

## Survey gives snapshot of pandemic life for families, children with special health care needs

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A new [report](#) offers insight on the pandemic's impact on families with children and youths with special health care needs (CYSHCN). These families experienced greater disruptions to family life, higher stress and more intimate partner violence and spanking than households without CYSHCN, according to the report (<https://bit.ly/pandemic-CYSHCN>).

The findings are from the Family Snapshot survey of 3,000 parents/caregivers conducted by the AAP in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Tufts Medical Center in November 2020 as well as results from two virtual parent focus groups conducted in April 2021.

About one-third of survey respondents reported having at least one child with special health care needs in the household.

Households with CYSHCN were more likely to report disruptions to family life during the pandemic (figure 1) and being overwhelmed (figure 2), according to the report "The Impact of the Pandemic on Households with CYSHCN."

Respondents who said they feel stressed or nervous most or all the time were more likely to have accessed mental or behavioral health or social work services for their child during the pandemic compared with those who did not report those feelings (42% vs. 35%).

Family violence also was more common among parents of CYSHCN. Twenty-one percent reported spanking their children in the past week compared to 14% of families without CYSHCN; 30% reported experiencing intimate partner violence vs. 17% of families without CYSHCN.

"The AAP suggests that health care providers initiate contact with these families, coordinate health needs primarily through telehealth and make accommodations for in-person visits when necessary," according to the report. "Acknowledging these difficulties might be a first step in starting a discussion with families about parenting during the pandemic and supporting families with resources to encourage positive parenting."

