

Challenging Times Are Taking a Toll on People's Mental Health

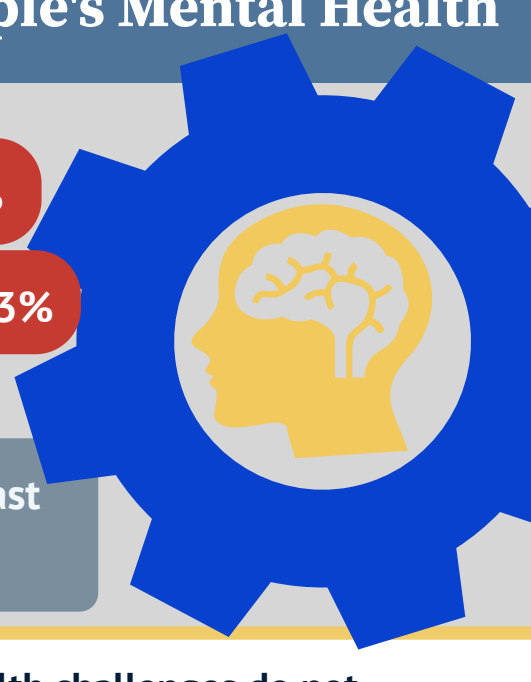
Change from 2019 to 2020:

Reported symptoms of anxiety have tripled **from 8.1% to 25.5%**

Depression symptoms have almost quadrupled **from 6.5% to 24.3%**

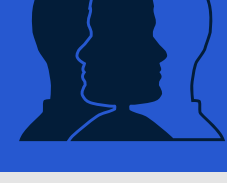
In late June, 2020:

75% of 18-to-24 year old respondents reported having at least one adverse mental or behavioral health symptom



Employers have an opportunity to ensure these mental health challenges do not turn into serious, long-lasting mental health problems

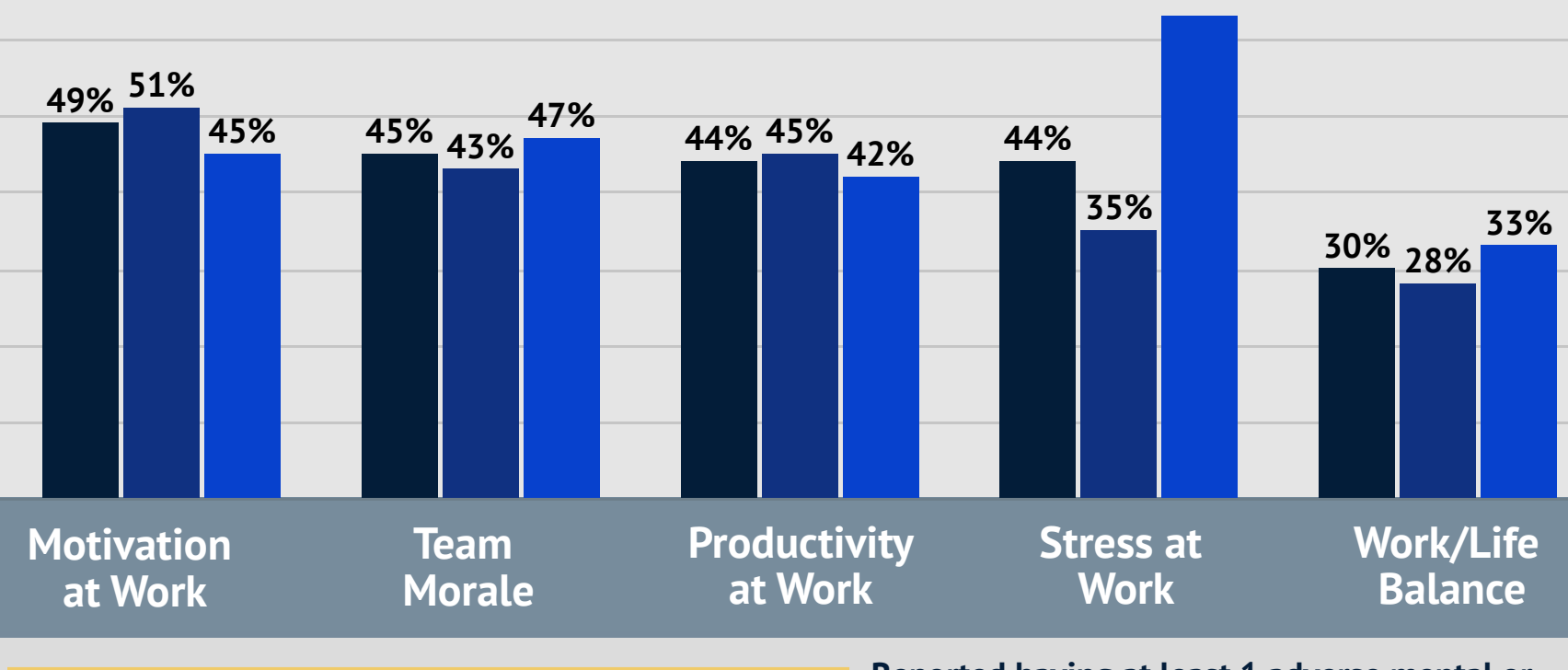
Mental Health Struggles Are Affecting Work Life



51% of people reported worse mental health at work since COVID-19 started

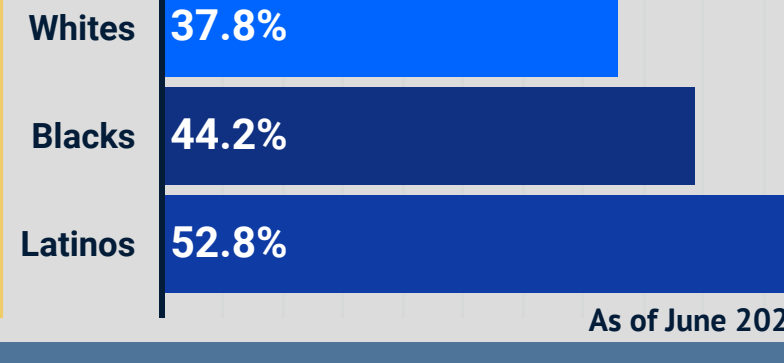
Employees report many factors impacting mental health have worsened with the pandemic

● All Employees ● Work from Home ● On Site



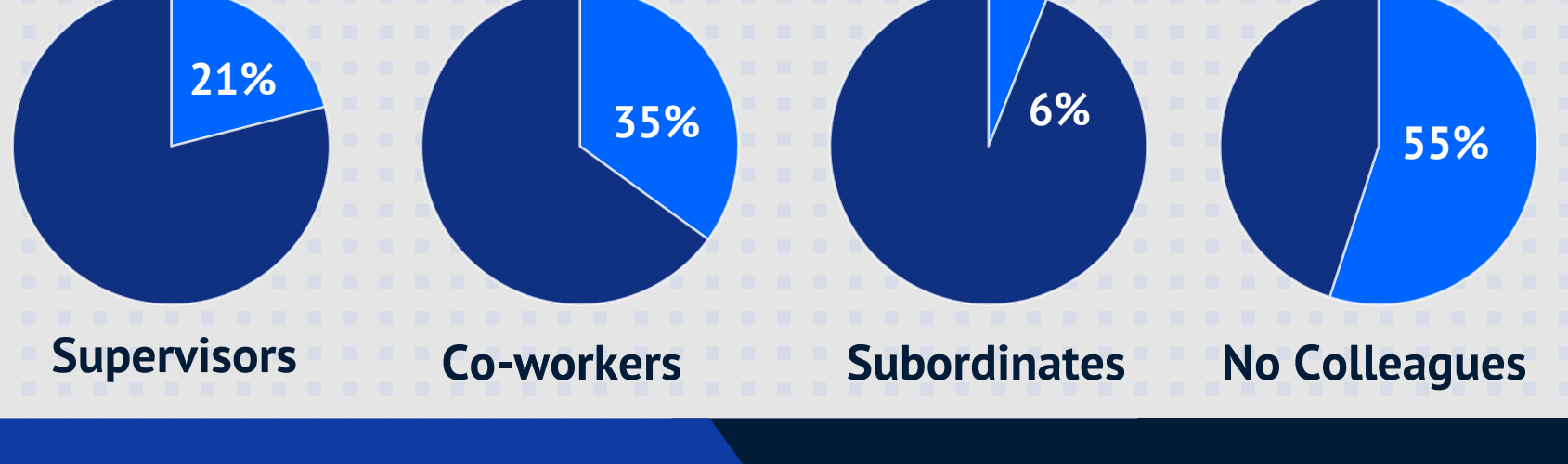
Black and Latino people are disproportionately employed in jobs that are now considered "essential" or on site jobs, which may contribute to an **increase in reported mental or behavioral health symptoms**

Reported having at least 1 adverse mental or behavioral health symptom during COVID-19



Employees Feel Like They Have No One to Turn to at Work

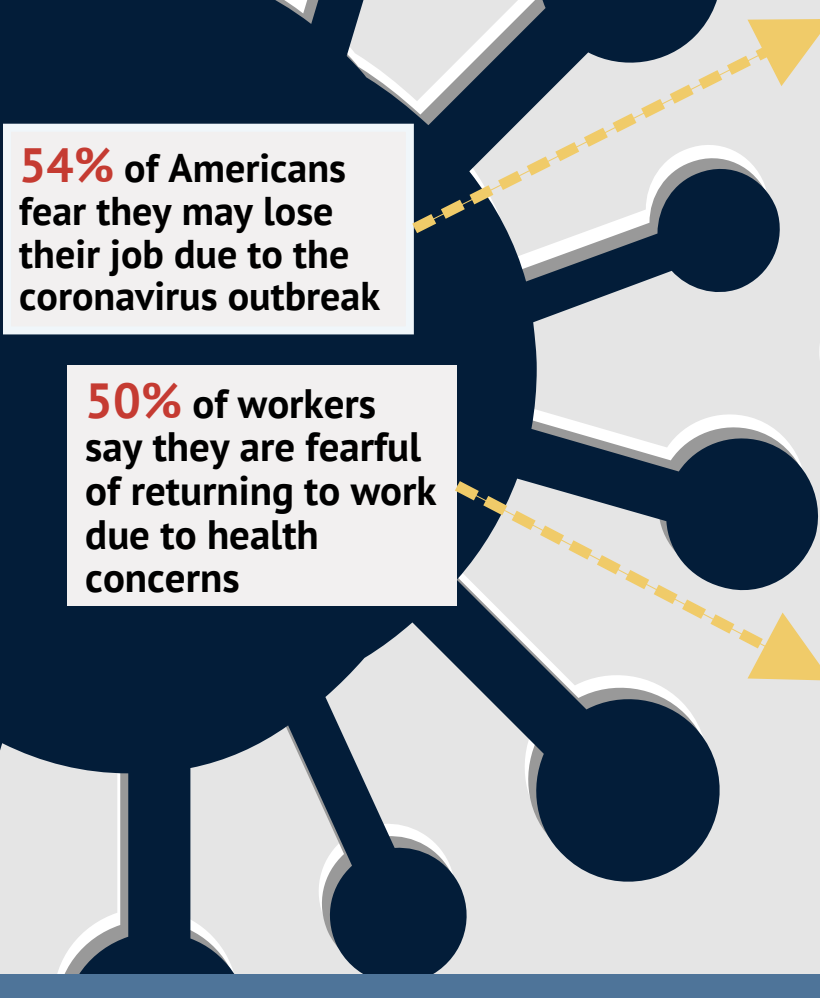
Who colleagues feel comfortable confiding in regarding their mental health:



30% of employees reported being fearful that disclosure of mental health could lead to being fired or furloughed

57% of entry-level employees reported feeling uncomfortable talking about mental health compared to 37% of managers

The Pandemic Has Increased Mental Health Risks



54% of Americans fear they may lose their job due to the coronavirus outbreak

50% of workers say they are fearful of returning to work due to health concerns

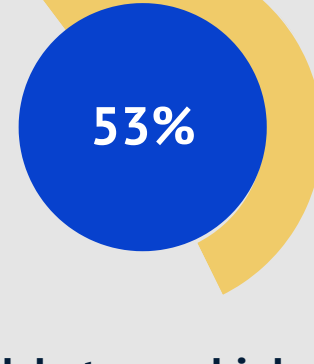
- Job loss/risk of job loss
- Isolation & social distancing
- Juggling childcare and work
- Not having proper supplies
- Fear of getting sick
- Managing an expanded workload

Mental Health Symptoms Can Lead to Serious Health Complications

Physical Effects

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Chronic Fatigue
- High Blood Pressure
- Gastrointestinal Issues

People with severe mental illness have a **53% higher risk** of having **cardiovascular disease** than those who didn't have mental illness



Research has shown a link between high levels of mental distress and an **increased risk** of dying from **cancer**

Serious mental illnesses can reduce life expectancy by **10 - 20 Years**

Strategies for Employees to Prioritize Their Own Mental Health

- Limit Media Use:** Avoid long exposure to news, media, and social media that may trigger or elevate mental stress
- Physical Exercise:** Engaging in physical exercise alleviates stress and increases endorphins, with positive impacts on mental health
- Keep a Schedule:** Create and maintain a routine and schedule with a designated space to work or learn
- Set Boundaries:** When working, including from home, be sure that you are working reasonable hours
- Get Outdoors:** Being in nature has been shown to reduce stress
- Reach Out for Support:** It is important to reach out for support when needed

What Can Employers Do to Help During COVID-19 and Beyond

- Reduce stigma, speak candidly about mental health, and lead by example
- Have wellness & health packages that emphasize & cover mental health
- Get trained in mental health first aid to recognize mental health symptoms
- Make mental health self-assessment tools and materials readily available
- Create designated office quiet zones and de-stressing areas
- Be adaptable with flexible work hours, teleworking, and increased time off
- Emerging strategies employers are using to prioritize workers mental wellness:
 - Requiring employees to go offline for an hour during lunch
 - Giving stipends that can be used for wellness coaches or classes and upgrading work from home setups
 - Hosting free digital trainings and seminars about different wellness topics
 - Giving workers a percentage of the week to work on creative projects of their choosing
 - Implementing a four day work week and increasing days off
 - Providing food stipends to employees

In addition to workplace policies, steps need to be taken outside the workplace that address childcare, food security, caretaker leave, mental health, and financial security