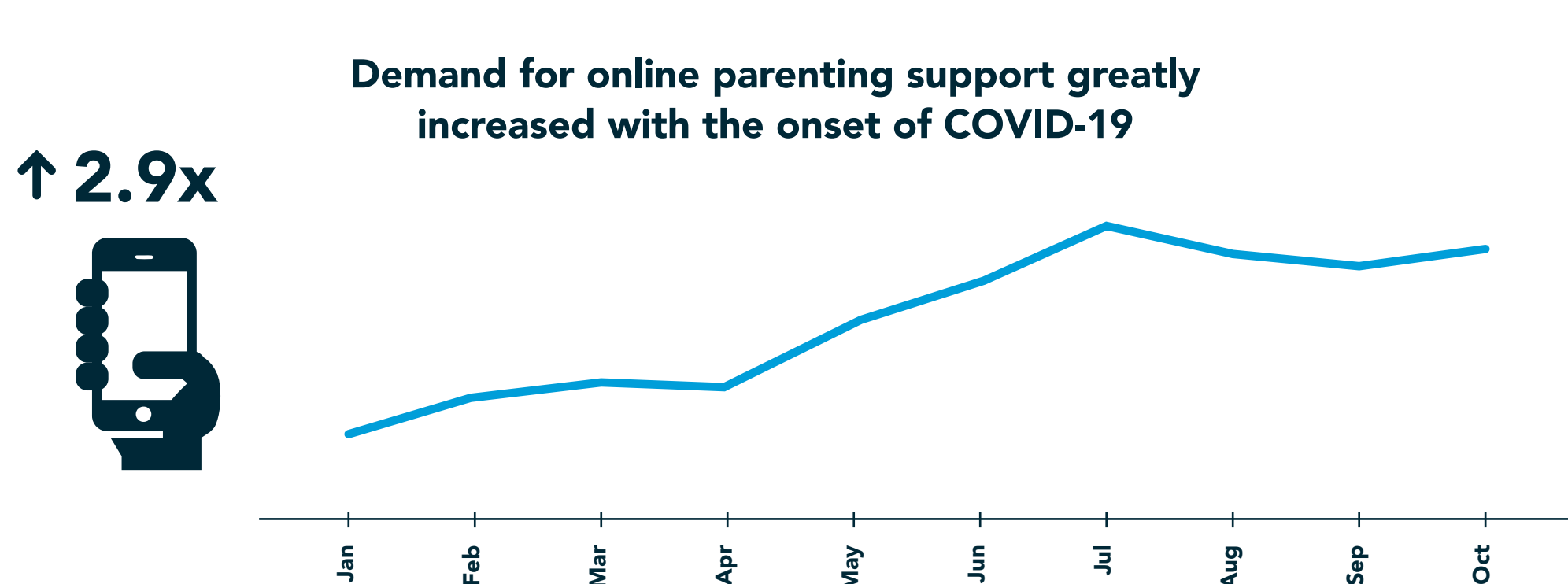
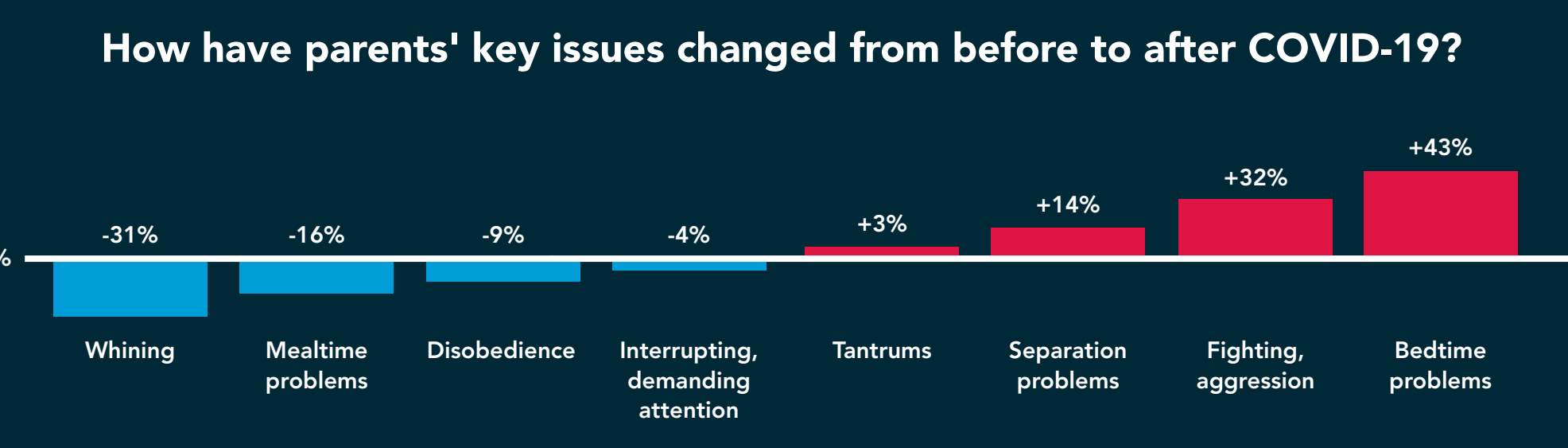
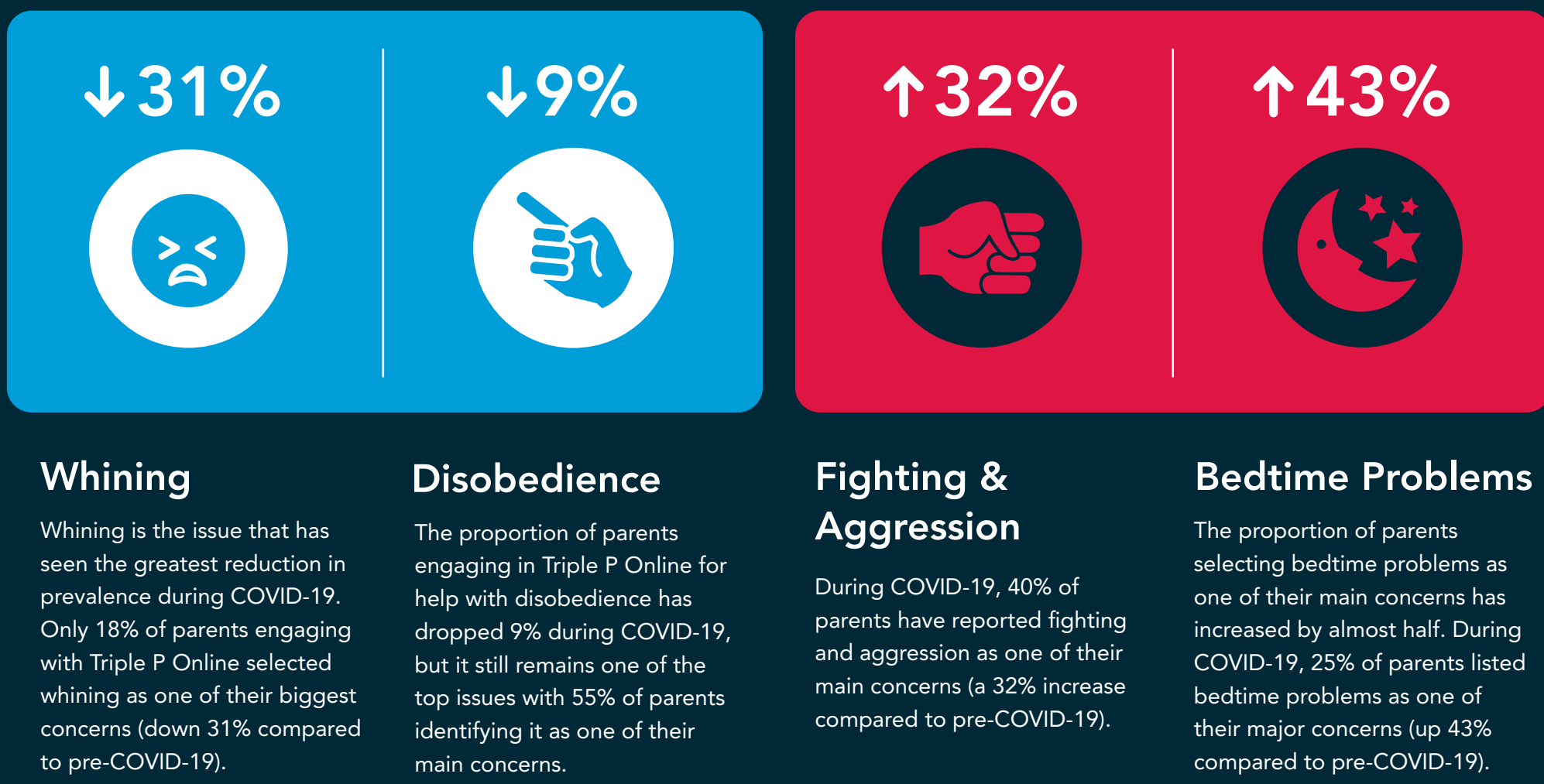


How has COVID-19 affected the mental health and wellbeing of UK children and families?

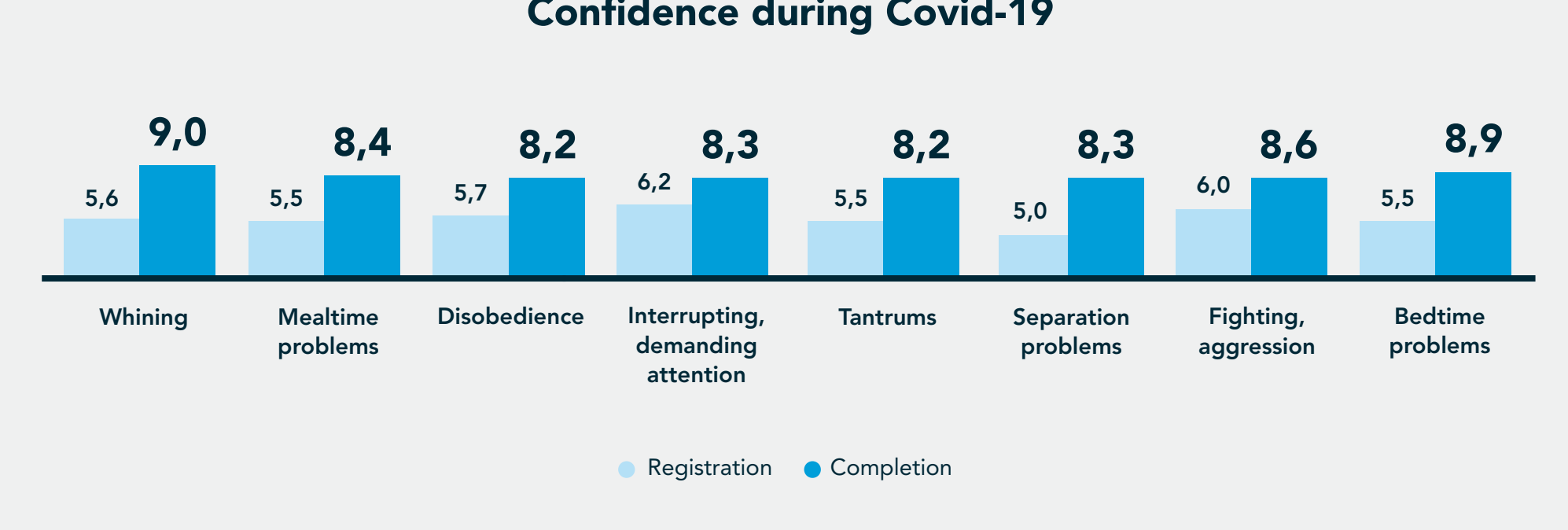
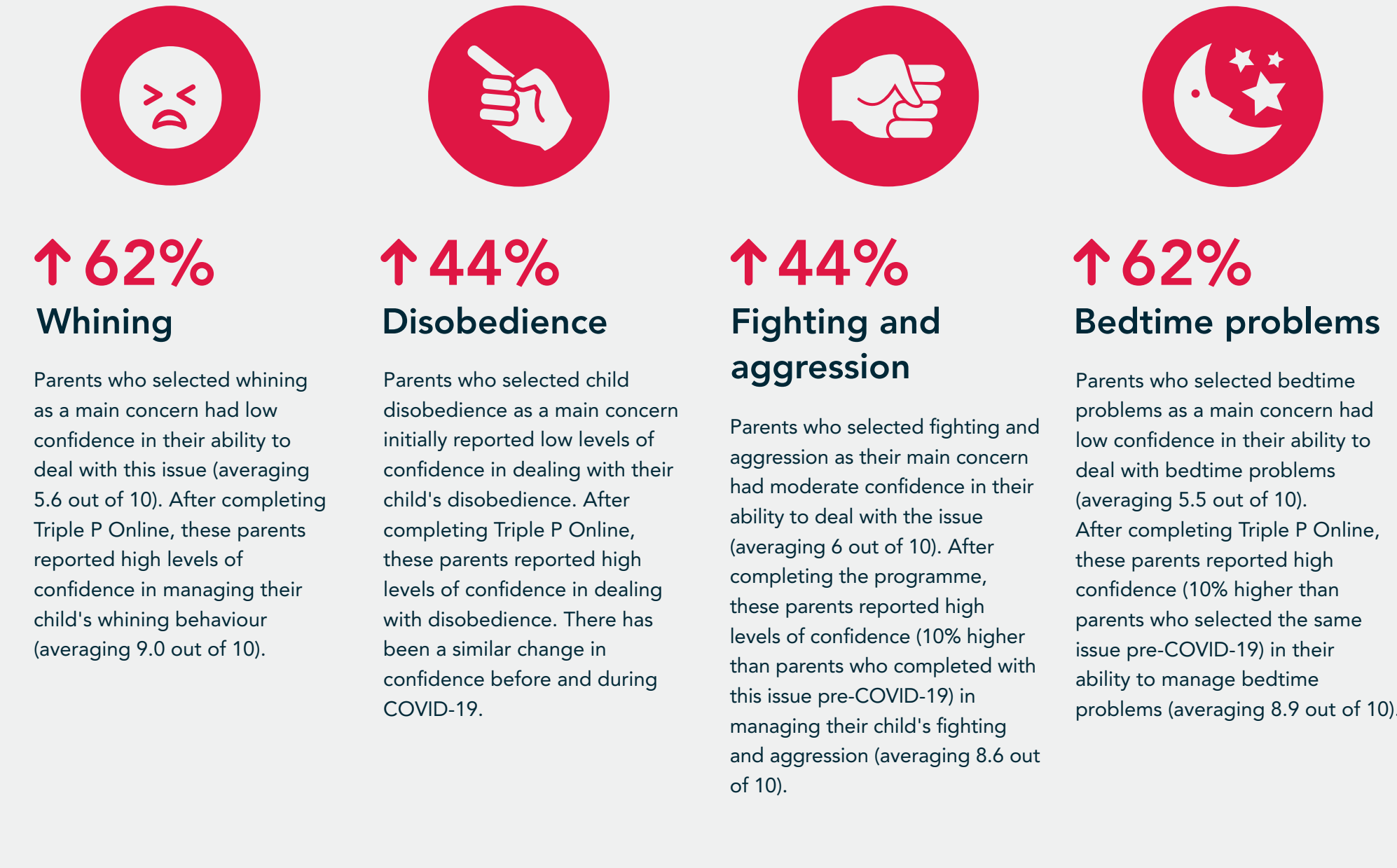
Families are facing challenges at an unprecedented scale as the world works through the COVID-19 pandemic. Many parents are experiencing employment, financial, and emotional strain, changed childcare arrangements, as well as going through an extended period of disruption to schooling and other activities critical to children's development. In the UK, parents working from home report negative impacts on their own mental health, as well as an increased strain on relationships within the household.¹ Internationally, evidence is showing that these conditions heighten the risk of family conflict², challenging behaviours³, and mental health issues for children⁴ and parents⁵.



COVID-19 is changing which child behaviours are the greatest issue for parents



Parents are reporting increased confidence in dealing with child problem behaviours after engaging with Triple P Online



COVID-19 has changed the status quo in many ways, with a particular impact on mental health and wellbeing.

Many people who were in good health have been affected by the outbreak in some way. Further still, many of those who were already struggling with their mental health and well-being prior to the outbreak have been significantly impacted and challenged by the disruption to normal life.⁷

Although children are not the 'face' of COVID-19 and physically may be less susceptible to the virus, the United Nations argues children will bear the greatest impact of the outbreak across their lifespan. COVID-19 is likely to have a negative impact on child emotional and behavioural problems, increased abuse, and affect long-term brain development.⁷

Research from previous infectious disease outbreaks and reports during COVID-19 show how public isolation, social distancing, and the economic downturn has a negative impact on families and children and puts pressure on children's well-being, care and supervision.⁸

It is crucially important to increase the capacity for healthy behaviours in children and parents and begin to manage the negative experiences and trauma people have endured during both the outbreak and lockdown.

The UK Government asserts that to provide the best support for children and young people, parents and carers should approach the pandemic calmly and confidently, be mindful of their own mental health, provide a routine, and provide a safe space to talk about current events.⁹ Furthermore, parents in the UK have reported wanting support around managing their child's emotions and behaviours during this time.¹⁰

It is important that parents have access to appropriate support services, such as evidence-supported parenting programmes, now and into the future, to help manage the complex challenges presented by COVID-19 and promote optimal mental health and wellbeing for children and families.

Access to the Triple P Online program is currently free for parents of children and teenagers in some areas across the UK. Parents can also access the programme directly at a cost of £72 inc VAT. For more information about Triple P Online, please visit www.triplep-parenting.net.

Triple P Online is a self-directed version of the world-renowned Triple P – Positive Parenting Program®. Triple P Online is the only digital parenting intervention rated as robustly evidenced by the UK's Early Intervention Foundation (2020),¹¹ with evidence to date from eight published randomised controlled trials. Triple P Online demonstrates the largest effect sizes of all Triple P delivery formats for child social, emotional and behavioural outcomes and parental conflict.¹²

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⁷ United Nations. (2020). UN Policy Brief: COVID-19 and mental health [Report]. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief-covid_and_mental_health_final.pdf
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⁹ Public Health England. (2020). Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>
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¹¹ Early Intervention Foundation. (2020). Early Intervention Foundation Guidebook: Delivery models: Online or app. Retrieved: https://guidebook.eif.org.uk/search?filters_type=search&delivery_models%5B%5D=%2522online-or-app%22%25&search=
¹² Sanders, M.R., Kirby, J.N., Tellegen, C.L., & Day, J.D. (2014). The Triple P-Positive Parenting Program: A systematic review and meta-analysis of a multi-level system of parenting support. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 34, 337-357. doi:10.1016/j.cpr.2014.04.003