



PUBLIC POLL FINDINGS AND METHODOLOGY

Two-thirds of Americans report experiencing social isolation since start of COVID-19 pandemic

Americans under 50 years old more likely to experience social isolation and negative emotions during pandemic

Topline Findings

Washington, DC, October 7, 2020 – According to a new Ipsos poll, conducted on behalf of Golin, most Americans report experiencing social isolation and other negative emotions in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Younger Americans under 50 years old are more likely to report experiencing negative emotions and social isolation since the start of the pandemic. Additionally, most Americans say the pandemic has caused difficulties connecting with friends and agree that it takes a lot of energy to keep in touch with people. Around half say they have lost touch with many people.

Detailed Findings

1. Many Americans report increased stress levels and feeling negative emotions since the COVID-19 pandemic began.
 - Two in three report increased stress or anxiety levels due to COVID-19 (66%). Americans under 50 years old are more likely to report this (74% ages 18-34, 75% ages 35-49 and 56% ages 50 and older), along with parents of a child under 18 years old (78%).
 - Those under 50 years old are more likely to say they have felt negative sentiments since the COVID-19 pandemic began, including feeling stressed, anxious, sad, overwhelmed, and exhausted.
 - More women than men report feeling all listed negative emotions: frustrated, stressed, anxious, isolated, tired, sad, overwhelmed, exhausted, and lonely.
2. Many Americans say the pandemic has hurt their ability to connect and keep in touch with people.
 - Seventy-four percent of Americans say that the pandemic has made it more difficult to connect with friends.
 - More than half agree that it takes a lot of energy to connect with friends during the pandemic (58%), and around the same number admit that they put more effort into trying to keep in touch with people at the beginning (51%).
 - Moreover, forty-eight percent say they have lost touch with many people.
 - Those 50 years and older are least likely to report a decrease in effort (58% ages 18-34, 54% ages 35-49 and 46% ages 50 and older) or losing touch with many people (57% ages 18-34, 54% ages 35-49 and 41% ages 50 and older).
3. Two-thirds of Americans say they have personally experienced social isolation, defined as “having few social relationships or infrequent social contact with others”.
 - Sixty-six percent of Americans have personally experienced social isolation since the start of the pandemic, and 67% report a loved one experiencing this.
 - Americans under 50 years old are most likely to report personally experiencing (76% ages 18-34, 67% ages 35-49 and 60% ages 50 and older) or seeing a loved one experience social isolation (72% ages 18-34, 69% ages 35-49 and 62% ages 50 and older).
 - The most common changes seen in those experiencing social isolation are lack of motivation (50% personal change, 32% change in loved one), feeling more anxious than usual (41%





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- personal change, 31% change in loved one), and feeling depressed (37% personal change, 30% change in loved one).
- Nearly all Americans agree that social isolation can have a significant impact on someone's mental health (89%) or physical health (86%), and 64% think that social isolation can increase chance of heart disease, high blood pressure or sleep disorders.

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 21-25, 2020 on behalf of Golin. For this survey, a sample of 2,010 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents.

For full results, please refer to the following annotated questionnaire:



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Full Annotated Questionnaire

1. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, which of the following emotions have you felt? Please select all that apply.

	Total (N=2,010)
Frustrated	57%
Stressed	52%
Anxious	47%
Isolated	41%
Tired	37%
Sad	37%
Overwhelmed	33%
Exhausted	30%
Lonely	28%
Hopeful	27%
Calm	19%
Happy	16%
Excited	7%
Rejuvenated	5%
Other	5%
None of the above	6%

2. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, have you had challenges when trying to access any of the following? Please select all that apply.

	Total
Food	25%
Healthcare services	24%
Transportation	12%
Internet	11%
Prescription medication	9%
[If parent] Childcare	(N=482)
	5%
Other	3%
None of the above	52%

3. Thinking about your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **The pandemic has made it more difficult for me to connect with friends.**

	Total
Strongly agree	33%
Somewhat agree	41%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	10%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>74%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>26%</i>





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4. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, what is the longest time you have gone without interacting with other people outside of your household and your workplace?

	Total
A few days	28%
A week	13%
Two weeks	14%
Three weeks	8%
A month	13%
Two to three months	17%
I have not interacted with people outside my household/workplace since the pandemic began	8%

5. Thinking about the definition of social isolation that you just read, to what extent have you or a loved one experienced social isolation since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Strongly or somewhat experienced Summary

	Total
A loved one	67%
Myself	66%

a. Myself

	Total
Strongly experienced	24%
Somewhat experienced	42%
Haven't experienced much	21%
Haven't experienced at all	12%
<i>Experienced (Net)</i>	66%
<i>Haven't experienced (Net)</i>	34%

b. A loved one

	Total
Strongly experienced	26%
Somewhat experienced	41%
Haven't experienced much	21%
Haven't experienced at all	12%
<i>Experienced (Net)</i>	67%
<i>Haven't experienced (Net)</i>	33%



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6. **[If personally experienced social isolation]** Because of social isolation, what kind of changes have you seen in yourself? Please select all that apply.

	Total (N=1,310)
Lack of motivation	50%
Feeling more anxious than usual	41%
Feeling depressed	37%
Feeling more sad	36%
Increased anger or frustration	31%
Withdrawal from others	29%
Feeling less healthy	27%
A decline in hope	23%
An increase in my appetite	22%
Becoming more forgetful	18%
A decline in my appetite	11%
Other	3%
None of the above	13%

7. **[If loved one experienced social isolation]** Because of social isolation, what kind of changes have you seen in your loved one? Please select all that apply.

	Total (N=1,325)
Lack of motivation	32%
Feeling more anxious than usual	31%
Feeling depressed	30%
Feeling more sad	29%
Increased anger or frustration	28%
Withdrawal from others	22%
Feeling less healthy	21%
A decline in hope	18%
Becoming more forgetful	16%
An increase in their appetite	16%
A decline in their appetite	10%
Other	2%
None of the above	22%



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8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Total Agree Summary

	Total
Increased social isolation can have a significant impact on someone's mental health	89%
Increased social isolation can have a significant impact on someone's physical health	86%
The COVID-19 pandemic has shown me whom I can actually count on	69%
The COVID-19 pandemic has caused my stress/anxiety levels to increase	66%
It takes a lot of energy to try to connect with friends during the COVID-19 pandemic	58%
At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I put more effort into trying to keep in touch with people compared to now	51%
I have lost touch with many people since the COVID-19 pandemic	48%
I find it difficult to talk to others about how disconnected I have been feeling	40%
I considered reaching out for professional help during the pandemic, but did not know where to start	22%

a. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I put more effort into trying to keep in touch with people compared to now

	Total
Strongly agree	15%
Somewhat agree	36%
Somewhat disagree	35%
Strongly disagree	14%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>51%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>49%</i>

b. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused my stress/anxiety levels to increase

	Total
Strongly agree	23%
Somewhat agree	43%
Somewhat disagree	19%
Strongly disagree	15%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>66%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>34%</i>





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c. I have lost touch with many people since the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total
Strongly agree	14%
Somewhat agree	34%
Somewhat disagree	32%
Strongly disagree	19%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>48%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>52%</i>

d. It takes a lot of energy to try to connect with friends during the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total
Strongly agree	16%
Somewhat agree	42%
Somewhat disagree	29%
Strongly disagree	13%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>58%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>42%</i>

e. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown me whom I can actually count on

	Total
Strongly agree	22%
Somewhat agree	48%
Somewhat disagree	23%
Strongly disagree	8%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>69%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>31%</i>

f. Increased social isolation can have a significant impact on someone's mental health

	Total
Strongly agree	44%
Somewhat agree	45%
Somewhat disagree	8%
Strongly disagree	3%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>89%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>11%</i>

g. Increased social isolation can have a significant impact on someone's physical health

	Total
Strongly agree	39%
Somewhat agree	47%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	3%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>86%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>14%</i>



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- h. I considered reaching out for professional help during the pandemic, but did not know where to start

	Total
Strongly agree	8%
Somewhat agree	13%
Somewhat disagree	31%
Strongly disagree	48%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>22%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>78%</i>

- i. I find it difficult to talk to others about how disconnected I have been feeling

	Total
Strongly agree	13%
Somewhat agree	27%
Somewhat disagree	35%
Strongly disagree	25%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>60%</i>

9. Do you think that social isolation can increase your risk for health conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure or sleep disorders?

	Total
Yes	64%
No	16%
I am not sure	21%

10. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, has a healthcare professional asked you about any of the following during an in-person or virtual visit? Please select all that apply.

	Total
General health	37%
COVID-19 symptoms	30%
Prescription medications	26%
Anxiety/Stress	22%
Pre-existing conditions	20%
Social isolation	13%
Nutrition	12%
Other	1%
I have not visited/seen a healthcare professional since the COVID-19 pandemic began	41%



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11. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, some people may have experienced times when they felt down or sad. At times when you might have felt down or sad, what type of people have you looked to for hope? Please select all that apply.

	Total
Family members	53%
Friends	47%
Spiritual leaders	14%
Neighbors	12%
Medical professionals	11%
Public health officials	7%
Celebrities	5%
Media anchors	4%
Local politicians (i.e. Mayor)	4%
State politicians (i.e. Governor or state representative)	4%
Federal politicians (i.e. Senator or Congressman/woman)	3%
Other	3%
None of the above	27%

12. Thinking about the future, if we continue to have social-distancing guidelines during the winter holidays (i.e. Thanksgiving), what impact do you foresee it having on your mental well-being?

	Total
Very positive	6%
Somewhat positive	7%
No impact	36%
Somewhat negative	38%
Very negative	13%
<i>Positive (Net)</i>	<i>13%</i>
<i>Negative (Net)</i>	<i>51%</i>



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 21-25, 2020, on behalf of Golin. For this survey, a sample of 2,010 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing a sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Posthoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online non-probability polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=2,010, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/- 4.0 percentage points).

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