



COVID-19 and Mental Health:  
What We Are Learning from [www.mhascreening.org](http://www.mhascreening.org)  
June 1, 2020

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Mental Health America  
**B4Stage4**

# Mental Health and COVID-19: More Than 88,000 Impacted by Anxiety and Depression

- Since the beginning of the worry about COVID-19 in mid-to-late February, there have been at least **88,405 additional positive depression and anxiety screening results** over what had been expected (using November 2019-January 2020 average as a baseline).
- There have been **54,093 additional moderate to severe depression** and more than **34,312 additional moderate to severe anxiety screening results from late February through the end of May**.
- The per day number of anxiety screenings completed in May was **370% higher** than in January, before coronavirus stress began. The per day number of depression screens was **394% higher** in May than in January.
- These impacts on mental health are **more pronounced in young people (<25)**: roughly 9 in 10 are screening with moderate-to-severe depression, **and** 8 in 10 are screening with moderate-to-severe anxiety.



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

- **“Loneliness and isolation”** is cited by the greatest percent of moderate to severe depression (73%) and anxiety (62%) screeners as contributing to mental health problems “right now.” These percentages have been steady since mid-April.
- Despite a dramatic jump in screeners in May (more than 211,945 versus 69,626 in April), severity continued to track equal to or higher than our pre-pandemic baselines.
- In May 2020, **21,165 depression screeners reported thinking of suicide or self-harm** on more than half of days to nearly every day, with 11,894 reporting these thoughts nearly every day.
- Special populations are also experiencing high anxiety and depression, including LGBTQ, caregivers, students, veterans/active duty, and people with chronic health conditions.
- This isn’t just affecting people with anxiety and depression, but other mental health conditions, too. Among psychosis screeners in May, more than 16,000 were at risk, and the percentage at risk (73%) also increased.

# MHA Screening ([www.mhascreening.org](http://www.mhascreening.org)): Nearly 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)

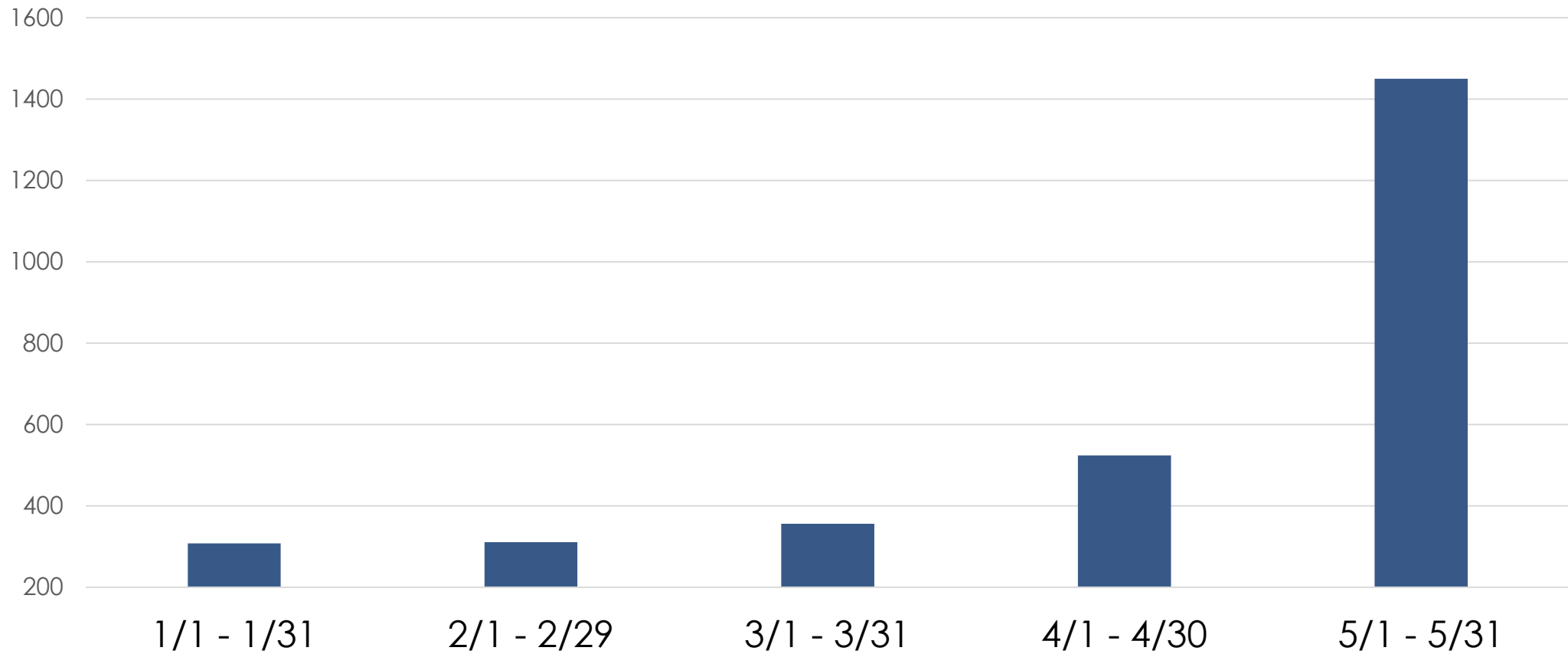
Psychosis Screen  
(Ultra-High Risk)  
(PQ-B)

Eating Disorders

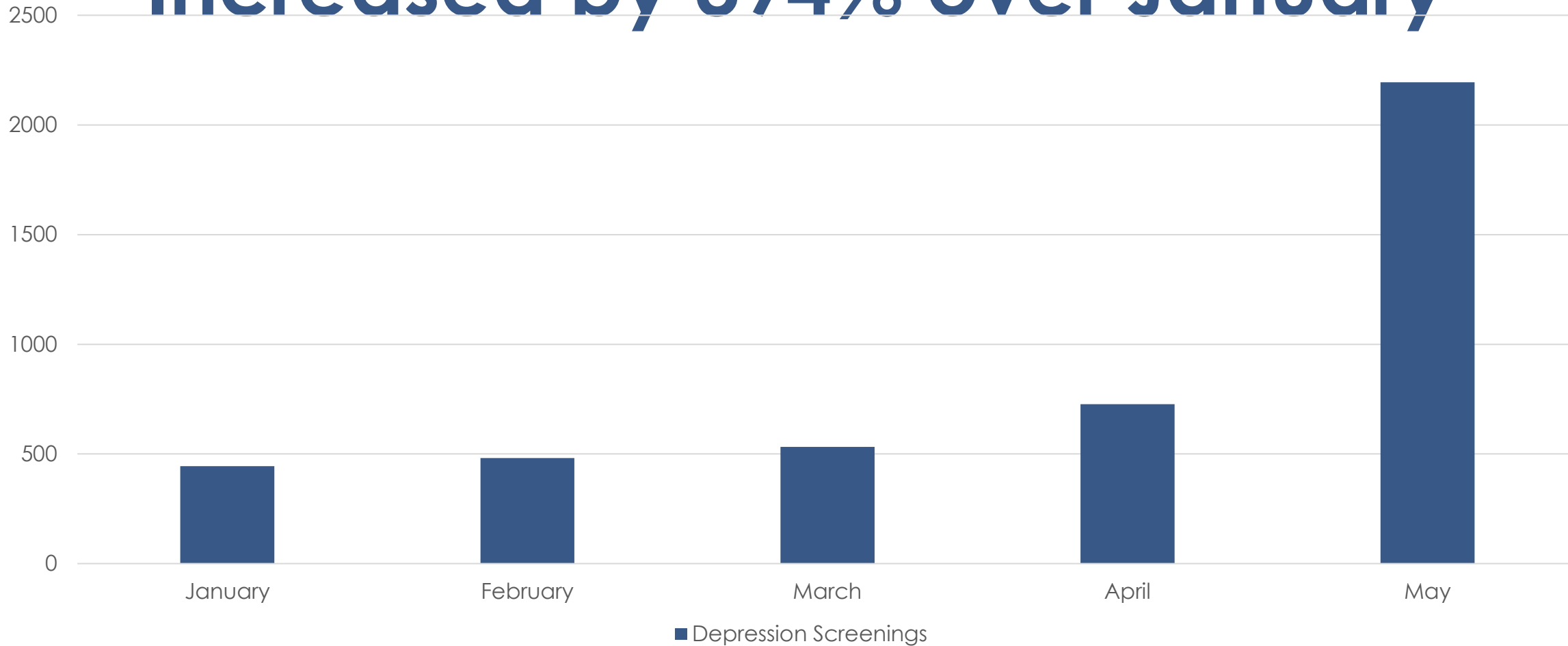
# MHA Screening

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

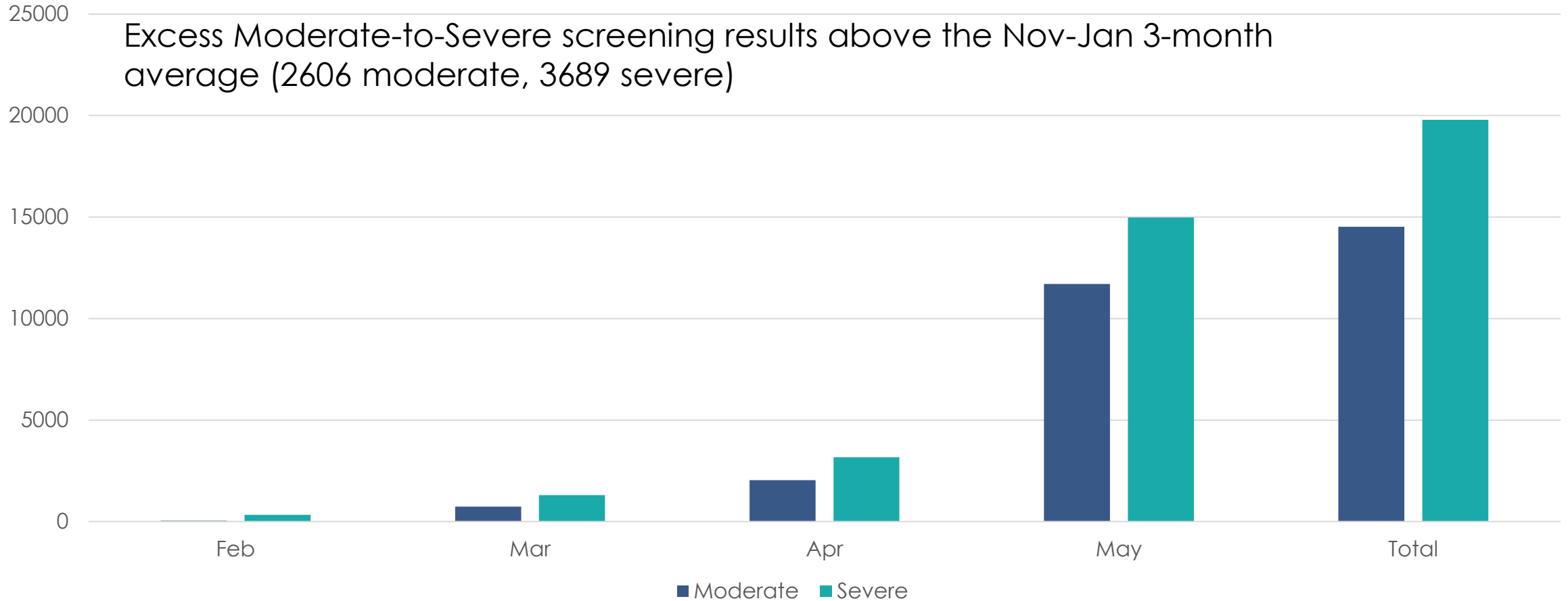
# In May, Per Day Anxiety Screenings Increased by 370% over January



# In April, Per Day Depression Screenings Increased by 394% over January



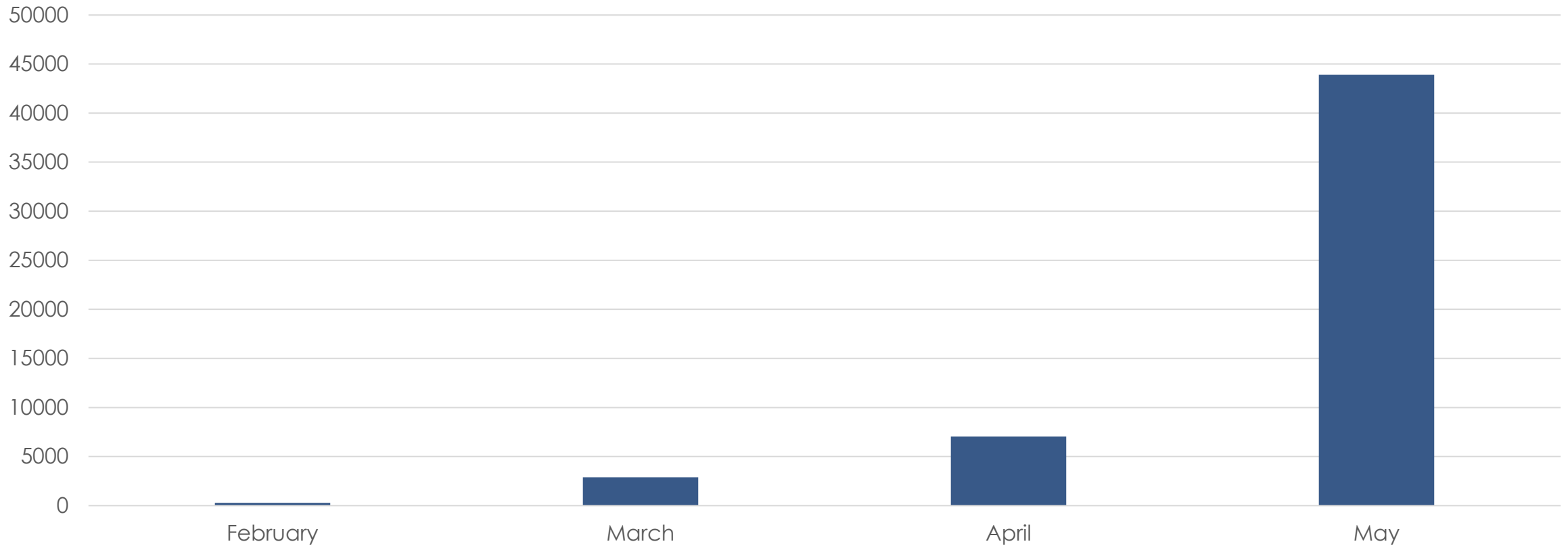
# More Than 34,312 Additional Screeners Have Anxiety Since COVID-19 Pandemic





# More Than 54,093 Additional Screeners Have Depression Since COVID-19 Pandemic

Excess Moderate to Severe Depression Screens above the previous 3-month average (10,867 moderate to severe)



# April Anxiety Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now? Loneliness/Isolation #1

Reason	Number of Responses	Percent of Respondents
Loneliness/Isolation	3337	60%
Past Trauma	2547	46%
COVID-19	2491	45%
Relationship Probs.	2121	38%
Current Events	1728	31%
Financial Probs.	1454	26%
Grief	1336	24%

N=5,525, scoring moderate to severe 4/13-4/30,  
"Choose up to 3"

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

Reason	Number of Responders	Percent of Respondents
Loneliness or isolation	15934	62.14%
Past trauma	12219	47.65%
Relationship problems	10540	41.10%
Coronavirus	9326	36.37%
Current events (news, politics, etc.)	7542	29.41%
Grief or loss	6489	25.31%
Financial Problems	6315	24.63%

N=25,643, scoring moderate to severe 5/1-5/31,  
"Choose up to 3"

# April Depression Screeners: The Main Things Contributing to Mental Health Problems Right Now? Loneliness/Isolation #1

Reason	Number of Responses	Percent of Respondents
Loneliness/Isolation	6492	72%
Past Trauma	4230	47%
Relationship Probs.	3885	43%
COVID-19	2874	32%
Grief	2453	27%
Financial Probs.	2128	24%
Current Events	1906	21%

N=8,989 scoring moderate to severe, collected 4/13-4/30, "Choose up to 3"

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

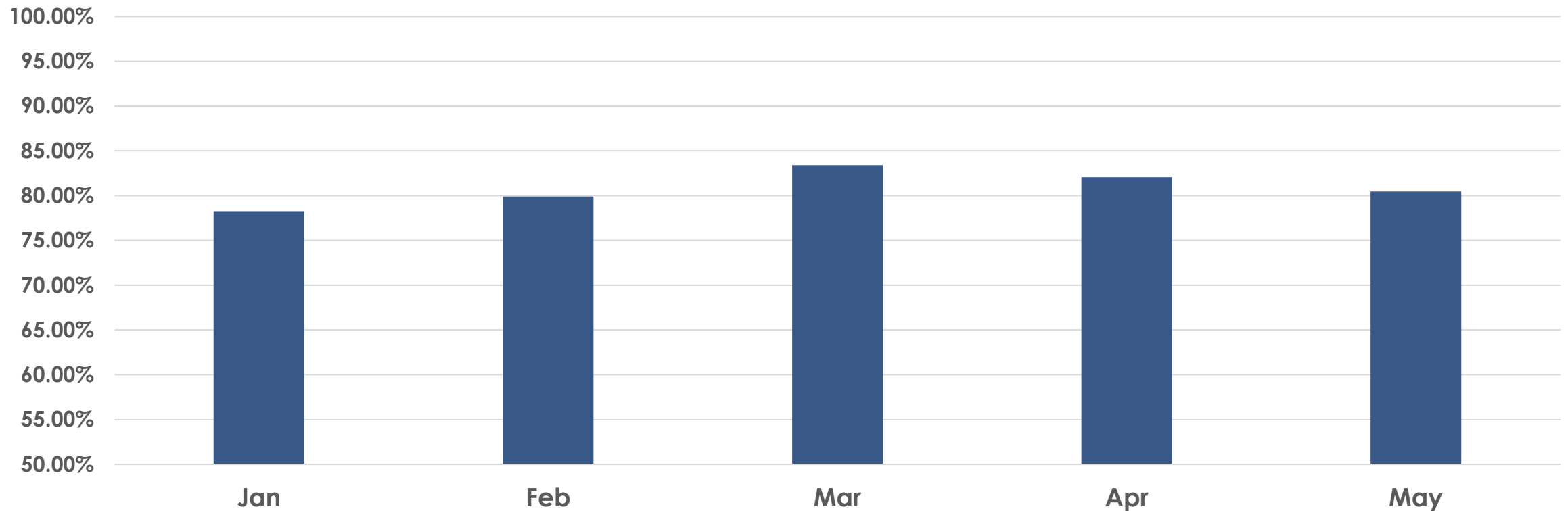
Reason	Number of Responders	Percent of Respondents
Loneliness or isolation	32910	72.59%
Past trauma	20931	46.17%
Relationship problems	20100	44.34%
Coronavirus	13703	30.23%
Grief or loss	12413	27.38%
Financial Problems	10142	22.37%
Current events (news, politics, etc.)	9868	21.77%

N=45,335, scoring moderate to severe 5/1-5/31,  
"Choose up to 3"



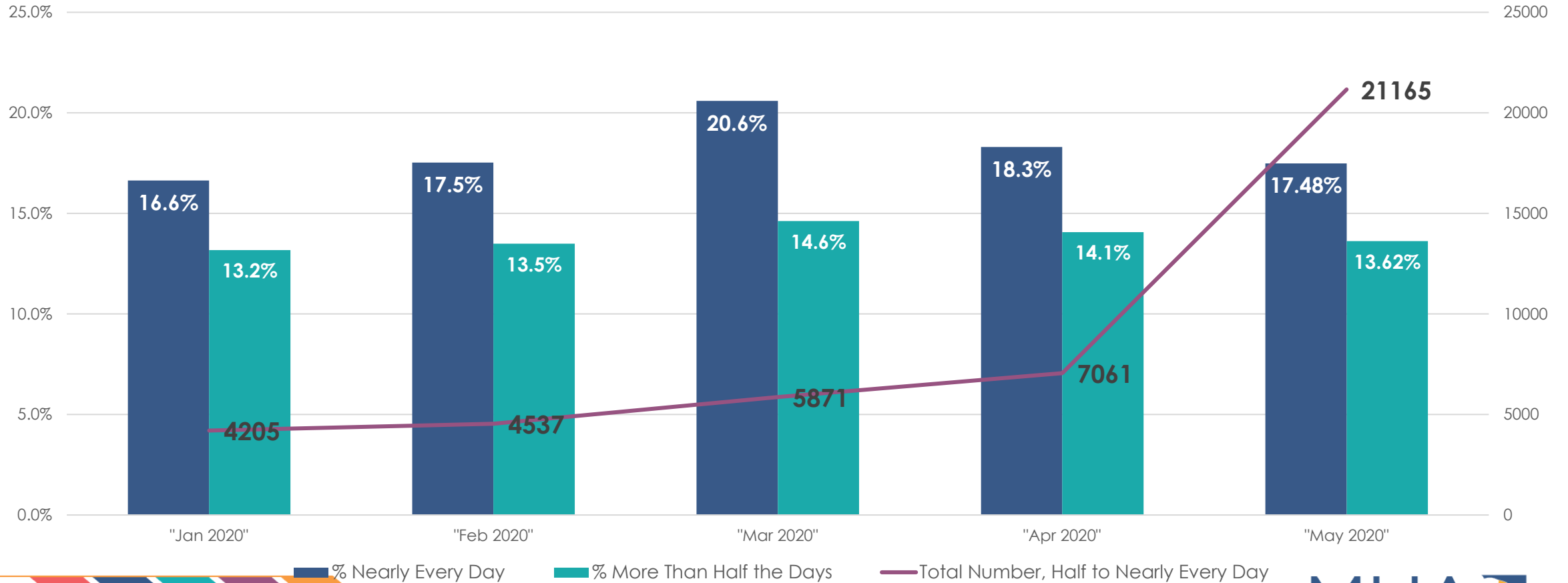
# Screeners Are Not “Worried Well”: Depression Severity Higher In March-May v. Jan-Feb

Depression Screeners, Percent Moderate to Severe



# More Than 21,000 People Considered Self-Harm or Suicide in May

Suicidal/Self-Harm Thinking



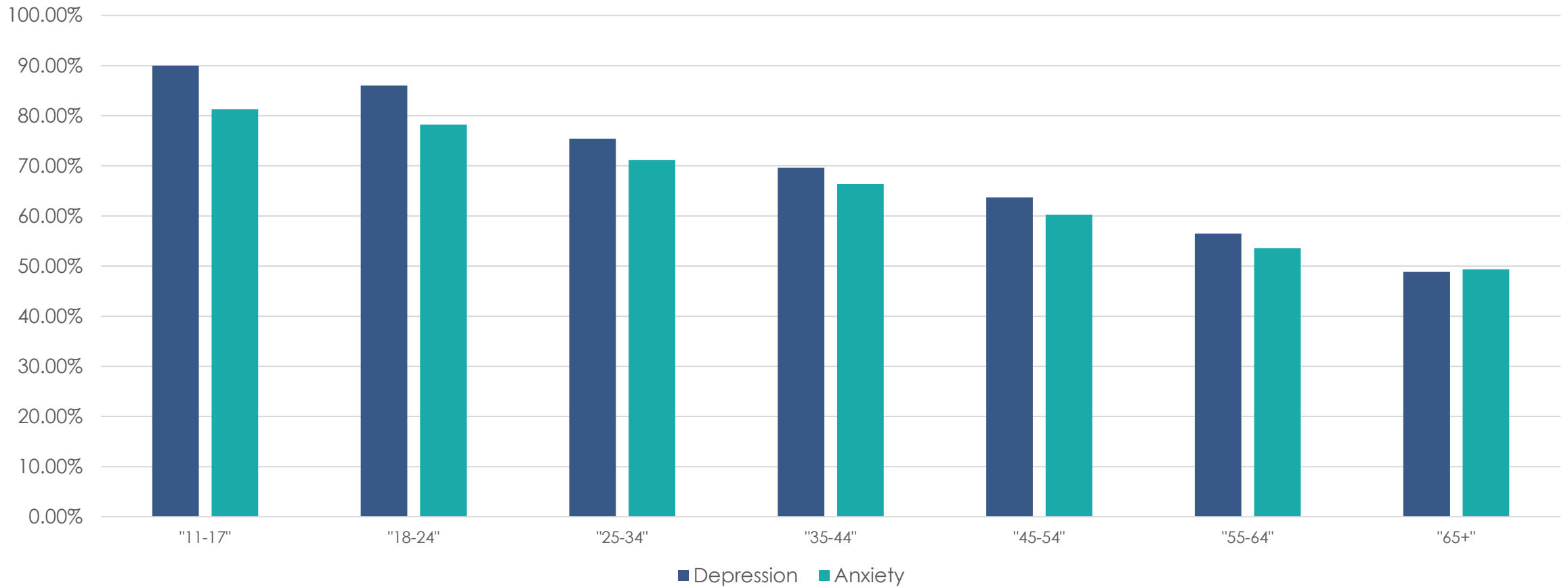
■ % Nearly Every Day

■ % More Than Half the Days

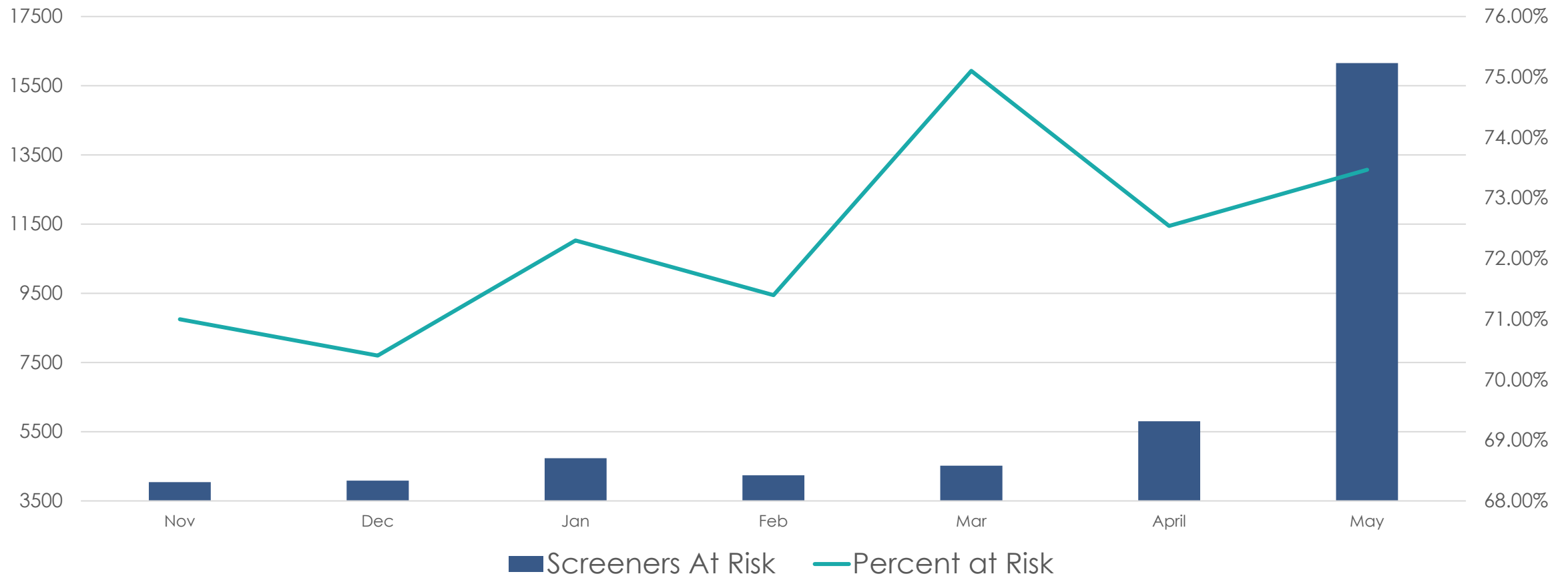
— Total Number, Half to Nearly Every Day

# Young People in May Still Disproportionately Experiencing Depression and Anxiety

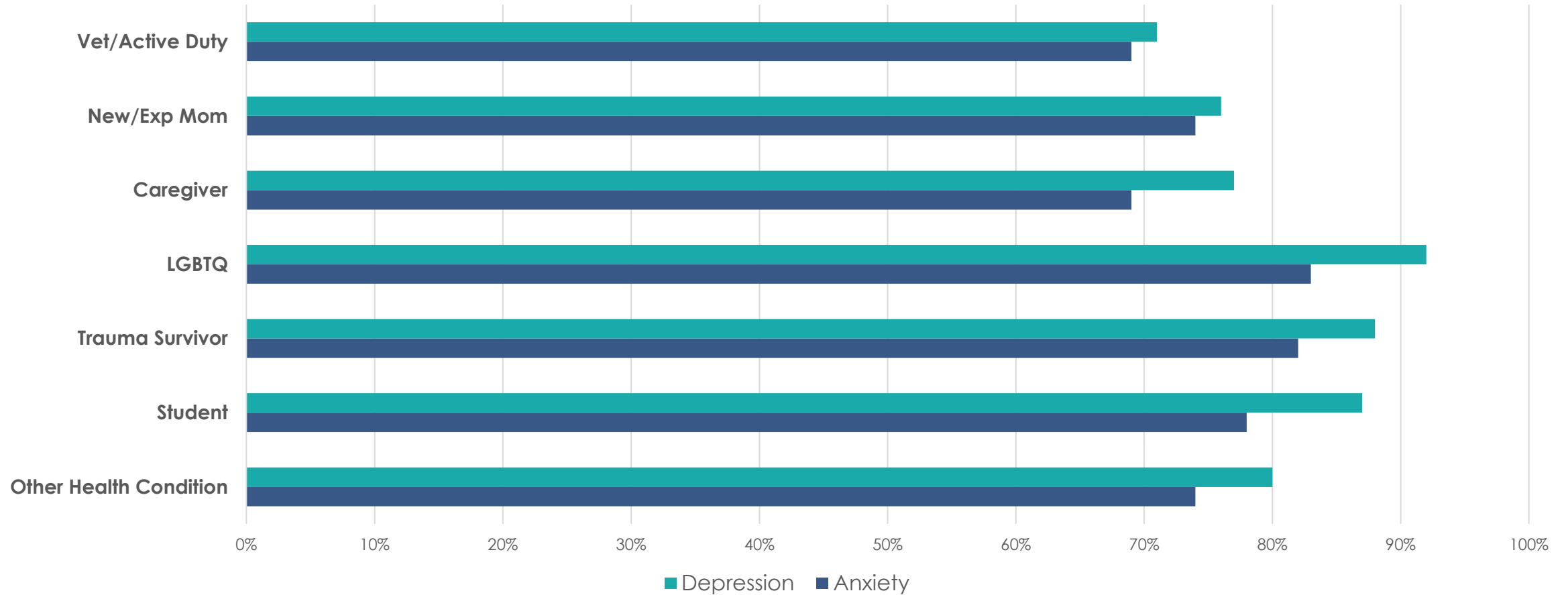
Percent Moderate to Severe



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



# Special Populations: Positive for Depression and Anxiety





# 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



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