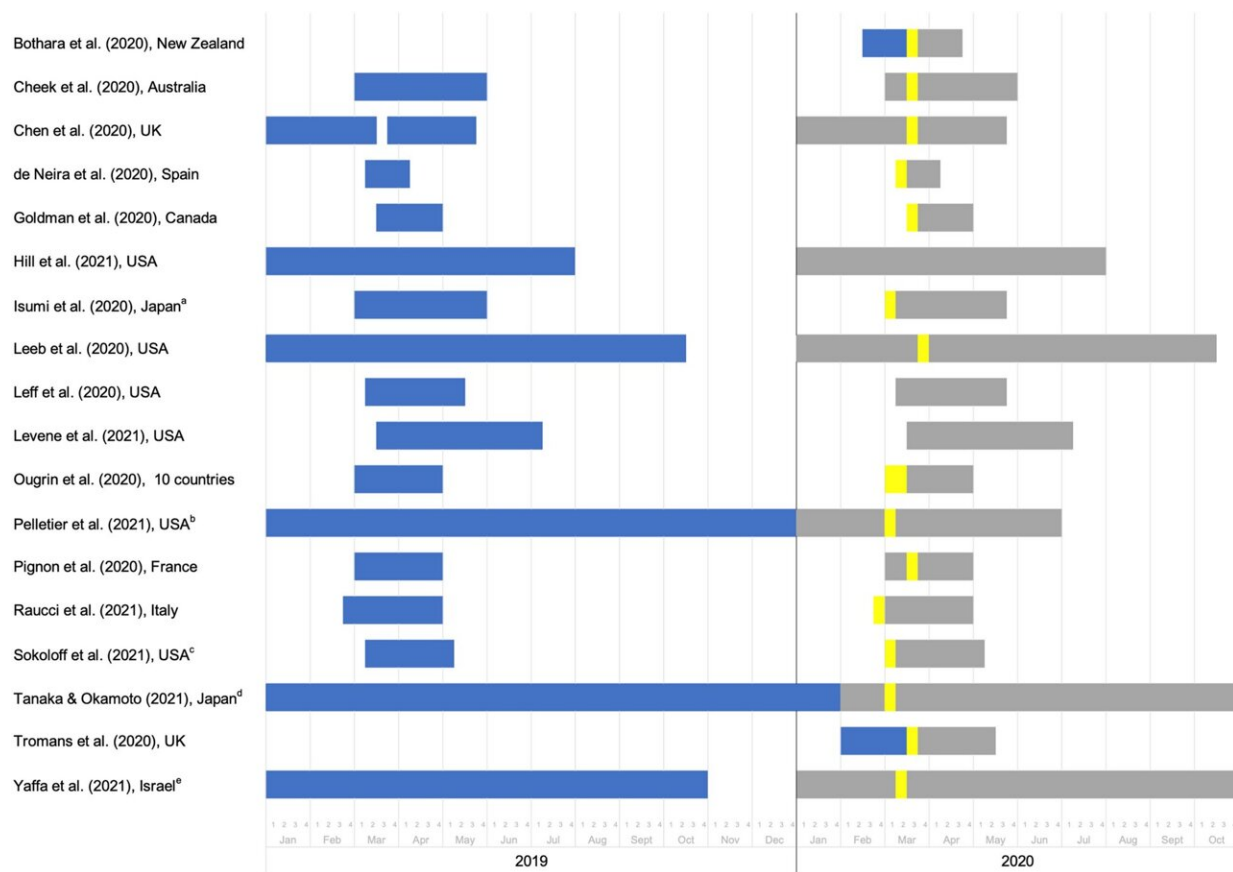


# Study: 28% reduction in mental health service use during early pandemic among children and young people

March 9 2022



Timeframes covered by the data before (blue) and during (gray) the COVID-19 pandemic. The yellow lines depict the first lockdowns or restrictions, based on information from the study authors.<sup>a,b,c,d,e</sup> Before pandemic timeframe started before January 2019: <sup>a</sup> March to May 2018 and 2019, <sup>b</sup> January to December 2010–2019, <sup>c</sup> 7 March to 6 May 2018 and 2019, <sup>d</sup> November 2016 to January

2020, <sup>e</sup> January to October 2015–2019. Credit: *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health* (2022). DOI: 10.1186/s13034-022-00452-3

A recently published extensive systematic review showed a 28% reduction in mental health service use in the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic among children and young people. Reductions were mainly recorded for ED visit due to mental health issues for which the services reduced on average by 40%.

The study included peer-reviewed studies that compared administrative data for psychiatric service use, [self-harm](#), and suicide during and before the COVID-19 pandemic. The review included 18 studies with data from 19 countries published from 1 January 2020 to 22 March 2021.

"The findings show the immediate impact the pandemic had on [mental health services](#) for children and young people," according to joint first authors Dr. Wan Mohd Azam Wan Mohd Yunus and Dr. Laura Kauhanen, who are postdoctoral researchers at the Research Centre for Child Psychiatry at the University of Turku, Finland.

According to Assistant Professor David Gyllenberg, unmet mental health needs or delays in accessibility to appropriate care are a significant public health concern.

"Other studies are showing increased psychiatric symptoms among children and [young people](#) during the pandemic. Such large reductions in service use at the beginning of the pandemic raises questions on the role of treatment delays in how [mental health issues](#) have progressed during the pandemic," says Dr. Gyllenberg who led the study.

"Another relevant question is, what resources are needed to tackle

them," he continues.

The study was published in the journal *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry & Mental Health*.

**More information:** Wan Mohd Azam Wan Mohd Yunus et al, Registered psychiatric service use, self-harm and suicides of children and young people aged 0–24 before and during the COVID-19 pandemic: a systematic review, *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health* (2022). [DOI: 10.1186/s13034-022-00452-3](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-022-00452-3)

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