# COVID-19 and Mental Health:
# What We Are Learning from www.mhascreening.org
August 1, 2020

# The COVID-19 Pandemic: Severe Impacts on Mental Health

- More than 260,000 people have been impacted by anxiety and depression;
- More than 42,000 people have been impacted by psychosis;
- More than 90,000 people have had thoughts of suicide or self-harm on more than half the days.

# Mental Health and COVID-19:

- MHA Screening reflects the experiences of a help-seeking population that accesses mental health screening through www.mhascreening.org.
- We do not reach the entire population; therefore our numbers are likely to underreport the actual experiences of the population.
- From late February thru July **263,515 people screened moderate to severe for depression or anxiety** over and above what we would have expected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- From late February thru July an addition **42,851 people screened at risk for psychosis** over and above what we would have expected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Since March 1, **90,114 depression screeners** reported suicidal or self-harm thinking on more than half the days.

# Mental Health and COVID-19: Thoughts of Suicide & Self-Harm at Epidemic Levels

- These impacts on mental health are **more pronounced in young people** (<25): over 9 in 10 are screening with moderate-to-severe depression, **and over** 8 in 10 are screening with moderate-to-severe anxiety.
- **"Loneliness and isolation"** is cited by the greatest percent of moderate to severe depression (74%) and anxiety (65%) screeners as contributing to mental health problems "right now." These percentages have been steady since mid-April.
- Despite a dramatic jump in screeners in June and July (256,057 in July versus 69,626 in April), severity continued to track equal to or higher than our pre-pandemic baselines.
- In July 2020, **30,519** reported thinking of suicide or self-harm on more than half of days to nearly every day, with **17,728 reporting these thoughts nearly every day**.
- Special populations are also experiencing high anxiety and depression, including LGBTQ, caregivers, students, veterans/active duty, and trauma survivors.

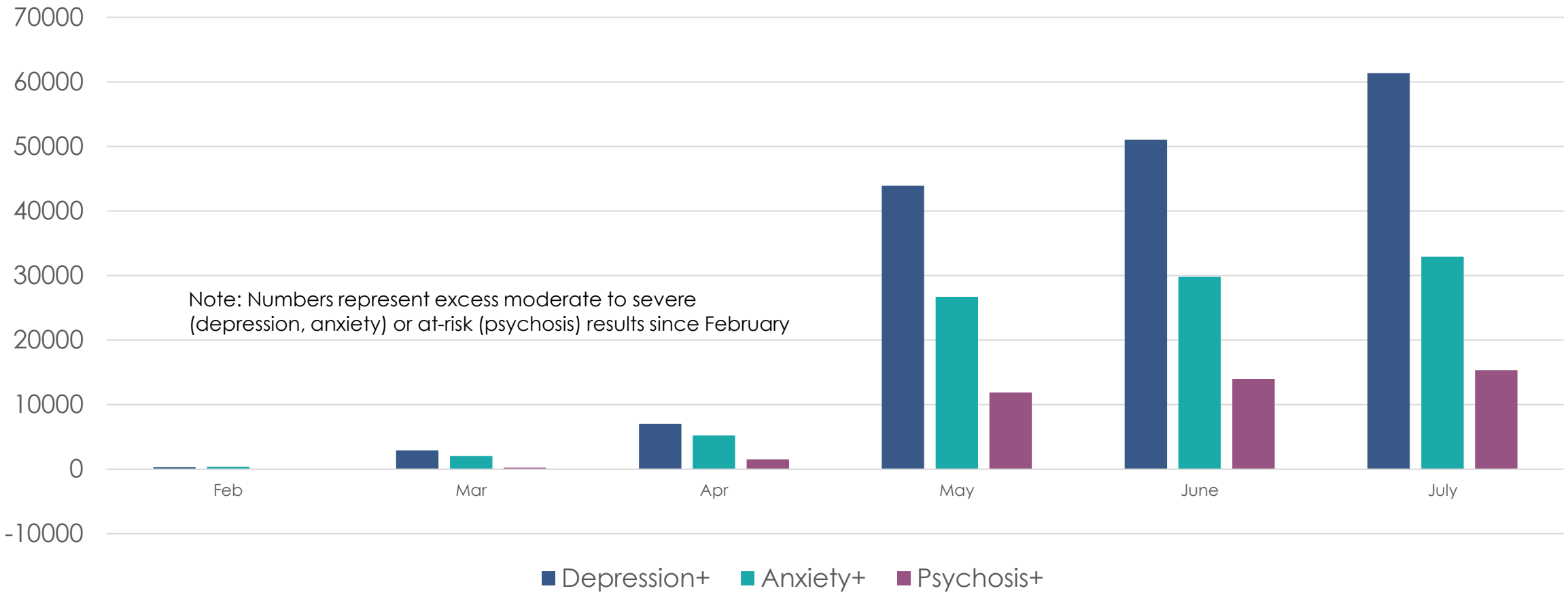
# MHA Screening (www.mhascreening.org): More than 5.5 Million Completed Screens

- Depression (PHQ-9)
- Anxiety (GAD-7)
- Bipolar (MDQ)
- PTSD (PC-PTSD)
- Youth Screen (PSC-YR)
- Parent Screen (PSC)
- Alcohol and Substance Use Screen (CAGE-AID)
- Psychosis Screen (Ultra-High Risk) (PQ-B)
- Eating Disorders

# MHA Screening

- Began in April 2014.
- Access to screening tools is free and anonymous at www.mhascreening.org.
- Most screeners voluntarily give de-identified demographic data.
- Screeners are young, (63% < 25 years), female (72%).
- Help-seeking population (74% positive).

# Depression, Anxiety, & Psychosis: "Positive" Numbers Increased Dramatically in May-July

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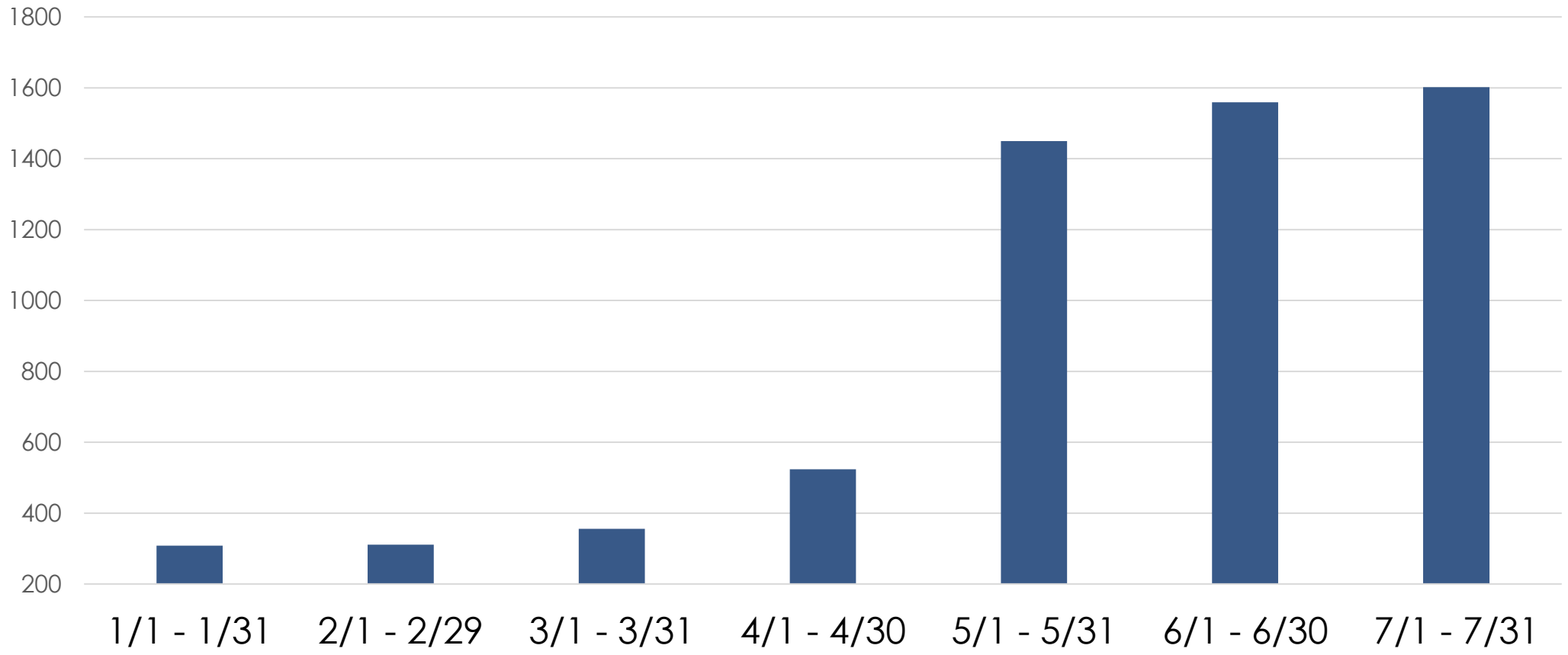
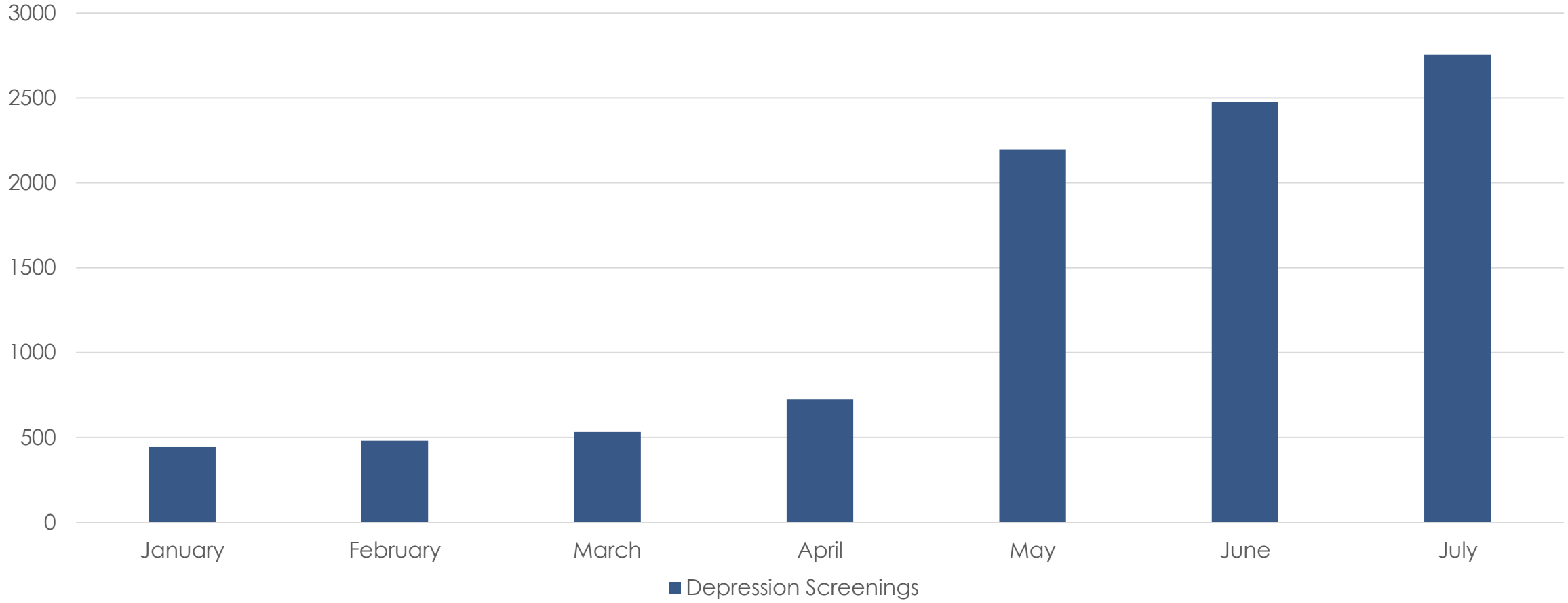
# In July, Per Day Anxiety Screenings Increased by 420% over January



# In July, Per Day Depression Screenings Increased by 520% over January

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# June Anxiety Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now

| Reason | Number of Responders | Percent of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Loneliness or isolation | 17637 | 64.74% |
| Past trauma | 12700 | 46.62% |
| Relationship problems | 11111 | 40.79% |
| Current events (news, politics, etc.) | 9838 | 36.11% |
| Coronavirus | 7878 | 28.92% |
| Grief or Loss | 6723 | 24.68% |
| Financial Problems | 6588 | 24.18% |
| Racism | 2097 | 7.70% |

N=27,241, scoring moderate to severe 6/1-6/30, "Choose up to 3"
"Racism" added as option on 6/16

# July Anxiety Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now

| Reason | Number of Responders | Percent of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Loneliness or isolation | 19063 | 65.28% |
| Past trauma | 14206 | 48.65% |
| Relationship problems | 11994 | 41.07% |
| Current events (news, politics, etc.) | 9009 | 30.85% |
| Coronavirus | 8578 | 29.37% |
| Grief or Loss | 7459 | 25.54% |
| Financial Problems | 7246 | 24.81% |
| Racism | 3012 | 10.31% |

N=29,202, scoring moderate to severe 7/1-7/31, "Choose up to 3"

# June Depression Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now

| Reason | Number of Responders | Percent of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Loneliness or isolation | 37237 | 73.92% |
| Past trauma | 22653 | 44.97% |
| Relationship problems | 22058 | 43.79% |
| Current events (news, politics, etc.) | 14674 | 29.13% |
| Grief or loss | 13366 | 26.53% |
| Coronavirus | 11926 | 23.67% |
| Financial Problems | 11767 | 23.36% |
| Racism | 2704 | 5.37% |

N=50,376, scoring moderate to severe 6/1-6/30, "Choose up to 3"
"Racism" added as option on 6/16

# July Depression Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now

| Reason | Number of Responders | Percent of Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Loneliness or isolation | 43396 | 74.39% |
| Past trauma | 26634 | 45.66% |
| Relationship problems | 25443 | 43.62% |
| Grief or loss | 15497 | 26.57% |
| Coronavirus | 14389 | 24.67% |
| Current events (news, politics, etc.) | 14261 | 24.45% |
| Financial Problems | 13995 | 23.99% |
| Racism | 4450 | 7.63% |

N=58,335, scoring moderate to severe 7/1-7/31, "Choose up to 3"

# Main Concerns Are Different Across Race/Ethnicity

Black or African American screeners cite financial concerns at a higher rate

Native American or American Indian screeners report more past trauma

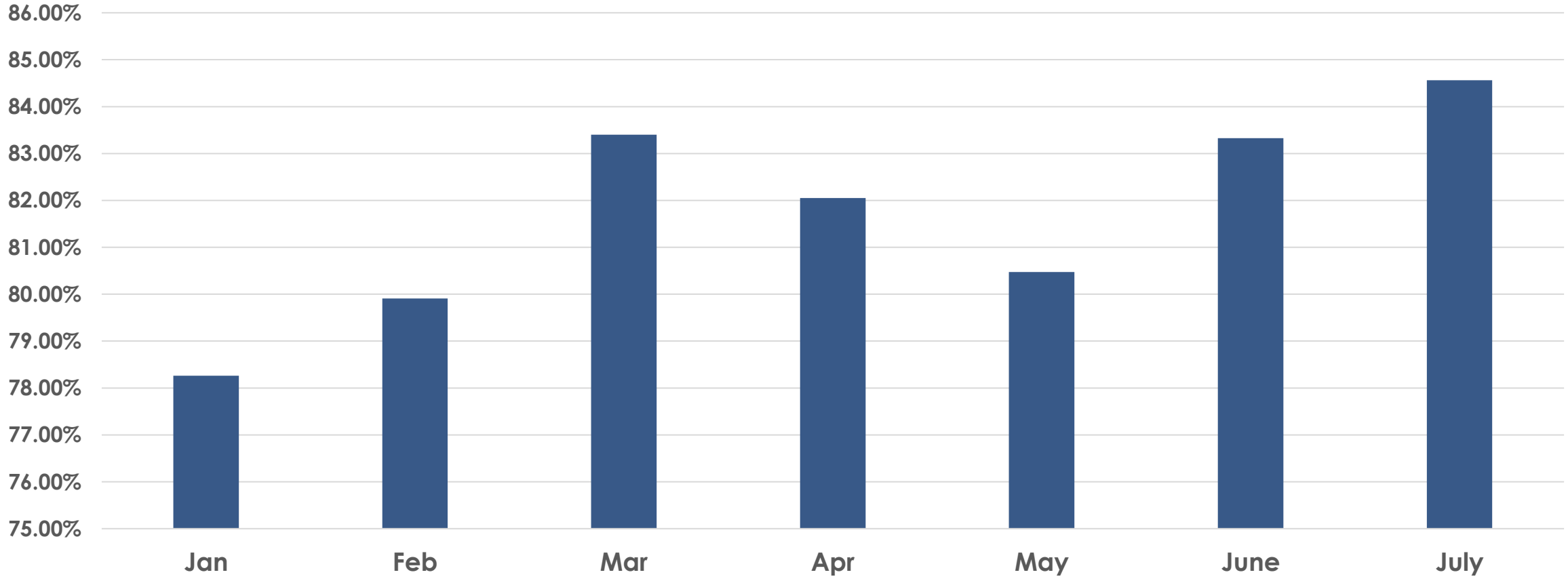
Hispanic or Latino screeners more worried about COVID-19

Hispanic or Latino screeners cite loneliness or isolation at highest rates

Largest increases in concern about loneliness among Black and White screeners

# Screeners Are Not "Worried Well": Depression Severity Highest In July 2020

Depression Screeners, Percent Moderate to Severe

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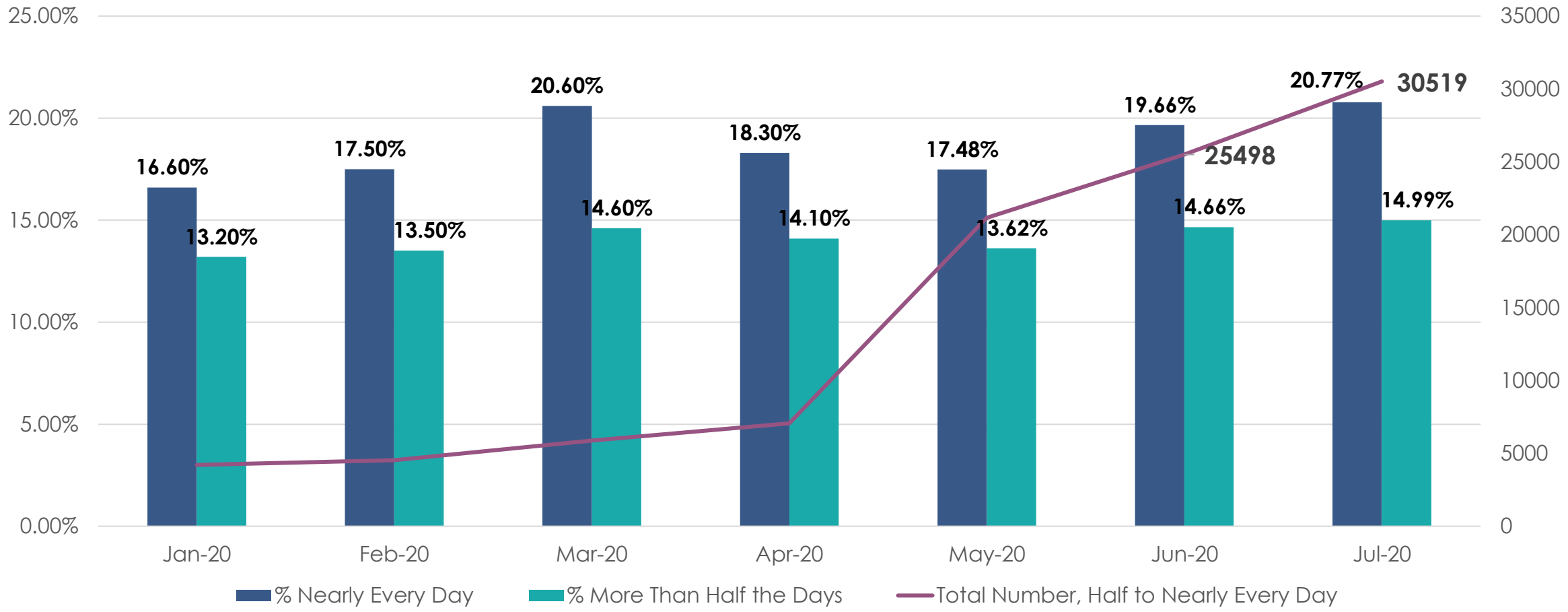
# More Than 30,000 People Considered Self-Harm or Suicide in June

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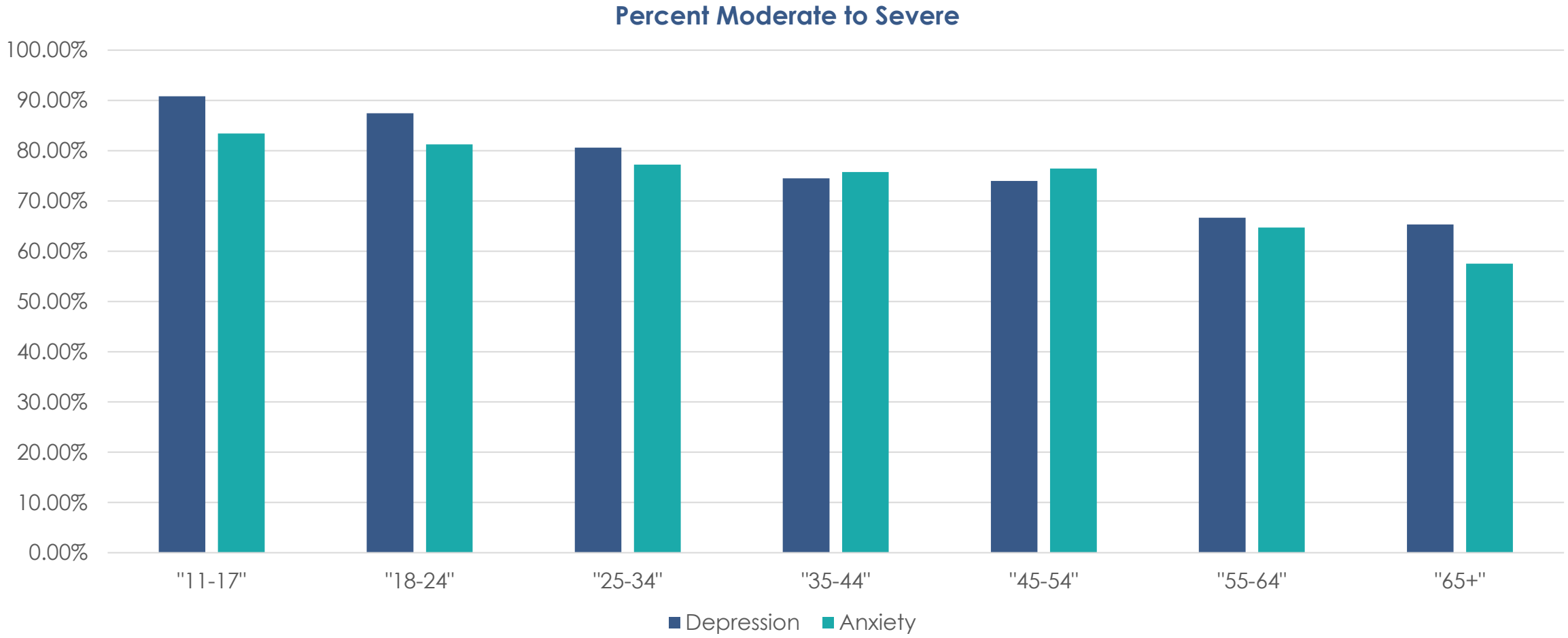
# Young People in July Still Disproportionately Experiencing Depression and Anxiety

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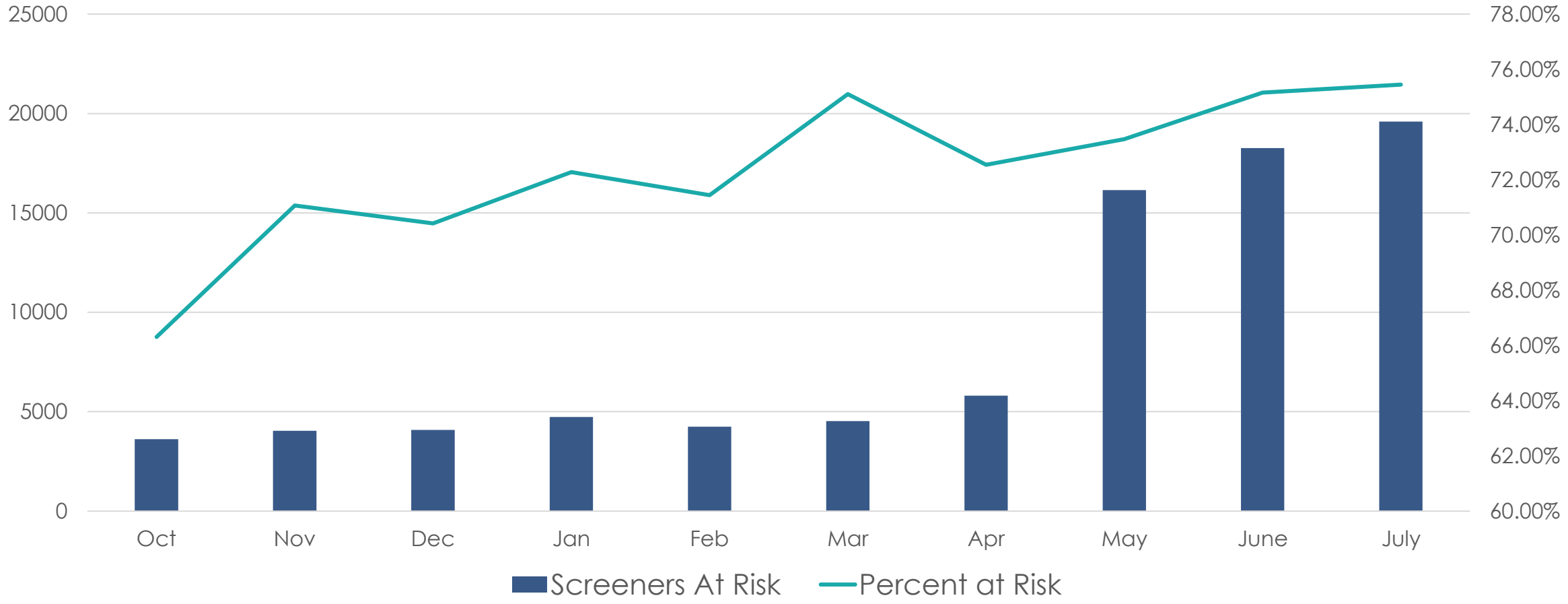
# Psychosis Screening: Screeners at Risk and Severity Up in July 2020

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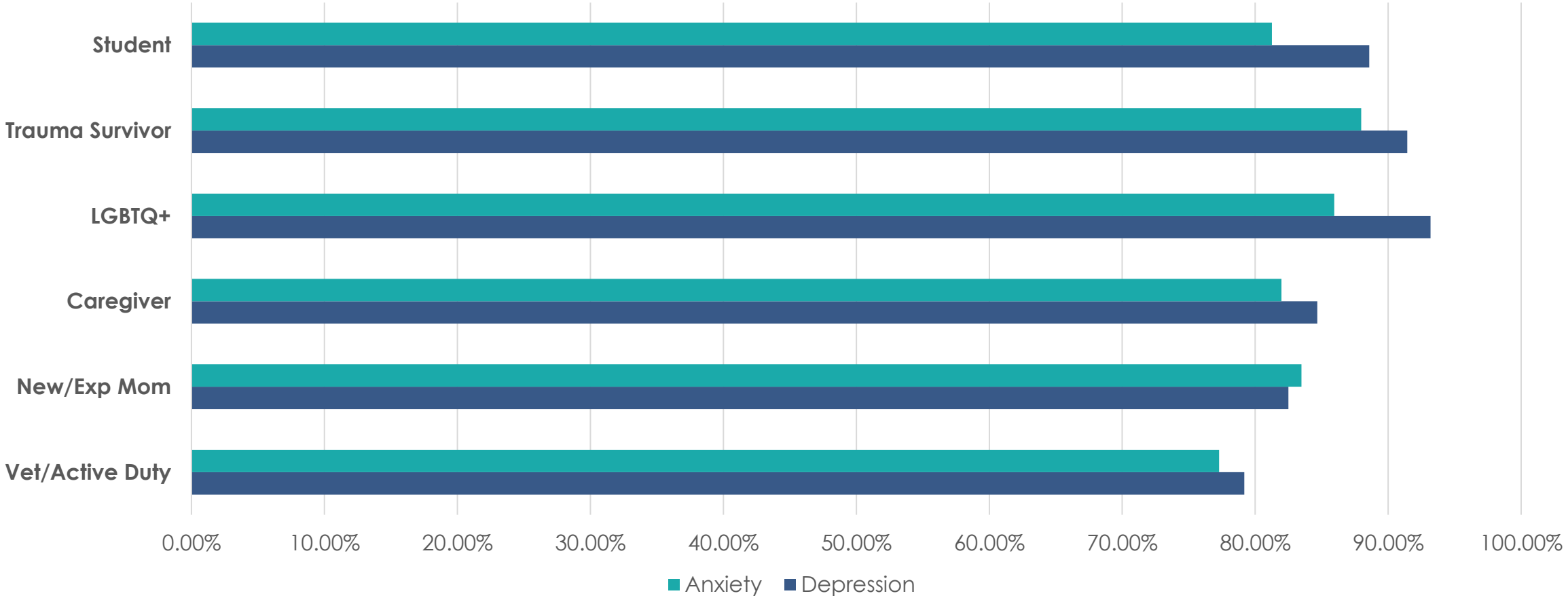
# Special Populations: Positive for Depression and Anxiety

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# For More Resources

- For MHA COVID-19 resources: https://www.mhanational.org/covid19
- For other mental health COVID-19 resources: https://psychhub.com/covid-19/
- To take a free mental health screen: https://screening.mhanational.org

# Contact Us

Mental Health America
500 Montgomery Street
Suite 820
Alexandria, VA 22314

Facebook.com/mentalhealthamerica

Twitter.com/mentalhealtham

Instagram.com/mentalhealthamerica

Youtube.com/mentalhealthamerica

pgionfriddo@mhanational.org

@pgionfriddo