

# Emphasizing severity of COVID-19 important for teen behaviors

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(HealthDay)—For adolescents, understanding the severity of COVID-19

and valuing social responsibility are associated with acting in socially responsible ways, including more social distancing and disinfecting, according to a study published online June 29 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Benjamin Oosterhoff, Ph.D., and Cara A. Palmer, Ph.D., from Montana State University in Bozeman, examined psychological factors associated with adolescents' behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic using data from a self-reported survey conducted from March 20 to 22, 2020. Data were included from 770 [adolescents](#) (74.7 percent girls).

The researchers found that 68.6 percent of teens reported not engaging in pure social distancing, while 89.4 and 87.8 percent reported monitoring the news and disinfecting daily, respectively. Overall, 19.7 percent reported hoarding. Attitudes about the greater severity of COVID-19 correlated with more social distancing, disinfecting, and news monitoring and with more hoarding. There were also correlations for greater [social responsibility](#) with more disinfecting and news monitoring and with less hoarding. Less [social distancing](#) and more hoarding were seen in association with greater self-interest values. Greater social trust correlated with less hoarding.

"Adolescents' beliefs about COVID-19 and community attachments may represent important attitudes and [psychological factors](#) that inform their response to the COVID-19 pandemic," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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