

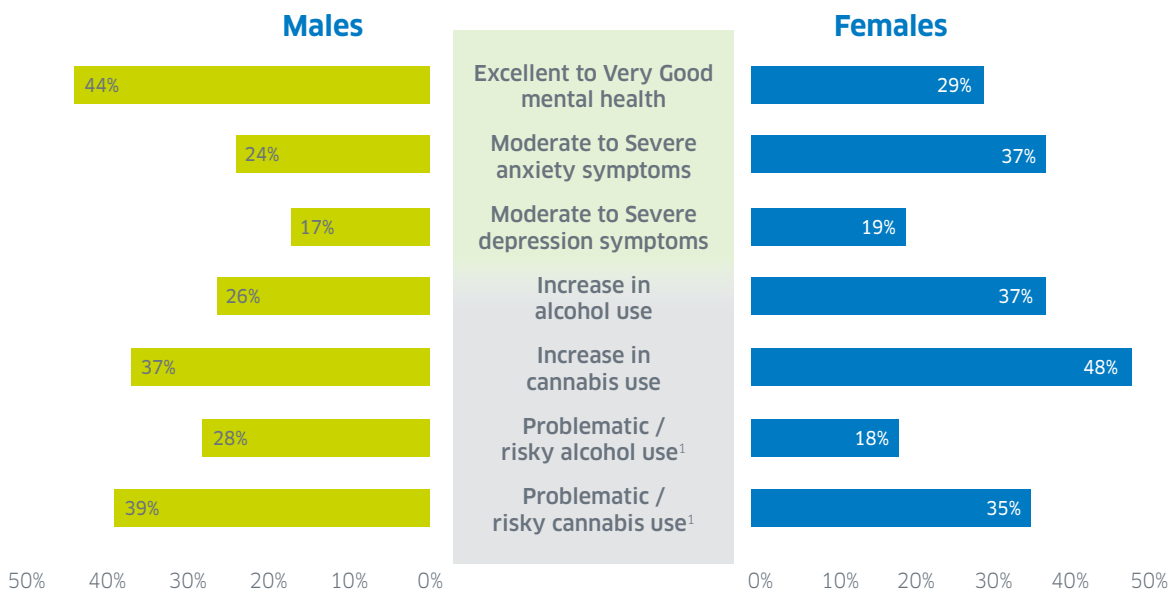
# MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING COVID-19

Spotlight on Canadian Households with **Young Children**



Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, many people are reporting **mental health and substance use concerns**. According to recent [surveys conducted by Leger](#) on behalf of the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction and the Mental Health Commission of Canada, these concerns are greater among **females in households with young children** (< 13 years).

## Self-reported mental health and substance use concerns among households with young children

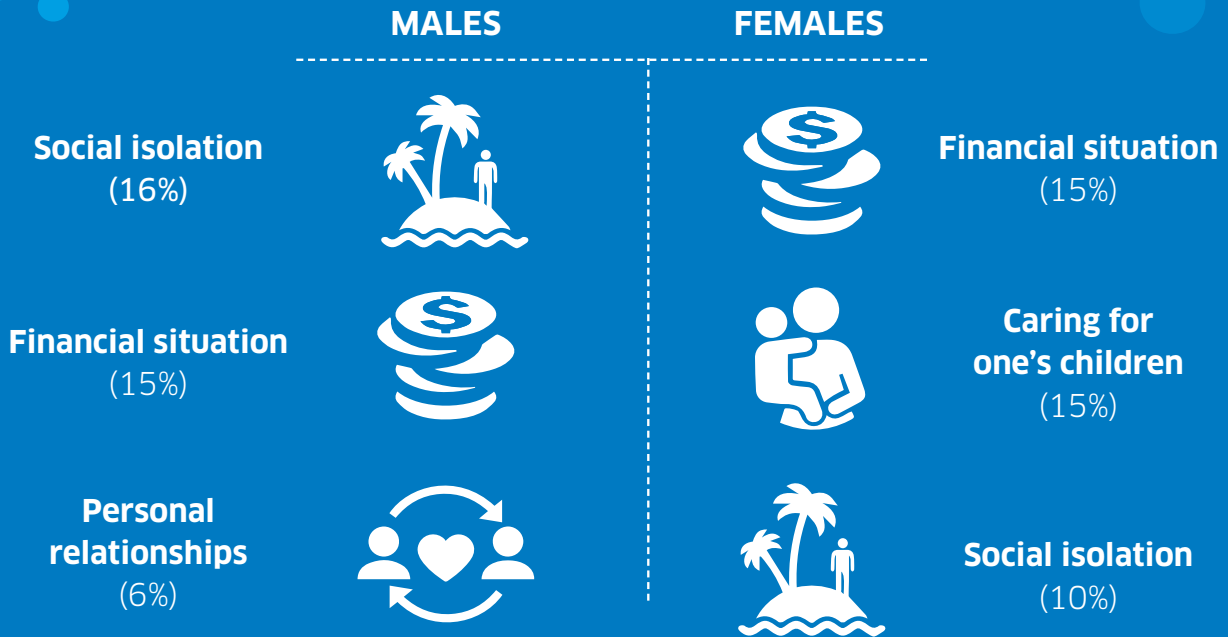


**Sex differences** in mental health and substance use pre-date the pandemic. According to [Statistics Canada](#), in 2012, females were 2 X more likely to report depression than males and 1.5 X more likely to report generalized anxiety. Conversely, males were 2.5 X more likely to report a substance use disorder than females.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Problematic alcohol or cannabis use refers to a pattern of use that might affect a person's health and safety, and increase the risk of other problems related to alcohol or cannabis use.

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Community Health Survey - Mental Health used the World Health Organization, Composite International Diagnostic Interview 3.0, to classify people with select mental or substance use disorders. This standardized instrument is typically used to assess mental disorders in population surveys, according to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV) criteria.

# Top 3 pandemic stresses among households with young children



## What you can do to cope

- Stay active and keep yourself busy** with activities you enjoy.
- Stay connected** with friends and family while still practising physical distancing.
- Find balance** by staying informed but know when to take a break from COVID-19 news and topics.
- Be kind to yourself**, this is a difficult time, and you're doing your best to manage a challenging situation.
- Take care of your body** by eating and sleeping well, exercising and meditating. Try this [breathing exercise](#) to calm your nervous system.
- Reach out for help!** Talk to a family member or friend, and seek professional support, if needed.

## If you use substances

- 1 Monitor your use: pay attention to its frequency and context.
- 2 Follow *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*.
- 3 Follow *Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines*.
- 4 Avoid stockpiling alcohol, cannabis, and other substances.
- 5 Reach out for help if you are concerned about your consumption.

For more information on COVID-19, mental health and substance use, visit our resource hubs:

[Mental Health and Wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)  
[Impacts of COVID-19 on Substance use](#)