**Sustainable Calgary – Mental Health, Well-being, Life Satisfaction and Happiness:**

**AOF Overview**

**Topics:**

* Self-reported anxiety, depression, and stress over time for AOF women and youth
* Snapshot (2023) – flourishing, life satisfaction, happiness for women and youth
* Median income for 2022 (last year with available data) and lack of differences in key well-being indicators when comparing income (<$80,000/year vs >=$80,000/year)

**WOMEN:**

**Mental health over time**

* Women self-reported – elevated anxiety symptoms

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children | Women age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated anxiety symptom prevalence |
| 2011-2013 | 2-years | 33.4 (4.4) | 1,576 | 15.2% |
| 2012-2014 | 3-years | 34.4 (4.4) | 1,972 | 15.1% |
| 2014-2017 | 5-years | 36.5 (4.4) | 1,927 | 15.8% |
| 2017-2020 | 8-years | 40.1 (4.4) | 1,929 | 16.2% |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 41.6 (4.4) | 1,290 | 23.2% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 42.3 (4.4) | 1,327 | 20.4% |
| 2021-2022 (COVID-3) | 10-13 years | 42.9 (4.4) | 1,235 | 24.9% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 44.0 (4.3) | 1,446 | 23.5% |

* Scale across all surveys: Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, State Anxiety subscale

Interpretation:

There was a notable increase in self-reported anxiety symptoms in women parenting children in Calgary in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic (16.2% to 23.2%). The proportion of parenting women reporting elevated anxiety symptoms remained high throughout the pandemic and post-pandemic.

* Women self-reported – elevated depression symptoms

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children | Women age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated depression symptom prevalence |
| 2011-2013 | 2-years | 33.4 (4.4) | 1,596 | 12.5% |
| 2012-2014 | 3-years | 34.4 (4.4) | 1,991 | 12.4% |
| 2014-2017 | 5-years | 36.5 (4.4) | 1,932 | 15.6% |
| 2017-2020 | 8-years | 40.1 (4.4) | 1,947 | 17.5% |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 41.6 (4.4) | 1,284 | 32.3% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 42.3 (4.4) | 1,309 | 30.9% |
| 2021-2022 (COVID-3) | 10-13 years | 42.9 (4.4) | 1,218 | 31.7% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 44.0 (4.3) | 1,437 | 28.1% |

* All scales: Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale

Interpretation:

The proportion of parenting women in Calgary reporting depression symptoms was observed to increase during the pandemic. This trend has declined slightly post-pandemic, but still remains elevated in comparison to pre-pandemic levels.

* Women self-reported – elevated stress

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children | Women age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated stress prevalence |
| 2012-2014 | 3-years | 34.4 (4.4) | 1,977 | 17.4% |
| 2014-2017 | 5-years | 36.5 (4.4) | 1,927 | 17.1% |
| 2017-2020 | 8-years | 40.1 (4.4) | 1,917 | 16.1% |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 41.6 (4.4) | 1,265 | 19.7% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 42.3 (4.4) | 1,317 | 18.0% |
| 2021-2022 (COVID-3) | 10-13 years | 42.9 (4.4) | 1,227 | 18.1% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 44.0 (4.3) | 1,470 | 24.3% |

* All scales: Perceived Stress Scale, 1SD cutoff used

Interpretation:

While parenting women in Calgary experienced elevated stress during the pandemic, post-pandemic stress is observed to have the highest proportion reporting elevated stress.

Perimenopause:

In 2023, 10.8% of AOF women were going through perimenopause. Perimenopausal women were found to experience elevated depression symptoms, anxiety symptoms, stress, and relationship conflict, as well as lower flourishing scores in comparison to premenopausal women.

Overall interpretation of anxiety, depression and stress findings:

These findings indicate that women are struggling with their mental health after the pandemic. Factors that may affect women’s mental health include ongoing recovery from the pandemic, parenting youth, increased responsibilities at work, experiencing perimenopause, return-to-work mandates, economic conditions, and caring for aging parents, among others.

**Women Well-being, Life Satisfaction and Happiness Snapshot Post-pandemic**

**Year: 2023**

* Women self-reported flourishing:
  + - * Flourishing refers to a state of complete well-being often associated with a sense of purpose and belonging.
      * 74.4% of women parenting youth in Calgary were flourishing.
      * Captured overall life satisfaction, perceived happiness, self-rated physical and mental health, life being worthwhile, life purpose, content with relationships, resilience, relationship satisfaction, and economic well-being (i.e., being able to meet living expenses, and not worrying about safety, food or housing)
      * Women who flourished reported more social support and less stress.
* Women self-report life satisfaction:
  + - * 85.4% of women parenting youth in Calgary are moderately or highly satisfied with their life.
      * Satisfaction in work, career, work-life balance, housing, shared responsibilities in the home, family relationships, partner/closest personal relationships, friendships, social activities and motherhood/children
* Time pressure:
  + - * 80.5% of women parenting youth in Calgary experience moderate to severe time pressure.
      * Time pressure was defined as feelings of being rushed, pressured or too busy. Moderate time pressure was defined as experiencing this a few times a week. Severe time pressure was defined as experiencing this every day.
    - Happiness in relationship with partner:
      * 73.1% of women are happy, very happy or extremely happy in their relationship with their partner
    - Discrimination:
      * 13.21% of women reported experiencing discrimination in the past year
      * Of those who experienced discrimination, 95.6% of women parenting youth were affected somewhat or a lot by the experience(s).

**YOUTH:**

**Mental health over time**

* Youth self-reported – elevated anxiety symptoms

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children - range | Youth age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated anxiety symptom prevalence |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 10.3 (0.8) | 884 | 15.7% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 10.9 (0.8) | 1,019 | 14.9% |
| 2021-2022 (COVID-3) | 10-13 years | 11.6 (0.8) | 1,022 | 18.6% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 12.8 (0.8) | 1,294 | 28.9% |

* COVID-1 to 3 – BASC-3 SRP-C Anxiety score – at-risk and clinically significant
* 12-14 year – BASC-3 SRP-A Anxiety score – at-risk and clinically significant

During the late and post-COVID-19 pandemic, the greatest proportion of youth reported elevated anxiety symptoms in comparison to the early and mid-pandemic periods. In 2023, almost 3 in 10 youth reported experiencing elevated anxiety symptoms.

* Youth self-reported – elevated depression symptoms

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children - range | Youth age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated depression symptom prevalence |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 10.3 (0.8) | 884 | 11.0% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 10.9 (0.8) | 1,020 | 14.7% |
| 2021-2022 (COVID-3) | 10-13 years | 11.6 (0.8) | 1,022 | 19.7% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 12.8 (0.8) | 1,293 | 24.6% |

* COVID-1 to 3 – BASC-3 SRP-C Depression score – at-risk and clinically significant
* 12-14 year – BASC-3 SRP-A Depression score – at-risk and clinically significant

During the late and post-COVID-19 pandemic, the greatest proportion of youth reported elevated depression symptoms in comparison to the early and mid-pandemic periods. In 2023, 1 in 4 youth reported experiencing elevated depression symptoms.

* Youth self-reported – elevated stress

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year(s) | Age of children - range | Youth age mean (SD) (years) | Total N | Elevated stress prevalence |
| 2020 (COVID-1) | 8-11 years | 10.3 (0.8) | 885 | 15.6% |
| 2021 (COVID-2) | 9-12 years | 10.9 (0.8) | 909 | 15.5% |
| 2023 | 12-14 years | 12.8 (0.8) | 1,293 | 33.3% |

* COVID-1 and 2– BASC-3 SRP-C stress question – often and almost always
* 12-14 year – BASC-SRP-A stress question – often and almost always

In 2023, 1 in 3 youth between 12 and 14 years of age reported experiencing elevated stress. This is more than double the proportion of youth who experienced elevated stress during the early- and mid- COVID-19 pandemic (15.6%, and 15.5%, respectively).

**Note:** Elevated anxiety and depression symptoms can be associated with changing hormones and development in adolescents. However, there does appear to be an overall increasing trend of Canadian adolescents and youth being diagnosed with mental health disorders, and self-reporting poorer mental health. In the 2015 Canadian Community Health Survey, 10.5% of Canadian youth between 12-17 years of age reported being diagnosed with a mood and/or anxiety disorder, in comparison to 13.4% in 2021.[[1]](#footnote-1) Additionally, the proportions of these youth who reported “very good” or “excellent” self-rated mental health declined from 78.0% in 2015 to 62.2% in 2021.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Youth Well-being, Life Satisfaction and Happiness Snapshot Post-pandemic**

**Year: 2023**

* Happiness
  + 61.7% of youth were moderately or highly happy
  + Subjective well-being on how content or satisfied youth are in their lives
* Ecoanxiety
  + 10.2% very or extremely worried about climate change
* Flourishing
  + 67.9% of youth were moderately or highly flourishing
  + Defined as youth with total flourishing scores of 7 or higher (/10)
  + Self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, autonomy, personal growth, and life purpose
  + Youth who flourished had a higher sense of belonging, and experienced less discrimination and less climate anxiety
    - 20.1% of youth experienced discrimination in the last year; of these, 62.7% of youth were affected somewhat or a lot from the experience(s)
* Optimism
  + 60.2% of youth were moderately or highly optimistic
  + The mindset of having positive expectations for the future
* Bullying
  + 32.9% experienced bullying at least once in the last year

**FAMILY INCOME AND WELL-BEING (2023):**

* Median coupled family household income in 2022 in Calgary was $118,950[[3]](#footnote-3)
  + - * 40% of AOF participants earned less than $125,000 in 2023
        + $100,000/year is no longer a living wage for a family in Calgary[[4]](#footnote-4),[[5]](#footnote-5)
* In AOF youth, flourishing, feeling they could rely on their parents, parent and peer attachment, and depression and anxiety symptoms did not differ by income status (<$80,000/year vs >= $80,000/year).
* In AOF women, partnership tension, relationship happiness, and satisfaction with social and emotional support from their partner did not differ by income status (<$80,000/year vs >= $80,000/year).

1. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/youth-young-adults/data-tool.html?0=3&1=0&2=1&3=0> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/youth-young-adults/data-tool.html?0=0&1=0&2=1&3=0> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://regionaldashboard.alberta.ca/region/calgary/couple-families-median-income/#/?from=2018&to=2022> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://enoughforall.ca/projects/calgarys-living-wage> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/calgary-families-struggling-living-wage> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)