



COVID-19 SURVEY REPORT - APRIL 2021

Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living

Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living COVID-19 Survey Report April 2021

INTRODUCTION

In November of 2020, the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) sent out a survey to adults (age 18 and over) receiving Developmental Disabilities, Choice for Care and Brain Injury services asking about their experience with COVID-19. DAIL wanted to know how COVID-19 affected the lives of people and their services and what they found helped them and what was difficult during that time. DAIL also wanted to learn what could be done differently in the future to better support people.

PROCEDURE

Survey Development

The survey tool was developed by Adult Services Division and Developmental Disabilities Services Division staff with input from the Green Mountain Self-Advocates, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council and other DAIL staff. A draft survey was presented, feedback was collected and changes were made to the tool based on feedback from the Designated Agency and Specialized Services Agency Developmental Services Directors, the Developmental Disabilities Services State Program Standing Committee and the Choices for Care Case Management Agencies after presenting the tool in draft form.

The goal was to keep the survey short and easy to understand. The questions focused on what people were experiencing regarding COVID-19, such as what changed for people and whether they received the supports they needed to feel safe and supported. The survey ended with some basic demographic questions.

Survey Distribution

The survey was designed so it could be accessed both on-line through Survey Monkey and in hard copy. If people completed the hard copy, they could mail the survey's directly to DAIL or have their agency collect and return them to DAIL. The Survey Monkey link and Word versions of the survey were also available on the DAIL website.

DAIL depended on the provider organizations to distribute hard copies of the survey and email notices about the survey containing the survey link. This collaboration was helpful in getting the survey directly to people since DAIL does not have a database of mailing or email addresses of people in services.

DAIL also asked for help from Green Mountain Self Advocates and the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council to advertise the survey and offer assistance to people in completing the survey.

Survey Process:

The goal was to have as many surveys completed as possible. The survey tool was designed to be completed by the person in services or with assistance, such as from a support worker, family member or friend. Surveys completed on-line went

directly into Survey Monkey. DAIL staff entered the data into Survey Monkey for all mailed-in surveys.

The period for submitting surveys originally ended on December 31, 2020. However, in the hope of receiving more responses, the deadline was extended to January 30, 2021.

RESULTS

The first part of the survey had 14 multiple and single choice questions (Q1 – Q14) and three open-ended questions (Q15 – Q17). The second part of the survey had seven demographic questions (Q18 – Q24). The data is presented in both graph and table format. The summary of open-end questions and responses to “Other” lists the most frequently mentioned comments.

The survey was not designed with the intent of being statistically valid in terms of numbers and analysis, so the results are not considered to be statistically significant. Therefore, due to the low overall response rate, the results from all three programs were combined. Even with the limited number of respondents, the information that was shared is still helpful as a snapshot of what people in services experienced during the height of COVID-19 in 2020. The results also provide insight as to how the service system can best to respond to the needs of people in the future.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ♥ 577 surveys were completed.
- ♥ Over half the people who responded were people in Developmental Disabilities Services. A little less than half were in Choices of Care. Just a few people received Brain Injury Services.
- ♥ Over half said they stopped seeing family and friends who did not live with them and stopped going places where they spent time with others.
- ♥ Most said they choose multiple ways to stay safe: wore masks, used hand sanitizer, and did not go out in public.
- ♥ Most said they felt safe during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order.
- ♥ Most said they were able to contact their case manager when they needed to.
- ♥ Most said they thought someone checked in with them often enough.
- ♥ The majority said they used the phone to contacted friends and family.
- ♥ The ways people said they were in contact with others were by email, social media, in person, text and video chat.
- ♥ Some said they had difficulties using masks and hand sanitizer, having enough money, and getting groceries.
- ♥ Over half said they liked staying home more. Some said they liked using technology more, spending time walking and doing outdoor activities, and talking to family more.

The following section of the report provides the data for all the questions ask in the COVID-19 Survey.

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DATA RESULTS

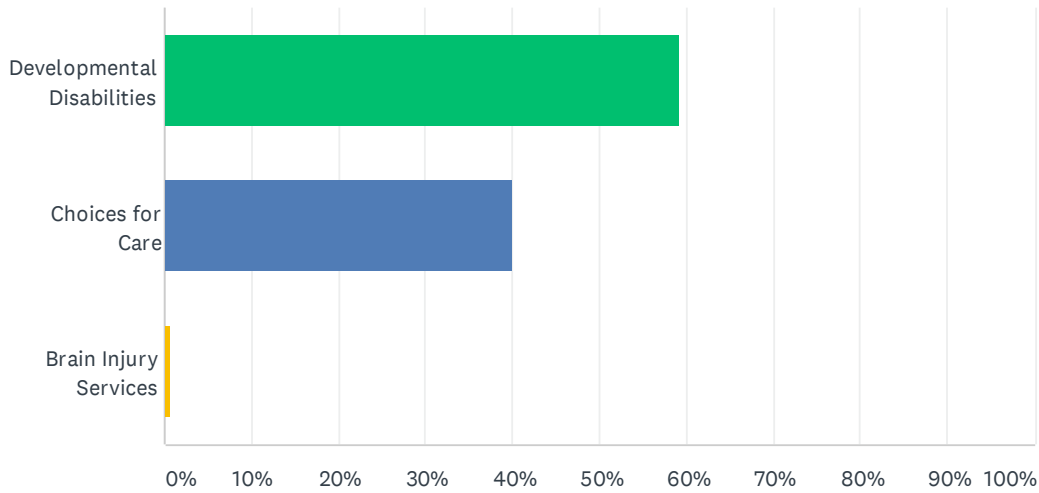
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Department of Disabilities Aging & Independent Living



Q1 What services do you receive? (Choose one)

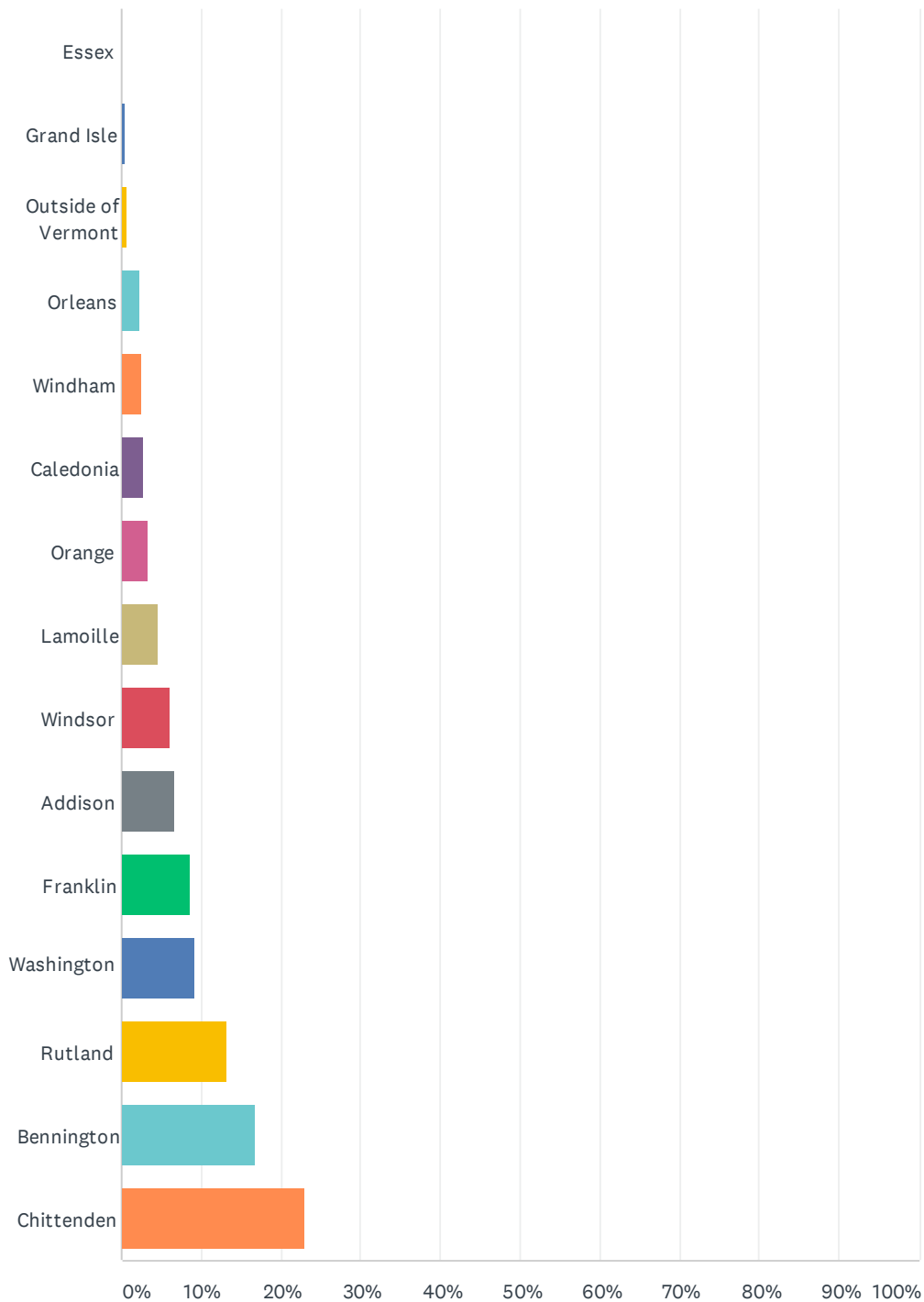
Answered: 577 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Developmental Disabilities: Home and Community Based Services	59.27%	342
Choices for Care	40.03%	231
Brain Injury Services	0.69%	4
TOTAL		577

Q2 What county do you live in?

Answered: 578 Skipped: 0

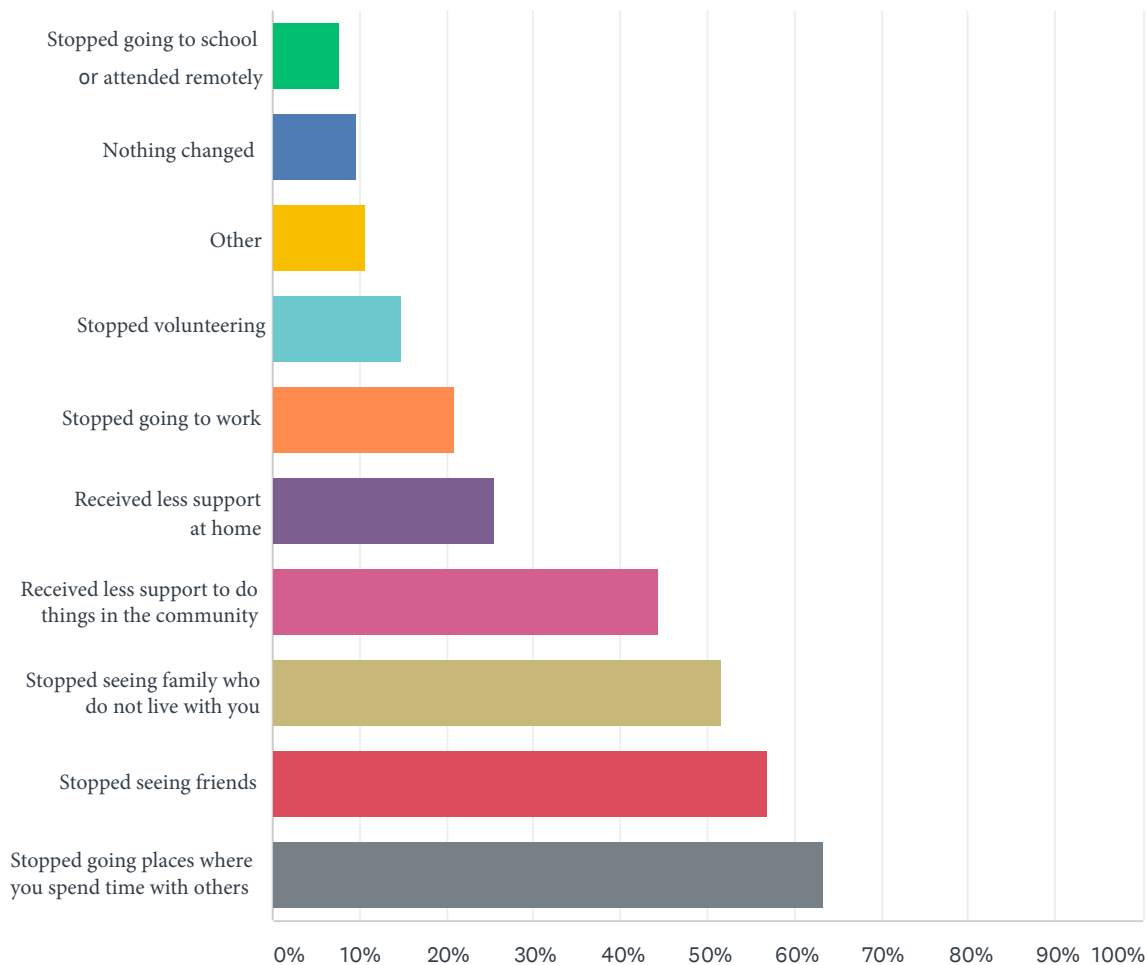


DAIL COVID-19 Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Essex	0.00%	0
Grand Isle	0.52%	3
Outside of Vermont	0.69%	4
Orleans	2.25%	13
Windham	2.60%	15
Caledonia	2.77%	16
Orange	3.29%	19
Lamoille	4.50%	26
Windsor	6.06%	35
Addison	6.75%	39
Franklin	8.48%	49
Washington	9.17%	53
Rutland	13.15%	76
Bennington	16.78%	97
Chittenden	23.01%	133
TOTAL		578

Q3 What did not go well for you during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 572 Skipped: 6



DAIL COVID-19 Survey

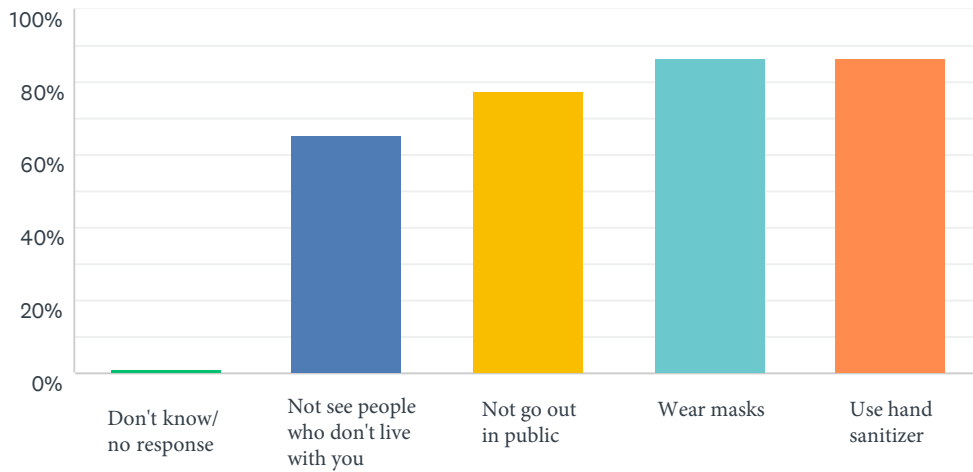
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Stopped going to school or attended school remotely	7.69%	44
Nothing changed during that time	9.62%	55
Other	10.66%	61
Stopped volunteering	14.86%	85
Stopped going to work at your job	20.98%	120
Received less support at home	25.52%	146
Received less support to do things in your community	44.41%	254
Stopped seeing family who did not live with you	51.57%	295
Stopped seeing your friends who did not live with you	56.99%	326
Stopped going to a place where you spent time with others	63.46%	363
Total Respondents: 572		

Response option “Other” included responses such as:

- No church, shopping, doctor visits, clinical services, restaurants, sports, school
- Visits/meetings/doctor appointments via Zoom/phone
- Could not leave home, leave my room, go to appointments in home provider’s car
- Limited safety measures at work
- Difficulty grieving a death/having funeral
- Need to wear masks
- Loss of workers/PCAs/respite/crisis placements/personal care/therapy
- Felt isolated, alone, bored,
- Could not see family

Q4 What were you able to do to stay safe during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order? (Choose all that apply)

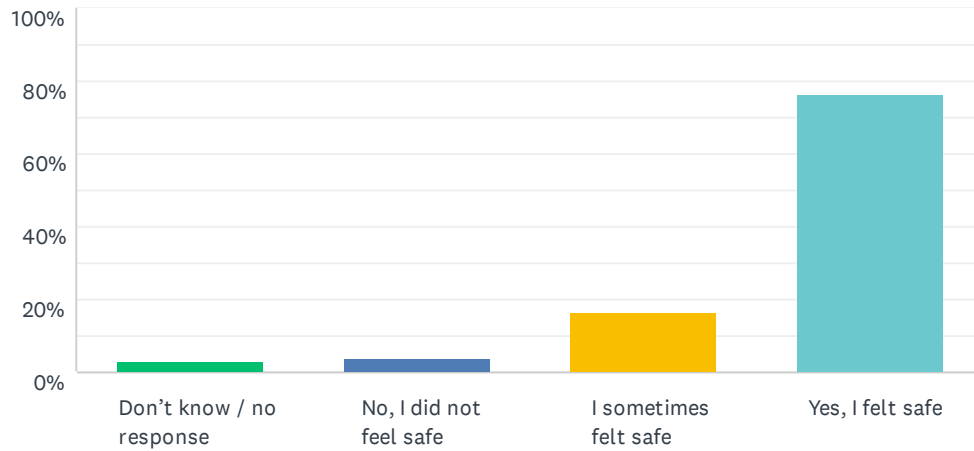
Answered: 573 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know / no response	1.22%	7
Not see people who do not live with you	65.62%	376
Not go out in public	77.66%	445
Wear masks	86.39%	495
Use hand sanitizer	86.74%	497
Total Respondents: 573		

Q5 Did you feel safe during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order?

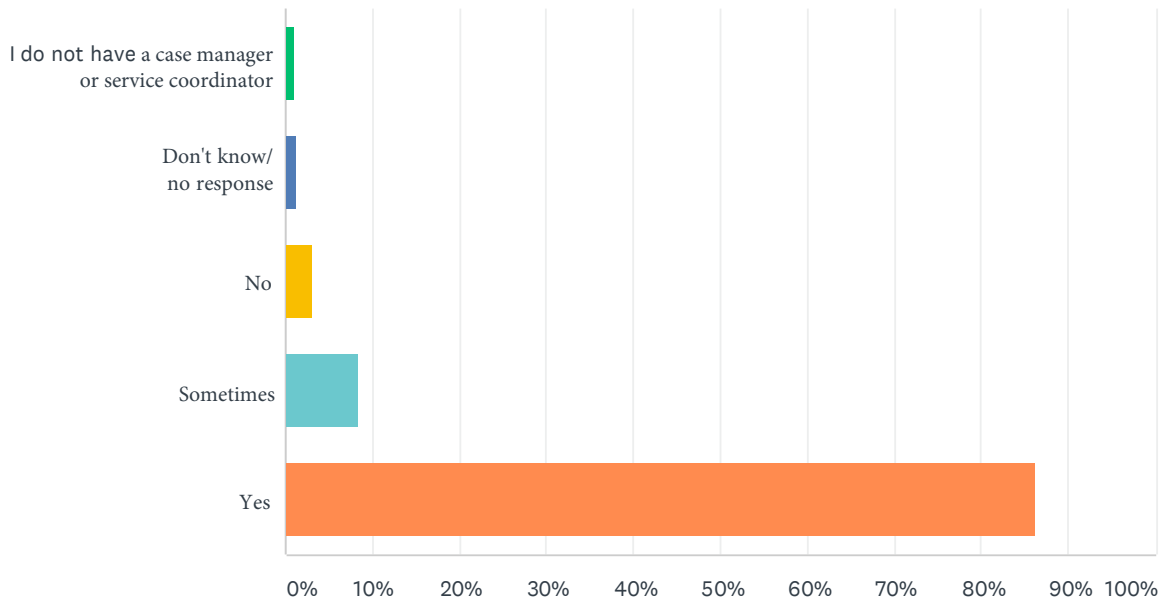
Answered: 574 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know / no response	2.96%	17
No, I did not feel safe	4.18%	24
I sometimes felt safe	16.38%	94
Yes, I felt safe	76.48%	439
TOTAL		574

Q6 Were you able to contact your case manager or service coordinator when you needed to?

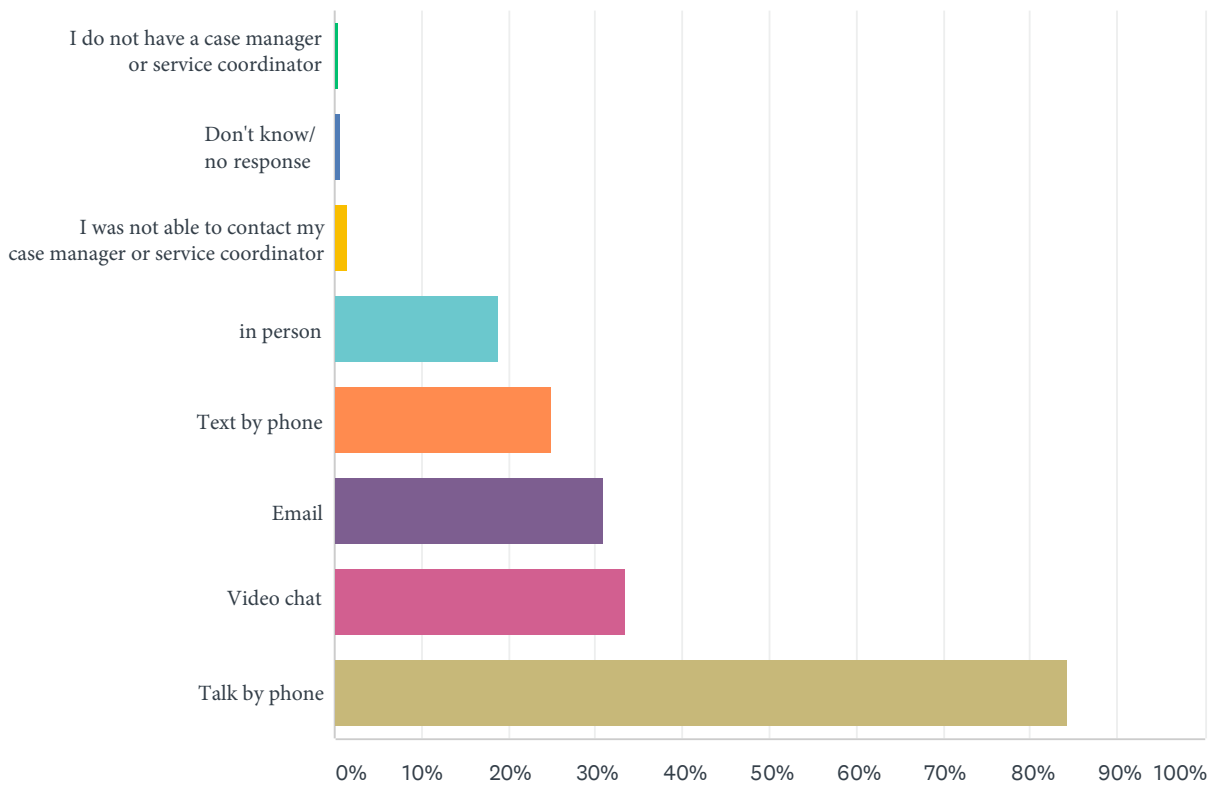
Answered: 575 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not have a case manager or service coordinator	1.04%	6
Don't know / no response	1.22%	7
No	3.13%	18
Sometimes	8.35%	48
Yes	86.26%	496
TOTAL		575

Q7 How did your case manager or service coordinator contact you? (Choose all that apply)

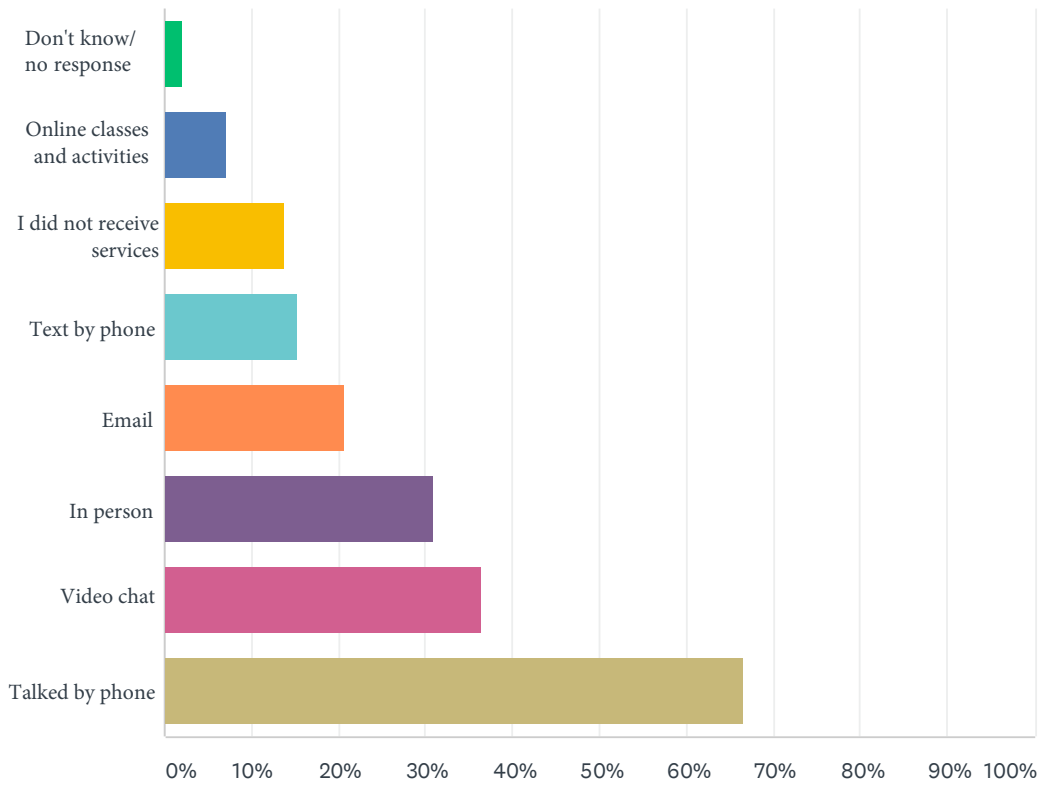
Answered: 575 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not have a case manager or service coordinator	0.52%	3
Don't know / no response	0.70%	4
I was not able to contact my case manager or service coordinator	1.57%	9
In person	18.78%	108
Text by phone	24.87%	143
Email	30.96%	178
Video chat (such as Facetime/Zoom)	33.39%	192
Talk by phone	84.35%	485
Total Respondents: 575		

Q8 How did you get your services during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order? (Choose all that apply)

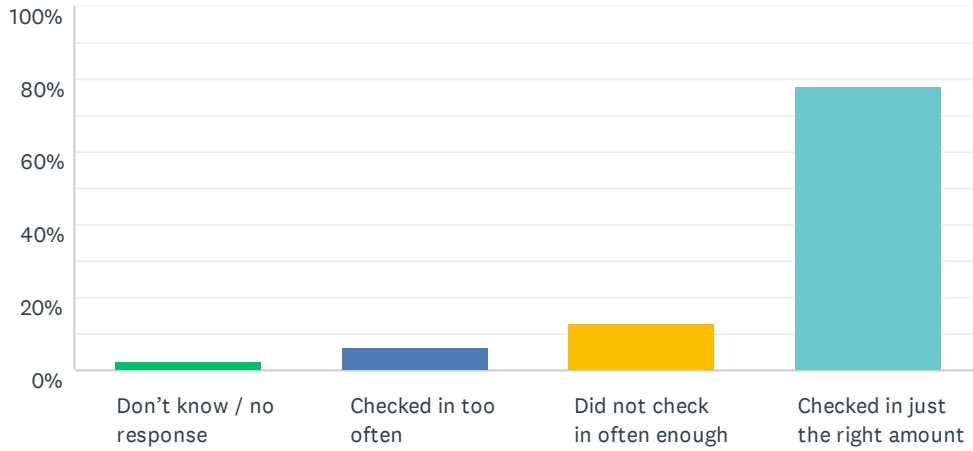
Answered: 573 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know / no response	2.09%	12
On-line classes and activities	7.16%	41
I did not receive any services during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order	13.79%	79
Text by phone	15.18%	87
Email	20.77%	119
In person	31.06%	178
Video chat (such as Facetime/Zoom)	36.47%	209
Talk by phone	66.49%	381
Total Respondents: 573		

Q9 Did someone check in with you often enough?

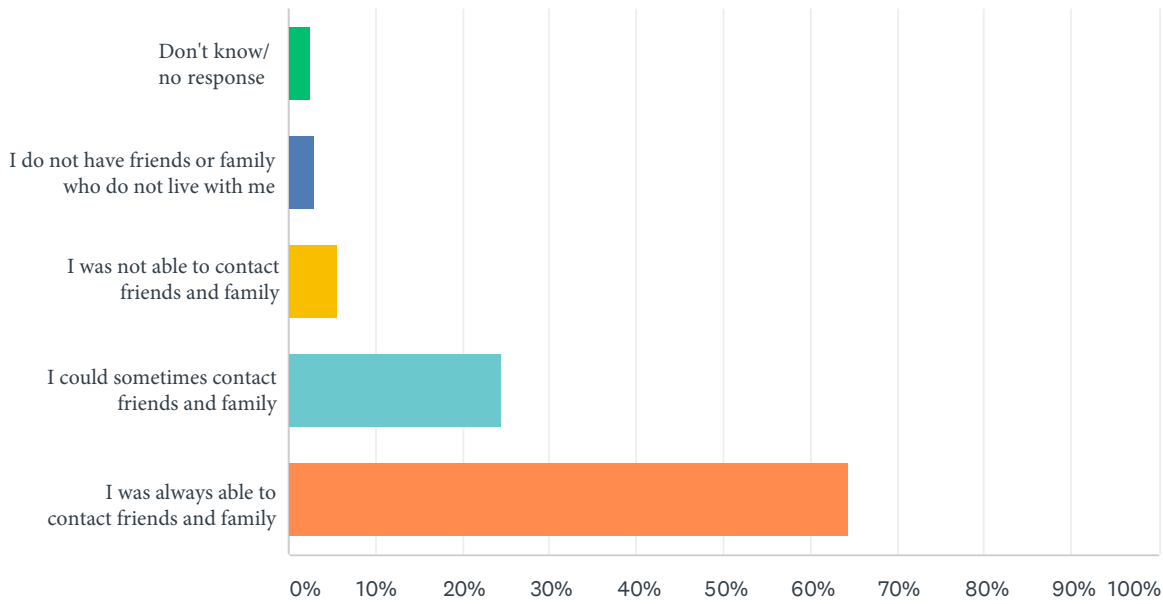
Answered: 574 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know / no response	2.61%	15
Checked in too often	6.27%	36
Did not check in often enough	12.89%	74
Checked in just the right amount	78.22%	449
TOTAL		574

Q10 During that time, were you able to contact your friends and family who do not live with you?

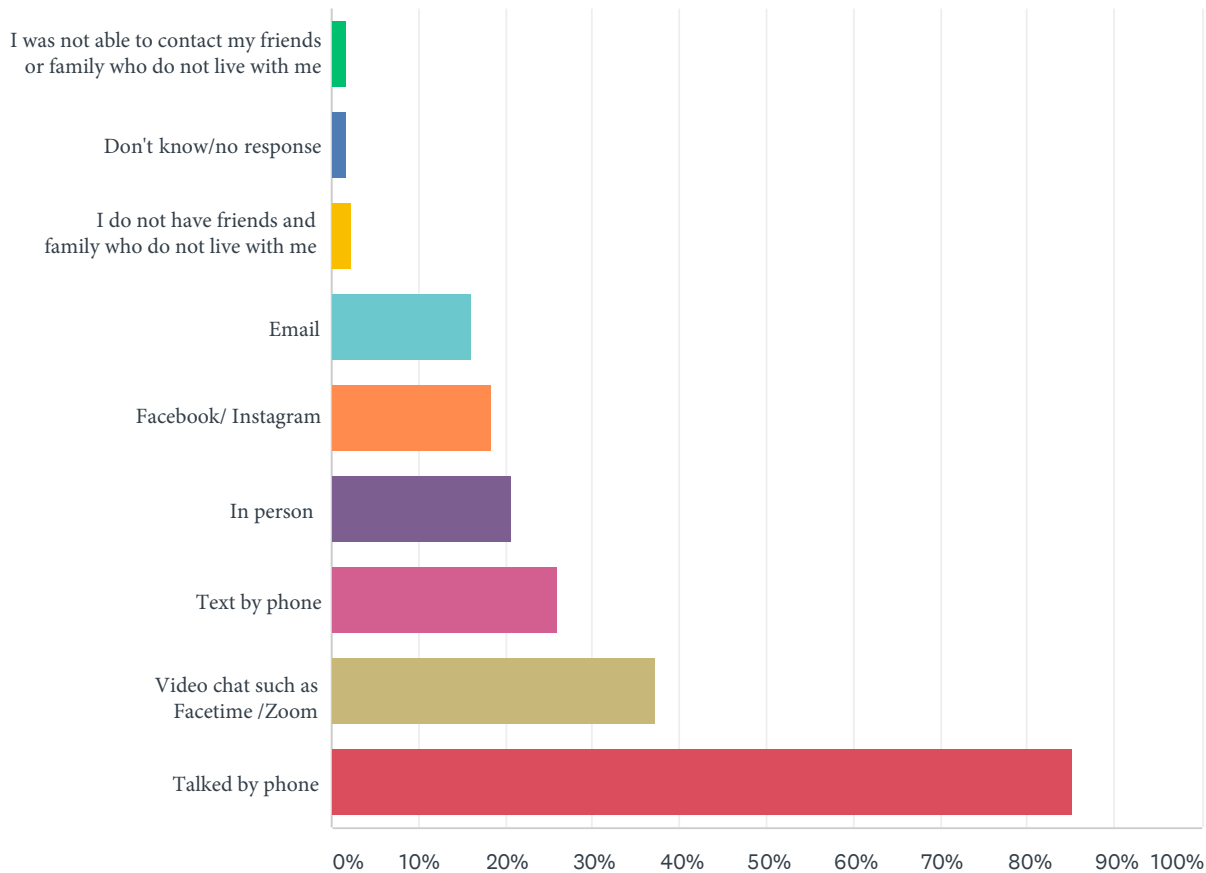
Answered: 575 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know / no response	2.43%	14
I do not have friends or family who do not live with me	2.96%	17
I was not able to contact friends and family	5.57%	32
I could sometimes contact friends and family	24.52%	141
I was always able to contact friends and family	64.52%	371
TOTAL		575

Q11 How did you contact your friends and family who do not live with you? (Choose all that apply)

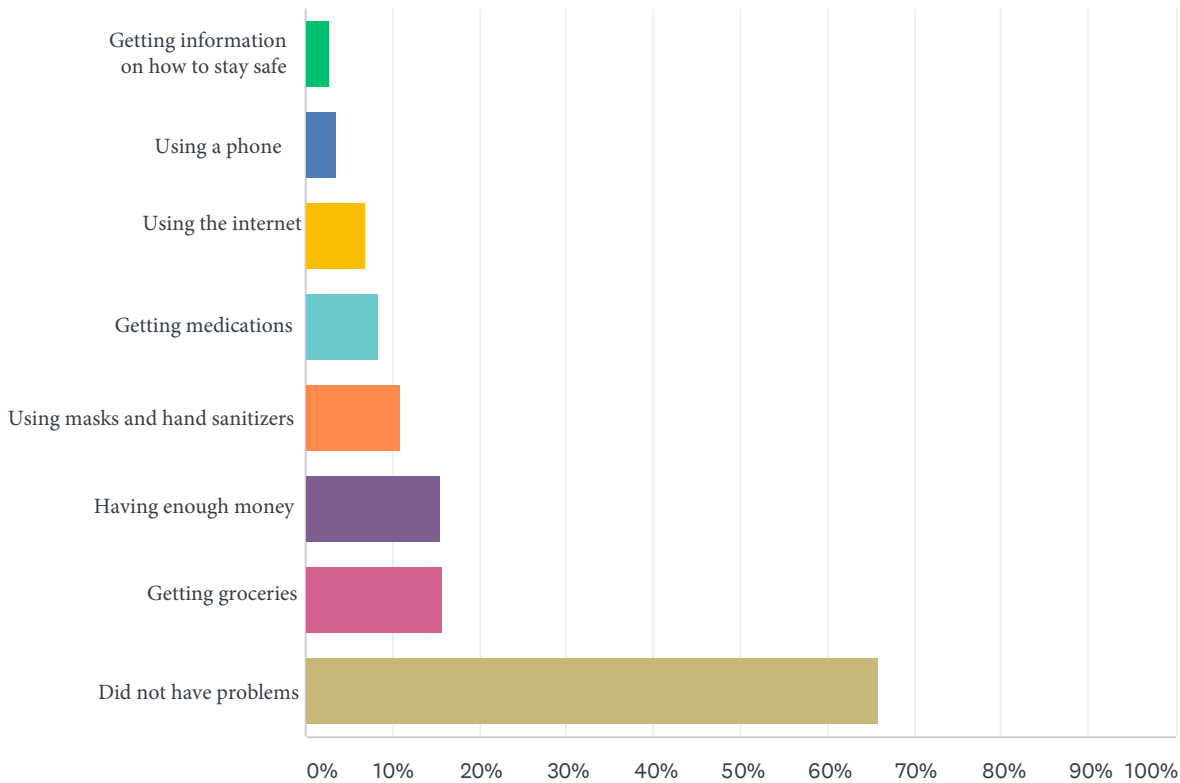
Answered: 573 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I was not able to contact my friends or family who do not live with me	1.57%	9
Don't know / no response	1.75%	10
I do not have friends and family who do not live with me	2.27%	13
Email	16.06%	92
Facebook/Instagram	18.50%	106
In person	20.77%	119
Text by phone	26.00%	149
Video chat (such as Facetime/zoom)	37.17%	213
Talk by phone	85.17%	488
Total Respondents: 573		

Q12 Did you have problems with any of the following during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order? (Choose all that apply)

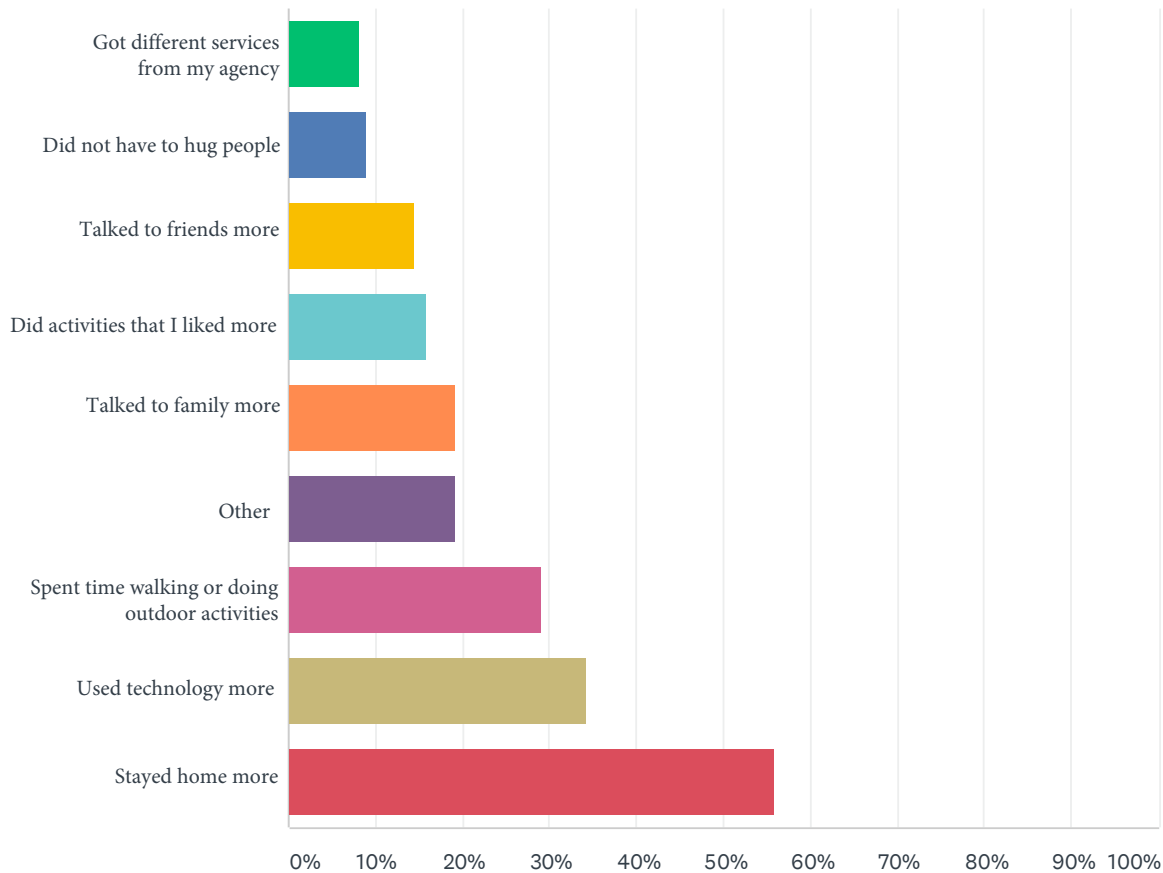
Answered: 570 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Getting information on how to stay safe	2.81%	16
Using a phone	3.51%	20
Using the internet	6.84%	39
Getting medication	8.42%	48
Using masks and hand sanitizer	10.88%	62
Having enough money	15.44%	88
Getting groceries	15.61%	89
Did not have problems	65.96%	376
Total Respondents: 570		

Q13 Were there any changes in your life during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order that you liked? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 527 Skipped: 51



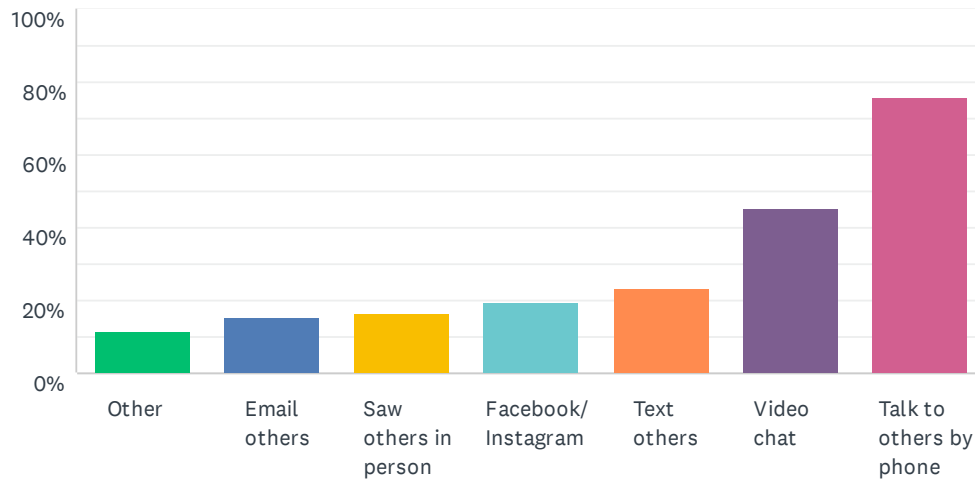
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Got different services from my agency	8.16% 43
Did not have to hug people	8.92% 47
Talked to friends more	14.42% 76
Did activities that I liked more	15.94% 84
Talked to family more	19.17% 101
Other	19.17% 101
Spent time walking or doing outdoors activities	29.03% 153
Used technology more	34.35% 181
Stayed home more	55.79% 294
Total Respondents: 527	

Response option “Other” included responses where the person noted that they enjoyed such things as: Playing games, Zoom activities, Increased watching of TV/movies, Cleaning and organizing, More time with family

Responses option “Other” also included responses where the person noted that they did not like such things as: Isolation, Being told they must stay home, Being at home, Feeling sad, Missing friends, Not going out, Not working, Losing in-person help

Q14 What helped you feel more connected to others during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 563 Skipped: 15



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Other	11.37%	64
Email others	15.28%	86
Saw others in person	16.70%	94
Facebook/Instagram	19.72%	111
Text others	23.27%	131
Video chat (such as Facetime/Zoom)	45.29%	255
Talk to others by phone	75.84%	427
Total Respondents: 563		

Response option “Other” included responses such as:

- Family/Service Coordinator checking-in
- Home Provider
- Pets
- Mail
- Technology/Zoom events
- Church
- Did not feel connected, felt abandoned, disconnected
- Nothing

Q15 What one thing did you miss the most or was the most challenging for you?

Answered: 519 Skipped: 59

What one thing did you miss the most or was the most challenging for you?

Answers included such things as:

- "Normal" routine
- Not able to celebrate special occasions
- Hugs
- Loss of staff, respite, housekeeper
- Not able to go out to do stuff (bowling, swimming, movies, concerts, community activities, stores, out to eat, shopping, go outside, traveling, camp, day program/adult day, church, library, coffee shop, sports/gym/Special Olympics)
- Not being able to see counselor, PCA, staff, service coordinator, doctor, dentist, therapist
- Not hanging out with friends, seeing family, being productive, being social, volunteering, working or going to school
- Loneliness, being alone
- Lost sense of self-worth
- Freedom to be out and about
- Not having a normal life
- Lack of communication supports
- Having people drop in unexpectedly
- Wearing a mask
- Others not following the rules

Q16 What two things helped you feel better or made it easier for you?

Answered: 503 Skipped: 75

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1)	100.00%	503
2)	79.32%	399

What two things helped you feel better or made it easier for you?

Responses included such things as:

- Technology to connect to others: phone, computers, Zoom, Facetime, iPad, internet, text, email, video chat, Facebook
- Parents, family, friends
- Seeing people in person
- Having someone to talk to
- Pets/animals
- Aids, caregivers, home provider, therapist, housekeeper, guardian
- Being outside, exercise
- Case manager check-ins, speaking to support worker regularly
- Arts and crafts, activities, chores, music, reading, TV, video games
- Food
- Having information, talking about it, being informed
- Not getting sick
- Knowing everyone was in the same situation
- Knowing it would end some day
- Faith
- Routine
- Staying safe: masks, hand sanitizer, washing hands
- Going for rides
- Not going certain places: day program, doctor's office
- Shopping on- line
- Dance parties
- Humor

Q17 What else would you like to tell us?

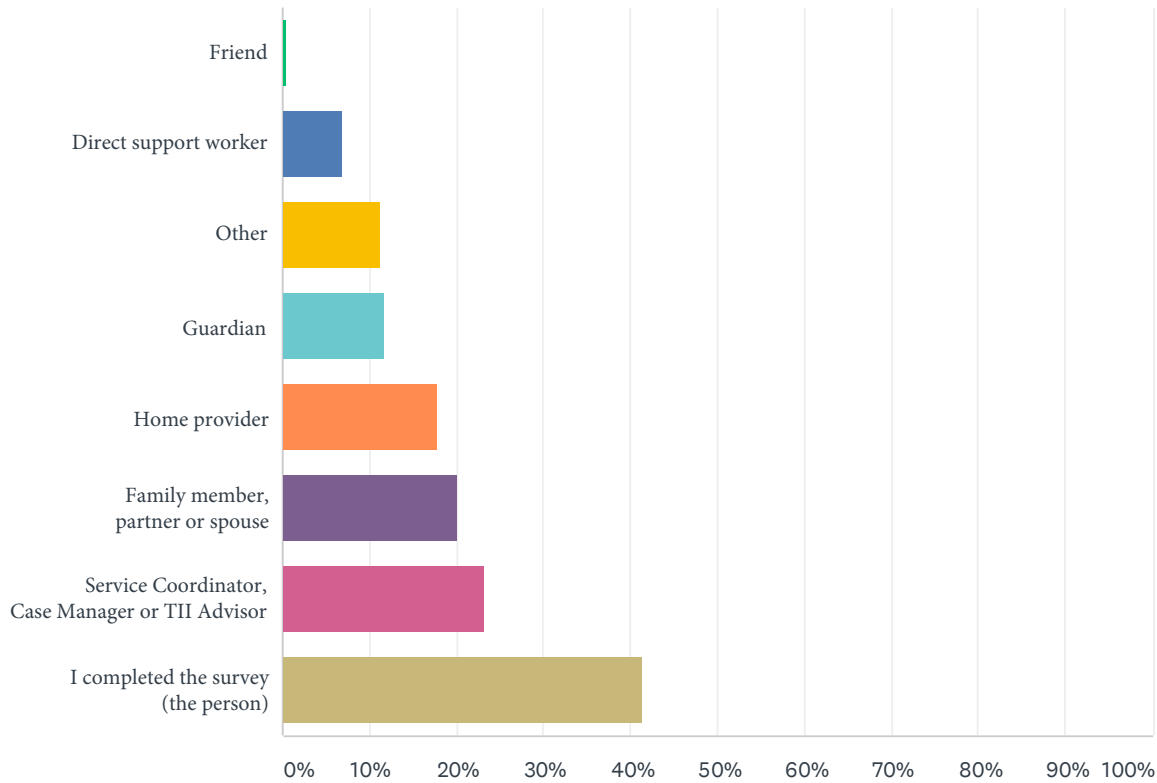
Answered: 332 Skipped: 246

Answers to “what else would you like to tell us?” included statements such as:

- I will be glad when the vaccine is ready
- Isolation made things worse
- Concerns about not getting regular services
- lack of contact from case manager
- I needed technical support
- Tired of being locked up
- COVID sucks for people with Autism
- I do not like COVID
- Wearing masks is difficult
- Worried about others not wearing masks
- I'm sleeping more
- Grateful/thankful
- Worried about it happening again
- Worried about my friends and others
- Anxious/scared
- Financial issues
- Not being able to work
- It's been tough, not as easy as they think

Q18 Who completed this survey? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 576 Skipped: 2



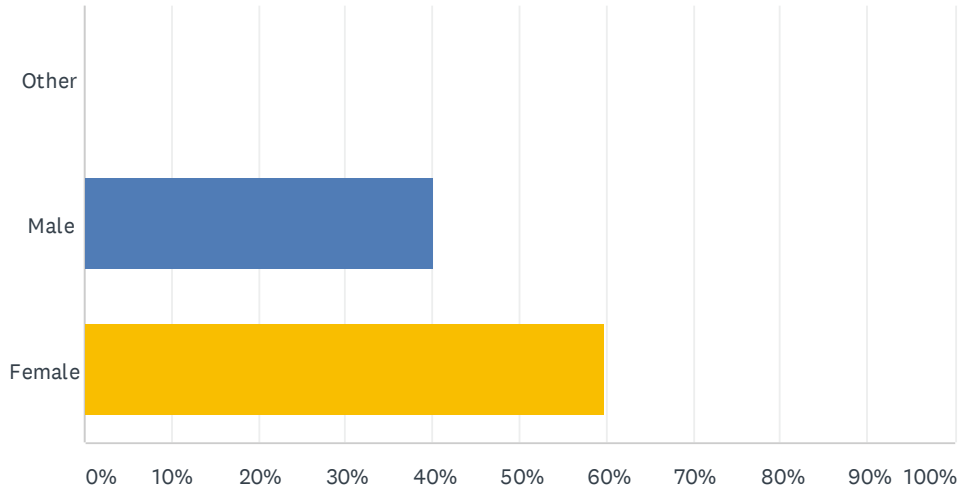
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Friend	0.52%	3
Direct support worker	6.94%	40
Other	11.28%	65
Guardian	11.63%	67
Home provider	17.88%	103
Family member, partner or spouse	20.14%	116
Service Coordinator, Case Manager or TII Advisor	23.26%	134
I completed the survey (the person)	41.49%	239
Total Respondents: 576		

Responses to “Other” included:

- Caregiver/home health aide/home provider
- Case manager
- Client mailed in and case manager entered into computer
- Family member
- Someone else read the person the questions
- Over the phone with someone else recording the answers

Q19 What is your gender?

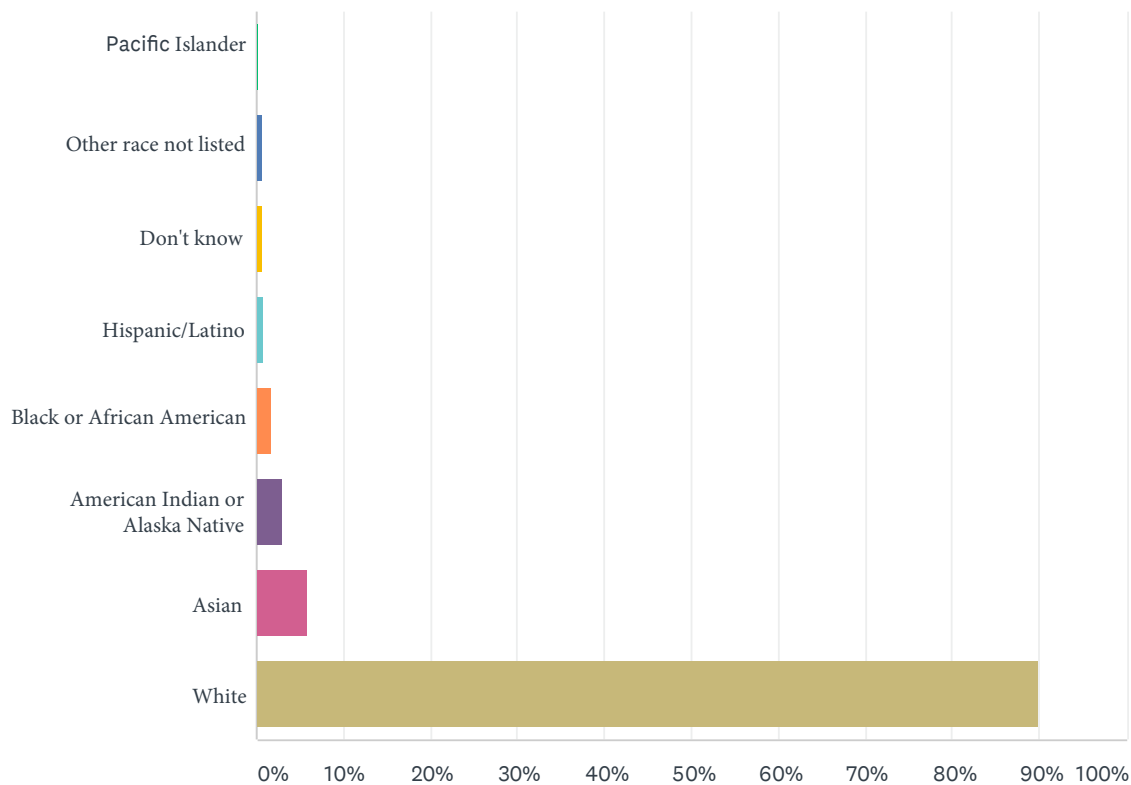
Answered: 569 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Other	0.00% 0
Male	40.07% 228
Female	59.93% 341
TOTAL	569

Q20 What is your race and ethnicity? (Choose one or more)

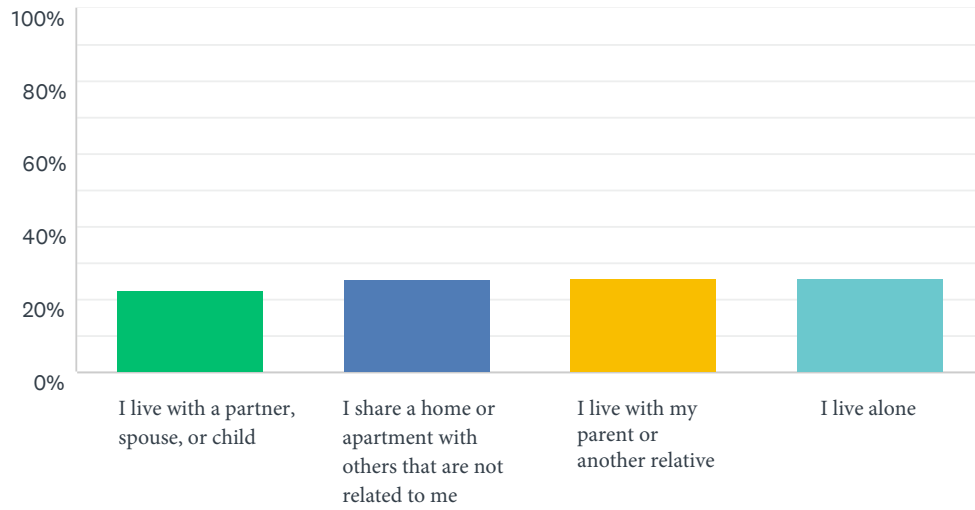
Answered: 572 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Pacific Islander	0.17% 1
Other race not listed	0.52% 3
Don't know	0.70% 4
Hispanic/Latino	0.87% 5
Black or African American	1.75% 10
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.97% 17
Asian	5.77% 33
White	89.86% 514
Total Respondents: 572	

Q21 Who do you live with?

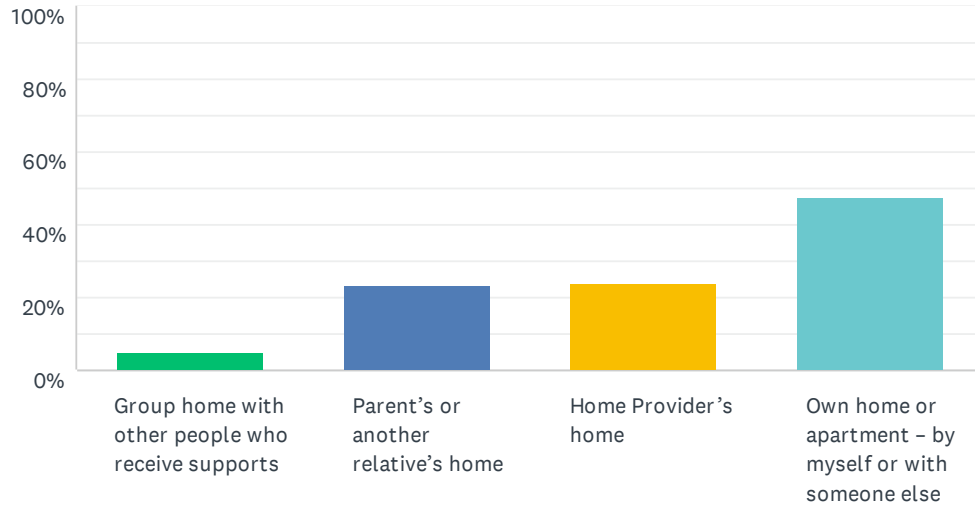
Answered: 571 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live with a partner, spouse, or child	22.59%	129
I share a home or apartment with others that are not related to me	25.39%	145
I live with my parent or another relative	25.92%	148
I live alone	26.09%	149
TOTAL		571

Q22 What type of place do you live?

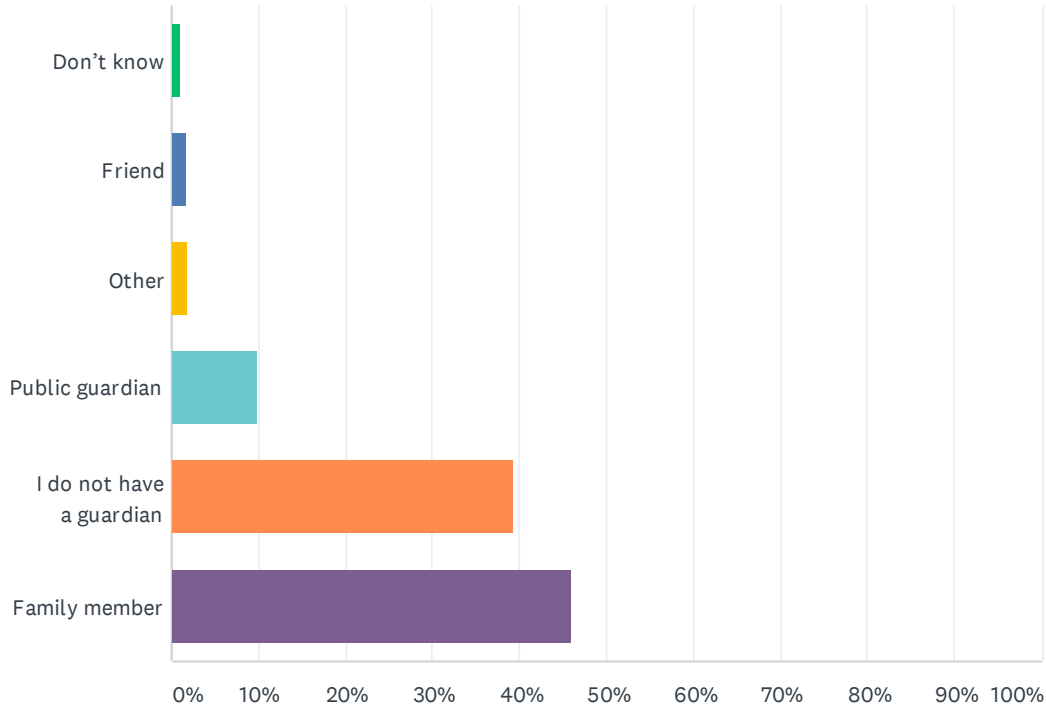
Answered: 566 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Group home with other people who receive supports	4.95%	28
Parent's or another relative's home	23.32%	132
Home Provider's home	24.03%	136
Own home or apartment – by myself or with someone else	47.70%	270
TOTAL		566

Q23 Who is your guardian (if you have one)?

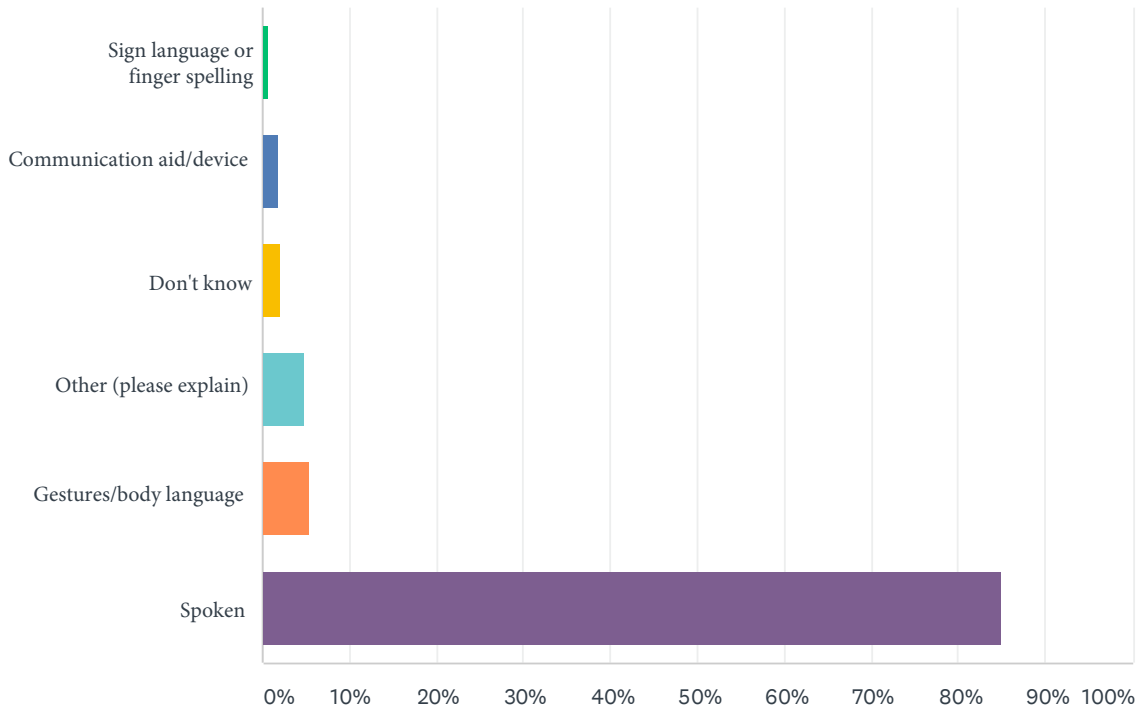
Answered: 569 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Don't know	1.05%	6
Friend	1.76%	10
Other	1.93%	11
Public guardian	9.84%	56
I do not have a guardian	39.37%	224
Family member	46.05%	262
TOTAL		569

Q24 In what way do you communicate best? (Choose one)

Answered: 571 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sign language or finger spelling	0.70%	4
Communication aid/device	1.93%	11
Don't know	2.10%	12
Other (please explain)	4.90%	28
Gestures/body language	5.43%	31
Spoken	84.94%	485
TOTAL		571

Responses to "Other" included:

- Ask "Yes/No" questions
- Cannot read
- Some verbal/talk in short sentences/can't express emotions, feelings, abstract
- Communication device with trained facilitator/Facilitated Communication/ technology-based communication/speech generated app
- Email/ text/on-line/phone/Facebook
- In person
- Mix of spoken and writing
- Non-verbal
- Speaking aloud
- Gestures
- Difficulty word finding