



CHILDREN WITH BRAIN-BASED DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Canadians with disabilities and their families have been flagged as an "at-risk" group by several media outlets, including in official statements.¹



CONCERNS

There is a concern that children with brain-based developmental disabilities may be more affected by COVID-19 than children without disabilities due to their unique needs and the potential for underlying health conditions that increase the risk of serious complications.

Families in particular are concerned about:

- The **risks** for their children, and
- The **type of support** they may receive from the healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic.



WHAT DOES RESEARCH TELL US?

THERE IS A KNOWLEDGE GAP!

There is a lack of evidence on the effects of COVID-19 in children with brain-based developmental disabilities. It appears as though this specific population has been overlooked.

The review of the literature did NOT find information on the prevalence of COVID-19 in children with brain-based developmental disabilities.

Four studies found that seven cases of children (under the age of 12 months) infected with COVID-19 were at risk of presenting brain-based developmental disabilities (e.g., premature).

The literature review was conducted by the SPOR Evidence Alliance in cooperation with CHILD-BRIGHT collaborators to include youth, parents, and researchers, to evaluate whether children with brain-based developmental disabilities were more likely to develop COVID-19 than children without disabilities, and to have complications or poorer outcomes following infection. This review was conducted in April 2020.



WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT?



DATA & POLICY

Ask Canadian policymakers to examine the data on children with COVID-19 in Canada to determine:

- 1 If children with brain-based developmental disabilities are over-represented, and are more likely to be hospitalized.
- 2 What unique resources, support, and programs are needed for children with brain-based developmental disabilities and their families during the pandemic and afterwards.



ENGAGEMENT

Work with Canadian brain-based developmental disability organizations and families to design methods of reporting about the occurrence and impact of COVID-19.

Based on patient-partners opinions and research evidence

CHILD-BRIGHT WILL BE CONDUCTING ANOTHER REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE IN 3 MONTHS.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

¹ UNICEF www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_response_considerations_for_people_with_disabilities_190320.pdf

The Review
Dugas M., Carnovale V., Poirier AA., Mailhot, B., Skidmore B., Faust L.E., Costello C., Thomson D., Majnemer A., Goldowitz D., Miller S., and LeBlanc, A. (2020). COVID-19 in children with brain-based developmental disabilities: A two-week rapid review. SPOR Evidence Alliance. www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.05.01.20088021v1
The report: www.child-bright.ca/new-blog/2020/5/15/covid-rapid-review

CHILD-BRIGHT Network
www.child-bright.ca/covid-19-resources

Canadian Association of Community Living
<https://cacl.ca/coviddisability/>

Accessible Canada
www.include-me.ca/accessible-canada

World Health Organization
www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/healthy-parenting

American Psychological Association
www.apa.org/research/action/children-disabilities-covid-19

Children's Health Canada
www.childrenshealthcarecanada.ca/covid19-and-canadas-kids

BC Children's Hospital
www.bcchildrens.ca/health-info/covid-19-and-children-information-for-patients

Holland Bloorview
<https://hollandbloorview.ca/our-services/family-workshops-resources/covid-19-tip-sheets-and-resources>

United Nations
www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Disability/COVID-19_and_The_Rights_of_Persons_with_Disabilities.pdf