

'FAMILIES ARE OVERWHELMED': THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON RACIAL INEQUITIES AND SCHOOL DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

Tiffany Jones, Anne Williford, and Devin Duncan

WELCOME

HOUSEKEEPING

LET'S MAKE THIS A DISCUSSION

ASK QUESTIONS THROUGHOUT!

COMMENTS ARE WELCOME

TWO PANDEMICS:

RACISM

COVID-19

EDUCATION DEBT: BIPOC STUDENTS ARE...

Less likely to:

- Be tracked into advanced classes
- Receive access to academic and social support
- Experience a culturally affirming education

More likely to:

- Be tracked into special education
- Be exposed to exclusionary discipline
- Attend schools with fewer resources

COVID-19 + Structural Racism =

- Higher death rates
- Increased risk for underlying conditions
- Worse environmental conditions
- Uninsured
- Working front line jobs where social distancing isn't possible

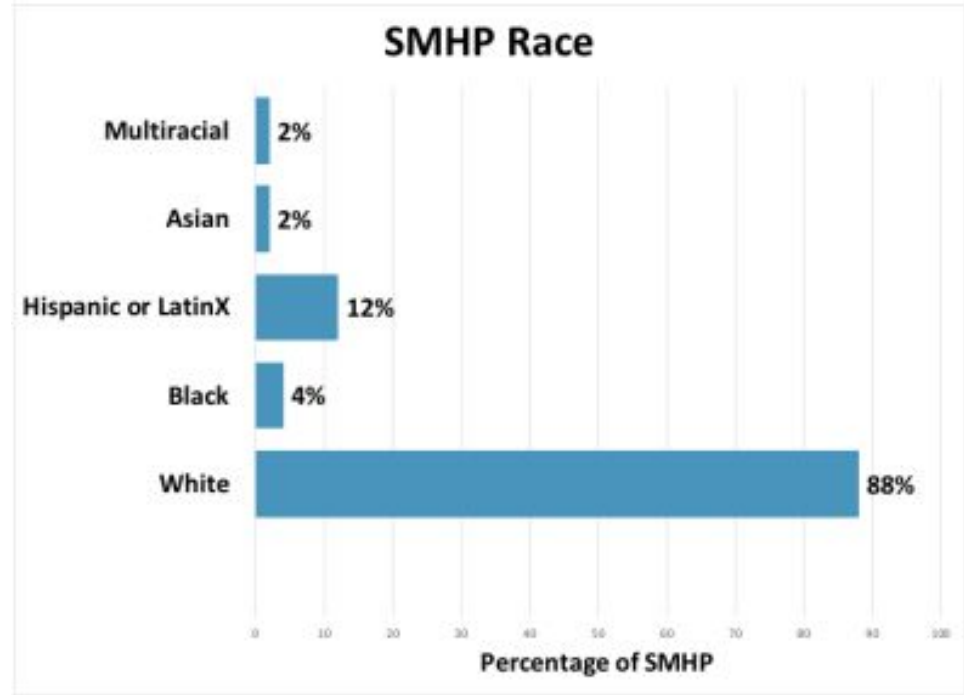
THE EDUCATION DEBT IN YOUR CONTEXT

- In what ways do students of color experience your school/district? Is it different or similar to the way white students experience the school?
- How have you seen the education debt show up in your school/district for BIPOC students?
 - Academically?
 - Socially?
 - Emotionally?



WE SURVEYED 58 SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS (SMHP) IN MAY 2020

- 57% School Social Workers, 22% School Psychologists, 10% School Counselors, and 13% other student support roles
- From 8 Colorado School Districts
- 53% Urban, 47% Suburban, 12% Rural
- 91% female, 5% male, 3% non-binary
- SMHP worked across all age groups



STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT

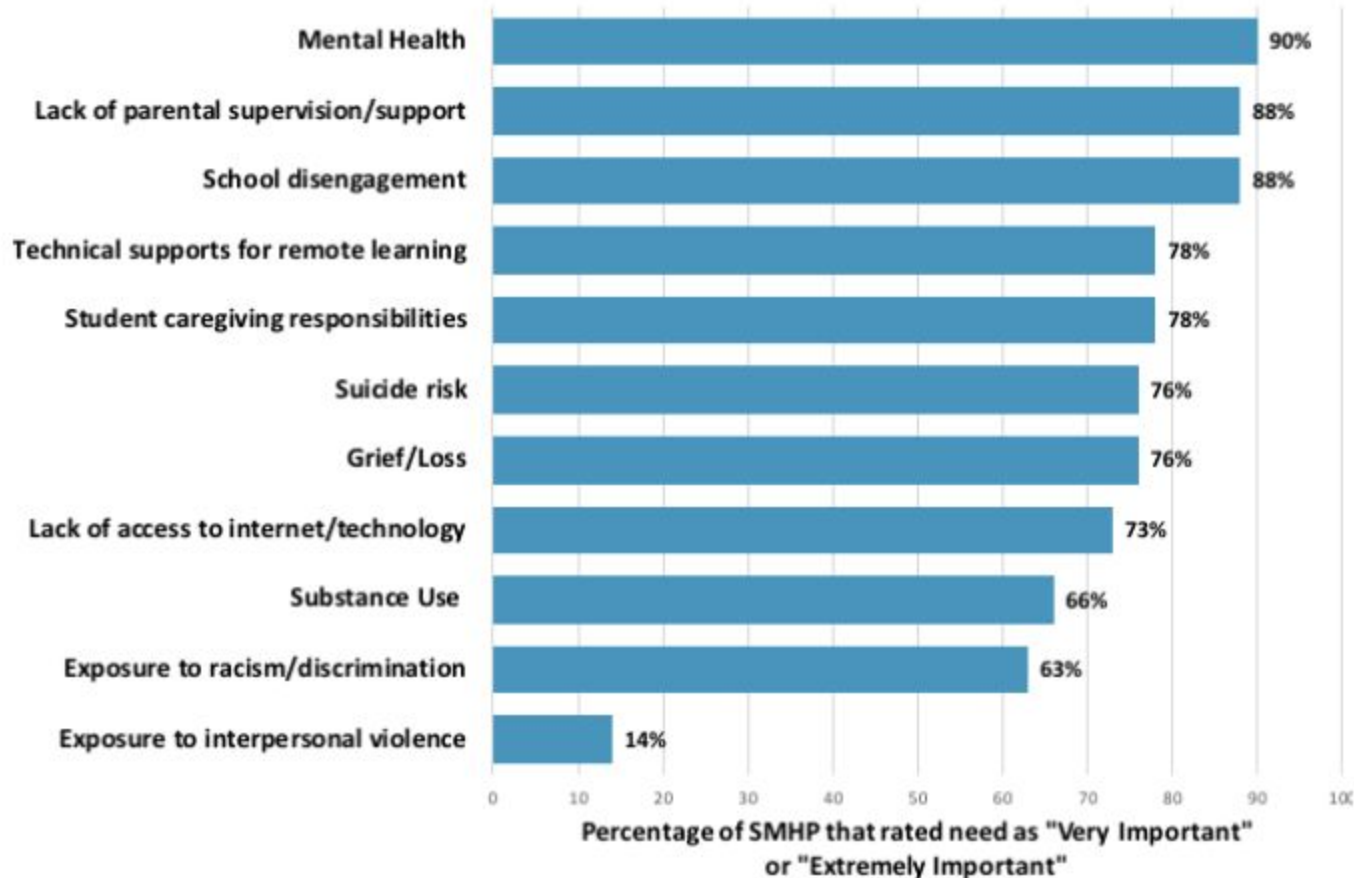
9 out of 10 SMHP said that over 25% of the students they worked with were disengaged, and these students were disproportionately students of color

Factor related to disengagement

- Basic needs
- Technology needs
- Student and family needs

“Some of our families live in one or two bedroom apartments and have 4-6 kids trying to participate in virtual class meetings in the same room, often with the TV on and toddlers grabbing their materials.”

Student Needs from Perspective of SMHP



STUDENT NEEDS: YOUR PERSPECTIVE

- What have you seen over the last year are students' most pressing needs?
- Do needs differ by a student's
 - Race/ethnicity?
 - Socioeconomic status?
 - Gender identity?
 - Sexual orientation?
 - Other characteristics?



STUDENTS DISPROPORTIONATELY AT RISK

Immigrant students and families

“My undocumented students are dealing with a disproportionate level of COVID related stressors (un/underemployment, uninsured, no stimulus money, must take the risk of working a lot).”

“I have 3 student families that are dealing with a parent/caregiver being sent back to Mexico.”

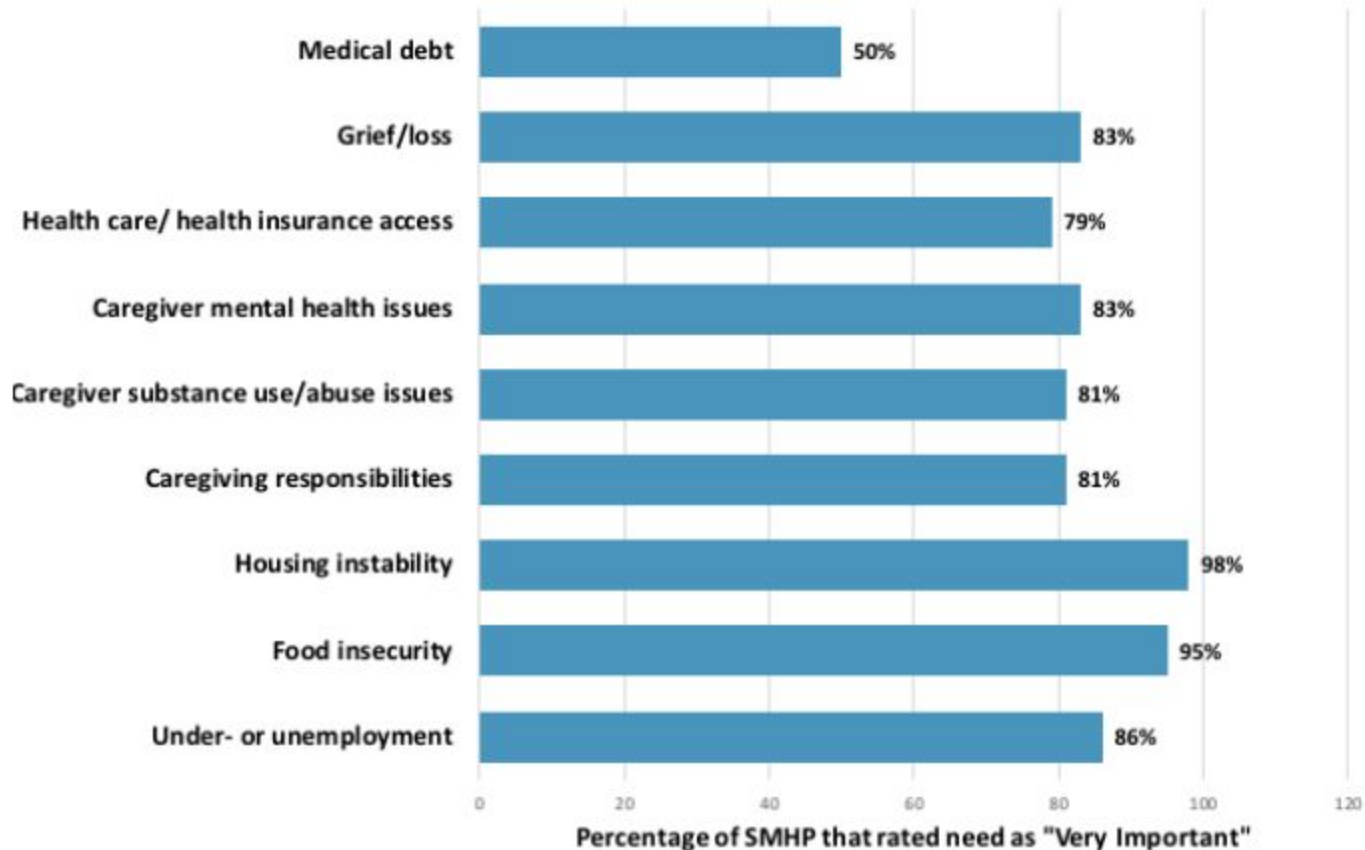
Police were sent for wellness checks

English Language Learners

Students with IEP, Disabilities or Existing Mental Health issues



SMHP Perception of Family Needs



FAMILY NEEDS: YOUR PERSPECTIVE

- What have you seen over the last year are families' most pressing needs?
- Do needs differ by a family's
 - Race/ethnicity?
 - Socioeconomic status?
 - Other characteristics?



AREAS OF RESILIENCE:

COMMUNITY & FAMILY CONNECTIONS

BETTER SCHOOL OUTCOMES FOR SOME

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

RESPECT FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

STUDENT AND FAMILY RESILIENCE: YOUR PERSPECTIVE

- How have you seen students and families get through the last year?
- What helped most in navigating this past academic year?
- What do you think will help most this school year to keep students and families engaged and support student success?



BIAS PRESENT IN SMHP'S PERCEPTIONS

SMHP pointed out many areas we need to target to support students:

- social support
- public services
- access to healthcare
- trauma informed care at school
- grief and loss

However, most SMHP did not consider the disproportionate burden of the pandemic for BIPOC students.

Call to Action:

- racial consciousness
- center cultural wealth
- address microaggressions and explicit racism within education

IN ACTION = COMPLICITY

DISCUSSION



THANK YOU!

CONTACT US:

TIFFANY.JONES@COLOSTATE.EDU

ANNE.WILLIFORD@COLOSTATE.EDU

DEVIN.DUNCAN@COLOSTATE.EDU

LINK TO THE PUBLISHED PAPER

*Special Thanks to
Kaylee Becker and
Samantha Bruick
(MSW
Students/alumni!)
for supporting the
analysis for this
project*