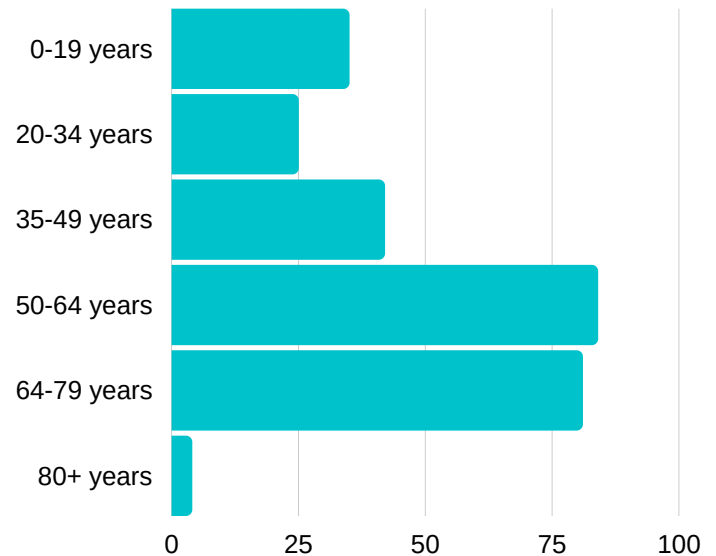


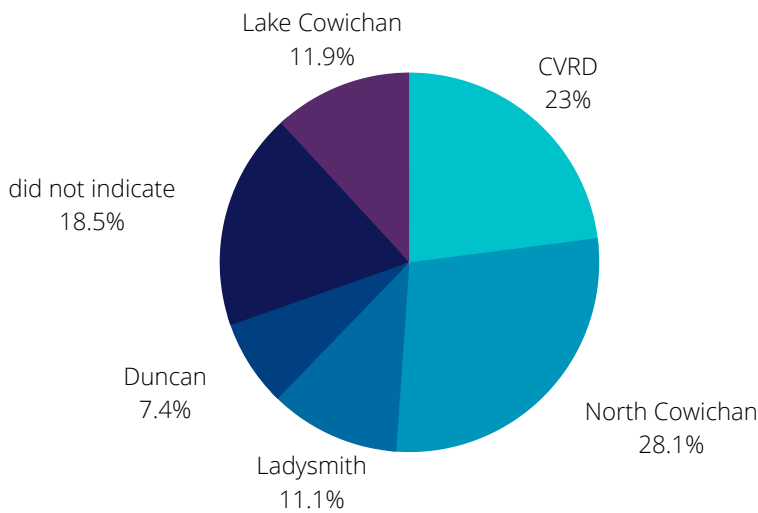
## PERSONAL AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have profound impacts on personal and family well-being. In Phase 3 (that began in June 2020), the Cowichan community adapted to increased restrictions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 bringing new challenges. This survey found that although individuals increased their outdoor physical activity and found time to connect with family, many are feeling restless and isolated from the broader community. The closure of gyms, cancellation of social events, and ongoing concern for loved ones who are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 has increased stress and anxiety. The well-being of Cowichan business owners has increased significantly since Phase 1, however many households have financial and employment concerns. As the pandemic evolved, respondents gained a deeper appreciation for the importance of community and human connection.

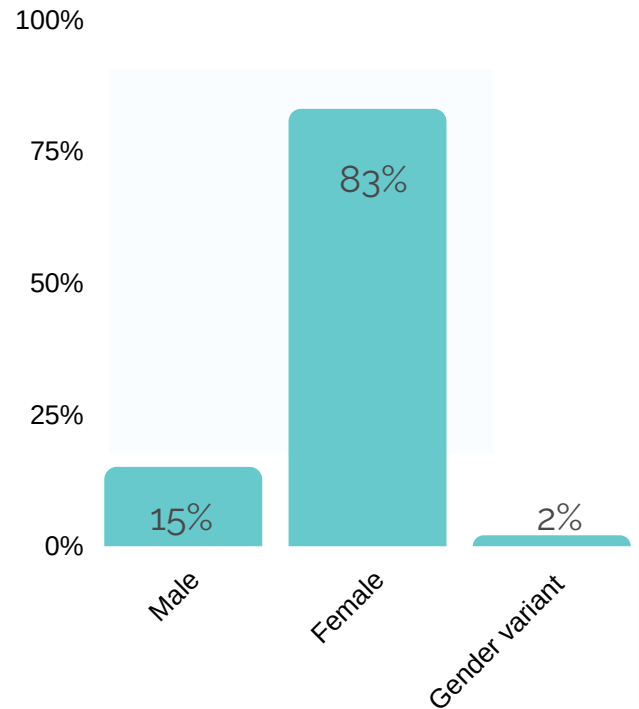
**Ages Represented in the Households of Survey Respondents**



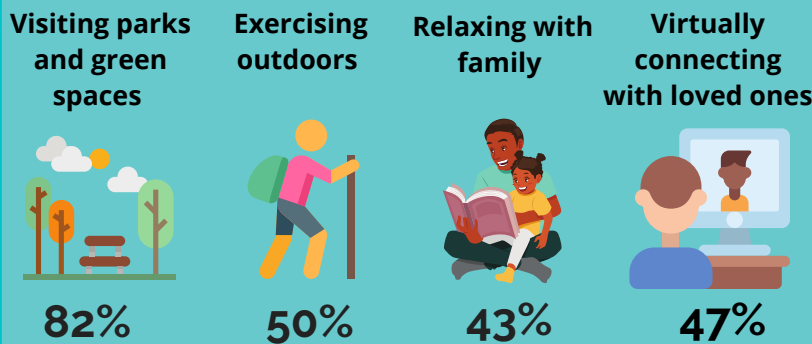
**Household Locations of Survey Respondents**



**What is your gender?**



### How Canadians Are Supporting Their Mental Health



**142** ...total number of respondents for Survey #3

## PERSONAL AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

### Mental Health Impacts

**37%**

... of survey respondents say that their personal mental health is a little or a lot **worse** since prior to the COVID-19 crisis.



**DOWN** from **38%** in previous survey.

**7%**

... of survey respondents say that their personal mental health is a little or a lot **better** since prior to the COVID-19 crisis.



**DOWN** from **23%** in previous survey.

**16%**

...of survey respondents say that relationships with those they share living accommodation are a little or a lot **worse** during this time of isolation.



**UP** from **9%** in previous survey.

**17%**

...of survey respondents say that relationships with those they share living accommodation are a little or a lot **better** during this time of isolation.



**DOWN** from **15%** in previous survey.

#### How have ways you are supporting your mental, emotional, or spiritual health changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

	increased	decreased	stayed the same	N/A
counselling services	13.39%	7.09%	21.26%	58.27%
complementary health professionals	8.59%	22.66%	24.22%	44.53%
wellness services	13.28%	23.44%	24.22%	39.06%
prayer	12.7%	4.76%	26.98%	55.56%
connecting with nature	45.19%	11.85%	35.56%	7.41%
meditation	18.11%	4.72%	28.35%	48.82%



Since December 2020, Canadians reporting positive mental health since the beginning of the pandemic has been consistently below 35% each week and has trended downward, reaching 29% in February 2021.

Source: Stats Canada: Canadians' Well-being in Year One of the COVID-19 Pandemic, April 2021

#### How do you feel?

worried happy  
depressed pessimistic  
optimistic grateful anxious  
bored normal  
untroubled numb  
lonely

While many supports have been shut down due to COVID-19, respondents are using online and COVID-safe services to support their mental health including...

- online support groups
- Virtually connecting with family and friends
- Community outreach services and volunteering
- Zoom church and devotional practices
- Creative projects
- Outdoor exercise

Respondents share concerns over supporting their mental health including...

- Costs of counselling
- Little time for self care
- Loss of a sense of community
- Maintaining hope with increased COVID cases

## PERSONAL AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

### Physical Health Impacts

**66%**

... of survey respondents say that their physical well-being is **worse** since prior to the COVID-19 crisis.



**UP** from **45%** in previous survey.

**18%**

... of survey respondents say that their physical well-being is **better** since prior to the COVID-19 crisis.



**DOWN** from **20%** in previous survey.

### Common things reported...

- Continued closure of gyms, pools, and group fitness resulted in weight gain and decreased motivation.
- Adjusting from the cancellation of in-person activities has meant an increase in outdoor physical activity.

### Changes in Substance Use

**23%**

... of survey respondents report **increased** alcohol consumption.



**DOWN** from **31%** in previous survey.

**12%**

... of survey respondents report **increased** cannabis consumption.



**UP** from **10%** in previous survey.

### The well-being of Cowichan business owners has improved significantly since Phase 1 of the pandemic.

- 80%** reported feeling good, very good or excellent  
**UP** from **29%** reporting positive feelings in previous survey
- 20%** reported feeling poor or fair  
**DOWN** from **98%** reporting negative consequences in previous survey

Source: Cowichan COVID-19 Business Survey, September 2020

### How do you care for your physical well-being?



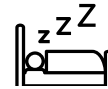
**51.43%** garden or do yard work



**68.57%** walk in their neighbourhood



**59.29%** hike on local trails



**43.57%** sleep well



**56.43%** eat well



**57.86%** take vitamins and supplements



**42.86%** access medical services as needed



**38.57%** weight-lift, practice yoga, or attend online fitness classes at home



**8.57%** kayak or boat



**18.57%** run or cycle outside

### Screen time is increasing

- During Phase 1 of the COVID-19 crisis, approximately **65%** of Canadians reported increased TV and Internet usage which negatively impacted their self-perceived mental health and is linked to reduced physical activity levels and poor quality sleep.
- 68%** of Cowichan survey respondents reported increased screen time during Phase 2 and **53%** reported decreased sleep quality.

Source: Stats Canada: Exercise and screen time during the COVID-19 pandemic, July 2020

## PERSONAL AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

### How do you get reliable COVID-19 information?



**54%** of survey respondents use TV



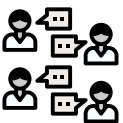
**85%** of survey respondents use internet sources



**33%** of survey respondents use social media



**32%** of survey respondents use radio



**11%** of survey respondents use word of mouth

### What specific sources do you rely on?

- CBC News
- CHEK TV
- The Times Colonist
- BCCDC
- WHO
- BC Ministry of Health
- Dr. Henry and Minister Dix updates
- Articles on Facebook
- Sources sent by friends, family, and employers

### Belonging and Participation

COVID-19 has altered the activities that members of the usually active Cowichan community participate in. While some events have moved online, restrictions of social gatherings has changed the way that people engage with their communities.

- **54%** are staying connected with family and friends
- **42%** feel that their family has an adequate support network
- **42%** report that their family is doing well
- **29%** are doing activities they have not done in a while
- **67%** report feeling more restless

### How are you connecting with neighbours?

- outdoor social distanced conversations
- email, Zoom, phone, and social media
- walks and hikes when social bubbles are permitted
- sharing recipes via text

### Observations on changing personal and family well-being since the COVID-19 pandemic began

**75%**

say life has slowed down significantly

**67%**

are reflecting on what is most important in life

### Common things reported...

- The winter weather made it harder to be outside which is relied on by many as a physical and mental health support.
- Growing concern for the health of senior family members with rising COVID-19 cases in the Cowichan valley.
- Increased isolation for students and adults working remotely.
- Minimal outlets for children who miss sports and social activities.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, **1 in 10** Canadian women were very or extremely concerned about the possibility of violence in the home. The Assaulted Women's Hotline fielded 20,334 calls from October-December 2020 compared to 12,352 in 2019 which is a **65% increase**.

Source: The Assaulted Women's Hotline: <https://www.awhl.org>

Source: Stats Canada: Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 1: Impacts of COVID-10, April 2020

[Click here for raw survey data](#)





## PERSONAL AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

"Some anxiety about purchasing essential goods and services. Well-being of children, grandchildren, friends in long-term care and family overseas."

"Income. Affording the cost of the various therapy I need to help me with anxiety. Anxiety has impacted my day to day life the most."

"Isolation. Lack of motivation and energy. People who refuse to wear masks and social distance, Mindless TV."

"My mental health has severely declined."

### What have been your biggest concerns in Phase 3?

"Getting sick with COVID, serious health damage, dying alone. Constantly having to think of innovative/effective ways to stay mentally fit and healthy and to stay interested in only activities at home."

"A deeper appreciation for friends. Time to read and reflect on life. A slower pace."

"Accomplishing long-delayed projects."

"Going outside to walk in nature. Being able to speak to a doctor on the phone."

### Have you had positive experiences during this time of the COVID-19 crisis?

"I've learned that I am stronger and more resilient than I thought I was. My volunteering for friendly visiting calls has enriched my life so much."

"Reducing expenses, trying to stay fit mentally and physically."

### What are you doing to prepare for the future?

"Taking things day by day."

"Ensuring we have food and money available."

"Just going on day to day with a positive attitude that we will get the vaccination and move on to a new normal."

## Questions for the future...

- What is the long-term impact of social isolation and lack of human connection?
- How can we support cultivating a sense of belonging and community?
- What are strategies to mitigate compounding stress from isolation, financial concern, and worry about contracting COVID-19?
- How can we bring awareness to substance abuse and domestic violence as impacted by isolation and travel restrictions?