

# How COVID-19 affected our lives

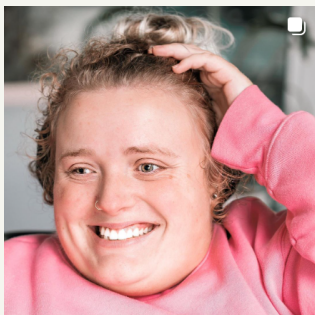


*Stories and experiences of the pandemic's impact on youth with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families*

***"I think they could have just done a better job of [...] looking at people with disabilities. I don't think they took that into consideration at all. They were so busy dealing with the rest of the world [...] and we were kind of left out"***  
**- Parent**



## Watch our stories



[Watch Gillian's story \(here\) about her experiences with the Pandemic](#)



[Watch Sarah's story \(here\) about her experiences during the Pandemic as a mother caring for a youth with NDD](#)

A Canada-wide study captured experiences of youth with neurodevelopmental disabilities (NDD) and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## What the study found



### Changes to Mental Health

- Increased anxiety, stress, feelings of sadness, loneliness, fear, and worry
- Stress associated with mask-wearing
- Barriers relating to availability, affordability and/or accessibility of mental health supports



### Impacts on Academic Success

- Academic regression in children with NDDs
- Mixed experiences with online learning
- Challenges accessing in-school services and accommodations



### Deconstruction of Social Network

- Lack of social contacts, loss of community
- Feelings of loneliness and isolation



### Accessibility and Interaction with Society

- Reluctance of some youth to enter public spaces due to fear of being ostracized or harassed for not being able to wear a mask
- Physical barriers in public spaces presented accessibility challenges



### Impacts on Developmental Progress

- Regression in progress
- Greater difficulties meeting development-related goals



### Shifts in Caregiving Capacity

- More time supporting children
- Increased feelings of stress and burnout
- Decreased ability to manage many competing demands

**To learn more about the study findings please contact [disabilitystudyinfo@gmail.com](mailto:disabilitystudyinfo@gmail.com) or check out DiPo's website at [www.dipo.ca](http://www.dipo.ca)**

