How Are Children and Caregivers Doing, Really?

- Of the 1,100 caregivers who responded, 649 have a child(ren) with an I.E.P. or 504 Plan. Only 9% feel their child's needs are being met well.
- Most (62%) say their child's special education needs are being met worse than expected.
- Caregivers report that both they and their children are experiencing an increase in behavioral health symptoms (anxiety, depression, substance use, negative thoughts) at equivalent rates (~70%).

What Do Caregivers Say is Most Challenging?

1. Navigating Platforms
   - I have to take pictures of school work on my phone, send it to a school email, upload the images and then send them to the teacher. I waste lots of time waiting on the computer to load videos. I just don't feel like I'm learning much despite the hard efforts of teachers. She learns better in person with a variety of teachers for motivation. (West Virginia)

2. Meeting Special Education Needs
   - My son is nonverbal and this has not been taken into consideration at all and he is not receiving his speech and occupational therapy. (Texas)

3. Balancing School and Work (Time)
   - I have become depressed and anxious. I can't manage my work on top of helping my 6-year-old manage his school schedule and learn new material. It's absolutely exhausting. (Indiana)

Support from School/Teachers

- One of my kids is fine academically, but is extremely challenged by the lack of social interaction. (New Jersey)
- Our special needs child needs access to in-person classrooms. I don't see the same level of support and engagement in virtual learning. (Massachusetts)

Impact on Caregiver and Child Mental Health

- I have 2 children with severe autism and 4 in total. This has been a horrific experience for my family. (Illinois)

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Increased Behavioral Health Symptoms

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Accessing Mental Health Services

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A 2021 survey conducted by the National Federation of Families | www.ffcmh.org
"for everyone to catch up. Instead, we have many kids who are behind academically, so that they would all be behind equally and we could put together a plan to get them back on track. It would help if teachers and staff could have possibly made. (Texas)

"We really need a voice." (West Virginia)

"This generation will most likely have long-term mental health struggles for years to come." (New York)

I believe teachers and administrators are doing the best they can with the way they have been given. I have no concerns with the school, but I feel that this year is going to be extreme for the parents. (Texas)

I am very concerned about the inequity in what different students are able to provide. My mental health takes a hit. Instead of being taught in school. (West Virginia)

We really need a voice. (West Virginia)

It would help if teachers and staff could have possibly made. (Texas)

"It has been extremely stressful and emotionally draining." (West Virginia)

I have been suffering with depression for the last month. I was able to take 12 weeks of family and medical leave (FMLA) but I feel that the school system is struggling and doesn't know if my child will be at school, in the classroom. (North Carolina)

"I am very concerned about inequality." (New Jersey)

"We really need a voice." (West Virginia)

The selected quotes shared here offer a glimpse into the worry and desperation caregivers feel...