

The impact of Covid-19 on children & adolescents

Perspectives of child psychiatrist

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Milder symptoms

Less likely to be affected

Impact of the virus- brain, long covid

COVID

Impact of restrictions and other changes in our daily life

Asymptomatic

10 times less likely to be hospitalised





Exposure to virus in utero does not impact babies' development at 6 months

(Shuffrey et al, 2022, JAMA Pediatrics)



Children under 2 more likely to get serious illness esp if pre-existing condition

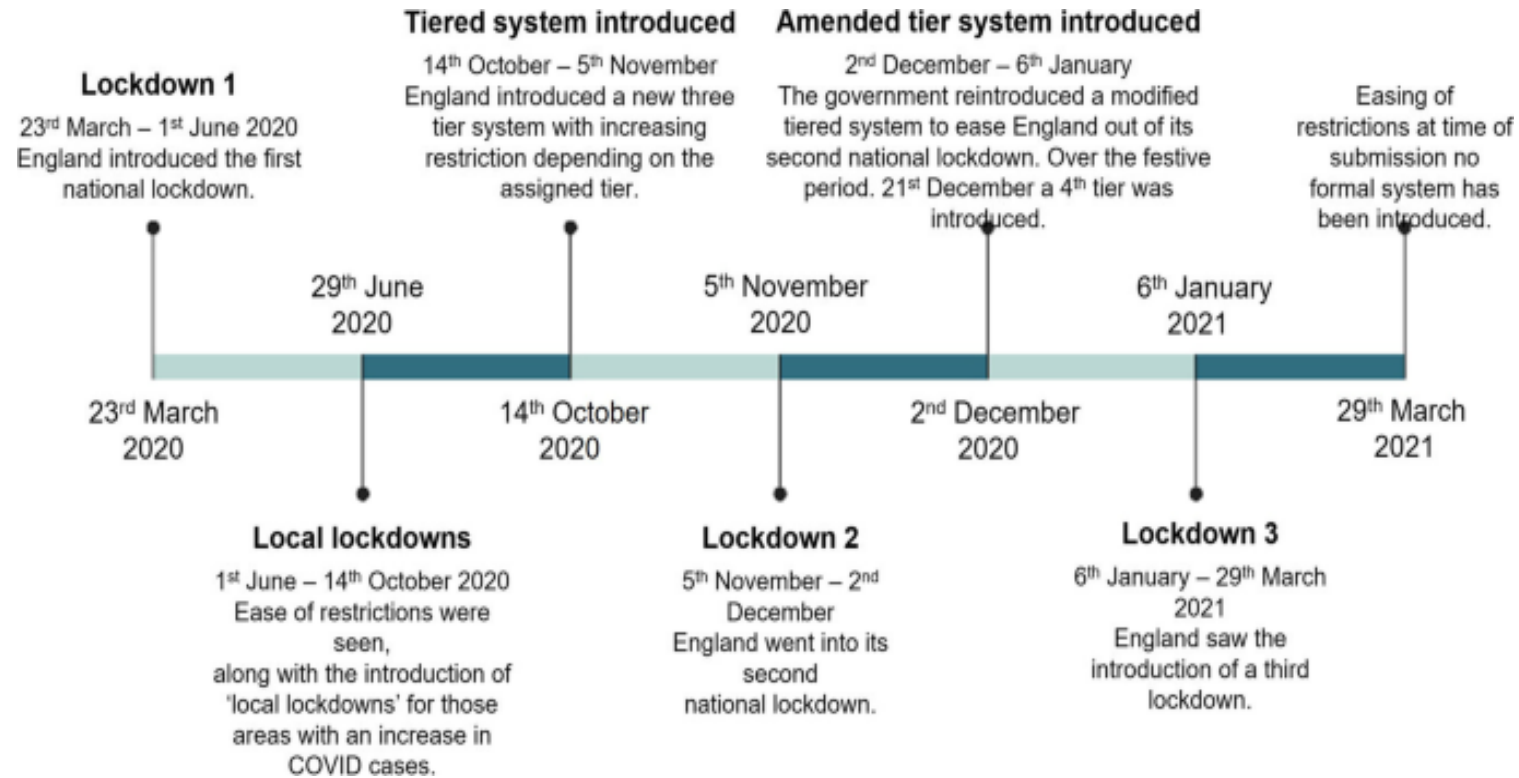


Mild illness but some reports suggest some may be affected by long-covid



#269215403

Multisystemic inflammatory syndrome uncommon but affects school age children

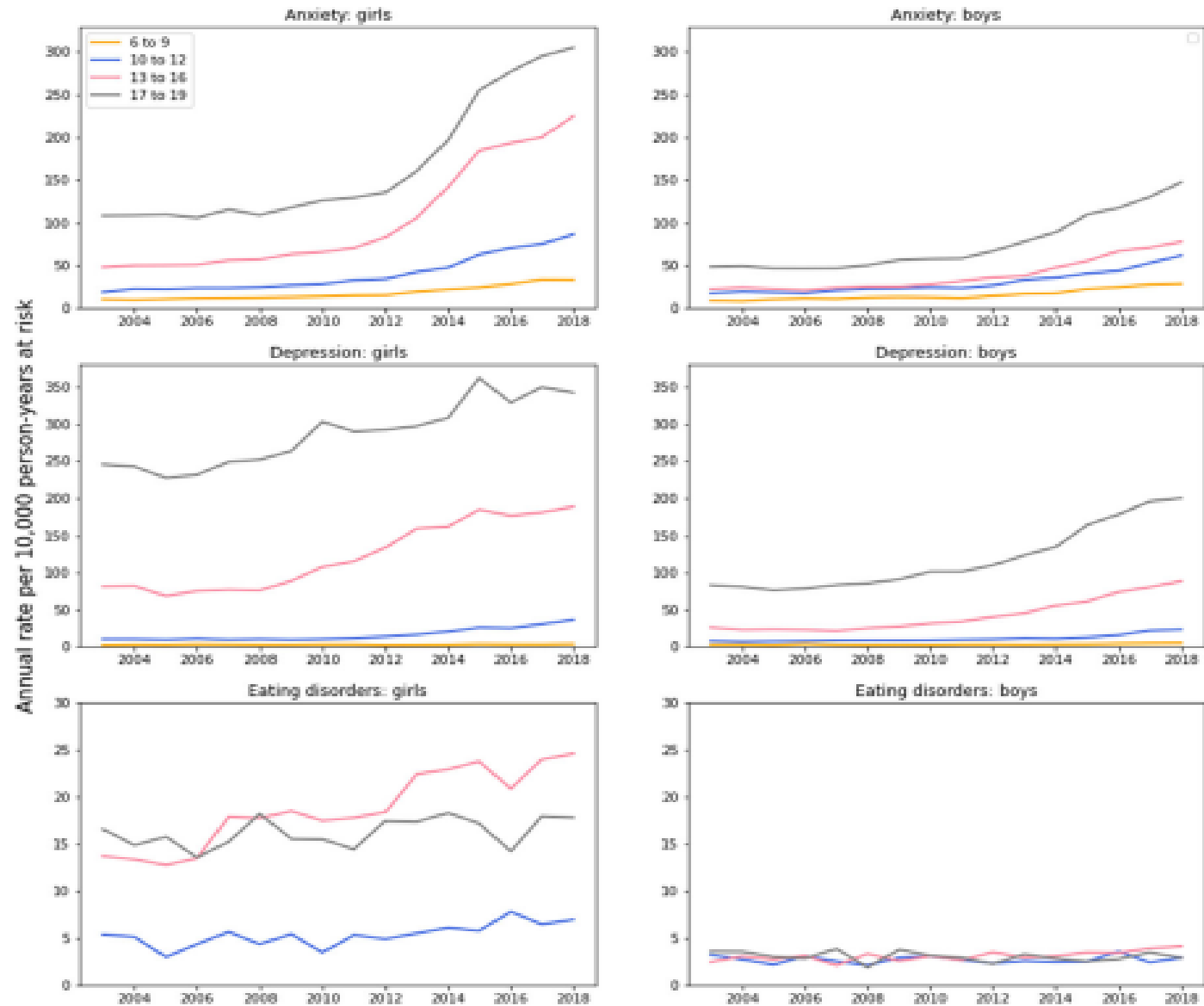


Coronavirus:
school closures



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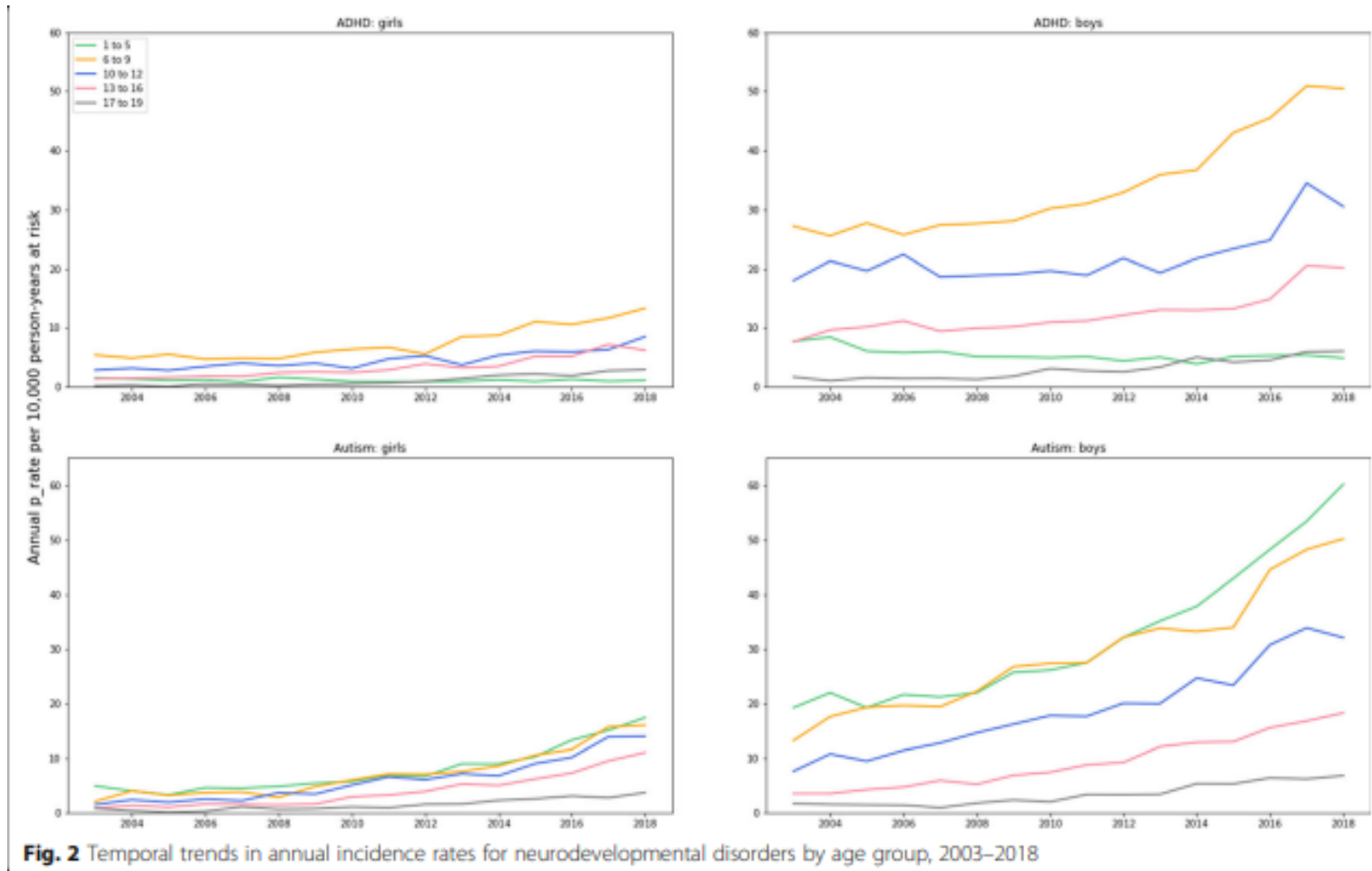
Rising rates of child mental health problems pre-pandemic



Cybulski et al, 2021

Fig. 1 Temporal trends in annual incidence rates for mental illnesses by age group, 2003–2018

Unprecedented demand for mental health services pre-pandemic



Sharp increase during pandemic

1 in 6

**children
in England**

had a probable mental disorder in 2021

the same as in 2020 but an **increase** from 1 in 9 in 2017

81% increase in referrals to CAMHS services in between April –September 2021 (much greater than 11% increase in adults)

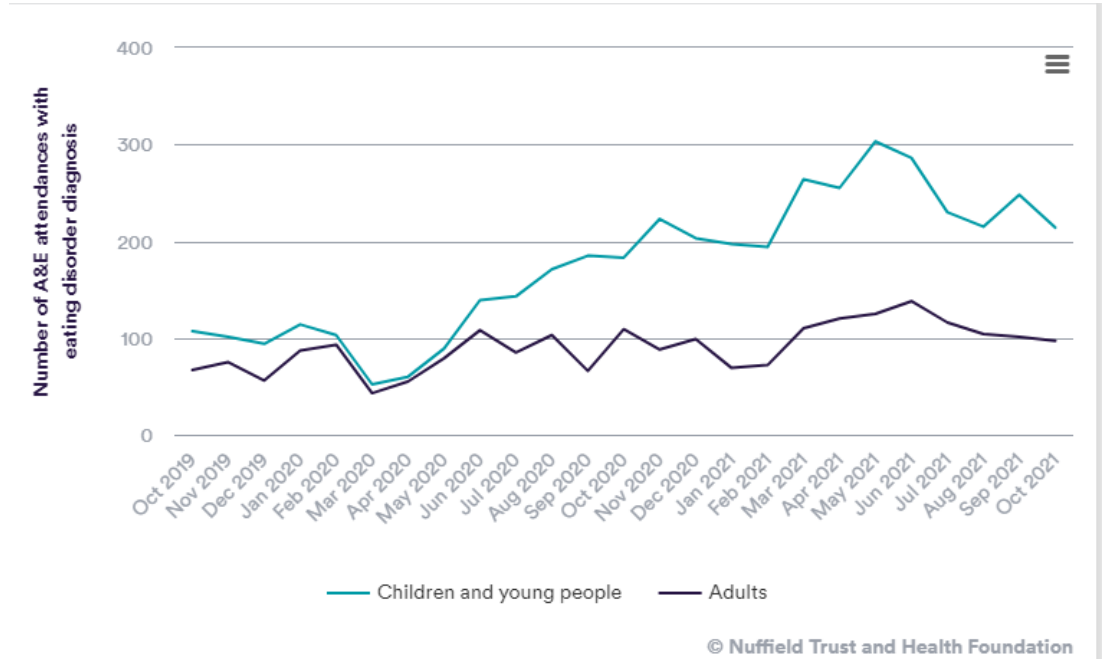
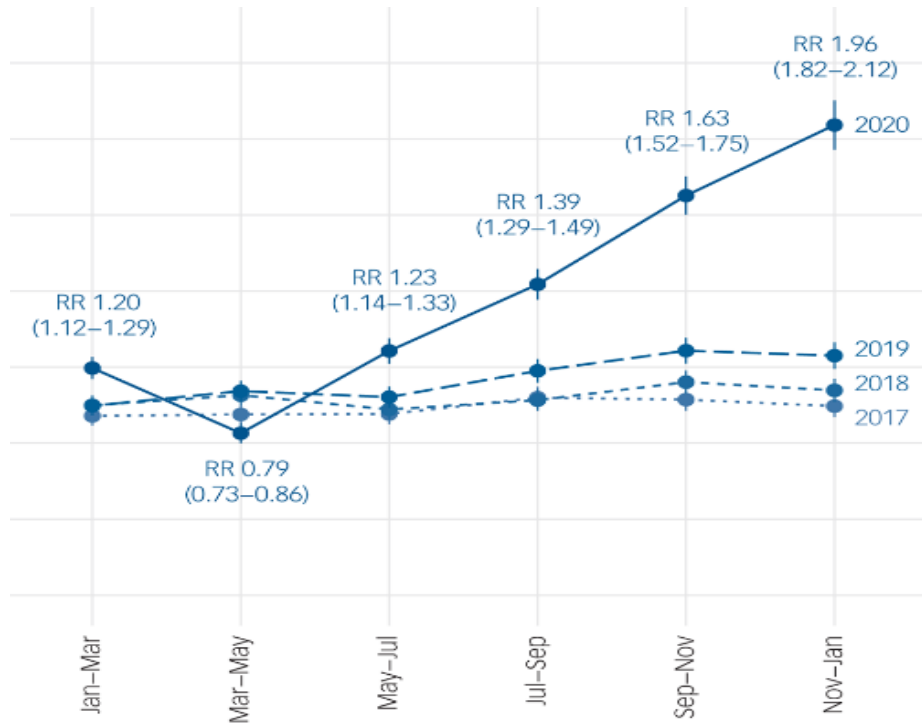
Number of children referred to emergency crises care increased by 59%

Long waits to access care

NHS treating record number of young people for eating disorders

7 March 2022

Children and young people Mental health



Source: Emergency Care Data Set (years 2019 to 2021) Copyright © 2022, re-used with the permission of NHS Digital. All rights reserved.

Taquet et al, 2021

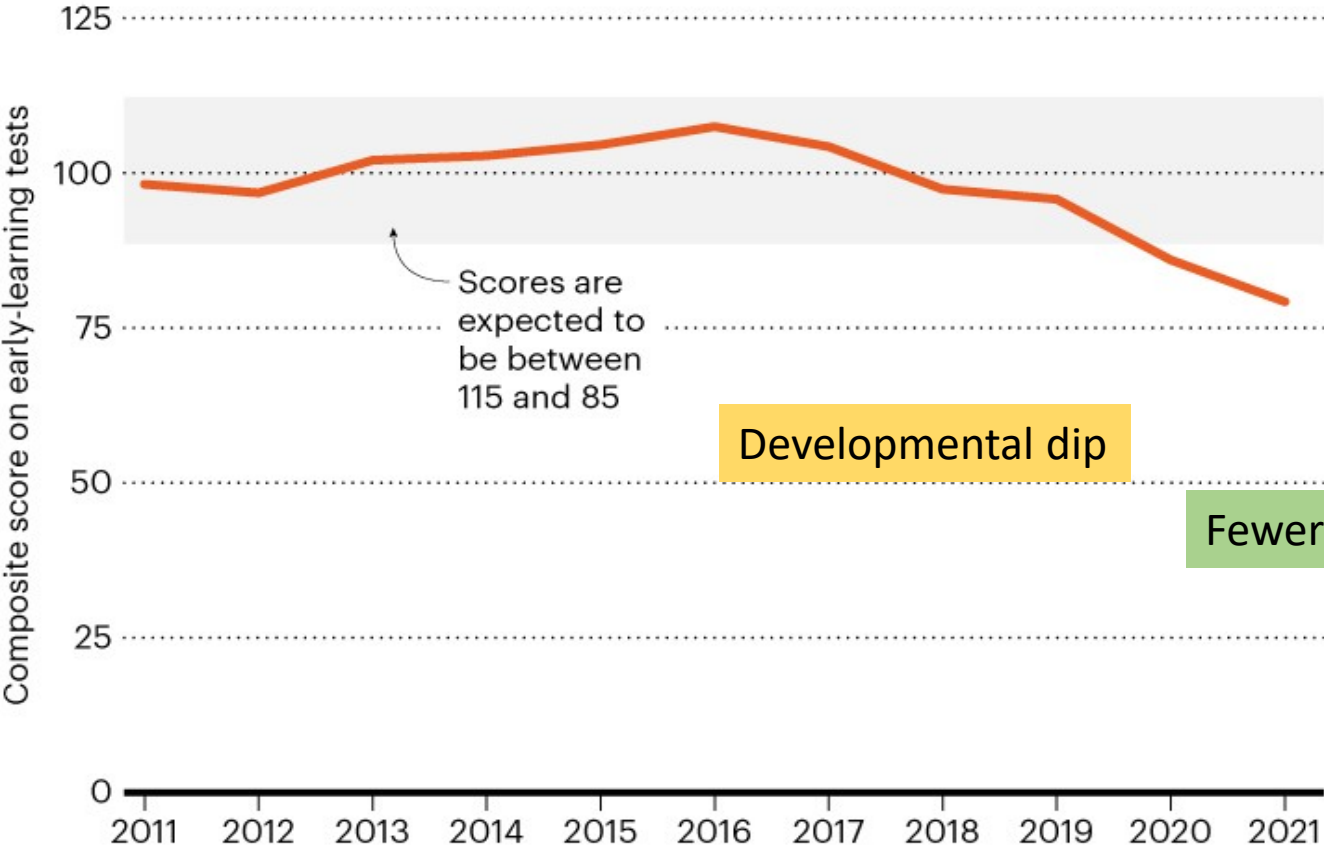
- Coping strategy
- Way of coping with unpredictability
- Social media
- Isolation
- Restricted range of food availability

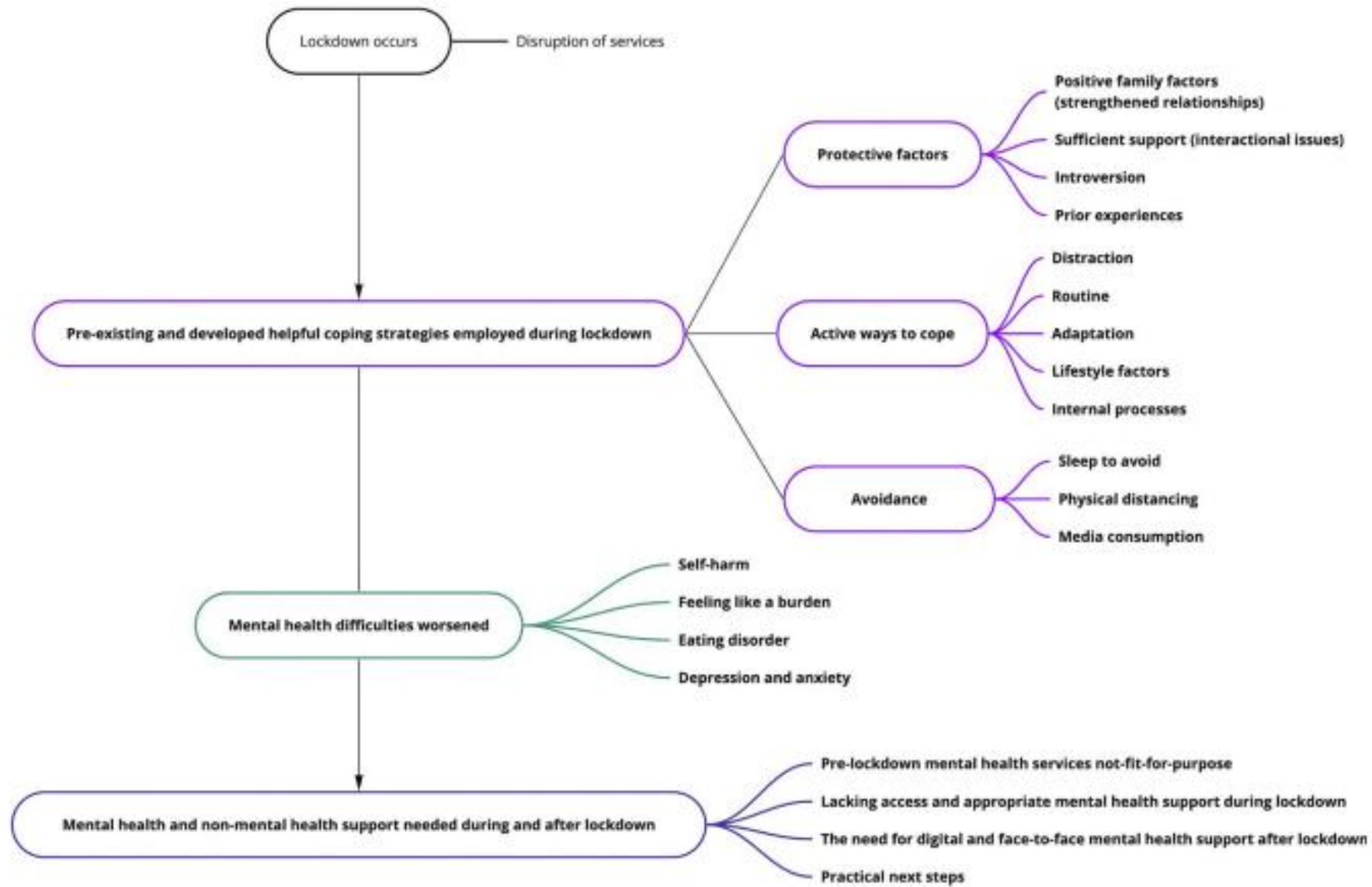
Nuffield Trust report, 2021

The COVID generation: how is the pandemic affecting kids' brains?



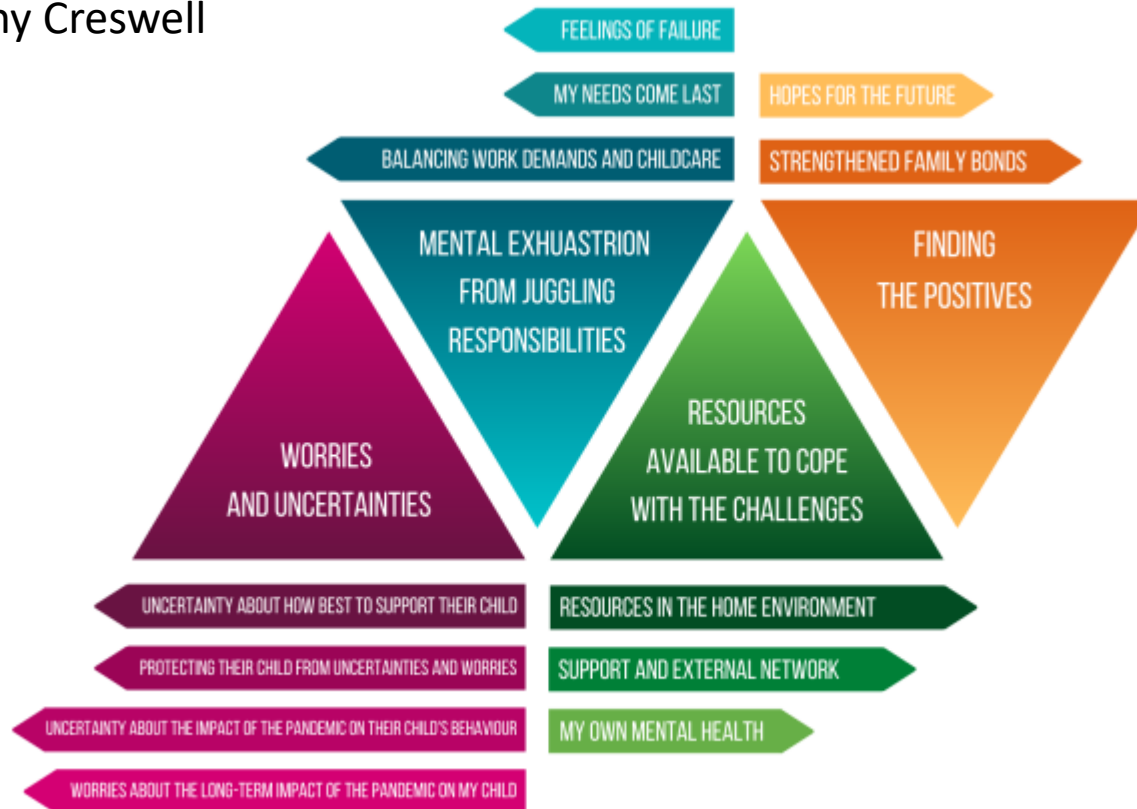
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Parental mental health & family functioning

Co-Space study led
by Cathy Creswell



Worse mental health during restrictions which improved when lockdown lifted- esp parents of children in primary school

Worse outcomes for parents of children with special needs , low income and preexisting mental health difficulties

Effects on vulnerable children

“ Confidence has rapidly reduced. Anxiety is high. Access to wellbeing activities non-existent. Depression. Loss of hair. Sleep disorder. No motivation. Poor personal hygiene.”

“ Managing his home learning had a negative impact on my mental health leading me to doubt my ability to support him and losing the will to even try on some days. I worry constantly about what the future holds for him.”

“ I’m absolutely shattered. No respite. Increased stress.”

No access to school particularly in 1st lockdown- confusion who constituted about ‘vulnerable children’

Support from health services ceased

Lack of clarity around who is responsible, no joined up working

Positives of the lockdown for vulnerable children



Summary

- Unprecedented period of disruption
- Whilst the focus was on the impact of the virus esp in adults, effect on children has been profound
- Mental health services under a huge strain
- Increased funding for mental health services but also primary care, education, social care, prevention, support for staff retention