

More than one in five children in home confinement report depression

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(HealthDay)—During the COVID-19 outbreak in Hubei province in

China, 22.6 percent of children in home confinement reported depressive symptoms, according to a research letter published online April 24 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Xinyan Xie, from the Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, China, and colleagues examined depressive and anxiety symptoms among students in Wuhan who were restricted to home starting Jan. 23, 2020, and remained home until April 8, 2020, and those in Huangshi who started observing restrictions on Jan. 24, 2020, and remained home until March 23, 2020. A total of 1,784 participants (62.2 percent residing in Huangshi) completed a survey between Feb. 28 and March 5, 2020, when they had been restricted to home for a mean of 33.7 days.

The researchers found that 22.6 and 18.9 percent of students reported depressive and anxiety symptoms, respectively. Students in Wuhan had significantly higher scores on the Children's Depression Inventory-Short Form (CDI-S) than those in Huangshi, with increased odds of [depressive symptoms](#) (odds ratio, 1.426). Significantly lower CDI-S scores were reported for students who were slightly or not worried about being affected by COVID-19 versus those who were quite worried, with reduced odds of depressive symptoms (odds ratio, 0.521). Significantly higher CDI-S scores were reported for those who were not optimistic about the epidemic compared with those who were quite optimistic, with increased odds of depressive symptoms (odds ratio, 2.262).

"These findings suggest that serious infectious diseases may influence the mental health of children as other traumatic experiences do," the authors write.

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