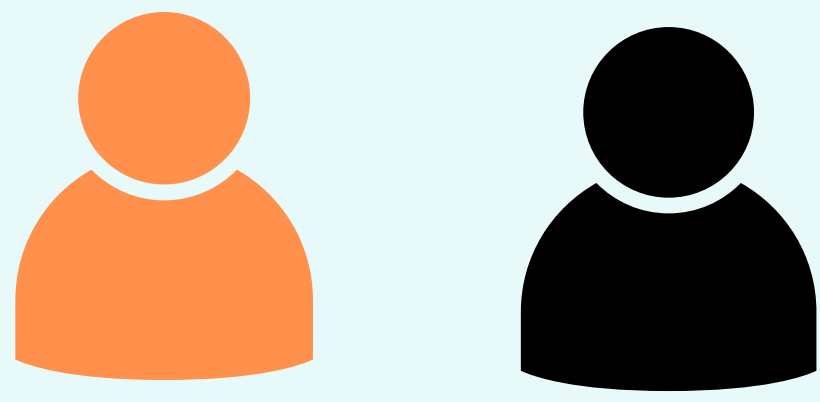


How has stigma surrounding substance use affected help-seeking behaviours of Canadians from 2020-2021?

Aaron Boughen, Evan Cheston, Leanne Mae Lacap, Keji Natana, Manahil Saeed

Research Objectives

- Understanding impact of social stigma on help-seeking behaviours for substance use disorder
- Recommend solutions to address stigma, enhance help-seeking



1 in 2 respondents with a history of substance use disorder (SUD) experience moderate to severe depression symptoms.

(Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2020)

Stigma can impact aspects of individuals' lives including



Employment



Relationships



Health

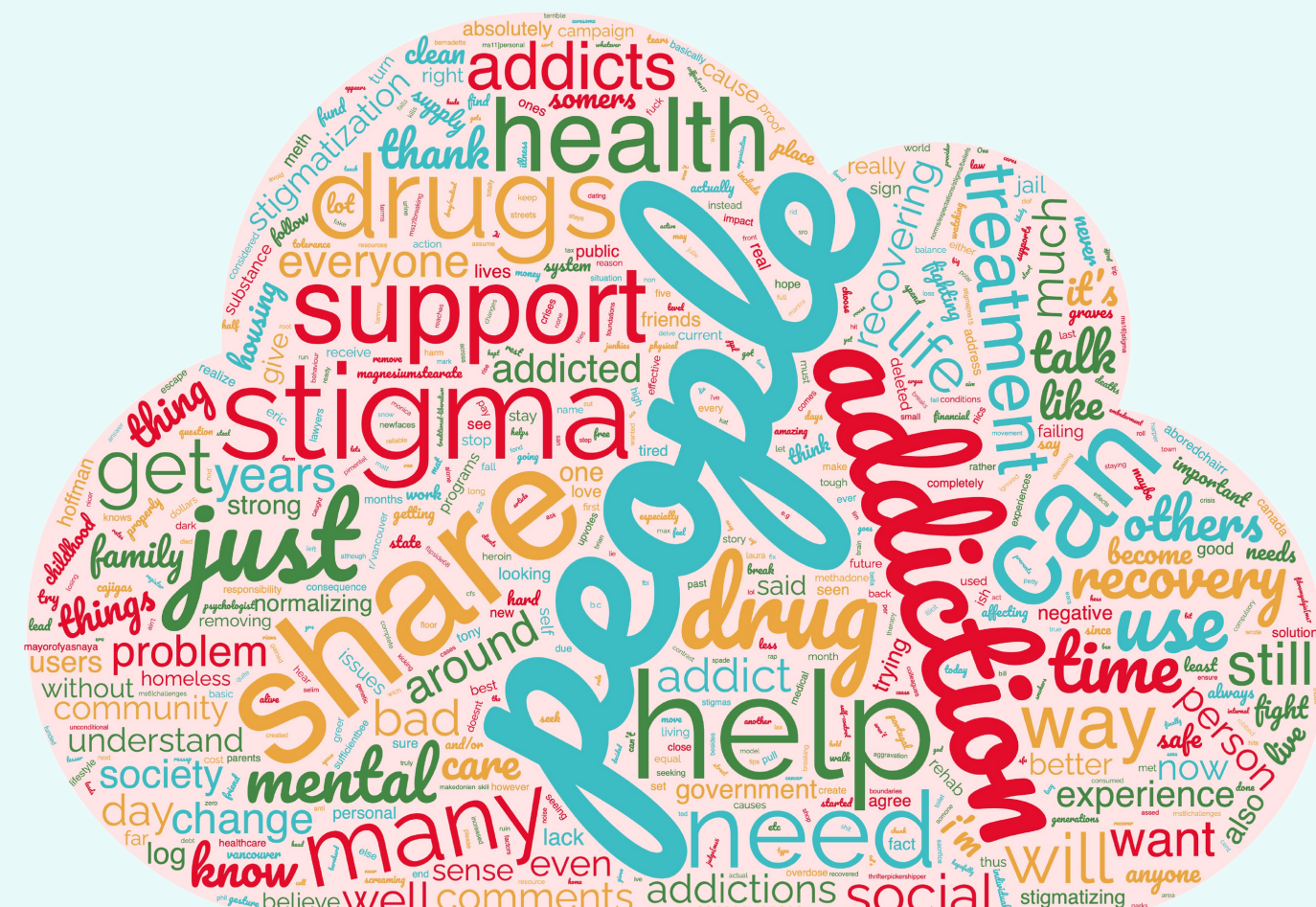
(Crapanzano et al., 2018)

"I hate that people who struggle with addiction are sent to prison. They need help and support, not shaming and isolation."
TedTalk video comment



Qualitative Findings (Themes):

- Importance of support
- Challenges
- Stigma not the problem
- Systems and policy failure
- Stigma useful



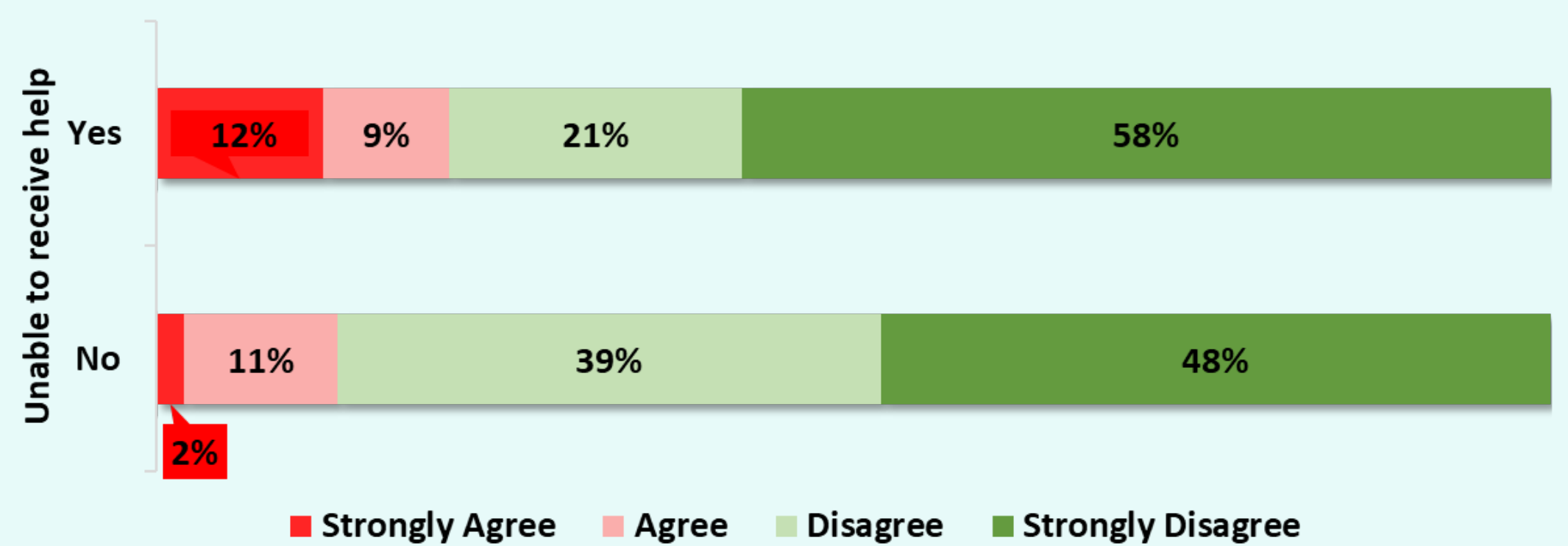
(Sourced from TED talk YouTube comments and Reddit blog posts)

Word cloud is based on these sources and reflects listed themes

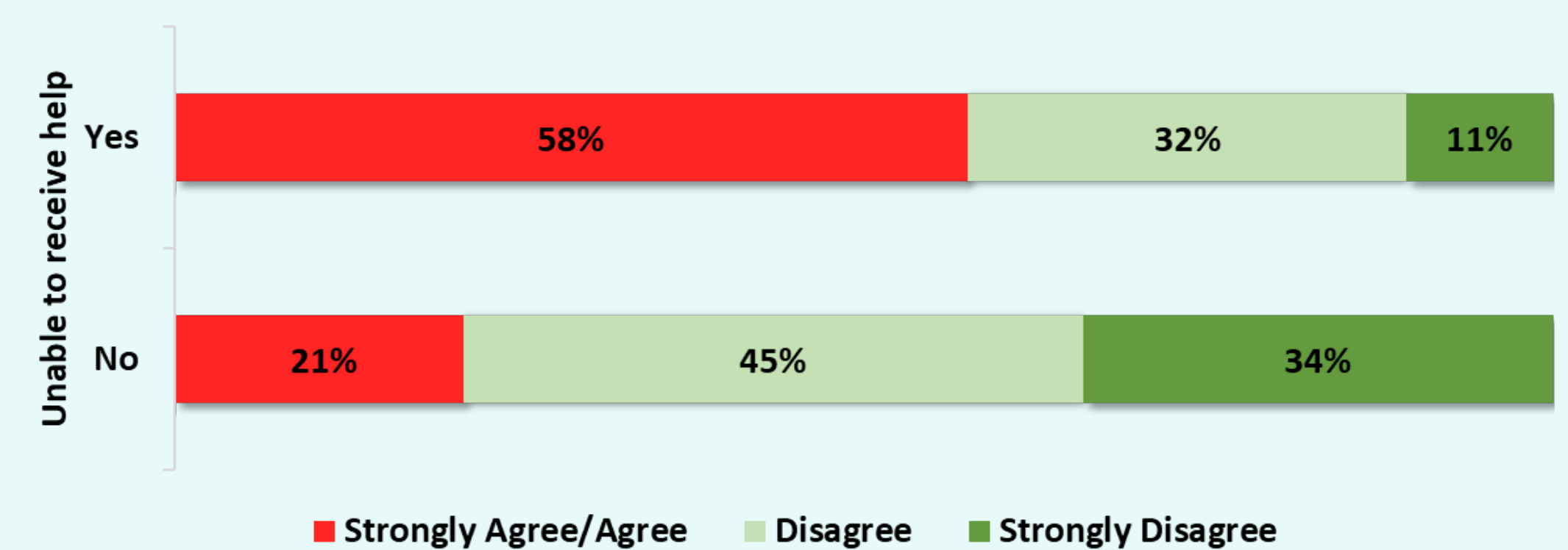
Quantitative Findings

- Seven stigma-related variables affect help-seeking for mental health/ substance use (Statistics Canada, 2023)
- Embarrassment, fear, and being insulted for substance use more common for those not seeking help

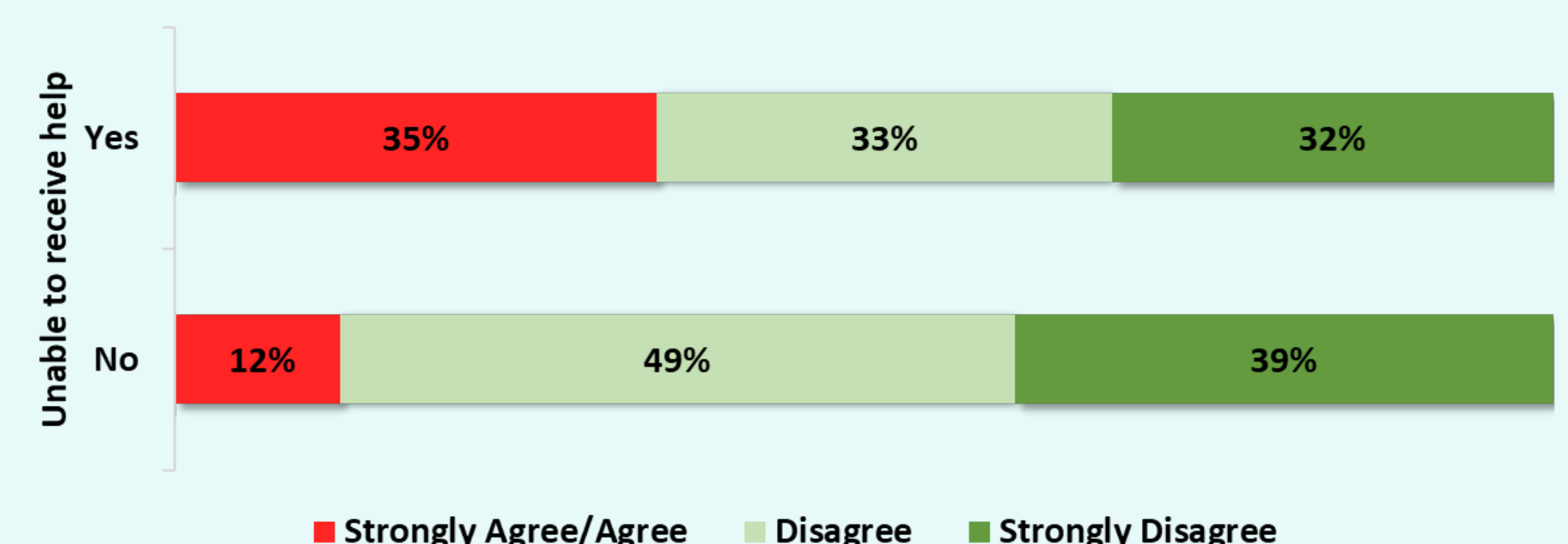
Embarrassed to tell Family/Friends about Substance Use



Fear Others' Reactions to their Substance Use



Insulted because of their Substance Use

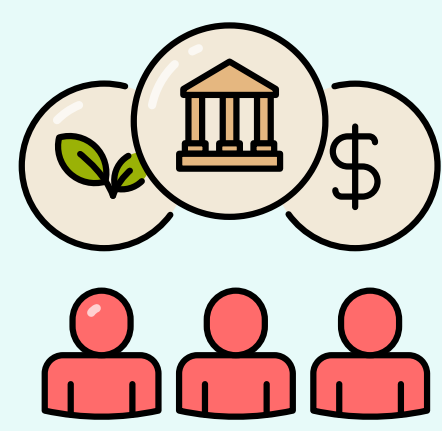


Discussion



Treatment barriers tied to challenges and policy failures

(Barry et al., 2014)



Unhelpful policies due to stigma

Recommendations



Educate health care providers on structural stigma



Education on appropriate language use



Mental health support programs



Community peer support programs

References:

- Barry, C. L., McGinty, E. E., Pescosolido, B. A., & Goldman, H. H. (2014). Stigma, discrimination, treatment effectiveness, and policy: Public views about drug addiction and mental illness. *Psychiatric Services*, 65(10), 1269-1272. <https://doi.org/A0.1176/appi.ps.201400140>
- Crapanzano, K. A., Hammartund, R., Ahmad, B., Hunsinger, N., & Kullar, R. (2018). The association between perceived stigma and substance use disorder treatment outcomes: a review. *Substance abuse and rehabilitation*, 1-12.
- Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2020). *Mental Health and Substance Use During COVID-19: Summary Report*. https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/mhcc_ccsa_covid_leger_pol_eng.pdf
- Statistics Canada. (2023). *The Canadian Perspectives Survey Series 6: Substance Use and Stigma During the Pandemic*, Public-Use Microdata File. 45-25-0012. Statistics Canada. <https://doi.org/10.25318/45250012-eng>