

Understanding the Burden of Chronic Pain in Pediatric Patients: Insights from Caregiver Perspectives

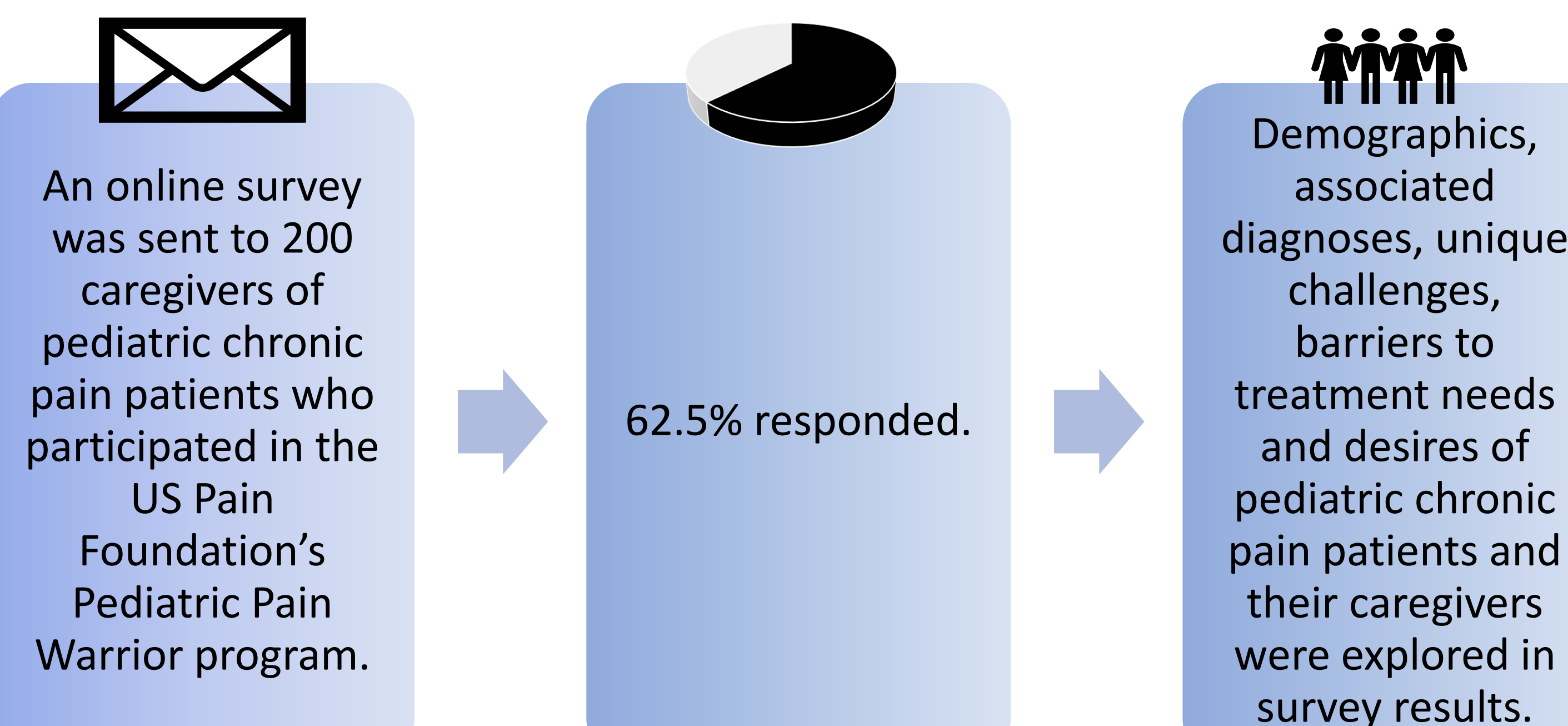
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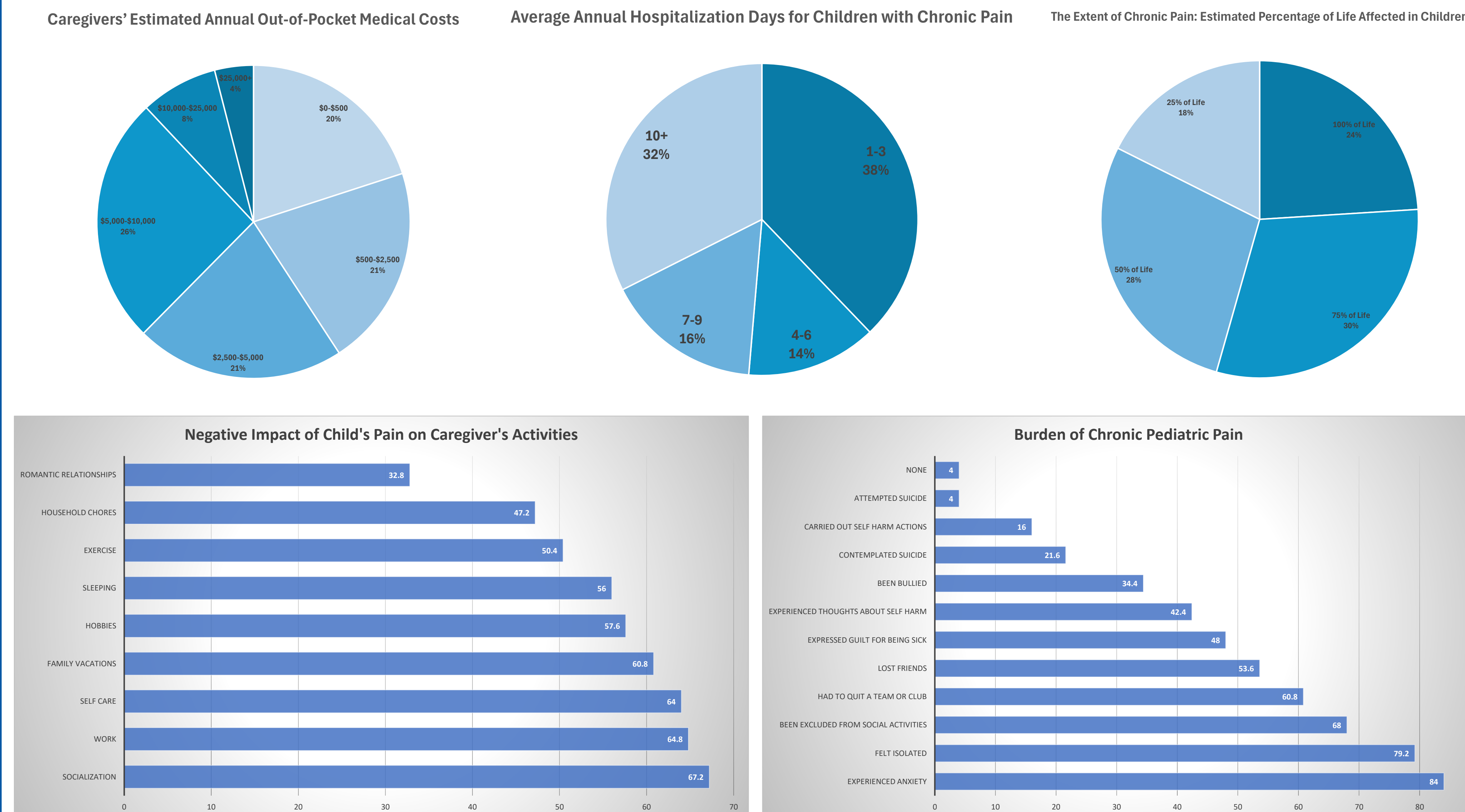
Background

Chronic pain in pediatric patients poses a substantial and often overlooked public health challenge, profoundly impacting affected children, their caregivers and society. Chronic pain affects a significant proportion of children, with detrimental effects on physical, emotional, and social well-being both for children as well as their caregivers. Despite its prevalence, pediatric chronic pain remains underdiagnosed and undertreated, compounded by limited access to specialized care and inadequate resources. The burden extends beyond increased healthcare utilization, encompassing disruptions in leading productive lives, social interactions, and daily activities for both children and their families. Understanding the multifaceted impacts of pediatric chronic pain is crucial for developing targeted interventions that address the unique needs of young patients and their caregivers.

Study Design



Results



Over 82% of caregivers reported chronic pain affecting their child for more than half of their life, with 24% noting constant impact. Children average 1-5 medical appointments monthly (73.6%), and 36% rely on primary care. However, 38.4% seek more access to pain specialists due to barriers. Hospitalizations are frequent (32%), with significant costs (25.6% spend \$5000-\$10000 annually). Many miss school (29.6% unable to attend, 48.4% miss ≥3 days/month). Caregivers note profound isolation (79.2%), bullying (34.4%), school exclusion (68%), anxiety (84%), self-harm thoughts (42.4%) and actions (16%). They also face limitations in work, socializing, and self-care due to their child's condition.

Conclusion

- Chronic pain significantly impacts pediatric patients—many experience constant or near-constant pain.
- Caregivers face major challenges—including disrupted daily life, high treatment costs, and limited access to specialists.
- Missed school days and social isolation are common among affected children, along with increased anxiety and self-harm risk.
- Urgent need for better pain management—accessible, comprehensive care is essential for improving outcomes for patients and families.

References & Acknowledgements

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