



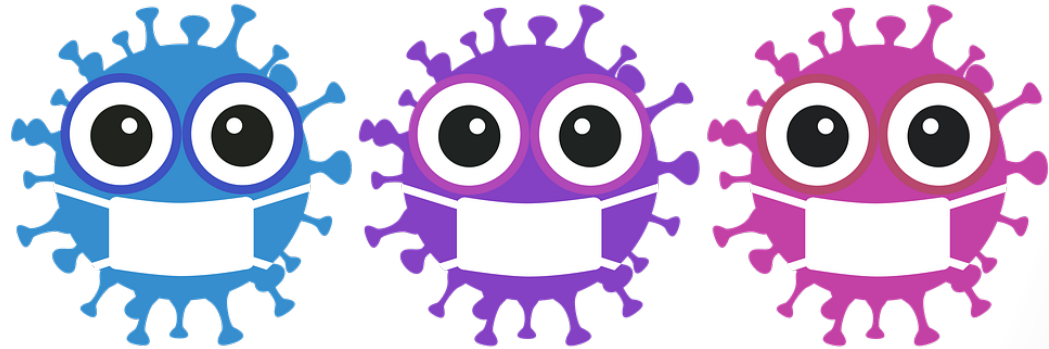
Responding to Mental Health Concerns in the Workplace

**Presented by:
Gail Sutter, LMHP, CEAP
Executive Director Continuum EAP**



Complex Emotions

- Increased stress & worry
- Lack of “normal”
- Emotional exhaustion
- Loneliness
- Grief/loss
- Fear
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Distrust



Impact of Stress on the Mind and Body

- 77% of people regularly experience physical symptoms caused by stress
- 73% of people regularly experience psychological symptoms caused by stress

Impact of Stress on the Mind and Body

- What percentage of employees said they were less productive at work as a result of stress?

- 22%
- 40%
- 51%
- 79%

Impact of Stress on the Mind and Body

- What percentage of employees said they were less productive at work as a result of stress?
- 51%

Impact of Stress

- 41% of employees feel burnt out, draining or exhausted from their work
- 1 in 4 report frequently feeling down, depressed or hopeless
- Yet more than one in three employees reported having done nothing to cope with these feelings

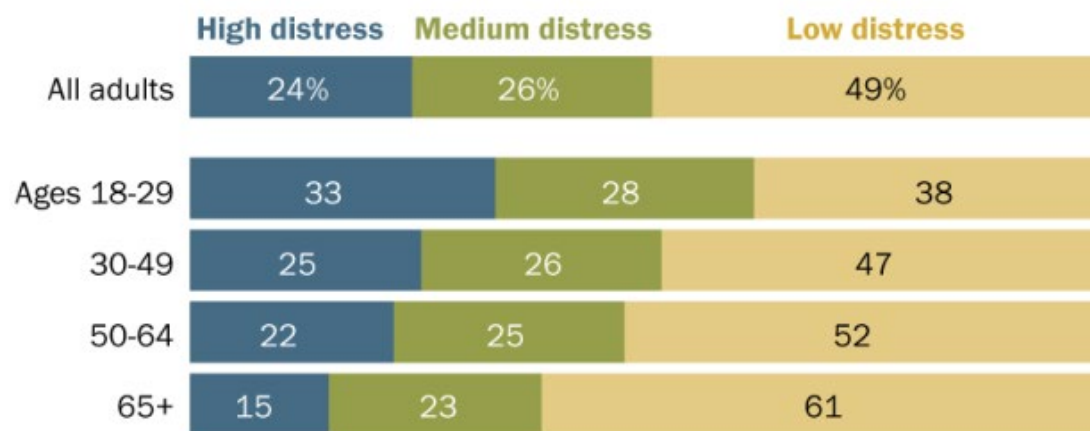
SHRM Research

What age group do you think is most likely to report high levels of emotional stress during COVID 19?

- Ages 18-29
- Ages 30-49
- Ages 50-64
- Ages 65+

Younger Americans more likely to report high levels of emotional distress during COVID-19 pandemic

% of U.S. adults who fall into each category of psychological distress



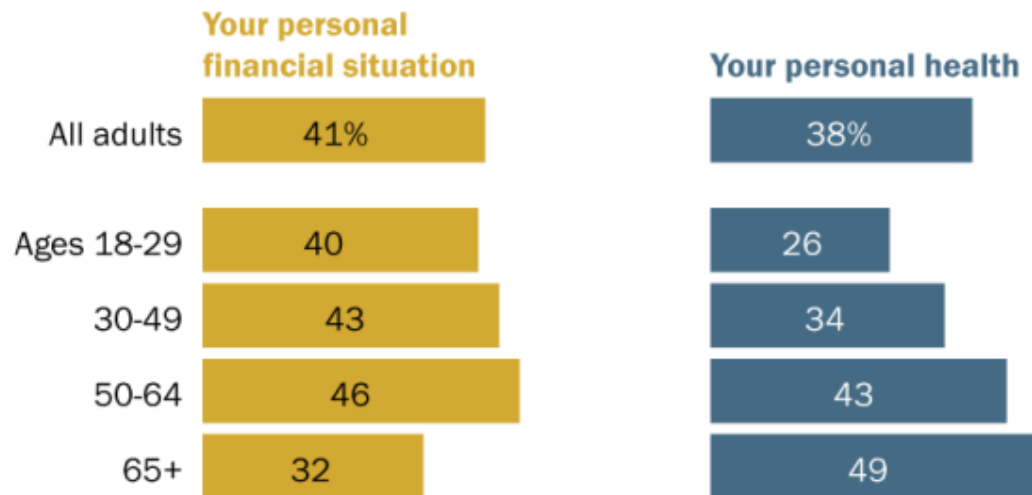
Note: Additive psychological distress scale based on responses to five standard measures of psychological distress adapted from GAD-7, CES-D, Impact to Event Scale-Revised.

Source: Survey of all U.S. adults conducted March 19-24, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Older U.S. adults see COVID-19 outbreak as a major threat to their personal health; younger Americans say it is a major threat to their finances

% who say the coronavirus outbreak is a major threat to ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 5, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

What does this stress do to employee mental health?

CDC study conducted in June 2020

- 31% reported symptoms of an anxiety or depressive disorder
- 26% reported trauma/stress related disorder due to Covid 19
- 13% started or increased substance use to cope
- 11% had seriously considered suicide in the preceding month

**twice the rate reported in 2018

The Good New is-

There are things you
can do as a
workplace.

3 Tiered Approach



Opening Up-

62% of millennials 32% of Baby Boomers

Say they are comfortable discussing their mental health issues.



Traditionalist
(1927-1945)

>75



Baby Boomer
(1946-1964)

56-74



Generation X
(1965-1980)

40-55



Millennials
(1981-1994)

26-39



Gen Z/ Born free
(1995-2010)

10-25

Why don't they ask for help?

- 64% of employees think if someone reached out to HR or management about a mental health issue, it would negatively impact their job security.
- NAMI reports that 8 out of 10 workers with a mental health condition report that shame and stigma prevent them from seeking treatment

Organizational Focus-

- Values, ethics, missions that guide behavior
- Organizational culture and management practices
- Train your leaders to be proactive
- Focus on problem solving and accountability
- Strong communication
- Social connectedness

Create a positive attitude about getting help rather than feeling broken because need help.

- Be vulnerable
- Model healthy behaviors
- Communicate how to utilize services with real-life situation
- Give people permission to use resources
- Build a culture of connection
 - Check in regularly
 - Be patient and understanding
- Encourage team members to be understanding
- Know the resources available

3 Tiered Approach



Resources for emotional health

- EAP provides support both to employees and family members as well as to the organization.
- Wellness/Well-being programs
- Financial wellness
- Promote events such as Mental Health Awareness month
- Offer resources-Don't have to be expensive

Expressing Concern

Explore the Situation

- Express what you see
- Say how you feel
- Really listen
- Resist making judgements
- Resist giving advice

Encourage Action

- Offer resources
- Focus on solutions vs. problems

Seek Support

- Use resources from HR, EAP or community



3 Tiered Approach



Have a Conversation-

- An employee says:
 - “I just can’t handle everything that is happening. I’m not sleeping and just can’t make decisions.”
 - “I’m going through a divorce and I have been struggling.”
 - “I’m so worried about elderly parents who are having health issues. It is all I can think about.”
- **I’m sorry to hear that you are having a difficult time.**
- **I’m concerned about you and want to help you through this.**
- **I’m not sure I have all of the answers but can help you get some help.**
- **I encourage you to utilize our Employee Assistance Program.**



Avoid the ends of the spectrum



No
Acknowledgment

Over Involvement

“The workplace can be a strong contributor to mental wellbeing, giving people the opportunity to feel productive and achieve their potential”