

University of Notre Dame

Adult Development and Aging Lab News

Study of Health & Well-Being



Lab News

We are interested in learning how COVID-19 has affected people's lives throughout the pandemic. Our knowledge of COVID-19 has evolved since the start of the pandemic. It's important that we collect data over the course of the year to record how people have adapted.

What have we learned?

Negative affect, such as worry, anxiety, frustration, guilt, or depression, is an emotional outcome associated with stress. In this study, we asked you to tell us how your stress varies from day to day. People often describe it as being on a roller coaster—some days are good, others are more stressful. These feelings are true in general, but they are especially true when we think about how we felt due to a pandemic that we didn't know much about. The global pandemic worry last April exacerbated the relationship between our stress and our negative emotions. What we learned from this study is that having a balance of positive and negative emotions is important. What does that mean? If we can reframe our experiences to see the good in the bad, it helps our mood and our overall feelings of positivity. Think of COVID-19 as an opportunity, rather than a challenge or threat. For example, with schools closed, kids are home, more family time, etc. As one of the participants wrote... *"Developing healthy habits are a key in this season to relieve your mind"*. This is not easy, but our study showed that it is a beneficial way to deal with stress.

In March of 2020 our lab went into hibernation due to COVID-19. The University changed to online classes and our lab members started working on analyzing previously collected data from their homes. In order to capture the impact of the

pandemic we collected our first wave of COVID data online in April 2020. Data was collected for 28 days from a large portion of our research volunteers. In late September 2020 we collected our 2nd wave of COVID data. We are so grateful for all of you who have taken the time to participate in the study.

We will be collecting another round of COVID data soon, packets will be mailed out the week of February 8th (check your mailbox). **Daily Data collection (online and paper/pencil) will begin on February 14th!**

- ❖ **Are you interested in being part of our COVID-19 data collection?**
- ❖ **Do you need to update your contact information?**

Please contact: Mechelle

Phone: (574) 631-4078

Email: mcelie@nd.edu



Photo Reference - iStock

In our sample *“Older adults report that social isolation and fear of getting Covid is their primary worry.”*

According to the response *“Younger adults are more affected by the pandemic than older adults.”*

Grant News

In September 2018, Cindy Bergeman was awarded a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to continue the Notre Dame Study of Health & Well Being for 4 additional years. The study is now in it's 14th year!

In August 2020, Cindy Bergeman was awarded a supplemental grant to her NIH-NIA funded project entitled "An Integrative Science Approach to Resilience: The Notre Dame Study of Health & Well-being." The additional funding was awarded to add a COVID-19 component to the existing research project.

Student News

Grad student announcement:

Raquael Joiner, a graduate student in the Adult Development and Aging lab, defended her Ph.D this summer and has accepted a Postdoc position in UCLA's Marriage Laboratory. She was recruited for her strong theoretical and quantitative abilities in analyzing dyadic data. Raquael will start her new position in January 2021.

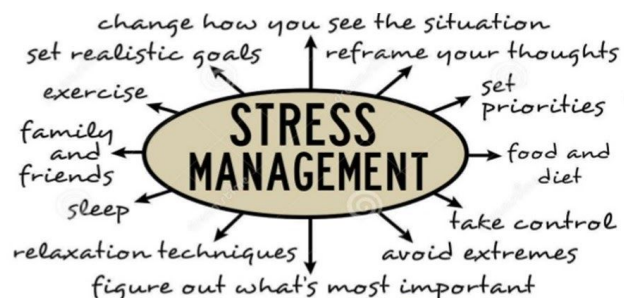
At the end of the 2019-2020 academic school year, we had four undergrad students graduate:

Allison Spraul - completing a gap year of service with Precious Blood Volunteers working at a primary care clinic serving underserved populations in the Kansas City area. She is currently applying to med school and hopes to have an offer by the fall of 2021.

Karen Aldavaz Saenz - currently working in Arizona's Children Association as a Client Support Specialist.

Rebecca Parmenter - accepted into a one year post-bac research program at Oregon Health and Sciences University with automatic acceptance into OHSU medical school upon completion.

Claudia Torres - after graduating this past May, she decided to return to Notre Dame and work towards her Masters of Science in Management degree. She will graduate in May 2021 and then start as a Healthcare consultant for Huron (Healthcare consulting) in August.



Quotes from participants regarding their thoughts about COVID-19. Have you experienced this?

"Most of my negative feelings stem from being in Quarantine, I miss my life!!!"

"Praying helps me most with dealing with uncertainties of Covid-19."

"This questionnaire helps me meditate on the events that I am living and my interaction in them making me try to do better in my relationships and in consequently trying to be a better person. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of it. "

"I don't feel safe going out to places where lots of people are."

"Eating too much because I can't go anywhere."

"I am worried about what the future holds. Not only for me but for my children and my grandchildren."

"I worry about getting injured and having to go to the hospital."

Director's Corner



Cindy S. Bergeman, Ph.D.

Professor and Chair, Department of Psychology

Mail: 390 Corbett Family Hall

Office: 314 Corbett Family Hall

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame, IN 46556

Phone: (574) 631-0881

Director, Notre Dame Study of Health & Well-being (NDHWB)

Adult Development & Aging Lab

318 Corbett Family Hall

Emotion & Stress Physiology Lab

320 Corbett Family Hall

"Thank you to everyone who has contributed to what we have learned about the effects of stress on health and well-being and the resilience resource that help others to thrive and be well."