

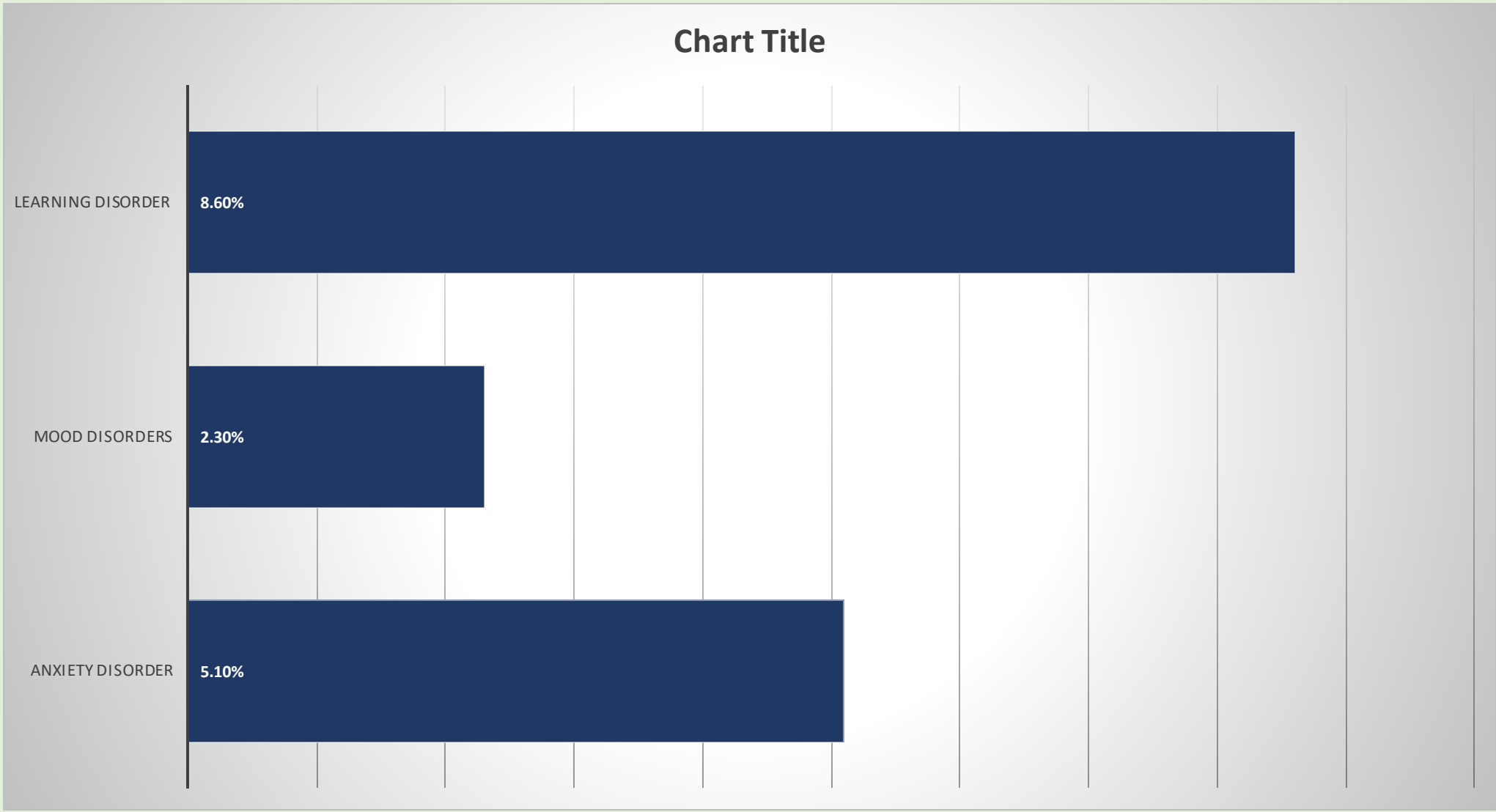
Effects of COVID-19 on the mental health of children aged 5 to 20 years

The pandemic has had a significant impact on child and adolescent mental health, with 70.2% of children and adolescents experiencing deterioration in at least one domain. Pre-school-aged children are less likely to show deterioration. Parents must have resources to mitigate their children's stress.



The pandemic has had a significant impact on children and young people's mental health, with depression and anxiety being among the most prevalent mental disorders. The pandemic may also make certain types of anxiety worse, such as specific phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and generalized anxiety connected to unpleasant and unpredictable events. Additionally, the family setting may become a significant risk factor for some children and youths' mental health when they are kept at home for an extended period. To reduce their children's stress, parents must have the necessary mental and physical resources. This raises the possibility that this pandemic will be traumatizing for children and youth, with long-lasting emotional repercussions.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on child and adolescent mental health, with more than two-thirds of children and adolescents reporting mental health problems. These problems were linked to stress related to social isolation, and 70.2% of children 6–18 years old experienced deterioration in at least one domain. Deterioration in depression was highest among 10–12-year-old children, while deterioration in anxiety and irritability was highest among 6- to 9-year-old children. Pre-school-aged children were less likely to show deterioration in anxiety, irritability, and hyperactivity, with the lowest rates of deterioration and the highest rates of improvement.



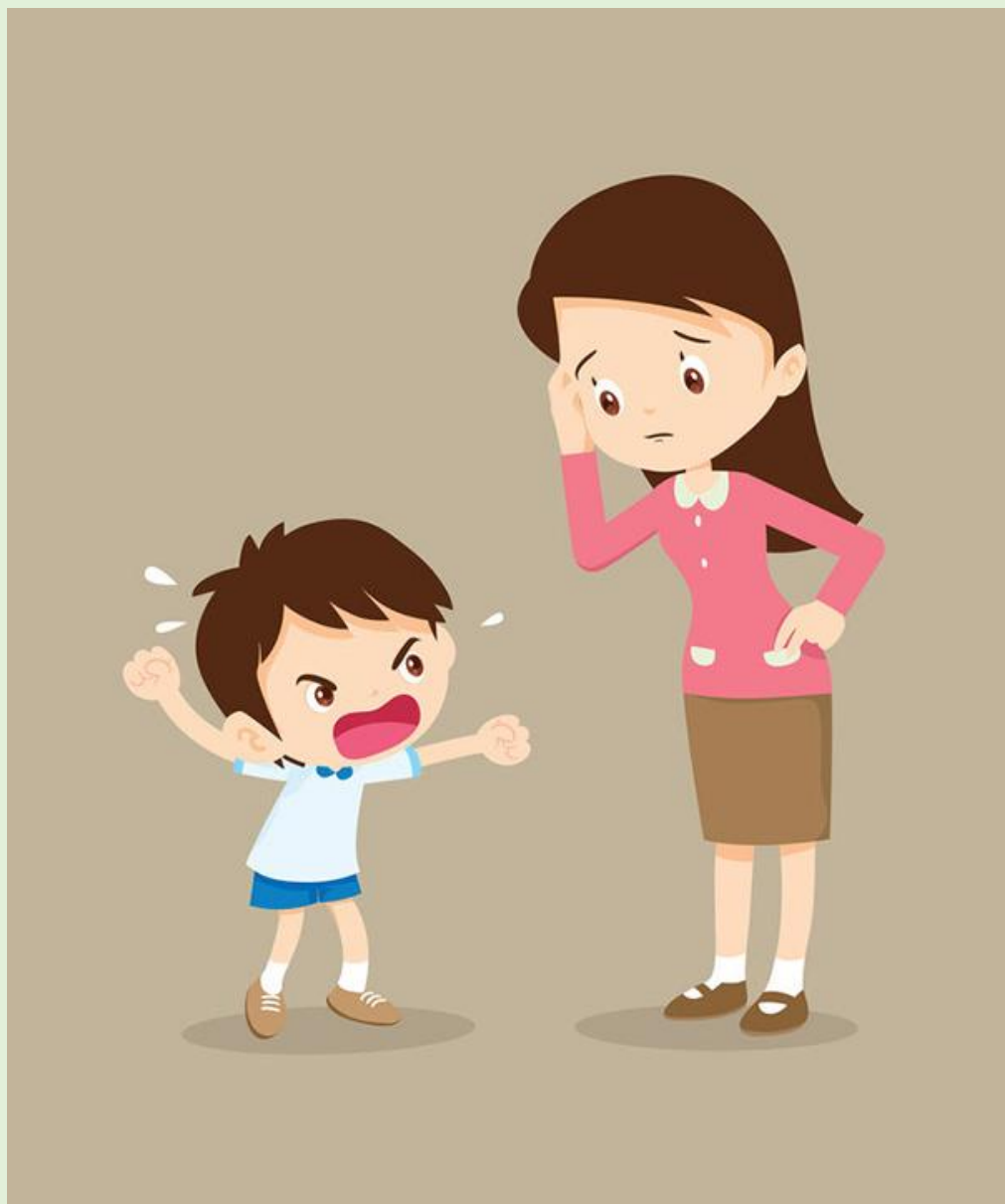
Anxiety Disorder

The rate of anxiety and depressive symptoms in children hospitalized for COVID-19 infection in Wuhan was almost twice as high as pre-pandemic levels, according to a meta-analysis of general population studies conducted during the pandemic.



Learning Disorder

8.6% of children in Ontario were affected by learning disorders, and rigid adherence to DSM-5 criteria for initial identification of a specific learning condition poses a risk of error when schooling has been disrupted by COVID-19. Schools changed their curricula while educational disruption persisted, making it harder to determine whether reported learning difficulties and/or poor accomplishment levels are a result of inadequate instruction or an underlying learning condition.



Behavioral Disorder

2.3% of children aged 5-19 years had behavioral disorders, with higher clinical levels of emotional symptoms, conduct issues, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship issues, and a lack of prosocial behavior in May 2020. Neurodevelopmental impairment was not a reliable indicator of increases in emotional/behavioral issues.

Problems



Lack of physical activity and socialization can lead to boredom and mental health issues.



The pandemic caused schools to close, leading to learning loss and potential long-term consequences for academic achievement.



The pandemic has caused a significant increase in mental health problems in children due to social isolation, stress, and disruptions to daily routines.

Solutions



Home-based activities and arts and crafts can help children relax and express their feelings, while traditional therapy can help them process their emotions and develop coping skills.



Technology can be used to address the mental health needs of children during the pandemic, such as video-based social meetings and telepsychiatry for those who cannot meet with mental health professionals in person.



Parents can use this time to engage in meaningful activities with their children, strengthening the parent-child bond and providing children with a sense of security and support.