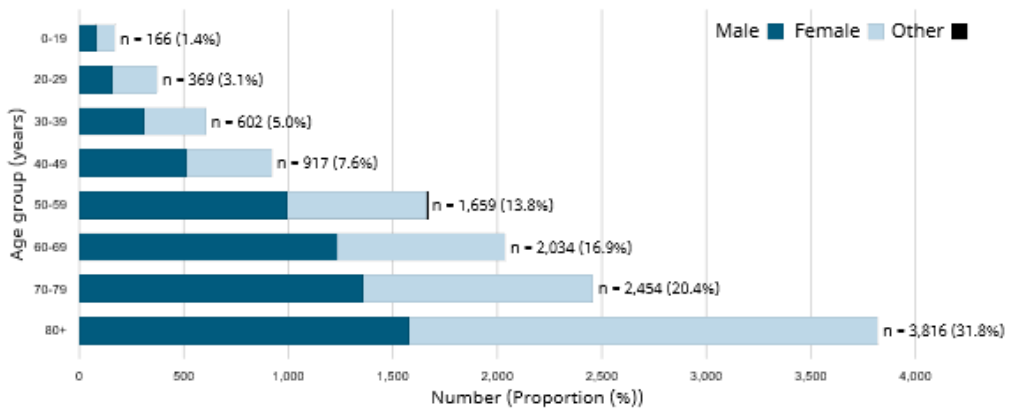


Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Perspectives Survey Series (CPSS), Wave 4, July 2020.

As the pandemic unfolds, youth are less concerned about health risks and more likely to socialize – likely resulting in higher rates of COVID-19 cases but few hospitalizations

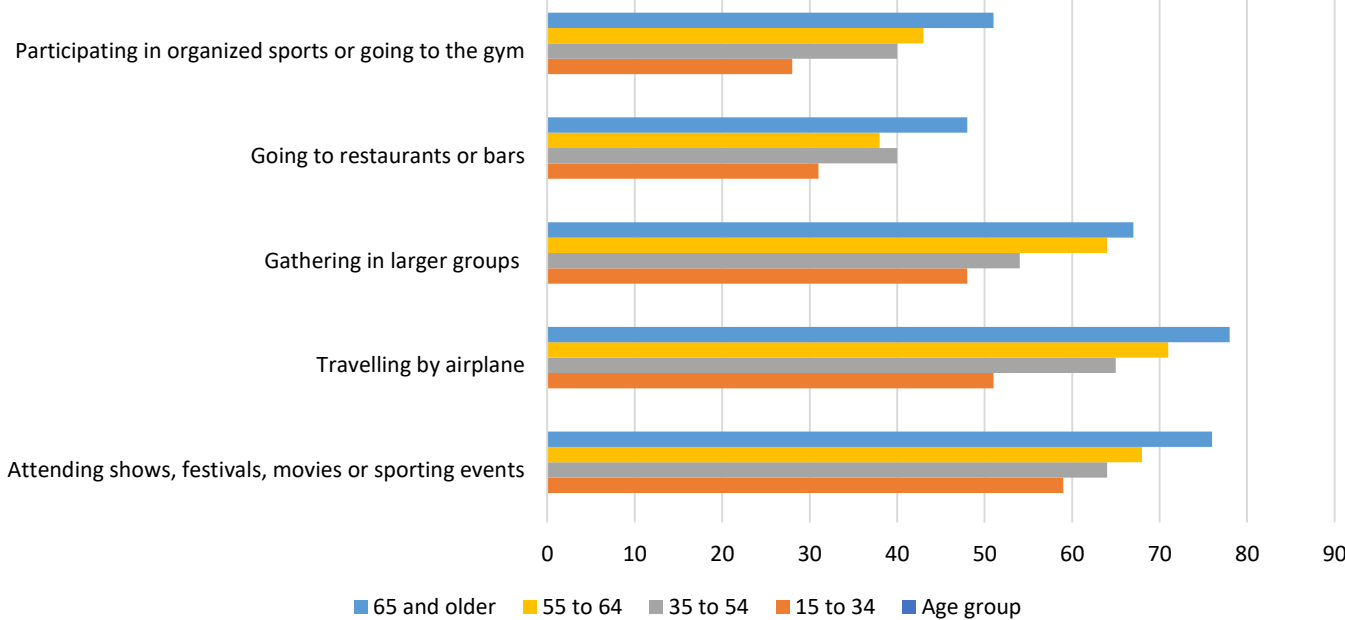
- As restrictions have been lifted, youth are consistently less likely to report being concerned about the health risks of resuming activities.
- In July, youth aged 15 to 34 were twice as likely to have been in close contact with at least 9 people other than their household members (45% vs 22%).

Distribution of hospitalized COVID cases by age and gender, Canada, September 27, 2020



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada.

Proportion of individuals who were very concerned about the health risks of resuming activities, by activity type and age group, Canada, June, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Perspectives Survey Series (June 2020).

- As of September 27th, the distribution of cases among youth aged 20 to 29 is 17.6% compared with 13.2% among the elderly (80+ years of age) – however, the risk of hospitalization and death among youth remains low.

Managing the pandemic moving forward – despite lower level of concerns regarding the health of others, youth are still willing to take necessary precautions to avoid spreading the virus

Since the start of the pandemic, youth remain concerned about their health but less concerned about the health of others...

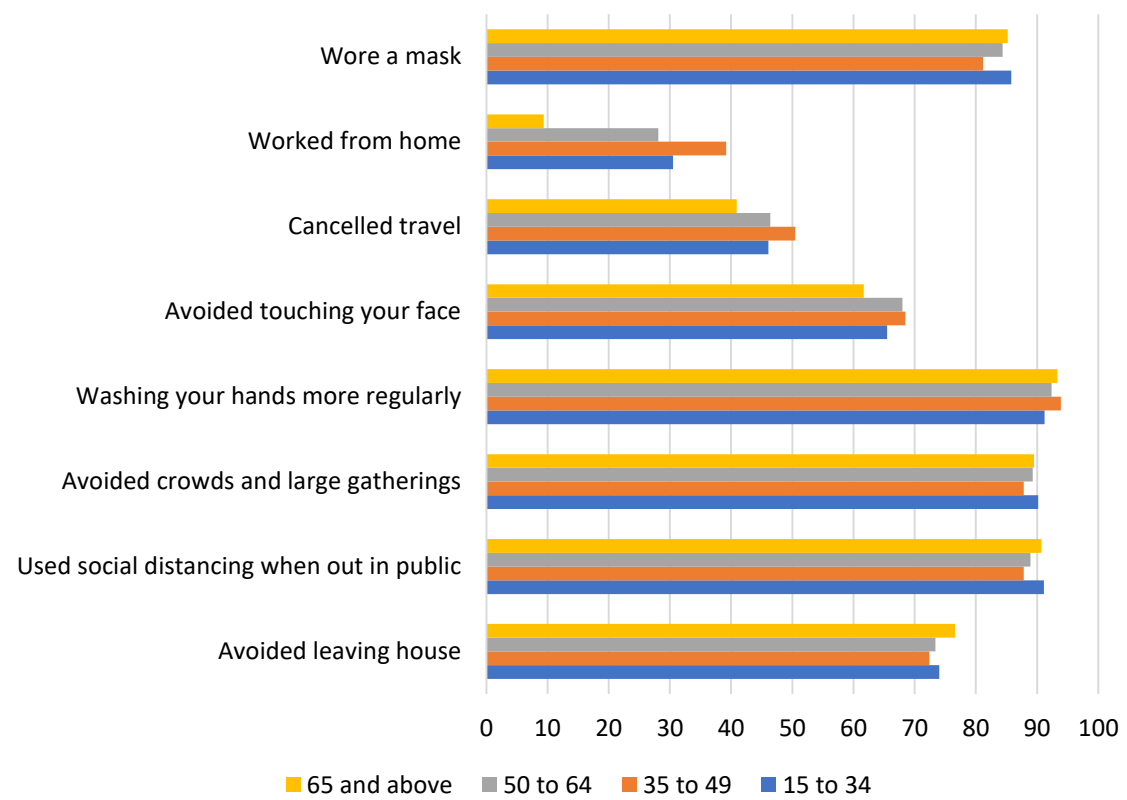
- Concern for their own health (26% in March vs 25% in July);
- Concern for health of those in their household: (55% in March/April vs 49% in July); and
- Concern for Canadian population’s health (65% in March/April vs 44%% in July).

Youth as likely as other age groups to take precautions and in some cases slightly more likely.

Targeted messaging to youth to remind them of the risk of COVID for elderly people

In the UK, young people are told not to 'kill granny'

Proportion of individuals who are likely to take precaution by type of precaution and age group, Canada, July 2020

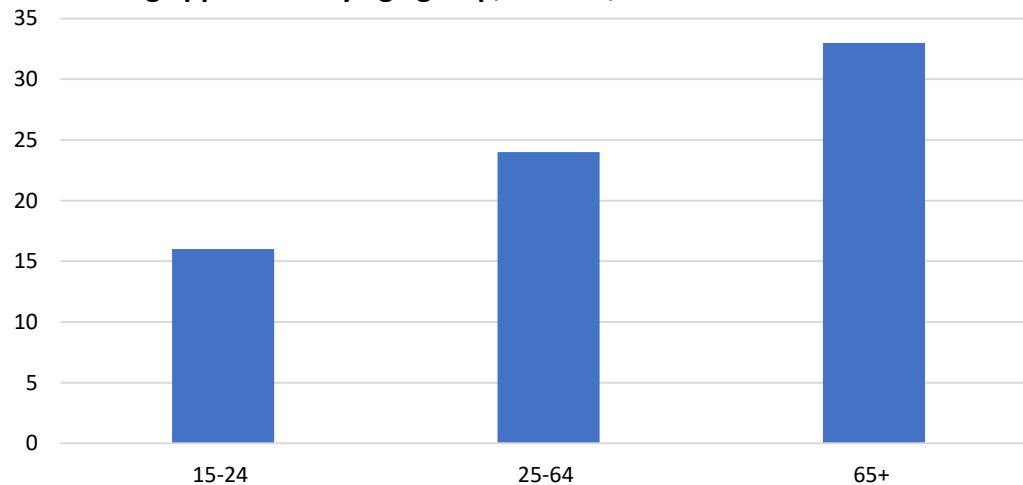


Source: Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 4 – Information sources consulted during the pandemic, July 2020.

Managing the pandemic moving forward – the willingness of youth to take further action varies to fight the pandemic depends on the type of precaution

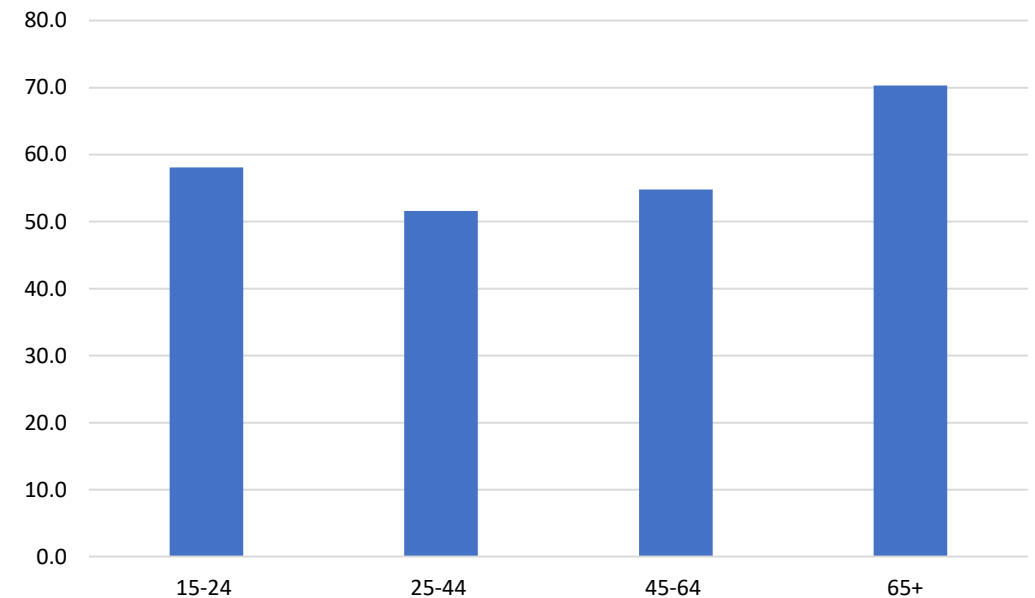
- Those aged 15 to 24 were less likely to support mandatory testing compared with older respondents (aged 65 or older) (49% and 39%).
- Despite being more socially active, only 16% of young Canadians said they would be “very likely” to use a contact tracing application compared with 33% among seniors.

Proportion of Canadians who are very likely to use a contact tracing application by age group, Canada, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3 (June 2020).

Proportion of Canadians who are very likely to get a vaccine when it becomes available by age group, Canada, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 3 (June 2020).

- Just over half of youth (58%) indicated they would get a vaccine – higher than older adults but less compared with 70% among seniors.

Looking forward

- While the impacts of the pandemic on youth employment may be felt for years to come, major structural shifts in demand for highly-skilled workers due to telework and automation may favour post-secondary educated workers since most are able to do their job at home, and generally do work that is non-automatable.
- With Students in health, services and trades most affected so far, this could play out in terms of graduation rates, this could also affect choices in Field of study.
- If balancing work, childcare and home schooling becomes the new norm for parents, women might be affected more so than men. Will there be impact on their workforce participation and fertility rates.