

# Potential Psychosocial Impact of COVID-19 on Children: a Scoping Review of Pandemics and Epidemics

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

- Abrupt closures of daycares, schools, and recreational centres worldwide
- High stress home environments
- 1.4 billion children were out of school or childcare, without access to group activities, team sports, or playgrounds
- Concerns, range from psychosocial impacts to nutritional and safety outcomes
- An understanding of the potential impacts is necessary to plan for the eventual return to socialized life, and to design programmes and policy that will support families in the short- and long-term

### Objective

- To examine extant literature on pandemics and epidemics to identify the expected impact of COVID-19 on children

### Child Outcomes of Interest

- Stress related disorders, mood disorders, grief, stigma, child abuse, play/screen time, family conflict, academic losses, malnutrition, job/income loss



## METHODS

### Scoping Review: Arksey & O'Malley's 5-Stage Method



- Articles were searched within the Medline, Global Health, PsycINFO, and CINAHL databases
- Grey literature was also examined from the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

*Complete protocol and search strategy available upon request*

### Sample of Charting Methods (stage 4 in methods) & Results

**Table 2.** Studies found through scoping review searches 1-14

First author and year	Crisis/Year	Country	Participants (N; ages)	Study Design	Key Findings
Aitken 2010	H1N1	Australia	1292 over 18 years	Cross-sectional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 94% have food for 3 days of isolation</li><li>- 54% have food and water for 3 days of isolation if utility services were stopped</li><li>- Households with children less prepared for 3 days of isolation</li></ul>
Borse 2011	H1N1	USA	554 elementary school children	Cross-sectional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 70% of children stayed home</li><li>- 30% left home during the school closure (most commonly to playgrounds)</li><li>- Households in which adults were employed, 24% left home</li></ul>

## RESULTS

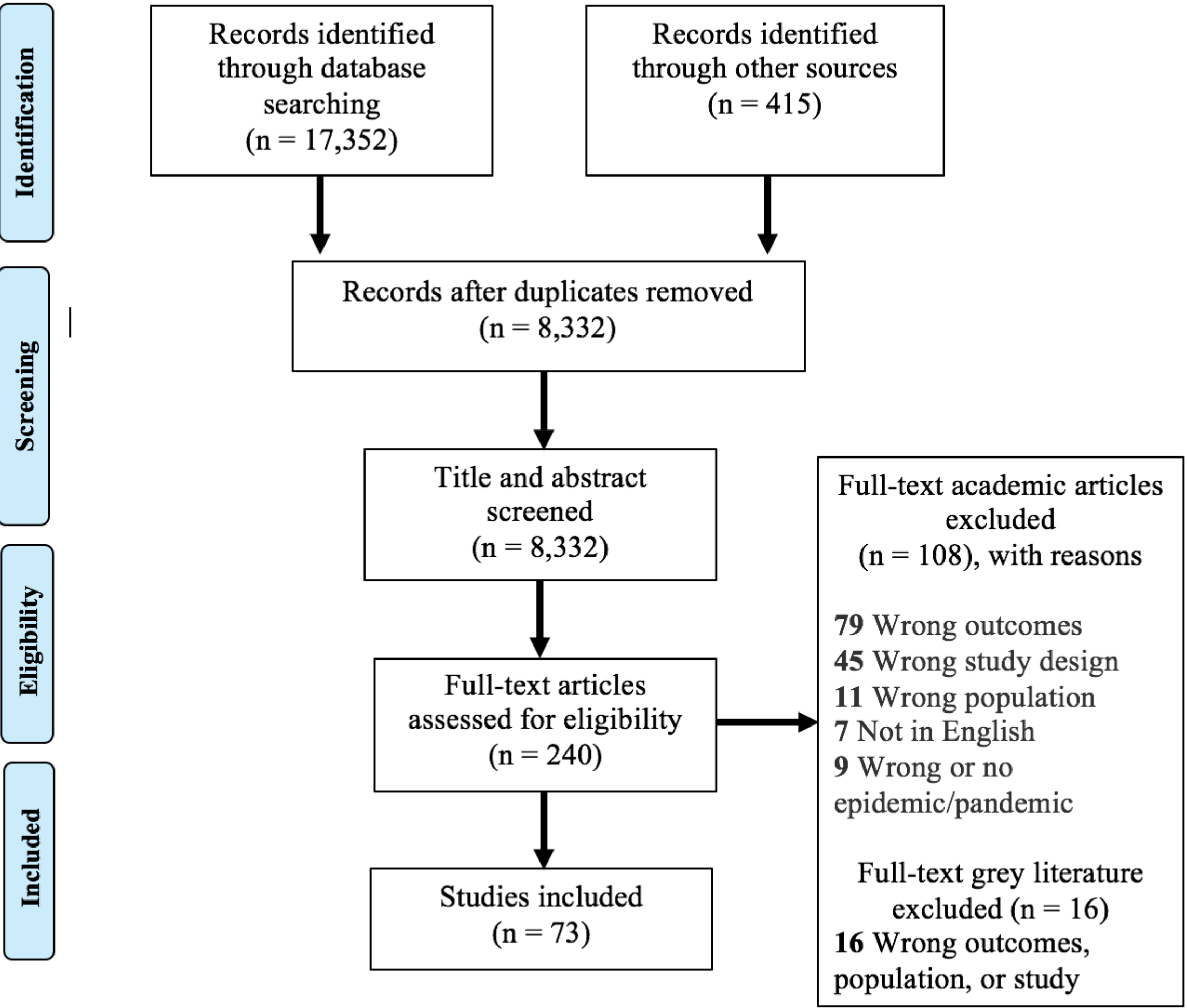


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram depicting the selection process articles and reports in the current scoping review

### Outcome Domains Investigated (% of total articles included)

- 62% specified negative mental health outcomes
- 33% poor nutrition
- 25% child abuse
- 25% economic challenges
- 23% negative academic impacts
- 21% reduced play/increased screen time
- 8% family conflict
- Pre-existing vulnerabilities and greater suffering

## DISCUSSION

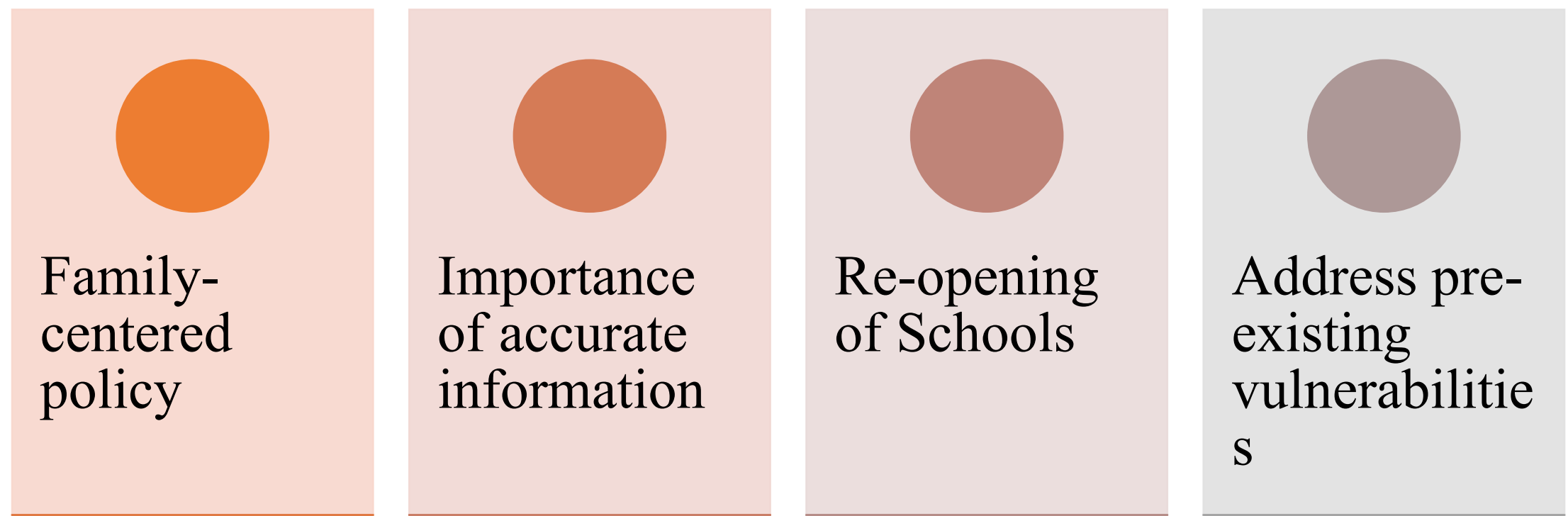
### Contributions/Strengths

- Focused comparison between outcomes in different pandemics
- Balances a wide scope of pandemics/outcomes while focusing on specific outcomes and unique challenges

### Gaps in Research

- Effects of COVID-19 longitudinally
- Research comparing outcomes to pre-pandemic levels is needed to make more meaningful comparisons

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS



## CONCLUSION

- Pandemics and epidemics have had diverse and widespread negative consequences on children
- Findings can inform the development and implementation of resources for children during the COVID-19 pandemic

*References available upon request*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

