



How Are You Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic?

From Anxious to Tired to Good in 6 Weeks – Respondents are Resilient

Highlights from Coping Survey #6: April 27 – May 3

**Decision • Partners Canada Inc.
Dunn & Associates Communications and Public Affairs Inc.**

Coping Survey #6 – Top Line

- Highlights from **Survey #6** include new data on how people feel about loosening restrictions and their **specific advice to leaders**.
- Our respondents are becoming active **risk assessors!**
 - Most believe **restrictions are appropriate** and they are working – **“we’re flattening the curve”**
 - Even those who think restrictions are too strict are doing risk assessment, noting in their area the number of cases are low and not growing, or that some activities are low risk and should be allowed
 - **Opening up too quickly is a significant concern** for many – they don’t want a second wave
 - Before things open up, people **want to know that the curve has flattened and the trend is downward**
- They **trust their public health and government leaders**. Trust in Dr. Tam and Dr. Fauci continues to be high and appears to be increasing.
- Respondents are judging the risks, benefits and tradeoffs of leaving the safety of their homes and participating in things that are opening up. They assessing **Are We Safe?** And **Can We Trust You?**
- They **want assurance from leaders** – public health, government and business – to inform their assessment of whether it is **safe** to go back to work and resume some activities. They want assurance that **effective hygiene procedures, diagnostic testing** and **physical distancing** are in place.
- How people weigh the risks, benefits and tradeoffs of leaving self-isolation and participating in specific activities is the focus of **Coping Survey #7** [Everyone is welcome to participate.](#)

COVID-19 Coping Survey Week #6 Highlights

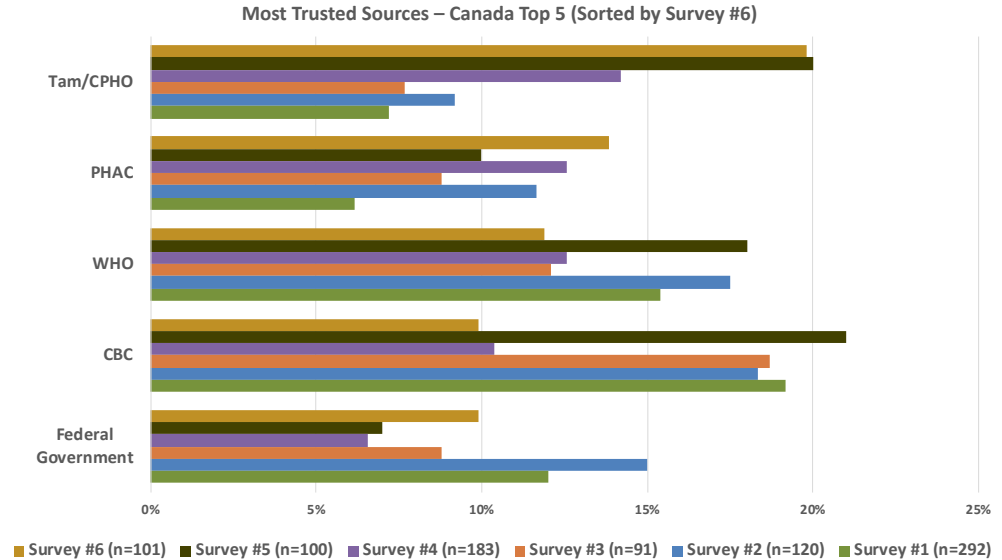
Coping Survey #6 – Top Line

- Respondents are “**okay**”, “**good**” or “**fine**”, but we’re also hearing some are “**tired**” or “**anxious**”.
- Most of our respondents are over 45. They appear to be pretty cautious, careful and pragmatic. Over the past 6 weeks, they have **demonstrated their ability to cope – they are resilient**.
- They are **following the requirements**, although there has been some movement from very high compliance to high in the past weeks.
- Some are reporting “**quarantine fatigue**” and are anticipating and preparing for things to open up. Most appear to be **adapting fairly well** to the changing conditions; others are reporting “frustration” and “impatience” among themselves and others.
- **Safety is their top priority**. Respondents are **watching and judging the behaviour of others** – more people are out and about, some people are “slacking off”, “complacent”, “taking more risks”, “not being so careful” – and this is a concern for some.
- There is **ongoing and pervasive uncertainty about the future** – everything from food supply, to economy, to the likelihood of children back to school in September – and still significant concern about **more waves of pandemic** and more “lockdown”.
- Respondents continue to be most **grateful for family and health** and offer advice to others: Take care of yourself physically and mentally and stay connected with the people you love.

Trusted Sources

Trust has a significant influence on people's judgment, decision making and behaviour

- In Canada, **Dr. Tam, PHAC, WHO, CBC** and the **Federal Government** (in general) have been most frequently cited as respondent's most trusted source.
- The order fluctuates from week to week, but **Dr. Tam and PHAC have trended higher** over the past 6 weeks.
- In the US, **Dr. Anthony Fauci and CDC** are most frequently cited as trusted sources.
 - » Most Trusted sources word clouds can be found in the appendix .

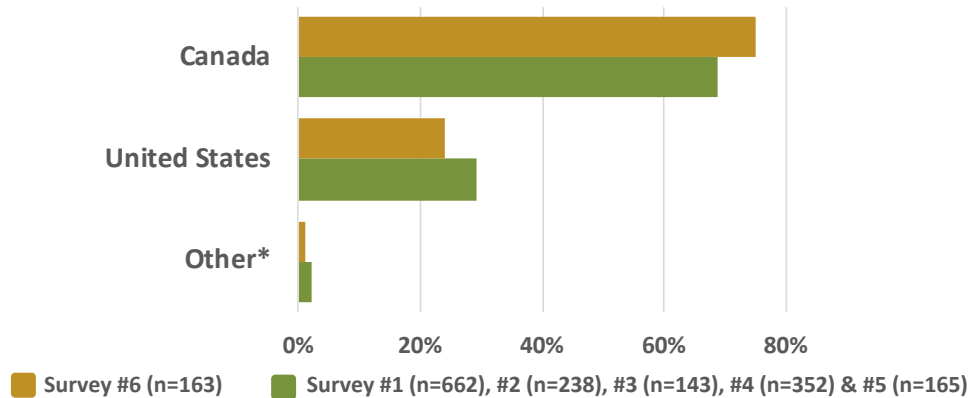


- For the 6th week in a row, **virtually all survey respondents report they are doing what their public health and government leaders have asked them to do.** They are paying close attention to **what leaders are saying and doing.** They want assurances that government and health experts have made **measured decisions based on facts and future considerations:**
 - » *“That they're dealing with real numbers of the infection levels in their area not just reacting to the cries of ‘turn us loose’ from people who just want it all to be over.”*

Survey Overview

Survey Responses

- » COVID-19 Coping Survey #6 was active from April 27 through May 3, 2020.
- » **163 people responded** in total. Participation was limited to people 18 and over.
- » **73% of respondents had participated in previous surveys.** 27% were new participants this week.



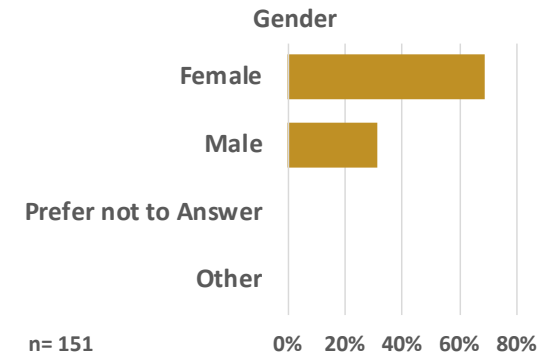
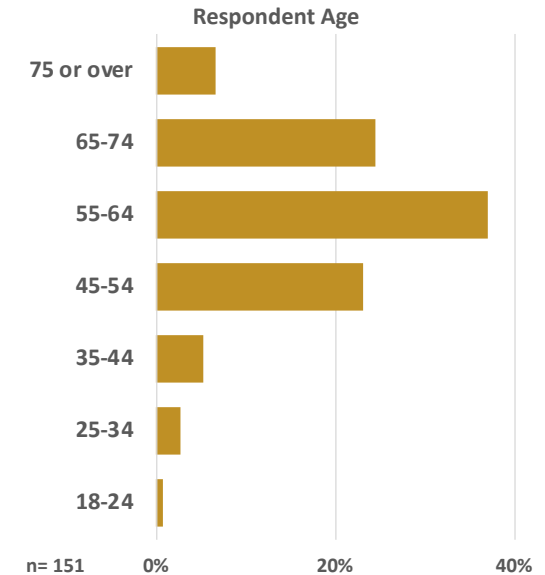
* Other countries represented in Survey #6 include:

- Hong Kong, United Kingdom

The number of people who responded to each question varied and is specified as “n” for each question. When the results are presented as a % of respondents this is the percentage of those responding to that question.

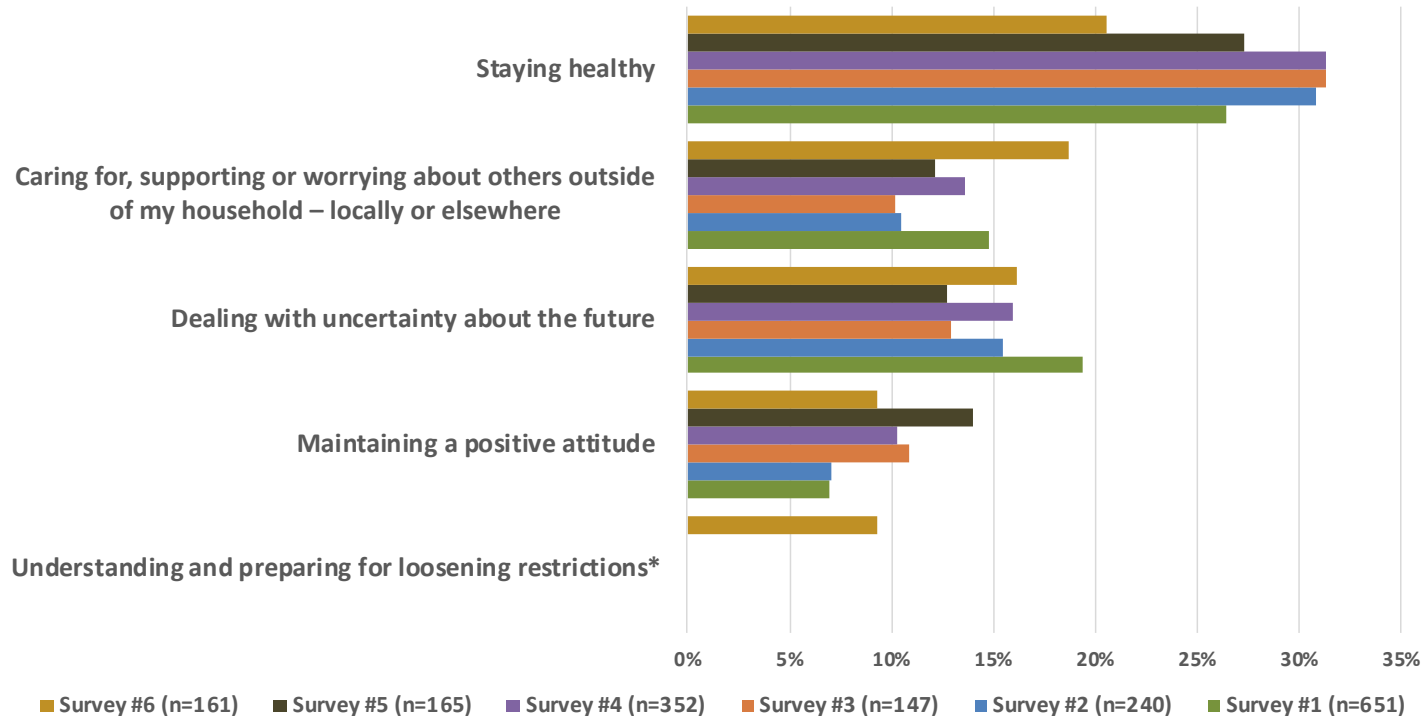
Additional Demographics included at end of presentation

[COVID-19 Coping Survey Week #6 Highlights](#)



What would you say is your greatest concern today?

- Respondents' concerns continue to fluctuate, although **“staying healthy”** has stayed the top concern but by a lesser margin. Other concerns appear to be trending higher or lower.



* New option in Survey #6

Notable Changes in the Past Week

When asked about the biggest changes they've noticed around them in the past week, many respondents commented on the following ...

- **More people are out and about and there is more traffic on the roads now that the weather has improved:**
 - » *“As the weather gets nicer, more people are outside.”*
- **Respondents note rising frustration with people “getting antsy” and wanting to “return to normal”, but question whether to open up more quickly or more slowly ...**
 - » *“I've noticed that myself, my family, friends and colleagues all appear to range between resigned to this for many more weeks, irritated by that but resolving to continue the measures put in place.”*
 - » *“People are getting, impatient, stressed. Worried about homeschooling, their jobs, their futures.”*
 - » *“People are definitely experiencing quarantine fatigue and wanting to get out. There's a lot of concern and worry about reopening everything too early. But there's also a desire to get back to whatever normal we can get back to.”*
 - » *“People are starting to rise up more, on both sides of the equation: both the “open up” protestors and people who are protesting against premature opening and poor government response. People are getting less afraid and more angry.”*

Notable Changes in the Past Week

Respondents noted that some are following, others are “flaunting” the guidelines ...

- **Some respondents noticed people adapting to the “new normal”, observing social distancing and wearing masks ...**
 - » *“I see that people are adjusting to this new reality. They seem to be following all the rules and are still managing to get out for exercise.”*
 - » *“More people are taking masks, sanitation and distancing seriously.”*
- **Others noted more people “flaunting” the guidelines, or not following them as closely:**
 - » *“More people and a lot more seniors disregarding advice to not go out only for essentials or medical appointments and not wearing masks. Not being aware of the 2m distance between you and the other person.”*
 - » *“As media reports in the US talk about things “opening up again,” I see people near me are getting more lax in their adherence to recommendations regarding social distancing.”*

Other Notable Changes in the Past Week

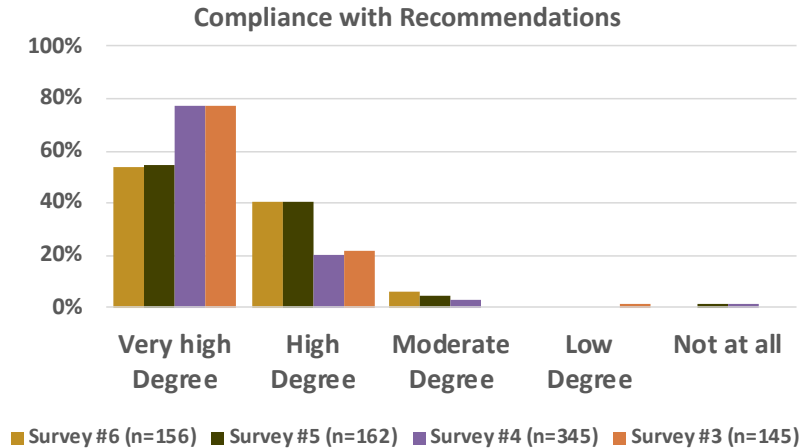
- **Other changes noted, include:**

- » Changes in commerce (shortages and limits in grocery stores, higher prices, delivery delays)
- » Some people are more hopeful and grateful
- » More doctors are using telemedicine
- » The curve is flattening
- » The government is offering financial assistance and is relaxing some payment deadlines, e.g. income tax
- » “Online entertainment raising funds and awareness for businesses/people affected by COVID-19.”
- » There is an “increased demand for emergency services”
- » Increased wildlife

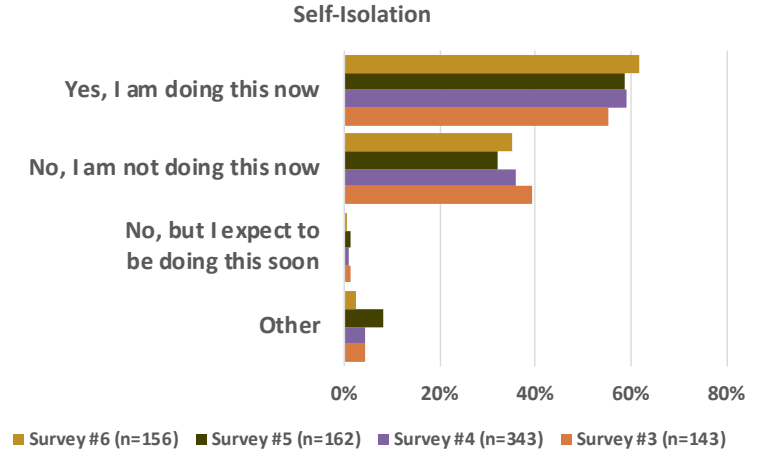
“Stay at Home”, “Shelter in Place” Orders

- Nearly all respondents (95%) reported some form of “stay at home” order in their area now and are self-reporting a very high or high degree of compliance. Many also report going beyond the recommendations and are “self-isolating”.

To what degree would you say that you are following the recommendations in your area?



Some individuals are taking more extreme physical distancing actions sometimes called “self-isolate” – Are you doing this?



Current Level of Restrictions – About Right

- **Nearly all respondents (85%) characterized the level of restrictions in their area as “About Right”. This is the same percentage as last week. They said:**
- **Important “for everyone’s safety” to stop the spread and prevent a second wave:**
 - » *“Our number one priority has to be the prevention of the spread of the virus.”*
 - » *“Without social distancing we are doomed.”*
- **Restrictions are working, people are following them and the curve is flattening:**
 - » *“The restrictions seem to be producing the intended results, low infection rates.”*
- **Restrictions are “logical”, “reasonable” and necessary to ensure compliance:**
 - » *“People are doing a pretty good job with the restrictions as they are. If they were more stringent, I think people would have a harder time complying.”*
 - » *“People mostly stay home and try to avoid walking into harms way. Would not do this without mandatory restrictions.”*

Current Level of Restrictions – Too Strict

Those who feel that the restrictions are too strict – **about 10%** – said ...

- **Low rate of infection in their area, no need for restrictions:**

- » *“As one of the areas with a low rate of infection and deaths, I think it's unfair that the vast majority of people are suffering (no elective surgeries and other types of health care that could help people) for the sake of those few who have contracted the virus (vast majority have not needed hospitalization).”*
- » *“We have very few cases where we are and the level is not rising. People should be allowed to work as long as they can do so safely for themselves and others. They need money, they need to save their small businesses. The economic destruction is massive.”*

- **Open parks and walking paths and allow outdoor activities:**

- » *“Restrictions on parks, outdoor venues and activities should not be in place. risk thought to be low in outdoor settings. Fines for people doing recreational activities outside are excessive and punitive.”*

- **A few said restrictions on non-essential services (hairstylist, nail salon or dentist) should be eased:**

- » *“When you get your hair or nails done, there are less people within 6 ft of you than there are at the grocery store.”*

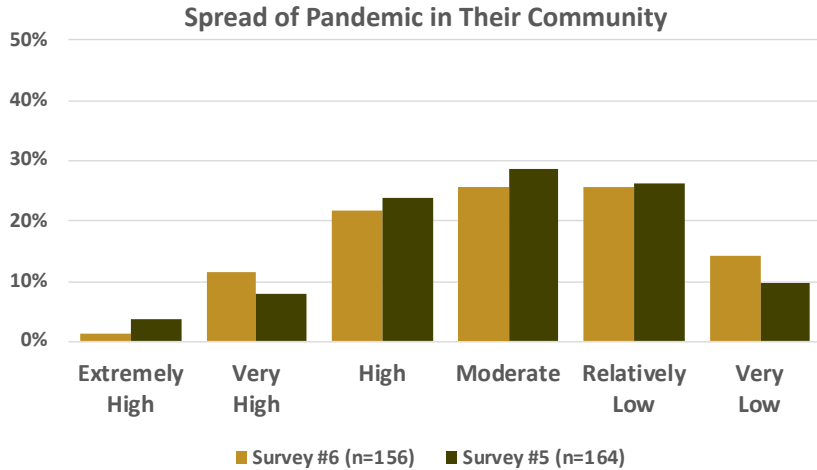
Current Level of Restrictions – Too Loose

- **Those who felt that the restrictions are too loose – about 5% – noted a lack of compliance and need for stricter enforcement:**
 - » *“I use curb side pick up for groceries and drive through for medications. When I see the parking lot at Walmart full, it appears to show no restrictions.”*
 - » *“City buses are too crowded for social distancing.”*
 - » *“We see lots of construction and road work personnel not practicing social distancing.”*
 - » *“There are clearly groups of people who are not acting in accordance with the “stay-at-home” guidelines and refuse to uphold their social contract to keep not only themselves safe, but those close to them who are especially vulnerable. If there were more legitimate and tangible consequences for these groups, other than a scolding on social media or at a press conference, I think that they will be more inclined to follow the rules.”*
 - » *“Still not enough research on testing and tracking. Many people in stores not wearing masks, not distancing.”*

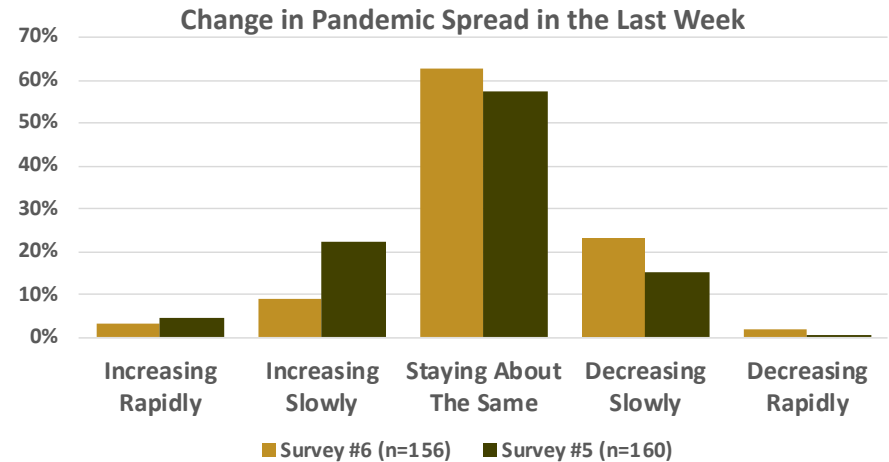
Covid-19 in Their Community

- When asked about the level of the number of people infected or hospitalized with COVID-19 in their community respondents reported a wide range, with the level of impact is “staying about the same” as the previous week.

How would you rate the level of impact of the pandemic on your community this week?



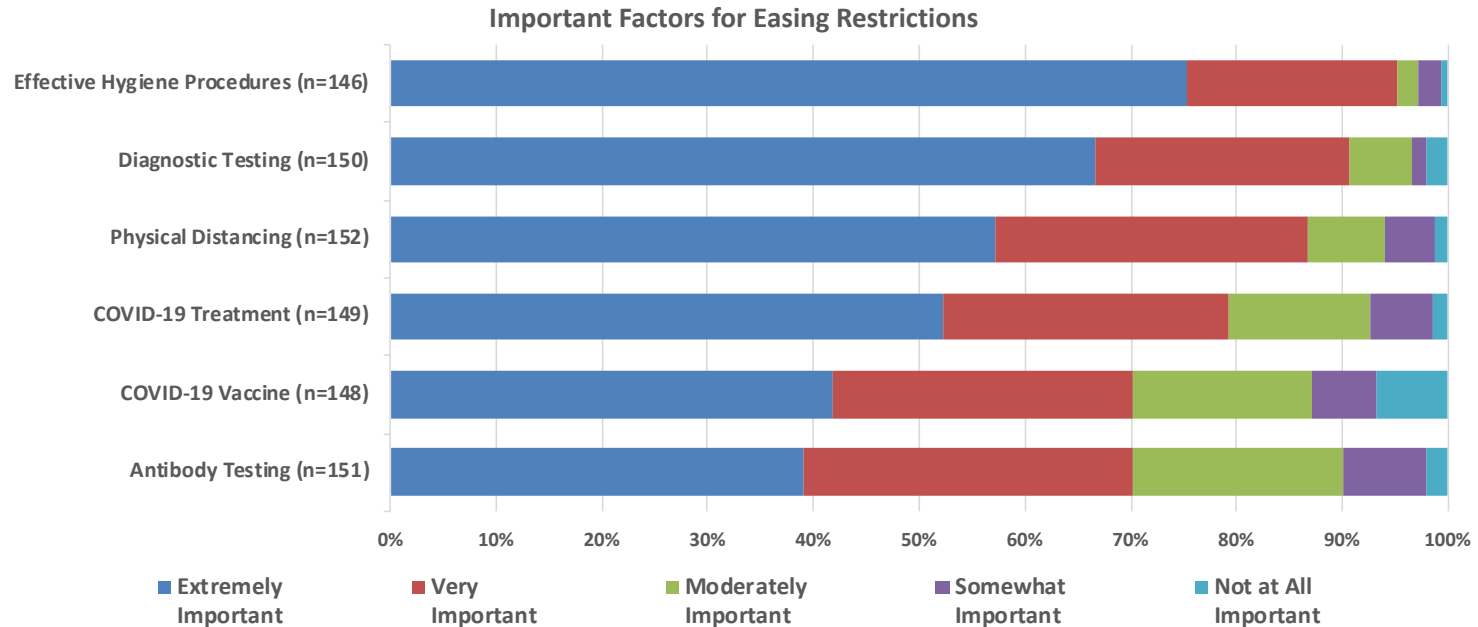
How has the level of impact changed in the last week?



Assurances Prior to Easing Restrictions

How important will the following be to you in making personal decisions about returning to activities that you have been limiting or avoiding during the pandemic?

- **No significant changes since the last week when we first asked about assurances for easing restrictions.**



Assurances Prior to Easing Restrictions

What would you want to be assured of before officials begin to loosen restrictions?

- **That the curve has flattened, a “consistent downward trend” in new cases:**
 - » *“Consistent decrease in community spread, hospitalizations and deaths.”*
 - » *“At least a couple of weeks after the flattening of the curve.”*
 - » *“That infections have decreased dramatically, i.e. less than 20 new infections a day.”*

- **Wide-spread testing and contact tracing:**
 - » *“Testing, testing, testing and technological contact tracing must be fully operational for all citizens returning to work anywhere or who wish to be outside the home. Institute an electronic Vaccination Passport now - so all vaccines are up to date AND that it records Covid-19 testing records. Testing must be validated, reliable, repeated daily or weekly.”*

Assurances – Clear Guidelines

- **Clear guidelines and enforcement to assure personal and community safety, including for businesses, travel, social and public places:**
 - » *“Parks and beaches should be open for walking not lingering. People will be monitored for distancing. Number people going in park, one-way routes.”*
 - » *“That my fellow citizens – effectively informed by evidence-based public health risk communications – understood what was at stake, how to behave and what to do to continue to reduce the spread while leaving their homes to restart the economy. That strategies for monitoring workplaces and public spaces for compliant behaviours was evidence-based, tested, well resourced and implemented.”*
 - » *“Masks should be worn, self-distancing should continue, number of people in stores or restaurants should be reduced to allow for self-distancing.”*
 - » *“Schools should shut down for the remainder of the year.”*

Assurances – Ready to handle an outbreak

- **That medical resources, staffing, equipment and training, will be sufficient to handle any additional cases or outbreak:**
 - » *“Health care professionals deem the hospital readiness and capacity is consistently available and stable. PPE supplies are fully stocked for ALL health care, LTC, and nursing homes so that they are able to change them after each patient with no concerns of supply shortages.”*
- **That easing of restrictions will be “gradual”, “slow”, a “phased”:**
 - » *“Need to ease with extreme care and slowly, with careful testing as it’s done.”*
 - » *“There is a phased-in approach, especially with commuting, workplaces and schools.”*
 - » *“Follow the science. Go slow. Be prepared to shut down again as needed. Remember the lessons from 1918.”*
- **That there will not be a “resurgence” or second wave:**
 - » *“I’d like to have more increased awareness of the second wave expectations.”*
 - » *“That we have sufficient knowledge of the virus’ transmissibility, lethality and occurrence and that we have sufficient mitigation procedures to be confident we don’t restart the pandemic.”*

Assurances – Evidence-based plans

- **That decisions to ease restrictions are based on “science and data”, evidence from other areas that have “reopened”.**
 - » *“That they’re dealing with real numbers of the infection levels in their area not just reacting to the cries of ‘turn us loose’ from people who just want it all to be over.”*
- **“Precise reporting” – “keep us informed”.**
- **Processes in place to protect at-risk populations and children:**
 - » *“A process is put into place to protect seniors and those with pre-existing conditions.”*
 - » *“Immune compromised household member must be vaccinated before I can return to work.”*
 - » *“Keep children safe and give parents the freedom to keep their children home from school and homeschool the way that works best for each family and child.”*
- **A few commented that nothing would give them assurance that restrictions can be eased and they would not get sick with COVID.**

Assurances Prior to Returning to Workplace

People who are working were asked: *Thinking specifically about potentially returning to work (outside of your home) what would you want to be assured of before returning to your workplace?*

- **Assurance that safeguards and protocols are in place to protect employees, including wearing masks and other appropriate PPE, personal hygiene and cleaning and disinfecting the workplace:**
 - » *“That the offices are being cleaned well every night and that hand sanitizer and wipes are available for personal use.”*
 - » *“PPE supply, wipes and disinfectant gel readily available and used.”*
- **Assure physical distancing. Limit the number of employees in the workplace by offering work-at-home option, split shifts and a gradual ramp-up. Have controls in place to limit contact, reduce the number of meetings and casual interactions.**
 - » *“Work setting clear guidance on social distancing, offer work from home if available, distance learning, canceling large gathering event until summer 2021, be very flexible to new way to do business.”*

Workplace Assurances – Safety first

- **Availability of widespread testing, contact tracing and transparency. One suggested temperatures be checked before starting work:**
 - » *“100% of employees tested with regular testing monthly. Also, need our management to tell us when we have been exposed and by whom. We have had 4 cases and did not learn about the cases until 2 weeks after the cases had been discovered.”*
 - » *“On demand testing for people conducted on a weekly basis.”*
- **Decrease in the number of cases and deaths and assurance that the “spread has been stopped”:**
 - » *“No infection in our area for two weeks.”*
- **Assurance that it is “risk free” to return to the workplace:**
 - » *“That we will not be forced to do unnecessary things that compromise our safety. We have no idea, for instance, how safe our building’s HVAC system is.”*
 - » *“That it is safe. That the government/public health has declared it safe, not my employer. I want it to be declared safe, not maybe or partly safe. I need it to be definitive.”*

Workplace Assurances – Minimal risk

- **Assurance that employees will “self-report” illness or symptoms and that there will be no negative impact for those who stay home when they are ill:**
 - » *“Ability to stay when sick for however long is needed without repercussions.”*
 - » *“That all those who are feeling unwell, stay home.”*
- **Other assurances, each mentioned by one or two Respondents, included:**
 - » Assurance that there will not be another wave
 - » Assurance that workers won’t spread the virus to their clients
 - » Travel restrictions, specifically to the US and pertaining to air travel
 - » Assurance that it is safe to use public transportation, although one respondent said there could be no such assurance
 - » A “functioning” vaccine
 - » Policies against sharing of office equipment including computers, telephones, etc.
 - » Assurance of the ability to monitor, react and enforce policies
 - » Herd immunity

Thoughts about Wearing Masks

- When asked about wearing masks, most respondents said that they were wearing masks consistently or sometimes, with many characterizing them as “helpful”, “important” and “necessary”:

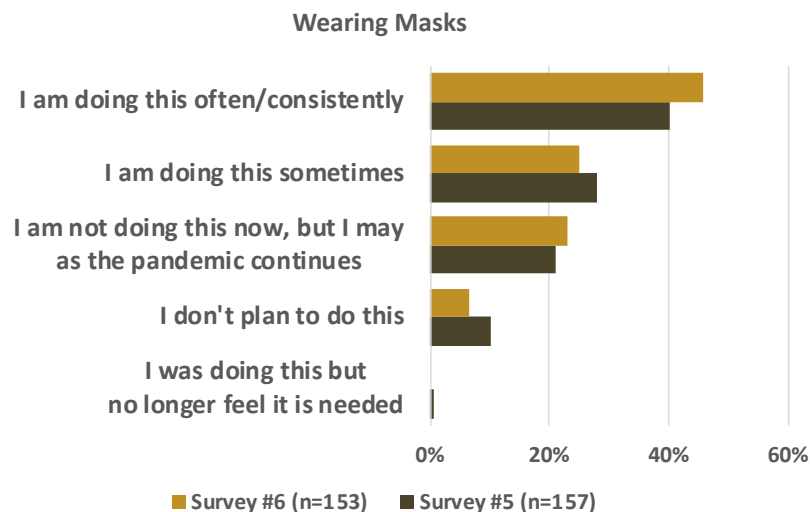
» *“The recommendation is based on science. I do not want to take the risk of infecting others or of others infecting me.”*

» *“It's stupid not to wear masks even if they aren't clinically perfect they have to provide at least some protection and a level of comfort.”*

» *“It is considerate of retail workers if customers wear them.”*

» *“Necessary evil.”*

» *“I'm angry at the people who don't wear them. It's so simple and is making a difference to community spread.”*



Thoughts about Wearing Masks

- **Mask wearing depends on activity or if you are not feeling well:**
 - » *“I will do so if I go into a place where people are close by force (grocery stores) but less likely to do it when on a nature trail where I can move to the side.”*
 - » *“If you feel sick then yes wear the mask. If you have no symptoms you don’t need the mask. Social distancing is more than enough.”*
- **Some felt that masks were unnecessary or not helpful and can give a “false sense of security”:**
 - » *“I hate them. I hope that they will not be necessary after the crisis. I truly believe that in normal circumstance they are unnecessary. We need to be exposed to some level of germs daily to build immunities.”*
 - » *“Basically masks are a prophylactic in that they protect others from the breath of the individual wearing the mask. Since I am rarely within 4 feet of another person, a mask is somewhat unnecessary since anyone sneezing in public would be avoided like the plague.”*
 - » *“I worry that masks give people a false sense of security and make them overconfident with respect to safety.”*

Thoughts about Wearing Masks

- **Uncomfortable, “annoying”, hard to breathe:**
 - » *“I don’t like how they feel. I seem to have trouble breathing when wearing it.”*
 - » *“Unpleasant to wear but of utmost importance.”*
 - » *“I find masks claustrophobic - difficult to breathe. I also have negative associations with them. They make me think of apocalyptic movies like Contagion.”*
- **Not easily accessible, “hard to come by”:**
 - » *“Impossible for me to obtain a mask.”*
- **One respondent commented on having “mixed” feelings about wearing masks and expressed concern about being judged if not wearing a mask:**
 - » *“My understanding was that it was most effective for people who are sick to wear them to protect others. As more and more people start to wear them, I feel that those of us who don't are going to be judged for putting others at risk even if we are not sick or experiencing symptoms.”*

What is the one thing you're looking forward to doing ...

... once distancing restrictions are lifted and you feel more comfortable doing things that you used to do before the outbreak?

- **Spending Time with Family and Friends is by far the most frequent:**

- » *“Visiting with family and friends not worried or refraining from physical contact.”*
- » *“Being with my family – Sunday dinners. Going out with friends.”*
- » *“Hugging family and friends and being in their company”*

- Physical interaction – “Hugging”
- Dining out
- Travelling, to visit family, to the cottage and internationally
- Enjoying outdoor activities, including boating, hiking, cycling, swimming, camping, fishing, golfing, gardening and going to the beach
- Getting a hair cut and having nails done, having a massage
- Returning to “normal life”, “Freedom”
- Going to sporting events and movies
- Returning to work
- Shopping, products back on the shelves
- Returning to school
- Going to the library
- Going to the gym, playing sports
- Resuming children’s activities
- Going to medical/dental appointments

Suggestions to Others

If you could offer one suggestion or piece of advice to other people dealing with the social isolation related to the COVID-19 outbreak, what would that be?

- **In Week 6, taking care of yourself physically (exercise, get fresh air, eat well) and mentally (meditate, relax) was mentioned most frequently:**
 - » *“Even when you get really scared, do something - anything. Don't remain in your head.”*
 - » *“Smile even if you don't feel happy – sometimes that itself can make you feel better.”*
 - » *“Find the ‘here and now’ things to be thankful for every day. Sunshine, rain showers, rainbows, laughter all help every day.”*
 - » *“Chill out, enjoy the pause, contemplate how you will change your lifestyle after this. How important is money?”*

- **Staying connected and reaching out to others was recommended almost as frequently:**
 - » *“Plan for weekly calls with friends and family. Knowing you have a call coming up makes it easier to stay positive.”*
 - » *“Be sure to keep in touch with your loved ones.”*

Suggestions to Others

- **Keep busy, develop a routine and be productive:**
 - » *“Join a live online site where new things can be learned/experienced – cooking/yoga/book club/knitting whatever! LIVE with a community of like-minded people.”*
 - » *“Try to establish a routine, cook, clean, read, spend time on hobbies/activities you enjoy.”*
- **Follow the guidelines:**
 - » *“Stop whining and wear a mask. Stay home.”*
 - » *“It isn’t a punishment, it is a strategy for self-preservation.”*
- **Stay the course:**
 - » *Make the most of it, it is here, do not let it define you.”*
- **Other suggestions, listed in order of frequency of mention included:**
 - » *Limit media exposure*
 - » *Be kind and patient toward others*
 - » *Stay positive*

Respondents' Comments on our Survey

- We heard from many respondents that the survey is **providing an outlet for them to share their thoughts and experiences and it is helping them cope with the pandemic:**
 - » *“The survey makes me feel better, thank you. I know nobody in a decision loop cares about anyone out here. So it's nice to pretend it matters to you.”*
 - » *“Thanks for doing this survey. It helps me get my feelings out. And I am hopeful the input and comments will have an impact.”*
 - » *“Helps make me more mindful of what I have done over the past week.”*
 - » *“Thank you for the opportunity to express.”*
 - » *“I haven't been counting the weeks but thank you for doing this for me!”*

Supplemental Results

Survey Overview

▪ Survey Responses

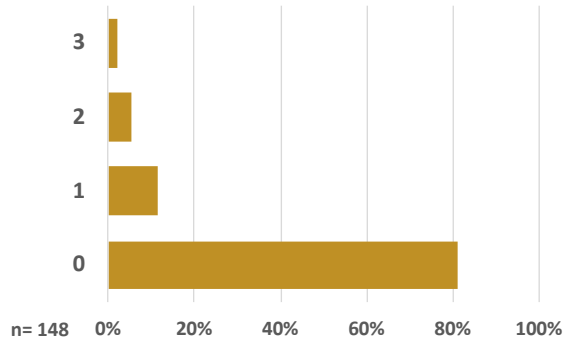
- » COVID-19 Coping Survey #6 was active from April 27 through May 3, 2020.
- » **163 people responded.** Participation was limited to people 18 and over.
- » **73% of respondents had participated in previous surveys.** 27% were new participants this week.
- » **Over 1700 respondents over the past 6 weeks**

▪ Survey Sample

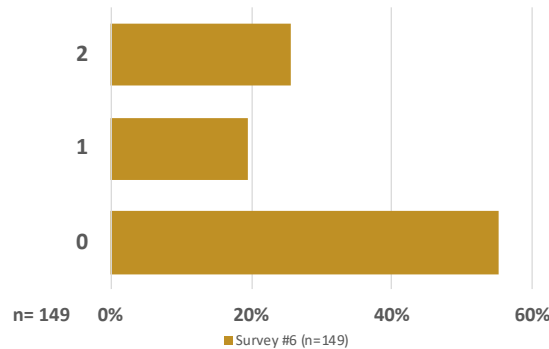
- » Survey participants were recruited through convenience and snowball sampling.
- » The survey was promoted through various avenues starting with our friends, families and professional colleagues via email, LinkedIn, Twitter and other platforms. People were asked to share the survey invitation with others.
- » *As such, we make no claims about the representativeness of the survey to any specific population, but we do believe that the results provide meaningful insight into people's experiences and perspectives during these difficult times.*

Other Demographics – Survey Week #6

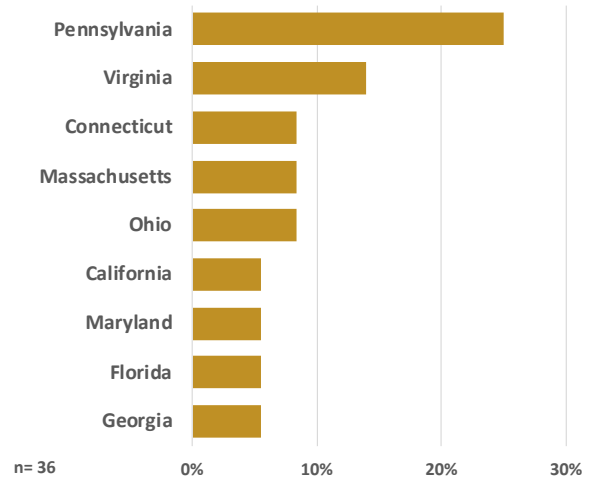
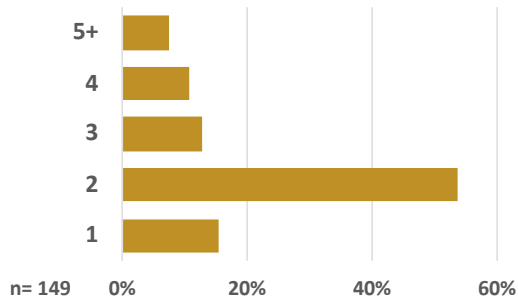
Children <18 at Home



Seniors >65 at Home

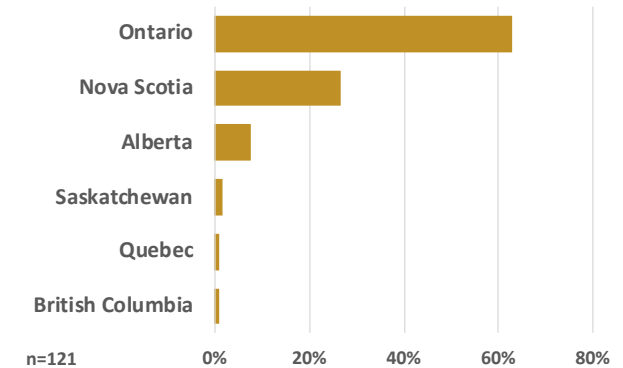


Household Size



Other states represented in Survey #6 include:

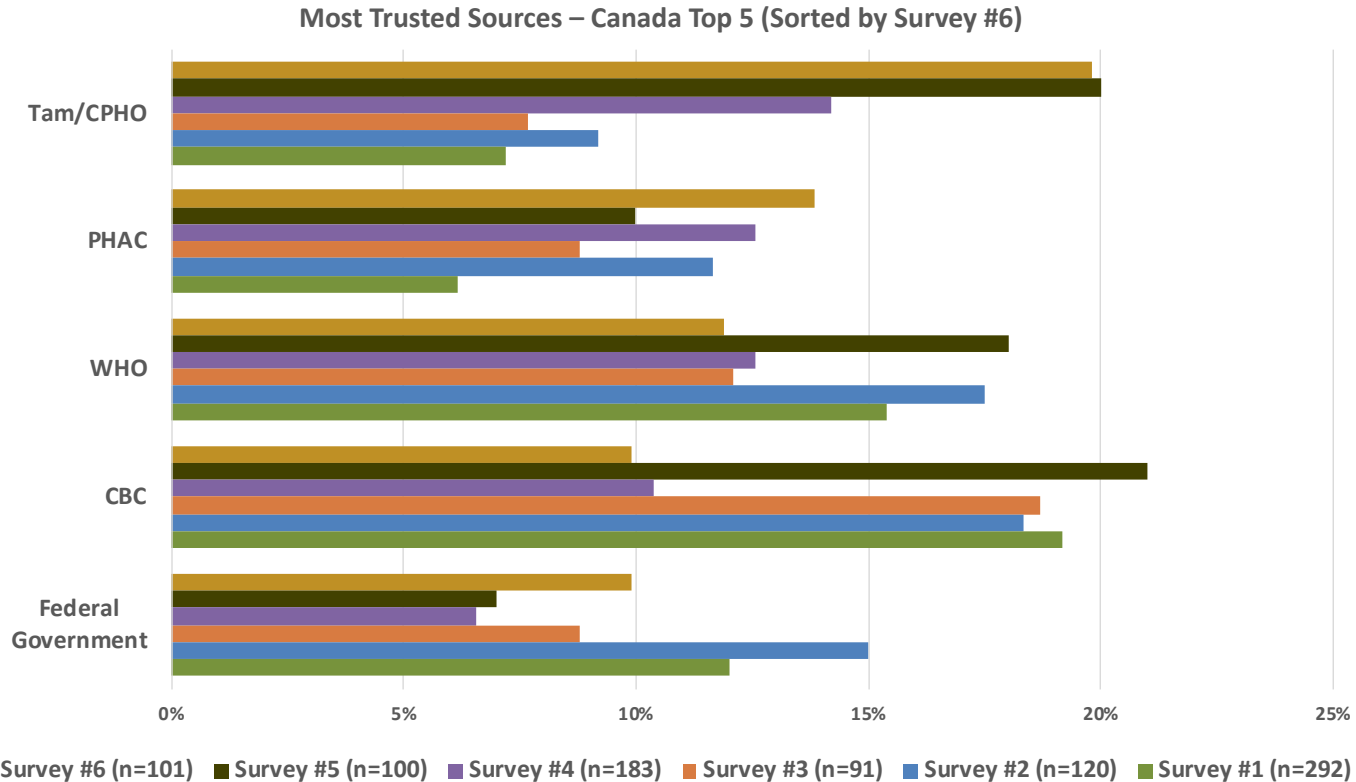
- Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Montana, Wisconsin



Trusted Sources – Canadian Respondents (Surveys #1- #6)

Which organization or individual do you trust most when it comes to information related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

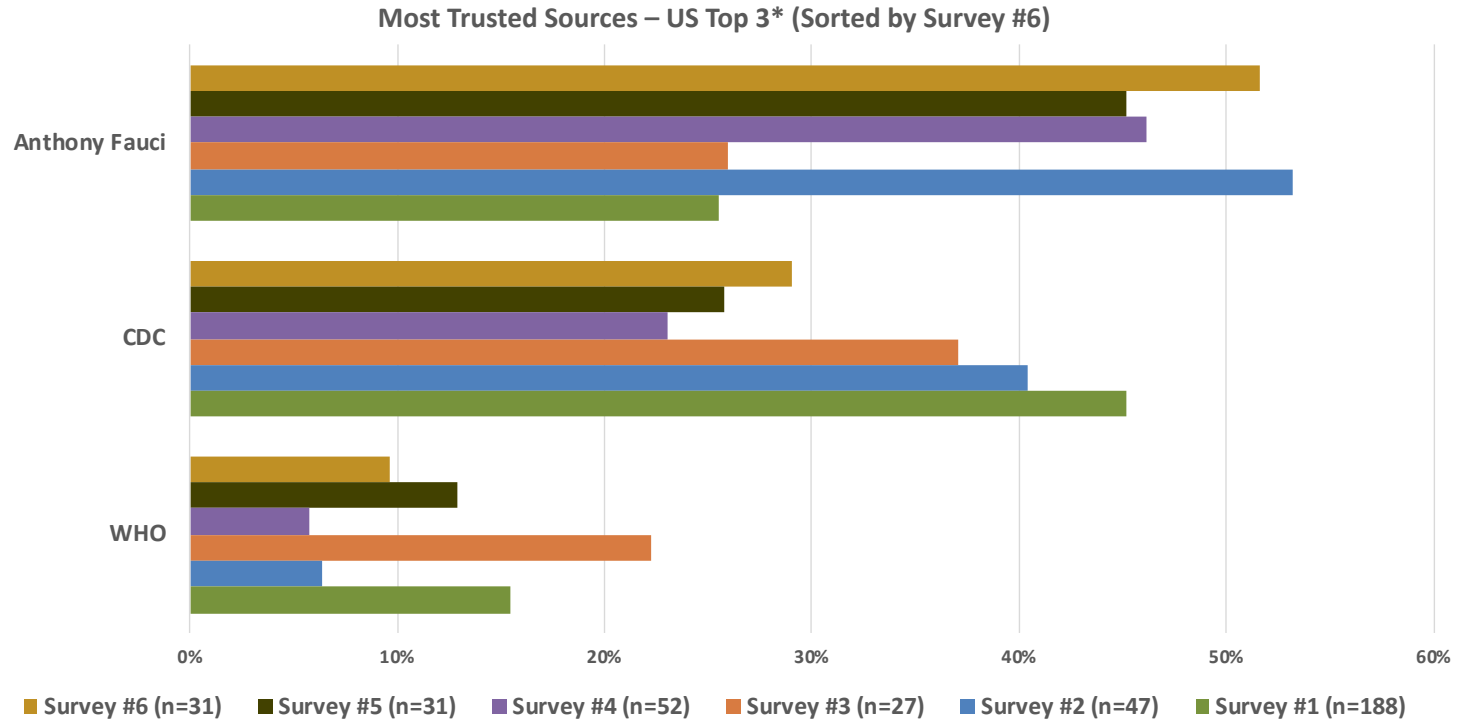
- Comparing the most trusted sources over our 6 surveys ...



Trusted Sources – US Respondents

Which organization or individual do you trust most when it comes to information related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Comparing the most trusted sources over our 6 surveys ...



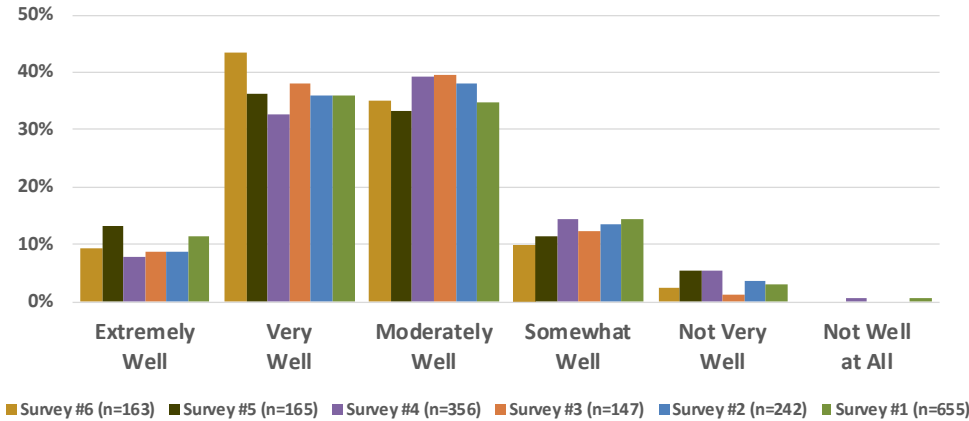
* The top 3 sources are shown for the US as they are consistently above other sources

[COVID-19 Coping Survey Week #6 Highlights](#)

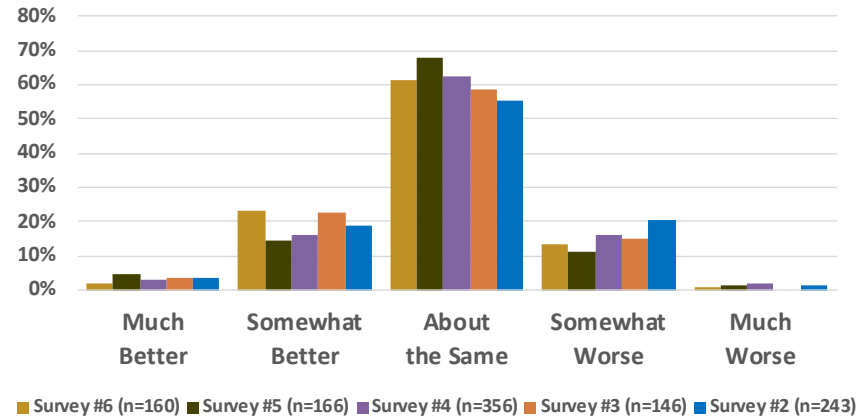
Coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic?

- The range of how well respondents are coping has been consistent over the past 6 weeks and continues to reflect the broad range of emotions people are feeling. Most are reporting that it is unchanged from the previous week.

How well are you coping with the COVID-19 pandemic today?



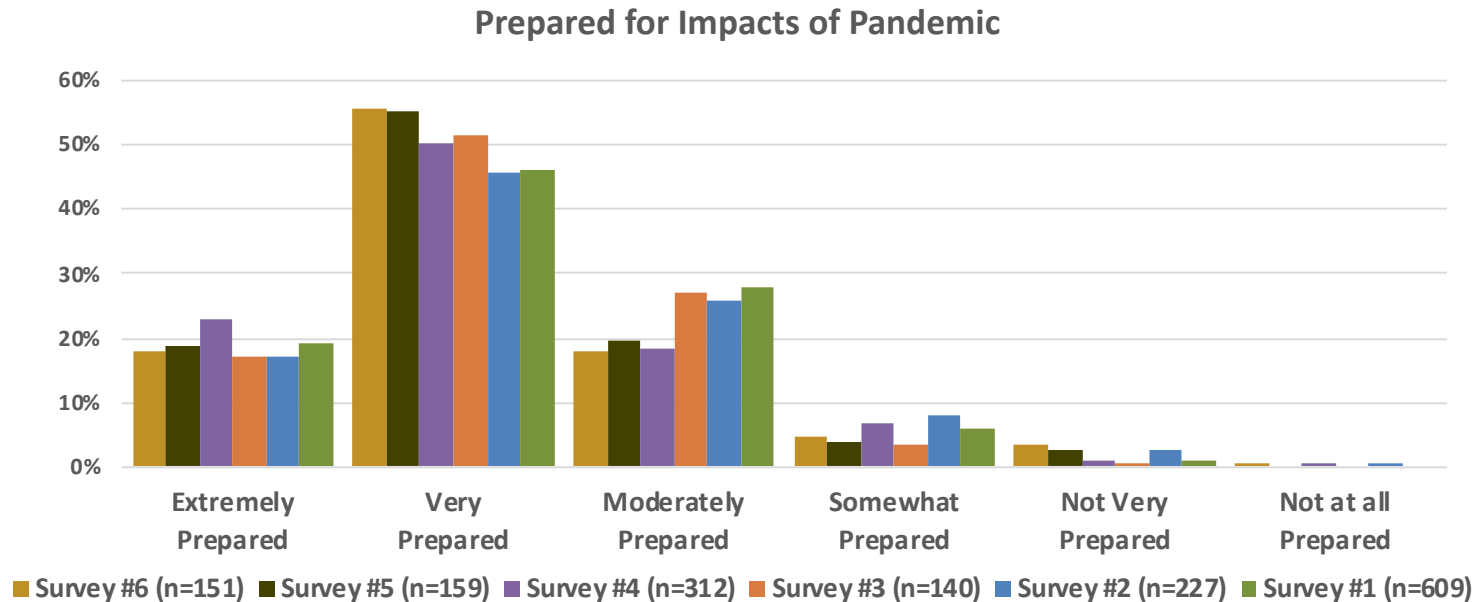
How does this compare to last week?



Prepared for next 4 weeks

How prepared are you (and those in your household) to handle the impacts of the pandemic and the changing public health recommendations over the next four weeks even as physical distancing restrictions may change or are lifted?

- Respondents have been consistently and increasingly reporting that they are prepared to handle the impacts of the pandemic



Why We're Doing the Coping Survey

- Like many others we are trying to understand and cope with the practical, psychological and emotional effects of physical distancing, self-isolation, symptom monitoring and general uncertainty during this COVID-19 pandemic.
- Our team at Decision Partners believes we can help, in a small way, by doing what we do best – listening and learning about how people are feeling and what they are doing to cope with the changes and challenges we are all facing. That's why we launched our **weekly** COVID-19 Coping Survey on March 24.
- No one has sponsored this research – we're doing it on our own. We hope this work will generate useful insight to help people cope a little better, and hopefully inform ongoing and future pandemic decision making.
- Please [take the weekly survey](#), share the survey link and the weekly results!

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About Us

Our team at Decision Partners believes our world is a better place when people make better-informed decisions. We specialize in behavioural research designed to better understand how people think about and respond to complex topics, including social and health-related issues. We are a small business that has been doing this work for 30 years.

You can learn more about us, and our COVID-19 Coping Survey at <http://www.decisionpartners.co>

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