



WABANAKI TWO-SPIRIT ALLIANCE



Final Report: Survey on Covid-19 Impacts with the Two-Spirit Community of Wabanaki, 2021

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Introduction

The Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance conducted an online survey in 2020 to understand the impacts of Covid-19 in the Two-spirited community of Atlantic Canada.

Purpose of survey

The main goal was to gather data on the impacts of Covid-19 in the Two-Spirit community from a health, social, cultural, and economic perspective.

Survey development

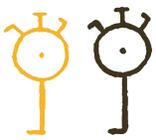
A group of Two-Spirit volunteers including Elders, Trans people, and Youth co-developed the survey. The group adapted the *Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) COVID-19 response survey (2020)* for a Two-Spirit audience. Careful consideration was taken to identify triggers and lower the risks of retraumatization as a trauma-informed approach. The survey was tested by volunteers and amended according to their recommendations. Mental health supports were shared at the end of the survey.

Survey delivery

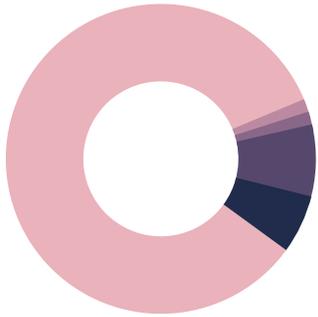
The online survey was launched using Survey Monkey, then shared on W2SA social media networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) between May 20 - June 15, 2020, with a total of 149 respondents, all over 18 years old. The limitations of the study stemmed from a lack or limited access to the internet or devices to complete the survey, which may have affected the number of respondents from various demographics and areas.

Data analyzation

W2SA conducted the data analysis with a group of Two-spirit people including community representatives and the W2SA staff. The data findings are the only source of data in Atlantic Canada about the Two-Spirit community.



Demographics

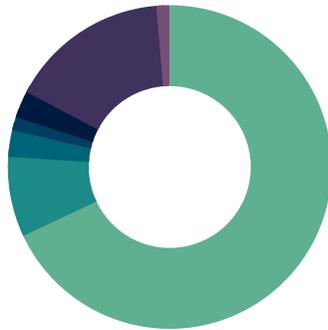


Indigenous Identity

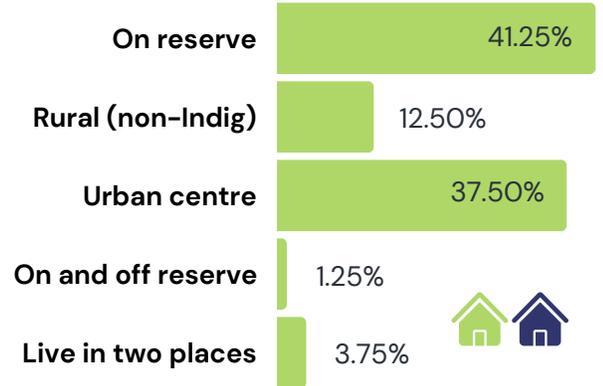
First Nation 82.55%
 Inuit 1.34
 Metis 1.34%
 Indigenous Ancestry 7.38%
 Not Indigenous 6.04%

Indigenous Nation

Mi'kmaq (L'nu) 68.0%
 Wolastoqiyiq (Maliseet) 8.0%
 Inuit 2.67%
 Penobscot 1.33%
 Metis 2.67%
 Outside of Wabanaki 16.0%
 Outside of Turtle Island 1.33%

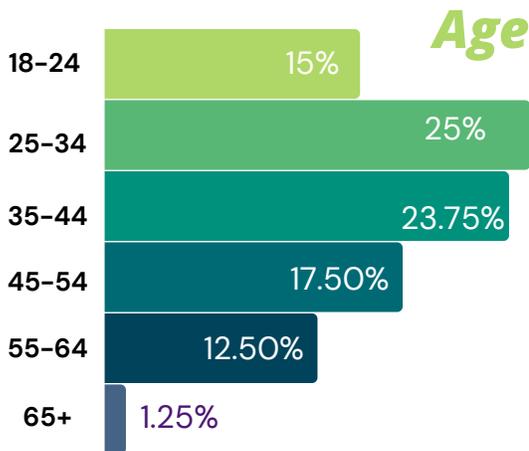
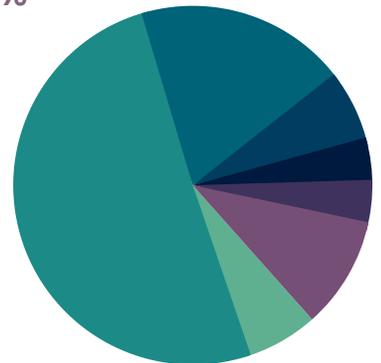


Primary Residence(s)



Source(s) of income

Full-Time Work 50.63%
 Part-Time Work 6.33%
 Self-employed 3.8%
 Odd jobs 3.8%
 Social Assistance 18.99%
 School Funding 6.33%
 Other 10.13%



Gender Identity

32.50%

Female

23.75%

Male

6.25%

'X': not exclusively male or female

31.25%

Two Spirit, queer &/or non-binary

5.0%

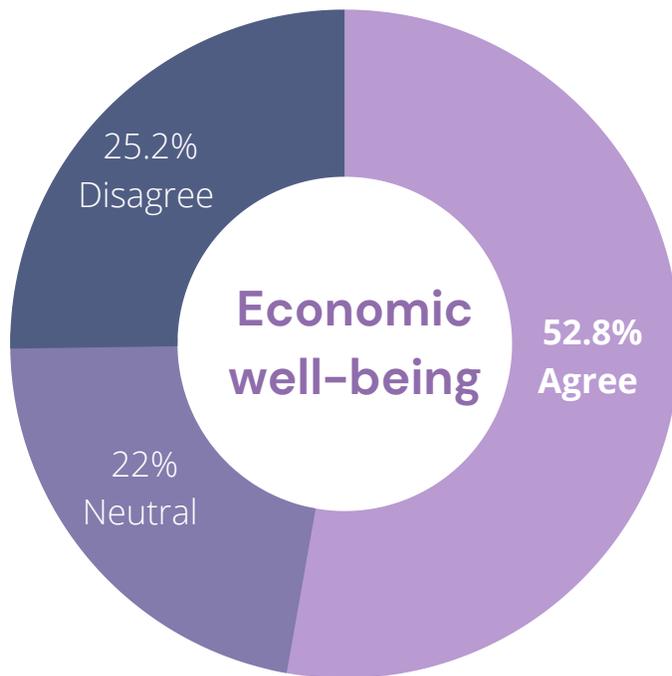
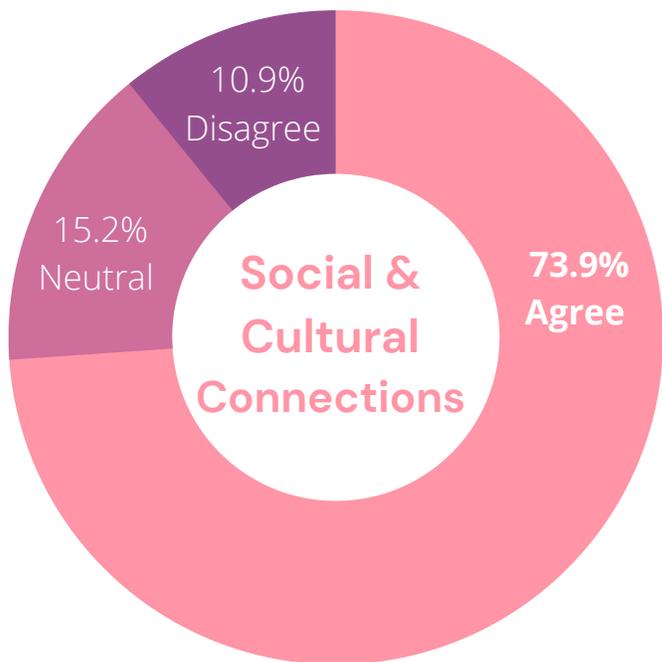
Trans



Broad Impacts of Covid-19



The **majority** of Two-Spirit & Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ community members indicated that **COVID-19 had impacted them spiritually, economically, & socially.**



Covid has impacted my spiritual well-being

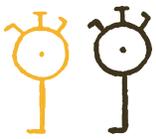
Strongly agree (14.13%), agree (26.09%), & somewhat agree (22.83%)
 Neither agree nor disagree (14.13%)
 Somewhat disagree (6.52%), disagree (10.87%), & strongly disagree (5.43%)

Covid has affected my economic well-being

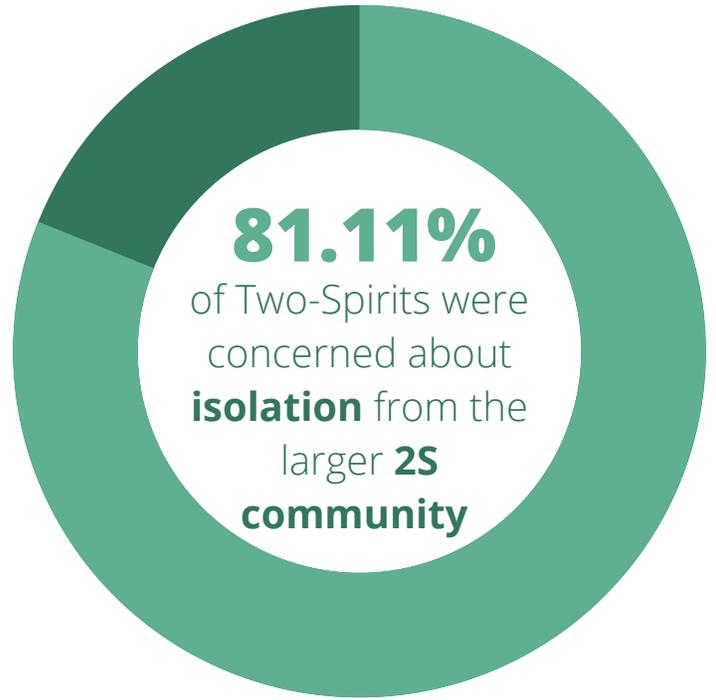
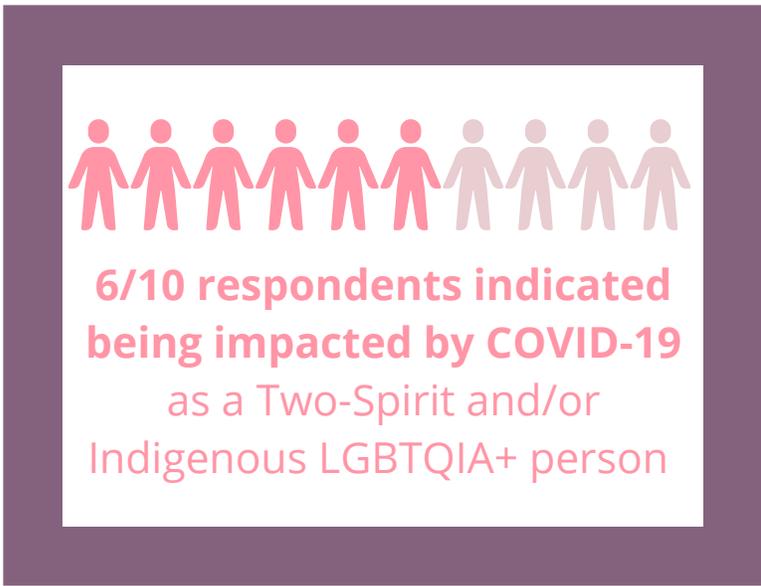
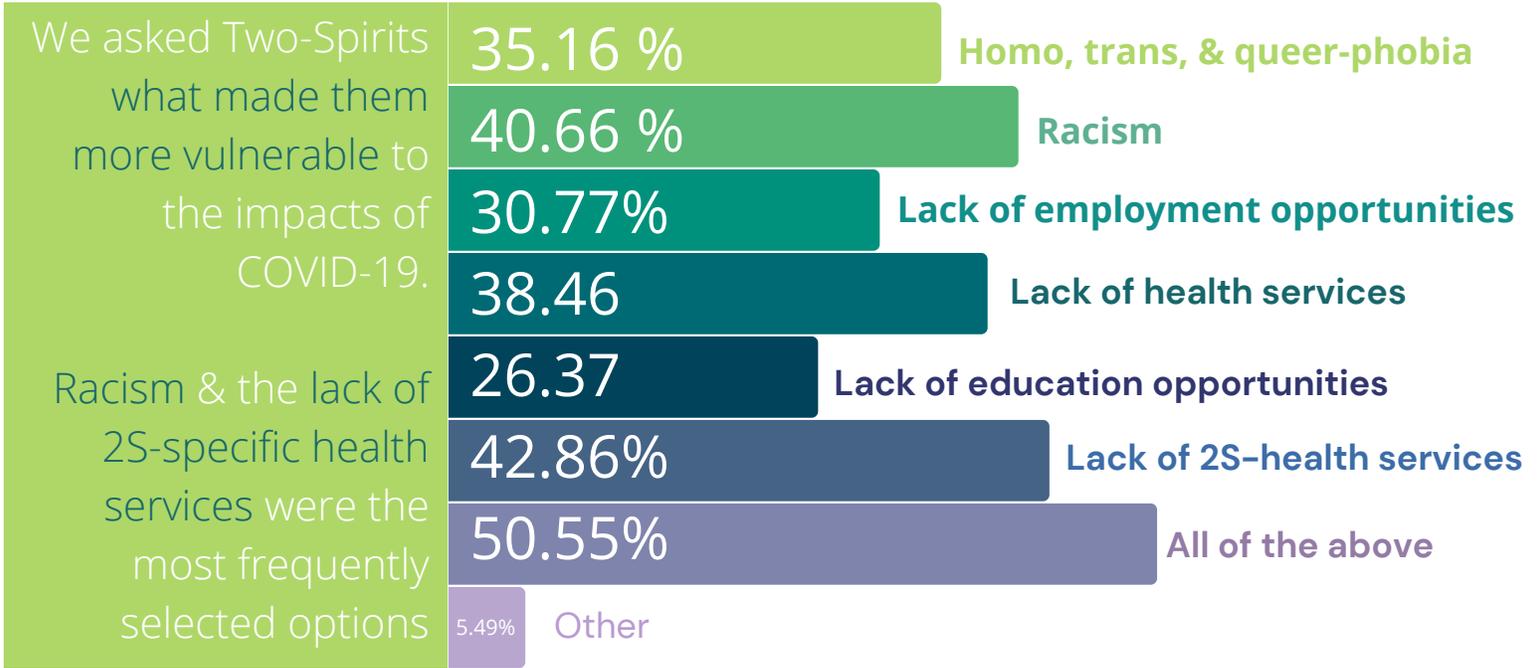
Strongly agree (20.88%) and agree (31.87%)
 Neither agree nor disagree (21.98%)
 Disagree (19.78%) and strongly disagree (5.43%)

Covid has impacted my social and cultural connections

Strongly agree (28.26%) & agree (45.65%)
 Neither agree nor disagree (15.22%)
 Disagree (10.87%)



2SLGBTQIA-specific impacts



How concerned are u about isolation from the two spirit community

A great deal (16.67%); a lot (21.1%); a moderate amount (18.89%); a little (24.44%)

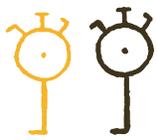
None at all (18.89%)

Covid-19 has impacted me as a Two-Spirit /Indigenous LGBTQIA+ person

A great deal (11.63%), a lot (11.63%), a moderate amount (20.93%), a little (10.47%), agree (3.49%), & somewhat agree (2.33%)

Neither agree nor disagree (12.79%)

None (20.93%), somewhat disagree (1.16%), disagree (3.49%), and strongly disagree (1.16%)



2SLGBTQIA+ concern(s) for others



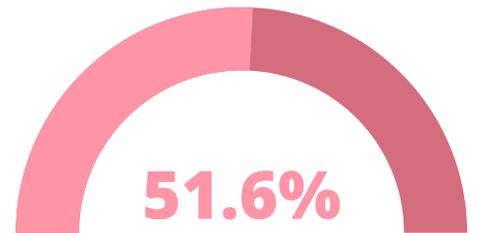
The **majority** of the Two-Spirit & Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ community indicated being **more concerned about family & community** well-being than their own individual health.



Indicated being worried 'a great deal' about their home community/ies.



Indicated being worried 'a great deal' about their personal health

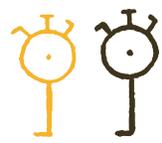


Indicated being worried 'a great deal' about their family's health

(30.43% a great deal)
 (28.26% a lot)
 (27.17% moderate)
 (14.13% a little)
 (0.0% none at all)

(18.23% a great deal)
 (17.20% a lot)
 (29.03% moderate)
 (34.41% a little)
 1.08% none at all

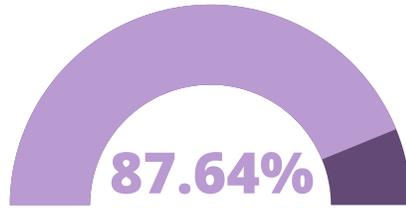
(51.61% a great deal)
 (21..51% a lot)
 (15.05% moderate)
 (11.83% a little)
 (0.0% none at all)



2S Health[care] during COVID



**of Two-Spirits
were worried
about their
mental health
during COVID-19**



**of Two-Spirits
were concerned
about accessing
healthcare
during Covid-19**

Two-Spirit & Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community members experienced increased health concerns during COVID-19; however, few (3.6%) accessed a healthcare professional.

Historic distrust in medical institutions, racism, & a lack of gender affirming care may explain why many were concerned about accessing healthcare during COVID-19.

Two-Spirits experienced a variety of mental, physical, & emotional health issues during the Covid-19 pandemic & lockdown(s)	71.43% Sadness	79.12% Anxiety	68.13% Tiredness, weakness & fatigue	67.03% Loneliness
	60.44% Fear	58.85% Pain and hurt	57.14% Depression	39.56% Anger
	23.08% Suicidal thoughts	21.98% Thoughts of self-harm	2.2% Suicide	3.30% Other

How concerned are you as a Two spirit/ Indigenous LGBTQIA in accessing healthcare services during Covid 19
 A great deal (28.09%); a lot (21.35%); a moderate amount (21.35%); a little 16.85
 None at all (12.36%)

How concerned are you about your mental health
 A great deal (34.78%); a lot (19.57%); a moderate amount (27.17%); a little (13.04%)
 None at all 5.43



Violence & Safety during Covid-19

Who are Two-Spirits likely to face violence from?

63.74%

A stranger

57.14%

A partner

51.65%

A community member

50.55%

A family member

49.45%

An acquaintance

48.35%

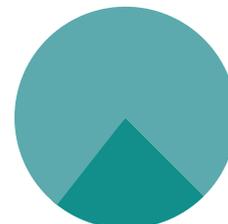
A previous partner

34.07%

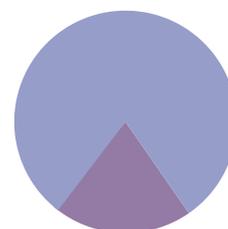
A colleague

27.47%

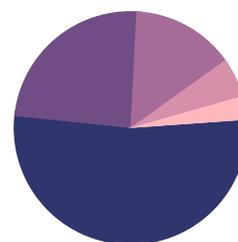
A friend



23.08% of Two-Spirits were worried about experiencing violence during COVID-19



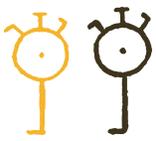
20% of Two-Spirits had been a victim of violence during COVID-19



52.75% of Two-Spirits felt 'a great deal' of safety in their living/home situation.

Do you feel safe in your living / home situation

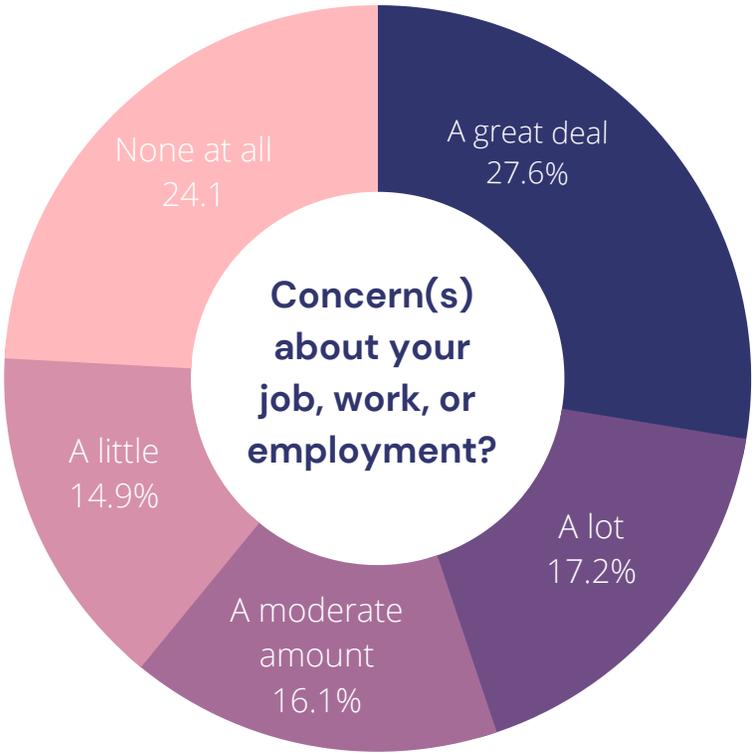
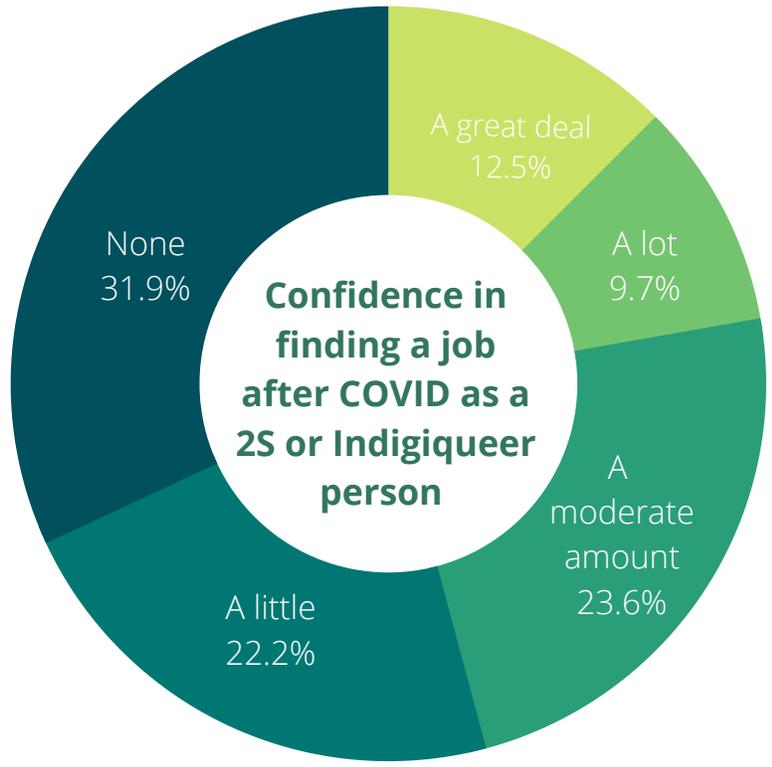
A great deal (52.75%); a lot (24.18%); a moderate amount 14.29%; a little (5.49%)
None at all (3.30%)



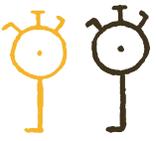
Job Security during COVID-19



The **majority** of the Two-Spirit & Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ community did **not express full confidence** in being able to **find a job after COVID** as a 2S or LGBTQIA+ person.



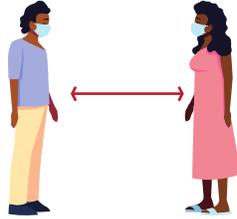
The **majority** of the Two-Spirit & Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ community **expressed some level of concern** regarding their **job security during COVID-19** and beyond .



2S coping during the pandemic

20.73%

Managed on their own



20.73%

Followed the health measures to stay safe

13.41%

Exercised to stay healthy



13.41%

Reached out to friends and/or family

8.54%

Managed with the help of family and/or friends



6.10%

Did cultural activities like: artwork, beading, or drumming

6.10%

Prayed and/or used traditional medicines.



3.66%

Went to a healthcare professional



2.44%

Helped others or volunteered



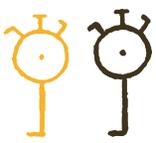
1.22%

Looked for online services



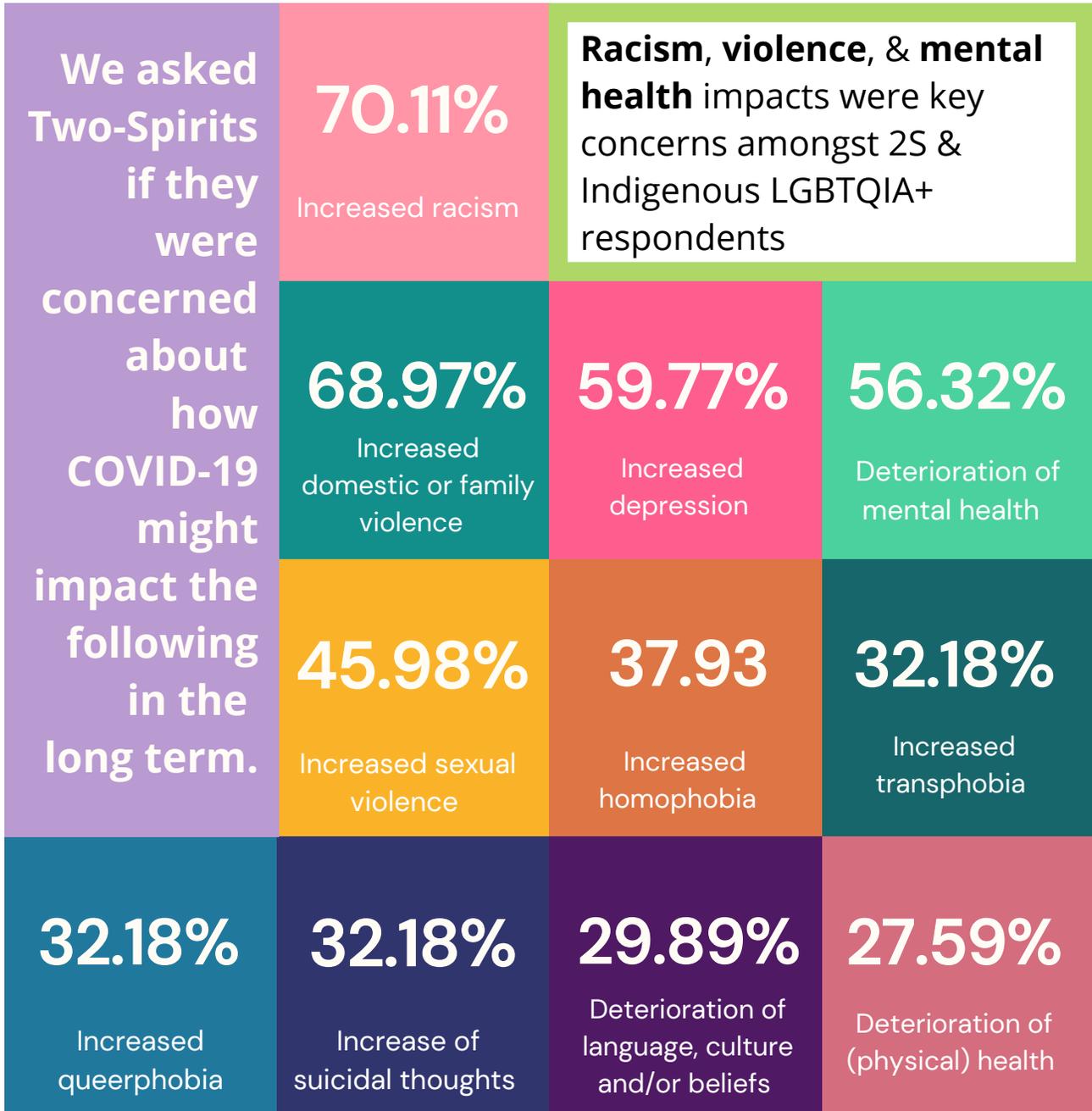
1.22%

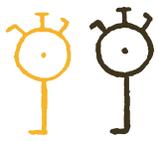
Spoke to an Elder, healer, or knowledge keeper



Long term impacts

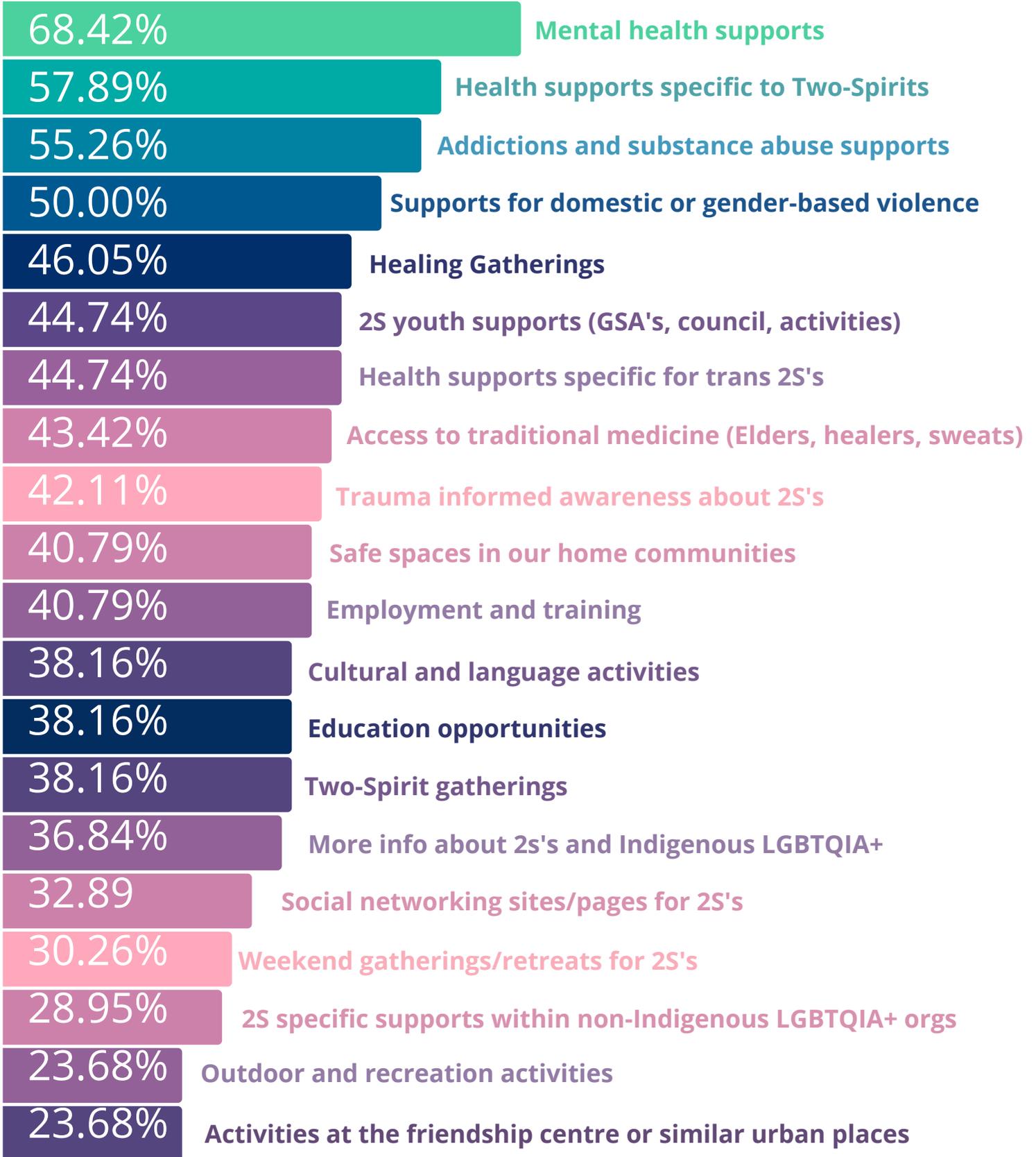
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Long term supports needed

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Moving forward...

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The Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance is addressing the impacts of Covid-19 in the Wabanaki Two-spirit community. The Alliance's goal is to use the findings as community-based evidence to: advocate for services to address gaps in healthcare; to develop a regional mental health plan; and, to conduct an assessment of needs for the 2S people in order to guide our work until 2025.

W2SA [virtual] gatherings

The Alliance is planning a series of virtual gatherings and workshops as a way to bring the community into spaces to share stories, learn together, and just have fun. The Alliance is putting up a Pride Teepee during the Halifax Pride Festival in August to celebrate with 2S activities. Then, it will host its regional gathering, September 10-12, 2021 where there will be music, powwow, cultural workshops, and its AGA. The gatherings are medicine for the 2S community and there has to be more effort to provide every opportunity to make space and time for people to come together.

Funding

The Alliance's network of partners and peer 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations provided much-welcomed resources during the pandemic. For example, W2SA received emergency relief funding from **2 Spirits in Motion** and the **Enchanté Network** to address urgent needs, including the development of this survey in 2020. In 2021, the W2SA has also secured **Women and Gender Equality** funding to strengthen the Alliance's community capacity development as part of its strategic approach for sustainability in the Atlantic Canada region. increasing capacity of the organization, which in turn enables us to better support 2S's in the region; build relationships with individuals, communities, and allied organizations; continue to assess needs of 2S's in the region; provide more gatherings, workshops, etc; and seek funding to continue (and expand) this work.

Second Covid Survey

The Alliance followed up with a second survey on the first survey's one-year anniversary. This survey confirmed most of the original findings with a lower response amount. These findings provide perspectives to develop ways to engage long-term needs, concerns, and impacts of the pandemic. The data informs the Alliance to develop its short and long-term strategy in the Wabanaki region.

Survey Questions

Which of the following precautions have you taken to reduce the risk of exposure(s) to COVID-19? Select all that apply.

Stocked up on groceries, toiletries, & household items	66.15%
Stocked up medicines, prescriptions, or traditional medicines	49.23%
Stocked up on personal and sexual health needs (menstrual products, condoms, etc).	27.69%
Made plans to help family members who may be more vulnerable	49.23%
Made plans to help community members who may be more vulnerable	40.77%
Made plans for me because I am more vulnerable	30.77%
Made plans for communicating with family, friends, and neighbours	57.69%
Practiced social distancing	93.85%
Avoided public places except when seeking essential needs	80.00%
Stayed home	78.46%
Stayed indoors	50.77%
Avoided crowds, large gatherings	86.92%
Stayed informed about COVID-19	80.00%
Practiced public health protocols (washing hands, avoiding touching face)	83.08%
Wore gloves and/or masks in public	64.62%
Cancelled upcoming travel	50.00%
Worked from home	56.15%
Attended online classes	33.08%
None of the above	2.31%

Where did you find information about public health measures and recommendations? Select all that apply.

On the news (local, national, or international)	71.54%
Indigenous news (local, national, international)	39.23%
Federal health agency (website, information pages, updates)	55.23%
Provincial health agency (website, information pages, updates)	60.00%
Municipal health agency (website, information pages, updates)	26.15%
Local or community government (reserve, territory or community, chief and council)	46.92%
Two-Spirit /Indigenous organization (local, national, international)	11.54%
Non-Indigenous LGBTQIA+ organization (local, national, international)	36.92%
Updates by local leadership (Chief, Elder, leader, educators)	61.54%
Updates through social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Google)	51.54%
Family, friends, colleagues	54.62%
Health Professionals	33.85%
Place of Employment	10.77%
Place of study	0.77%
I am not practising recommended health measures	

Since COVID-19, which emergency and/or health supports did you apply for? Select all that apply.

Canada Emergency Response Benefits (or similar)	37.50%
Canada Emergency Student Benefits (or similar)	14.06%
Employment benefits for workers	10.94%
Disability benefits	4.69%
Community or On-reserve emergency funds	26.56%
Tribal or Organization emergency funds	10.94%
Provincial emergency funds	7.81%

Survey Questions

Have you experienced any impacts on your personal living/residence/home due to COVID-19? Select all that apply.

Lost my home/apartment	0.00%
Forced to move out of my home/apartment	1.10%
Had to move back home or to my community	3.30%
Had to move into a group home	0.00%
I am currently couch surfing, staying with family/friends, or a similar situation	2.20%
I am homeless because of COVID-19	1.10%
None of the above	93.41%

Has COVID-19 affected your eating/nutrition/food security? Select all that apply.

Limited in accessing food because of shortages/food availability in my community	2.20%
Limited in accessing healthy food	4.40%
Changed eating habits and food because of food shortages/availability	10.99%
Cooking from home more (less take out and going to restaurants)	39.56%
Eating more traditional food (wild game, berries, fish)	1.10%
Less money for food because of COVID-19	1.10%
Had to go to the food bank, soup kitchen or similar	4.40%
Motivated me to hunt, fish and/or gather traditional food(s)	2.20%
Improved my eating habits	7.69%
No change in my eating habits, nutrition or food security.	15.38%
All of the above	1.10%
None of the above	7.69%

What are your personal strengths in dealing with COVID-19? Select all that apply.

I am strong (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual)	52.56%
I have an awesome support team (family, partner, community)	44.87%
I feel safe in my home	69.23%
I feel safe in my family	47.44%
I feel safe in my community	47.44%
I support others to cope	39.74%
I have strong cultural practices and beliefs that make me feel strong	29.49%
I have a stable income	44.87%
I am supported as a Two-Spirit / Indigenous LGBTQIA+ (all around generally)	23.08%
I feel safe as a Two-Spirit / Indigenous LGBTQIA+ (community, family, friends, work)	32.05%
My language and culture help me cope	29.49%
Other (please specify)	2.56%

Survey Questions

How concerned are you about your living/home situation?

A great deal	10.87%
A lot	14.13%
A moderate amount	15.22%
A little	15.22%
None at all	44.57%

How concerned are you about your physical distancing from your partner

A great deal	6.59%
A lot	7.69%
A moderate amount	12.09%
A little	6.59%
None at all	52.75%

How concerned are you about the health care system

A great deal	45.16%
A lot	22.58%
A moderate amount	20.43%
A little	7.53%
None at all	4.30%

How concerned are you about your studies?

A great deal	17.50%
A lot	8.75%
A moderate amount	20.00%
A little	13.75%
None at all	40.00%

How concerned are you about your sexual health?

A great deal	7.69%
A lot	8.79%
A moderate amount	12.09%
A little	18.68%
None at all	52.75%

How worried are you about maintaining social ties?

A great deal	20.65%
A lot	17.39%
A moderate amount	23.91%
A little	26.09%
None at all	11.96%

We thank you for your ongoing support of the Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance

Acknowledgements

Wabanaki Two-Spirit Alliance acknowledges the contributions of our regional and national partners that made the survey and report possible. We especially thank all the Two-Spirit participants who shared their time and interest to share their voices. Our gratitude to W2SA Elders who reached out during the pandemic to express their concerns.

Included in our acknowledgements who committed resources, time, and dedication, such as:

Our W2SA volunteers, contributors, and staff **for survey development, analysis, and feedback.**

Naomi Bird is behind the report development, writing, and design.

Our **funders**: Enchanté Network, 2 Spirits in Motion, Women and Gender Equality of Canada

Our **regional partners**: Nova Scotia Native Women's Association, Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories, and peer 2SLGBTQQIA+ organizations.

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