

The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

United States of America | November 2021



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November 2021 highlights

 While there is high adoption for digital or video support, almost half of working Americans indicate a preference for in-person mental health support.

At nearly four points below the pre-pandemic benchmark, the mental health of Americans continues to show strain

- The Mental Health Index™ for November 2021 has increased from October but remains nearly four points below the pre-2020 benchmark.
- Differences in mental health scores between those with and without emergency savings have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Nearly two years later, individuals without emergency savings have a mental health score (-21.8) more than 18 points below the overall group (-3.7) and more than 20 points below those with emergency savings (0.9).
- For the 20th consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-18.8) by a significant margin.

In spite of wider adoption of digital/video mental health support, almost half of Americans want in-person support

- 39% of Americans indicate a preference for in-person support.
- 26% do not have a preference.
- The remaining 27% indicate a preference for video, digital, telephonic or another modality.

Nearly one-fifth of working Americans report that their working life has worsened since the start of the pandemic

- 17% of Americans indicate that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic; the mental health of this group is nearly 11 points below the national average.
- Americans working from home are 75 percent more likely than those working at the worksite to report an improvement in their working lives compared to before the pandemic.
- 16% of Americans report that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic; the mental health of this group is nearly 15 points below the national average.

Improving sleep is the most valued area of mental health support for Americans

- 39% of Americans report that improving sleep is the greatest value for their mental health.
- 38% indicate that the most valued area of support is improving mental focus, memory, and problem solving.

39%

want to improve
their sleep

39%

prefer in-person
counseling

38%

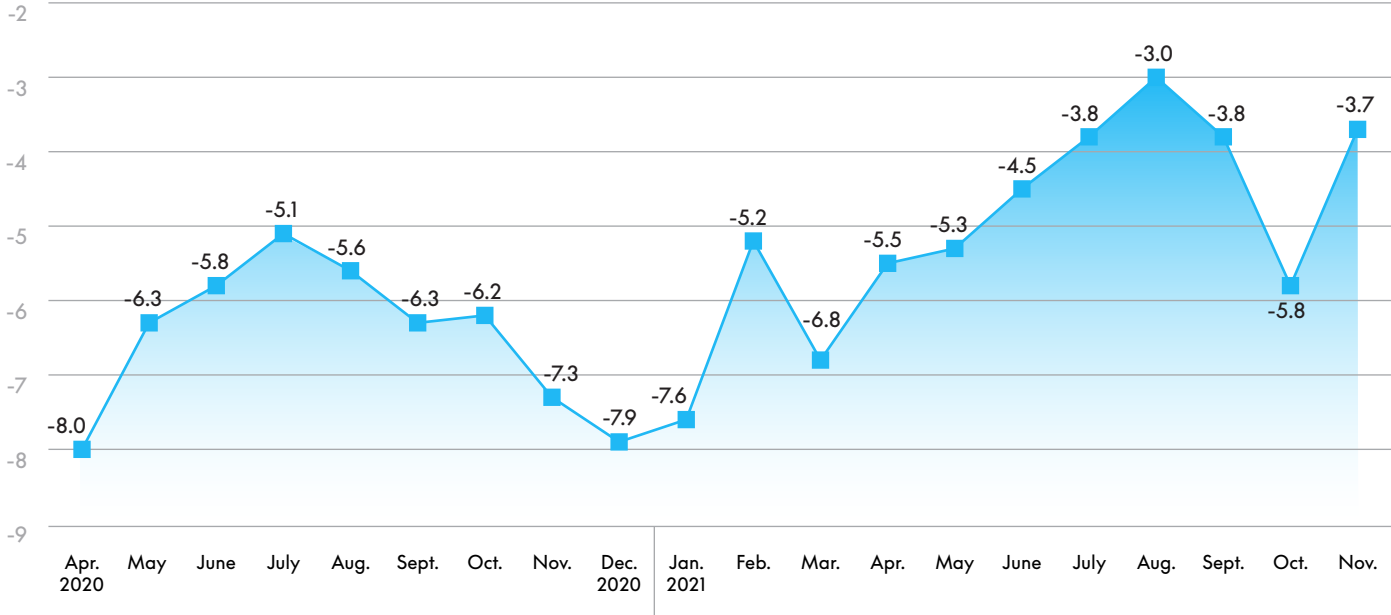
want to improve
their mental focus, memory,
and problem solving

17%

indicate worsening of
their working life since
the pandemic

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 November 2021 is -3.7 points.** A nearly 4-point decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed fortieth percent of the benchmark population.



MHI Current Month
November 2021

-3.7

October 2021

-5.8

¹ 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 (-5.7), followed by isolation (-5.0), anxiety (-4.8), depression (-4.5), anxiety (-8.1), and optimism (-3.8). General psychological health (3.3) and financial risk (10.3) are the only two sub-scores above the benchmark.

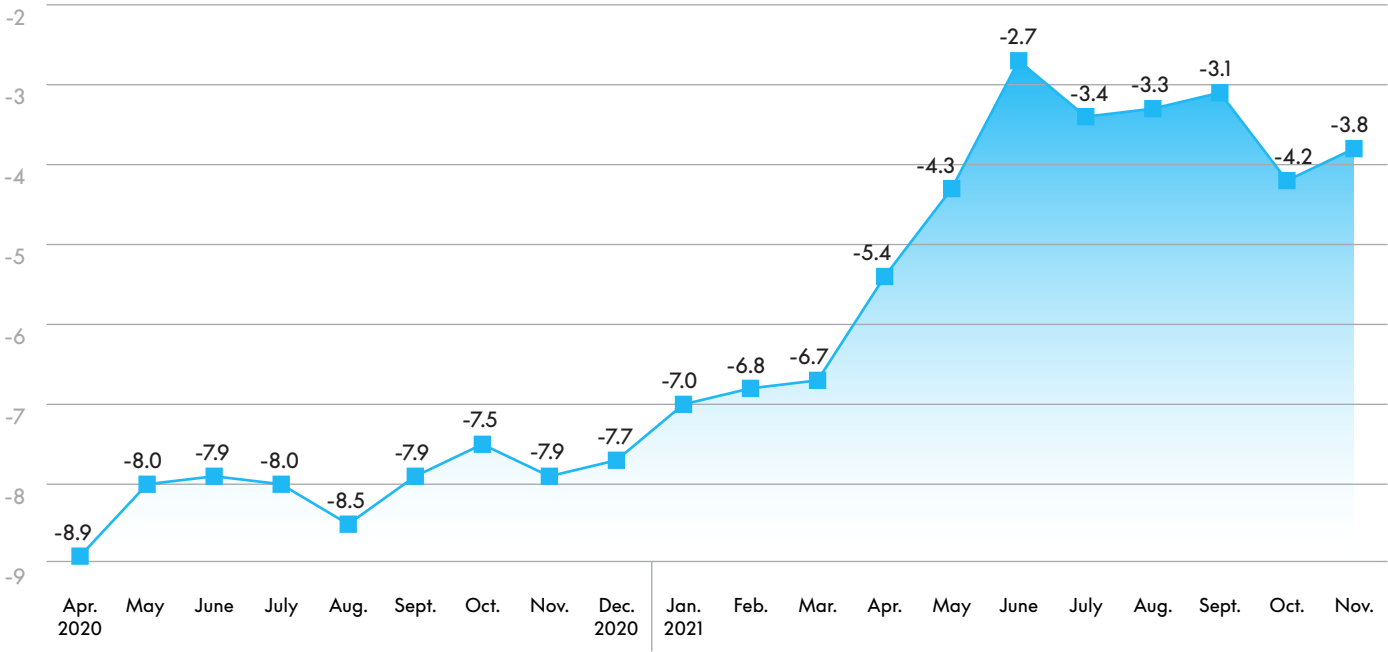
- All mental health sub-scores improved in November 2021.
- With a 2-point improvement in November, the financial risk score continues to be the strongest of all sub-scores and is more than 10 points above the pre-2020 benchmark.

Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores ² 2021	November	October
Work productivity	-5.7	-8.8
Isolation	-5.0	-7.7
Anxiety	-4.8	-8.1
Depression	-4.5	-8.5
Optimism	-3.8	-4.2
Psychological health	3.3	2.9
Financial risk	10.3	8.3

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

Optimism

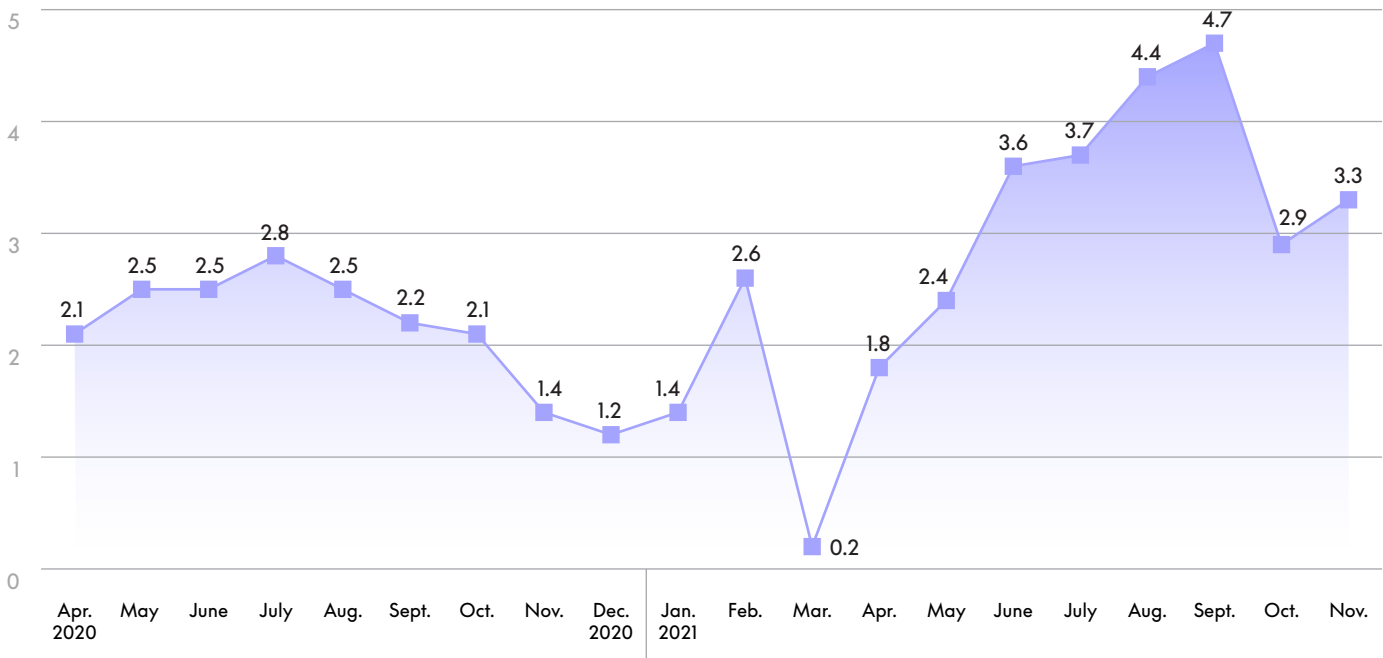
For more than one year, since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, optimism scores have remained significantly below the benchmark. Since April 2021, the optimism scores have improved meaningfully and in June 2021, the score (-2.7) was approaching the pre-2020 benchmark. In July 2021, the score fell 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 (-4.2). A slight improvement is seen in November 2021 to -3.8.



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. A slight rebound is seen in November to 3.3 points above the pre-2020 benchmark.



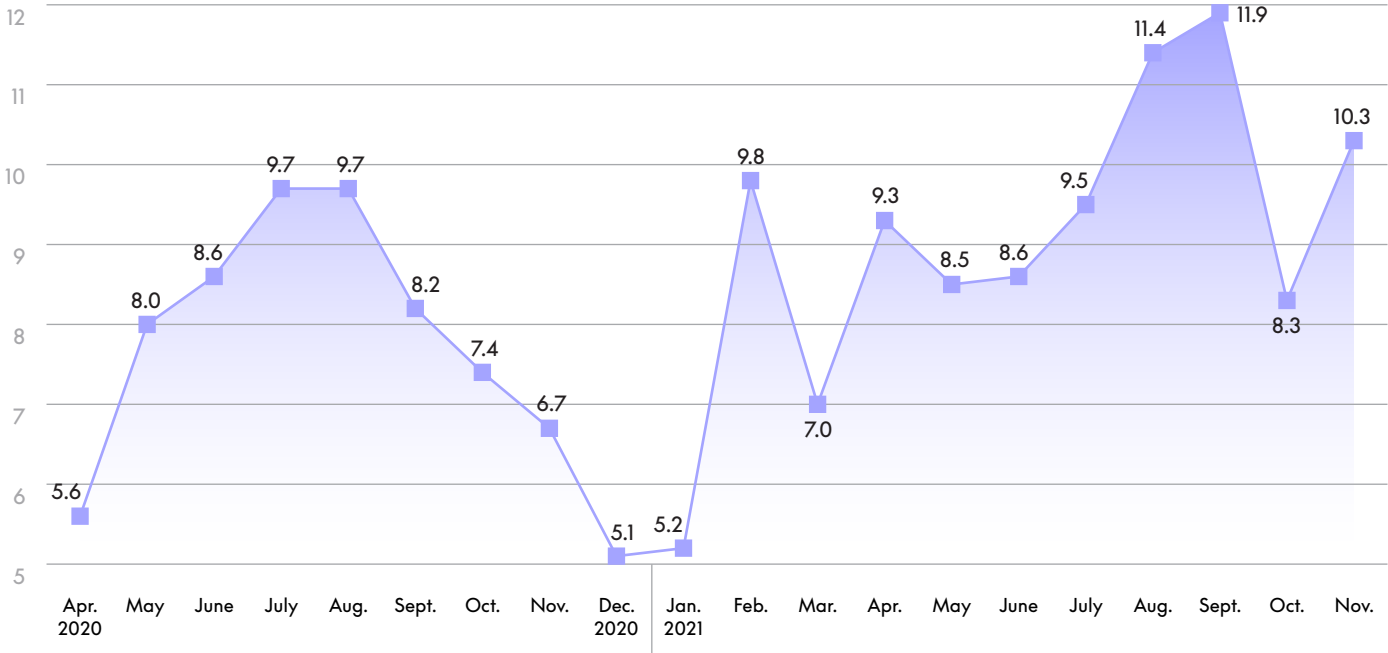
Financial risk

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.

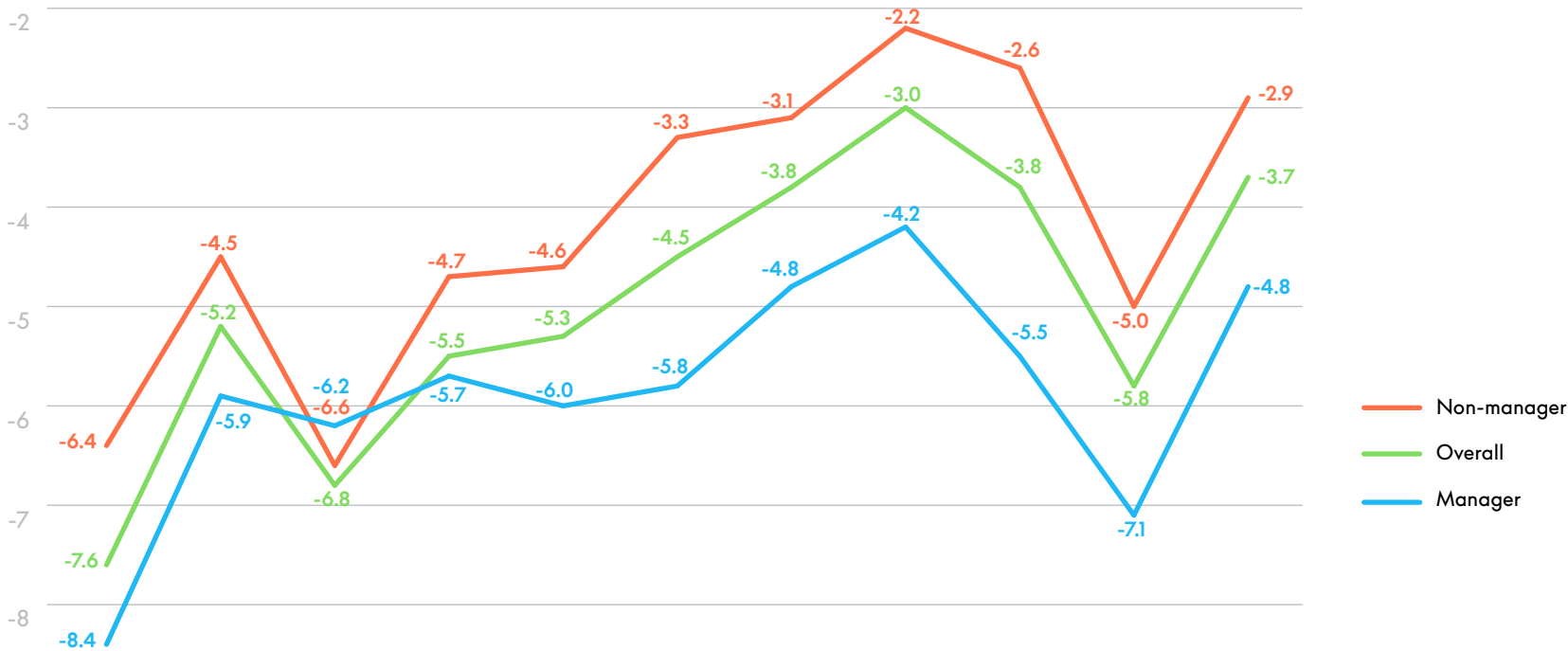
In October, a decline of nearly 4 points was observed, with financial risk falling to the lowest score in six months.

The financial risk sub-score rebounded two points in November 2021 to 10.3. At 10 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 (-4.8) and non-managers (-2.9) improved in November 2021.



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In November 2021, the mental health score of women is -6.2 compared to -1.1 for men.
- In each of the past 20 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. More than one year later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-9.9) compared to those without children (-1.3).

Employment

- Overall, three per cent of respondents are unemployed³ and eight percent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-18.2), followed by those reporting fewer hours (-14.6), and those not currently employed (-6.8).
- Managers have a lower mental health score (-4.8) than non-managers (-2.9).
- Individuals working for companies with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (-0.3).
- Respondents working for companies with 501-1,000 employees have the lowest mental health score (-7.9).

Emergency savings

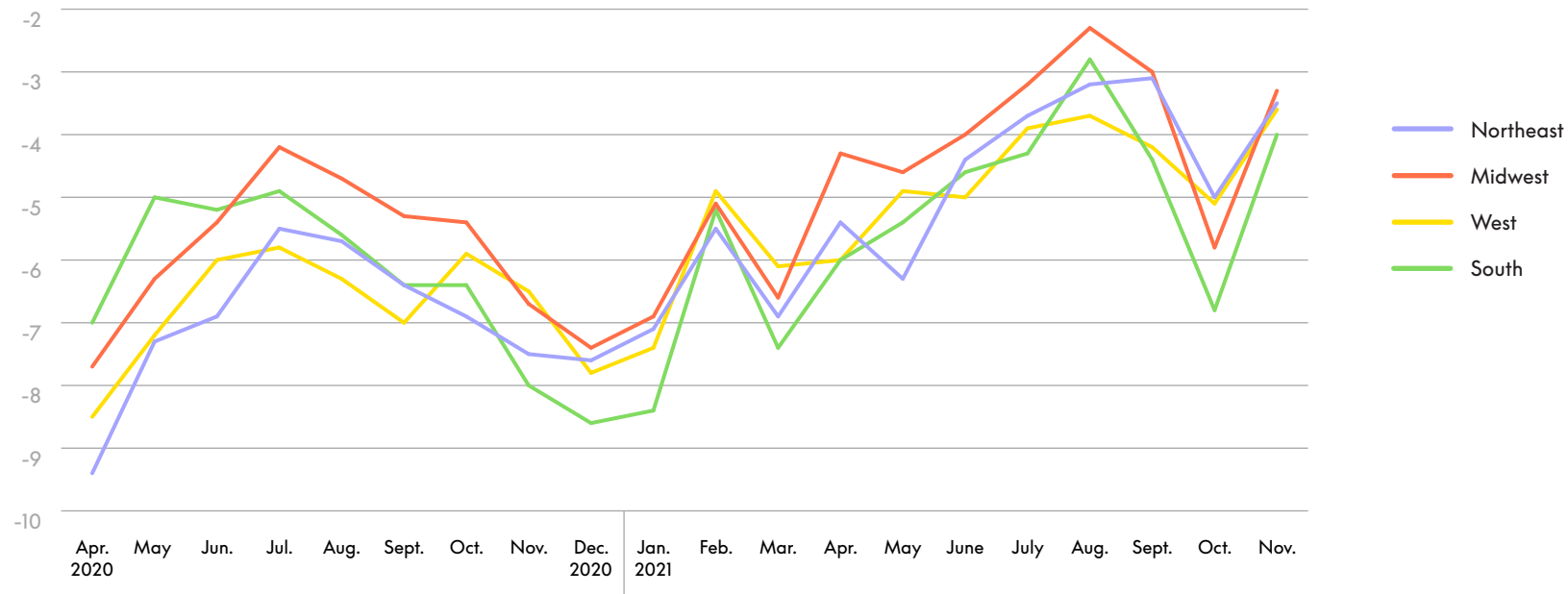
- Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (-21.8) than the overall group (-3.7). Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of 0.9.

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 have improved in November 2021.

- With a 2.5-point increase over October 2021, the mental health score in the Midwest is strongest (-3.3).
- Despite a significant 2.8-point increase in November, the mental health score in the South remains the lowest (-4.0).



Employment status	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-2.5	-4.6
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-14.6	-15.8
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-18.2	-20.2
Not currently employed	-6.8	-6.6
Age group	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Age 20-29	-16.2	-17.1
Age 30-39	-11.5	-14.1
Age 40-49	-7.4	-8.3
Age 50-59	-1.1	-3.2
Age 60-69	4.1	3.2
Number of children	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
No children in household	-1.3	-2.9
1 child	-9.9	-12.1
2 children	-9.8	-11.9
3 children or more	-9.9	-10.7

Region	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Northeast	-3.5	-5.0
Midwest	-3.3	-5.8
South	-4.0	-6.8
West	-3.6	-5.1
Gender	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Men	-1.1	-3.9
Women	-6.2	-7.6
Household income	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
<\$30K/annum	-12.5	-14.7
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	-8.3	-10.1
\$60K to <\$100K	-3.6	-4.8
\$100K to <\$150K	-1.6	-4.0
\$150K or more	3.7	0.5

Employer size	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	-3.4	-5.4
2-50 employees	-2.8	-5.5
51-100 employees	-5.6	-8.6
101-500 employees	-3.9	-6.2
501-1,000 employees	-7.9	-8.8
1,001-5,000 employees	-3.1	-5.2
5,001-10,000 employees	-3.0	-5.7
More than 10,000 employees	-0.3	-2.2
Manager	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Manager	-4.8	-7.1
Non-manager	-2.9	-5.0

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 20th consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-18.8).

This score continues to be significantly lower than the next lowest scores: individuals employed in Information and Cultural Industries (-14.4), and Food Services (-9.5).

Individuals employed in Public Administration (2.0), Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (2.0), and Manufacturing (0.3) have the highest mental health scores this month.

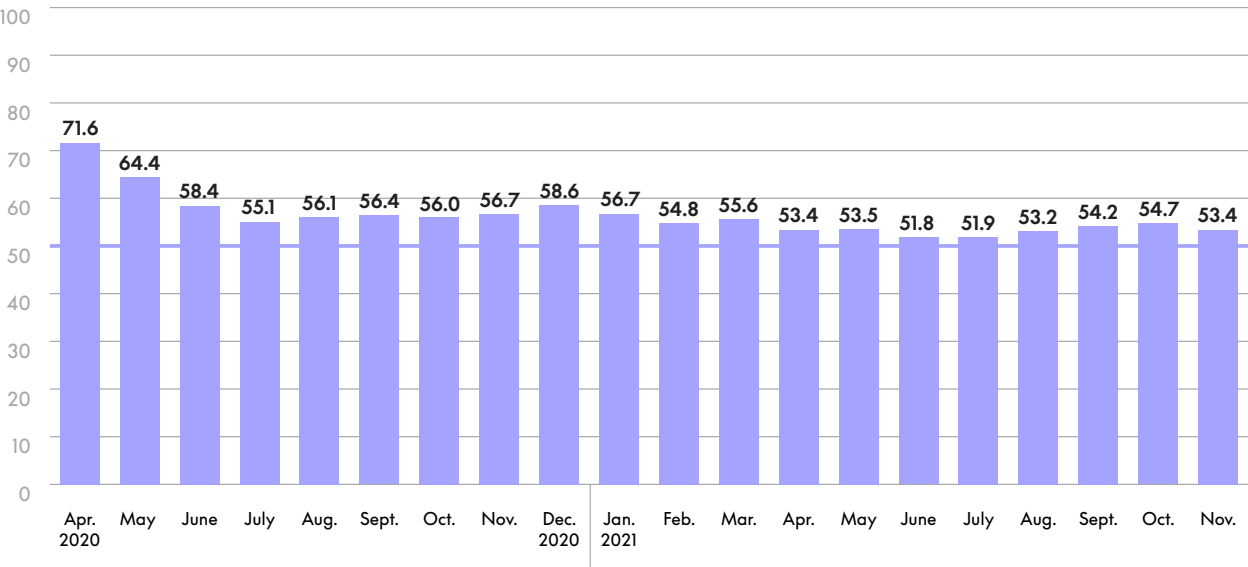
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	November 2021	October 2021	Change
Manufacturing	0.3	-5.2	5.6
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-9.4	-15.0	5.6
Food Services	-9.5	-14.1	4.7
Finance and Insurance	-3.5	-7.2	3.7
Other	-3.7	-7.3	3.6
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-5.2	-8.0	2.8
Transportation and Warehousing	-1.5	-4.0	2.5
Wholesale Trade	-5.9	-8.3	2.4
Construction	-4.5	-6.2	1.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	0.1	-1.5	1.6
Educational Services	-1.6	-3.1	1.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	-5.7	-7.1	1.5
Other services (except Public Administration)	-5.6	-7.0	1.4
Retail Trade	-5.9	-7.1	1.3
I am a student	-18.8	-19.7	0.9
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-2.7	-3.7	1.0
Utilities	-5.5	-6.3	0.8
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	2.0	2.3	-0.4
Public Administration	2.0	2.6	-0.6
Information and Cultural Industries	-14.4	-13.7	-0.7
Administrative and Support services	-7.9	-6.9	-1.0
Accommodation	-6.8	0.6	-7.4

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 November 2021 is 53.4.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 16 percent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with nine percent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the American population.



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

MStressChg
Current Month
November 2021

53.4

MStressChg
October 2021

54.7

Mental Stress Change (percentages)

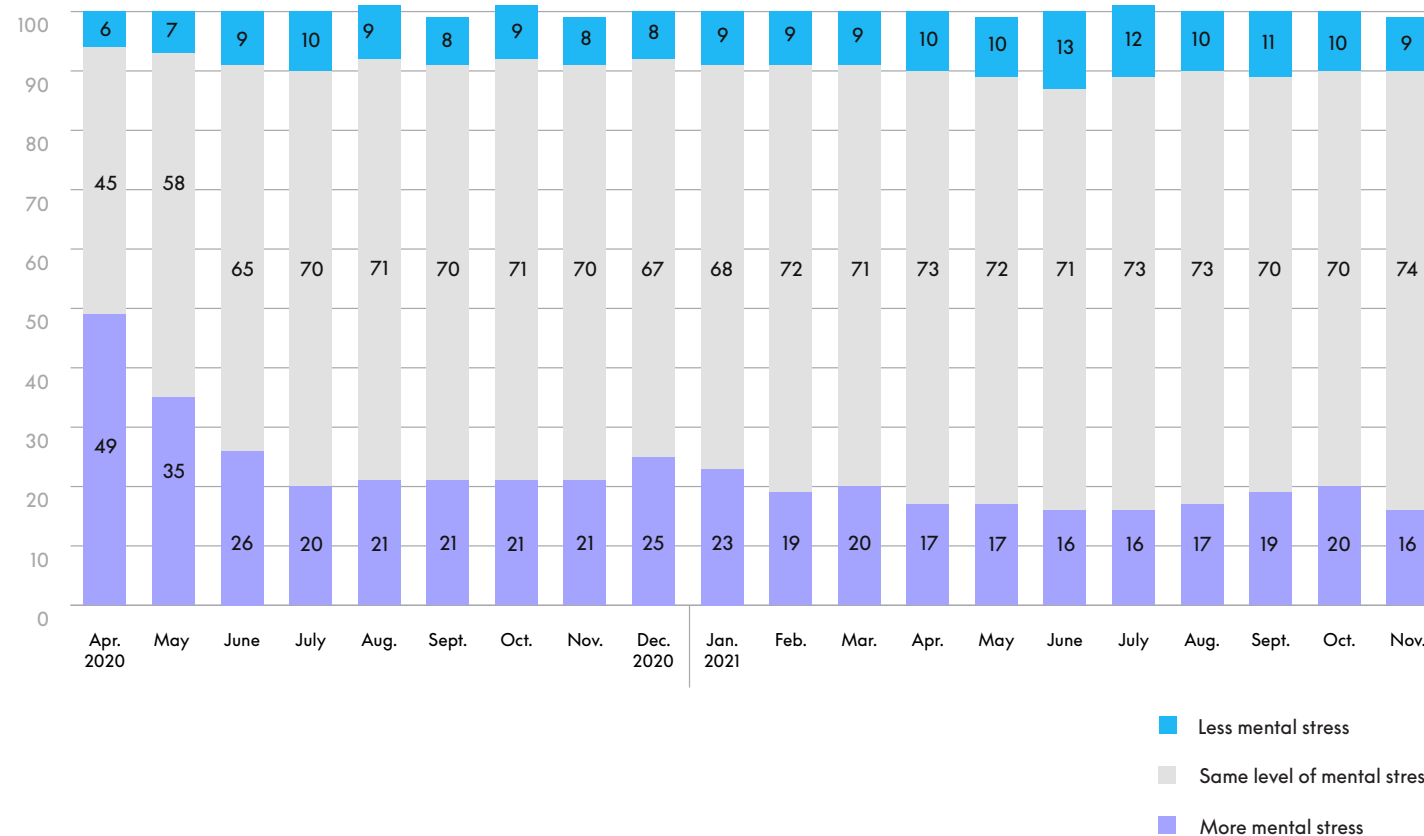
Mental Stress Change tracks stress changes each month.

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 more than one year, 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 16 percent in November 2021, while 74 percent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and nine 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 54.3 compared to 52.4 for men.

Geography

- The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in the Southern United States (54.2), followed by the Northeast (53.4), the Midwest (53.2), and the Western United States (52.2).

Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced salary (65.8), followed by employed people with reduced hours (62.5), employed people with no change to salary or hours (52.5), and unemployed people (51.5).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (54.9) than non-managers (52.4).

Employment status	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	52.5	53.8
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	62.5	61.5
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	65.8	70.9
Not currently employed	51.5	52.1

Age group	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Age 20-29	59.2	60.9
Age 30-39	56.6	59.0
Age 40-49	55.8	56.5
Age 50-59	52.9	53.7
Age 60-69	50.0	50.1

Number of children	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
No children in household	52.2	53.0
1 child	57.5	59.5
2 children	56.1	57.7
3 children or more	53.9	56.1

Region	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Northeast	53.4	54.6
Midwest	53.2	54.3
South	54.2	55.7
West	52.2	53.7

Gender	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Men	52.4	54.1
Women	54.3	55.4

Household income	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
<\$30K/annum	54.1	57.8
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	55.1	56.5
\$60K to <\$100K	52.4	53.5
\$100K to <\$150K	52.8	55.3
\$150K or more	53.0	52.9

Employer size	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	51.8	53.8
2-50 employees	52.4	54.3
51-100 employees	52.1	54.7
101-500 employees	54.7	54.9
501-1,000 employees	56.0	58.2
1,001-5,000 employees	54.1	53.7
5,001-10,000 employees	52.6	55.9
More than 10,000 employees	52.4	53.6

Manager	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021
Manager	54.9	56.7
Non-manager	52.4	53.6

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 November 2021, individuals employed in Construction (46.6), Accommodation (48.6), and Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (49.5) report less mental stress than the prior month. 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.

Individuals employed in Information and Cultural Industries have the most significant increase in mental stress (61.9) followed by those employed in Utilities (58.7), and Finance and Insurance (57.7).

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

Industry	November 2021	October 2021
Construction	46.6	51.3
Accommodation	48.6	43.8
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	49.5	52.2
Manufacturing	50.3	55.1
Public Administration	50.9	49.0
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	52.0	52.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	52.5	55.0
Other	52.7	53.1
Retail Trade	52.8	54.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	52.9	52.7
Educational Services	53.1	53.5
Transportation and Warehousing	53.2	50.0
Administrative and Support services	53.8	50.9
Wholesale Trade	54.0	55.4
Management of Companies and Enterprises	54.1	60.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	54.1	58.0
Other services (except Public Administration)	55.6	53.6
I am a student	55.7	59.2
Food Services	56.7	58.1
Finance and Insurance	57.7	61.6
Utilities	58.7	55.6
Information and Cultural Industries	61.9	58.2

Spotlight

Pandemic effect on working and personal life

Impact on working life

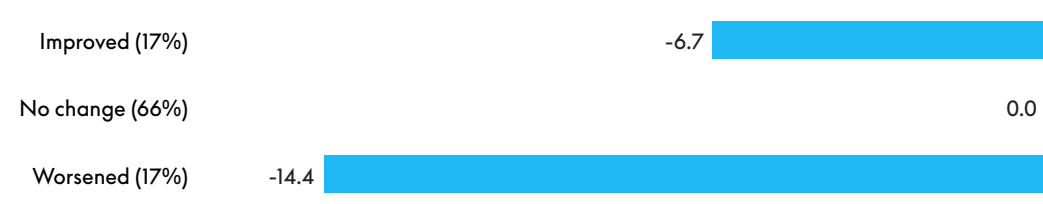
Respondents were asked how they would describe their working life now compared to before the pandemic.

- Nearly two-thirds (66 percent) report no change in their working life compared to before the pandemic and this group has the most favourable mental health score (0.0), equal to the pre-pandemic benchmark.
- Seventeen percent indicate that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-14.4), nearly 11 points below the overall American average (-3.7).

How has your working life changed compared to **before the pandemic**?

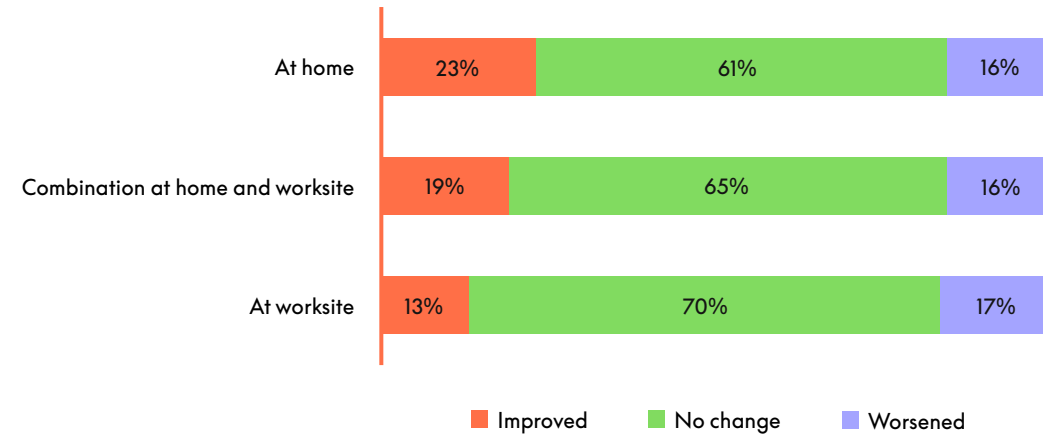


MHI score by how your work life has changed compared to before the pandemic



- Individuals working from home are 75 percent more likely than individuals working at the worksite to report an improvement in their working lives compared to before the pandemic.
- Individuals splitting their time between home and the worksite are nearly 50 percent more likely to report an improvement in their working lives than individuals working exclusively at the worksite.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary or fewer hours are more than twice as likely as individuals with no change to hours or salary to report that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic.
- Individuals without emergency funds are 50 percent more likely than individuals with emergency funds to report that their working life has worsened compared to before the pandemic.

Change in working life compared to before the pandemic (work location)



Impact on personal life

In November 2021, respondents were asked how they would describe their personal life now compared to before the pandemic.

- More than two-thirds (70 percent) report no change in their personal life when compared to before the pandemic and this group has the most favourable mental health score (0.3).
- Sixteen percent indicate that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-18.2), 14 points below the overall American average (-3.7).
- Individuals reporting reduced salary or hours are twice as likely as individuals with no change to hours or salary to report that their personal life has worsened compared to before the pandemic.
- Respondents under 40 are more than three times as likely as respondents over 50 to report an improvement in their personal lives compared to before the pandemic.

How has your personal life has changed compared to **before the pandemic**?



MHI score by how your personal life has changed compared to before the pandemic

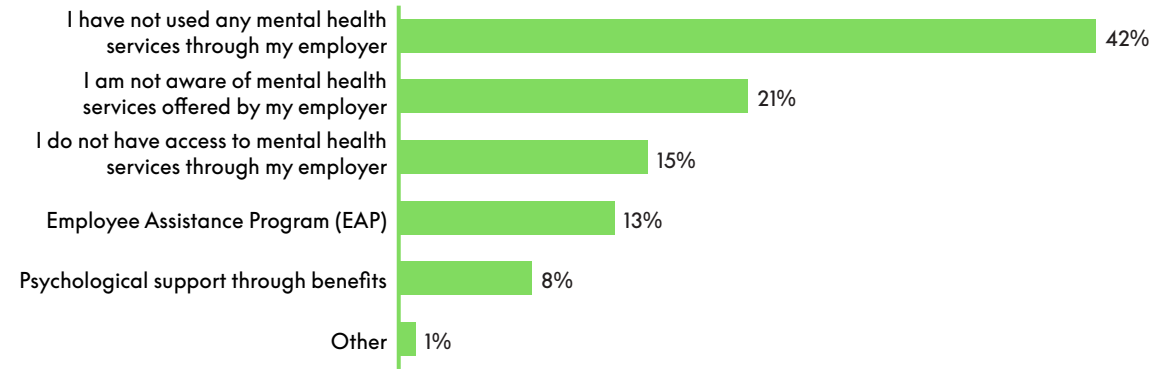


Use of employer-funded mental health services

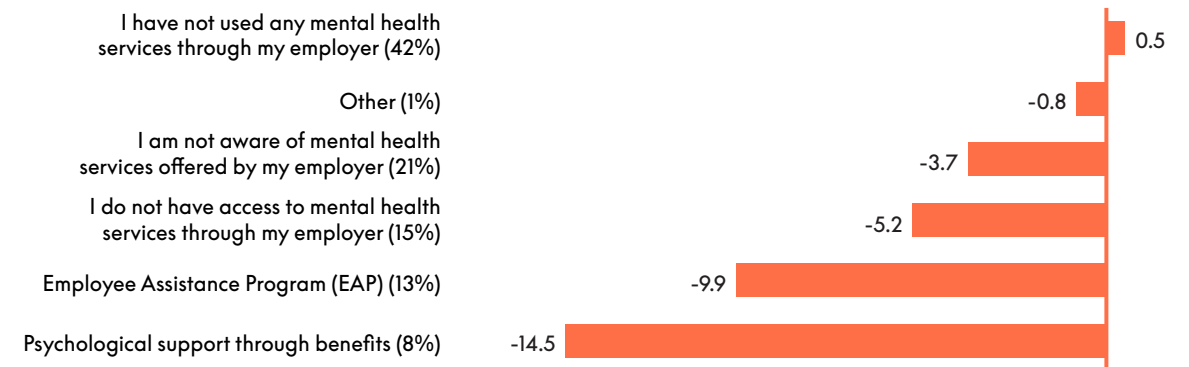
Respondents were asked whether they have used any employer-funded mental health services.

- Forty-two percent report not using any mental health services through their employer and this group has the most favourable mental health score (0.5).
- Nearly one in ten (8 percent) report using psychological support through benefits and this group has the least favourable mental health score (-14.5).
- Parents are more than three times as likely as non-parents to use an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Managers are three times more likely as non-managers to use psychological support through their benefits plan.

Use of employer-funded mental health services



MHI score by use of employer-funded mental health services

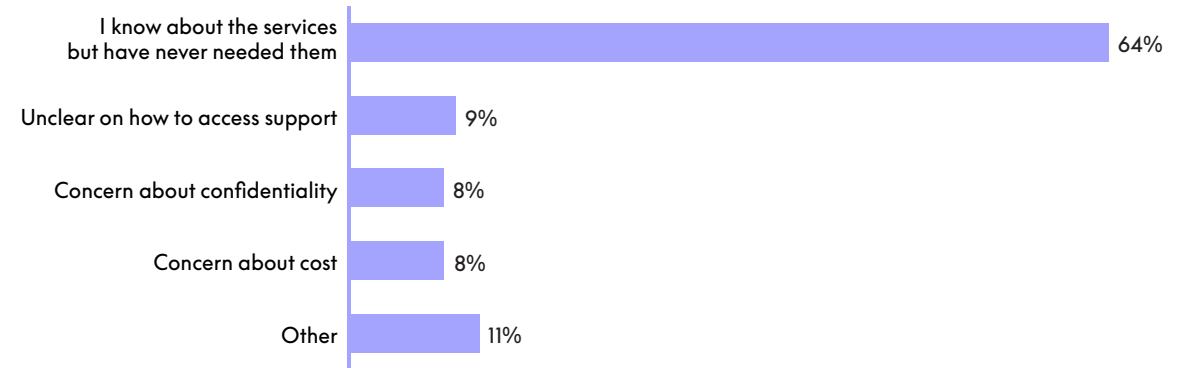


Reasons for not utilizing employer-funded mental health services

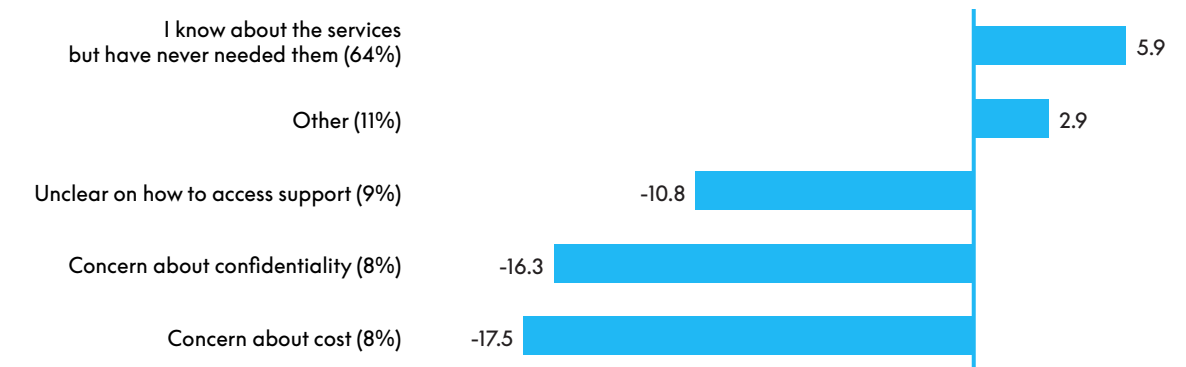
Respondents who have not used mental health services through their employer were asked why they have not used services.

- Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) report that they are aware of the services, but have never needed them, and this group has the most favourable mental health score (5.9).
- Nine percent indicate that they are unclear on how to access support and a further eight percent have concerns about confidentiality as reasons for not using mental health services through their employer.

Reason for not using employer-funded mental health services



MHI score by reason for not using employer-funded mental health services



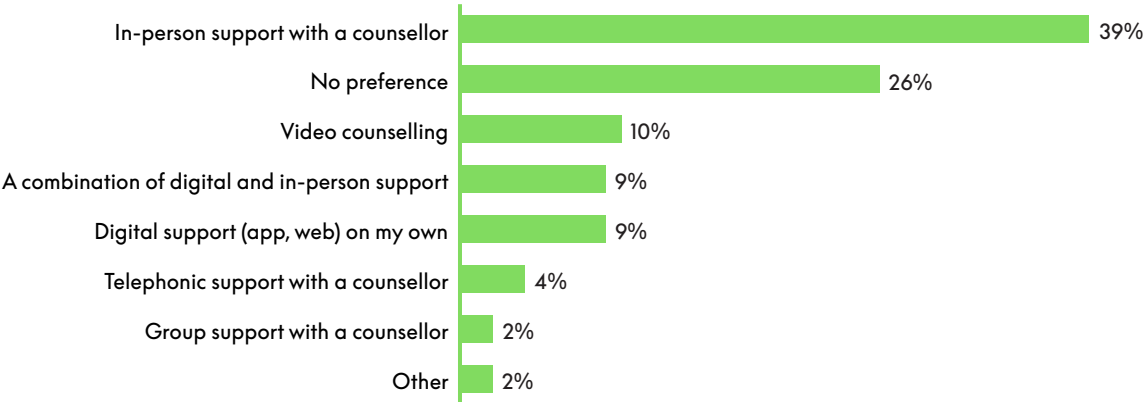
Mental health support

Modality

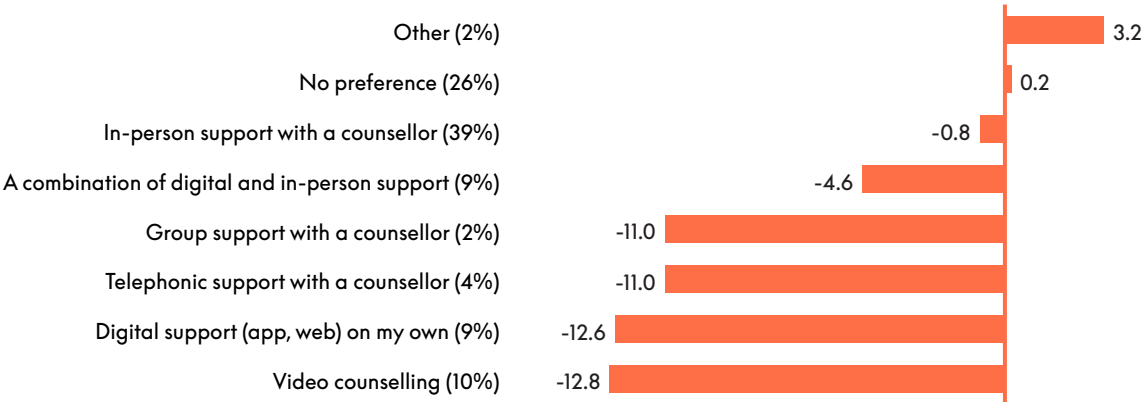
Respondents were asked about their preferred modality of mental wellbeing support.

- More than one-third (39 percent) report in-person support with a counsellor as their preferred modality for support.
- Another nine percent prefer a combination of in person and digital support.
- More than one-quarter (26 percent) report having no preference.
- Parents are twice as likely as non-parents to select video counselling as their preferred modality for support, and nearly three times as likely as non-parents to select digital support as their preferred modality.

Preferred modality for mental health support



MHI score by preferred modality for mental health support

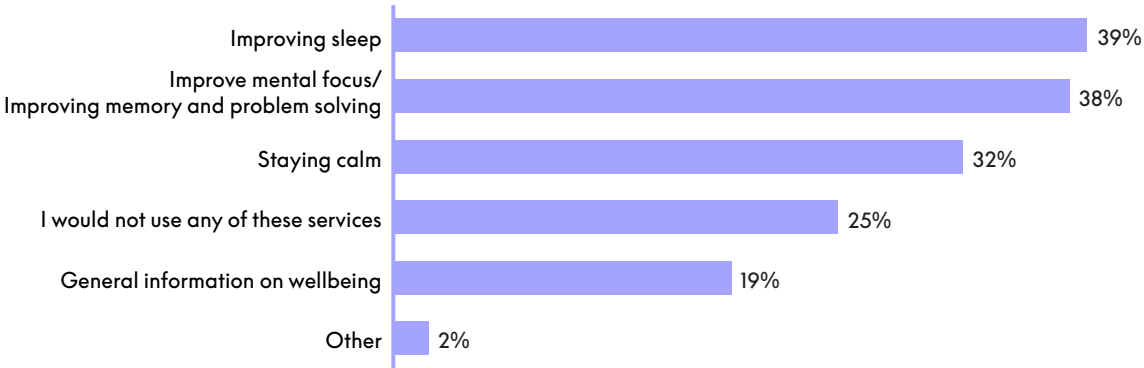


Most valued areas of mental wellbeing support

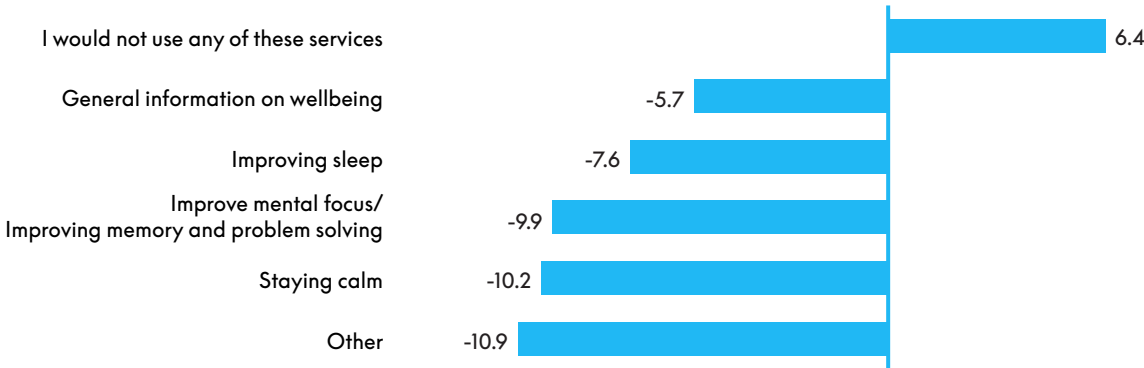
Respondents were asked about the areas that they would value mental wellbeing support.

- Nearly forty percent (39 percent) report that improving sleep is the most valued area of support.
- Parents are 50 percent more likely than non-parents to indicate that support to stay calm is their most valued area.

Mental wellbeing areas where support is most valued



MHI score by mental health areas where support is most valued



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:

1. 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 November 9 and 22, 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 cross-correlational and custom analyses, are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group is available upon request. Contact MHI@lifeworks.com



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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