The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

United States of America | December 2021

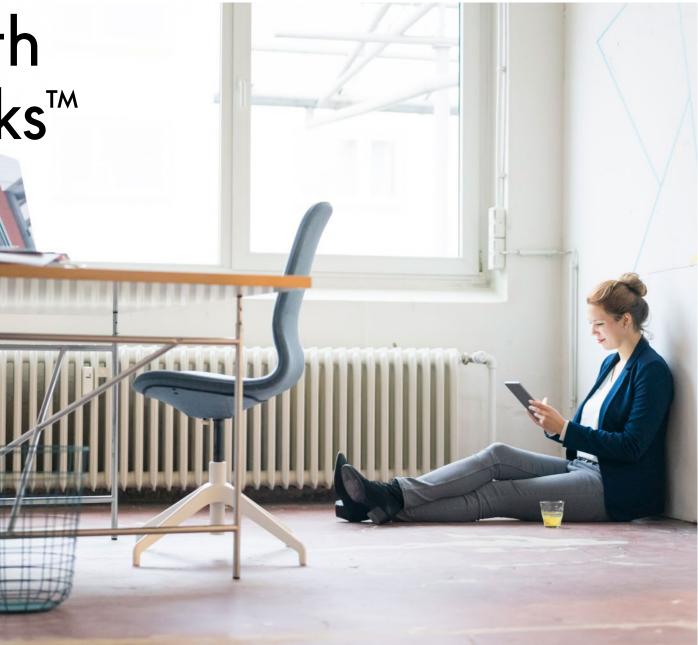




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The top 5 things your need to know | December 2021

- After improvement from April to August 2021, there has been a significant decline in the mental health of Americans
- From a low of -8.0 for the mental health index score in April and December of 2020 to a high of -3.0, the current score is -4.6, which represents a high level of mental health risk.
- All mental health sub-scores, apart from general psychological health, declined in December 2021. Work productivity is the lowest mental health sub-score for the fourth consecutive month.
- The strongest sub-score is for financial risk, which represents an improvement in the level of emergency savings compared to 2019.
- Declines in all regions are seen in December, with the Southern United States continuing to report the lowest score for the fourth consecutive month.
- 2. Nearly one-third of working Americans say that the flexibility they want is the ability to step away from work to attend to personal issues
- 31% want to be able to step away from work to attend to personal issues.
- 25% say that flexibility in the hours of work is most important to them.
- 24% say that location of work is most important.

- 3. Employees indicate that full flexibility for everyone would work best for their work team
- 36% want full flexibility, which gives each employee choice in the how, when, and where they work.
- 19% want everyone together at the worksite.
- 16% want everyone fully remote.
- 8% believe that the best approach for their team is to have everyone together at the worksite 2-3 days a week.
- 4. Employees indicate a slight decrease in collaboration
- 54% indicate a high level of collaboration before the pandemic, compared to 50% since the pandemic began.
- 17% indicate very poor collaboration before the pandemic, compared to 20% since the pandemic began.
- 5. More than half of Americans believe their CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing
- 59% believe that their organization's CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing.
- 63% say that HR policies at their organization support employee wellbeing.
- 29% are not concerned about the career impact of a mental health issue.



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The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index[™] (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark¹ of mental health and risk. **The overall Mental Health Index for December 2021 is -4.6 points.** A nearly five-point decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed thirty-fourth percent of the benchmark population.



MHI Current Month December 2021





The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Mental Health Index[™] sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index[™] sub-score is for the risk measure of work productivity (-6.9), followed by depression (-6.3), anxiety (-6.1), isolation (-5.6), and optimism (-4.4). General psychological health (3.3) and financial risk (9.0) are the only two sub-scores above the benchmark.

- All mental health sub-scores, apart from general psychological health, declined in December 2021.
- With a nearly two-point reduction, the depression score has had the most significant decline from the prior month.
- Despite a 1.3-point decline from November, the financial risk score continues to be the strongest of all sub-scores and is nine points above the pre-2020 benchmark.

Mental Health Index [™] Sub-scores ² 2021	December	November
Work productivity	-6.9	-5.7
Depression	-6.3	-4.5
Anxiety	-6.1	-4.8
Isolation	-5.6	-5.0
Optimism	-4.4	-3.8
Psychological health	3.3	3.3
Financial risk	9.0	10.3

2 The demographic breakdown of sub-scores is available upon request.

Optimism

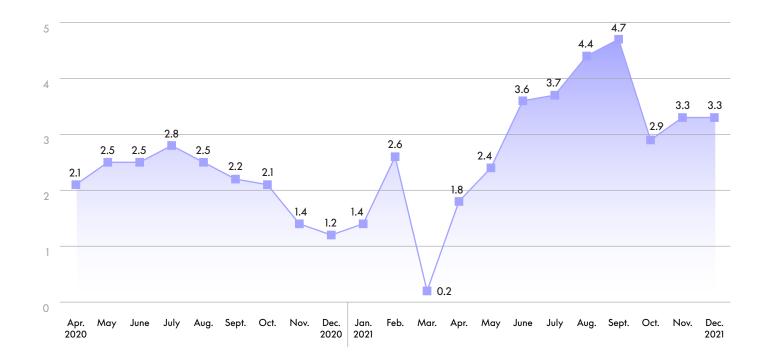
For nearly two years, since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, optimism scores have remained significantly below the benchmark. Since April 2021, the optimism scores have improved meaningfully and in June 2021, the score (-2.7) was approaching the pre-2020 benchmark. In July 2021, the score fell nearly one-point and remained stable in August and September. In October, a decline of 1.2-points was observed, falling to its lowest point in 5 months. While a slight improvement was seen in November, the optimism score declined in December to -4.4.



General psychological health

The psychological health sub-score assesses individuals' self-perception of their overall level of psychological health.

While modest improvements to general psychological health were observed from April 2020 to July 2020 and from December 2020 to February 2021, the psychological health score of Americans dropped dramatically in March 2021 (0.2). Since March 2021, psychological health sub-scores had shown seven continuous months of improvement, reaching a high of 4.7 in September 2021. In October 2021, a sharp decline of nearly 2 points was observed, falling to the lowest score in four months. The general psychological health score in December remains unchanged from the prior month at 3.3.

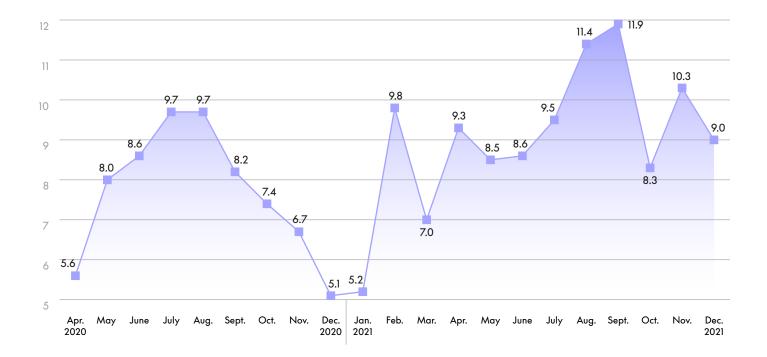


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Financial risk

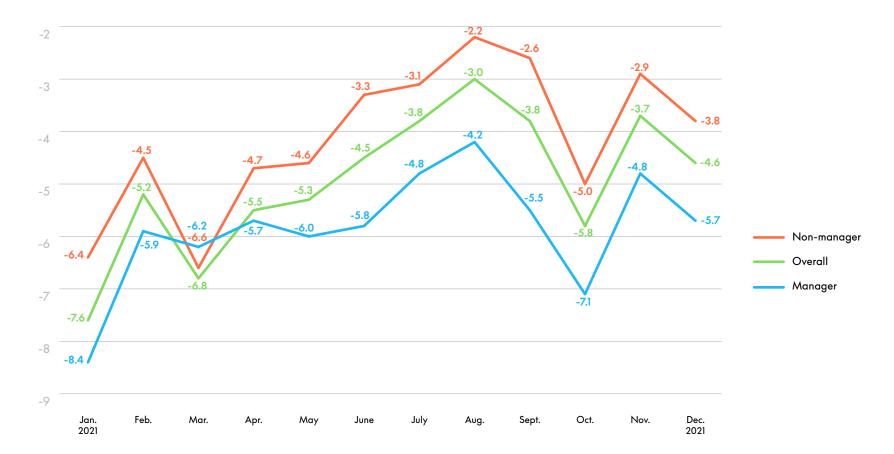
The financial risk sub-score measures the level of individuals' emergency savings.

The financial risk sub-score in September 2021 (11.9) was at the highest point since launch of the Index in April 2020. In October, a decline of nearly 4 points was observed, with financial risk falling to the lowest score in six months. The financial risk sub-score rebounded two points in November 2021 to 10.3 but has declined in December. Despite this decline, at nine points above the pre-2020 benchmark, the financial risk sub-score continues to be the strongest of all mental health sub-scores and indicates that people are more likely to maintain emergency savings compared to the before the pandemic.



Managers compared to non-managers

Since January 2021, the mental health scores of managers have been lower than non-managers and lower than the overall American average except for March. After two months of declines, the mental health score of managers and non-managers improved in November 2021; however, both scores have declined notably in December, with managers at -5.7 and non-managers at -3.8 points below the pre-2020 benchmark.



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Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In December 2021, the mental health score of women is -6.7 compared to -2.4 for men.
- In each of the past 21 months, mental health scores improve with age.
- Differences in mental health scores between those with and without children have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Nearly two years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-11.2) compared to those without children (-1.8).

Employment

- Overall, three percent of respondents are unemployed³ and nine percent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-21.4), followed by those reporting fewer hours (-16.6), and those not currently employed (-4.4).
- Managers have a lower mental health score (-5.7) than non-managers (-3.8).
- Individuals working for companies with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (-1.6).
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (-9.9).

Emergency savings

• Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (-22.4) than the overall group (-4.6). Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of 0.6.

³ MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

Mental Health Index[™] (regional)

Since April 2020, regional mental health scores had shown general improvement through July 2020, followed by declines until December 2020. Since January 2021, mental health scores have been inconsistent although the overall trend was improving through August. Following two months of declines, the mental health scores for all regions improved in November 2021; however, declines have been seen in the mental health score of Americans across the country in December.

- With a 1.6-point decrease from November 2021, the mental health score in the Southern United States remains the lowest (-5.6).
- Despite a modest 0.1-point decline, the mental health score in the Northeast continues to be highest (-3.6).



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Employment status	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-3.2	-2.5
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-16.6	-14.6
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-21.4	-18.2
Not currently employed	-4.4	-6.8
Age group	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Age 20-29	-19.0	-16.2
Age 30-39	-13.1	-11.5
Age 40-49	-7.6	-7.4
Age 50-59	-1.6	-1.1
Age 60-69	4.5	4.1
Number of children	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
No children in household	-1.8	-1.3
1 child	-11.5	-9.9
2 children	-10.4	-9.8
3 children or more	-12.2	-9.9

Region	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Northeast	-3.6	-3.5
Midwest	-3.9	-3.3
South	-5.6	-4.0
West	-4.6	-3.6
Gender	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Men	-2.4	-1.1
Women	-6.7	-6.2
Household income	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
<\$30K/annum	-15.5	-12.5
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	-9.9	-8.3
\$60K to <\$100K	-4.2	-3.6
\$100K to <\$150K	-1.6	-1.6
\$150K or more	3.6	3.7

Employer size	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	-4.4	-3.4
2-50 employees	-3.9	-2.8
51-100 employees	-9.9	-5.6
101-500 employees	-5.2	-3.9
501-1,000 employees	-7.3	-7.9
1,001-5,000 employees	-2.7	-3.1
5,001-10,000 employees	-1.9	-3.0
More than 10,000 employees	-1.6	-0.3
Manager	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Manager	-5.7	-4.8
Non-manager	-3.8	-2.9

Numbers highlighted in orange are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in green are the least negative scores in the group.

Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

Mental Health Index™ (industry)

For the 21st consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-25.2). This score continues to be significantly lower than the next lowest scores: individuals employed in Food Services (-15.6), and Management of Companies and Enterprises (-12.4).

Individuals employed in Public Administration (2.5), Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (1.7), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (-0.5) have the highest mental health scores this month.

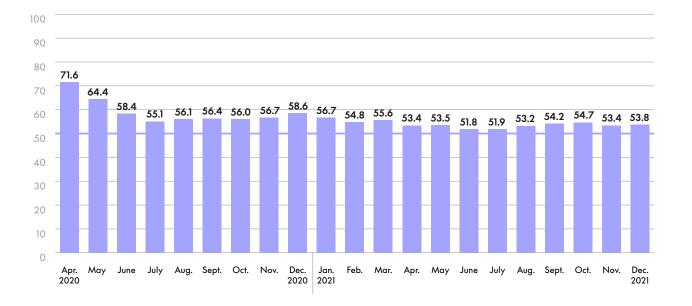
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	December 2021	November 2021	Change
Utilities	-1.0	-5.5	4.5
Accommodation	-2.6	-6.8	4.2
Information and Cultural Industries	-10.3	-14.4	4.1
Other services (except Public Administration)	-4.8	-5.6	0.8
Public Administration	2.5	2.0	0.5
Educational Services	-1.5	-1.6	0.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	-5.8	-5.7	-0.2
Finance and Insurance	-3.7	-3.5	-0.2
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	1.7	2.0	-0.3
Administrative and Support services	-8.2	-7.9	-0.3
Transportation and Warehousing	-2.0	-1.5	-0.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-0.5	0.1	-0.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-5.8	-5.2	-0.6
Retail Trade	-7.0	-5.9	-1.2
Manufacturing	-1.5	0.3	-1.8
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-4.8	-2.7	-2.1
Wholesale Trade	-8.5	-5.9	-2.6
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-12.4	-9.4	-3.0
Other	-6.9	-3.7	-3.2
Construction	-8.5	-4.5	-4.1
Food Services	-15.6	-9.5	-6.1
I am a student	-25.2	-18.8	-6.5

The Mental Stress Change score

The Mental Stress Change score (MStressChg) is a measure of the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month. **The Mental Stress Change score for December 2021 is 53.8.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 18 percent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with 10 percent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the American population.



MStressChg Current Month— December 2021

53.8

MStressChg November 2021

53.4

- A More mental stress
- 50 = No change from prior month
- Less mental stress

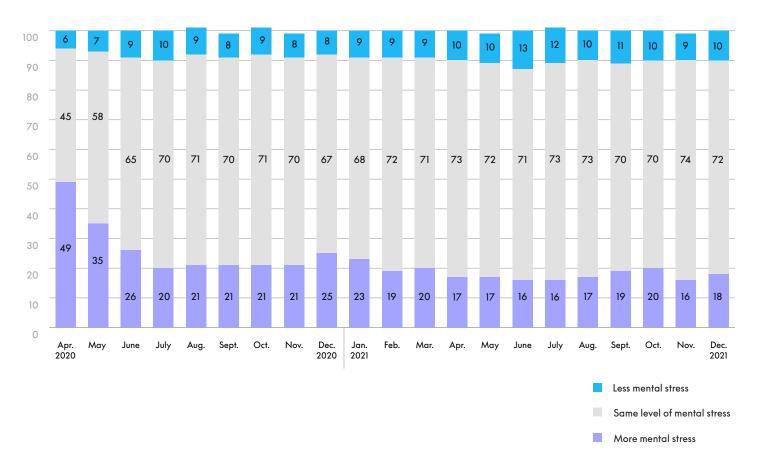
Mental Stress Change (percentages)

Mental Stress Change tracks stress changes each month. The percentages of those experiencing more stress, the same level of stress, and less stress for each month of the survey are shown in the graph.

For nearly two years, the percentage of those experiencing more mental stress than the previous month has steadily decreased; however, the data showing this decline is too insignificant to lower the overall Mental Stress Change score to below 50 (the level at which stress is lower than the previous month). As the proportion of individuals reporting the same level of stress or more stress than the previous month continues to outweigh the proportion reporting less mental stress, the population will continue to feel the effects of significantly increased stress and will not be able to reach a more sustainable and healthy level of stress.

In April 2020, 49 percent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. The number of respondents reporting increased month-over-month mental stress is 18 percent in December 2021, while 72 percent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and 10 percent report a decrease in mental stress.

Mental Stress Change by month



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, younger people have experienced a greater increase in mental stress month over month compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, women have had larger increases in mental stress compared to men. In November 2021, the mental stress change score for women is 55.0 compared to 52.5 for men.

Geography

• The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in the Midwest (54.6), followed by the Southern Untied States (54.1), the Western United States (53.3), and the Northeast (52.8).

Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced salary (64.8), followed by employed people with reduced hours (62.5), employed people with no change to salary or hours (52.5), and unemployed people (51.8).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (54.4) than non-managers (53.4).

Employment status	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	52.9	52.5
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	62.5	62.5
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	64.8	65.8
Not currently employed	51.8	51.5
Age group	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Age 20-29	60.0	59.2
Age 30-39	55.9	56.6
Age 40-49	55.1	55.8
Age 50-59	53.2	52.9
Age 60-69	50.8	50.0
Number of children	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
No children in household	52.6	52.2
1 child	56.2	57.5
2 children	56.5	56.1
3 children or more	58.3	53.9

Region	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Northeast	52.8	53.4
Midwest	54.6	53.2
South	54.1	54.2
West	53.3	52.2
Gender	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Men	52.5	52.4
Women	55.0	54.3
Household income	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
<\$30K/annum	56.7	54.1
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	56.9	55.1
\$60K to <\$100K	53.4	52.4
\$100K to <\$150K	52.1	52.8
\$150K or more	51.5	53.0

Employer size	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	53.8	51.8
2-50 employees	52.9	52.4
51-100 employees	53.1	52.1
101-500 employees	54.7	54.7
501-1,000 employees	56.4	56.0
1,001-5,000 employees	52.3	54.1
5,001-10,000 employees	52.7	52.6
More than 10,000 employees	53.8	52.4
Manager	Dec. 2021	Nov. 2021
Manager	54.4	54.9
Non-manager	53.4	52.4

Numbers highlighted in orange are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in green are the least negative scores in the group.

Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

The Mental Stress Change (industry)

In December 2021, individuals employed in Utilities (48.8) report less mental stress than the prior month while those employed in Construction (50.0), and Public Administration (50.2) report no increase in mental stress. A score of 50 means that the proportion of the population experiencing more stress is balanced by the proportion experiencing less stress. A score below 50 indicates that the group is experiencing less stress than the prior month.

Full-time post-secondary students have the most significant increase in mental stress (68.3) followed by those employed in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (57.8), and Finance and Insurance (57.1).

Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table.

Industry	December 2021	November 2021
Utilities	48.8	58.7
Construction	50.0	46.6
Public Administration	50.2	50.9
Other services (except Public Administration)	50.7	55.6
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	51.0	49.5
Accommodation	51.4	48.6
Manufacturing	51.9	50.3
Educational Services	52.5	53.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	52.6	52.9
Transportation and Warehousing	53.2	53.2
Other	53.6	52.7
Administrative and Support services	54.2	53.8
Wholesale Trade	54.2	54.0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	54.4	52.5
Management of Companies and Enterprises	54.5	54.1
Information and Cultural Industries	54.7	61.9
Retail Trade	55.4	52.8
Health Care and Social Assistance	56.2	54.1
Food Services	56.6	56.7
Finance and Insurance	57.1	57.7
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	57.8	52.0
l am a student	68.3	55.7

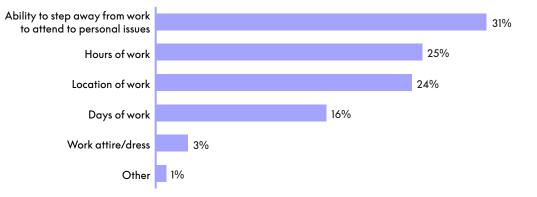
Spotlight

Flexibility at work

Americans were asked about the type of flexibility that is most important to them at work.

- Nearly one-third (31 percent) report that the ability to step away from work to attend to personal issues is the most important type of flexibility, followed by 25 percent reporting that hours of work is the most important, and 24 percent reporting that the location of work is the most important type of flexibility at work.
- Americans under the age of 40 are nearly 70 percent more likely than those 50 and over to indicate that days of work is the most important type of flexibility at work.

Most important type of flexibility at work

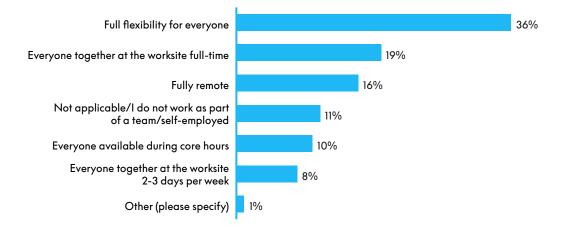


Teamwork

Americans were asked which model would work best for their team.

- More than one-third (36 percent) report that full flexibility for everyone (days, hours, and location) would work best for their team.
- Nearly one in five (19 percent) report that having everyone together at the worksite full-time is the best, followed by 16 percent reporting that a fully remote team would work best.
- Non-unionized employees are 35 percent more likely than union employees to indicate working completely remotely as the best for their team.
- Managers are 50 percent more likely than non-managers to report having everyone available during core hours as the best for their team.
- Those under 40 years old are 40 percent more likely than those over the age of 50 to report that everyone working fully remotely is the best workplace dynamic.

Which model would work best for your team?

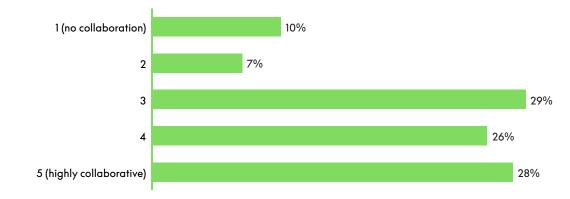


Collaboration

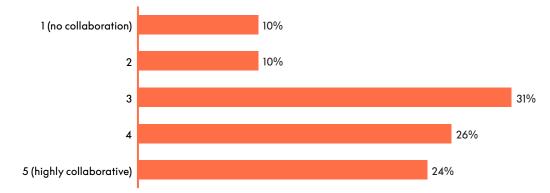
Americans were asked to rate collaboration/teamwork before the pandemic and since the pandemic began.

- More than half (54 percent) report high collaboration (a rating of four or five on a five-point scale) before the pandemic compared to 50 percent since the pandemic began. Both groups have higher mental health scores than those reporting poor collaboration.
- Seventeen percent report poor collaboration (a rating of one or two) before the pandemic compared to 20 percent since the pandemic began. Both groups reporting poor collaboration have the lowest mental health scores.

Collaboration/teamwork rating pre-pandemic



Collaboration/teamwork rating since the pandemic began



Support for employee wellbeing

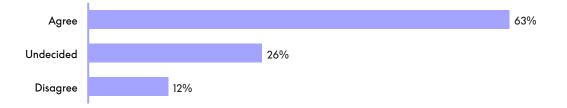
Americans were asked whether the HR policies at their organization supports employee wellbeing.

- Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) agree that HR policies at their organization support employee wellbeing, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.7).
- Those who disagree that HR policies at their organization support employee wellbeing have the lowest mental health score (-13.4).

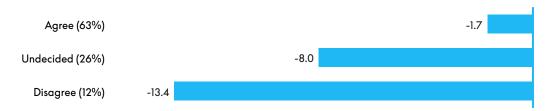
Americans were asked whether they believe that the CEO of their organization genuinely cares about employee wellbeing.

- Nearly three in five (59 percent) agree that their organization's CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.4).
- Fourteen percent do not believe that their organization's CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing and this group has the lowest mental health score (-13.4).
- Managers are 40 percent more likely than non-managers to agree that the CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing.

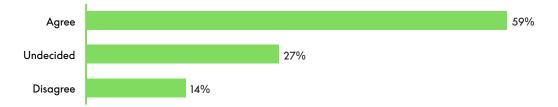
HR policies at my organization support employee wellbeing



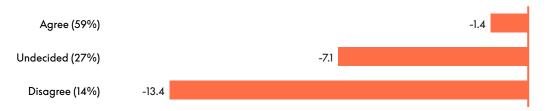
MHI score by HR policies at my organization support employee wellbeing



My organization's CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing



MHI score by my organization's CEO genuinely cares about employee wellbeing



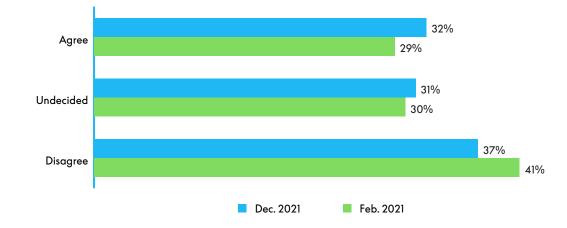
Mental health stigma

Self-stigma

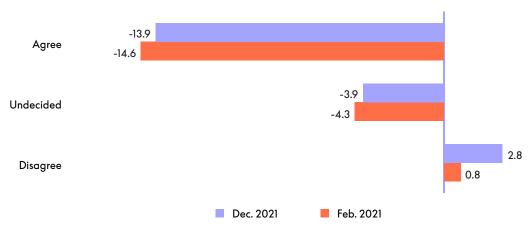
In February 2021 and December 2021, Americans were asked whether they would feel negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue.

- In December 2021, nearly one-third (32 percent) would feel negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue, nearly the same proportion (29 percent) reported in February 2021. The mental health score of those who would feel negatively about themselves is significantly lower (-13.9), than the national average (-4.6).
- Overall, the mental health scores among each group of respondents are more favorable in December 2021 compared to February 2021.
- Americans under the age of 40 are twice as likely as those 50 and over to feel negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue.

I would feel negatively about myself if I had a mental health issue



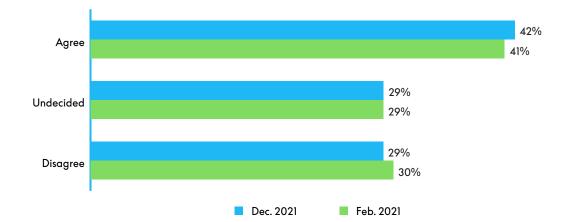
MHI score by I would feel negatively about myself if I had a mental health issue



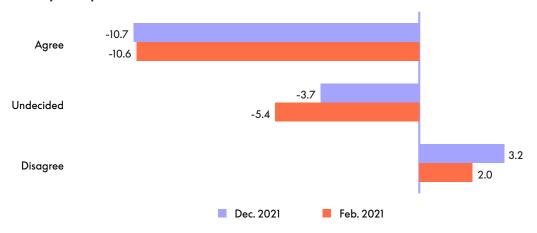
Career impact

In February 2021 and December 2021, Americans were asked whether they would be concerned that their career options would be limited if they had a mental health issue, and their workplace was aware.

- In December 2021, more than two in five (42 percent) believe that their career options would be limited if they had a mental health issue and their workplace was aware, a slightly lower proportion than reported (41 percent) in February 2021. The mental health score of those who would be concerned about career impact is significantly lower (-10.7), than the national average (-4.6).
- Overall, the mental health scores among each group of respondents are more favorable in December 2021 compared to February 2021.
- Americans under the age of 40 are nearly 60 percent more likely than those 50 and over to believe that their career options would be limited if they had a mental health issue, and their workplace was aware.



MHI score by my career options would be limited if I had a mental health issue, and my workplace was aware



My career options would be limited if I had a mental health issue, and my workplace was aware

Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

The mental health and wellbeing of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index[™] provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults in each geography compared to benchmarks collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by business and government.

The Mental Health Index[™] report has three parts:

- The overall Mental Health Index[™] (MHI), which is a measure of change compared to the benchmark of mental health and risk.
- 2. A Mental Stress Change (MStressChg) score, which measures the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month.
- 3. A spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community.

Methodology

Data for this report is collected through an online survey of 5,000 people who live in the United States and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United States. The same respondents take part each month to remove a sampling bias. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index[™] has been published monthly since April 2020. Benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Data for the current report was collected between December 3 and 14, 2021.

Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index[™], the first step leverages a response scoring system turning individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Everyone's scores are added and then divided by a total number of possible points to get a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores.

To demonstrate change, the current month's scores are then compared to the benchmark and the prior month. The benchmark comprises data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. The change compared to the benchmark is the Mental Health Index[™]. A score of zero in the Mental Health Index[™] reflects no change, positive scores reflect improvement, and negative scores reflect decline. A Mental Stress Change score is also reported given that increasing and prolonged mental stress is a potential contributor to changes in mental health. It is reported separately and is not part of the calculation of the Mental Health Index[™]. The Mental Stress Change score is (percentage reporting less mental stress + percentage reporting the same level of mental stress *0.5) * -1 + 100. The score reflects a comparison of the current to the prior month. A Mental Stress Change score of 50 reflects no change in mental stress from the prior month. Scores above 50 reflect an increase in mental stress and scores below 50 reflect a decrease in mental stress. The range is from zero to 100. A succession of scores over 50, month over month, reflects high risk.

Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdown of sub-scores, and specific crosscorrelational and custom analyses, are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group is available upon request. Contact MHI@lifeworks.com

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About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a world leader in providing digital and in-person solutions that support the total wellbeing of individuals. We deliver a personalized continuum of care that helps our clients improve the lives of their people and by doing so, improve their business.

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