

## KEY TAKE-AWAYS

"The situation brings out again my feeling of exclusion, and that my needs do not resemble the needs of the majority. / La situation fait ressortir mon sentiment d'exclusion, et que mes besoins ne ressemblent pas aux besoins de la majorité."

- Caregiver-Advocate



### MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- **Most** of the 1066 respondents (21% identified as Autistic, 82% identified as caregivers) reported **not coping well** during the pandemic
- Over **75%** of respondents reported feeling **stressed, worried, and anxious**
- Over **50%** of respondents said **maintaining personal routines/children's routines** as well as **keeping a healthy lifestyle** (including **sleep and exercise**) were the most difficult coping strategies to implement
- Almost **80%** of advocates rated 'mental health concerns' as somewhat, very or extremely challenging



### IMPACT ON DAILY LIVING

Greatest **impacts on children** reported by caregivers:

- Disruptions in education and learning
- Challenging behaviours
- Social relationships with family and friends

Greatest **impacts on advocates**:

- Maintaining emotional/mental well being
- Sleep problems
- Social relationships with family and friends



### ACCESS TO SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

The following **supports** were either extremely challenging to access, not accessible, or would have been useful:

- financial compensation to take time off work
- technology to work from home
- flexibility using government funding/subsidies
- access to recreation programs
- access to health professionals
- ASD specific hotline



### RESPONDENT VOICES

3 themes were continually stressed by our respondents through open-ended questions:

- **Affordability** – challenges due to government support delivery models and high cost of private support services
- **Housing** – lack of affordable housing options for the diversity of needs
- **Employment** – unemployment increasing for both advocates and caregivers