



JUNE 2020

On May 25, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was killed by police in Minneapolis during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill at a grocery store. This event set off weeks of protests over police violence and racism both across the country and around the world. And it took place against a backdrop of a nation struggling with the impact of a global pandemic.

In the second volume of Stress in America™ 2020: *Stress in the Time of COVID-19*, APA reports on two surveys conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of APA:

- Wave 2 of the COVID-19 tracker, conducted from May 21 to June 3, 2020, among 3,013 adults ages 18 and older who reside in the U.S.
- An additional poll about the current civil unrest, conducted from June 9 to 11, 2020, among 2,058 adults ages 18 and older who reside in the U.S.

## MOST AMERICANS SAY THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION IS A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF STRESS

Following the death of George Floyd, more than 8 in 10 Americans (83%) say the future of our nation is a significant source of stress.\*\* The previous high was reported in the 2018 Stress in America annual survey when nearly 7 in 10 Americans (69%) reported the same.

### THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION IS A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF STRESS

% reporting that the future of our nation is a significant source of stress

**2020**



Source: Civil Unrest Survey, June 2020

**2019**



Source: Annual Stress in America Survey, 2019

**2018**



Source: Annual Stress in America Survey, 2018

**2017**



Source: Annual Stress in America Survey, 2017

Around 7 in 10 Americans (72%) report that this is the lowest point in the nation's history that they can remember.\*\* For comparison, only 56% of Americans said the same in the 2019 and 2018 Stress in America surveys, while 59% said the same in 2017, which was the highest proportion recorded since this statement began being tracked as part of the Stress in America surveys in 2017.

## MOST AMERICANS SAY THIS IS THE LOWEST POINT IN HISTORY THAT THEY CAN REMEMBER

% reporting that this is the lowest point in the nation's history that they can remember

**2020**



Source: Civil Unrest Survey, June 2020

**2019 and 2018**



Source: Annual Stress in America Survey, 2018. Annual Stress in America Survey, 2019.

**2017**



Source: Annual Stress in America Survey, 2017

## BLACK AMERICANS REPORT DISCRIMINATION IS A SIGNIFICANT STRESSOR

The proportion of black Americans who say discrimination is a significant source of stress has increased significantly in the past month, with 55% of black adults saying discrimination is a significant source of stress.\* At the beginning of May, only 42% said the same. This is also the highest proportion since 2018, when 46% of black adults reported this stressor in the annual Stress in America survey that year.

### ONE-MONTH INCREASE IN BLACK AMERICANS CITING DISCRIMINATION AS A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF STRESS

% of black Americans reporting that discrimination is a significant source of stress

**June 2020**



**May 2020**



When it comes to stress related to the current environment, slightly more than 7 in 10 Americans overall (71%) say police violence toward minorities is a significant source of stress.\*\* At the same time, most Americans (67%) say the current movement against systemic racism and police brutality is going to lead to meaningful change in America.\*\*

### AMERICANS REACT TO CIVIL UNREST



Around 7 in 10 (71%) Americans say police violence towards minorities is a significant source of stress



Nearly 7 in 10 (67%) Americans say the current movement against systemic racism and policy brutality is going to lead to meaningful change

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS IS A SIGNIFICANT STRESSOR FOR MAJORITY OF AMERICANS

Almost 8 in 10 Americans (78%) say that the coronavirus pandemic is a significant source of stress.\*\* But according to the Wave 2 COVID-19 tracker, the average stress level Americans report feeling about the pandemic in the past month has decreased slightly to 5.6. This is lower than the stress level reported in Wave 1 of the COVID-19 tracker fielded at the end of April and beginning of May 2020 (5.9). Overall, Americans' self-reported general stress levels in the past month (5.2)\* are significantly higher than the average stress level reported in last year's Stress in America survey, which was 4.9.

Nearly 2 in 3 adults (66%) say the government response to the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant source of stress.\* Of those, 84% say the federal government response is a significant source of stress, followed by state government (72%) and local government (64%). Democrats (73%) are significantly more likely than Republicans (59%) to cite the government response as a source of stress but are only slightly more likely than Independents (68%) to say so. Gen X (ages 42 to 55) (75%) is by far the most likely to say the government response to the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant source of stress, compared to 63% of Gen Z adults (18 to 23), 67% of millennials (24 to 41), 62% of boomers (56 to 74) and 56% of older adults (75+).\*

### 66% OF ADULTS SAY GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IS A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF STRESS

% reporting that the government response to COVID-19 is a significant source of stress

of those 66% who said the government's response is a significant source of stress



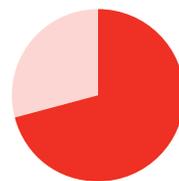
Almost 8 in 10 adults (77%) say they find preventive measures such as face masks and social distancing to be reassuring. Older adults are most likely to agree they find preventive measures reassuring (93% vs. 80% of boomers, 76% of Gen X, 75% of millennials, and 67% of Gen Z adults) while younger adults are more likely to agree they find these measures stressful (58% of Gen Z adults, 58% of millennials, and 53% of Gen X vs. 39% of boomers and 21% of older adults).\*

Overall, more than 6 in 10 Americans (63%) agree that the thought of the U.S. reopening causes them stress, but just over 7 in 10 adults (72%) say they are confident they can protect themselves from coronavirus once the U.S. reopens. At the same time, 65% say they wish they had more information about what they should do as their community reopens.\*

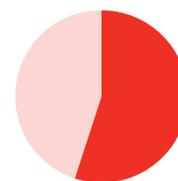
## PARENTS STRESS ABOUT THE LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON CHILDREN

Most parents (71%) say they are worried about the impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on their child's social development, and more than half (55%) report their child has been acting out more since the start of the pandemic.\* And while almost 7 in 10 parents (69%) say they are looking forward to their child's school year being over, 3 in 5 (60%) say they are currently struggling to keep their child occupied, and the same proportion (60%) say they have no idea how they are going to keep their child occupied all summer.\*

### PARENTS ARE WORRIED ABOUT LONG-TERM IMPACTS ON CHILDREN



71% of parents are worried about the impact the pandemic has had on their child's social development



55% report that their child has been acting out more since the pandemic began

Despite these challenges, more than 4 in 5 parents (82%) agree that they are grateful for the additional time they've had with their child during the coronavirus pandemic.\*

## METHODOLOGY

\*Wave 2 of the COVID-19 Tracker was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) between May 21 and June 3, 2020, among 3,013 adults age 18+ who reside in the U.S. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Data were weighted to reflect their proportions in the population based on the 2019 Current Population Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. Weighting variables included age by gender, race/ethnicity, education, region, household income and time spent online. Hispanic adults also were weighted for acculturation taking into account respondents' household language as well as their ability to read and speak in English and Spanish. Country of origin (U.S./non-U.S.) also was included for Hispanic and Asian subgroups. Weighting variables for Gen Z adults (ages 18 to 23) included education, age by gender, race/ethnicity, region, household income and size of household. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

\*\*The Civil Unrest Survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) between June 9 and 11, 2020, among 2,058 adults age 18+ who reside in the U.S. Results were weighted for age within gender, region, race/ethnicity, household income, education, marital status and size of household where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Neither online survey is based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, or methodologies for historical data referenced, please contact [sbethune@apa.org](mailto:sbethune@apa.org).