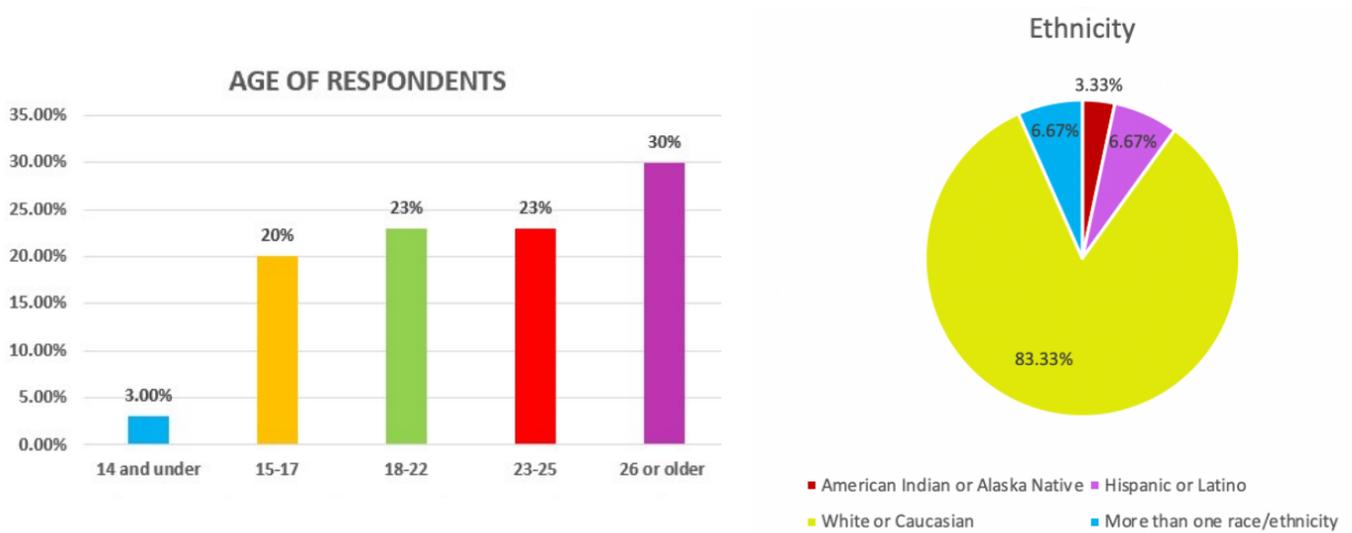


## Here's How They Rate It

**Overview:** COVID-19 has led to an increase in medical and behavioral health services through telehealth. Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL) and Youth MOVE Massachusetts surveyed 30 Massachusetts youth and young adults (ages 14 to 30 years) about their experiences with telehealth visits. Most respondents had seen a therapist or been described psychiatric medication in the last 12 months. A parallel survey for parents on the same topic was also conducted.



### FINDING 1

Youth and adults agreed on the three top benefits to telehealth. Youth (81%) benefitted more from the decrease in transportation while parents placed a high value on avoiding germs during face-to-face visits (59%).

### Top 3 Benefits of Telehealth

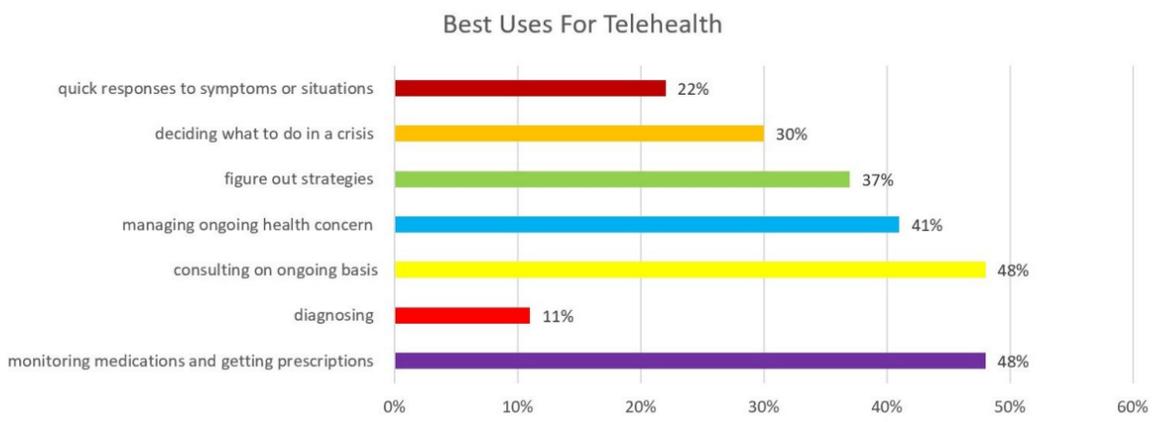
Benefits	% Adults	% Youth
No transportation/travel necessary. Do not need to get child in the car	79%	82%
More flexibility in appointments	63%	44%
No worry about germs as they would for face-to-face visits	56%	40%

### FINDING 2

Many youth reported they didn't get adequate help with apps and technology for telehealth visits. Access to technology, tech savviness and help obtaining needed software is required. Parents also struggled to download the correct apps (6%) and most did not get any help from their providers (38%) in the two month period they used telehealth. 11% of young adults also struggled while downloading the apps. Almost a third of youth (32%) reported they received unhelpful emails or no help at all with the technology for their visits. 33% of youth said they wished providers would offer more help with setting up the apps and tech issues prior to the first visit.

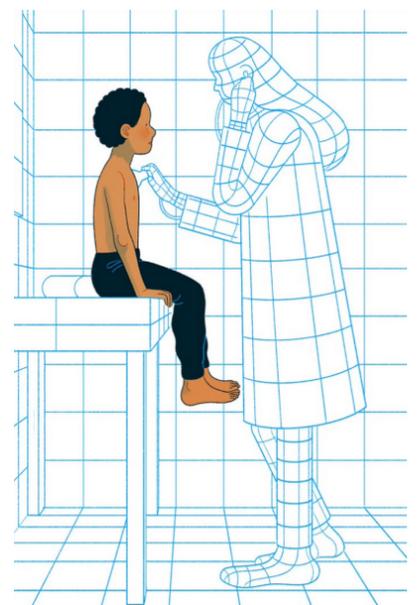
## FINDING 3

Telehealth is a tool of the future, however it is not a substitute for many medical and behavioral services. Young people believed that telehealth offered a lot of benefits but was a poor tool for diagnosing.



## FINDING 4

Limitations of telehealth include the inability of clinicians to see things off screen that may cause clinicians to miss important information. Incomplete information presents a challenge or barrier in telehealth. Close to 50% of parents noted that telehealth limits what clinicians can see. Telehealth is a very safe and easy way for access to a visit. But, clinicians cannot always fully assess the patient, possibly resulting in an incomplete assessment or wrongly diagnosed condition. 41% of youth answered telehealth has benefits but that it is only a little bit better than face-to-face visits, and 33% said telehealth either had the same effect or was completely worse for them.



## FINDING 5

Youth and adults identified the top 3 downsides of telehealth visits from their experiences:

1. May lose interest and focus more than in a face-to-face visits.
2. Home may not be ideal for appointments. It may be busy or chaotic, which can be distracting. Privacy may be limited.
3. May be hard to sit still through the entire appointment.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YOUTH

1. Providers should ask for feedback regularly on the effectiveness of telehealth for the patients	2. There should be a conversation about the situation at home before the first appointment	3. Providers should offer help with setting up apps
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Youth identified what they did and did not like about telehealth along with what they wish could be improved. Youth offered suggestions on improving telehealth. They recommended:

- Act proactively to maximize the effectiveness of telehealth with their patients.
- Recognize youth needs for private conversations.
- Provide guidance to streamline the use of telehealth.

Telehealth is far from perfect, but it will remain a method for delivering healthcare. Incorporating suggestions from young adults can lead to improvements and deliver a better, safer and more accurate form of healthcare.