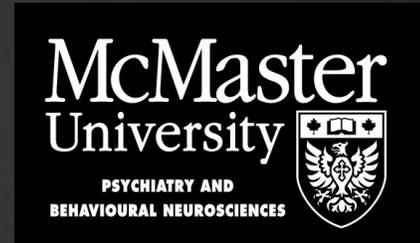
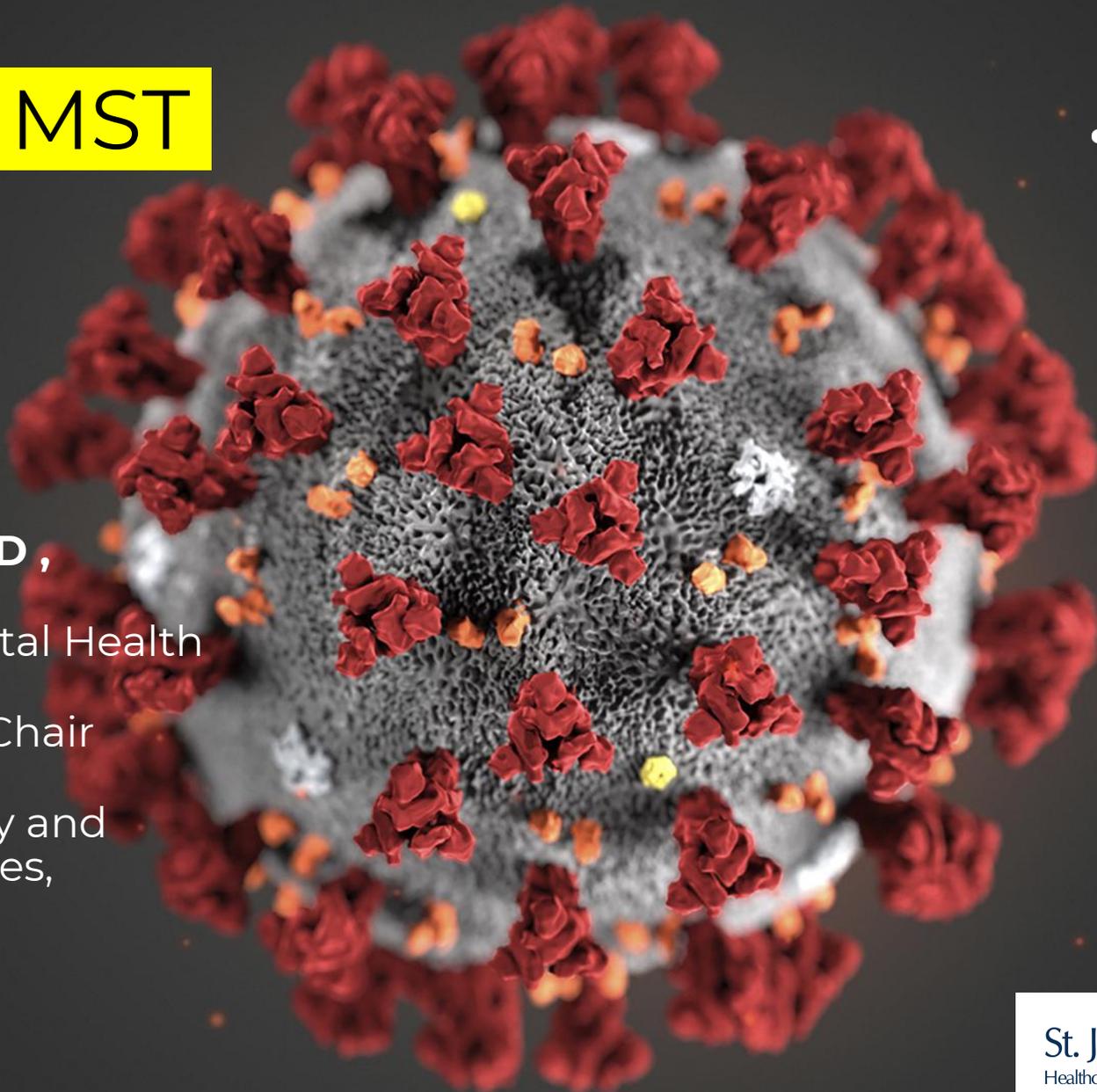


Coping with MST during the COVID-19 pandemic

**Margaret McKinnon, PhD ,
CPsych**
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and Trauma
Professor and Associate Chair
Research
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Behavioural Neurosciences,
McMaster University



Land Acknowledgement

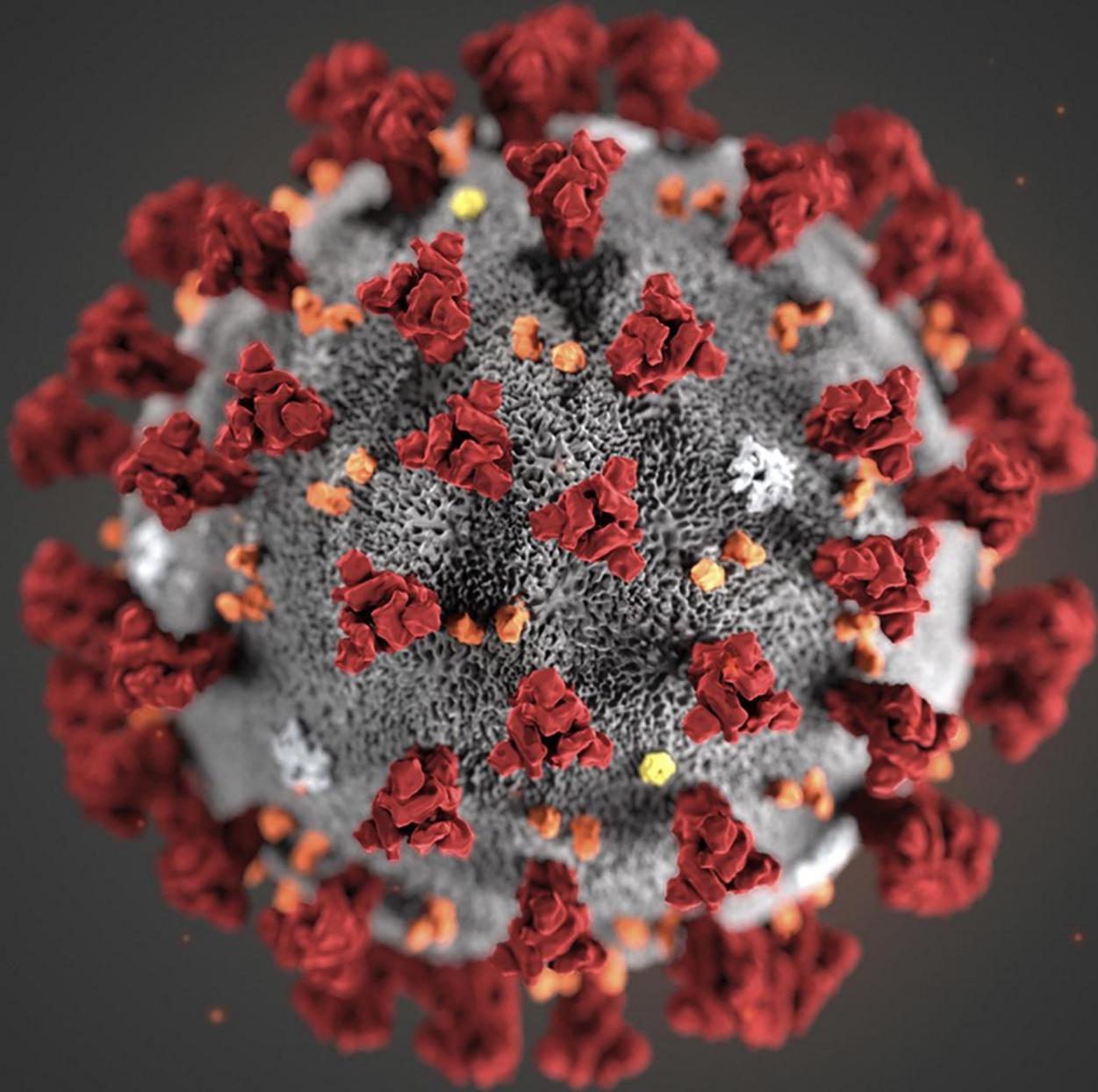
We meet on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish with One Spoon” wampum agreement.



Our world has shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

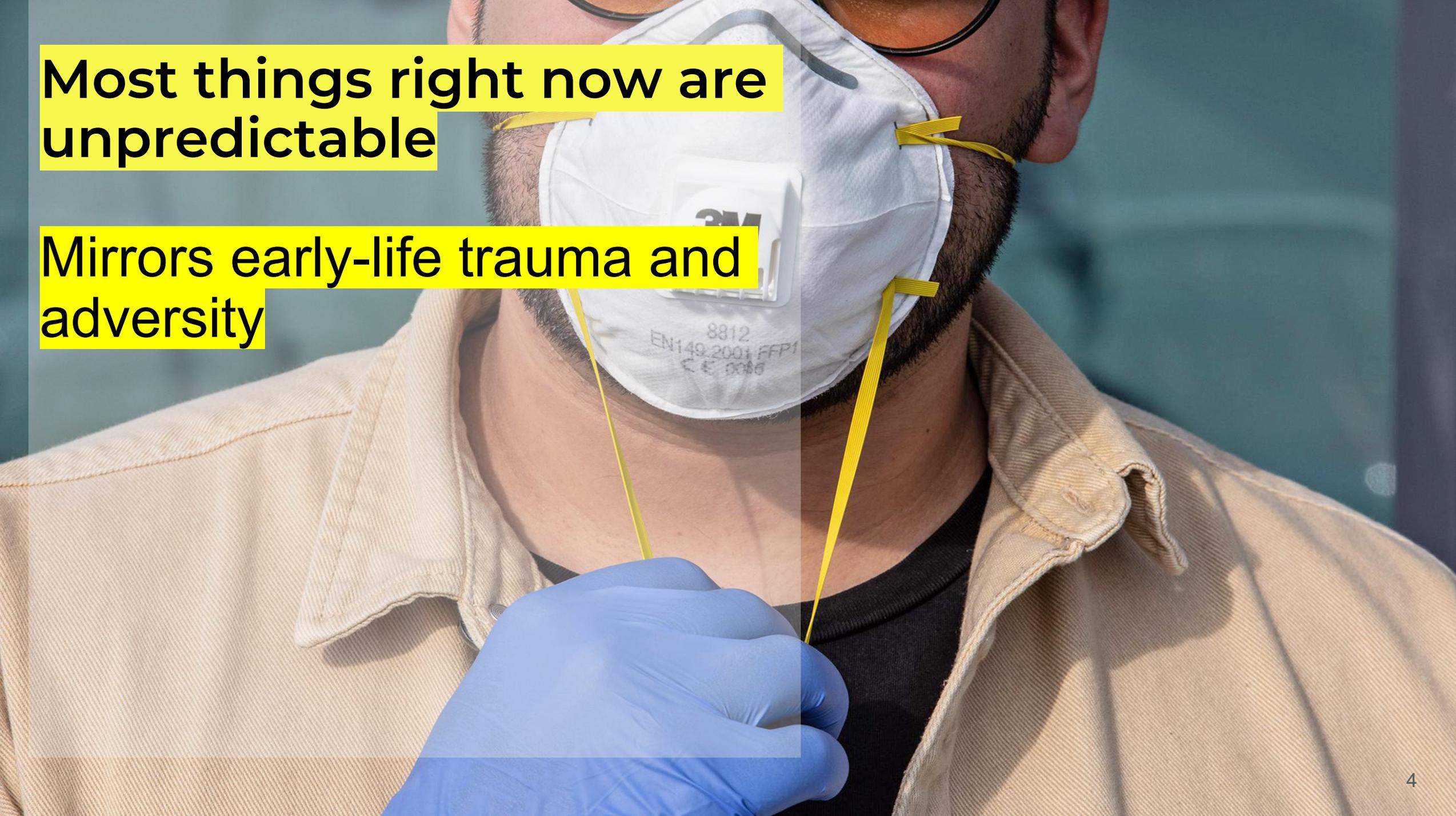
Mandates, expectations, roles changed over night.

Uncertainty over how long this will last (timelessness).



**Most things right now are
unpredictable**

**Mirrors early-life trauma and
adversity**



Moral arc of the universe (MLK)

- Social movements to rectify racial inequity and injustice
- We all have multiple identities that intersect to create our unique selves
- Double burden that is currently unaddressed
- Other forms of minority stress (e.g., sexual minorities; [dis]ability; ethnic or racial)
- Revelations surrounding residential schools in Canada



Intersectionality

Toronto

Women's participation in labour force reaches lowest level in 3 decades due to COVID-19: RBC

Men are already being rehired as certain industries get back on their feet,' RBC says

Tara Deschamps - The Canadian Press - Posted: Jul 16, 2020 6:42 PM ET | Last Updated: July 16



A woman walks through Toronto's financial district on Monday, July 30, 2018. A new study from the Royal Bank of Canada shows COVID-19 pushed women's participation in the labour force down to its lowest level in three decades. (THE CANADIAN PRESS)

In N.Y.C., the Coronavirus Is Killing Men at Twice the Rate of Women

More men also are infected than women, and they are hospitalized more frequently, new data show. A similar pattern was seen in China.



Bodies being transferred to refrigerated trailers at the Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn on Saturday. Victor J. Blue for The New York Times

PART 2/3

THE COMBINED EFFECTS OF SYSTEMIC RACISM & COVID-19 ON RACIALIZED HEALTHCARE WORKERS

COVID-19 has amplified the impacts of systemic racism on the physical and mental health of racialized people.

Racialized people are at a **HIGHER RISK** across these 7 domains:

1 COVID-19 EXPOSURE

Racialized people are at a **HIGHER RISK OF EXPOSURE** to COVID-19 because they are **MORE LIKELY** to:

Sources: 9-14

-  Experience income inequality & poverty
-  Live in high-density neighbourhoods
-  Live in congregate housing settings
-  Experience housing inequality
-  Use public transportation
-  Work 'essential service' jobs with greater workplace exposure

2 COVID-19 INFECTION

Racialized people are at a **HIGHER RISK OF COVID-19 INFECTION**.

Sources: 9-14

3x In Ontario, Canada, COVID-19 INFECTION RATES ARE 3 TIMES HIGHER in the most diverse neighbourhoods compared to the least diverse neighbourhoods.

Source: 13

4 COVID-19 MORTALITY

Racialized people are at a **HIGHER RISK OF COVID-19 MORTALITY**.

Sources: 9-14

2x In Ontario, Canada, COVID-19 MORTALITY RATES ARE 2 TIMES HIGHER in the most diverse neighbourhoods compared to the least diverse neighbourhoods.

Source: 13

3 SEVERE OUTCOMES

Racialized people experience inequities that increase their risk of developing chronic health conditions. As a result, they are at **HIGHER RISK OF DEVELOPING SEVERE OUTCOMES** when infected with COVID-19.

Sources: 10, 11, 13

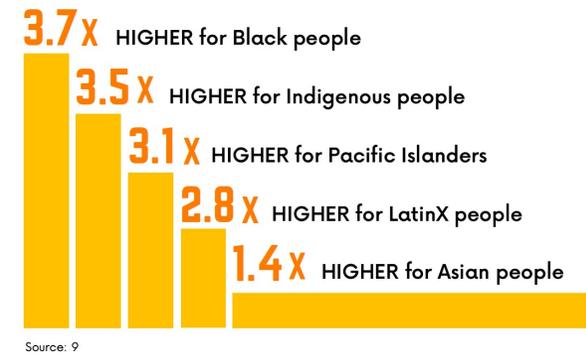
In Ontario, Canada, the most diverse neighbourhoods have:

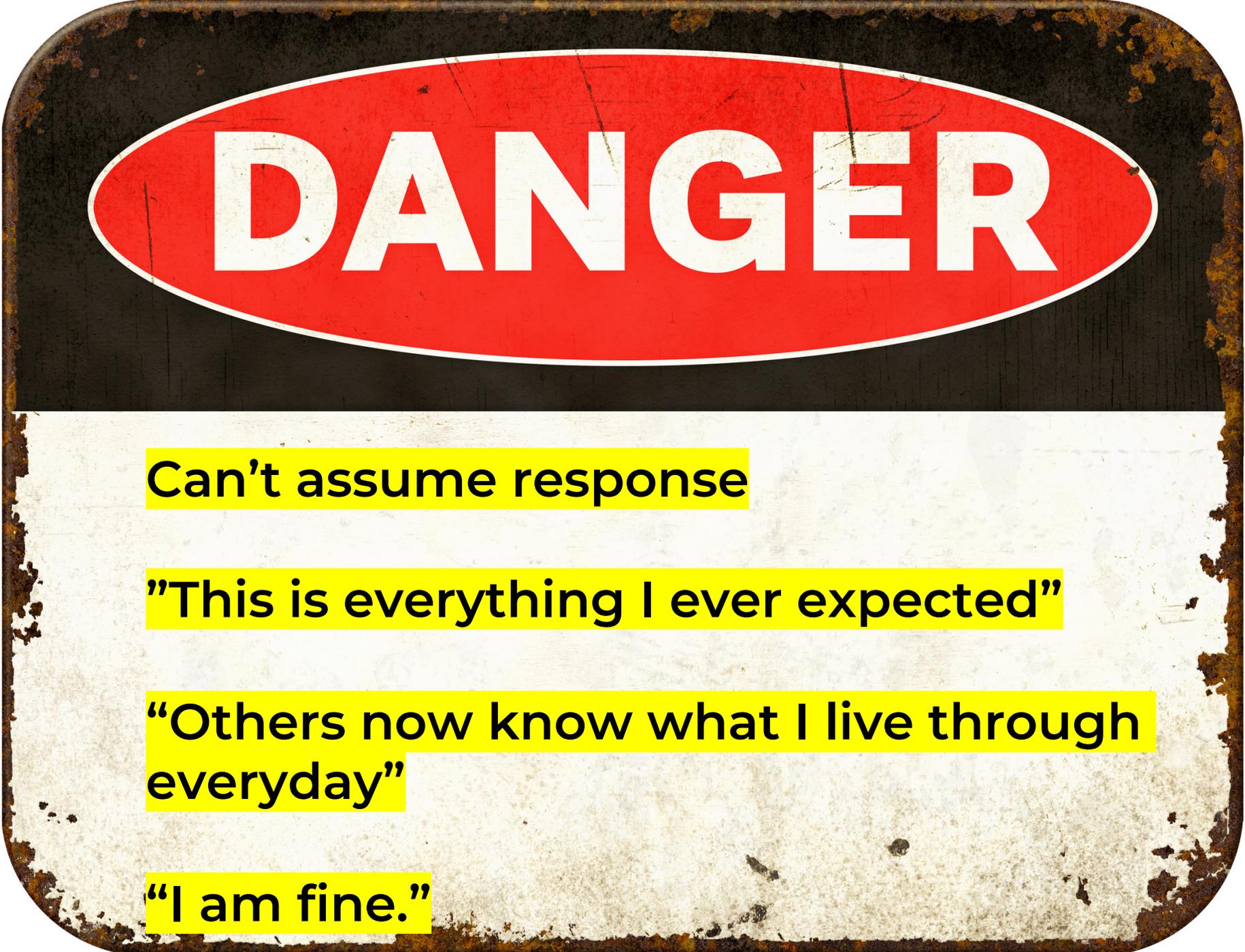
4x COVID-19 HOSPITALIZATION RATES THAT ARE 4 TIMES HIGHER than the least diverse neighbourhoods.

COVID-19 INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU) ADMISSION RATES THAT ARE 4 TIMES HIGHER than the least diverse neighbourhoods.

Source: 13

In the US, compared to white people, COVID-19 MORTALITY RATES are:





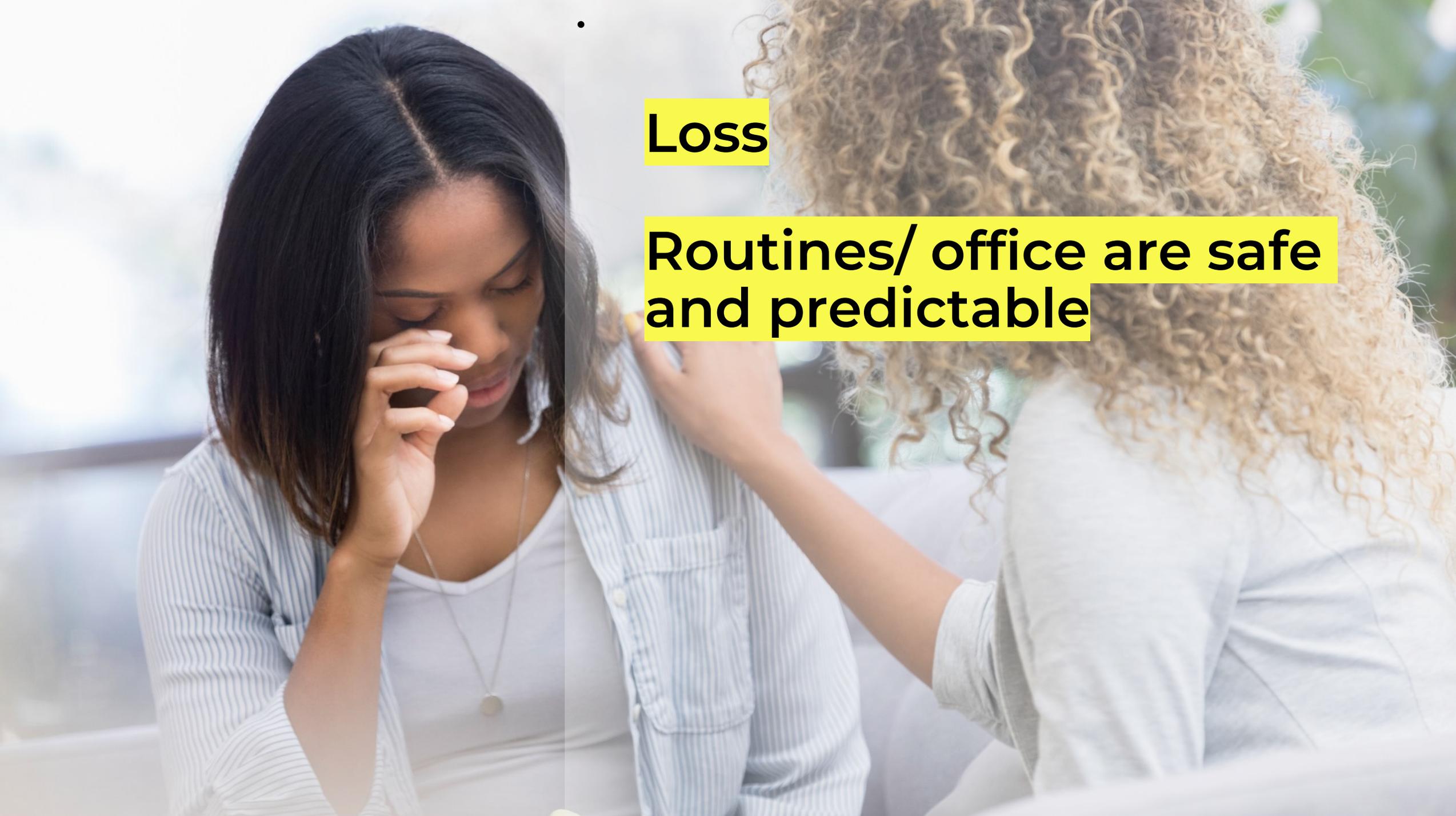
DANGER

Can't assume response

"This is everything I ever expected"

**"Others now know what I live through
everyday"**

"I am fine."

A photograph showing a woman with dark hair looking down with her hand to her face, appearing to be in distress. Another woman with curly hair is seen from behind, with her hand on the first woman's shoulder, suggesting a comforting gesture. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

Loss

**Routines/ office are safe
and predictable**

Re-traumatization

Control over your body and your space

-



“Physical Distancing” – can trigger feelings of rejection from the past

“Together but not alone” – Social support single greatest predictor develop PTSD





- **Virtual Therapy**

- **Guilt/ shame**

- **Self-loathing –
difficult to see self
on screen**

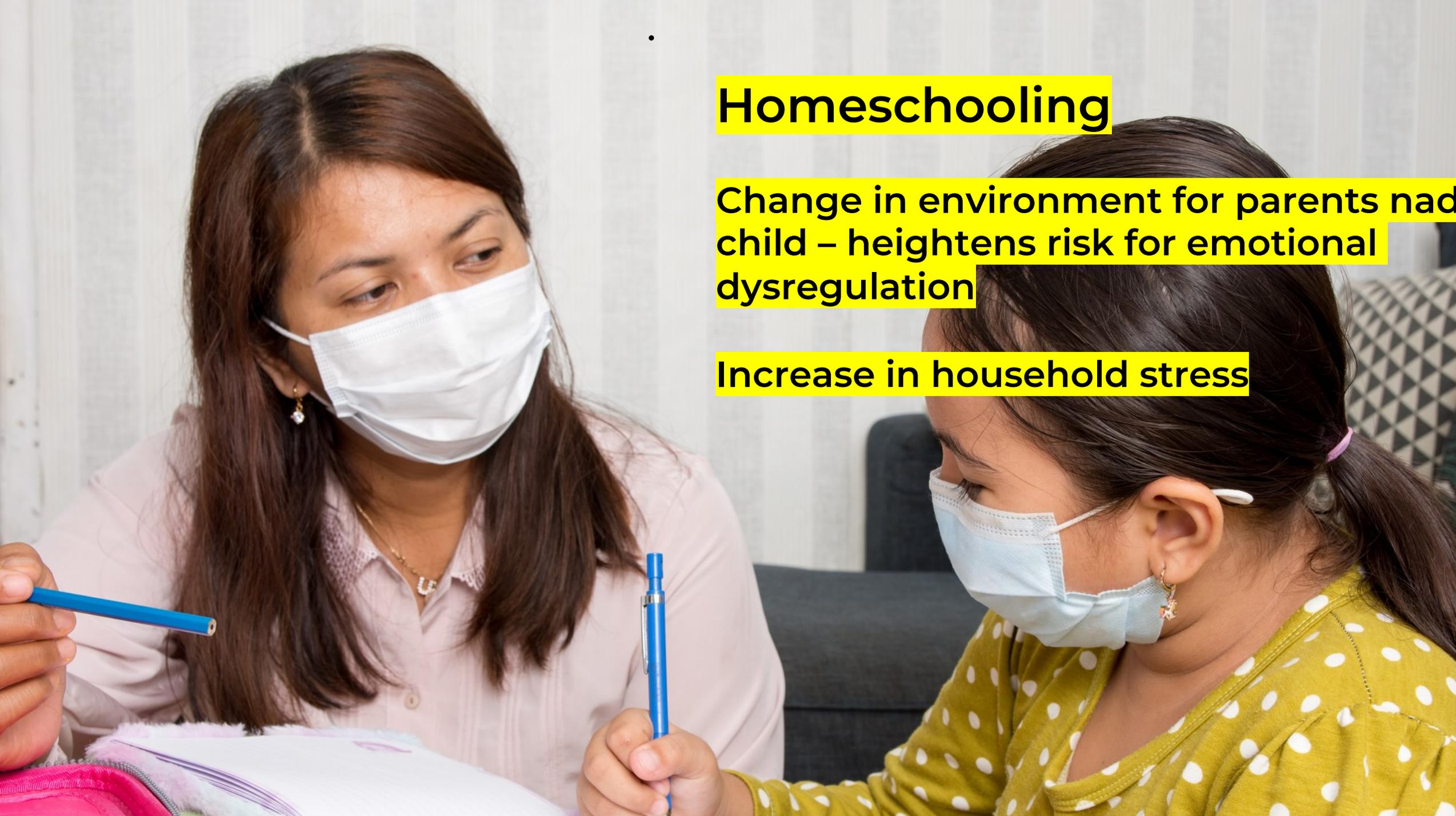
- **Phone**

- **Look away and
focus on provider**

Difficulty Reading Emotions

- Virtual environment makes reading emotions more difficult





Homeschooling

Change in environment for parents and child – heightens risk for emotional dysregulation

Increase in household stress



Dying alone

Guilt and shame

Letting go of attachment figures

**Death of the perpetrator;
processing emotion without self
judgment**

**Acceptance is harder than
change – I don't want to go back**

Personalized Approach

What are your warning signs?

What has worked for you in the past?

Proposed Strategies for Managing COVID-Anxiety: Grey Literature

Sources including the CDC and CAMH have published recommendations for managing stress and anxiety amidst the COVID-19 pandemic:

Stay informed, but know when to take a breather

- Stick to trustworthy sources, limit the number of times you check for updates, step away from the media if you're feeling overwhelmed

Focus on what you can control

- Wash your hands often, avoid touching your face, avoid all non-essential shopping and travel, get adequate sleep

Stay connected, even if you're physically separated

- Stay in touch with family and friends via video chat, don't let the pandemic dominate every conversation

Take care of your body and wellbeing

- Eat healthy meals, get adequate rest, exercise regularly, avoid excessive substance use
- Be patient with yourself, maintain a routine as best you can, make time for activities you enjoy, take up a relaxation practice
- Remember that you are resilient, you can challenge worries and anxious thoughts, and seek support

Give yourself permission to take a break from your anxiety.