

### PEDIATRICIAN LIFE AND CAREER EXPERIENCE STUDY (PLACES)

#### MESSAGE FROM THE AAP PRESIDENT



Dear PLACES Pediatricians:

Thank you for your continued commitment to children and families and to PLACES.

It has been a difficult couple of years for pediatricians as we tackle not only COVID-19, but a number of intersecting challenges weighing heavily on our country's 74 million children. I know each one of you, in all types of practice and geographic location, are dedicated to the children and families in your communities.

In this newsletter we summarize early findings on a topic you told us was a priority, children's mental health. In 2021 the Academy declared a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. The insights from PLACES pediatricians confirm this national crisis, intensified by the pandemic. These data are sobering. They are highly valuable and informative to the Academy, as we continue our work to support pediatricians addressing these challenges.

This year's PLACES main study survey is underway. As you know, this survey is focused on you – practice challenges, career changes, work-life balance, career satisfaction, and life changes. The data from PLACES provide a unique opportunity to understand your experiences. We truly appreciate your time.

Thank you, as always, for everything you do for children.

Warm regards,

Moira Szilagyi, MD, PhD, FAAP  
President



A program of the American Academy of Pediatrics

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#### About PLACES

PLACES is a longitudinal cohort study tracking the experiences and opinions of pediatricians over time.

There are 3 important cohorts:

##### Participating since 2012:

- 1) 2002-2004 Residency Graduates Cohort, n=897
- 2) 2009-2011 Residency Graduates Cohort, n=896

##### Participating since 2019:

- 3) 2016-2018 Residency Graduates Cohort, n=917

PLACES pediatricians are surveyed twice a year:

- Main study survey
- Shorter survey, focused on topic selected by participants

Strengths of PLACES:

- Longitudinal design
- Inclusion of both AAP members and non-members
- Range of content (work, satisfaction, personal dimension)
- **Commitment of pediatricians, like you!**

## Mental Health Initiatives

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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



# ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

OCTOBER 2022

## What we heard from you in 2021

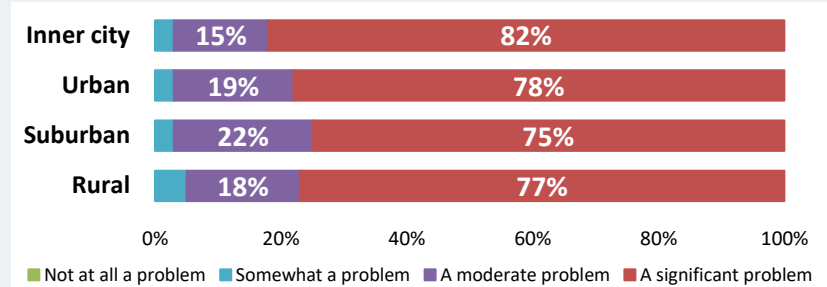
Addressing the mental health needs of children is a high priority!

## What we learned from you in 2022

Data collection is near final, but we wanted you to see the results first

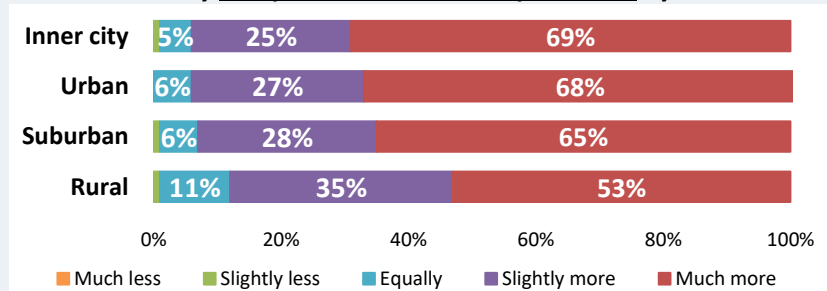
- PLACES pediatricians are universally concerned about the mental health of children in their communities
  - 3 in 4 across all practice areas said mental health is a **significant problem** (Figure 1)
  - Two-thirds in inner city, urban, and suburban areas and half in rural areas are **much more concerned** about mental health currently compared to before the pandemic (Figure 2)

Figure 1. PLACES pediatricians' views on child mental health as a problem in their community by area



Source: AAP PLACES, Summer 2022; near final data (n=1,468)

Figure 2. PLACES pediatricians' concern about child mental health in their community compared to before the pandemic by area



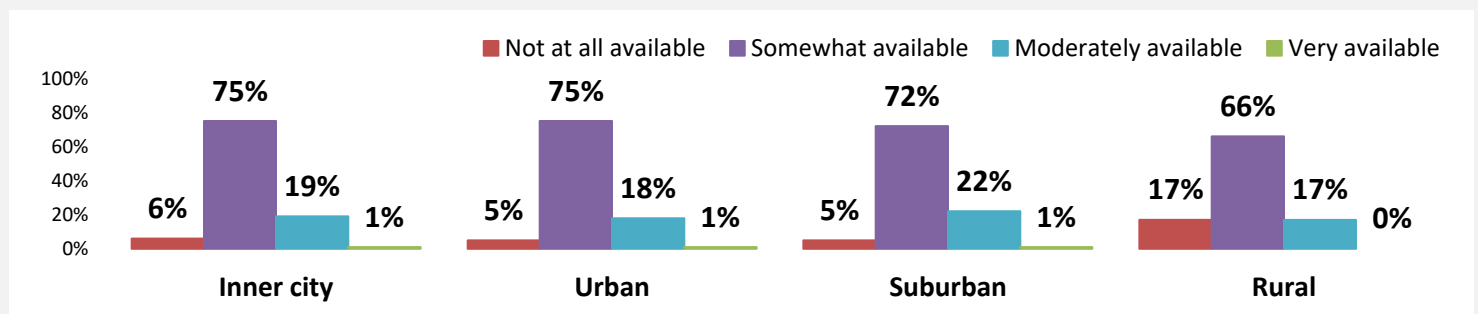
Source: AAP PLACES, Summer 2022; near final data (n=1,530)

## Availability of Mental Health Resources

PLACES pediatricians report that adequate child mental health resources are lacking (Figure 3)

- 8 in 10 said adequate resources to care for children with mental health conditions are unavailable in their community
- 17% of those working in rural areas said adequate resources are *not at all available*

Figure 3. PLACES pediatricians' reported availability of child mental health resources in their community by area



Source: AAP PLACES, Summer 2022; near final data (n=1,454)

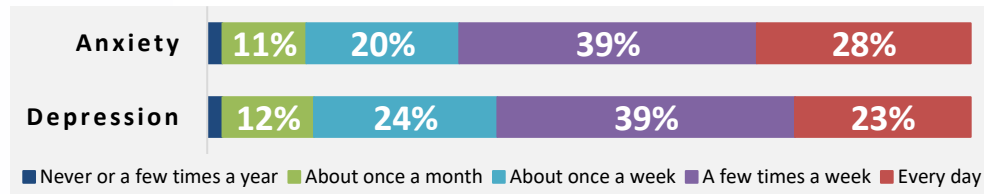
## What we learned from you in 2022

### Primary care pediatricians frequently care for patients with mental health conditions

The vast majority (98%) of PLACES primary care pediatricians have cared for a child with a mental health condition in the past year

- Many regularly see patients with **anxiety** and **depression** (Figure 4)
  - Nearly a third (32%) of those in both rural and suburban areas care for patients with **anxiety every day**
  - 30% in rural areas and 24% in suburban areas see patients with **depression every day**
- Although less frequently, many also care for patients with **suicidal ideation/behavior** and **eating disorders**
  - 20% care for patients with **suicidal ideation/behavior about once a week or more**
  - 16% report seeing patients with **eating disorders about once a week or more**

**Figure 4. PLACES primary care pediatricians' reported frequency of caring for patients with anxiety and depression**



Source: AAP PLACES, Summer 2022; near final data (n=711)

#### Finding Care for Patients

Almost 6 in 10 primary care pediatricians report difficulty finding mental health care for their patients

- One quarter (24%) say it is *very difficult* to find care

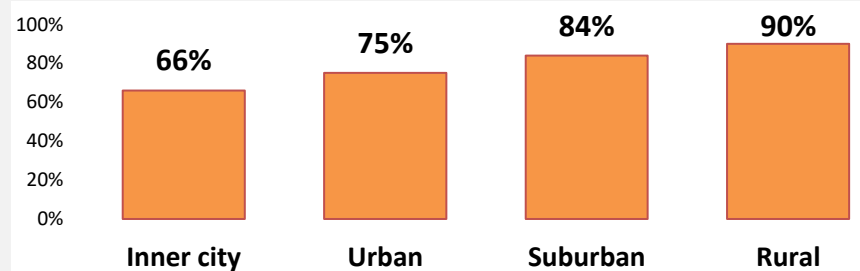
#### Prescribing Psychotropic Medication

Most primary care pediatricians (79%) have prescribed psychotropic medication in the past year

- Prescribing is more common in rural and suburban than urban and inner city practice areas (Figure 5)

Among those prescribing, half are moderately (40%) or very (10%) comfortable doing so

**Figure 5. Percentage of PLACES primary care pediatricians who have prescribed psychotropic medication in the past 12 months by area**



Source: AAP PLACES, Summer 2022; near final data (n=711)

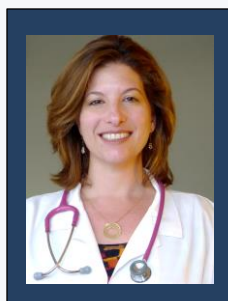
In 2021, PLACES pediatricians prioritized the topic of children's mental health needs to ask on our next survey.

- Nearly 7 in 10 participants completed the 2022 summer survey – thank you!
- Three raffle winners were randomly selected for a \$250 Amazon gift card from the pool of respondents.

### PLACES 2022 WINNERS



Dr Lisa Duffy-Reckner, DO FAAP  
is a general pediatrician  
practicing in Pennsylvania.



Dr Tamar Magnas, MD is  
a general pediatrician  
practicing in New York.



Dr Ashley Marchese, MD is  
a pediatric emergency  
medicine physician  
practicing in Massachusetts.

## KEY PROJECT PRIORITY – FEEDING BACK DATA TO YOU

### One of the highest priorities of PLACES is to feed data back to PLACES pediatricians

#### *How are data currently being distributed?*

- *GOING PLACES* participant newsletters are distributed twice a year, with the main study survey and the shorter survey.
- Articles about PLACES in *AAP News Research Update* are published at least annually.
- Data are presented at academic conferences, including the Pediatric Academic Societies Annual Meeting and published in peer-reviewed journals.
- PLACES website is updated monthly:  
[www.aap.org/places](http://www.aap.org/places)

#### Recent Journal Publications, 2019-2022

- Pediatricians' experiences with telehealth in 2021; In Press *Pediatrics*
- [Different measures and ways to categorize pediatrician burnout and the association with satisfaction](#)
- [Changes in work characteristics and pediatrician satisfaction: 2012–2020](#)
- [The effect of electronic health record burden on pediatricians' work–life balance and career satisfaction](#)
- [Factors influencing career longevity in pediatric hospital medicine](#)
- [Gender differences in earnings of early- and midcareer pediatricians](#)
- [Gender discrepancies related to pediatrician work-life balance and household responsibilities](#)

*A Special Thanks to the PLACES Project Advisory Committee:*

*Bobbi Byrne, MD; Gary Freed, MD, MPH; Laurel Leslie, MD, MPH; Amy Starmer, MD, MPH*