

Did the Covid-19 Pandemic Effect Mental Health in Young Adults?

By Haylee Cherry

Due to the Covid -19 pandemic, many people have struggled with the mental health, especially adolescents. Covid -19 has created many issues throughout the world, but it has especially taken a toll on individuals' mental health. This is very true for adolescents and younger adults, and I have faced these mental health challenges myself. It started in the beginning of the pandemic and increasingly got worse through my final months as a high school senior. I found an article called, "Impact of COVID- 19 on Mental Health in Adolescents: A Systematic Review" and it describes the effects that Covid really had on young adults.

Covid 19 had a negative impact on young adults' mental health because it was a huge stressor. It was difficult for younger kids to understand what was happening and why school was being canceled for the rest of the year, especially the graduating class of 2020. Covid created depression, anxiety, and trauma for children and there seemed to be no way to cope. There was a survey conducted in this article showed the pandemic caused more deaths in 2020 due to psychological effects from the pandemic.

For me, my anxiety and depression started on March 12th, 2020, my last day of senior year. I walked out of homeroom on my way to the nurse's office because I thought I had a temperature. The nurse checked me over and my oxygen levels were lower than normal, so she sent me home for the rest of the day. Little did I know that as soon as I walked out of my classroom it would be my last time walking through the halls of my high school. At that time, no one knew what Covid was or when it was going to affect us; it was all a rumor in my small town.

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My classmates laughed and made jokes about how there was no way we would miss the rest of the year; it was an easy laid back 2 weeks off school. That was the moment, when I look back on it, that sparked my struggle with mental health. I did not know that would be one of the last times I would see my classmates, and I wished I did not leave.

During the beginning of the pandemic, my peers and I didn't know how to deal with what was going on. "Adolescents had perceived high rates of low to moderate social support during the pandemic, which contributed to increases in anxiety and depression" (Jones and Mitra). For young adults, it was a constant feeling of uncertainty and emotional agony. It really affected young adults that had pre-pandemic issues and the pandemic just added on and made everything worse. Studies were reviewed in this article that proved that females did have a higher rate of anxiety than males because of the pandemic. "Both studies that discussed gender-related data [26,27] established higher rates of COVID-19 related anxiety among females" (Jones and Mitra).

For me, leaving high school so suddenly felt like I had to grow up and mature in an adult so quickly, more quickly than expected. It felt like this for me because it made me feel like I had no closure with high school. I had the summer to prepare for college and it was torture. I finally made it to college and my anxiety got worse. For the first week of college, I felt like I could not connect with anyone except my roommate that was from my hometown, and we knew each other previously. This gave me a lot of anxiety to start my first week of classes. Our freshman orientation week was not normal compared to recent years before us before the pandemic. Our freshman orientation week consisted of Zoom calls from our RA and our floor. I knew no one and I did not meet anyone my first semester because all my classes were online. I felt like was

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living by myself constantly looking a screen with someone talking through it, but I could not put a face or body to anyone. It was very lonely for me.

There was a study done on college students that asked them questions regarding the Covid -19 pandemic and it proved that Covid-19 had a very big impact on the psychological effects on college students. “Academic workload, psychological separation from school, and fear of contagion were positively associated with the perceived stress and negatively associated with physical and psychological health” (Jones and Mitra). It affected performance on schoolwork and separation anxiety from the classrooms.

As a sophomore at UPB, I finally am starting to experience some normality around campus after a year. I cannot go to class without wearing a mask and class is all in person. I finally am starting to feel like I am here at the right time, even though I do look back at two years ago and feel a sense of sadness that I missed out on so many things. I also feel like a lot was stripped away from the 2020 class. But now, 2022 and I’m here in my final semester as a sophomore and it feels good. I am starting next fall, at BRMC School of Radiology, and if someone asked me first semester freshman year if I would be in the radiology program I probably would have laughed, but the pandemic gave me a lot of time to think about what I really wanted to do with my life after college, so I switched my major from Exercise Science to Radiological Science and I could not be happier. Looking back on the past 3 years, I have seen myself go through the lowest of the lows and finally I feel like I am starting to get back to my normal self, and I feel a sense of normalcy within the University. It helps me stay on top of my mental health and never to push it aside. Because If I do that, it will only be a slippery slope from there. I also hope that other sophomores in college that went through the same thing as me start

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to feel the same way that I do and overcome the after effects of the pandemic and save their mental health.



This picture is of me at graduation. It was a drive-in style graduation, and each family was only allowed two cars. I was in the front seat of my dad's truck, as I watched my 44 classmates walk across the stage, knowing that would be the last time I saw some of them. I had to listen to the speakers at graduation through the radio of the truck. This is the best representation of my emotions throughout the pandemic.

Work Cited

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