

THE GLOBAL EVOLUTION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Gary E. Schaffer
Geschaffer@gmail.com



TIMELINE OF COVID-19 AND SCHOOL CLOSURE



December 31, 2019

WHO informed of
"pneumonia like
cases in China



January 23, 2020

Wuhan China placed
on lockdown



March 11, 2020

WHO declares
COVID-19 a
pandemic

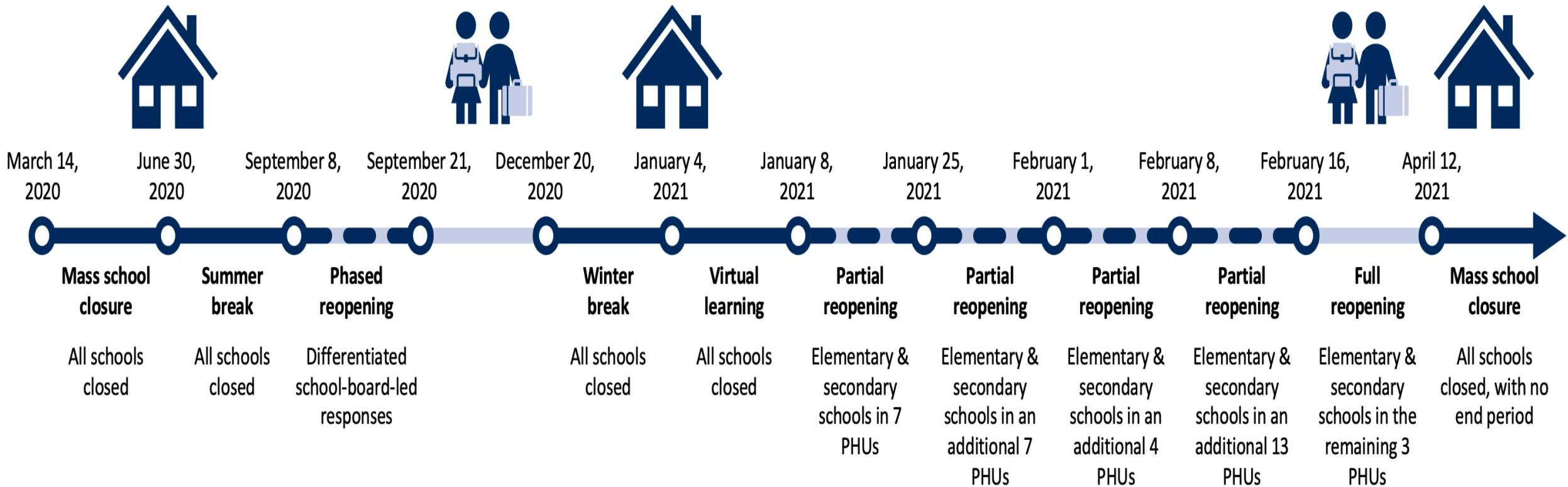


April 1, 2020

Global school
Closure

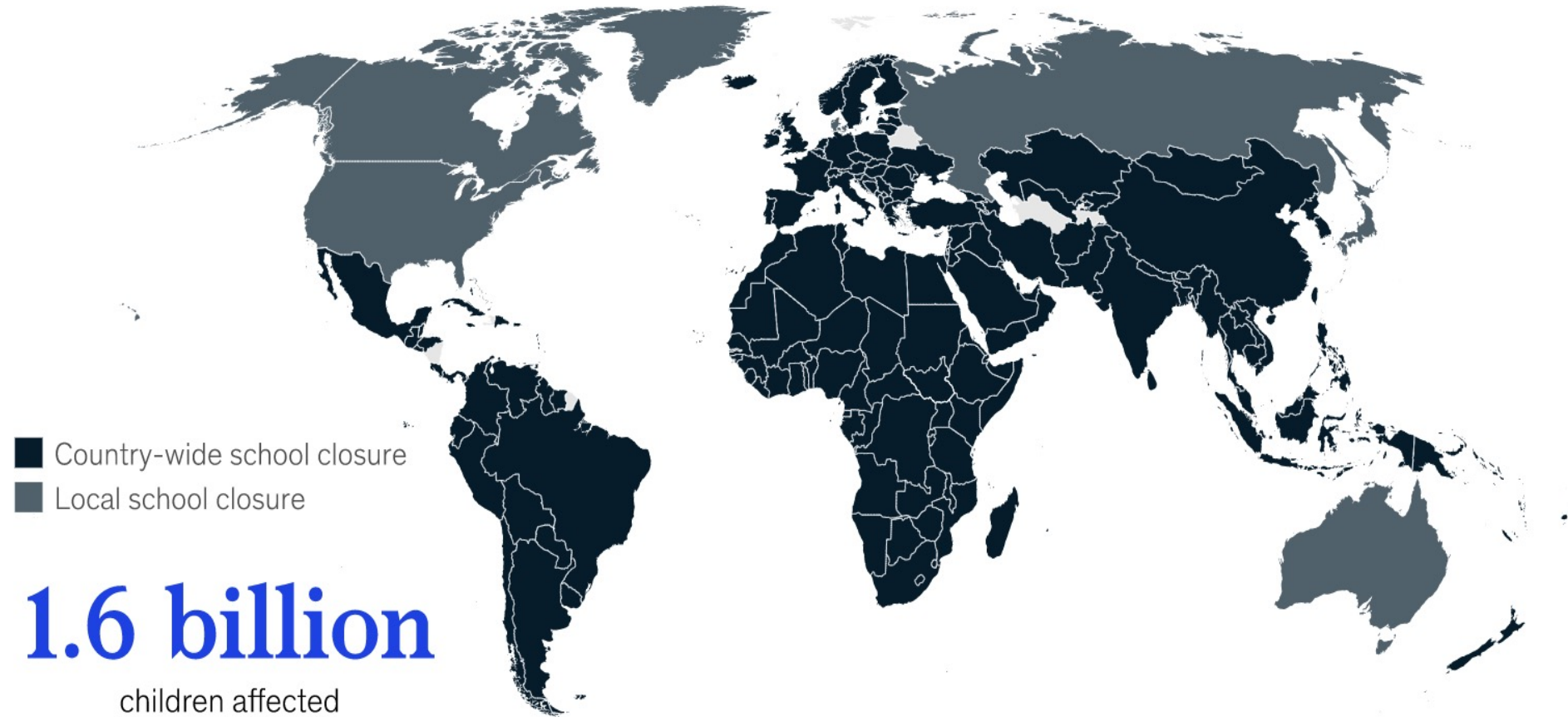


TIMELINE OF COVID-19 AND SCHOOL CLOSURE



OVERVIEW OF COVID-19 AND SCHOOL CLOSURE

By April, 2020 192 countries had closed all physical school buildings



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by McKinsey & Company.
Source: UNESCO

OVERVIEW OF COVID-19 AND SCHOOL CLOSURE

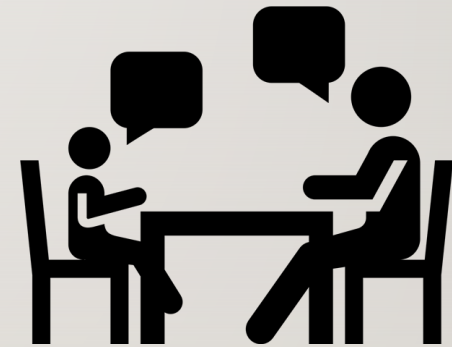
Worldwide COVID-19 Impacted:



1.6 Billion Students
(90% of school-age children impacted)

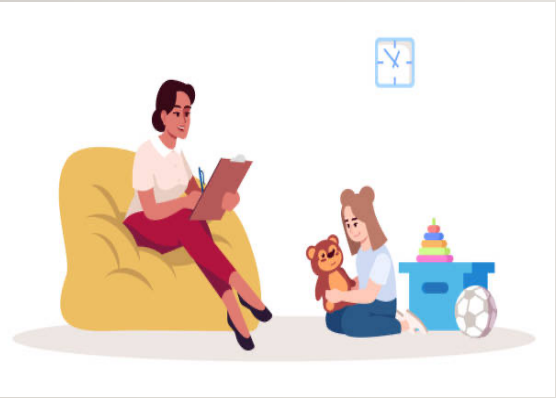


85 million teachers



76,000 School Psychologists
(32,000 in the U.S.)
(Jimerson et al., 2011)

Potential Responsibilities of School Psychologists impacted During COVID-19:



Counseling



Consultation



Data Collection & Analysis



Assessment

UNITED STATES SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY & COVID-19 STUDY



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RESEARCH ARTICLE

WILEY

Beyond the four walls: The evolution of school psychological services during the COVID-19 outbreak

Gary E. Schaffer¹ | Elizabeth M. Power² | Amy K. Fisk³ |
Teniell L. Trolan⁴

¹Department of School Psychology and Counseling, Niagara University, Niagara, New York, USA

²Department of Educational and School Psychology, The College of Saint Rose, Albany, New York, USA

³Department/Office of Accessibility, SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, New York, USA

⁴Department of Educational Policy and Leadership, SUNY Albany, Albany, New York, USA

Correspondence

Gary E. Schaffer, Department of School Psychology and Counseling, Niagara University, 5795 Lewiston Rd, Niagara, NY 14109, USA.
Email: Geschaffer@gmail.com



Abstract

The emergence of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in early 2020 led to the sudden temporary closure of K-12 schools across the United States. Schools were tasked with providing remote instruction to students, and many of these children continued to require mental and behavioral health services provided by school psychologists. In this study, 675 school psychologists were surveyed across the United States to examine how their roles and responsibilities changed as a result of COVID-19. Participants reported the perceived impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health and difficulty serving students and families, as well as their concerns and recommendations pertaining to school reentry. Overall, respondents in this study reported that their roles and responsibilities notably changed because of COVID-19. Participants noted their belief that children and educators will need increased mental health support upon returning to school. Implications for future practice and research are discussed.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19, mental health, pandemic, remote learning

STUDIES

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WILEY

Top Cited Article 2021-2022



Congratulations to:
Gary E. Schaffer

whose paper has been recognized as a top cited paper* in:

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS

Beyond the four walls: The evolution of school psychological services during the COVID-19 outbreak

*Among work published in an issue between 1 January 2021 – 15 December 2022.



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School Psychology

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The Practices of Psychologists Working in Schools During COVID-19: A Multi-Country Investigation

Andrea Reupert¹, Gary E. Schaffer², Alexa Von Hagen³, Kelly-Ann Allen^{1,4},
Emily Berger^{1,5}, Gerhard Büttner⁶, Elizabeth M. Power⁶, Zoe Morris¹, Pascale Paradis¹,
Amy K. Fisk², Dianne Summers¹, Gerald Wurf¹, and Fiona May¹

¹ Faculty of Education, Monash University
² Department of Counseling and School Psychology, Niagara University
³ Department of Educational Psychology, Goethe-University
⁴ The Centre for Wellbeing Science, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne
⁵ School of Rural Health, Monash University
⁶ Department of Educational/School Psychology, The College of Saint Rose
⁷ Office of Accessibility, SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, New York, United States

This exploratory study aimed to identify the ways psychologists working in schools supported students' mental health during school closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. An online survey was developed to determine (a) how psychologists working in schools across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia supported students' mental health during COVID-19, (b) how their services changed during COVID-19, and (c) potential differences between countries concerning difficulties supporting students' mental health during this time. The survey was based on previous research and was subsequently piloted. Using convenience and snowball sampling, 938 participants (U.S. $n = 665$, Canada $n = 48$, Germany $n = 140$, Australia $n = 85$) completed the online survey. Overall, school psychology services across these four countries pivoted from psychoeducational assessments to virtual counseling, consultation, and the development/posting of online support directly to children or parents to use with their children. There was some variation between countries; during the pandemic, significantly more psychologists in Germany and Australia provided telehealth/counseling than those in the United States and Canada, and psychologists in Germany provided significantly more handcopy material to support children than psychologists in other countries. There is a need to ensure psychologists have the appropriate technological skills to support school communities during periods of school closure, including, but not limited to, virtual counseling and the administration of psychoeducational assessments.

Impact and Implications
This study provides insight into the practices of psychology practitioners working in schools across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a broad shift from the provision of psychoeducational assessments to virtual counseling, consultation and the development/posting of online interventions and resources to support students' mental health. Schools have the appropriate technological skills to support students' mental health during periods of school closure.

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, mental health, telehealth

Andrea Reupert | <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1447-7769>
Kelly-Ann Allen | <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6613-9434>
Emily Berger | <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5550-807X>
Zoe Morris | <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0288-1708>
Dianne Summers | <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9364-5849>
Gerald Wurf | <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1459-6223>
Fiona May | <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0529-3610>
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Andrea Reupert, Faculty of Education, Monash University, 19 Ancora Imparo Way, Clayton, VIC 3800, Australia. Email: andrea.reupert@monash.edu

As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, school closures meant many students could not physically connect with their peers while they were in school. This study explored the impact of school closure on students' mental health and the role of school psychologists in supporting students' mental health during school closures. A multi-country comparison has the potential to highlight

Original Research Article

Perspectives of practicing school psychologists during COVID-19: A multi-country, mixed methods investigation

Fiona May¹
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Gary E. Schaffer
Department of School Psychology and Counseling, Niagara University, Niagara, NY, USA

Kelly-Ann Allen¹
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Emily Berger¹
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Alexa von Hagen
Department of Educational Psychology, Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main, Hessen, Germany

Vivian Hill
Institute of Education, University College London, London, UK

Zoe A. Morris
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Stefanie Prior
Institute of Education, University College London, London, UK

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International Journal of
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Article

A Qualitative Investigation of the Impact of COVID-19 on United States' Frontline Health Care Workers and the Perceived Impact on Their Family Members

Gary Edward Schaffer^{1,*}, Lisa Kilanowski² and Brian En Chyi Lee²

¹ Department of Counseling and School Psychology, College of Education, Niagara University, Lewiston, NY 14109, USA
² School of Psychology, Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC 3125, Australia
* Correspondence: geschaffer@gmail.com

Abstract: Although previous research has documented the mental and physical health impacts that COVID-19 had on frontline health workers in the United States, little is known about how the pandemic affected their families. This study sought to explore the impact COVID-19 had on the individual functioning of frontline health care workers in the USA and the perceived impact it had on their family members during the initial nine months of the pandemic. More specifically, this study sought to explore if and how family roles, routines, rules, and social-emotional well-being changed as a result of COVID-19. Twenty-eight frontline health care workers across the United States who were parents to at least one child residing in the home under 24 were interviewed. Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. From the analysis, four major themes emerged with regard to the changes and perceived impact to family functioning, family experiences of new hygiene practices, and stigma related to being a health care practitioner or having a family member working in health care, and psychological distress. The results of this study can be used by mental health clinicians to inform policy, develop practice guidelines, and help identify and target interventions for health care workers and their family members.

Keywords: frontline; health care worker; family functioning; family dynamics



Citation: Schaffer, G.E.; Kilanowski, L.; Lee, B.E.C. A Qualitative Investigation of the Impact of COVID-19 on United States' Frontline Health Care Workers and the Perceived Impact on Their Family Members. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2022, 19, 10483. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191710483>

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1. Introduction

The global spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in December 2019 and into 2020 led to unprecedented hardships for the nearly 22 million health care workers in the United States [1,2]. Despite the best efforts of these professionals to successfully treat and provide comfort for children and adults with coronavirus, the disease continued to proliferate. Just eight months after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as

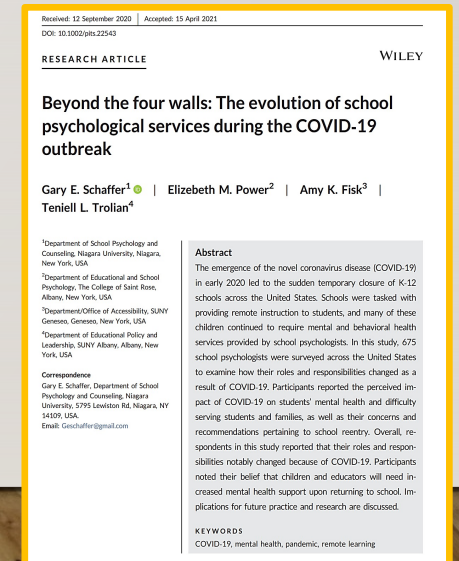


FOCUS OF SURVEY FOR ORIGINAL STUDY

Research Questions:

1. How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Did school psychologists believe there would be an increased need to support the social-emotional needs of children and educators upon returning to school after the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What factors were associated with the level of difficulty school psychologists experienced when serving children and their families during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. What did school psychologists want federal and state legislators to know about the field during the COVID-19 pandemic?

*Other countries adapted this survey for their needs.



STUDY CHALLENGES

At the time, no studies existed on:

- ✓ COVID-19 and educational impact
- ✓ COVID-19 and school psychology
- ✓ Pandemics and school psychology (i.e., Ebola, SARS, AIDS virus)

Little research on:

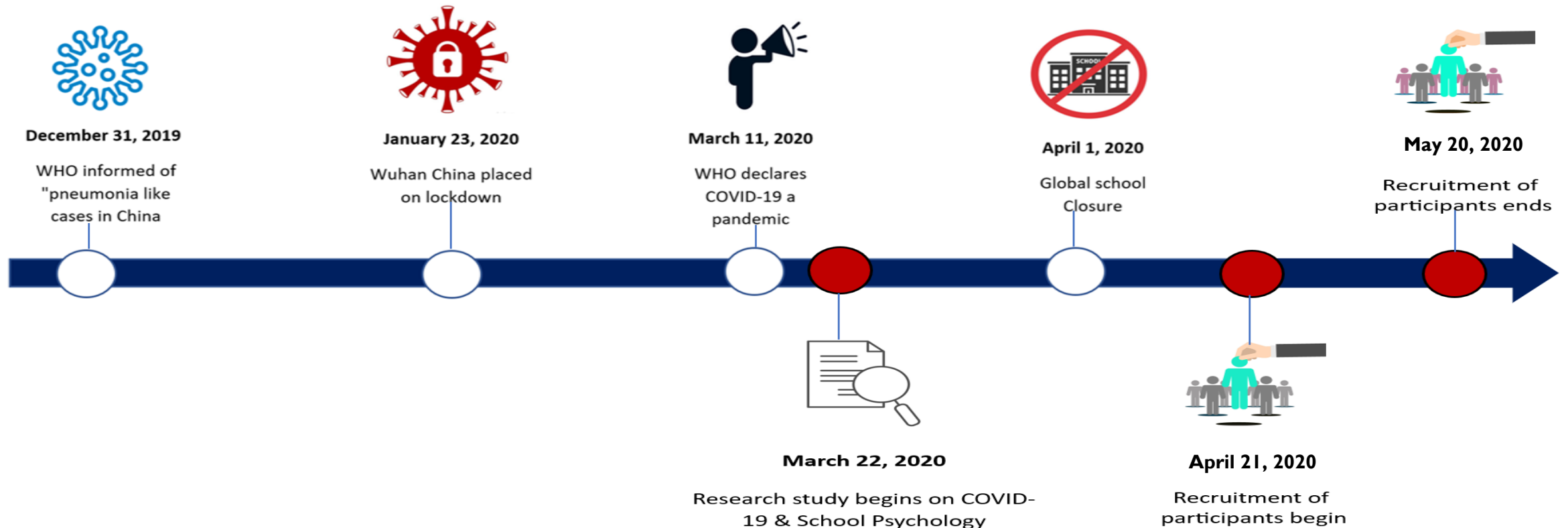
- ✓ Pandemics and educational impact
- ✓ Pandemics in general
- ✓ Impact of pandemics on schools and communities

Uncertainty over when School Closures and COVID-19 would end



STUDY DEVELOPMENT & RECRUITMENT

- ✓ Study Development began on March 22, 2020
- ✓ Recruitment of participants took place from April 11, 2020 to May 15, 2020



STUDY DEVELOPMENT & RECRUITMENT

Gary Schaffer <geschaffer@gmail.com>

Mar 24, 2020, 12:49 AM



to ELIZABETH, afisk ▾

Hello all,

I have started an extensive search and review of research articles for our newest endeavor. As the focus has turned to distribution of our survey for project Tacoma, I have begun to search and read a lot of articles, government documents, NASP papers on the H1N1 response, response to Hurricane Katrina and Rita, and the AIDS epidemic. As anticipated, articles related specifically to school psychology services and studies during these times is extremely limited. In fact, no study exists, from what I can see. The closest I have come to anything regarding school psychology in terms of epidemics was one on AIDS. Therefore, we really do not know about the "evolution of school psychological services in times of crisis." This is concerning, and we can start to address this in our article/ newest study. For ease, I have placed a folder of all articles I researched and read in dropbox. You may find the link to all files below.

Any suggestions for terms to search may be useful in helping to uncover any articles. I think and hope we can move with this study rather swiftly given our previous survey, working together, and knowing the process. I think it will be a rather easy study to complete with huge implications.

Link to dropbox folder

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6ykfdjfm6cuszzb/AAD1V5MXqQisRuldhIFU_o8ma?dl=0

Best,

Gary Schaffer
NYS OPWDD School Psychologist
ECMC School Psychologist
Professor/Lecturer of School Psychology & Counseling
Niagara University; Niagara University, NY

DATA COLLECTION

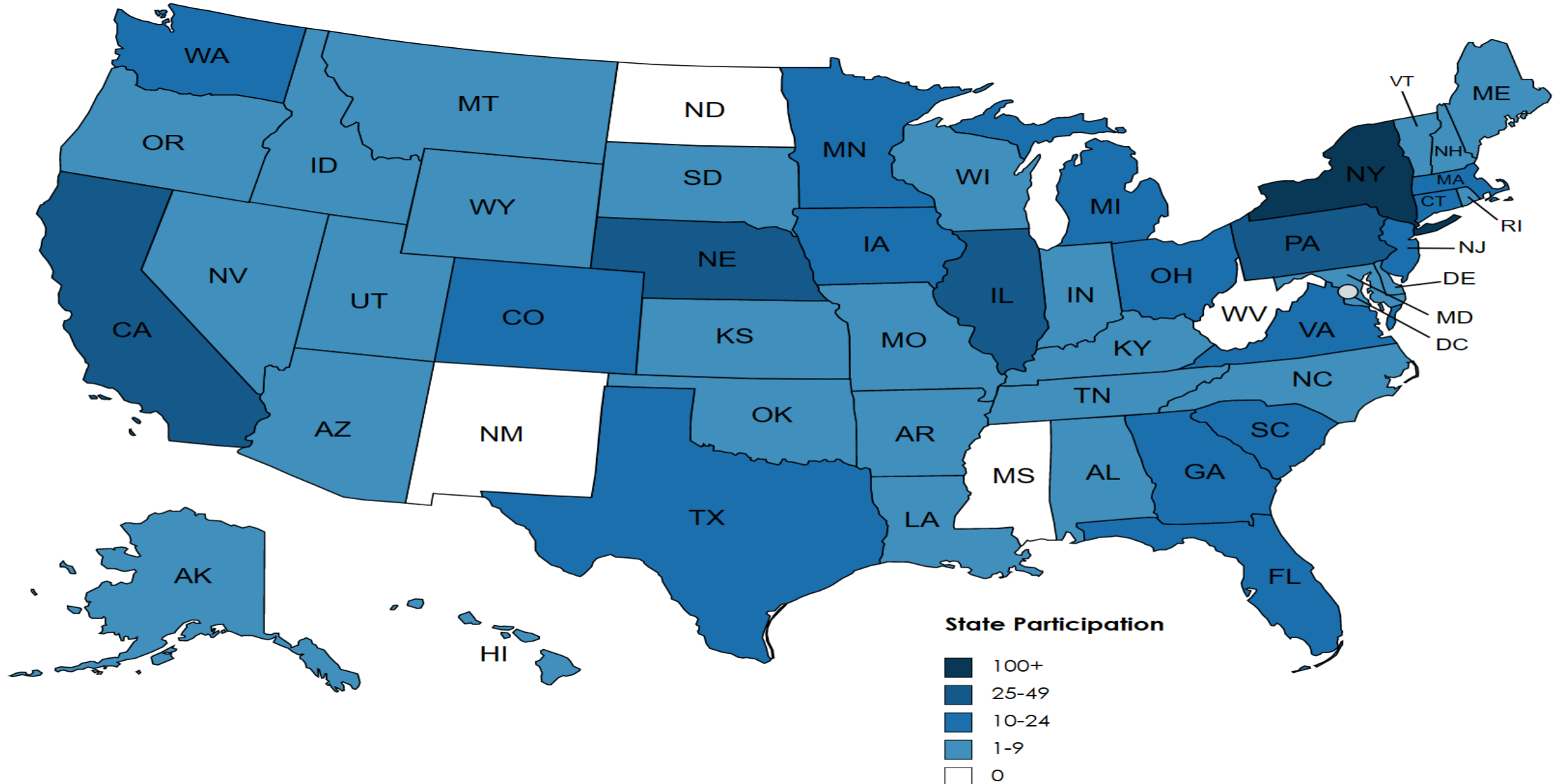
53-item Survey developed to focus on:

- ✓ Roles and responsibilities of school psychologists before and during COVID-19 lockdown
- ✓ Services school psychologists delivered before and during COVID-19 lockdown
- ✓ Perceived concerns and barriers in providing services
- ✓ Concerns and recommendations for planned re-entry into schools after COVID-19 lockdown

Data collected via Alchemer

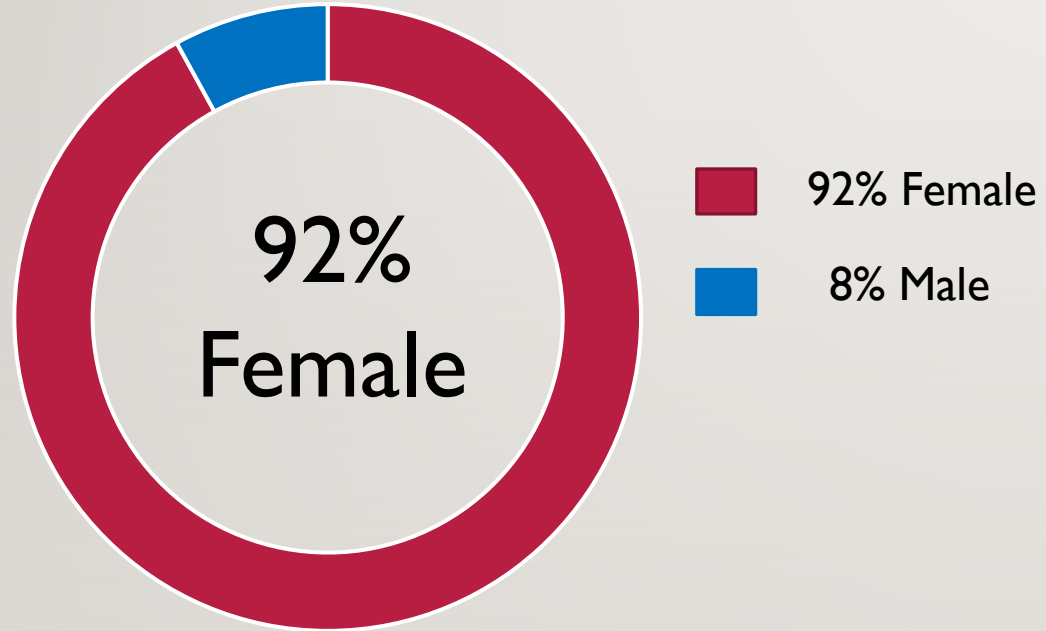


PARTICIPATION BY STATE

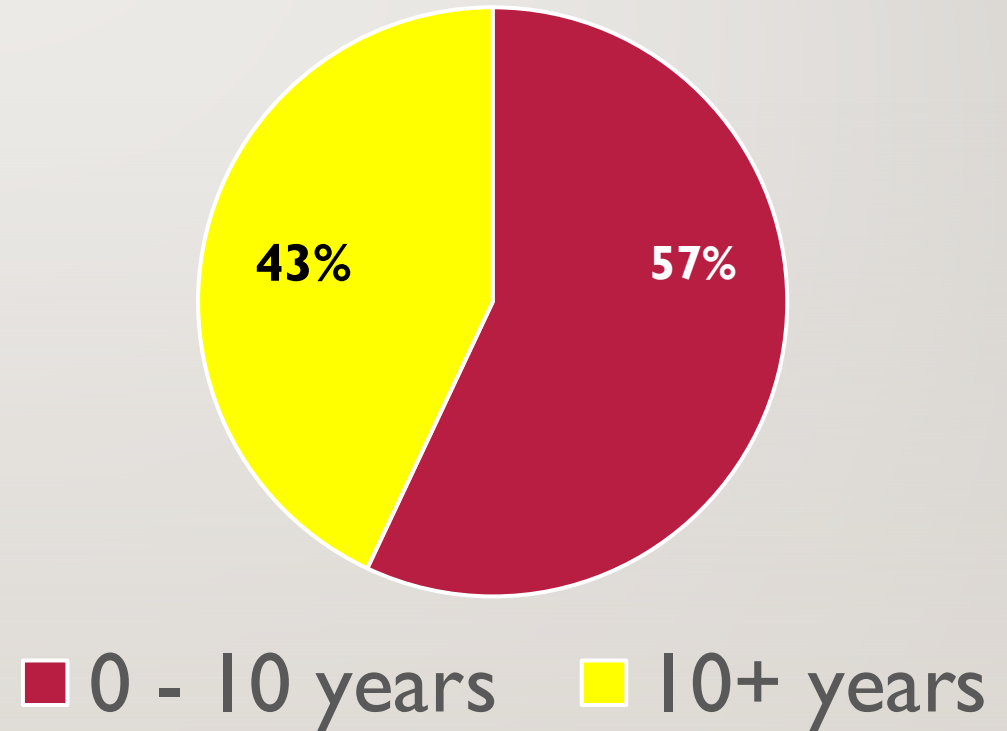


DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender



Years of Experience



Average Age of Participants

✓ 31 – 50 years

DEMOGRAPHICS



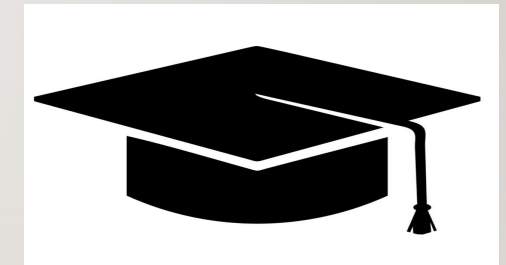
Age of Participants

Age Range	Percentage
21 - 30	25%
31 - 40	38%
41 - 50	22%
51 - 60	12%
61 - 70	3%



Race/Ethnicity of Participants

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage
White	85.1%
Hispanic/Latino	6.9%
Black	3.9%
Asian	2.1%
Mixed	1%



Highest Degree Obtained

Degree	Percentage
Specialist	63%
Masters	20%
PhD	6.9%
PysD	6.2%
Ed.D/D.Ed	1.7%

RESULTS UNITED STATES STUDY



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KEYWORDS

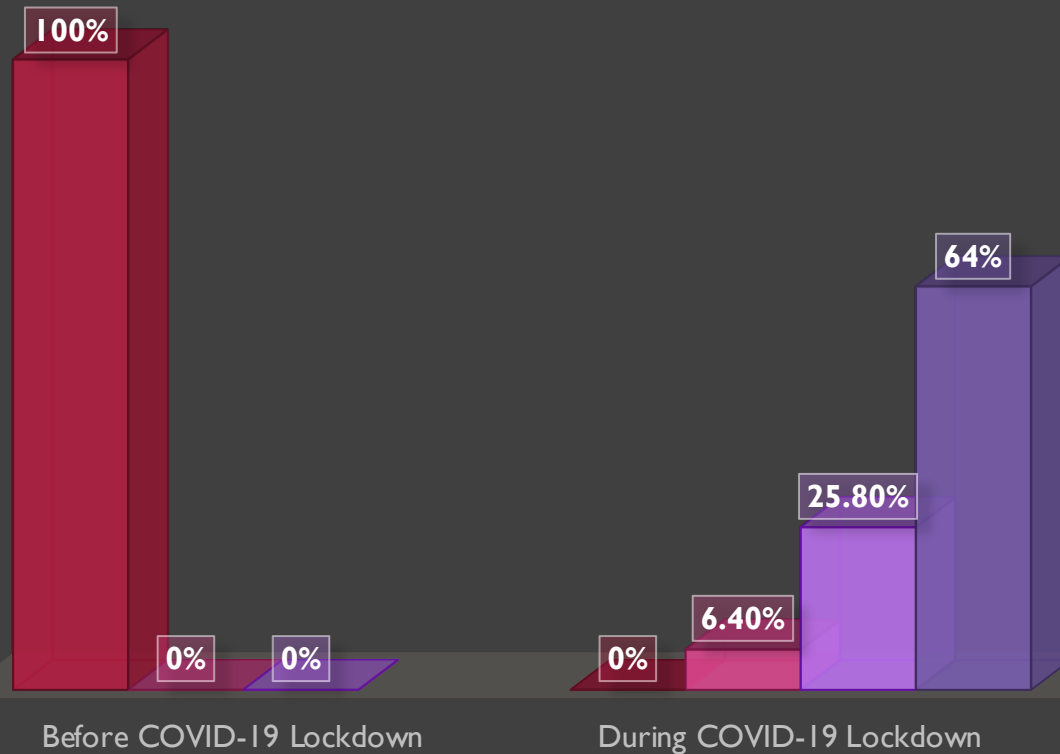
COVID-19, mental health, pandemic, remote learning

Research Question I:

- ✓ How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?

SHIFT FROM IN-PERSON TO ONLINE LEARNING

■ In-person learning ■ Synchronous Learning ■ Asynchronous Learning ■ Combined (Synchronous/Asynchronous)



Research Question I:

- ✓ How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Before Pandemic Working Hours	During Pandemic Working Hours
41.1 hours per week	30.4 hours per week

Question:

- ✓ During a time where children needed the most social-emotional support, why did school psychologists working hours decrease significantly across the United States and Canada?

Answer:

- ✓ School psychology has largely been an underutilized profession in North America
- ✓ Over 50% of school psychologists time has been consumed by assessment for special education services over the past 50 years.

Research Question 1:

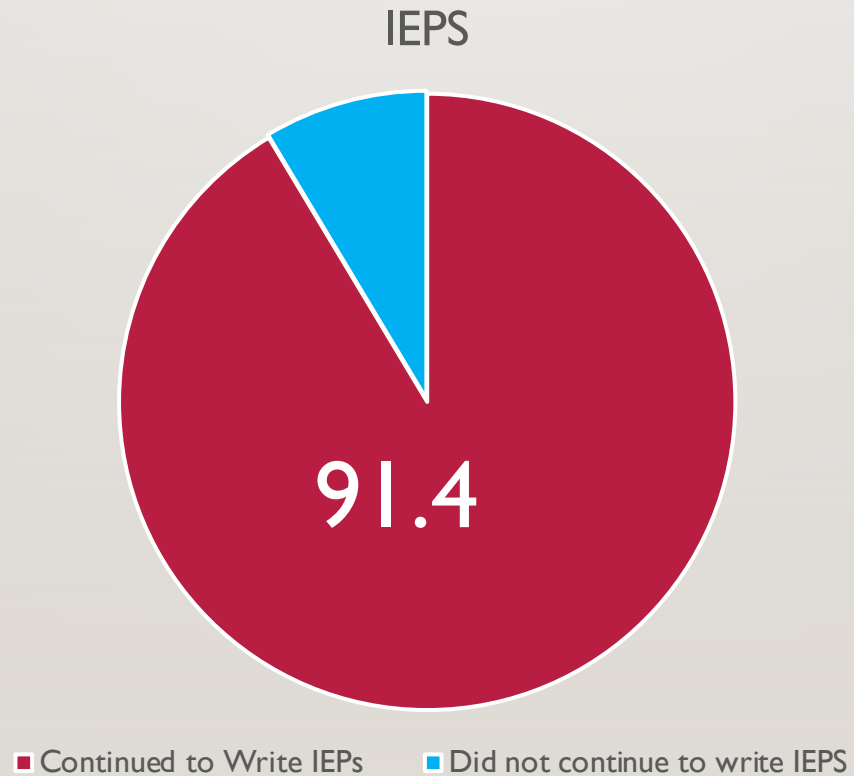
- ✓ How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?

TABLE 2 School psychologists' service delivery before and during COVID-19

Before COVID-19		After COVID-19	
Rank	Item	Rank	Item
1	Psychoeducational assessments	1	Consultation and collaboration
2	Consultation and collaboration	2	IEP meetings
3	IEP Meetings	3	Counseling
4	Counseling	4	Researching social, emotional, behavioral, or academic interventions/supports
5	CST Meetings	5	Psychoeducational assessments

Research Question 1:

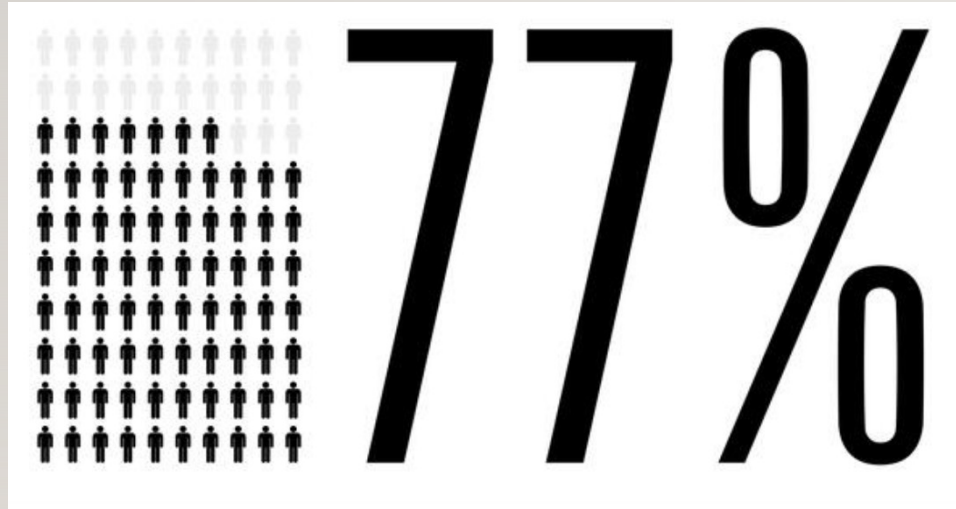
- ✓ **How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?**
- ✓ 91.4% of school psychologists continue to write IEPs



Research Questions:

- ✓ **How did the format of instructional modality along with the roles and responsibilities of educators and school psychologists change during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

77% of school psychologists indicated they continued to provide accommodations for SPED students during first few months of COVID.



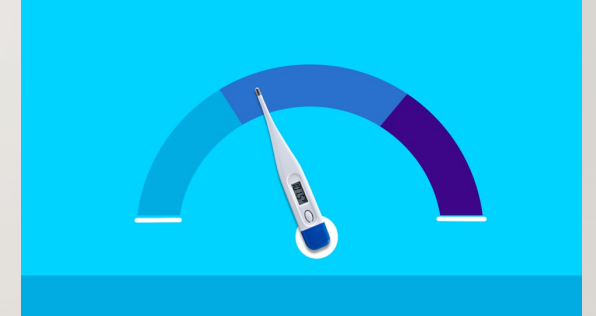
Top Three accommodations Provided to Students During First Months of COVID

- 1) Extended time to complete assignments
- 2) Shorted assignments and/or assessments
- 3) Audio recordings for readings instead of reading text

Research Question 2:

✓ **Did school psychologists believe there would be an increased need to support the social-emotional needs of children and educators upon returning to school after the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

- 56.5% of participants indicated the COVID-19 pandemic would negative impact students' overall mental health “moderately.”
- 22.4% of participants indicated the COVID-19 pandemic would negative impact students' overall mental health “severely.”



- 62.5% of school psychologists indicated that they provided mental health interventions “no more than what they did” before the pandemic!!



“I think that there will be a one-thousand percent need for more children’s mental health clinicians in New York State. To get my daughter into a counselor during COVID took two weeks, but then my daughter was referred to a counseling service for additional services that took up to three weeks. Within the five weeks that she was waiting for services, my daughter was hospitalized and seen in the emergency psychiatric unit at the hospital. I think that might have been prevented if my daughter had access to children’s mental health services right away.”



Article

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Gary Edward Schaffer ^{1,*}, Lisa Kilanowski ² and Brian En Chyi Lee ²



¹ Department of Counseling and School Psychology, College of Education, Niagara University, Lewiston, NY 14109, USA

² School of Psychology, Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC 3125, Australia

* Correspondence: geschaffer@gmail.com



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Research Question 3:

- ✓ **Did school psychologists believe there would be an increased need to support the social-emotional needs of children and educators upon returning to school after the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?**
 - 77.6% of participants indicated there would be an increased need for school psychologists to support the social-emotional needs of educators when schools reopened from lockdown.
 - Before the pandemic, 76.4% of school psychologists indicated that they felt a responsibility to provide social-emotional support to educators.
 - During the pandemic, this figure increased to 89.7%

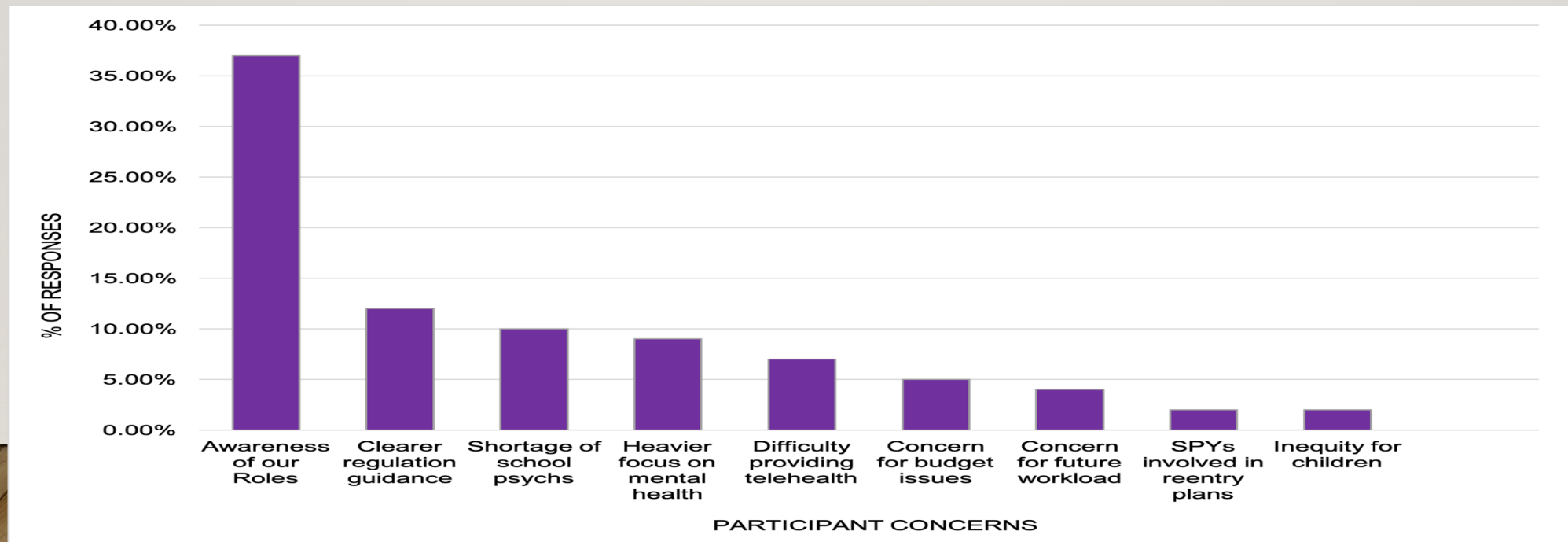


Research Question 3:

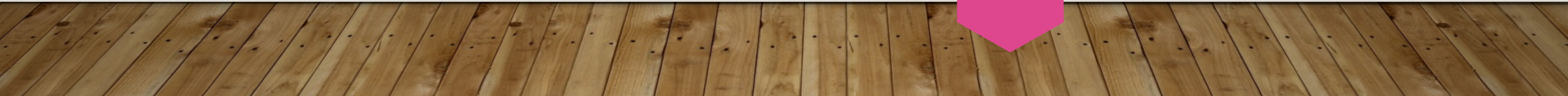
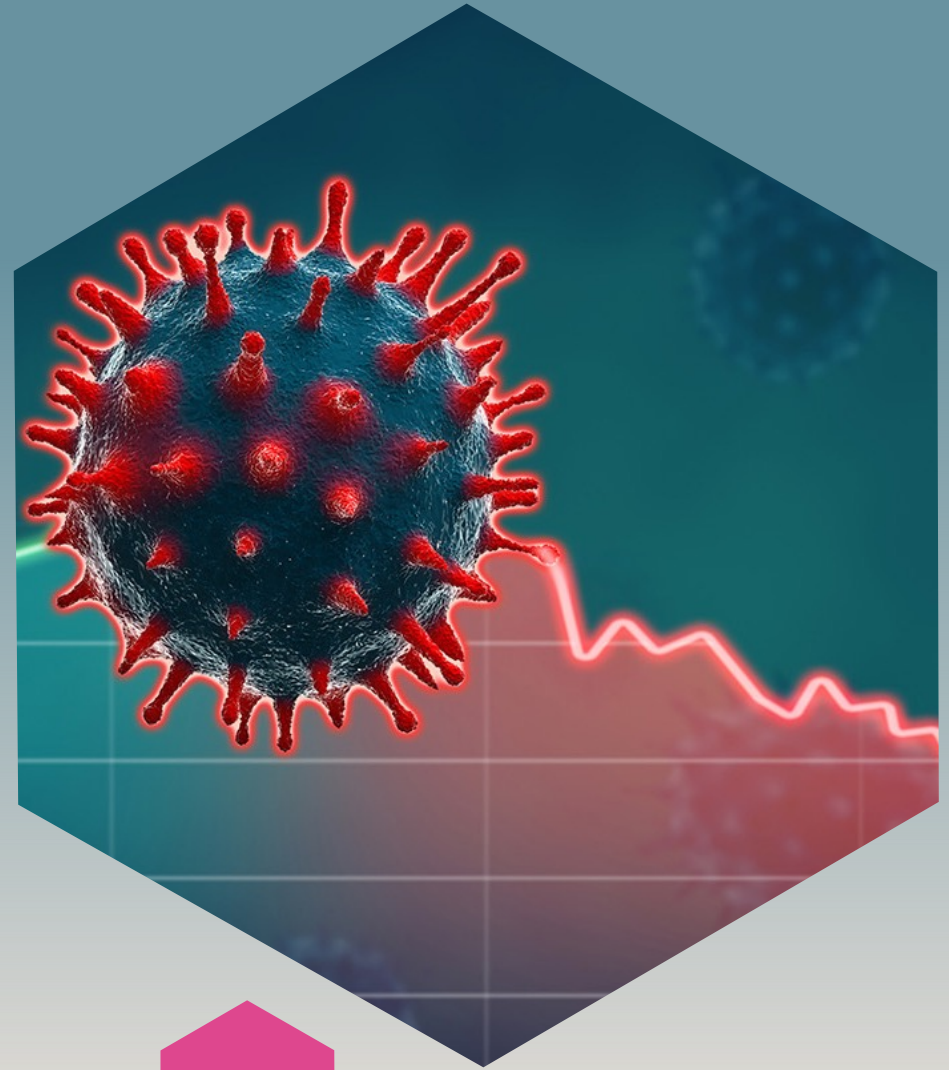
- ✓ **What factors were associated with the level of difficulty school psychologists experienced when serving children and their families during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic?**
 1. Students and families not signing online for services
 2. Balancing their home life and work during lockdown
 3. Child family not having adequate internet connection

Research Question 4:

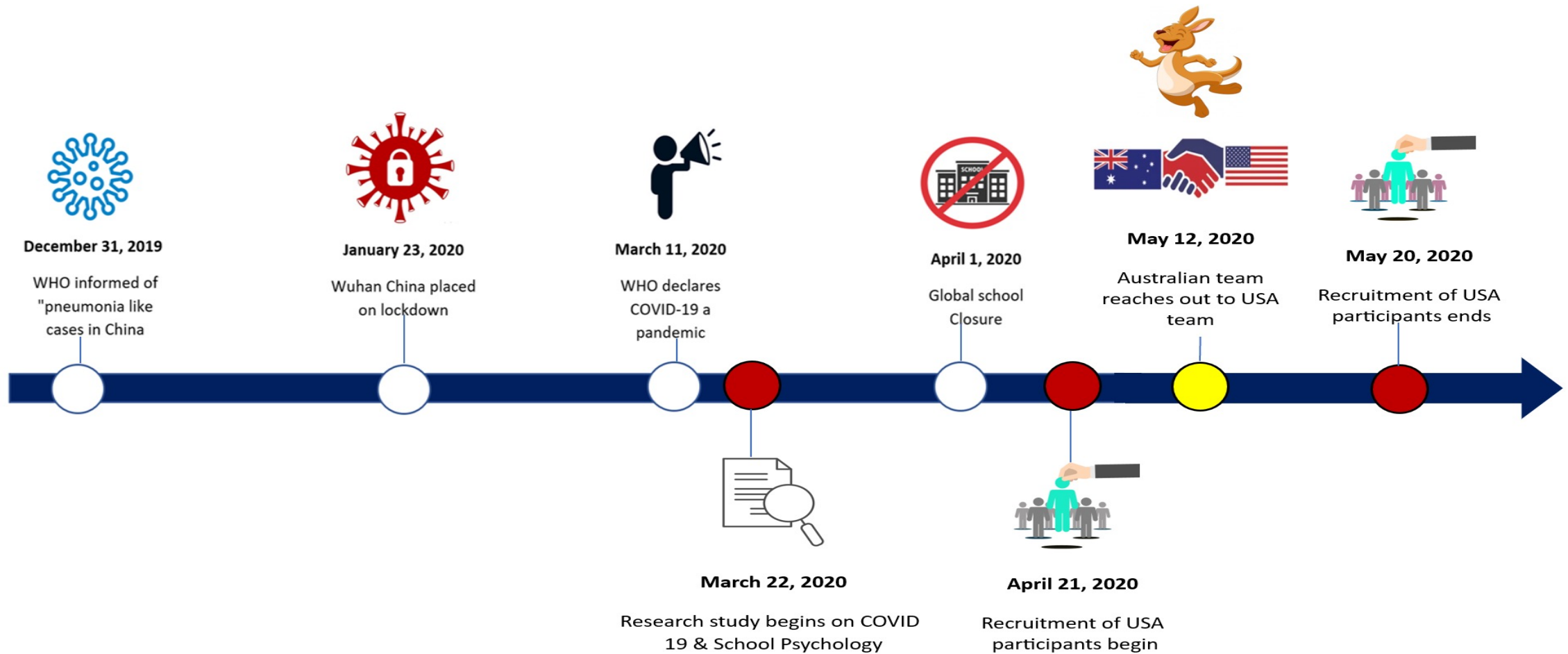
- ✓ **What did school psychologists want federal and state legislators to know about the field during during the COVID-19 pandemic?**



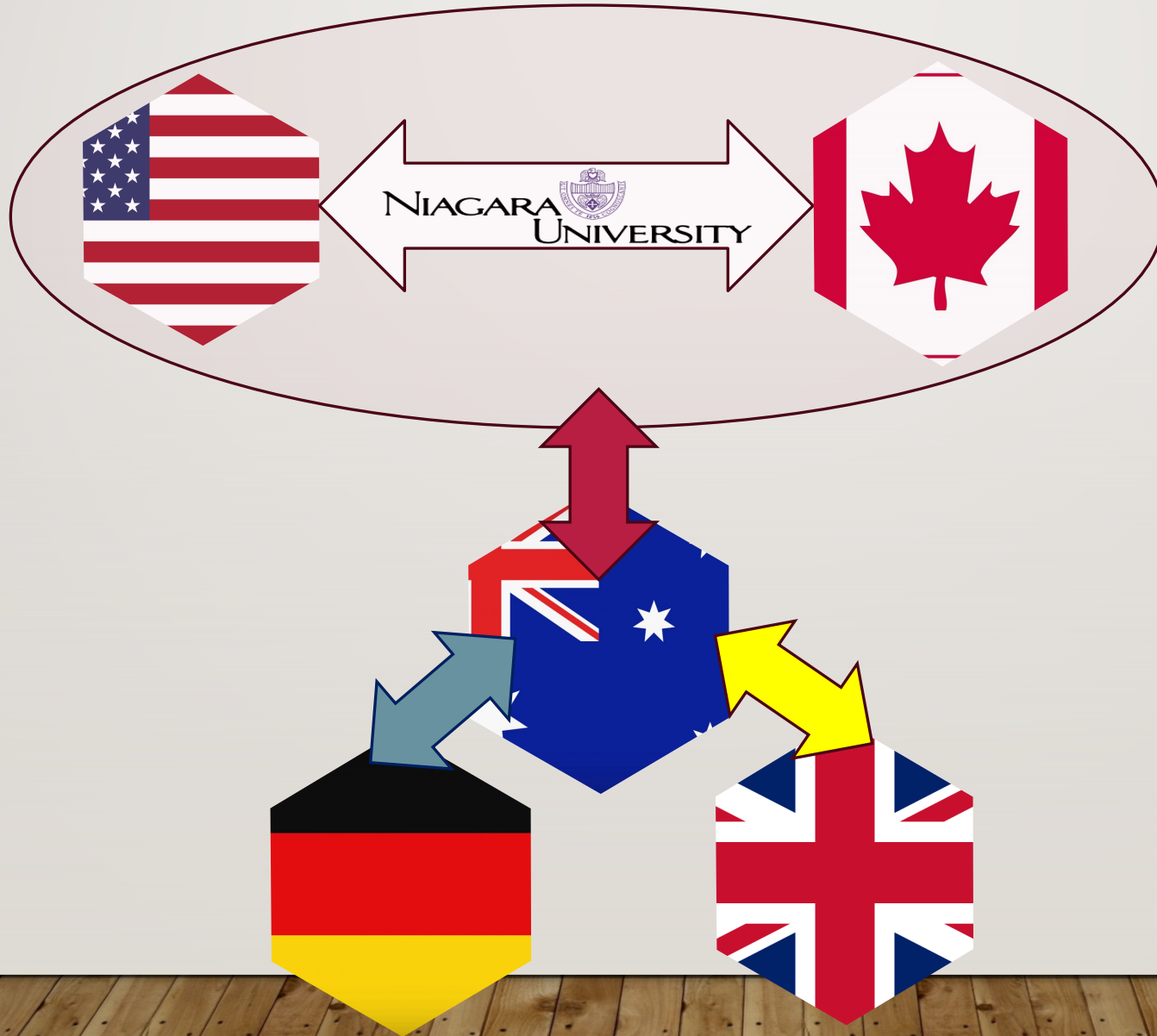
INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE



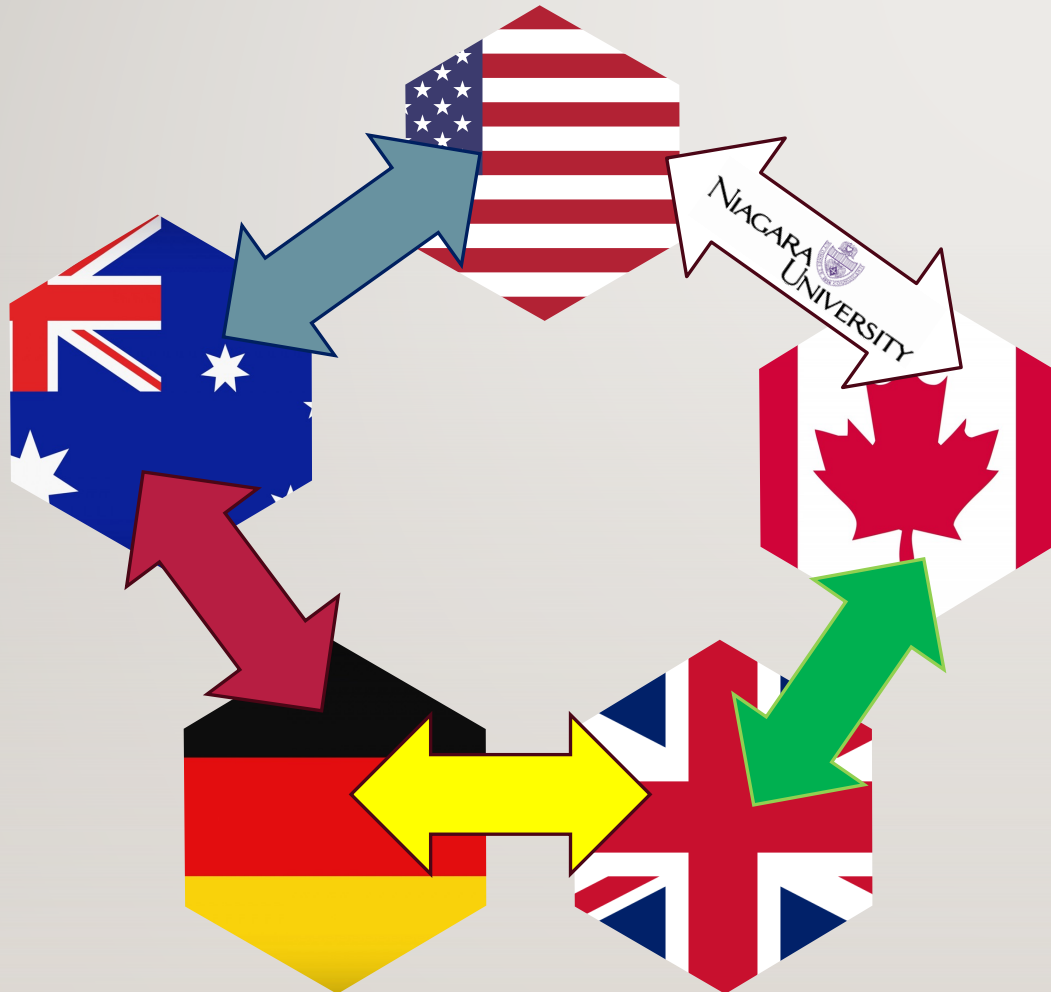
Adjusted Timeline with Australia!



Connections with Other Countries



Connections with Other Countries



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⁶ Department of Educational/School Psychology, The College of Saint Rose
⁷ Office of Accessibility, SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, New York, United States

This exploratory study aimed to identify the ways psychologists working in schools supported students' mental health during school closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. An online survey was developed to determine (a) how psychologists working in schools across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia supported students' mental health during COVID-19, (b) how their services changed during COVID-19, and (c) potential differences between countries concerning difficulties supporting students' mental health during this time. The survey was based on previous research and was subsequently piloted. Using convenience and snowball sampling, 938 participants (U.S. $n = 665$; Canada $n = 48$; Germany $n = 140$; Australia $n = 85$) completed the online survey. Overall, school psychology services across these four countries pivoted from psychoeducational assessments to virtual counseling, consultation, and the development/posting of online support directly to children or parents to use with their children. There was some variation between countries; during the pandemic, significantly more psychologists in Germany and Australia provided telehealth/telecounseling than those in the United States and Canada, and psychologists in Germany provided significantly more handcopy material to support children than psychologists in other countries. There is a need to ensure psychologists have the appropriate technological skills to support school communities during periods of school closure, including, but not limited to, virtual counseling and the administration of psychoeducational assessments.

Impact and Implications
This study provides insight into the practices of psychology practitioners working in schools across the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a broad shift from the provision of psychoeducational assessments to virtual counseling, consultation and the development/posting of online interventions and resources. It is critical that psychologists working in schools have the appropriate technological skills to support students, parents, and school staff during periods of school closure.

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, mental health, remote learning

As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, school closures meant many students could not physically connect with their peers while others experienced family stress related to parental unemployment or loss of family income. Already vulnerable children were exposed to chaotic, turbulent home environments without the respite of school (Campbell, 2020). Students' access to school-based mental health supports was disrupted, paradoxically when they needed it the most. This study aimed to identify how psychologists working in schools from the United States, Canada, Germany, and Australia supported students' mental health during COVID-19 related school closures. A multi-country comparison has the potential to highlight


Andrea Reupert  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1447-7769>
Kelly-Ann Allen  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6813-0034>
Emily Berger  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5550-807X>
Zoe Morris  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0288-1708>
Dianne Summers  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-9164-5849>
Gerald Wurf  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1459-6223>
Fiona May  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0529-3610>
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Andrea Reupert, Faculty of Education, Monash University, 19 Ancora Imparo Way, Clayton, VIC 3800, Australia. Email: andrea.reupert@monash.edu

School Psychology International
Original Research Article

Perspectives of practicing school psychologists during COVID-19: A multi-country, mixed methods investigation

Fiona May 
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Gary E. Schaffer
Department of School Psychology and Counseling, Niagara University, Niagara, NY, USA

Kelly-Ann Allen 
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Emily Berger 
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Alexa von Hagen
Department of Educational Psychology, Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main, Hessen, Germany

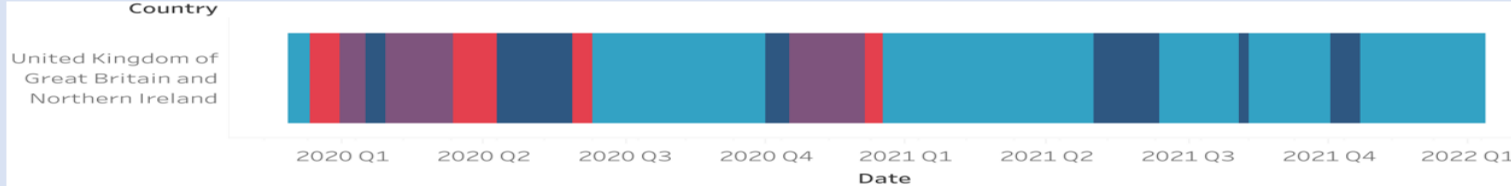
Vivian Hill
Institute of Education, University College London, London, UK

Zoe A. Morris
School of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Clayton VIC 3800, Australia

Stefanie Prior
Institute of Education, University College London, London, UK

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Closure by Country



Status

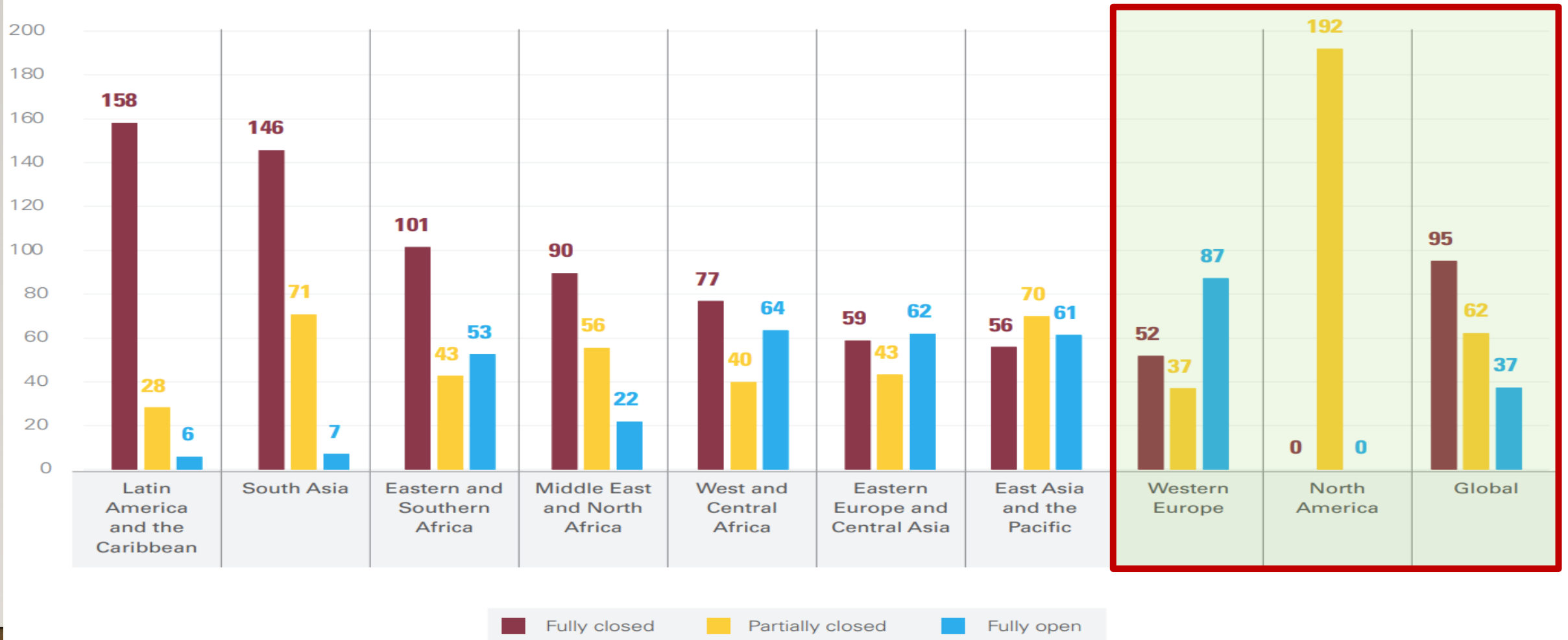
- Academic break
- Fully open
- Closed due to COVID-19
- Partially open

Data obtained from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Closure by Country

FIGURE 2

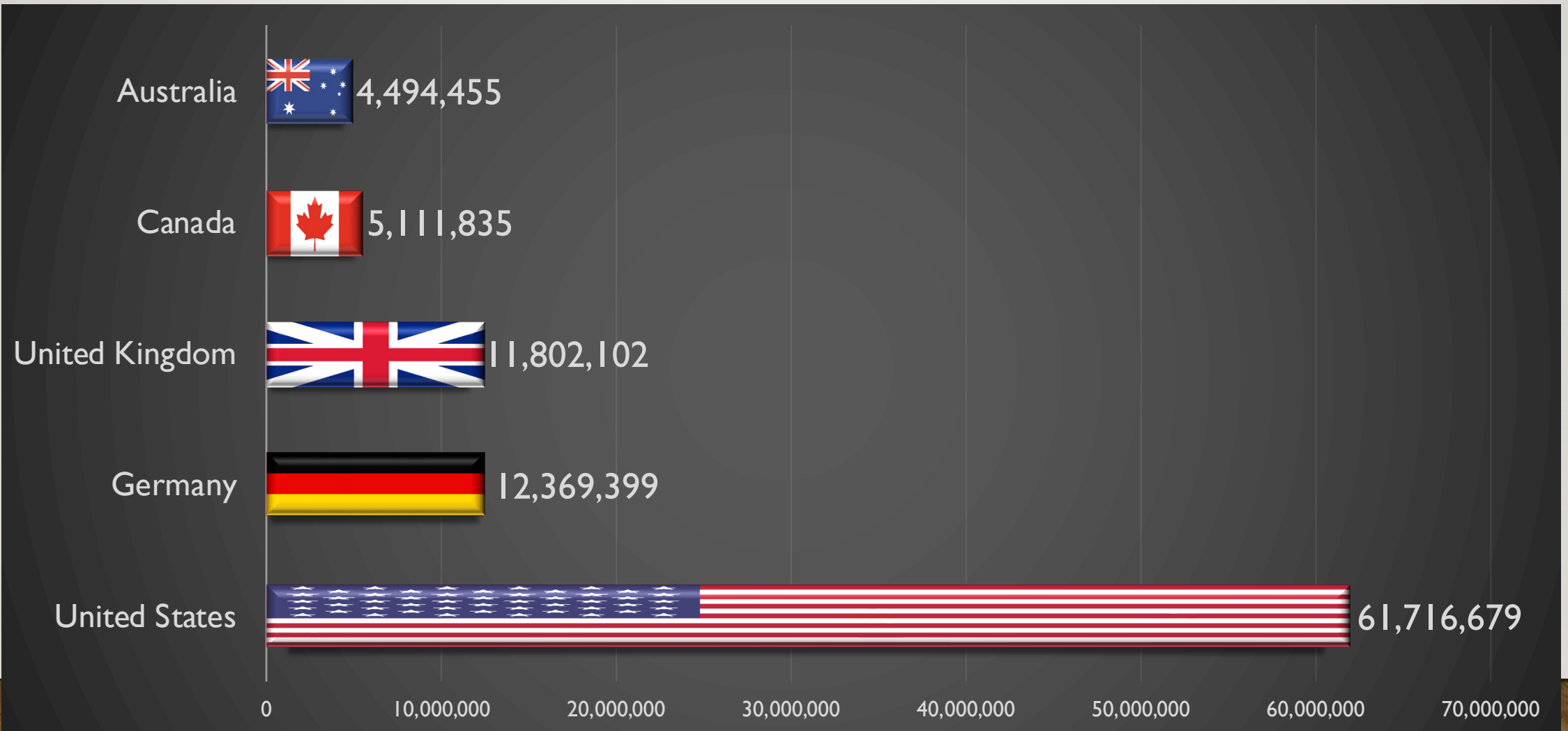
School closure status in number of days and by region, from March 2020 to February 2021 (weighted average)



Source: UNESCO Global monitoring of school closures caused by COVID-19

Note: Estimates are weighted by the number of students in pre-primary to upper secondary education in each country.

NUMBER OF STUDNETS IMPACTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURES ACROSS STUDIES



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

General Research Questions Across Studies

- ✓ What changes to practice were reported by school psychologists in each country in response to COVID-19 restrictions?
- ✓ What factors supported school psychologists in the delivery of services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in each country?

Recruitment

Participants recruited through:

✓ Email 

✓ Social Media   

✓ School Psychology Forums 

✓ School Psychology Associations



Recruitment Timelines



April 21, 2020 to May 20, 2020



April 21, 2020 to May 20, 2020



April 21, 2020 to May 20, 2020



January 27, 2021 to February 22, 2021



DEMOGRAPHICS

Participants

✓ 1,030 school psychologists total across five countries



665



140



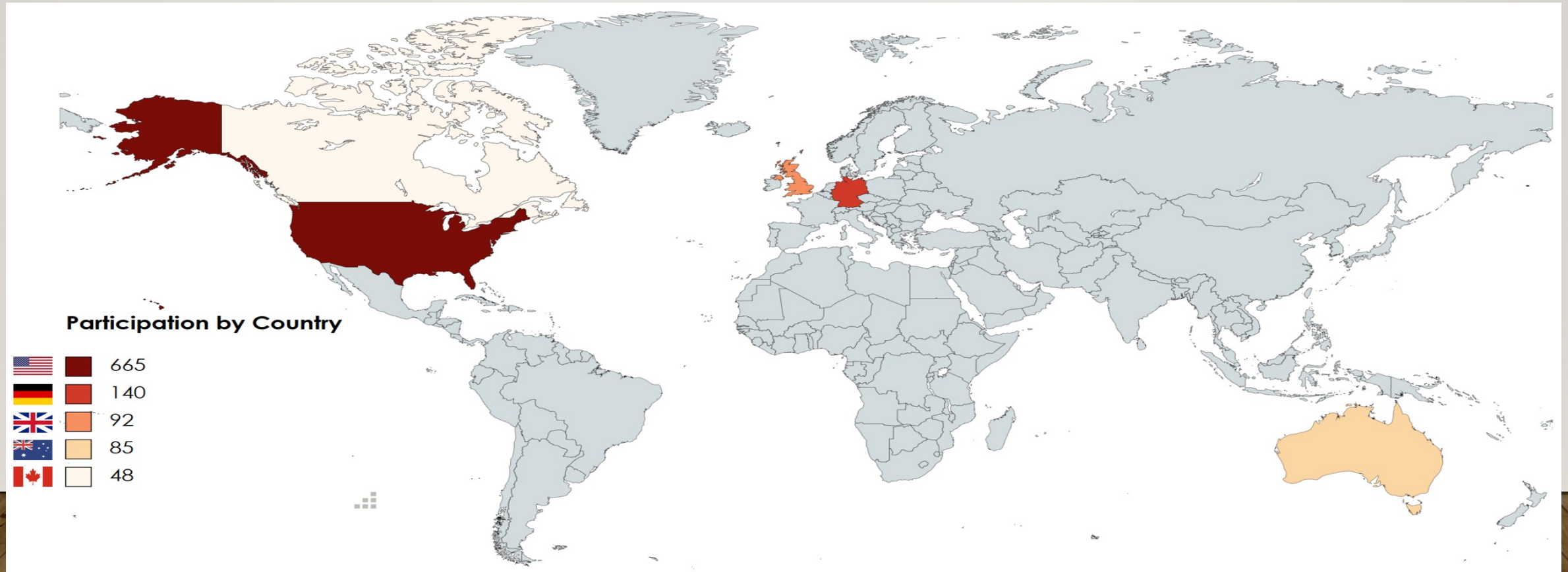
92



85



48

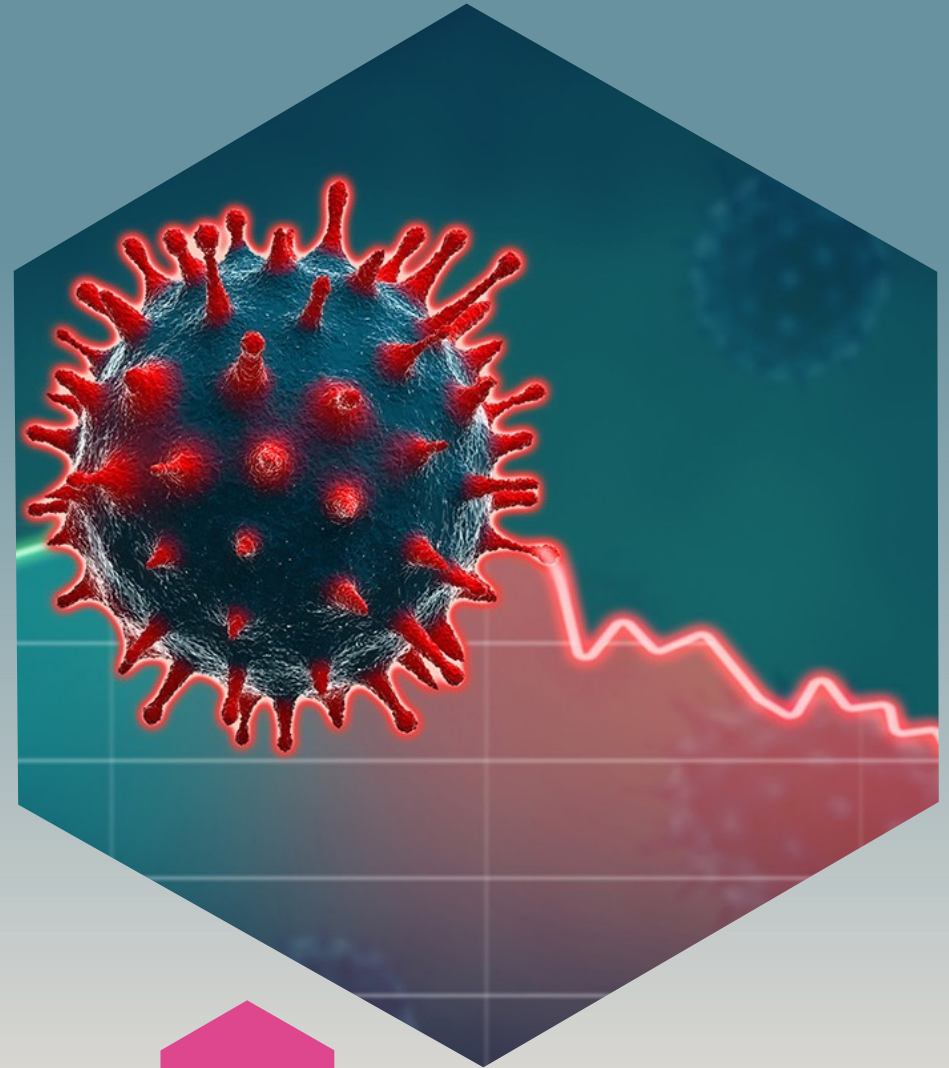


DEMOGRAPHICS

United States & Canada	United Kingdom
<p>White – 89%</p> <p>Latino – 7%</p> <p>Black – 4%</p> <p>Asian – 2%</p> <p>Mixed – 1%</p> <p>Indigenous – 0.4%</p>	<p>White – 87%</p> <p>Asian/Indian/Pakistani/Other – 4.4%</p> <p>Black – 3.3%</p> <p>Mixed – 1%</p> <p>Indigenous – 0.4%</p>

*Germany and Australia did not collect data on ethnicity.

RESULTS AND THEMES ACROSS STUDIES



Results

I. **What changes to practice were reported by school psychologists in each country in response to COVID-19 restrictions?**

- ✓ School psychology services and supports moved from in-person to online
- ✓ 83% of school psychologists across countries reported servicing students online

Results

I. What changes to practice were reported by school psychologists in each country in response to COVID-19 restrictions?

- ✓ COVID-19 impacted school psychologists working hours differently across countries.

United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Germany	Australia
62% reported decrease in working hours during pandemic	58% reported a decrease in working hours during pandemic	No change to working hours	No change to working hours	33% reported an increase in working hours during the pandemic

Results

1. What changes to practice were reported by school psychologists in each country in response to COVID-19 restrictions?

✓ Activities school psychologists engaged in changed across countries.





United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Germany	Australia
<p>Top services before COVID</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psych Assessment 2. Consultation & Collab. 3. IEP Meetings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in consultation & collaboration services 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decrease in non-statutory assessments 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased focus on consultation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No change in role related to the provision of counseling
<p>Top services during COVID</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultation & Collab. 2. IEP Meetings 3. Counseling 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Increase use of teleinterventions & videos to address social-emotional concerns in children 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Decreased group work with students 3. Decrease in parent training 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. No change to counseling and consultation services from before and during the pandemic. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Increased focus on researching interventions

Results

I. What changes to practice were reported by school psychologists in each country in response to COVID-19 restrictions?

- ✓ Delivery of services largely shifted from in-person to online and telehealth

Table 2. School psychology service delivery methods during COVID-19.

	Service delivery method (n, %)				
	Telehealth interventions via webcam or telephone	Mailing packets or newsletters with social, emotional, behavioral, or academic interventions	Developing or posting videos on common social, emotional, behavioral, or academic concerns for parents/caregivers	Use of a databases to post social, emotional, behavioral, or academic interventions to children	Other
USA	321 (48.2%)	114 (17.1%)	205 (30.8%)	259 (38.9%) 	149 (22.4%)
Canada	21 (43.8%)	8 (16.7%)	16 (33.3%) 	13 (27.1%)	14 (29.2%)
Germany	118 (84.3%) 	62 (44.3%)	8 (5.7%)	13 (9.3%)	NA ^a
UK	76 (83.0%)	64 (70.0%) 	-	-	-
Australia	66 (77.7%)	18 (21.2%)	20 (23.5%)	22 (25.9%)	16 (20.8%)

*Participants could select more than one response option, ^aNA = No response.

Results

Telehealth interventions via webcam or telephone

- ✓ **Germany – 84.3%**
- ✓ **United Kingdom – 83.0%**
- ✓ **Australia – 77.7%**

United States – 48.2%
Canada – 43.8%

Developing and posting videos for parents

- ✓ **Germany – 5.7%**
- ✓ **United Kingdom – n/a**
- ✓ **Australia – 23.5%**

United States – 30.8%
Canada – 33.3%

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2. What factors supported school psychologists in the delivery of services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in each country?

United Kingdom	Germany	Australia
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Well being of school psychologists2. Creativity with online working3. Support from virtual school psychology communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Access to alternative communication pathways (multiple means of connecting to parents)2. Access to adequate resources3. Having a mobile workforce	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Access to a range of different communication pathways2. Peer support and supervision3. Having sufficient time to provide the support required

Self-Care

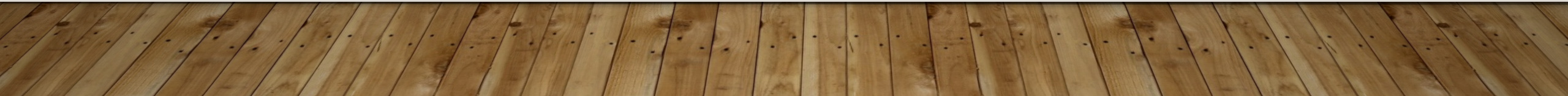
School Psychologists Used Self-Care Strategies During COVID-19

Table 4. Factors that supported the delivery of school psychology services during COVID-19 in Canada and the United States of America (select all that apply responses).

Enabling Factor	%	
	Canada	USA
Exercise	47.8	40.0
Participating in outdoor activities (e.g., hiking, gardening)	15.2	11.6
Spending time with family/significant others	10.9	13.1
Videoconference meetings with friends	4.4	6.4
Pet care/pet adoption	4.4	3.0
Watching television	4.4	6.1
Meditating/mindfulness/yoga	2.2	4.7
Hobbies (arts and crafts)	2.2	6.8

IMPLICATIONS

- Districts and schools in North America are underutilizing school psychologists and need to begin using their advanced skillsets under preventative models, such as MTSS
- Districts and schools across the world should provide school psychologists ongoing professional development in crisis prevention and intervention
- Post-secondary programs of school psychology should ensure that the courses being taught provide sufficient knowledge in the areas of mental and behavioral health and crisis intervention services
- Longitudinal research will be needed into the extent to which changes to school psychology practice across countries has been sustained beyond the pandemic.
- Across the United States, mental health support can be greatly bolstered by licensing school psychologists in states that do not already to so to allow them to practice beyond school settings.



QUESTIONS & THANK YOU

Gary E. Schaffer

geschaffer@gmail.com

