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Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4: Health, Education & Welfare of Hampton Roads

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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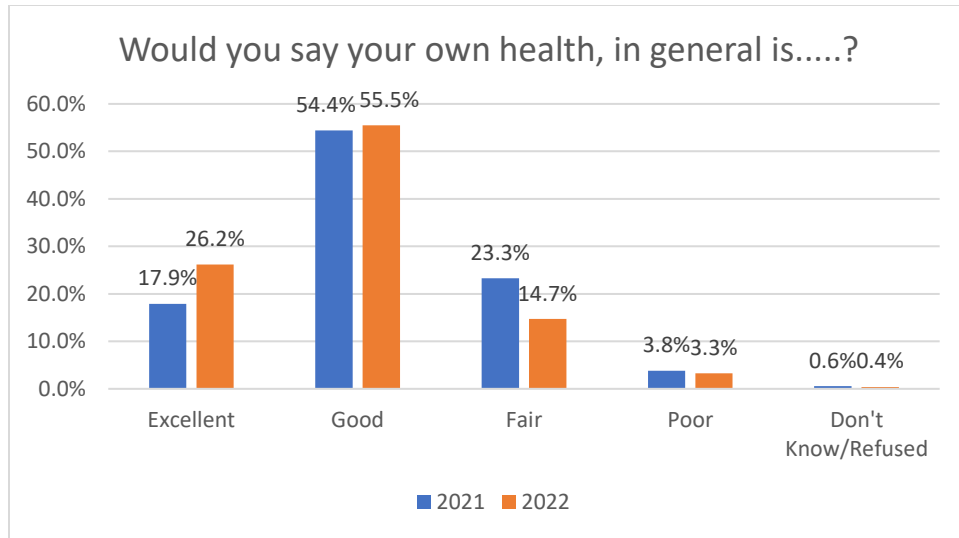
Life in Hampton Roads 2022 – Health, Education & Welfare of Hampton Roads

Introduction

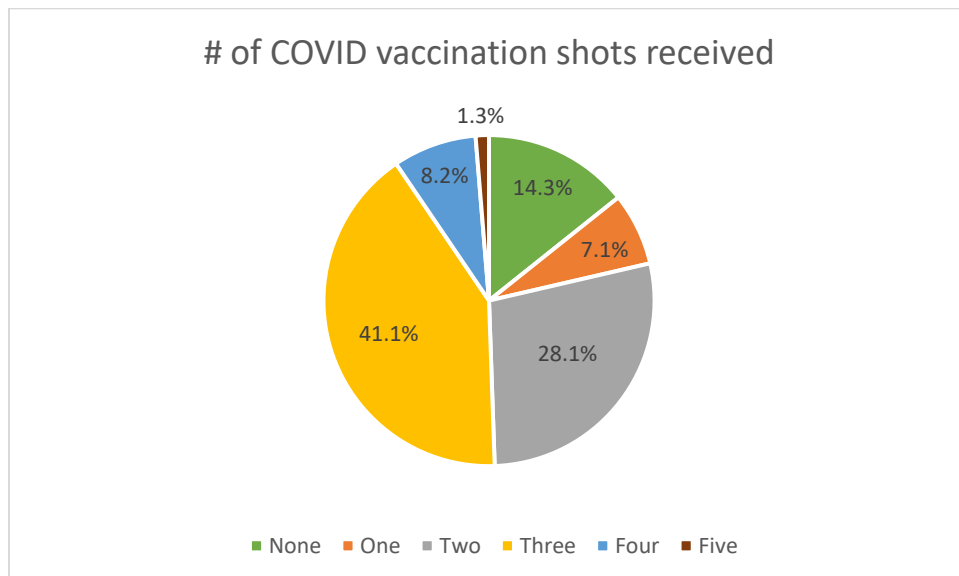
The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University recently completed data collection for the 13th annual Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) survey. The purpose of the survey is to gain insight into residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Hampton Roads as well as other topics of local interest such as perceptions of police, politics, the economy, education, health and COVID, transportation and other issues. A total of 639 telephone surveys were completed between May 31 and Aug. 19, 2022. Surveys this year were all completed over the telephone as was the case prior to 2020. In 2020, due to COVID-19, surveys were completed via online web panels. In 2021, a mixture of online web panels and telephone surveys were used. This year, a mixture of listed and random-digit dial (RDD) cellphone and landline telephone numbers were used. From 2012 to 2019, RDD landline and cell phone samples were used. This change limits to some degree the ability to compare this year's results with those from previous years or to confidently generalize the results to the Hampton Roads population as a whole. However, as with previous years, this year's survey data was weighted to match city population distributions on several variables including race, Hispanic ethnicity, age and gender, along with access to broadband internet service. For more detailed information on the methodological changes and potential impacts please see the Methodology section in the full report, or please contact the SSRC directly.

Health, the COVID Pandemic, and Climate Change

More than 81% of respondents rated the quality of their health as excellent (26.2%) or good (55.5%). This is about 9% higher than last year (72%), with most of the increase being in the excellent category (increasing from 17.9%). Thus, we are seeing an increase in self-reported good/excellent health close to levels reported pre-pandemic (e.g., from 82% in 2017).

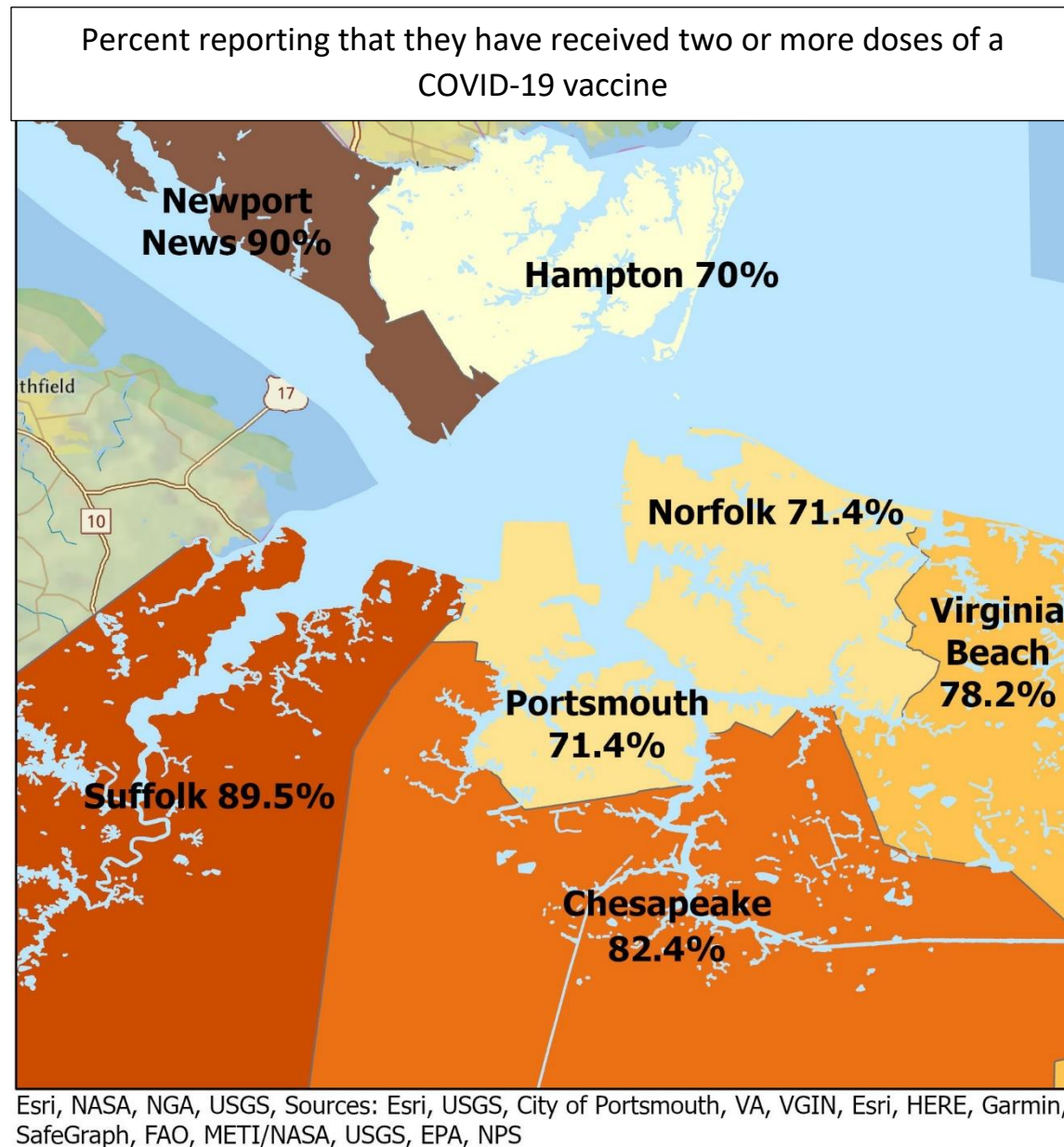


In the 2021 survey, Hampton Roads residents were asked if they had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and 74.3% indicated yes. This year, 85.2% reported they had received at least one dose – and increase of more than 10%. Last year, 69.9% of respondents indicated that they were fully vaccinated (defined as two shots) and 25% indicated that they were not vaccinated (even partially). This year, the number of fully vaccinated residents rose to 78.6% and only 14.1% had received no vaccinations. This past year, half of the sample (50.6%) reported getting at least one booster, that is, three or more shots.



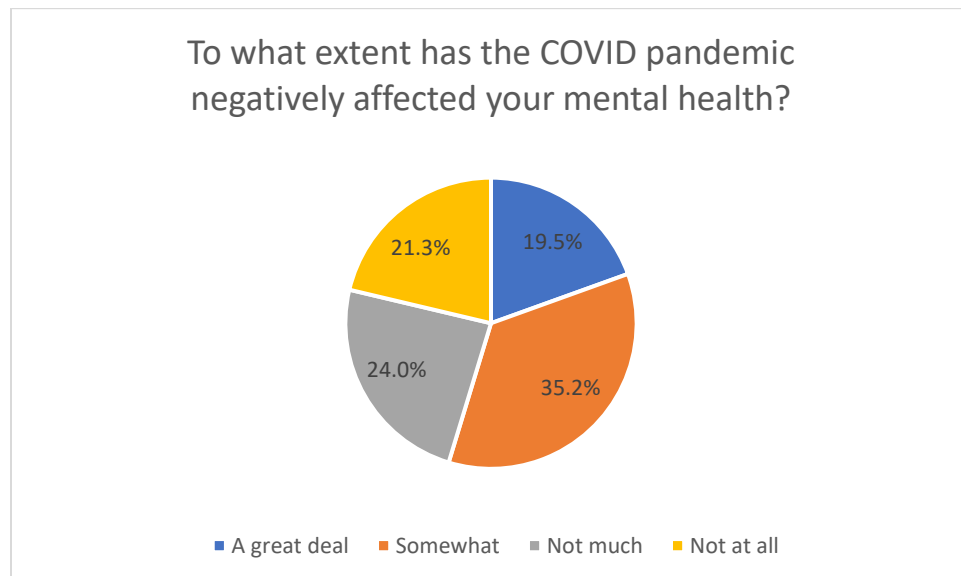
There was significant variation across cities in the proportion of people who were fully vaccinated this past year (two doses or more). A solid majority of Hampton (70%), Norfolk and Portsmouth (both 71%) respondents reported being fully vaccinated. The rates were even higher in Virginia Beach (78%) and

Chesapeake (82%). About 90% of residents in Suffolk and Newport News had received full vaccinations by the summer of 2022.

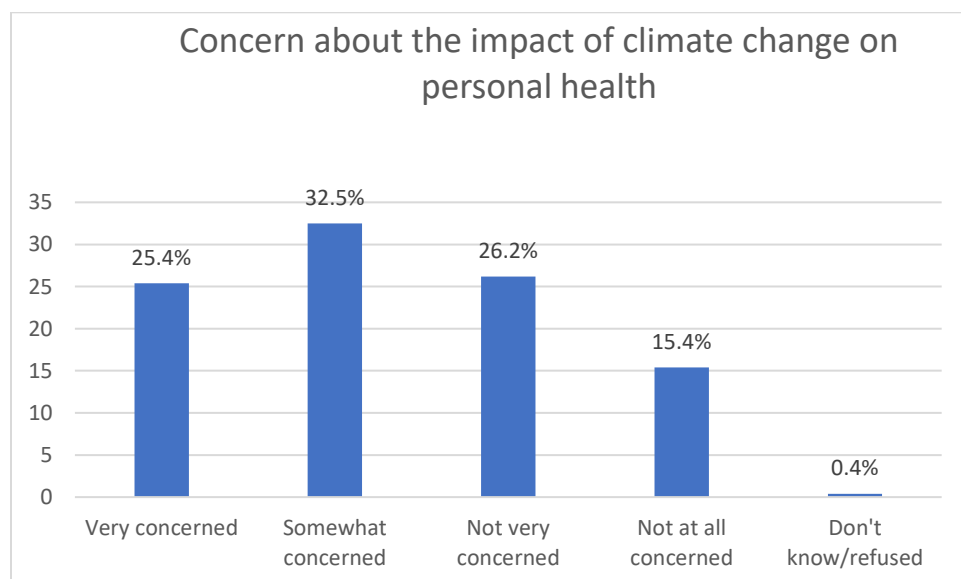


The COVID pandemic has had far-ranging consequences, and this year we asked Hampton Roads respondents to what extent the COVID pandemic has negatively affected their mental health. Hampton Roads residents appear to some extent to be a resilient population with almost half reporting, “not much” (24%) or “not at all” (21.3%). Still, that leaves more than a third of the population (35.2%) reporting that

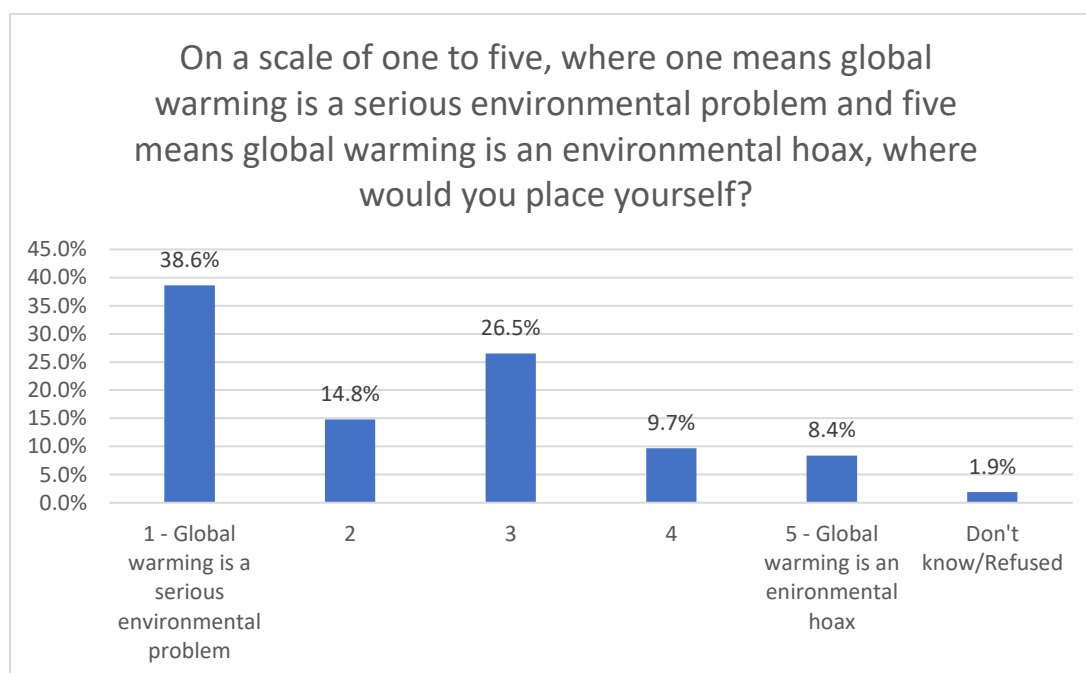
the pandemic has somewhat negatively affected their mental health and 19.5% saying that the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health a great deal.



Another societal concern involves the impact of climate change on the Earth and on individuals. We asked residents of Hampton Roads how concerned they were about the impact of climate change on their personal health. Well over half (57.9%) reported that they were either somewhat (32.5%) or very concerned (25.4%). More than 40% indicated they are not very concerned or not at all concerned.

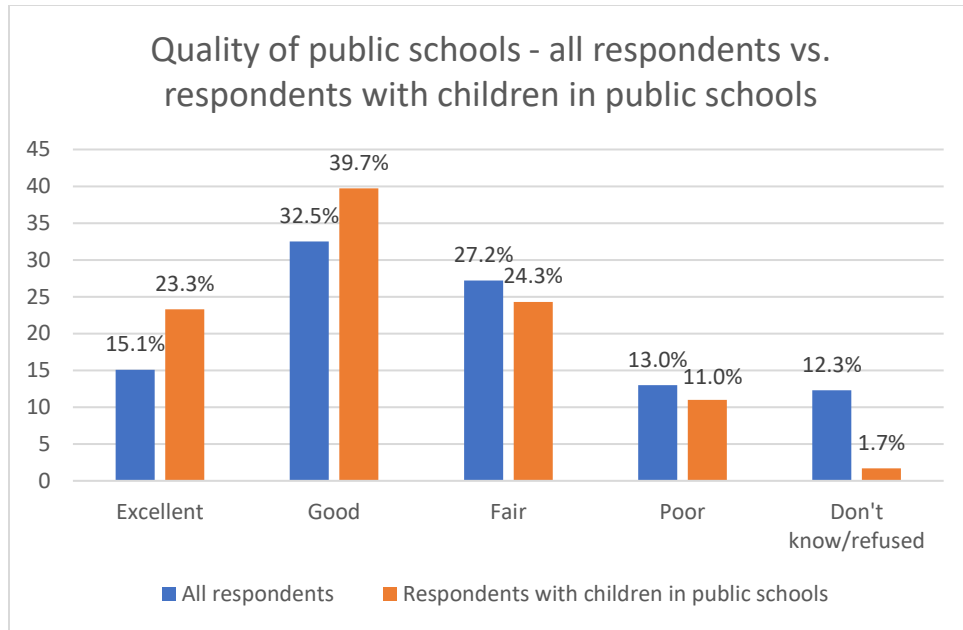


This year, we repeated a question from the first years of the Life in Hampton Roads survey (2011) which asked respondents, using a scale of one to five where one means global warming is a serious environmental problem and five means global warming is an environmental hoax, where they would place themselves. More than one-third (38.6%) of respondents responded with 1 (serious problem) while only 8.4% responded with 5 (environmental hoax). The percentage of who responded in the middle (3) increased from slightly from 21.5% in 2011 to 26.5% this year. The percentage responding 4 or 5 (hoax) decreased from 23.5% in 2011 to 18.1% this year.



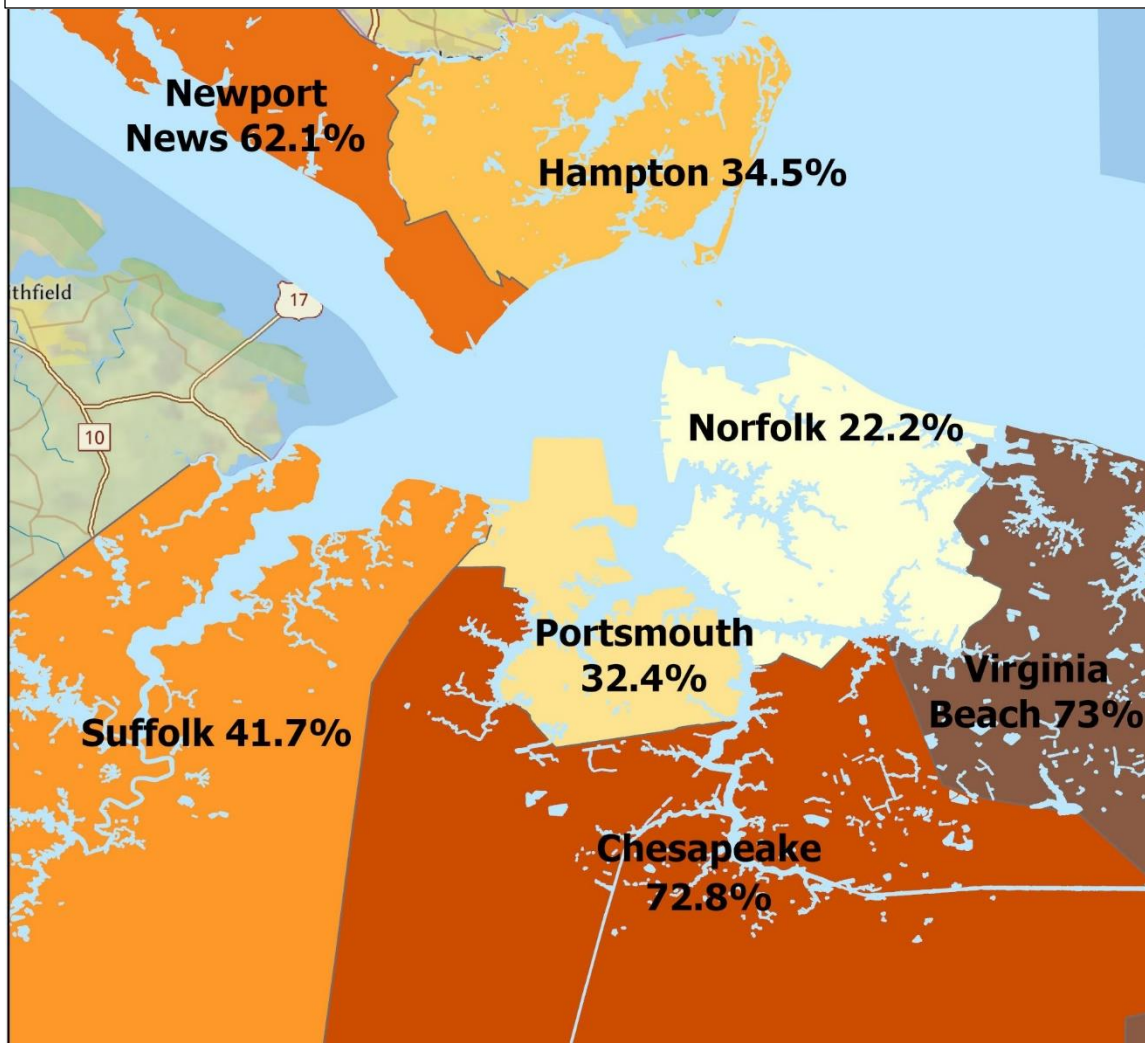
Education and the Welfare of Hampton Road Residents

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of their local public school system, and there was considerable variation in the responses. About 15% reported that their public school system was excellent and another third (32.5%) reported their school system was good. Still, 27.2% rated their local public school as fair and another 13% rated it as poor. These numbers are compared below with a subsample of respondents (n=136), parents with children in local public schools. There are a couple of items of note. First, parents with children in public schools were less likely to report that they did not know about the quality of the public schools. Second, they tended to view the schools more favorably than all respondents as a whole. Parents with children in public schools were by a margin of 8.2 percentage points more likely to describe them as excellent and by 7.2 percentage points more likely to rate them as good.



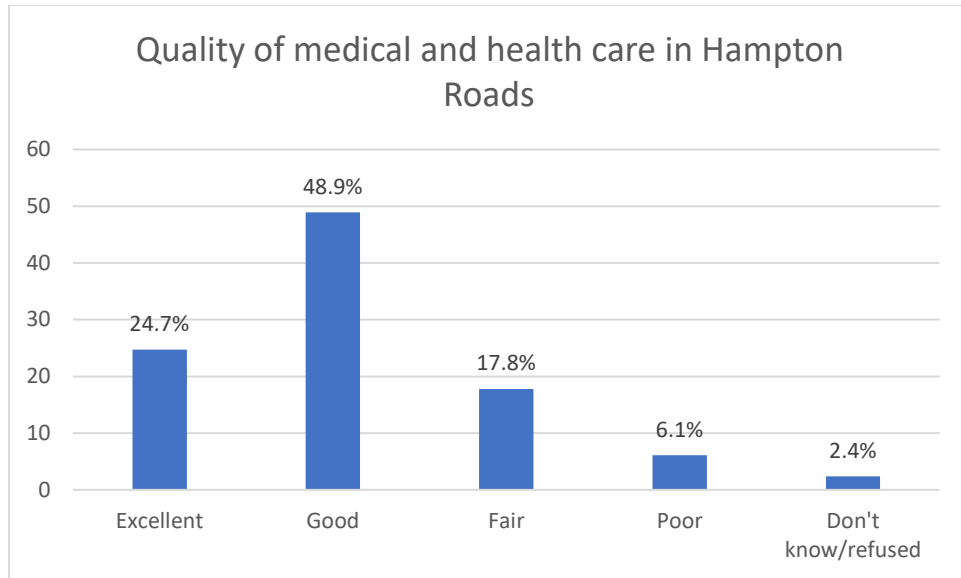
Perceptions of the quality of local public schools varied significantly across cities. Perception of the public schools was lowest in Norfolk with only 22% rating them as good or excellent. About a third of Portsmouth (32%) and Hampton (35%) rated their public schools as good or excellent and less than half of Suffolk rated their schools positively (42%). More than half of the respondents in Newport News (62%) rate their local public schools as good or excellent and nearly three-quarters of those in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach rated their public schools positively.

Percent rating the quality of local public schools as good or excellent

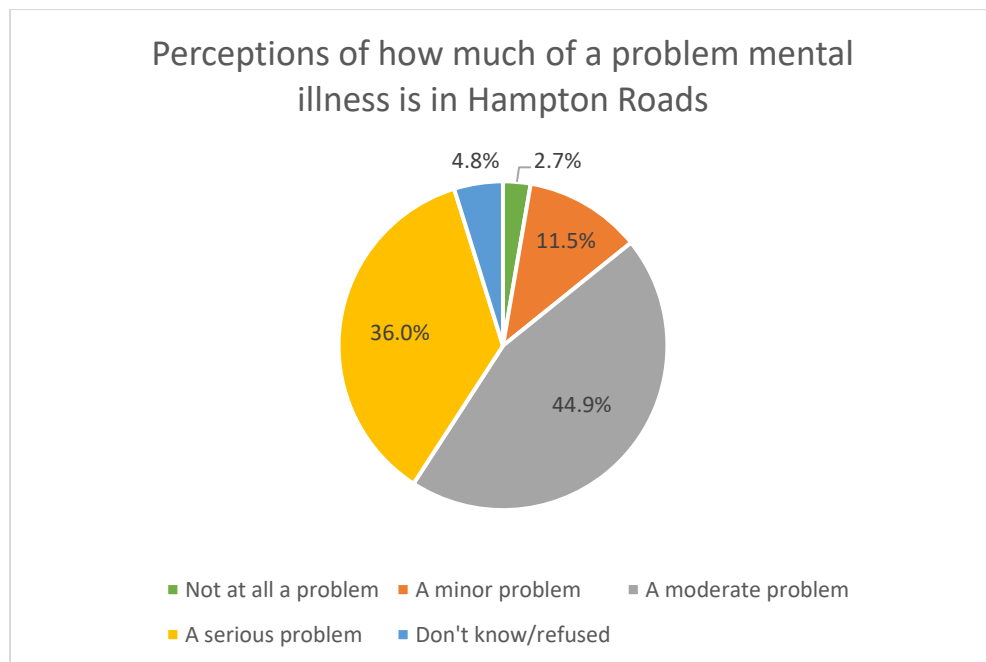


Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Several questions were asked this year regarding the welfare of Hampton Roads residents with a specific focus on mental health. We began with a general question regarding residents' perceptions of the quality of medical and health care in Hampton Roads. About a quarter of respondents rated medical and health care in the area as excellent and another 48.9% rated it as good. Thus, nearly three-quarters of the sample perceived the quality of care as good or excellent and 6.1% rated it as poor.

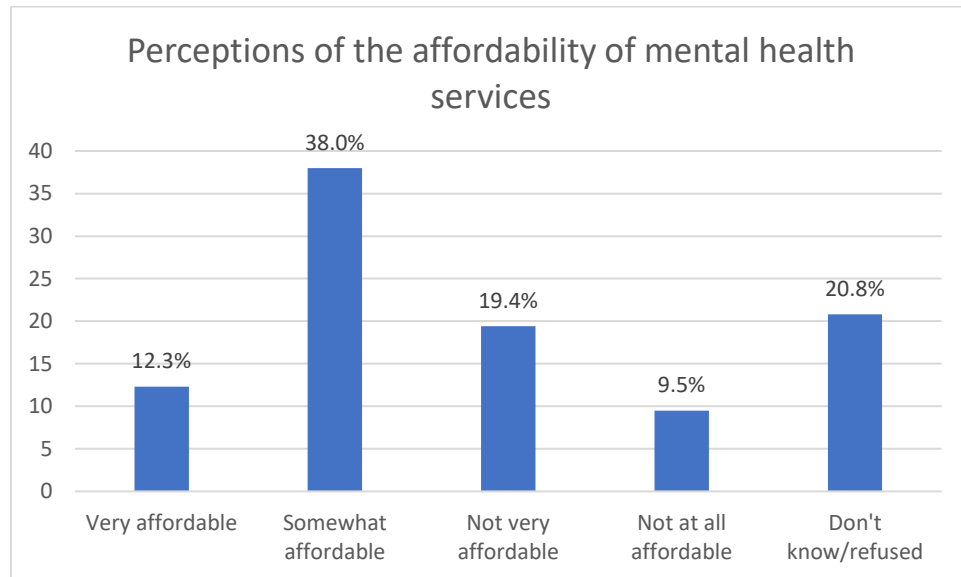


Respondents were asked how much of a problem mental illness is in Hampton Roads. Very few suggested that it was not a problem (2.7%) and another relatively small percentage stated that it was a minor problem (11.5%). Significantly more residents believed that mental illness was a moderate problem (44.9%) and more than a third (36%) responded that it was a serious problem.



We also asked respondents how affordable they thought mental health services were for people like them in Hampton Roads. Only 12.3% thought that health care services were very affordable though another 38% rated mental health services as somewhat affordable – meaning about half felt that mental health care services were somewhat or very affordable. We note, however, that about 20.8% of the sample did

not know (19.2%) or refused to answer the question (1.6%). It does seem reasonable that many respondents would not know the costs of mental health services. Removing these individuals from the sample produces a similar but slightly more positive story. Among those who have some knowledge of the cost of mental health services, 12.3% report that it is very affordable and another 38% say it is somewhat affordable. Still, more than a quarter state that mental health services are not very affordable (19.4%) or not at all affordable (9.5%).



The Life in Hampton Roads Data report and press releases will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2022 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

Tancy Vandecar-Burdin, PhD
Director
The Social Science Research Center
Old Dominion University
757-683-3802 (office)
tvandeca@odu.edu