

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

COVID-19 COMMUNITY IMPACT SURVEY: Young Parents Spotlight

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Results as of October 13, 2021



R E M I N D E R

This webinar is meant to be watched after you have already seen the CCIS Introduction Webinar.

The introduction contains important background information explaining how to interpret these results, how we did the survey, and how to frame these findings with a racial justice lens so that we can all turn the CCIS data into action!

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for more!

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CCIS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Many groups that were critical in the success of this effort and gave important input on the development and deployment of the survey:

- Health Resources in Action (HRiA)
- John Snow International (JSI)
- Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps and their work with local boards of health and on social media
- Mass in Motion programs, including Springfield, Malden, and Chelsea
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance
- The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
- The Immigrants' Assistance Center, Inc
- Families for Justice as Healing
- City of Lawrence Mayor's Health Task Force
- The 84 Coalitions, including the Lawrence/Methuen Coalition
- Boys and Girls Clubs, including those in Fitchburg and Leominster and the Metro South area
- Chinatown Neighborhood Association
- Father Bill's
- UTEC
- MassCOSH
- Stavros Center for Independent Living
- Greater Springfield Senior Services
- Center for Living and Working
- DEAF, Inc.
- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Viability, Inc.



PURPOSE AND INTENT

YOUNG PARENTS

This webinar will share some key findings from the COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (CCIS) around the pandemic's impacts on young parents. The goal is that these findings:

- Identify ways to advance new, collaborative solutions with community partners to solve the underlying causes of inequities
- Provide data that stakeholders at all levels can use to "make the case" for a healthy future for ALL.

Remember to watch the [CCIS Introduction Webinar](#) for important background, tools, and tips to frame these findings with a racial justice lens to turn the CCIS data into action!

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for all things CCIS!



YOUNG PARENTS

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Young Parent Sample & Survey Questions

There were two versions of the survey questions, “Youth” and “Adult”.

- If 25 years old or older → Adult version
- If parent of any age → Adult version
- If 14-24 and not a parent → Youth version

Many questions were the same in both surveys.

- Adult & youth results were weighted to the state distribution. Different weights were used for each population.
- Data on young parents was unweighted due to methodological considerations.

FRAMING MATTERS

- Though not often highlighted as a priority population, survey responses suggest that young parents have faced a confluence of pressures during the pandemic, ranging from grief due to lost loved ones, unstable housing or job loss, or significant stress related to balancing caregiving with paid work. These significant impacts must be considered in recovery planning.
- Young parents are both young people in a critical period of development, and caregivers of infants or young children in a critical period of development. Among youth, the needs of young parents are particularly consequential because of this intergenerational impact. Despite the social supports available during the pandemic, such as housing and food assistance, young parents may not be able to access some of these resources.

YOUNG PARENT EXPERIENCE WITH COVID-19

Young parents were more likely to report testing positive for and losing someone due to COVID-19 compared to other youth.

Compared to all youth respondents:



- Young parent respondents (6%) were 2x more likely to report testing positive for COVID-19 (3%)



- Young parent respondents (14%) were 2x more likely to report losing someone close to them due to COVID-19 (6%)

Young parent respondents were more than 4 times as likely to have a household member test positive for COVID-19 compared to older parents.

Compared to parents aged 35-44:

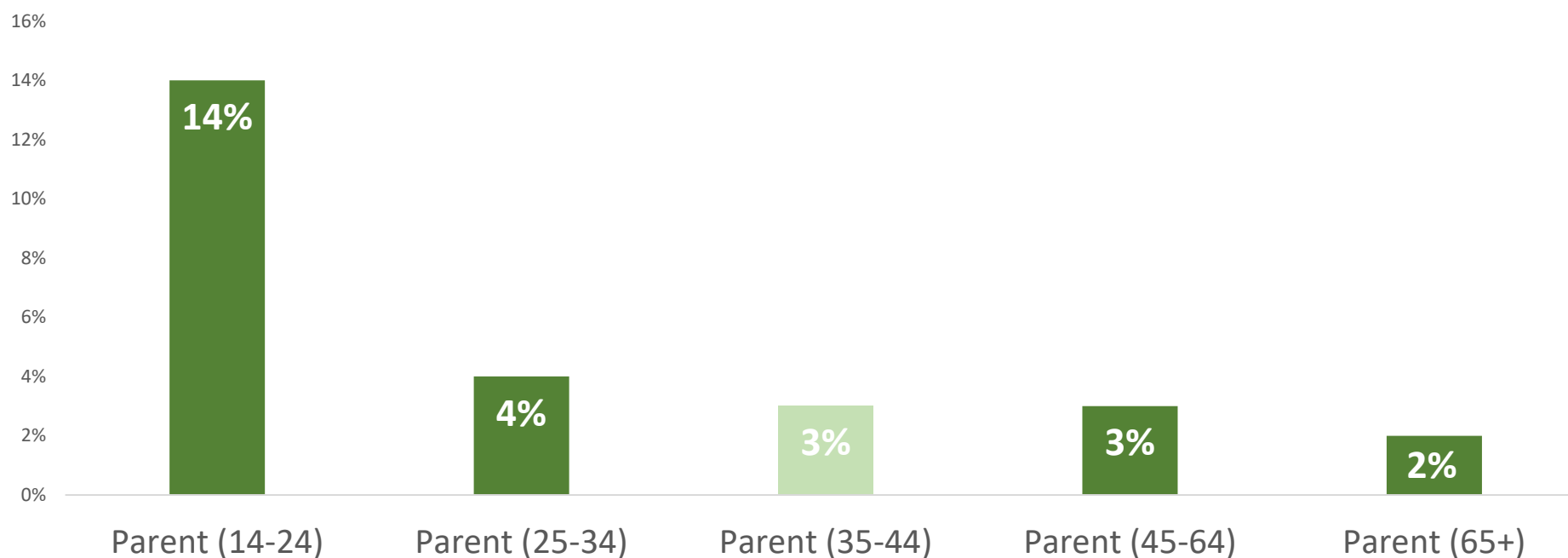


- Young parent respondents (14%) were 4.6x more likely to report having a household member test positive for COVID-19 (3%)

YOUNG PARENT EXPERIENCE WITH COVID-19

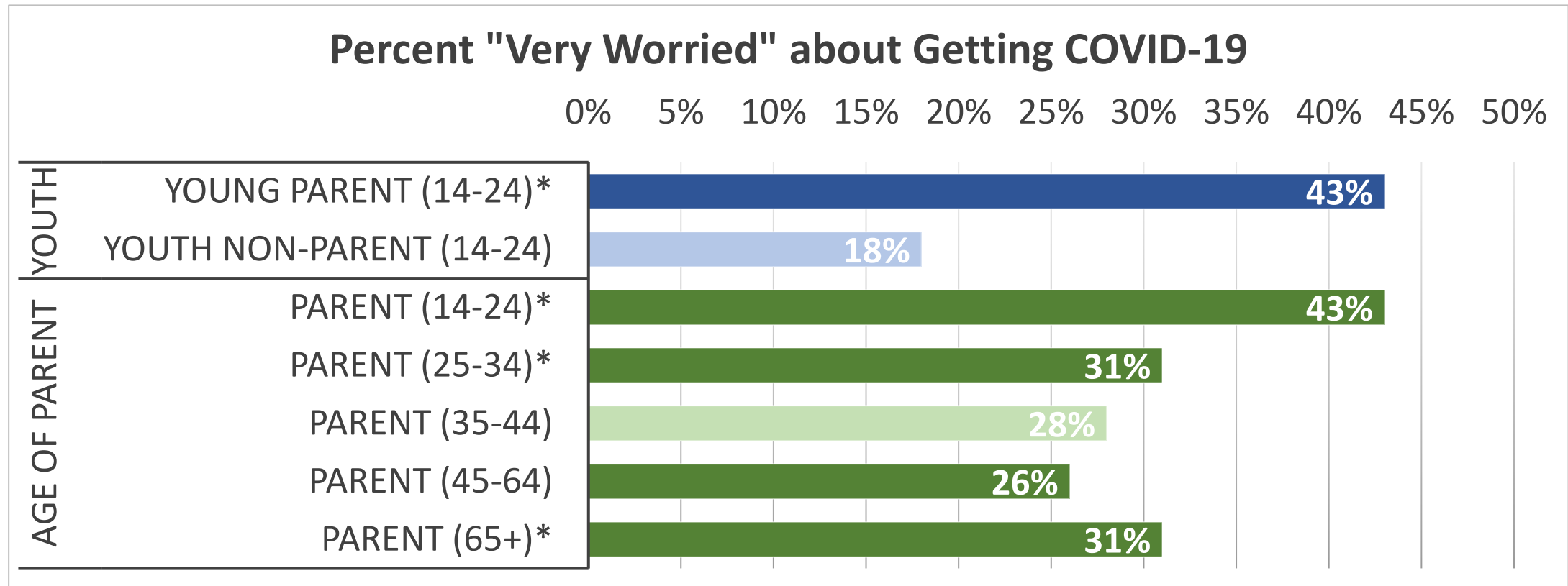
Young parent respondents were 4.6 times as likely to have a household member test positive for COVID-19 compared to older parents.

Percent of Parents Having a Household Member Test Positive for COVID-19



PERCEPTION OF COVID-19 RISK

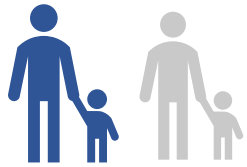
Young parent respondents were more than 2x as likely to be very worried about getting COVID-19 compared to other youth and 1.4x as likely to be very worried compared to older parents.



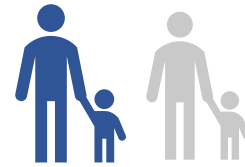
Data notes: 1) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) compared to the reference group; 2) reference groups are youth non-parent and parents aged 35-44; 3) All percentages are unweighted.

YOUNG PARENTS, EMPLOYMENT, & BASIC NEEDS

Young parent respondents were especially hit by job loss (many due to caretaking responsibilities) which impacts their ability to meet basic needs from housing to formula or diapers for their children.



1 in 2 employed young parents lost their jobs or reduced hours/took leave.



50% of young parents who reduced hours/took leave and 38% who lost jobs listed needing to take care of children as a reason.

More than 80% of young parent respondents report at least one unmet household need.

Compared to parents aged 35-44, young parent survey respondents were:



26% more likely to identify any household need (83% vs. 66%)



37% more likely to identify any child need (48% vs. 35%)



Twice as likely to reduce hours/take leave or lose their job (among employed parents)



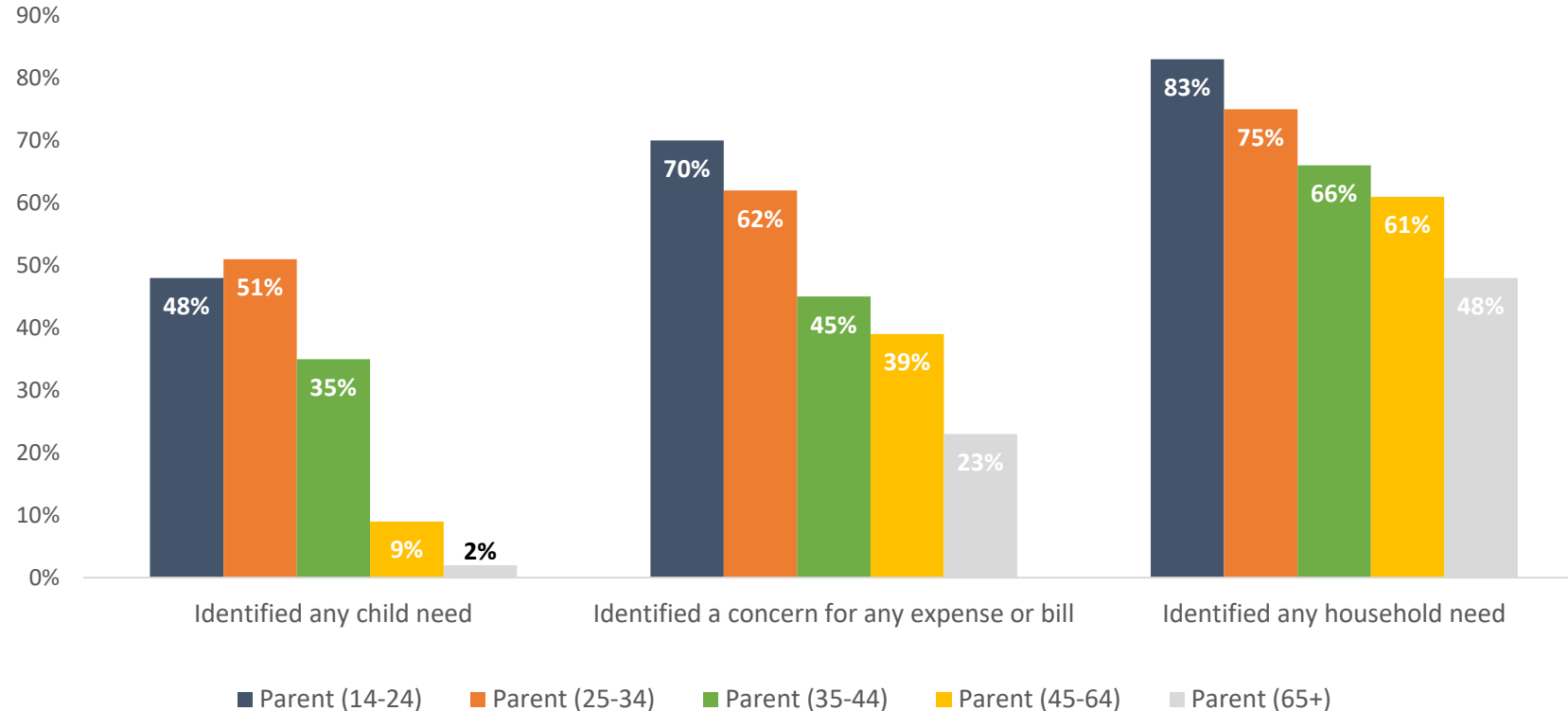
56% more likely to identify a concern for any expense of bill (70% vs. 45%)

* **Child need** includes: childcare, emergency childcare, diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, assistance with school/remote schooling; **Household need** includes: food, groceries, cleaning products, hygiene products, paper products, face masks; **Concern for any expense** includes housing, utilities, vehicle, debt, insurance, school/daycare

BASIC NEEDS AMONG YOUNG PARENTS

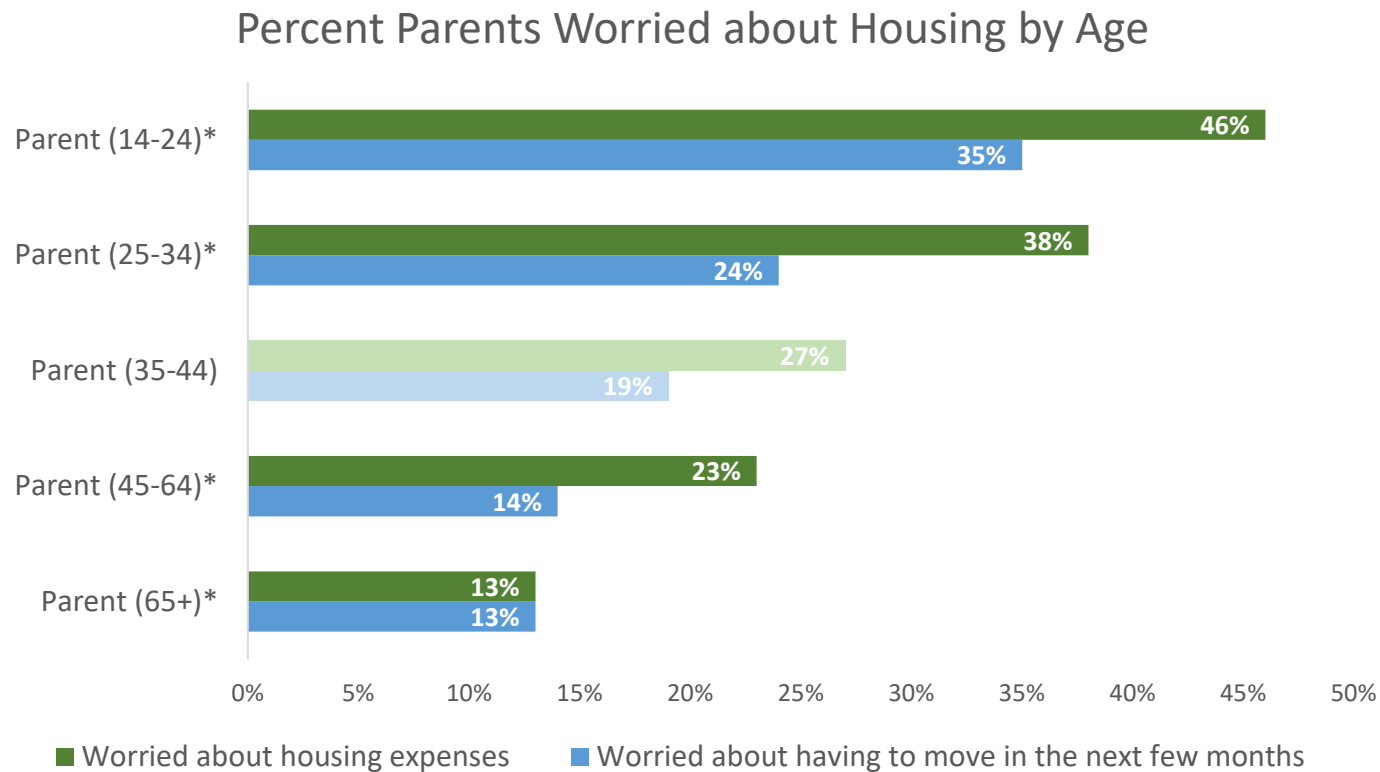
Younger parents are more likely to report any household needs, any child needs, and concern about any expenses compared to older parents.

Percent Parents Identifying Household, Child, or Expense Related Needs by Age



HOUSING NEEDS AMONG YOUNG PARENTS

1 in 2 young parent respondents reported being worried about housing.
This is 2x higher than older parents (aged 35-44) and 6x higher than other youth



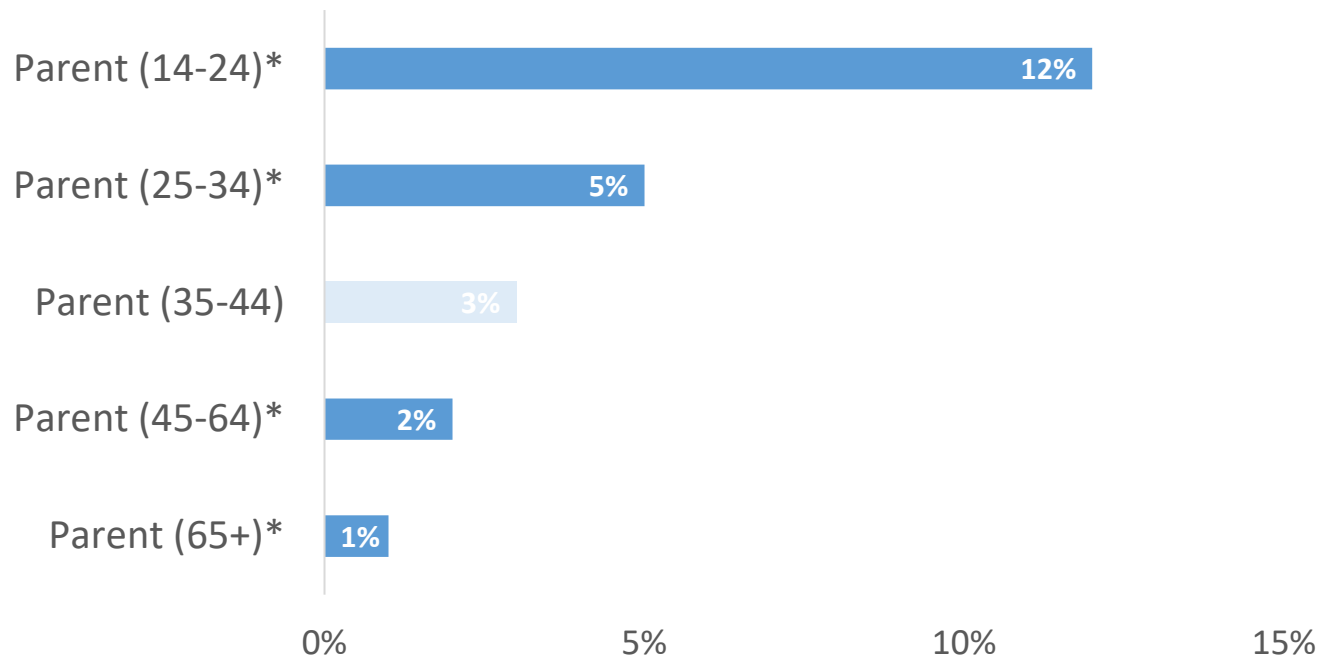
“...it's just a lot of very huge, lack of affordability and stuff, and there's a lot of people right now that I know, especially with children, who are struggling and they're, they're being told the waitlist is at least 15 years long.”¹
--MA young person living in Lynn

Source: (1) Umass Amherst interview with Lynn Community Action Board (CAB), unpublished.

EXPERIENCES WITH VIOLENCE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Young parent respondents on the survey were 4 times as likely to report intimate partner violence (IPV) during the pandemic compared to parents aged 35-44.

Percent Parents Reporting IPV by Age



Negative mental health effects, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, due to experiencing events that might be life-threatening (like a pandemic) are more likely for people who also have had other traumatic experiences like IPV, so they may be especially in need of services and support.

Data notes: 1) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) compared to the reference group; 2) reference groups is parents aged 35-44; 3) All percentages are unweighted.

EXPERIENCES WITH VIOLENCE DURING THE PANDEMIC

So if there is a teen that, for some reason they were kicked out or homeless...they may have to turn to sex work in order to provide for themselves. That's a big risk factor. Also you know young adults and teens are doubled up in living situations, either with strangers or with family members that could open up other opportunities for risk. ...I wonder if it could open up other opportunities for somebody to be victimized or taken advantage of, not just physically, but you know, whatever. So I think that that's definitely a big one, if a young adult child doesn't feel like they have a safe place to call home, that could lead to other things.”²

--MA young person living in Lynn

UNSTABLE HOUSING & YOUTH

Young parents who are homeless or have unstable housing are at risk of a range of health outcomes including violence



Young parents who are homeless are more likely to experience IPV, postpartum depression¹, concerns over expenses, & poor mental health.



Transactional sex may be used by housing and food insecure youth – including through online dating apps – to meet needs.²



IPV often leads to homelessness among survivors. Homelessness^{3,4,5} in turn puts people at risk for sexual assault and trafficking,^{4,5} creating a reinforcing cycle.

Sources: (1) Crawford, D. M., Trotter, E. C., Sittner Hartshorn, K. J., & Whitbeck, L. B. (2011). Pregnancy and mental health of young homeless women. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 81 (2), 173–183. doi: 10.1111/j.1939-0025.2011.01086.x (2) UMass Amherst interview with Lynn Community Action Board (CAB), unpublished. (3) Breiding, M.J., Chen J., & Black, M.C. (2014). Intimate Partner Violence in the United States — 2010. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (4) Jasinski, J. L., Wesely, J. K., Mustaine, E., & Wright, J. D. (2005). *The experience of violence in the lives of homeless women: A research report (Document No. 211976)*. Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211976.pdf> (5) Tyler, K. A, Whitbeck, L. B., Hoyt, D. R. & Cauce, A. M. (2004). Risk Factors for Sexual Victimization Among Male and Female Homeless and Runaway Youth. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 19, 503-520. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260504262961>

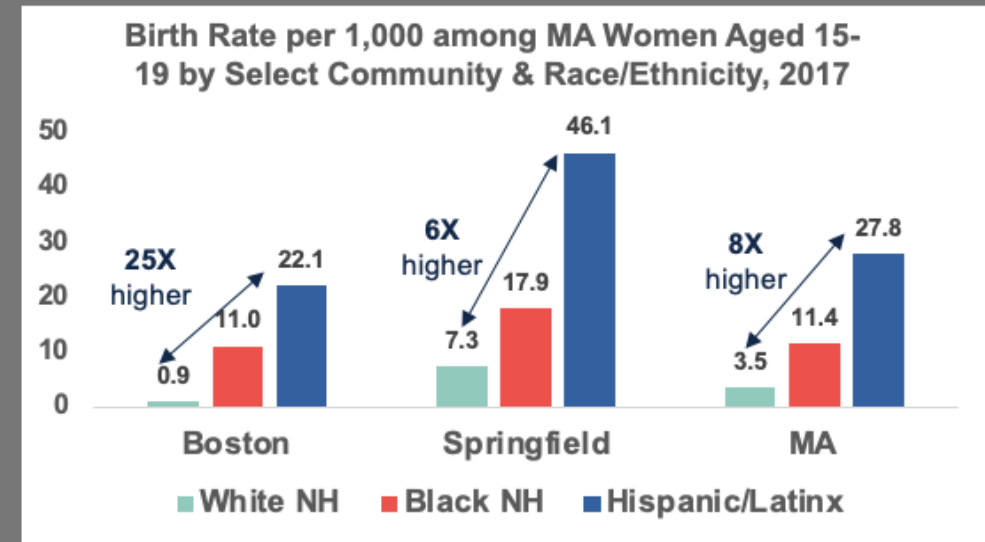
WHERE ARE YOUNG PARENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS?

Young parents are concentrated in areas hardest hit by the pandemic

Many of the towns with the highest teen birth rates, also are those hardest hit by COVID infections

Chelsea
Lawrence
New Bedford
Springfield
Lynn

Even within a single community, historic disinvestment and structural drivers have created racial inequities in the teen birth rate.



YOUNG PARENTS HAVE MULTIPLE NEEDS



Young women in foster care are more than twice as likely to become pregnant by age 19¹



Adolescent mothers are more likely to feel depressed compared to mothers aged 30-39²



44% of 18-25 year old females and 18% of 18-25 year old males experiencing homelessness nationally are parents³



Mothers aged 15-19 in MA are 25% less likely to receive adequate prenatal care compared to all MA mothers⁴

“I thought...I didn't really vibe with professional people because I feel like they are not down to earth. I felt like I had to put on a mask with these people with all smiles...that's why I wasn't open to help at all from anyone.”
— MA young parent

Sources: (1) The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. *Briefly: It's Your Responsibility to Talk to Youth: Pregnancy Prevention for Youth in Foster Care*. Available at: <http://www.centerforchildwelfare.org/kb/resource/ItsYourResponsibility.pdf>; (2) MA Pregnancy Risk Assessment & Monitoring System, 2015-2016; (3) Dworsky, A., Morton, M. H., Samuels, G. M. (2018). *Missed opportunities: Pregnant and parenting youth experiencing homelessness in America*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.; (4) MA Registry of Vital Records & Statistics, MA Department of Public Health

KEY TAKEAWAYS: YOUNG PARENTS

Supports for young parents are urgently needed. The impact of the pandemic on young parents could be multi-generational as it affects both youth/parent development and infant & child development.

- Half of employed young parents reduced their hours/lost jobs (twice as high as older parents).
- More than 80% of young parents have at least one unmet household need..
- Young parents experienced intimate partner violence at significantly higher rates than older parents .
- Nearly half of young parents are concerned about housing expenses.
- Concerns about housing, childcare, expenses, and IPV contribute significantly to the mental and physical health of both young parents and their children.
- Inequities are concentrated geographically

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for more information on how residents of Massachusetts have been impacted by the pandemic and how we can all work together to turn these data into action!