

Newsletter of the

# Chicago Longitudinal Study

Promoting Children's Success

ISSUE 9

MAY 2022

## Message from the Director

The CLS Team has been busy these last few months in collecting and analyzing data from the pandemic survey and many other projects. I would like to thank CLS participants for taking the time to complete the online survey. Our report is completed and can be viewed [here](#). Most interesting were the open-ended responses, which provided much insight into how the pandemic and social unrest over the past year has affected people's lives. There are many other reports and findings on [our website](#). I encourage you to take a look and of course provide feedback anytime.

Over the past few years, we at CLS have asked a lot of you. Beginning with the early midlife survey that was completed in 2017, to the health exam, and the online survey. More information has been collected in this period than ever before. We are taking a break from data collection for a while. In the next 2 or 3 years, we would like to do a brief survey of the young adult children of CLS participants. You may remember our team asking about the feasibility of doing this. The responses were very positive.

Two brief notes on early childhood education. First, we continue to partner with the Chicago Public Schools in helping to ensure young learners have the best possible experiences. We have organized and helped implement in 6 CPC schools smaller class sizes in kindergarten and 1st grade for the 2021-2022 school year. The district has contributed new funding to make this possible, and we are delighted. Hopefully, these elements can be sustained in all centers in future years.

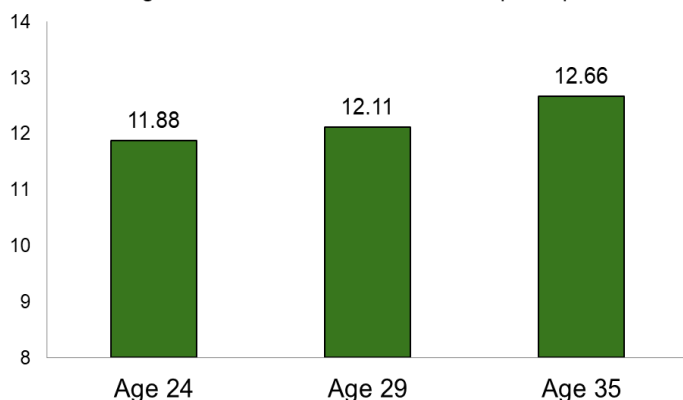
Second, as you may be aware, part of President Biden's American Families Plan (now under consideration in Congress in modified form) is universal preschool funding for all 3-and 4-year-olds. The billions of dollars in proposed funding over several years would be in partnership with states and school districts. The rationale for this size of plan is the accumulated evidence from CLS and other studies of the large and sustained effects of high-quality programs. Stay tuned as we continue to be engaged in this work.

Thanks again for all of your help in the project. The goal has always been the same: provide families, schools, and communities with the best possible information and research to improve the lives of all young people.

Sincerely,

**Arthur Reynolds, Director**

Average Years of Education of the CLS participants



## CLS Timeline

### 2019 December:

Completed in-person Health Exam

### 2020 August:

Started Health follow-up survey

### 2021 March:

Completed Health follow-up survey

## RECENT FINDINGS ON EDUCATION

CLS participants are continually pursuing higher education as they move into mid 30s. [A recent study](#) suggests that people who continue their pursuit for higher education in adulthood were boosted by better socio-emotional learning in elementary grades and on-time high school graduation. [CPC program participation was linked to more years of education, higher rates of college attendance, Associates' degree and master's degree at age 35.](#)

## HOW HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC INFLUENCED OUR PARTICIPANTS

Participants who completed health exams at Northwestern University were invited to complete a health follow-up survey online between August 14, 2020, and March 31, 2021. Two hundred and sixteen participants responded to the survey online. 206 participants fully completed the survey.

See the [summary report](#) or a [brief Blog](#) on [Human Capital Research Collaborative](#).

### WHAT PARTICIPANTS WERE WORRIED ABOUT MOST

1. Your financial well-being being impacted by coronavirus? (51.9%)
2. Being infected by coronavirus? (42.5%)
3. Family members being infected by coronavirus? (41.7%)
4. When schools and child care/ education will open again? (41.3%)

### BEHAVIORS OR FEELING IN HEALTH/MENTAL HEALTH INCREASED

1. Worrying in general (69.6%)
2. Feeling anxious (54%)
3. My children and/or family members have felt very sad (50.3%)
4. Feeling very sad (43.5%)
5. Unable to stay focused as normal (42.4%)

### HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN YOUR AREA LED TO ANY POSITIVE CHANGES IN YOUR LIFE?

*"Spending more time with family.  
Taking time for self-care. Gardening"*

*"Being around my children more and  
being able to save to pay off debt"*

*"More exercise, elimination of credit  
card debt, healthier diet, participating in  
educational programs and seminars.  
Trying to convince others to vote"*

*"Learning better health and cleaning  
habits. The out pouring of support and  
best wishes from neighbors and others  
in the community. A newfound respect  
for teachers, first responders and all  
essential workers"*

*"Help me focus on pursuit of a new  
career path."*

### THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, OR FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

*"My parents are elderly now and because they're  
black, they are high risk and I am concerned about  
the true impact of the COVID-19 vaccine on their  
health"*

*"The mental health of my family. The lack of  
structured education for my children. The increase  
of work demands when working from home"*

*"I worry about being a minority and receiving the  
disparity of treatment that frequently happens in the  
hospital. It happens in the hospital I work in."*

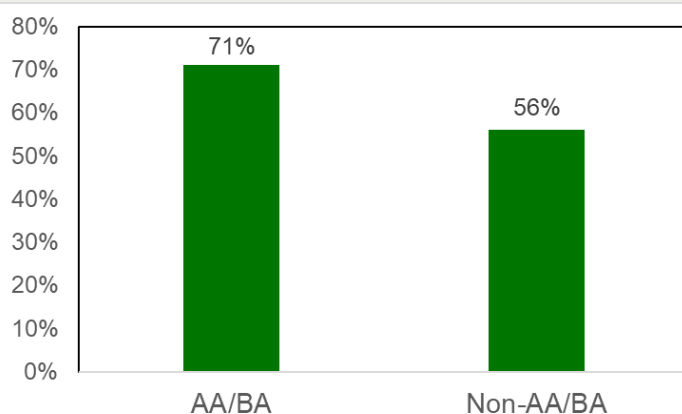
*"We've lost income. The extra bonus helped us  
with bills and food. Now it's gone we struggle with  
food. SNAP benefits were taken away when the  
bonuses were given; now everything is gone. I'm  
more stressed than ever and can barely pay for  
laundry."*

*"The pandemic has exposed inequalities in society.  
My family has remained safe, but prolonged  
quarantining leads to finding ways to do things that  
becoming increasingly risky."*

## RECENT FINDINGS ON PARTICIPANTS' HEALTH

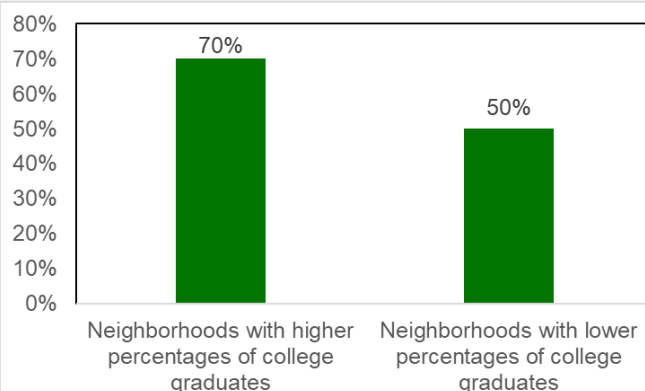
You may be familiar with Body Mass Indices (BMI), a measure of body fat based on height and weight. According to National Health and Nutrition Exam Survey (NHANES) as weight increases so too do health risks. The prevalence of any obesity in the CLS participants are lower than the US non-Hispanic black 20 years or older (44.9% vs. 49.6%, respectively). [CPC participation was associated with significantly lower BMI.](#)

### Normal or better health (lower risk of CVD) rates in the CLS by education status



AA= Associate's Degree; BA=Bachelor's degree

### CLS Rates of healthy weight by neighborhoods



Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a class of diseases that involve the heart or blood vessels. Some common CVD are heart attack and stroke. Up to 90% of CVD may be preventable through healthy eating, exercise, and avoidance of smoking and limiting alcohol intake. Social emotional learning in early elementary school, school quality and parent involvement in school are positively associated with better cardio health. [CPC preschool participation was associated with a 20% reduction in CVD risk at age 37.](#)

Based on the accumulated evidence from the CLS, the Midwest Longitudinal Study (MLS) launched in 2012 to evaluate the effects of the Midwest Child-Parent Centers (MCPC) Preschool to 3rd Grade Expansion. [A recent study](#) reports that MCPC participation was associated with significantly higher parent involvement in school at the end of second grade.

[Evidence Matters Blogs](#) on [Human Capital Research Collaborative](#) (HCRC) summarize current research in early childhood policy. See below for some examples.

- [Psychological Well-Being Starts Early](#)
- [Social Determinants of Health in the CLS](#)
- [The Pandemic's Impact on Participants in the Chicago Longitudinal Study at Midlife](#)
- [Fostering socio-emotional learning through early childhood education](#)

For further information and resources on early childhood programs, the CPC program, and related work see [HCRC.umn.edu](http://HCRC.umn.edu) and [cp3p.org](http://cp3p.org).

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**Want to learn more about the CLS? Or, have you moved and want to update your contact information?**

**Call:** 1-866-872-4270

**Email:** [clsstaff@umn.edu](mailto:clsstaff@umn.edu)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/cls.staff](https://www.facebook.com/cls.staff)

**Website:** <http://icd.umn.edu/cls>

## Resources

- Please check out [Chicago.gov](https://www.chicago.gov) for local news, COVID updates and relief efforts (e.g., cashpilot program), and community resources including physical & mental health.
- Follow @ChicagoPublicHealth on Facebook or @ChiPublicHealth on Twitter.
- [One Summer Chicago](#) is back again offering employment and internship opportunities to youth and young adults ages 14 to 24. Apply through their website.
- Applications for Fall 2022 Pre-K and early learning programs are now open at the [Chicago Early Learning](#) website.
- Free housing assistance for renters and homeowners from the state of Illinois. Check eligibility [here](#) on the website.
- Find information regarding Heart Disease, Obesity, and Stroke at [The Illinois Department of Public Health](#)

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