

Webinar Format

The webinar will begin shortly.

- To minimize background noise, all participants will be muted at the start of the webinar.
- Submit a question or comment to the presenters any time.
 - 1) Type it into the questions pane on the webinar control panel
 - 2) “Raise your hand” to be put in the queue to speak directly with our presenters.
- If you have technical difficulties during the webinar, please contact apawebinars@apa.org.
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APA Town Hall

Addressing Stress in America and APA's Role in this Emerging Reality

Jennifer F. Kelly, PhD, ABPP, 2021 APA President

Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD, APA CEO

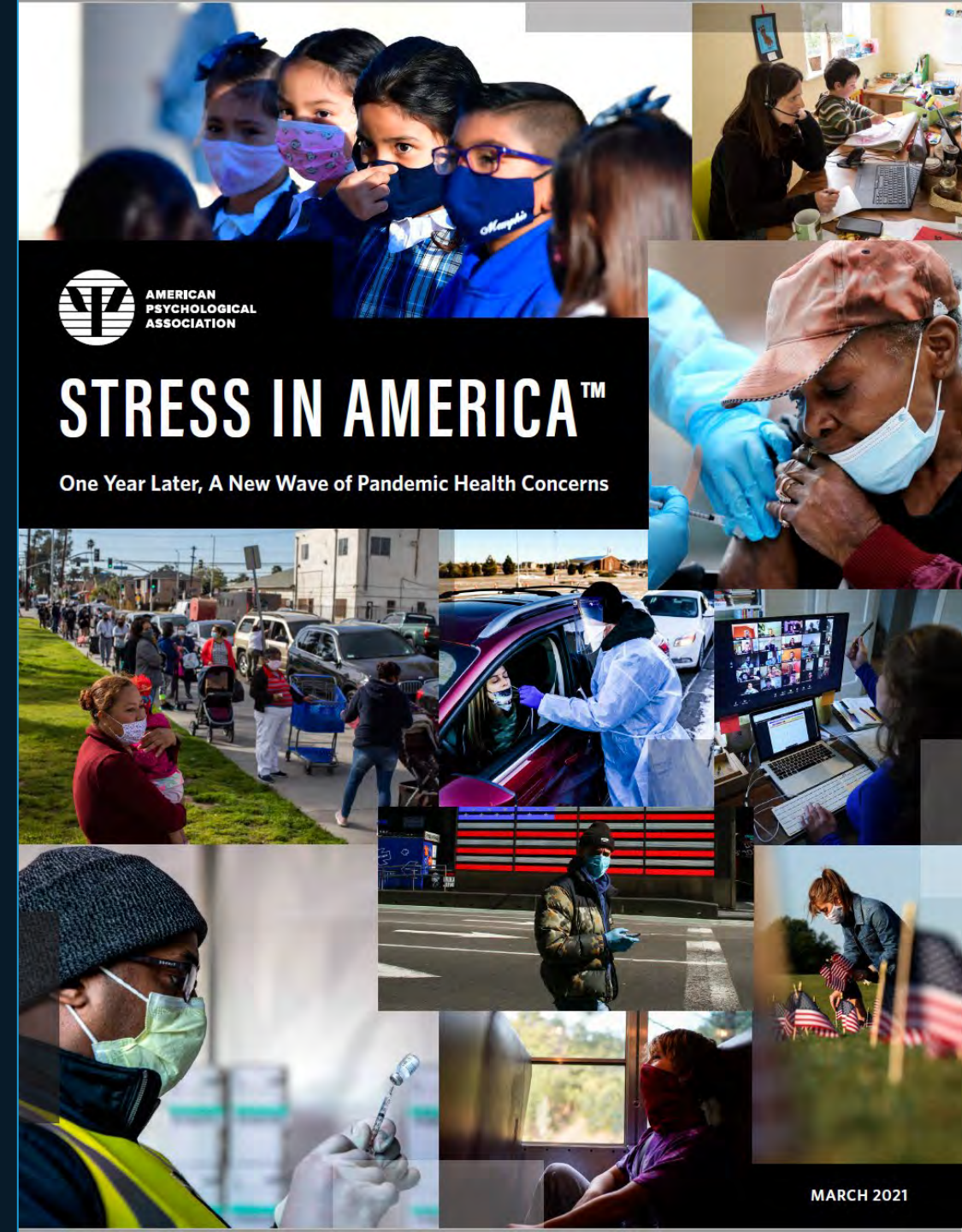
Featuring special guest:

Helen L. Coons, PhD, ABPP, President, Division 38 (Health Psychology)

American Psychological Association

MARCH 29, 2021

- **84% of adults report feeling at least one emotion associated with prolonged stress.**
 - e.g., anxiety, sadness, anger
- **Some subgroups of the population are experiencing disproportionately high levels of stress.**
 - e.g., parents with children under 18
 - e.g., people of color
 - e.g., essential workers
 - e.g., Gen Z adults





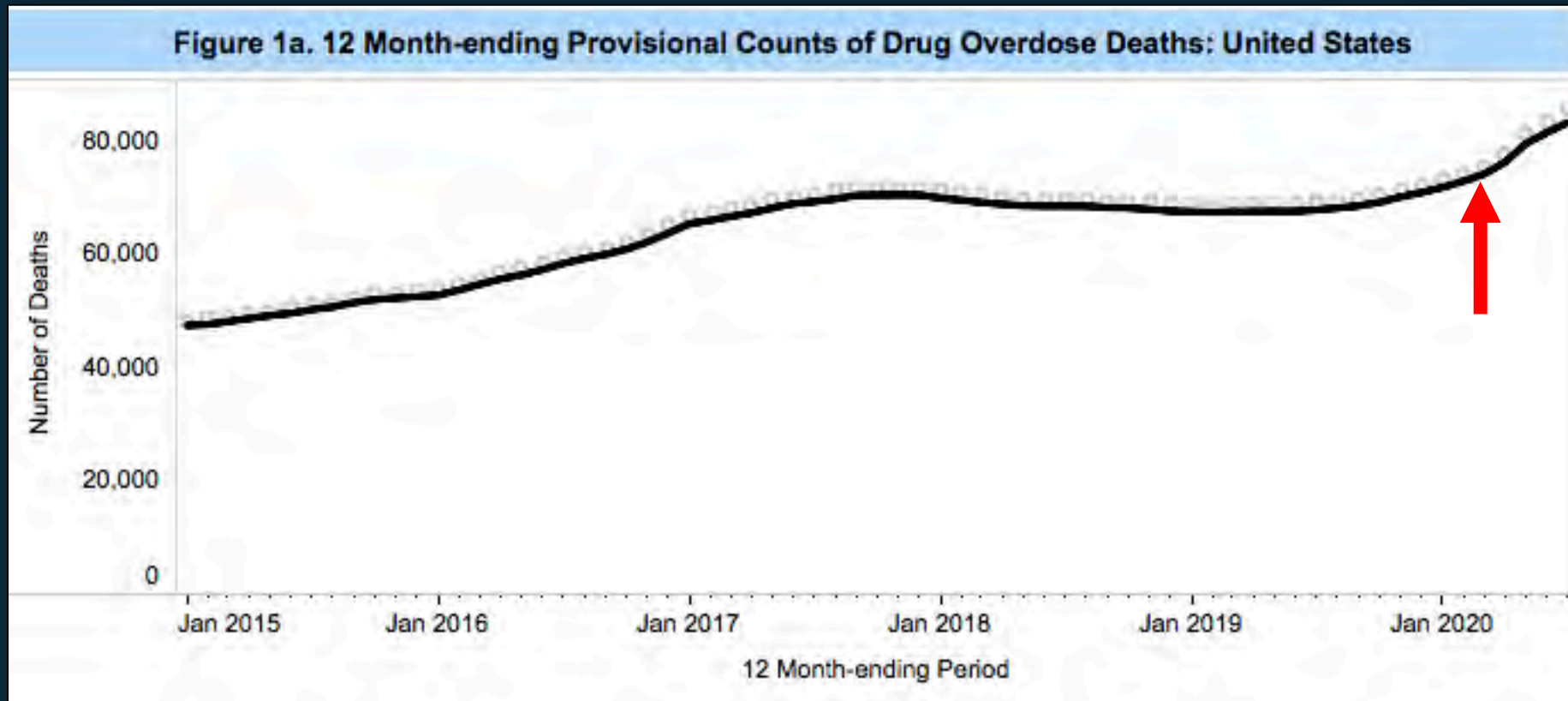
- **Many adults are struggling to cope and adopting unhealthy coping behaviors.**
- **For example:**
 - **Undesired weight changes**
 - 42% have gained weight (avg. = 29 lbs.)
 - 18% have lost weight (avg. = 26 lbs.)
 - **Changes to sleep patterns**
 - 2 in 3 Americans (67%) reported increased or decreased sleep since the pandemic started.
 - **Greater alcohol consumption**
 - Nearly 1 in 4 adults (23%) are drinking more alcohol to cope with stress during the pandemic.
 - **Decreased exercise and activity**
 - 53% of adults have been less physically active than they wanted during the pandemic.

Disparities in the Experiences and Effects of Stress

- Stress related to the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color.
- Hispanic adults were most likely to report undesired changes to sleep, physical activity levels and weight since the pandemic began.
- Black Americans were most likely to report feelings of concern about the future. More than half said they do not feel comfortable going back to living life like they used to before the pandemic.
- Nearly 2 in 3 Black (66%) and Hispanic (65%) adults said they could have used more emotional support than they received since the pandemic started, compared with 55% of white and 50% of Asian adults who said the same.

CDC Data On Opioid Overdose Deaths: 2/7/2021

The Rate of Opioid Deaths Increased Following the Stay At Home Order

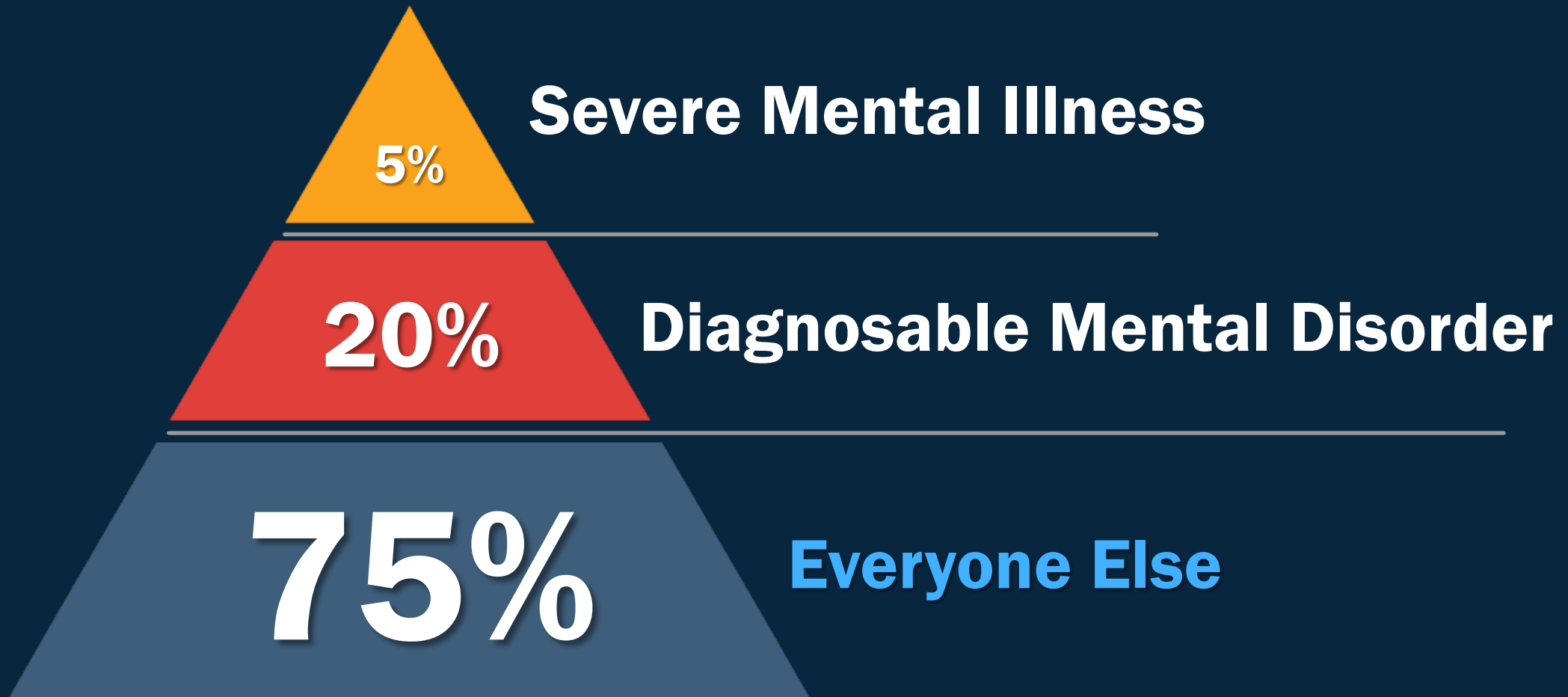


— Beginning of COVID Stay at Home Order

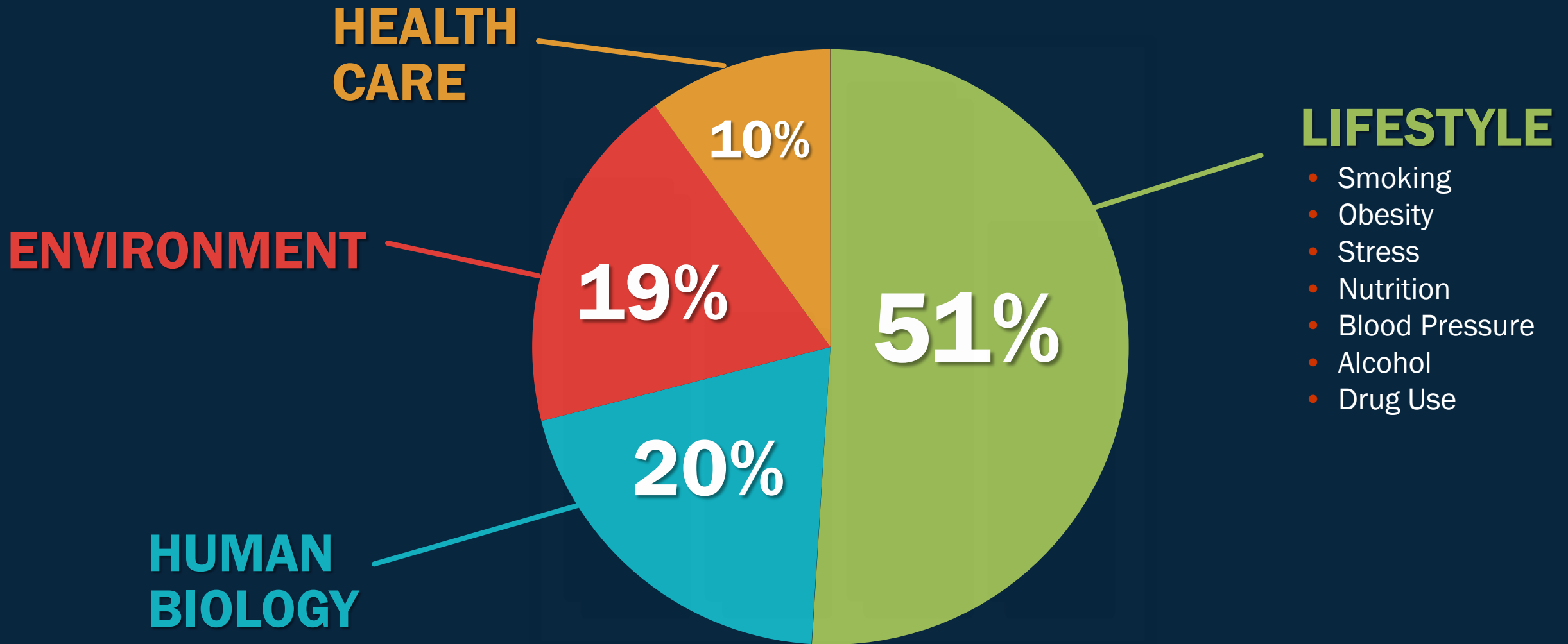
CDC National Vital Statistics System, 2021

Addressing the Mental Health Pandemic from a Population Health Approach

Current Treatment Approach



Factors that Influence Health Status

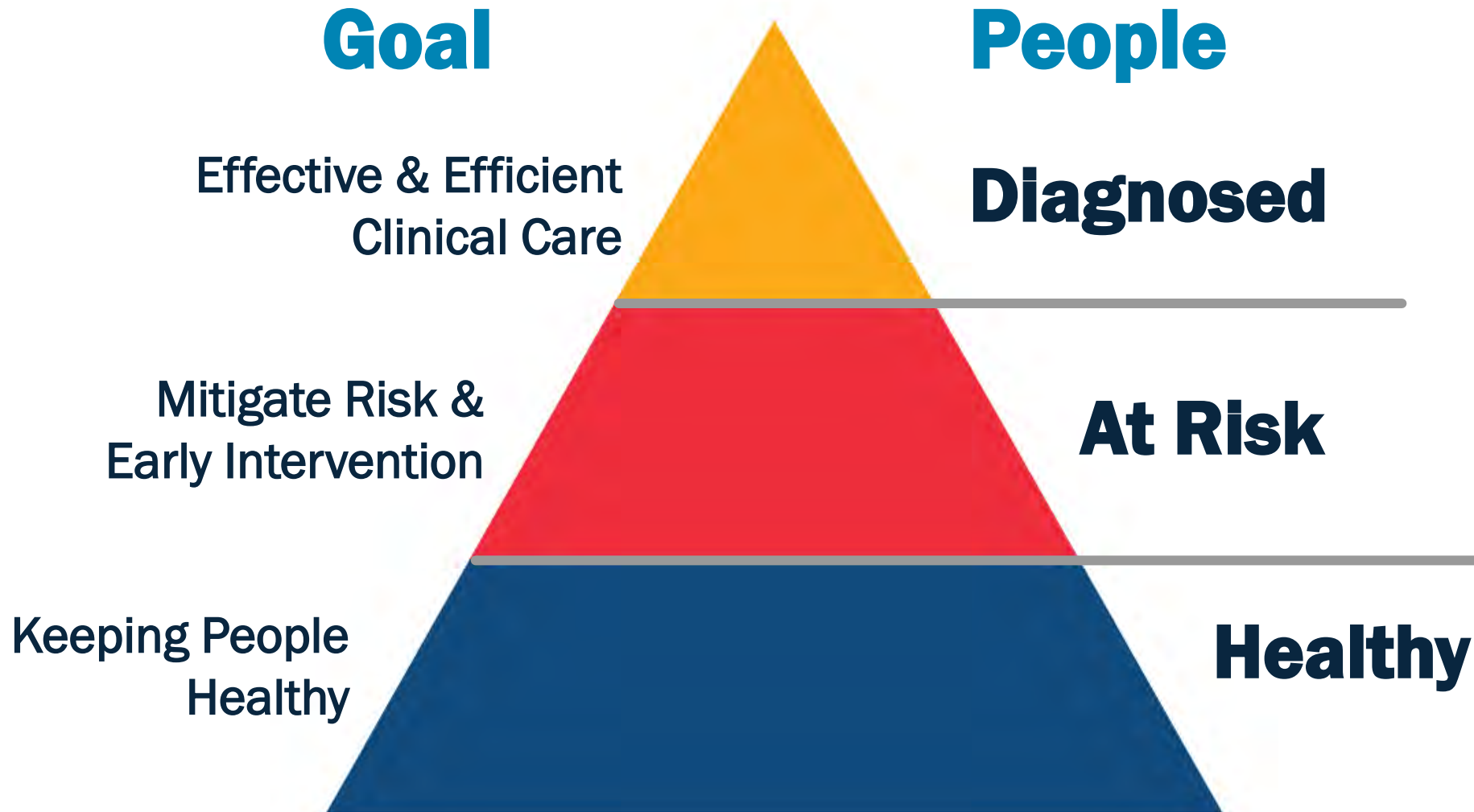


SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



- Education
- Income and Income Distribution
- Unemployment and Job Security
- Employment and Working Conditions
- Early Childhood Development
- Food Insecurity
- Housing
- Social Exclusion
- Social Safety Network
- Health Services
- Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Ability Status

Population Health Approach



What Can Psychologists Do?

- Educate the public on issues, such as:
 - How stress is showing up in people's behaviors and in ways that aren't always intuitive
 - How the vaccine will inoculate us against the virus, but not against stress
 - How transitioning to post-COVID life will come with new and unique stressors
 - How we need to work beyond the individual level (i.e., community and system level) and intervene through leaders to reach more people (e.g., mayors, teachers)

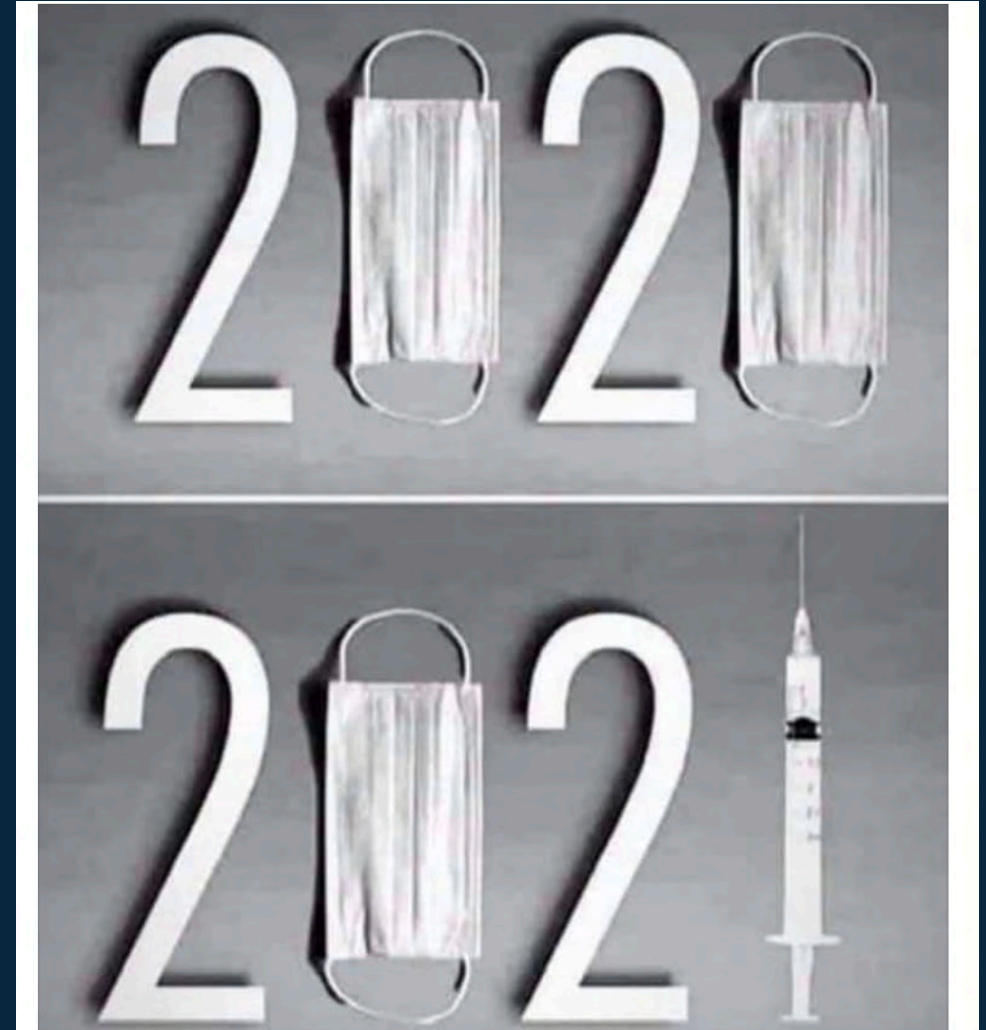
STRESS IN HEALTH CARE WORKERS



- **Worry** > new virus without treatment protocols, risk of exposure, access to PPE, next surge, deployment to new units
- **Exhausted** > uncertainty, new phases of pandemic, poor hydration in PPE, physical & cognitive overload, longer shifts, staffing shortages, insomnia
- **Juggling** > caring for patients, teams, families > holding everyone together, no COVID free time
- **Grief** > ill patients, high rates of death, health disparities, EOL education/decisions without families, ethical/moral distress, own loss

STRESS IN HEALTH CARE WORKERS

- Resilience
- Increased rates of mental health issues
 - Anxiety
 - Insomnia
 - Depression
 - Trauma reactions
 - ETOH use
- During & after pandemic...



Health Care Professionals

TAKING A MOMENT FOR SELF-CARE CAN HELP YOU STAY EFFECTIVE AND CALM ON THE JOB.

Celebrate Yourself



You are dealing with huge challenges. Think about 3 things that went well today. If they involved another person, recognize and thank them whenever possible.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND WHY THIS WORKS

It is easy to ignore or forget the positives when we are surrounded by distress and overwhelming demands that may feel impossible to successfully address. Slowing down to recognize even small successes can underscore our ability to have some control over our environment and achieve our purpose in helping others. Sharing these positive moments with others reinforces a shared sense of mastery and purpose and promotes the feeling of being part of a team all striving to do the best for very sick and scared individuals.

FIND MORE SCIENCE-BASED RESOURCES AT



TAKING A MOMENT FOR SELF-CARE CAN HELP YOU STAY EFFECTIVE AND CALM ON THE JOB.

Calm Yourself



Slowly breathe in for 4, hold it for 4, and then breathe out for 6. Repeat 10 times.

BEHIND WHY THIS WORKS

When we are calm, our physiology



COVID-19 SELF CARE RESOURCES FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



What's going on right now is a challenge for everyone. But healthcare professionals are particularly overburdened.

Take care of and be kind to yourself during this difficult time so you can take care of others. There are science-based things you can do right now to keep yourself going until you can get more help.

Acknowledge the negative emotions that come up and talk to colleagues about what you are feeling. Many are experiencing the same stress, anxiety, and grief. By opening up, you aren't adding to their burden; you are giving them the opportunity to share, too.

FIVE SCIENCE-BASED TIPS TO MANAGE YOUR STRESS

CALM YOURSELF

Slowly breathe in for 4, hold it for 4, and then breathe out for 6. Repeat 10 times.

FOCUS YOURSELF

Slow your racing thoughts by counting backwards by three in your mind from 100 (100, 97, 94, etc.).

RELAX YOURSELF

One by one, tense each muscle group in your body for 10 seconds and then release. Notice how it feels to let your muscles relax and have the tension leave your body.

GROUND YOURSELF

Do a quick scan of your body and notice the air around you and any surfaces you are touching. If possible, close your eyes and focus on the sensations, textures, and temperatures.

CELEBRATE YOURSELF

You are dealing with huge challenges. Think about 3 things that went well today. If they involved another person, recognize and thank them whenever possible.



FIND MORE SCIENCE-BASED RESOURCES AT [APA.ORG/COVID-19](https://www.apa.org/covid-19)

Gender Differences in Stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Gender differences in stress levels
- Essential workers in range of sectors
- Risk for COVID exposure
- Gender & racial discrimination in pay at work
- Part-time employment
 - Employment vulnerability
 - Economic vulnerability
- Care giving at home
- Single women heads of household in US > diminished support
- Health care inequity
- COVID during pregnancy
- Increased rates of IPV
- DEI in teams

HEALTHY COPING

- **Aerobic exercise**
- **Practice quieting exercises**
 - **Low & slow breathing**
 - **Mindfulness, Guided Imagery, Progressive Muscle Relaxation**
 - **Yoga, Thai Chi**
 - **Expressive writing**
 - **Music & art**
- **Improve sleep quality & quantity**
- **Improve nutrition**
 - **Reduce stress related eating**
- **Reduce ETOH & other drugs**

HEALTHY COPING

- **Expectations**
- **Perfectionism**
- **Focus >**
 - **Prioritize**
 - **Reduce multi-tasking**
- **Grace for self & others**
- **Establish work & home boundaries**
- **Be informed & limit news**
- **Increase & deepen connection**
- **Ask for help early & often**
- **Maintain pleasurable activities**
- **Focus on gratitude**
- **Meaning in life**
- **Think out of the box**

Accessing Mental Health Care for Adults

- Primary care/ObGyn providers
- Specialty medical providers
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Other community health centers
- Insurance companies
- Military & Veterans Hospitals
- Hospital Psychiatry Departments
- University Psychology Programs
- Community organizations
- Spiritual organizations
- Friends & family





AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

**Let's have a
conversation.**



Resources

APA Hub for Resources on Stress, Anxiety and Grief

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/index#stress>

COVID-19 Stress Management Tools (action-oriented exercises and the science behind them)

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/stress-management-tools>

Stress in America Press Room

<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress>

COVID-19 and Suicide

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/06/covid-suicide>

The Effects of Stress on the Body

<https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/body>

Stress Management for Leaders

www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/stress-management-crisis.pdf

APA/Alan Alda Communication Training: *Make Your Science Make Sense*

<https://pages.apa.org/alan-alda-training/>

Know the Signs of Distress from COVID

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/psychological-impact>

Building Your Resilience

<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>

APA's Speaking of Psychology podcast: How We're Coping One Year into the Pandemic

<https://www.apa.org/research/action/speaking-of-psychology/pandemic-year-anniversary>

Life after COVID-19: Making Space for Growth

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/06/covid-life-after>

Crisis Lines

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- English > 800-273-8255 (TALK)
- Spanish > 888-628-9454

Crisis Text Line

- Text 'Hello' to 741741

Veterans Text Line > 838255

LGBT National Hotline

888-843-4564

SAMHSA Drug & Alcohol Helpline

800-662-4357

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-7233