COVID – 19

Report 3 - December 2020

The following report provides a snapshot of the data collected between **October and November 2020** and compares it to the previous months**.**

The survey has been designed to measure community perceived social impact of COVID-19 in Kingston across 6 domains:

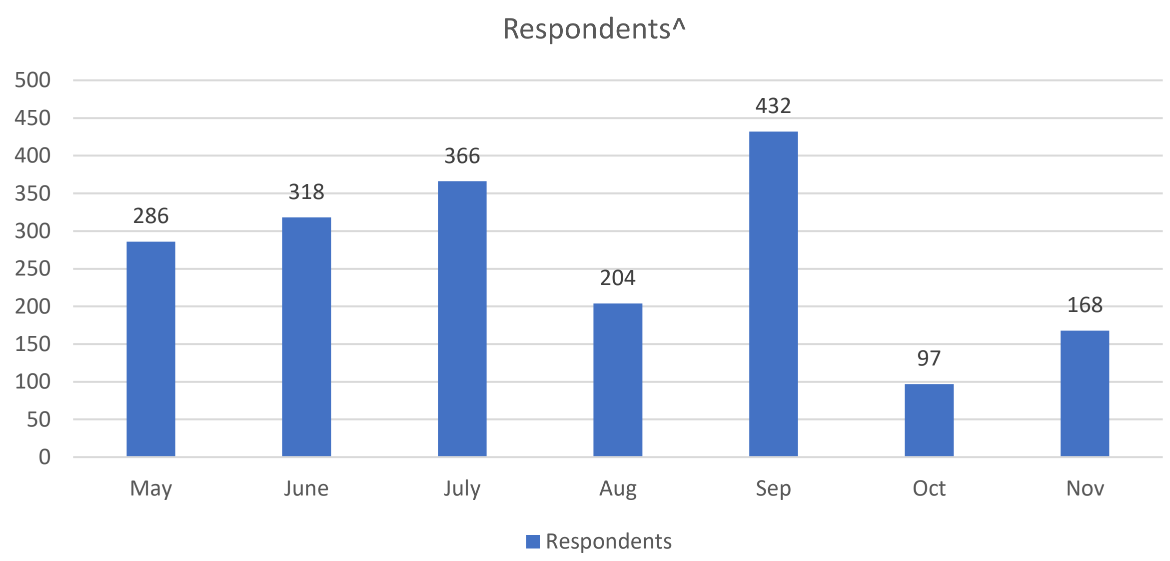
1. Resilience
2. Loneliness and social isolation
3. Anxiety and fear around mortality
4. Employment and income
5. Access to basic needs and services
6. Sense of community and safety

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*:

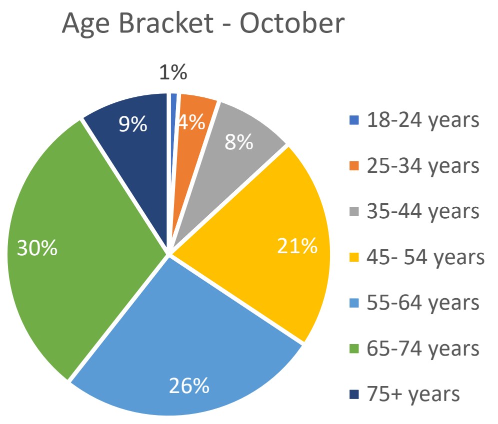
- Greater than 70% report a rating of 5 or more
- 30-69% report a rating of 5 or more
- Less than 30% report a rating of 5 or more

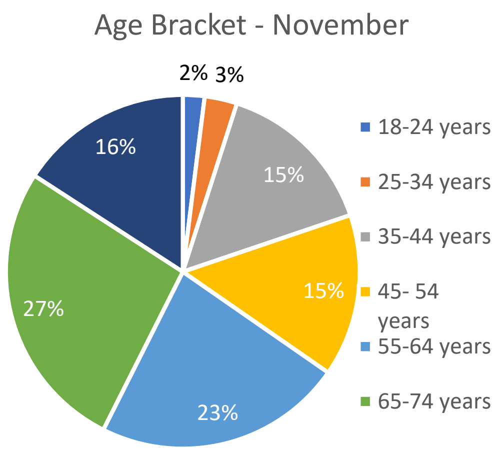
**The higher the rating the higher the level of negative impact experienced.*

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.



^Respondents may differ per month, results are presented for comparison purposes only.



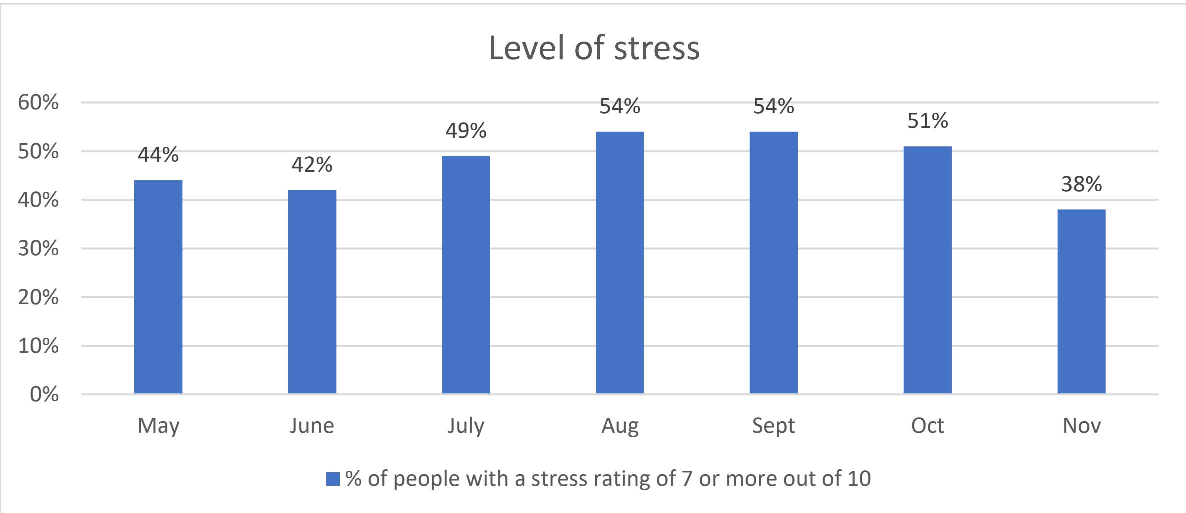


Key findings – additional graphical data is presented in Appendix 1

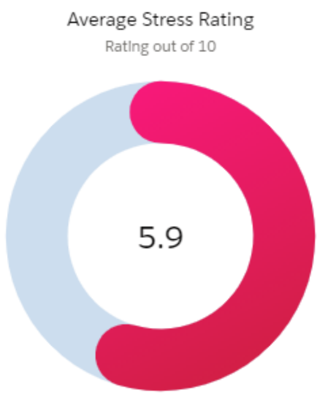
1. Resilience:

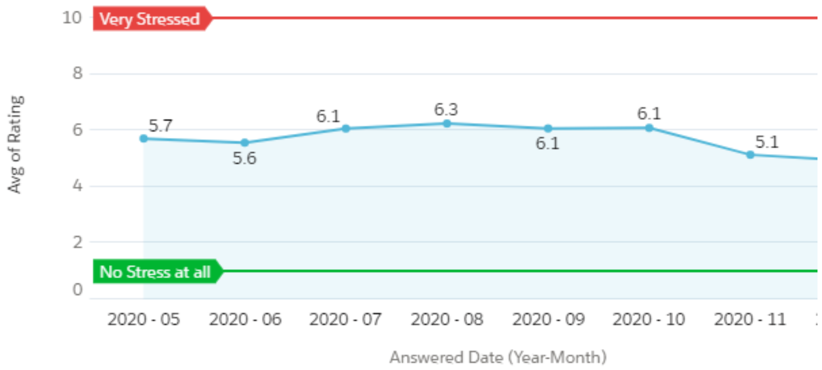
- Stress ratings increased in line with the COVID-19 second wave and increased restrictions in Metropolitan Melbourne.
- The decrease in stress ratings in November is likely to be influenced by the easing of restrictions; and low COVID-19 case numbers.

The Victorian Population Health Survey 2017[i] 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 COVID-19 in August and September and higher than in November 2020



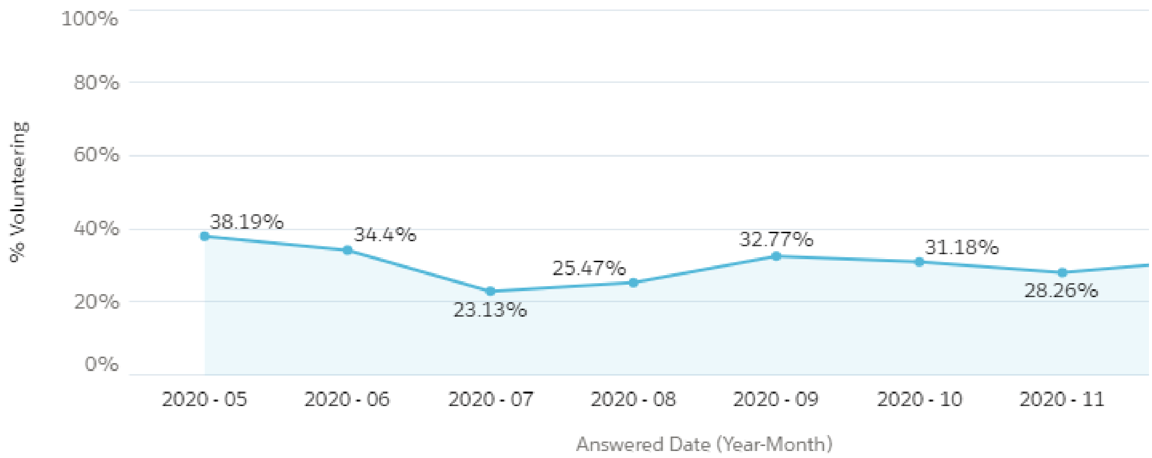
Peoples stress rating





- The average stress ratings per month show the highest average stress level was in August however it has remained relatively consistent from July to October ranging from 6.1 - 6.3
- The lowest average stress rating was in November with 5.1

Are you currently volunteering or helping other members of your community?

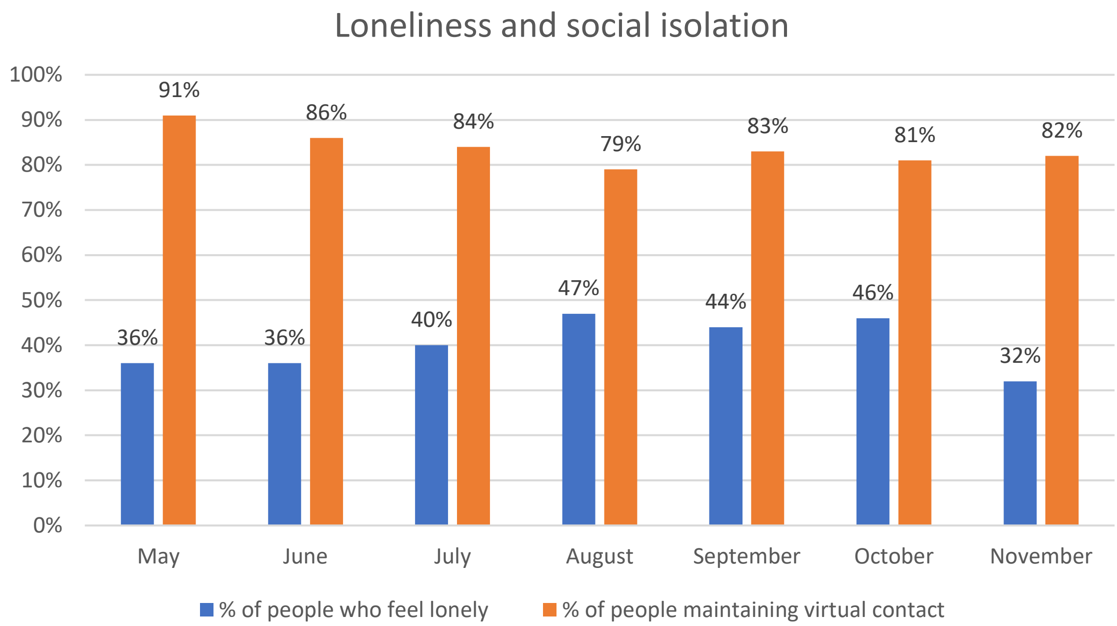


- Volunteering or helping others in the community declined between July and August before increasing in September and October
- In October 31% of people volunteered with a slight decline in November with 28%.

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016[ii] identified that 28% of people volunteer regularly, on average this is a similar rate as during COVID-19. There was a higher proportion of people in the 2016 survey who reported playing an active role in their community (43%).

2. **Loneliness and social isolation**

- The proportion of respondents reporting they felt lonely was highest in August (47%), this level was maintained through September (44%) and October (46%) before declining to 32% in November
- Virtual contact with friends and family remained consistently high from May to November, with 79-91% of people maintaining regular virtual contact with friends
- 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 November 18% of people were not maintaining virtual contact with family and friends.



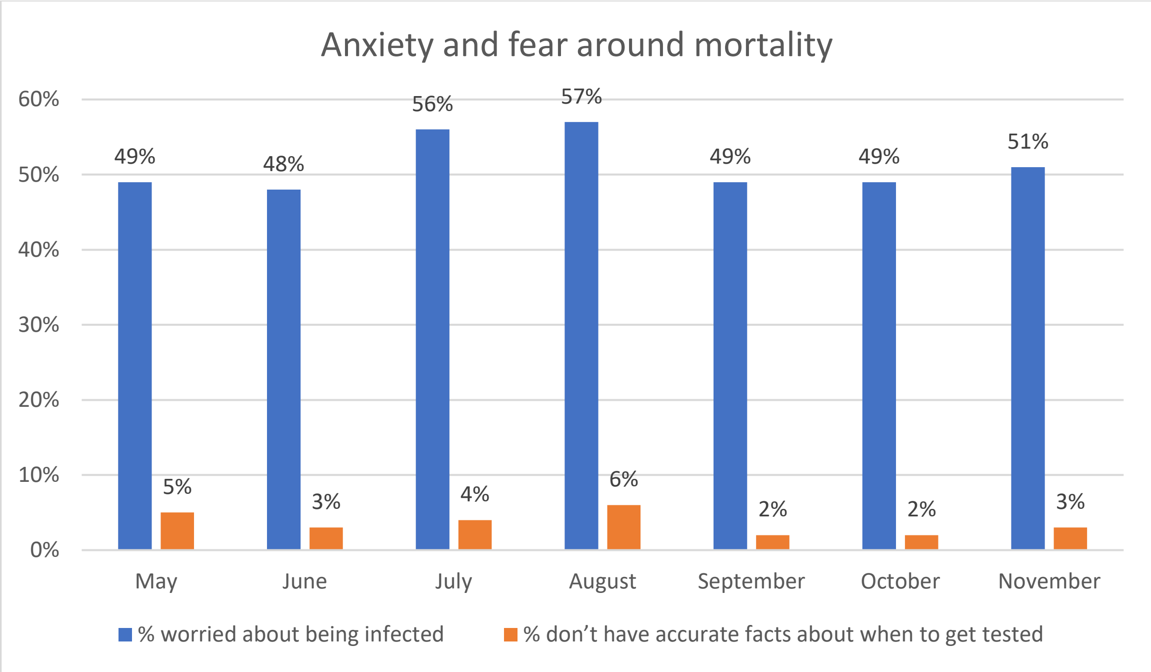
The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016[iii] identified that 14.6% of people sometimes felt isolated and out of contact with other people, this is lower than during COVID-19.

The 2016 census[iv] 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 the highest levels in July (56%) and August (57%) and then declined through September (49%) to November (51%)
- Confidence that family members or themselves would not recover if infected was highest through August (46%), September (45%) and October (44%), compared to May (38%), June (36%) and July (42%).
- In November there were 41% of people that did not have confidence that they or their family would recover if infected
- Most people have had access to accurate facts and information on when to get tested ranging from 95% in May to 97% in November

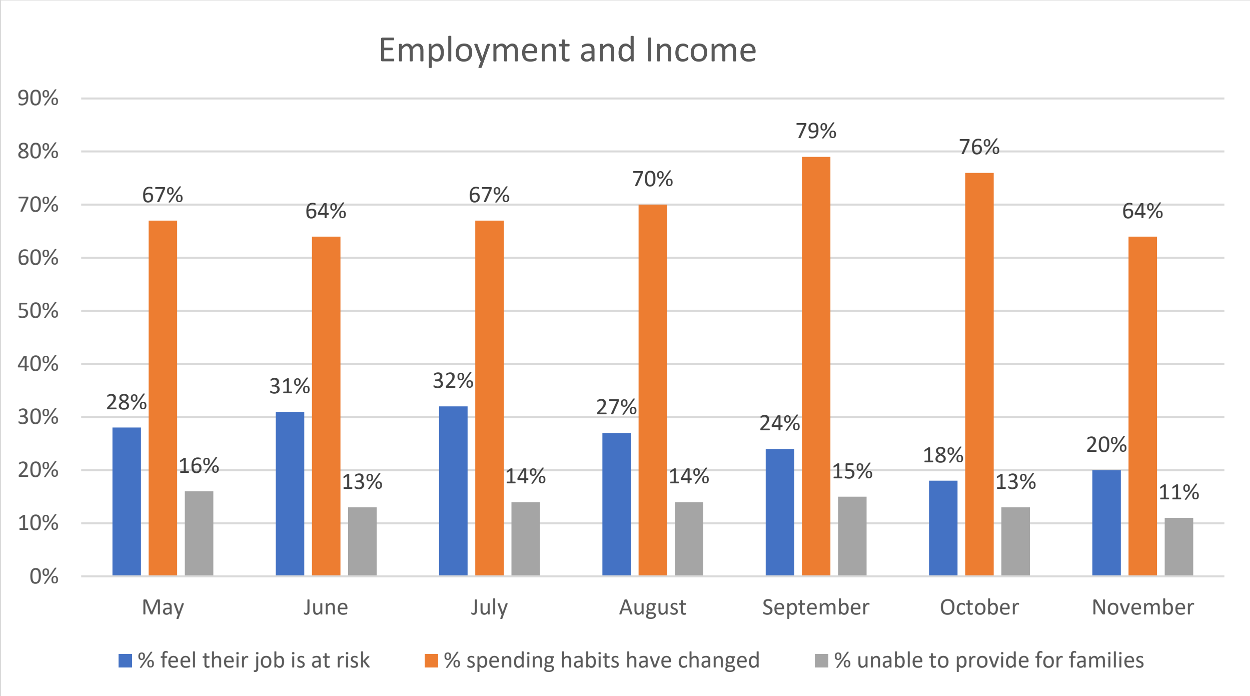
The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016[v] identified that 72.4% of people could easily find information on local services, and 91% have access to a local GP.



4. Employment and Income

- The proportion of people who felt their job was at risk has continued to decline since reaching a peak in July (32%). In October and November there were 18-20% of people who felt their job was at risk
- The proportion of people reporting their spending habits having changed increased from 67% in May to 79% in September, before declining again through October (76%) and November (64%). This is the lowest it has been since June.
- Most people have remained confident that they can continue providing for their family, with the proportion of people reporting they are unable to continuing to decline from May (16%) to November (11%), this is the lowest it has been.
- The proportion of people concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy has remained consistent on average from May to November with the majority (80%) reporting they are worried about the impact.

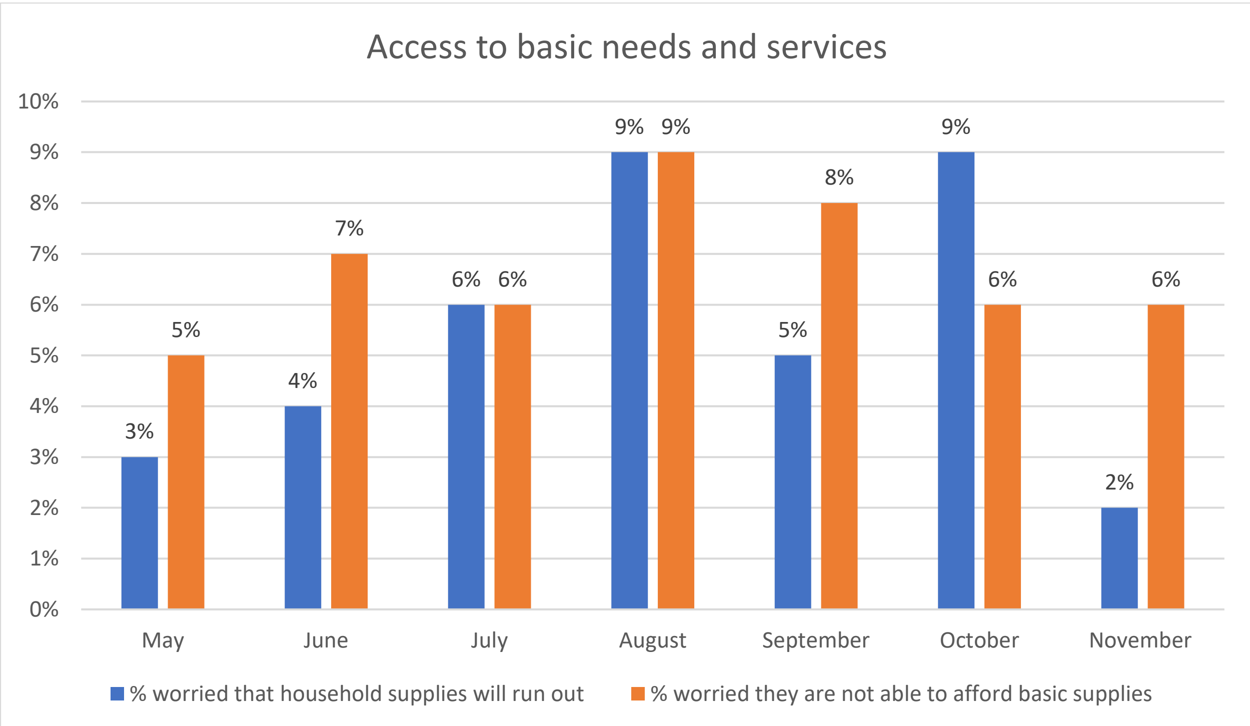
Economy .id[vi] forecast that in the September quarter, without the JobKeeper scheme there will be a loss of local jobs in Construction (-2,161 local jobs); Accommodation and Food Services (-2,022 jobs); and Retail Trade (-1,395 local jobs). In Kingston the impact on employed residents is higher than the local job market, with a decline in jobs of -12%, or -16.9% without JobKeeper.



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 from May (3%) to August (9%). This declined in September to 5% and increased to 9% in October
- In November most people were confident their household supplies would not run out with just 2% of people worried about this
- The proportion of people worried that they will not be able to afford basic supplies increased from May (5%) to September (9%) and has steadily declined to 6% by November.

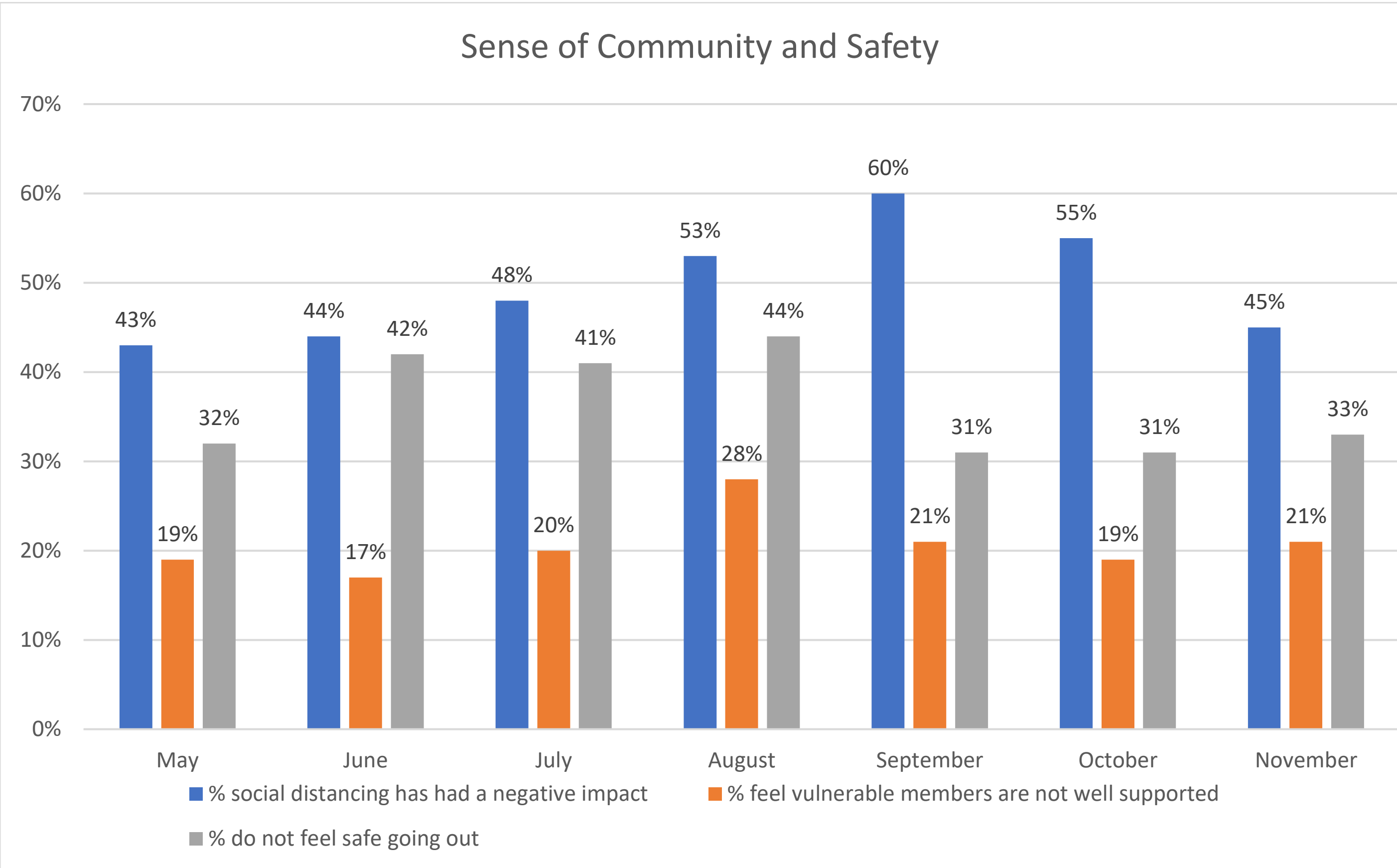
The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016[vii] identified that 92% of people have access to fresh/affordable food to meet their household's needs.



6. Sense of Community and Safety

- The proportion of people who believe social distancing has had a negative impact on their community has decreased since reaching a peak in September (60%) and has declined to 45% in November
- A feeling of safety when people go outside or to the shops increased from 32% in May to 44% in September before declining to 33% in November
- Throughout the pandemic respondents have felt vulnerable members of their community were well supported. In November 21% felt that vulnerable members of the community were not well supported.

The Kingston Public Health and Wellbeing Survey 2016[viii] 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.



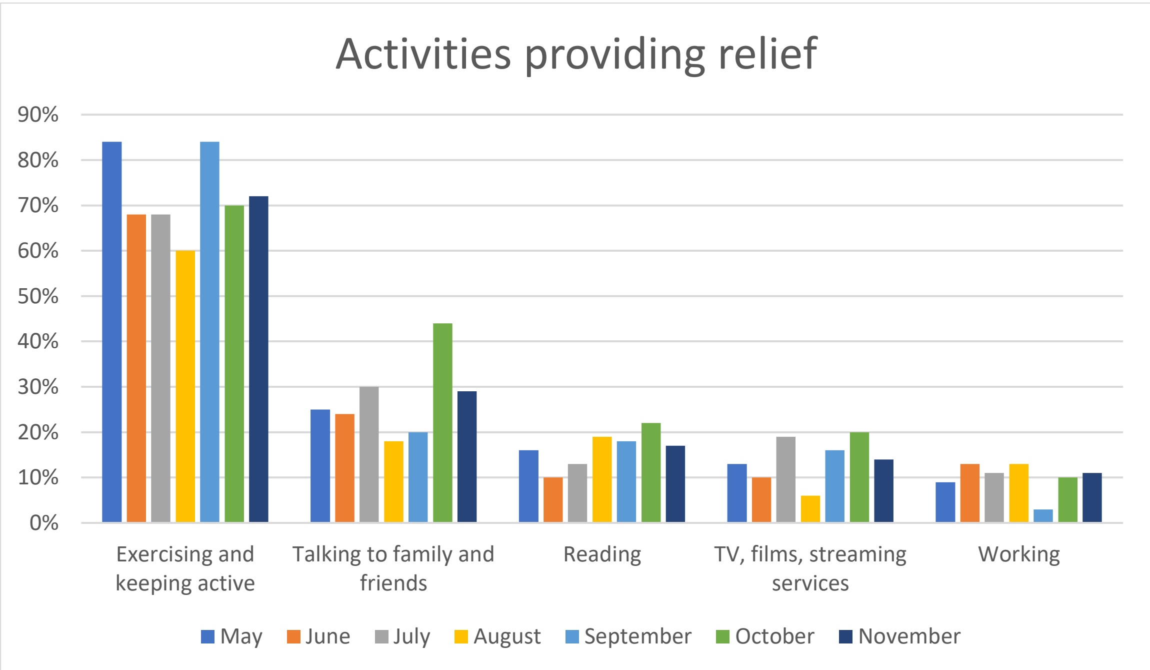
Free text responses

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 November most respondents were keeping physically active and exercising to provide relief from COVID-19 and restrictions. The highest rates of exercise and keeping active were during both May and September. The rates increased the most from August to September which coincides with the curfew restrictions implemented in Melbourne during this time.

	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
Exercising and keeping active	84%	68%	68%	60%	84%	70%	72%
Talking to family and friends	25%	24%	30%	18%	20%	44%	35%
Reading	16%	10%	13%	19%	18%	22%	17%
TV, films, streaming services	13%	10%	19%	6%	16%	20%	14%
Working	9%	13%	11%	13%	3%	10%	11%
Number of respondents	*194*	*122*	*158*	*104*	*96*	*94*	*93*



"Walking/exercising with a different friend each day"

"Watching TV, going on Facebook, Zoom, doing household chores, participating in internet events, PRAYING."

"Listening to podcasts because it feels like hanging out with friends when you're alone"

"Gardening, walking, exercise classes and speaking face- to - face with friends and family, where allowable, which is hardly possible."

Daily fitness walk; pursuing interests (playing instruments); garden maintenance;

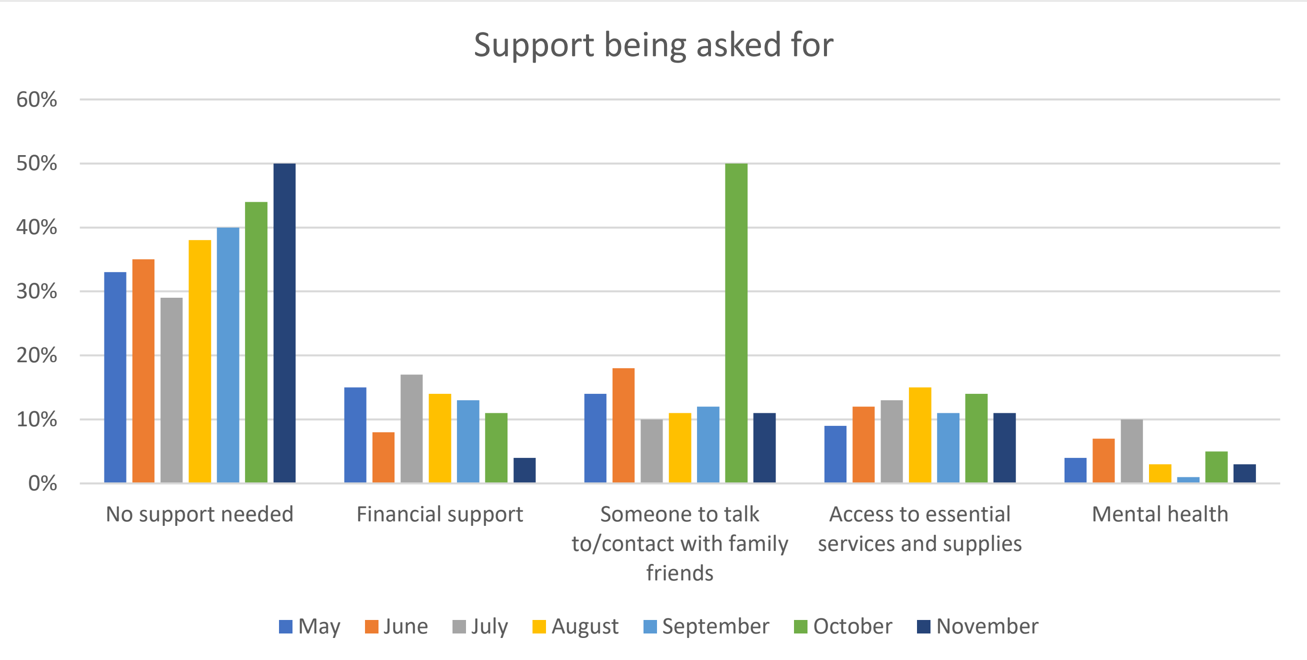
Limited contact with local friends. Facetime contact with distant family. reading and other personal home interests.

Support being asked for

Between May and November most people have consistently indicated that they did not need any support. The rate of people indicating this has steadily increased over this time with the lowest proportion in July (29%) and the highest in November (50%).

The proportion of respondents needing someone to talk to or contact with family and friends peaked in November (50%). The next highest proportion of people needing someone to talk to was in June with 18% of respondents identifying this as a need. The need for financial support has decreased from 15% in May to 4% in November.

	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
No support needed	33%	35%	29%	38%	40%	44%	50%
Financial support	15%	8%	17%	14%	13%	11%	4%
Someone to talk to/contact with family and friends	14%	18%	10%	11%	12%	50%	11%
Access to essential services and supplies	9%	12%	13%	15%	11%	14%	11%
Mental health	4%	7%	10%	3%	1%	5%	3%
Number of respondents	*183*	*118*	*155*	*95*	*92*	*88*	*92*



"Financial support, emotional support, contact with others"

"Social connection and mental health support"

"Online health services, good community communication and morale"

"Financial. I am unable to work at my Casual job and/or have any regular shifts and I am not entitled to any Government benefits"

"Nil supports but a sense of community connection is important"

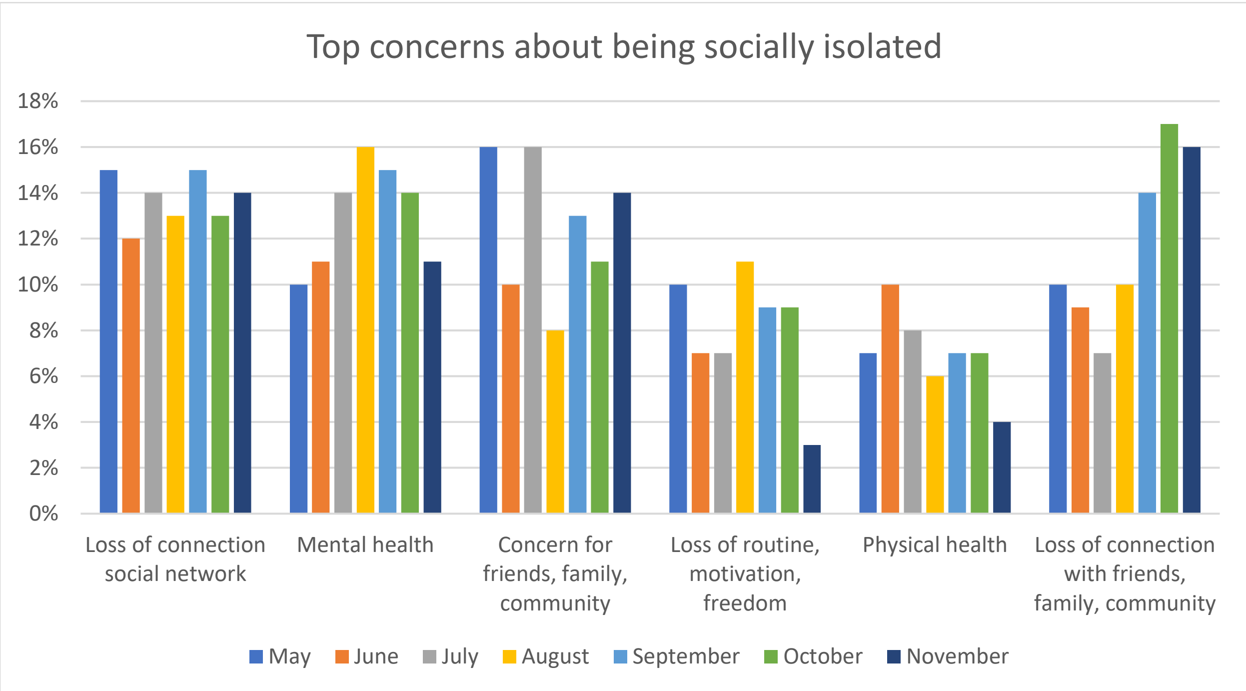
"Buying food and things needed at home, attending medical appointments"

"Connection with friends and family"

Top concerns about being socially isolated

Loss of connection with social networks, concern for friends and family and mental health have remained consistently the most cited concerns by respondents between May and November. The loss of connection with extended family increased the most from August (10%) to November (16%) which may reflect the impact of ongoing travel restrictions in Melbourne.

	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
Loss of connection with social network	15%	12%	14%	13%	15%	13%	14%
Mental health/feeling lonely	10%	11%	14%	16%	15%	14%	11%
Concern for friends, family or their community	16%	10%	16%	8%	13%	11%	14%
Loss of routine/motivation/ freedom	10%	7%	7%	11%	9%	9%	3%
Physical health	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	7%	4%
Loss of connection with extended family	10%	9%	7%	10%	14%	17%	16%
Number of respondents	*508*	*320*	*412*	*287*	*261*	*250*	*221*



"Not having things to look forward to"

"I feel forgotten"

"Depression increasing"

"Not being able to see immediate family 6km away"

"My children's wellbeing without seeing their friends

"Mental health deterioration"

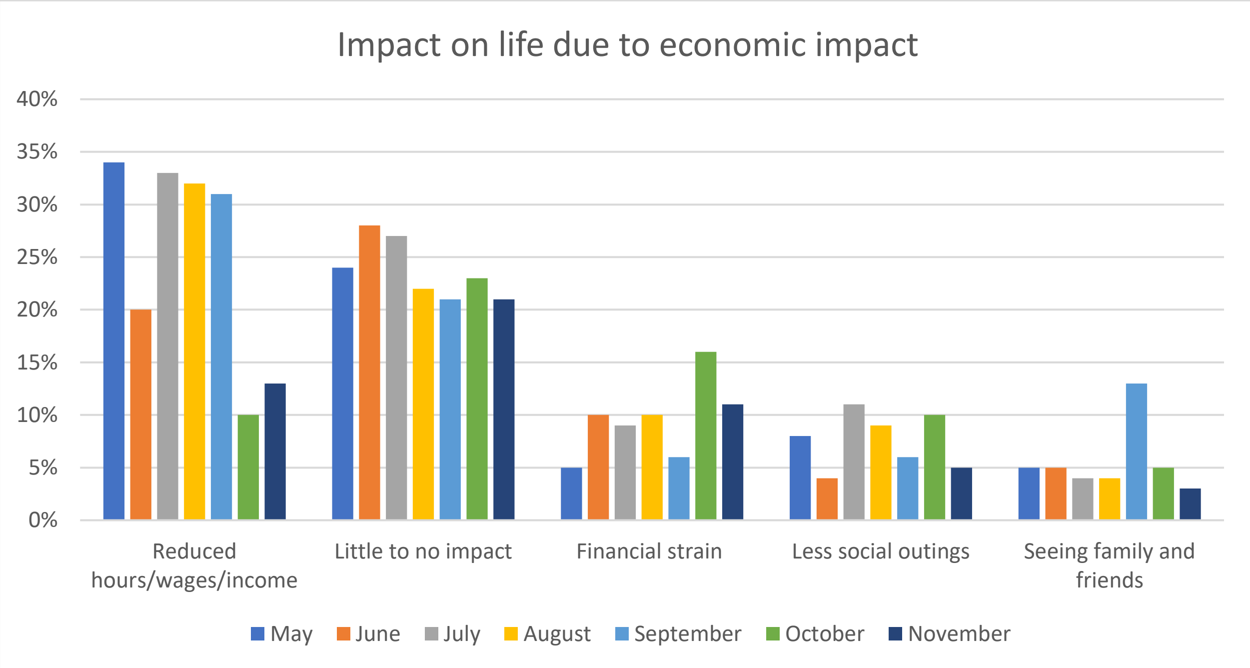
"Gets very lonely as I am used to being out and about a lot before this virus."

"My sanity - these ongoing Lockdowns - especially Stage 4 has really messed with my mental health and wellbeing. I am angry, frustrated and sad"

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 between May and September before declining by 20% in October and November. The second most cited response was of little to no impact which ranged from 21-28% throughout May-Nov. Many people note they have had to access their superannuation. Financial strain on the household increased to its highest point in October to 16%.

	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
Reduced hours/wages/loss of income	34%	20%	33%	32%	31%	10%	13%
Little to no impact	24%	28%	27%	22%	21%	23%	21%
Financial strain on household	5%	10%	9%	10%	6%	16%	11%
Less social outings	8%	4%	11%	9%	6%	10%	5%
Seeing family and friends	5%	5%	4%	4%	13%	5%	3%
Number of respondents	*181*	*111*	*142*	*93*	*87*	*80*	*80*



"Superannuation has been hit therefore my assets have been impacted and my lifestyle has too"

"Our business has experienced a significant drop in turnover"

"Loss of income not seeing family and having higher risk children"

"Less hours, part time admin role suspended, less discretionary spending"

"Had to support family members who cannot work due to restrictions, with financial help. Lack of goods and services available"

"I am having to accommodate an adult child who has had to return home to live"

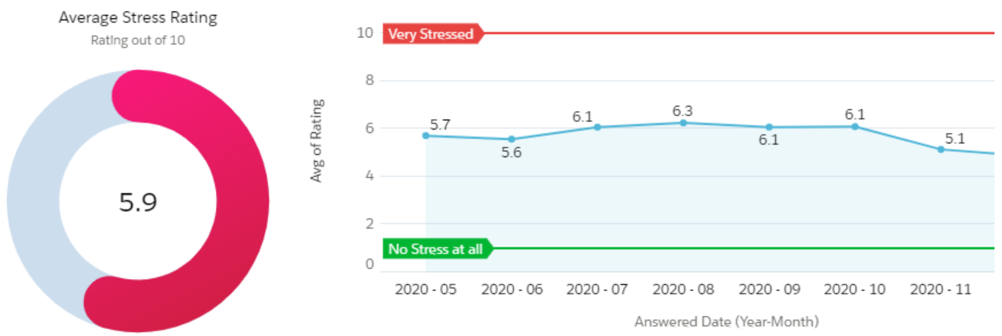
"I feel like my life has been put 'on hold' as I am not free to do everything I like to do (e.g. join a tennis club, visit elderly relatives who live well outside a 5 or 10km radius from my home)"

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 has declined from 6.1 in October to 5.1 in November. Respondents report experiencing a moderate level of stress over this time however this has declined significantly from October to November

Peoples stress rating



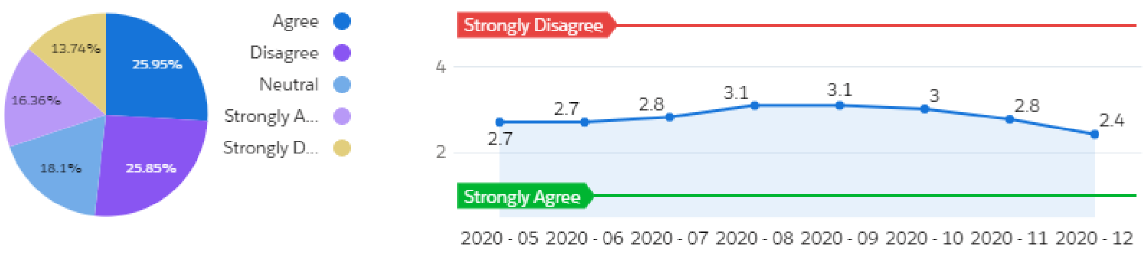
Stress rating of 7 or more out of 10 by month:

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	44%	286
June	42%	318
July	49%	366
August	54%	204
September	54%	432
October	51%	97
November	38%	168

2. Loneliness and Social Isolation

The proportion of respondents reporting they felt lonely increased from May to September (44%) and has declined steadily through to November (32%).

I do not feel lonely during this time



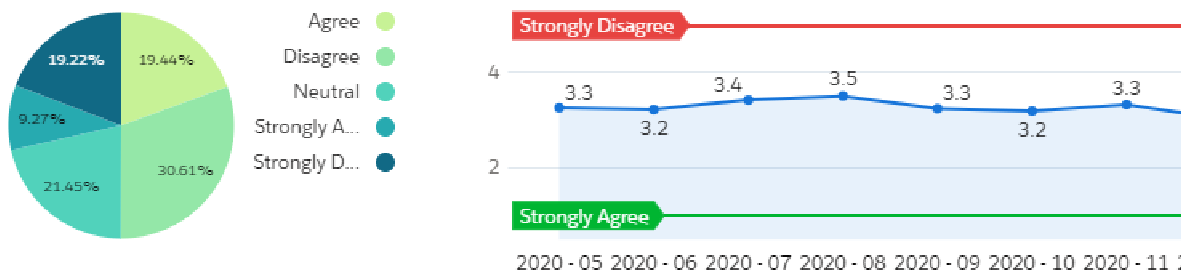
Percentage of people who felt **lonely**

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	36%	286
June	36%	318
July	40%	366
August	47%	204
September	44%	432
October	46%	97
November	32%	168

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%). It has decreased to 51% in November.

I am not worried about being infected

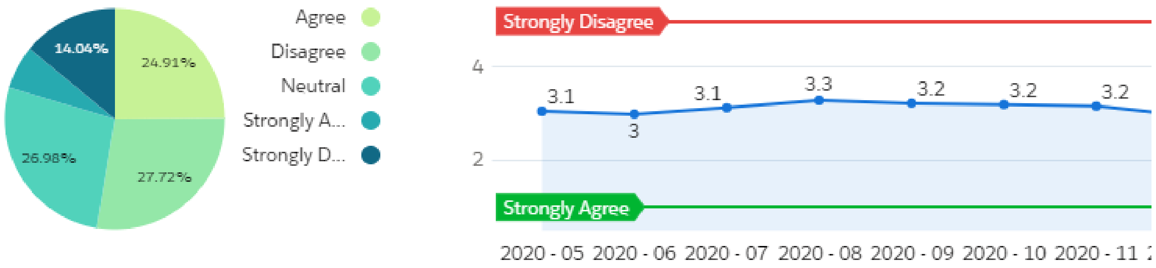


Percentage of people **worried** about being infected

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	49%	286
June	48%	318
July	56%	366
August	57%	204
September	49%	432
October	49%	97
November	51%	168

The proportion of respondents worried that they would not recover if infected with COVID-19 increased from May (38%) to September (43%). The largest increase of 6% was from June to July. The proportion of respondents worried they would not recover has declined to 41% in November.

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

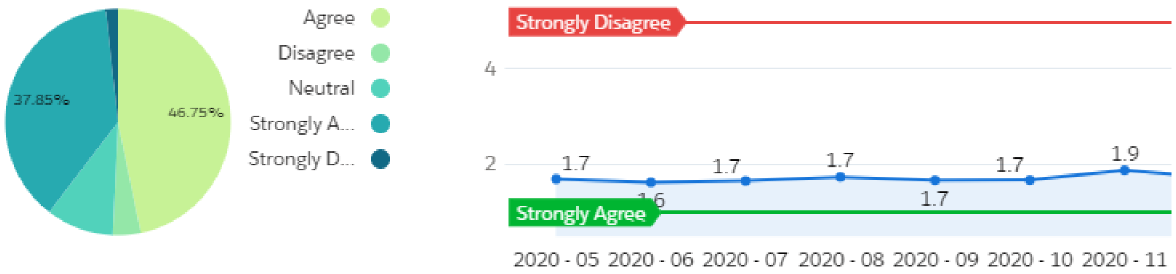


Percentage of people believed themselves and their family **would not recover** if infected

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	38%	286
June	36%	318
July	42%	366
August	46%	204
September	45%	432
October	44%	97
November	41%	168

From May –November 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



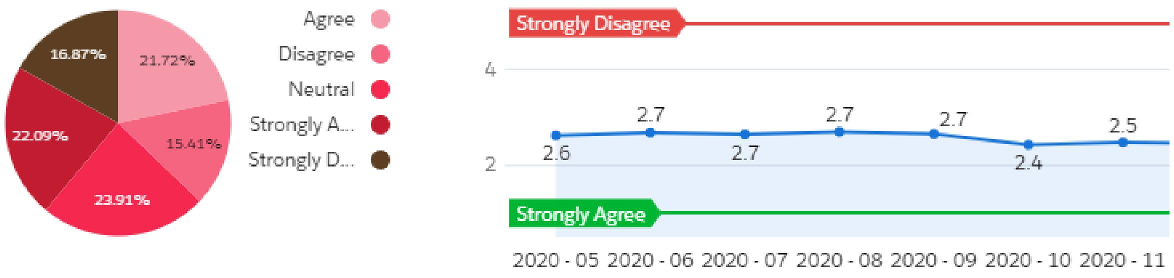
Percentage of people who **did not have access** to accurate facts and information on when to self-quarantine

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	3%	286
June	2%	318
July	4%	366
August	4%	204
September	1%	432
October	1%	97
November	4%	168

4. Employment and Income

The proportion of people who felt their job was at risk remained stable from May (28%) to August (27%) before declining form September (24%) through to November (20%)

My job is not at risk

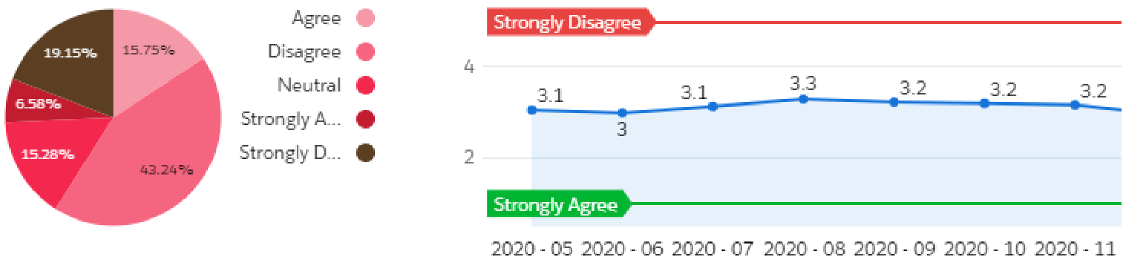


Percentage of people who felt their **job was at risk**

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	28%	286
June	31%	318
July	32%	366
August	27%	204
September	24%	432
October	18%	97
November	20%	168

A high proportion of people have indicated their spending habits have changed, this increased by 13% 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. The proportion of people whose spending habits have changed has declined by 12% from October (76%) to November (64%).

My spending habits have not changed

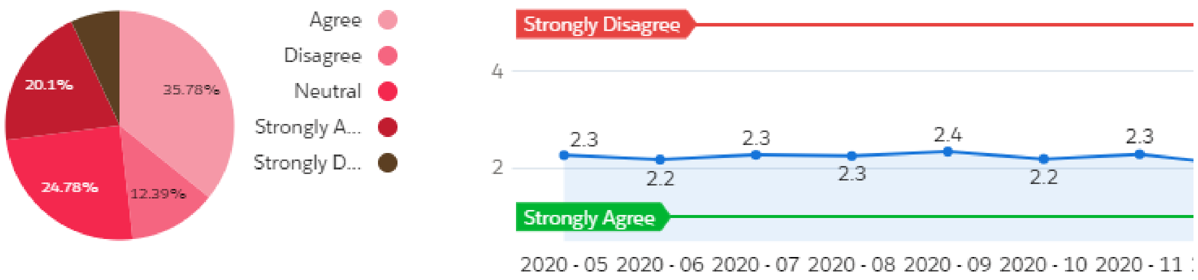


Percentage of people whose **spending habits** have changed

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	67%	286
June	64%	318
July	67%	366
August	70%	204
September	79%	432
October	76%	97
November	64%	168

Most respondents (56%) agree or strongly agree that they can continue providing for their family, this has remained consistent from May to November, with 11% in November indicating they are not confident they can continue to provide for their family.

I am confident that I can continue providing for my family

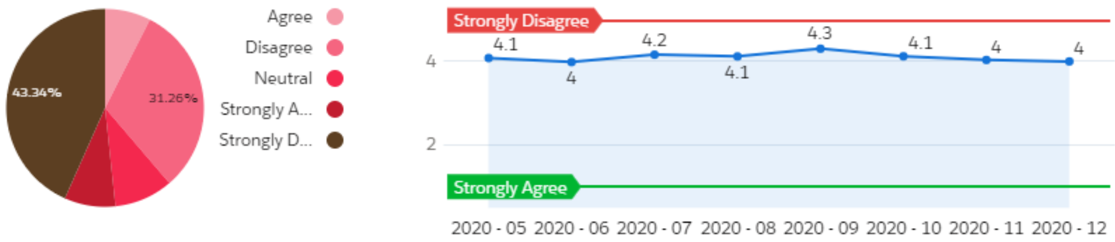


Percentage of people confident that they are **unable** to continue **providing for their families**

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	16%	286
June	13%	318
July	14%	366
August	14%	204
September	15%	432
October	13%	97
November	11%	168

Respondents have consistently reported a high level of concern about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, increasing from May (80%) to September (84%). Concern about the impact on the economy has remained consistent however has declined slightly to 78% in November.

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



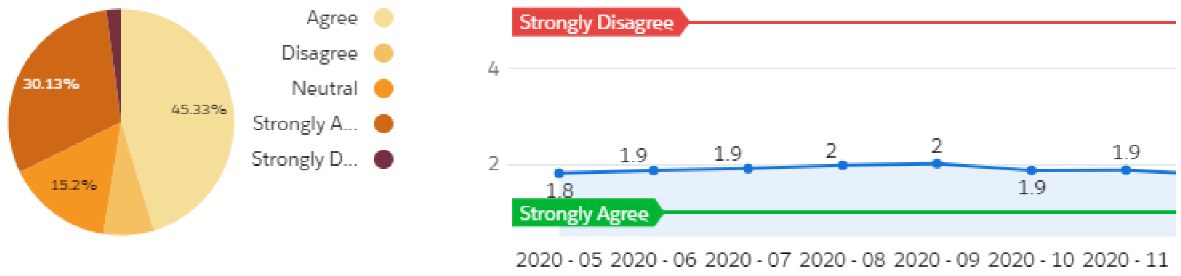
Percentage of people **worried about the impact** of COVID on the economy

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	80%	286
June	78%	318
July	83%	366
August	82%	204
September	84%	432
October	81%	97
November	78%	168

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 November. A smaller proportion were worried they would not be able to afford basic supplies, this increased from 5% in May to 9% in August, before declining to 6% in November.

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

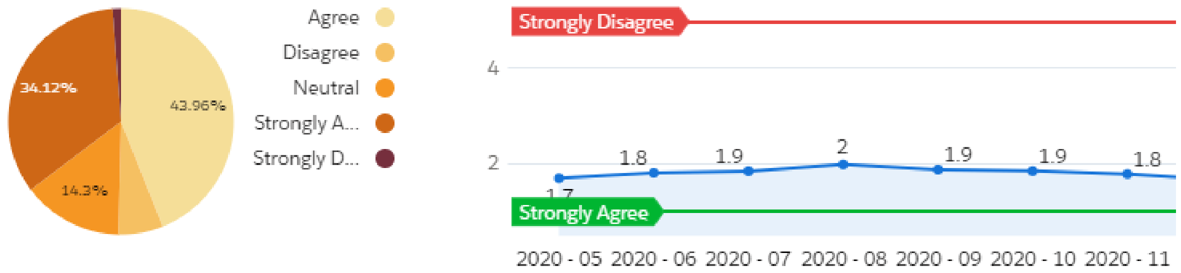


Percentage of people who are **not confident** they can continue to afford food and supplies.

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	5%	286
June	7%	318
July	6%	366
August	9%	204
September	8%	432
October	6%	97
November	6%	168

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%). The small sample size may have influenced the increase in October to 9%. In November only 2% of people were worried that household supplies would run out.

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



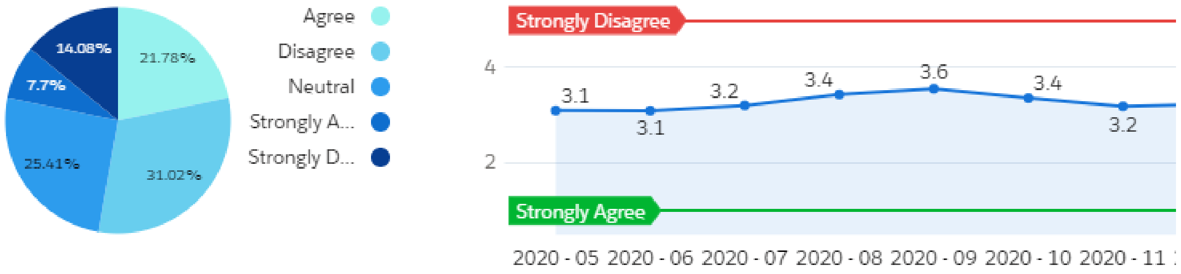
Percentage of people who are worried that **household supplies will run out**

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	3%	286
June	4%	318
July	6%	366
August	9%	204
September	5%	432
October	9%	97
November	2%	168

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 60% in September. This has declined to 45% in November

Social distancing has not had a negative impact on my community

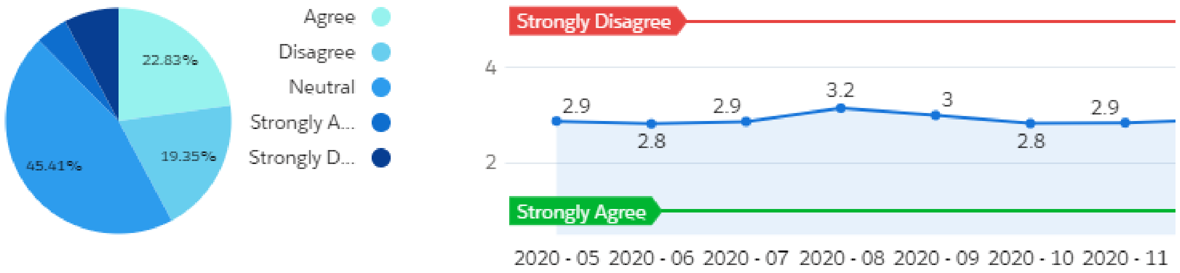


Percentage of people who believe social distancing **has had a negative impact** on their community

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	43%	286
June	44%	318
July	48%	366
August	53%	204
September	60%	432
October	55%	97
November	45%	168

A consistent proportion of respondents between May and November 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

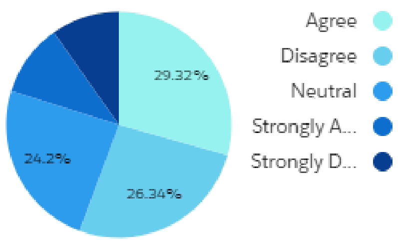


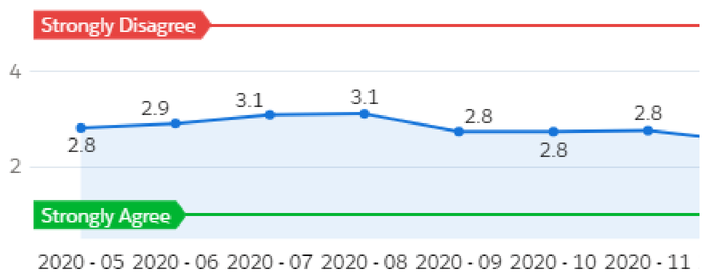
Percentage of people that feel vulnerable members of the community were **not well supported**

Month	%	Respondents (n)
May	19%	286
June	17%	318
July	20%	366
August	28%	204
September	21%	432
October	19%	97
November	21%	168

Feeling safe to go outside or to the shops has remained relatively stable from May to November 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 and was at its highest in August with 44% of respondents who did not feel safe going out. This has declined since August to 33% in November.

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	31%	432
October	31%	97
November	33%	168

References

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[viii] Kingston City Council 2016, Health and Wellbeing Survey, prepared by Metropolis Research, September 2016