

# COVID – 19

## Report 2

The following report provides a snapshot of the data collected from **May – 16 September 2020**. The survey has been designed to measure community perceived social impact of COVID-19 in Kingston across 6 domains:

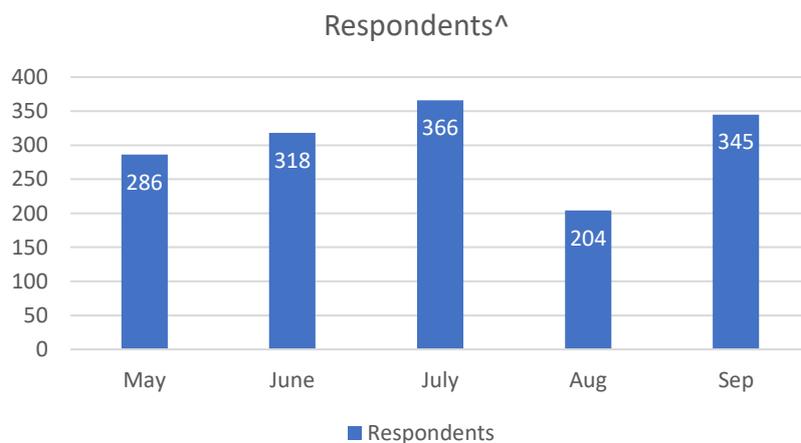
1. Resilience
2. Loneliness and social isolation
3. Anxiety and fear around mortality
4. Employment and income
5. Access to basic needs and services
6. Sense of community and safety

Colour coding represents the proportion of respondents rating their experience at 5 (except for the stress rating which is rated out of 7) or more on each scale\*:

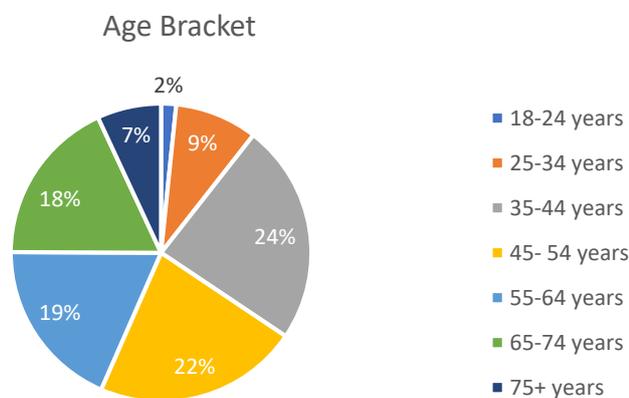
- Greater than 70% report a rating of 5 or more
- 30-69% report a rating of 5 or more
- Less than 30% report a rating of 5 or more

*\*The higher the rating the higher the level of negative impact experienced.*

Additional data is presented in the grey boxes as a pre-COVID-19 comparison. This data is not from the same source/s and acts as an indication only.



<sup>^</sup>Respondents may differ per month, results are presented for comparison purposes only.



Key findings - graphical data is presented in Appendix 1

### 1. Resilience:

- Stress ratings have remained relatively stable between May-September with 66% of people reporting a stress rating of 7 or more out of 10
- The average stress rating out of 10 increased from 5.7 in May 2020 to 6.3 in September 2020

The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017<sup>i</sup> identified that 25% of people in Kingston report a *moderate* level of psychological distress, this is lower than compared to during COVID-19. However, 60% reported a *mild* level of psychological distress which is comparable to during COVID-19.

- Volunteering or helping others in the community declined between May and July before increasing throughout August and September
- Approximately 36% of people were volunteering in September

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016<sup>ii</sup> identified that 28% of people volunteer regularly, this is lower than during COVID-19 however a higher proportion reported playing an active role in their community (43%).

### 2. Loneliness and social isolation

- The proportion of respondents reporting they felt lonely has increased from May to September
- The biggest increase was reported in August and September with 47% of people reporting feeling lonely compared to 36-40% in the previous months.

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016<sup>iii</sup> identified that 14.6% of people sometimes felt isolated and out of contact with other people, this is lower than during COVID-19.

- A high proportion of people have maintained regular virtual contact with friends and family. This was at its highest level in May (91%) and lowest in August (79%).
- In September 14% of people were not maintaining virtual contact with family and friends.

The 2016 census<sup>iv</sup> identified that 12.4% of households did not have internet connection, this is in line with the proportion of people not maintaining virtual contact during COVID-19.

### 3. Anxiety and fear around mortality

- The proportion of people worried about being infected with COVID-19 increased from May (49%) to July (56%) and August (57%)
- In September 47% of people were worried about being infected
- Confidence that family members or themselves would not recover if infected has increased from May (38%) to September (43%)
- Most people have had access to accurate facts and information on when to get tested ranging from 95% in May to 97% in September

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016<sup>v</sup> identified that 72.4% of people could easily find information on local services, and 91% have access to a local GP.

#### 4. Employment and Income

- The proportion of people who felt their job was at risk has remained stable between May (28%) and September (25%), with a slight increase in June and July (31-32%).

Economy .id<sup>vi</sup> forecast that 14% of Kingston residents (including JobKeeper recipients) will lose their jobs in the June Quarter 2020, this is comparable to losses expected in Greater Melbourne and Victoria.

- The proportion of people whose spending habits have changed has increased from 67% in May to 78% in September
- Most people have remained confident that they can continue providing for their family, with 13-16% from May to September reporting they are unable to do so
- The proportion of people concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy has increased from 80% in May to 85% in September

#### 5. Access to basic needs and services

- A small proportion of people report being worried that their household supplies will run out, this has increased slightly from May (3%) to August (9%)
- In September 5% of people were worried that their household supplies will run out
- The proportion of people worried that they will not be able to afford basic supplies has increased from May (5%) to September (9%)

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016<sup>vii</sup> identified that 92% of people have access to fresh/affordable food to meet their household's needs.

#### 6. Sense of Community and Safety

- The proportion of people who believe social distancing has had a negative impact on their community has increased from May (43%) to September (63%)
- A feeling of safety when people go outside or to the shops has remained relatively stable from May to September with 32% to 44% of people not feeling safe going out.
- In September 30% of people did not feel safe going out.

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016<sup>viii</sup> identified that nearly all respondents (97%) felt safe walking alone during the day and 63% felt safe walking alone at night, this is higher than during COVID-19.

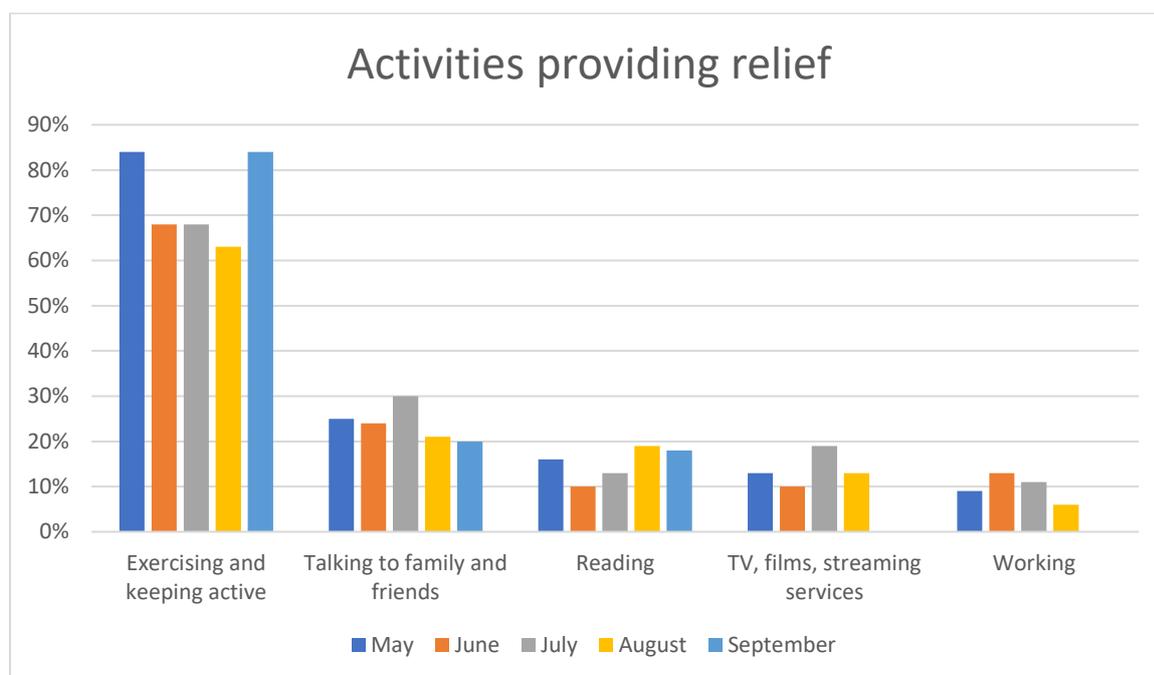
## Free text responses

In addition to the domains, respondents were invited to share additional information on their experience of COVID-19 and impact on their lives. This provides additional context and insight to the data reported for each domain.

### Activities providing relief

From May to September most respondents were keeping physically active and exercising to provide relief from COVID-19 and restrictions.

|                               | May        | June       | July       | August     | Sept      |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Exercising and keeping active | 84%        | 68%        | 68%        | 60%        | 84%       |
| Talking to family and friends | 25%        | 24%        | 30%        | 18%        | 20%       |
| Reading                       | 16%        | 10%        | 13%        | 19%        | 18%       |
| TV, films, streaming services | 13%        | 10%        | 19%        | 6%         | -         |
| Working                       | 9%         | 13%        | 11%        | 13%        | -         |
| <i>Number of respondents</i>  | <i>194</i> | <i>122</i> | <i>158</i> | <i>104</i> | <i>96</i> |



*“Walking, cooking”*

*“Exercise. Craft. Music.”*

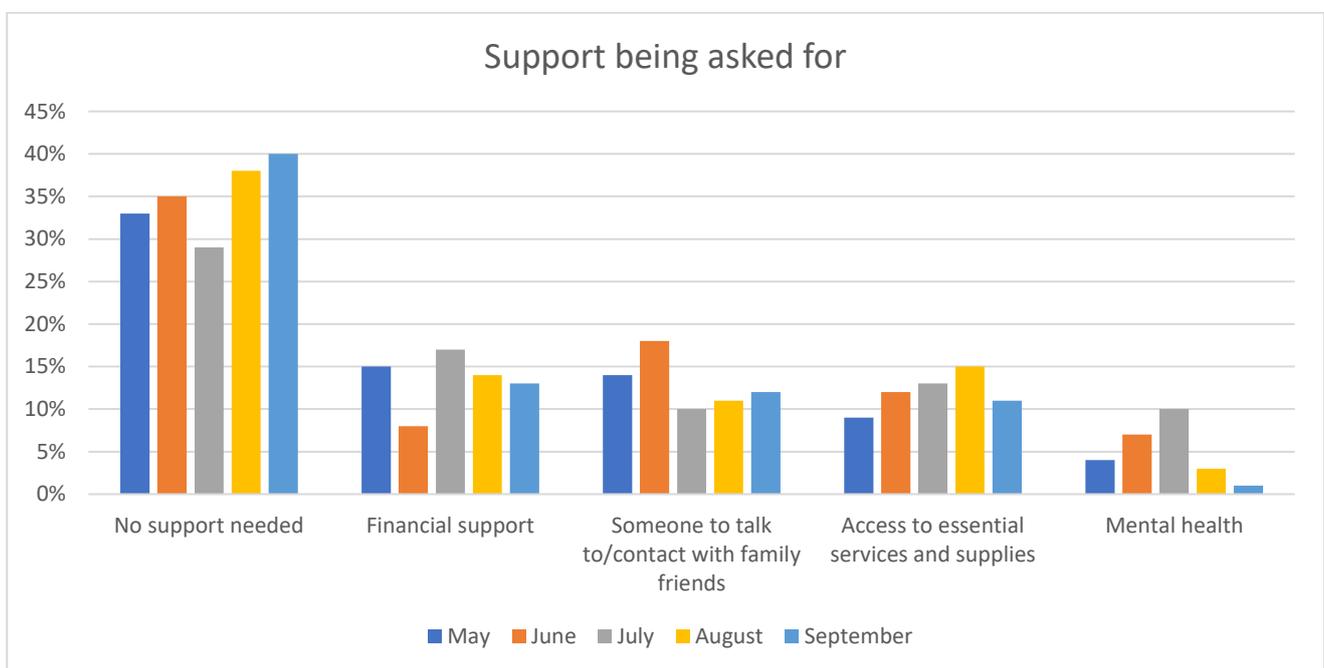
*“Daily walk, reading books, keeping connected with friends and family through Zoom, What's App, Facebook and the phone, having a job and studying my Masters. I have also joined the Kingston library book and writing groups.”*

*“Making sure I utilise the one-hour daily exercise. I go for a walk in the fresh air. Break my routine to take different routes. Talk with my family.”*

### Support being asked for

The highest proportion of people indicated they didn't need any support in from May to September. The proportion of respondents needing someone to talk to or contact with family and friends peaked in June with 18% of respondents identifying this as a need.

|  | May        | June       | July       | August    | Sept      |
|--|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| No support needed                                  | 33%        | 35%        | 29%        | 38%       | 40%       |
| Financial support                                  | 15%        | 8%         | 17%        | 14%       | 13%       |
| Someone to talk to/contact with family and friends | 14%        | 18%        | 10%        | 11%       | 12%       |
| Access to essential services and supplies          | 9%         | 12%        | 13%        | 15%       | 11%       |
| Mental health                                      | 4%         | 7%         | 10%        | 3%        | 1%        |
| <i>Number of respondents</i>                       | <i>183</i> | <i>118</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>95</i> | <i>92</i> |



*“The social support of visiting a family member /friend or having a family member /friend visit not allowed, making it very difficult.”*

*“Understanding from workplace (young child at home) Mental health support (using additional 10 Medicare psychology appointments)”*

*“Online health services, good community communication and morale”*

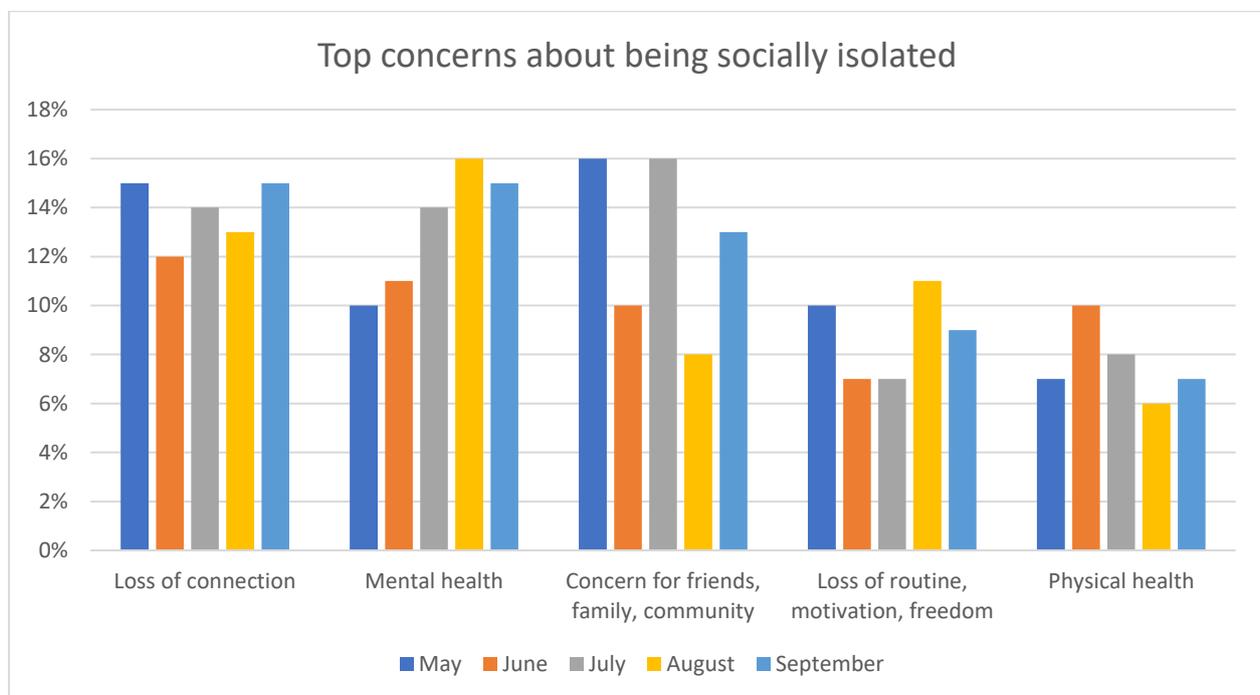
*“Financial help with paying utilities being a single income household.”*

*“Support for sufferers of Mental Health, as someone with Autism as well as clinical depression and anxiety I know the importance of things like welfare checks etc.”*

### Top concerns about being socially isolated

Loss of connections with social networks was the most frequently cited concern about being socially isolated between May to September, with mental health concerns increasing between May and August. Concern for friends, family or community was reported at the highest frequency during May and July.

|  | May        | June       | July       | August     | Sept       |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Loss of connection with social network         | 15%        | 12%        | 14%        | 13%        | 15%        |
| Mental health                                  | 10%        | 11%        | 14%        | 16%        | 15%        |
| Concern for friends, family or their community | 16%        | 10%        | 16%        | 8%         | 13%        |
| Loss of routine/motivation/freedom             | 10%        | 7%         | 7%         | 11%        | 9%         |
| Physical health                                | 7%         | 10%        | 8%         | 6%         | 7%         |
| <i>Number of respondents</i>                   | <i>508</i> | <i>320</i> | <i>412</i> | <i>287</i> | <i>261</i> |



*“There is no face to face contact with anyone else”*

*“Social anxiety worsened by isolation”*

*“Lack of contact with family and friends”*

*“Mental health deteriorating”*

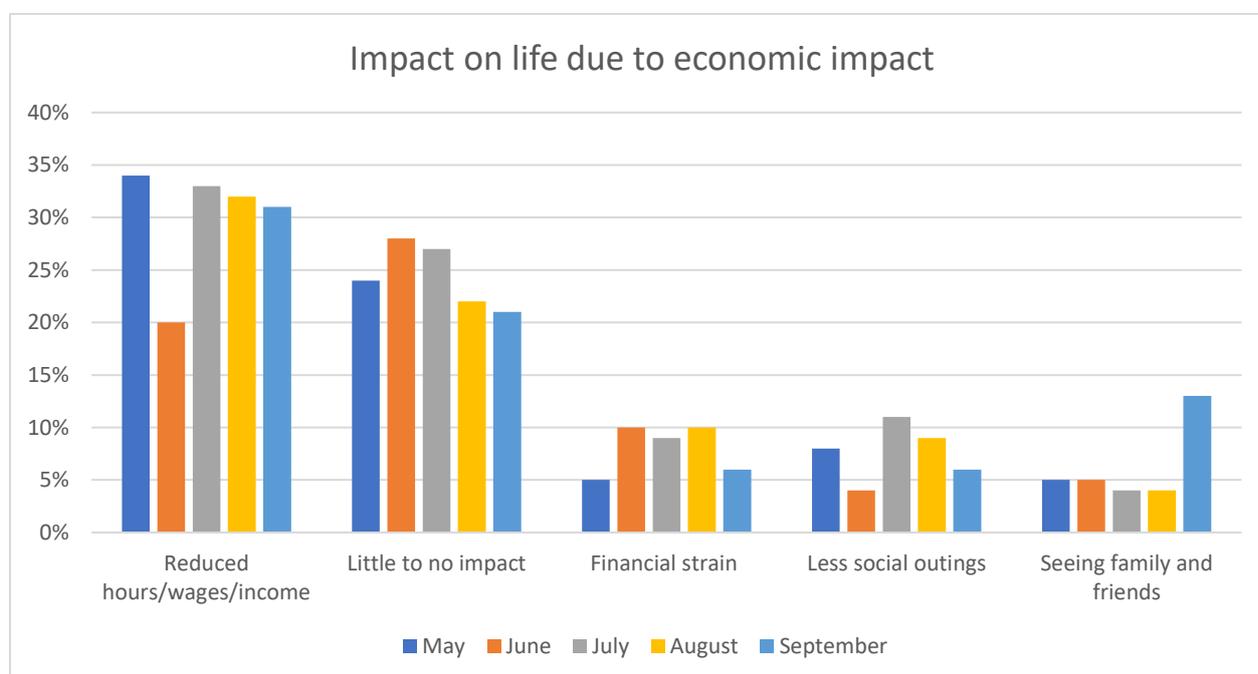
*“It contributes to reduced general motivation and energy - which affects my self-care/good nutrition habits.”*

*“I’ve lost my entire support network”*

## Impact on life due to economic impact of COVID-19

Most people report reduced hours/wages or loss of income as the greatest economic impact of COVID-19, followed by little to no impact. This remains consistent from May to September. Many people mention they have had to access their superannuation.

|                                    | May        | June       | July       | August    | Sept      |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Reduced hours/wages/loss of income | 34%        | 20%        | 33%        | 32%       | 31%       |
| Little to no impact                | 24%        | 28%        | 27%        | 22%       | 21%       |
| Financial strain on household      | 5%         | 10%        | 9%         | 10%       | 6%        |
| Less social outings                | 8%         | 4%         | 11%        | 9%        | 6%        |
| Seeing family and friends          | 5%         | 5%         | 4%         | 4%        | 13%       |
| <i>Number of respondents</i>       | <i>181</i> | <i>111</i> | <i>142</i> | <i>93</i> | <i>87</i> |



*"I have had to stop working due to the lack of childcare and having to home-school."*

*"No longer working for 6 weeks"*

*"My work life has become incredibly stressful and I am saving much more money, just in case I lose my job"*

*"less income from superannuation fund earnings"*

*" Worried that our superannuation will disappear or reduce...."*

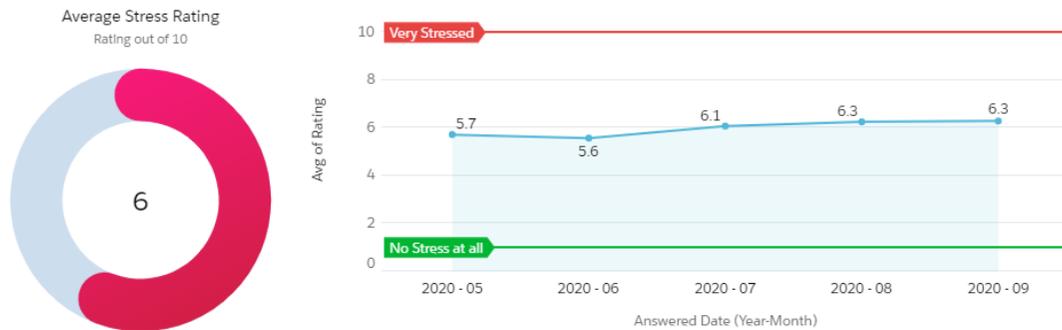
*"I've had a drop in wages and withdrawn twice from my super."*

## Appendix 1

### 1. Resilience

Overall the level of stress reported by respondents has remained relatively stable, showing a slight increase from July to September. The average stress rating out of 10 increased from 5.7 in May 2020 to 6.3 in September 2020. Respondents report experiencing a moderate level of stress over this time.

Peoples stress rating



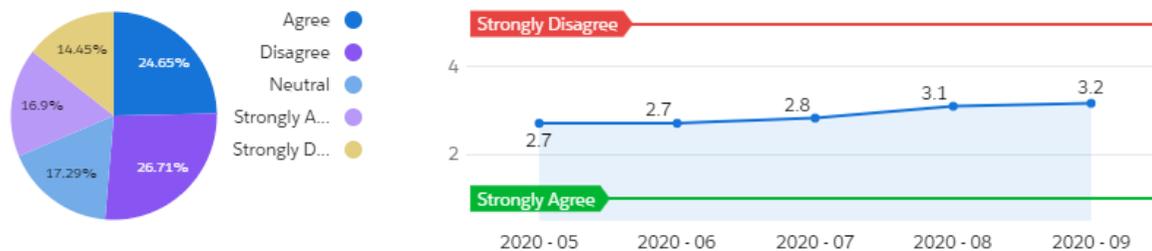
Stress rating of 7 or more out of 10 by month:

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 66% | 286             |
| June      | 67% | 318             |
| July      | 65% | 366             |
| August    | 65% | 204             |
| September | 66% | 345             |

### 2. Loneliness and Social Isolation

The proportion of respondents reporting they felt lonely has increased from May to September. The biggest increase was reported from August and September with 47% of people reporting feeling lonely compared to 36-40% in the previous months

I do not feel lonely during this time



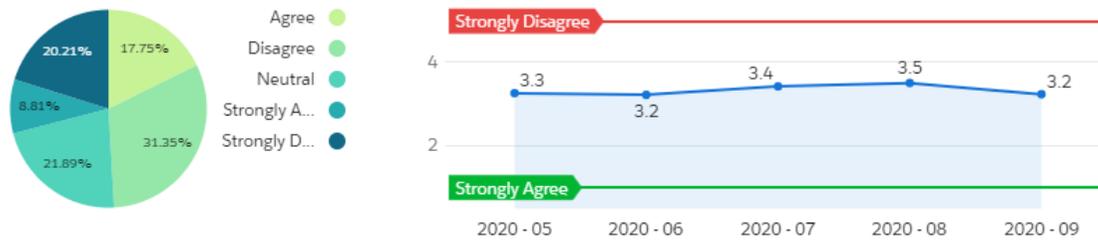
Percentage of people who felt lonely

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 36% | 286             |
| June      | 36% | 318             |
| July      | 40% | 366             |
| August    | 47% | 204             |
| September | 47% | 345             |

### 3. Anxiety and Fear around Mortality

The proportion of people worried about being infected with COVID-19 increased from May (49%) to July (56%) and August (57%). The biggest increase was reported in July with an 8% increase from the previous month.

I am not worried about being infected

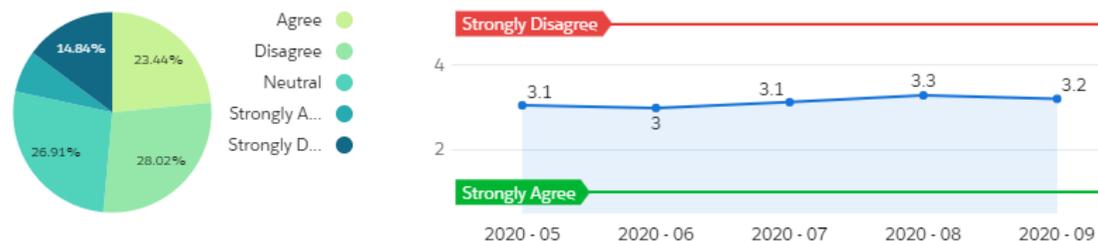


Percentage of people **worried** about being infected

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 49% | 286             |
| June      | 48% | 318             |
| July      | 56% | 366             |
| August    | 57% | 204             |
| September | 47% | 345             |

The proportion of respondents worried that they would not recover if infected with COVID-19 has increased from May (38%) to September (43%). The largest increase of 6% was from June to July.

I am confident that my family members and I would recover if we were to be infected



Percentage of people believed themselves and their family **would not recover** if infected

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 38% | 286             |
| June      | 36% | 318             |
| July      | 42% | 366             |
| August    | 46% | 204             |
| September | 43% | 345             |

From May – September a consistent proportion of respondents indicated they have access to accurate facts and information on when to self-quarantine. Only a small proportion do not have access to accurate information.

I have access to accurate facts and information on when to self-quarantine



Percentage of people who **did not have access** to accurate facts and information on when to self-quarantine

| Month     | %  | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|----|-----------------|
| May       | 3% | 286             |
| June      | 2% | 318             |
| July      | 4% | 366             |
| August    | 4% | 204             |
| September | 1% | 345             |

#### 4. Employment and Income

The proportion of people who felt their job was at risk has remained stable between May (28%) and September (25%), with a slight increase in June and July (31-32%).

My job is not at risk

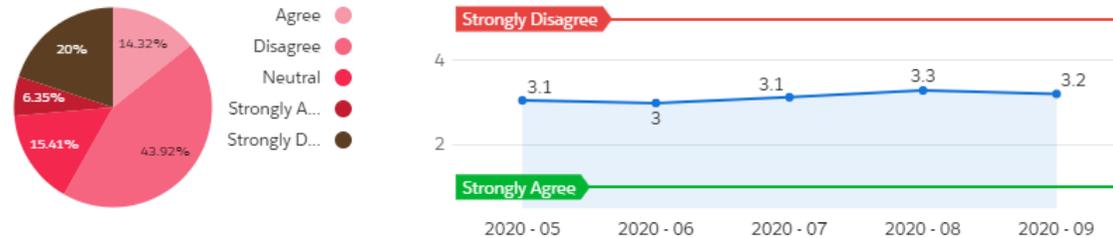


Percentage of people who felt their **job was at risk**

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 28% | 286             |
| June      | 31% | 318             |
| July      | 32% | 366             |
| August    | 27% | 204             |
| September | 25% | 345             |

A high proportion of people have indicated their spending habits have changed, this has increased by 11% from May to September. For many this is reflective of a loss or reduction in wages/income and increasing household costs, for others this represents savings due to retail and travel restrictions.

### My spending habits have not changed



### Percentage of people whose spending habits **have** changed

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 67% | 286             |
| June      | 64% | 318             |
| July      | 67% | 366             |
| August    | 70% | 204             |
| September | 78% | 345             |

Most respondents (56%) agree or strongly agree that they can continue providing for their family, this has remained consistent from May to June.

### I am confident that I can continue providing for my family

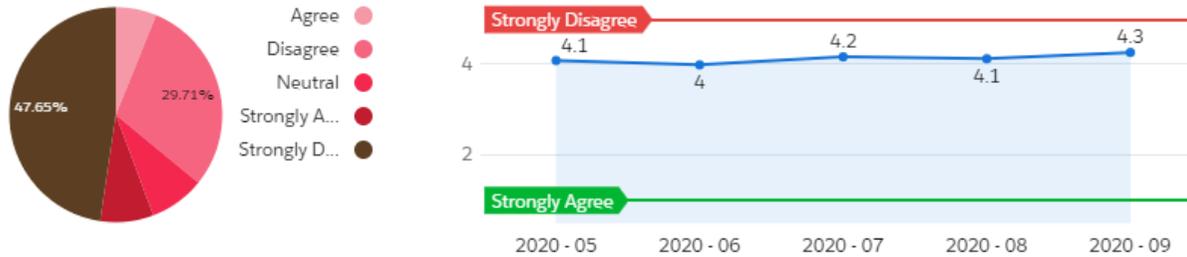


### Percentage of people confident that they are **unable** to continue providing for their families

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 16% | 286             |
| June      | 13% | 318             |
| July      | 14% | 366             |
| August    | 14% | 204             |
| September | 15% | 345             |

Respondents have consistently reported a high level of concern about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, increasing from May (80%) to September (85%).

### I am not worried about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy



### Percentage of people **worried about the impact** of COVID on the economy

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 80% | 286             |
| June      | 78% | 318             |
| July      | 83% | 366             |
| August    | 82% | 204             |
| September | 85% | 345             |

### 5. Access to Basic Needs and Services (e.g. essential items, medical services)

Most people have reported confidence in continuing to afford food and supplies between May and September. A smaller proportion were worried they would not be able to afford basic supplies, this increased from 5% in May to 9% in September.

### I am confident that I can continue to afford food and supplies



### Percentage of people who are **not confident** they can continue to afford food and supplies.

| Month     | %  | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|----|-----------------|
| May       | 5% | 286             |
| June      | 7% | 318             |
| July      | 6% | 366             |
| August    | 9% | 204             |
| September | 9% | 345             |

A small proportion of people report being worried that their household supplies will run out, the largest increase of 6% was between May (3%) and August (9%).

### I am confident that my household will not run out of food and supplies



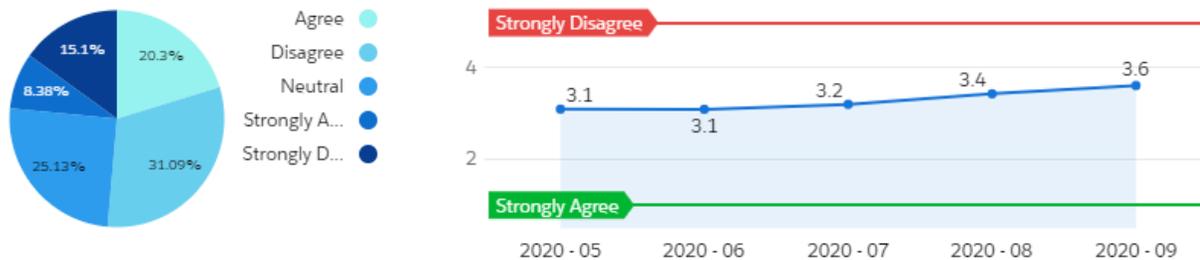
### Percentage of people who are worried that household supplies will run out

| Month     | %  | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|----|-----------------|
| May       | 3% | 286             |
| June      | 4% | 318             |
| July      | 6% | 366             |
| August    | 9% | 204             |
| September | 5% | 345             |

## 6. Sense of Community and Safety

The proportion of people who believe social distancing has had a negative impact on their community has increased from 43% in May to 63% in September.

### Social distancing has not had a negative impact on my community



### Percentage of people who believe social distancing has had a negative impact on their community

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 43% | 286             |
| June      | 44% | 318             |
| July      | 48% | 366             |
| August    | 53% | 204             |
| September | 63% | 345             |

A consistent proportion of respondents between May and July felt that vulnerable members of the community were not well supported, this increased from 19% in May to 24% in September.

Vulnerable members of my community are well-supported during this time



Percentage of people that feel vulnerable members of the community were **not well supported**

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 19% | 286             |
| June      | 17% | 318             |
| July      | 20% | 366             |
| August    | 28% | 204             |
| September | 24% | 345             |

Feeling safe to go outside or to the shops has remained relatively stable from May to September with 32% to 44% of people not feeling safe going out. The proportion of people not feeling safe increased by 10% between May to June. In September 30% of respondents did not feel safe going out.

I feel safe when I go outside / to the shops during this time



Percentage of people that **did not feel safe** going out

| Month     | %   | Respondents (n) |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|
| May       | 32% | 286             |
| June      | 42% | 318             |
| July      | 41% | 366             |
| August    | 44% | 204             |
| September | 30% | 345             |

## References

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- <sup>i</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, Victorian Population Health Survey 2017, <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/population-health-systems/health-status-of-victorians/survey-data-and-reports/victorian-population-health-survey/victorian-population-health-survey-2017>
- <sup>ii</sup> Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016
- <sup>iii</sup> Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016
- <sup>iv</sup> .id consulting 2016, City of Kingston community profile, 2016 ABS Census Household internet connection <https://profile.id.com.au/kingston/internet-connection>
- <sup>v</sup> Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016
- <sup>vi</sup> .id consulting 2020, City of Kingston economic profile, COVID-19 Economic Outlook Tool <http://economy.id.com.au/kingston/covid19>
- <sup>vii</sup> Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016
- <sup>viii</sup> Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016