

Norwalk Youth Survey: Spring 2021 Findings

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Presentation will cover:

1. About the Survey
2. Demographics of Respondents
3. Developmental Relationships Module
4. Drug-Free Communities Module
5. COVID-19 Module
6. Racial Injustice Module
7. Supplemental Questions on Mental Health & Suicide
8. Next Steps

1. About the Survey

2021 Survey in Norwalk

- Organized through The Norwalk Partnership (TNP), the city's prevention coalition. (Norwalk Public Schools is a coalition member.)
- Funded through the federal Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grant to Positive Directions-The Center for Prevention & Counseling.
- Administered in June 2021 targeting students in grades 7-11.
- 44% participation across 7th-12th grades (67% MS and 33% HS).



Developmental Relationships Survey

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Modules Administered:

- Developmental Relationships
- Drug-Free Communities
- Current Events: COVID* (stress & coping)
- Current Events: Racial Injustice* (efficacy beliefs)

**high school only*

Supplemental questions on mental health & suicide, vaping by substance, zip code

Notes on Interpretation

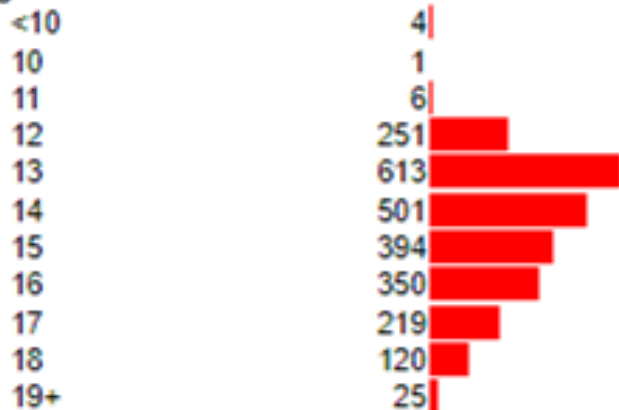
- First time using the DRS tool; provides baseline on Relationships
- Results should be considered in context of pandemic
- Report does not provide norms; most important is our local context
- Survey provides a single set of data; use in conjunction with other info
- Best examined by multiple stakeholders to gain different perspectives

2. Demographics of Respondents

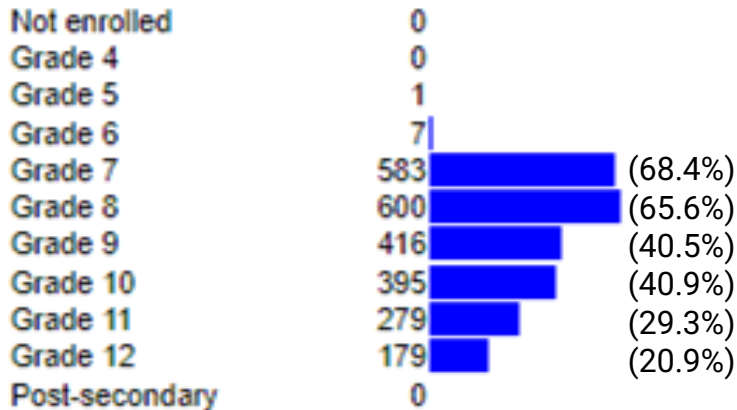
Youth Demographics	Sample Size
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Total	2,550
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Age



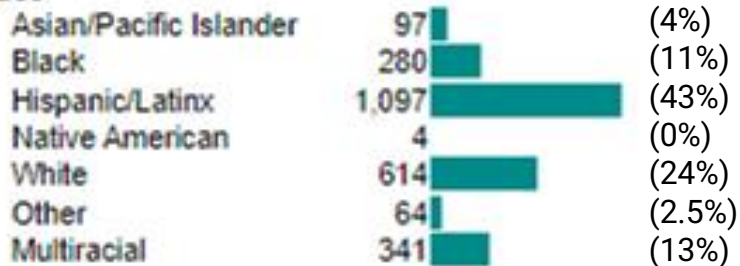
Grade



Gender



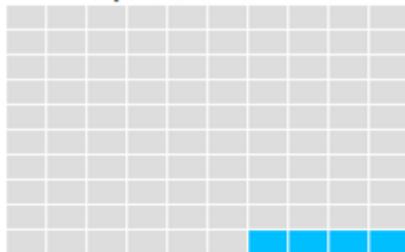
Race



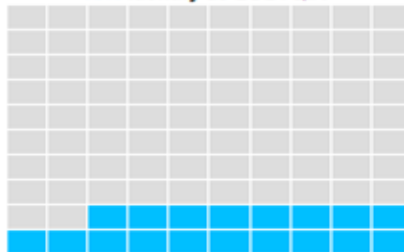
Participation Rates:

- Middle School (7th+8th): 67%
- High School: 33%
- Overall: 44%

4% experienced financial strain



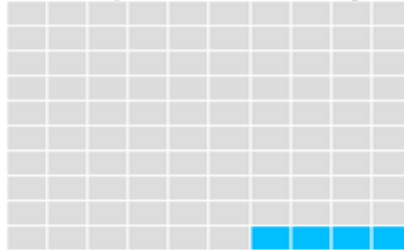
18% identify as LGBTQIA+



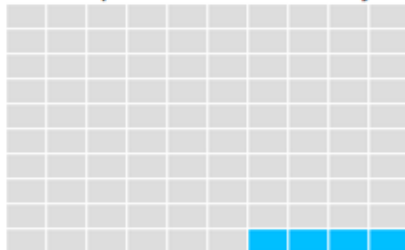
19% are in ESL/ELL programming



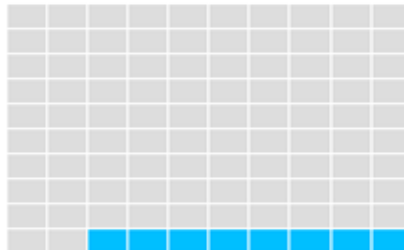
4% experienced food insecurity



4% experienced shelter insecurity



8% have an IEP



Which of these best describes you? (n=2312)	7-12 #	7-12 %
Straight	1649	71.3
Gay	19	.8
Lesbian	38	1.6
Bisexual	165	7.1
Pansexual	64	2.8
Demisexual	6	.3
Asexual	13	.6
Queer	17	.7
Prefer to self-describe	81	3.5
I am not sure yet	146	6.3
Choose not to answer	114	4.9

Do you identify as transgender? (n=2533)	7-12 #	7-12 %
Yes	45	1.8 [^]
No	2372	93.6
Choose not to respond	48	1.9
I don't know	68	2.7

[^]Data from the Williams Institute estimates that the average percentage of LGB youth ages 13-17 is 9.5% and the average percentage of Transgender youth is .7%.

3. Developmental Relationships Module

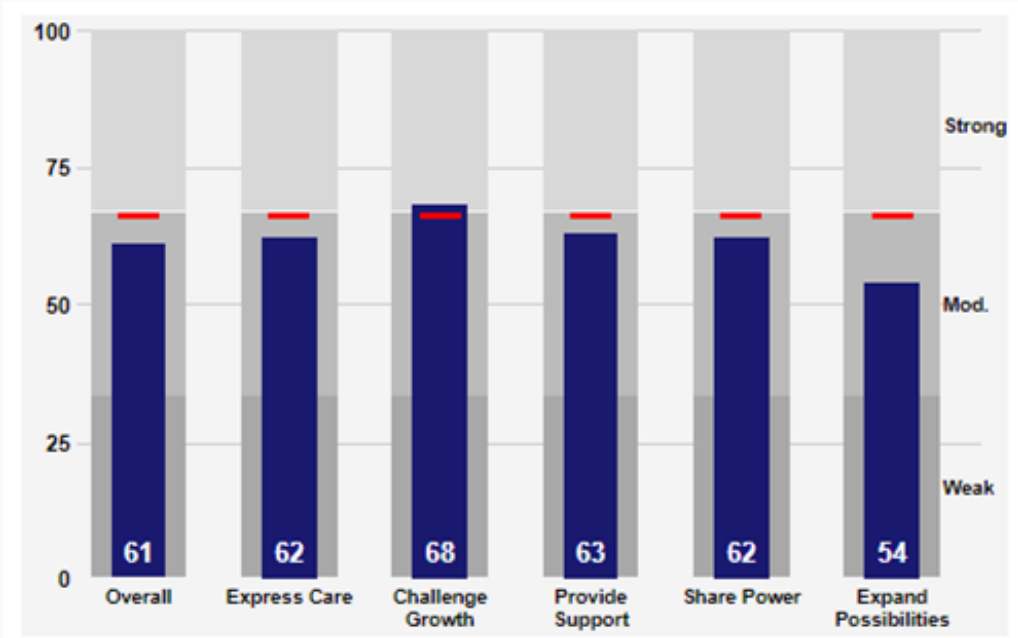
DR Module has 3 “core measures”:

1. Developmental Relationships Framework
2. Social and Emotional Competences
3. Equitable Practices

DR Module: Core Measure 1 (Developmental Relationships Framework)






5 elements of framework:

Elements	
	Express Care Show me that I matter to you.
	Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.
	Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.
	Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.
	Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.



DR Module: Core Measure 1 (Developmental Relationships Framework)

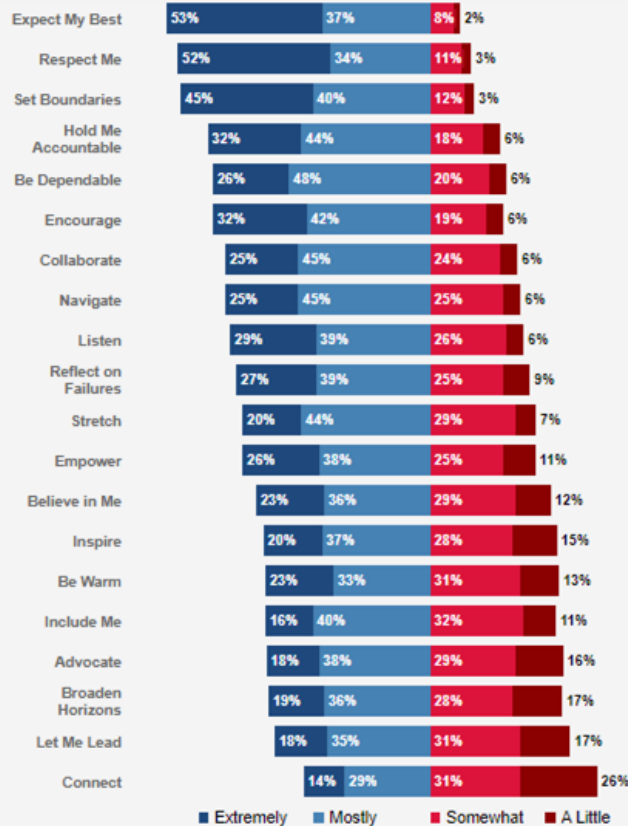
The 5 elements are measured through 20 corresponding actions (2nd column):

Elements	Actions	Definitions
 Express Care Show me that I matter to you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be dependable• Listen• Believe in me• Be warm• Encourage	Be someone I can trust. Really pay attention when we are together. Make me feel known and valued. Show me you enjoy being with me. Praise me for my efforts and achievements.
 Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect my best• Stretch• Hold me accountable• Reflect on failures	Expect me to live up to my potential. Push me to go further. Insist I take responsibility for my actions. Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks.
 Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Navigate• Empower• Advocate• Set boundaries	Guide me through hard situations and systems. Build my confidence to take charge of my life. Stand up for me when I need it. Put limits in place that keep me on track.
 Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect me• Include me• Collaborate• Let me lead	Take me seriously and treat me fairly. Involve me in decisions that affect me. Work with me to solve problems and reach goals. Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.
 Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspire• Broaden horizons• Connect	Inspire me to see possibilities for my future. Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places. Introduce me to people who can help me grow.

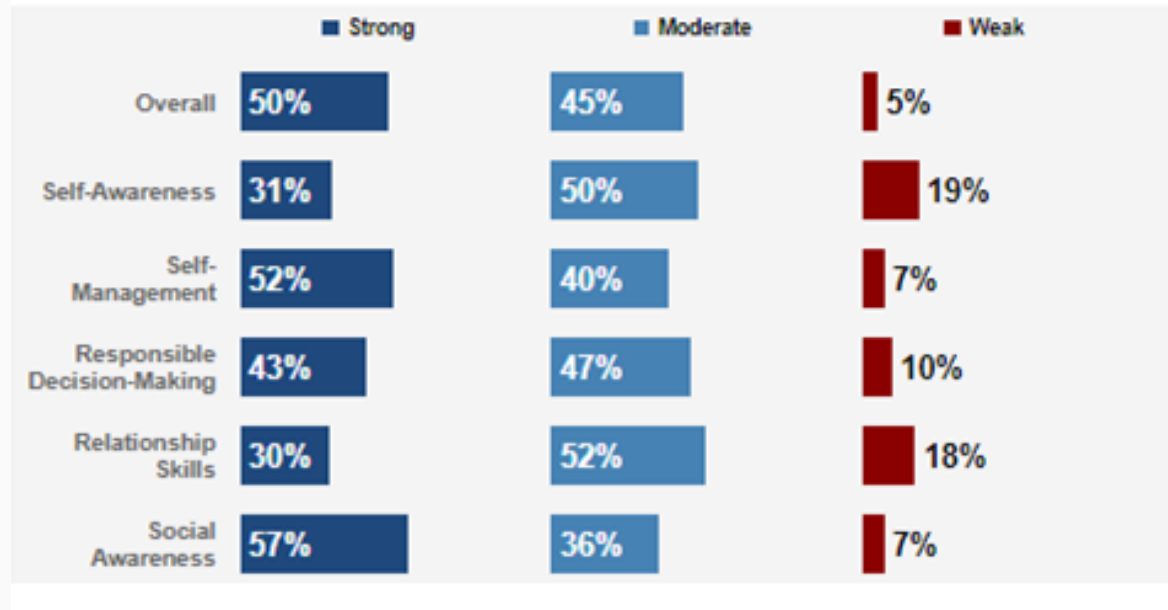
- For 19 of the 20 actions, more than half of students feel “**extremely**” or “**moderately**” supported by teachers.
- On 6 of the 20 actions, 15%-27% of students feel only “**a little**” supported.

DR Module: Core Measure 1 (Developmental Relationships Framework)

Youth reported different experiences of each of the 20 actions in the Developmental Relationships Framework.



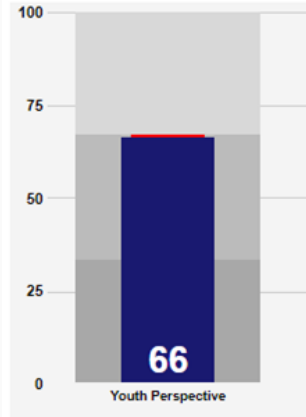
Norwalk teens self-report good social-emotional skills.



Youth who experienced stronger levels of Developmental Relationships had stronger Social Emotional Competence skills.

DR Module: Core Measure 3 (Equitable Practices)

Youth scores indicate that the NPS environment is culturally responsive, with a composite score of 66--on the border between “high moderate” and “strong”:



“There are adults who have similar racial or ethnic backgrounds to mine and who I consider good role models”:



Youth who reported a more Culturally Responsive environment had stronger Social Emotional Competence skills.

The following groups have overall composite scores that are LOWER than reported average scores:

- Developmental Relationships Framework (core measure 1):
 - LGBTQ+
 - Girls
 - White, Black
- Social and Emotional Competences (core measure 2):
 - Families experiencing financial strain
 - LGBTQ+
 - Latino
 - IEP
 - ELL
- Equitable Practices (core measure 3):
 - Families experiencing financial strain
 - Black
 - LGBTQ+

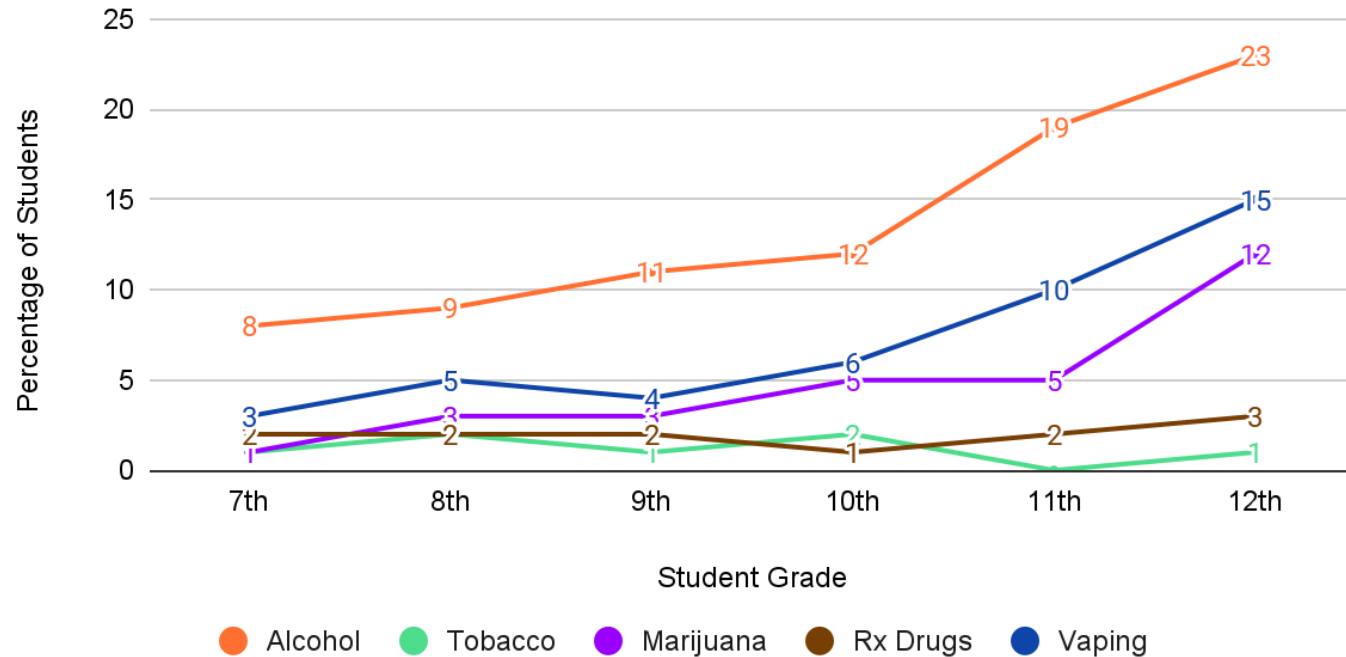
Questions on the DR Module?

4. Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Module

DFC Module: Current Substance Use among Norwalk Students

Past 30 Day Use of Substances, NPS

June 2021





88% of Norwalk 7th-12th graders are NOT using alcohol

- **12%** of all 7th-12th students drank in the past month
 - 12.4% of girls, 11.0% of boys
- **8%** of MS students, **15%** of HS students
 - **23%** of seniors

96% of Norwalk 7th-12th graders are NOT using marijuana

- **4%** of all students 7th-12th used marijuana in the past 30 days
 - 4.0% of girls, 3.1% of boys
- **2%** of MS students, **6%** of HS students
 - **12%** of seniors



94% of Norwalk 7th-12th graders are NOT vaping

- 6% of all students vaped in the past 30 days
 - 6.8% of girls, 4.2% of boys
- 4% of MS students, 8% of HS students
 - **15%** of seniors



Among vapers, use of **marijuana** is about the same as use of **nicotine**: 4 out of 10

- **Higher-risk groups for substance use compared with average:**
 - LGBTQ (LGB: $\sim 1.5x$, Self-describe: $\sim 2-4x$)
 - Mental health struggles (Sad/hopeless: $\sim 1.5x$ the average rate; Considered suicide: $2.5-3x$)
 - IEP ($\sim 1.25-2.5x$)
 - Financial strain ($\sim 2x$)
- **Gender disparity:** **Girls** use alcohol, marijuana & vapes at higher rates than boys
- **Racial differences:** White students use alcohol more; Black students use marijuana more, Multiracial students vape more

- **Almost all** students (93% or more) report that their parents disapprove of them using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, vaping, or Rx drugs. However, among seniors, 82% think their parents disapprove of marijuana.
- Overall, **most** students report that their peers disapprove of substance use. Peer disapproval is highest for Rx drug use (**89%**) and lowest for marijuana (**77%**).
- By senior year, there is a perception change. **More than half of seniors do not** perceive peer disapproval of marijuana. Peer disapproval of other substances is also much lower among seniors.

Student Perceptions of **Health Risks** from Alcohol, Marijuana and Vaping

- **77%** think drinking 5+ drinks at a time, 1-2 times per week, is harmful.
- **78%** think vaping is harmful, **85%** think smoking is harmful
- **65%** think using marijuana 1-2 times per week is harmful.
 - In 7th grade, only **77%** students think marijuana is harmful, dropping to **52%** of 12th graders.
- **86%** think Rx drugs are harmful

Higher-risk groups where perception of harm is **~7-10 points lower than the average**:

- Students experiencing financial strain (all drugs)
- Students with IEPs (all drugs)
- ELLs (all drugs except marijuana)

Questions on the Substance Use Module?

5. Current Events: COVID-19 Module

(grades 9-12 only)

How stressful has the COVID pandemic been for you?

73% of all respondents reported the pandemic was Somewhat or Very Stressful



Higher-risk groups reporting pandemic was “somewhat” or “very stressful”:

- LGBTQ+ (84%)
- Families experiencing financial strain (81%)
- Girls (81%)
- Black students (77%)

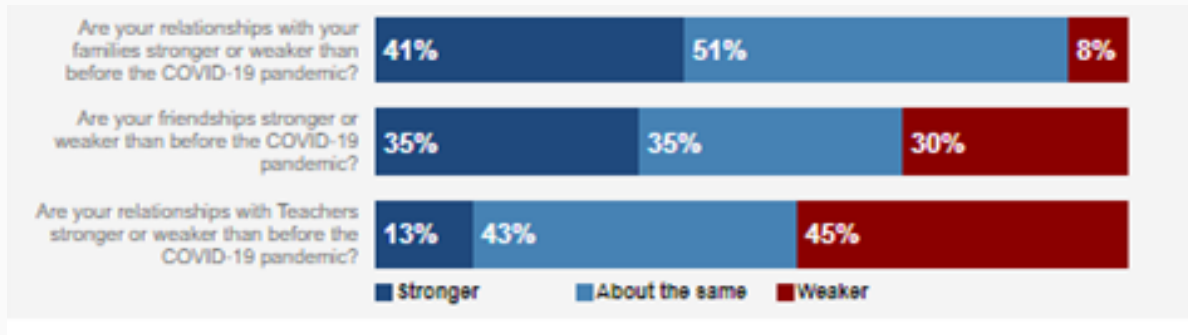
Coping Skills:

- **More than half** of students took steps to resolve COVID-related problems
- **Majority** accepted the reality of the pandemic
- Only **30%** reached out to others about how they were feeling

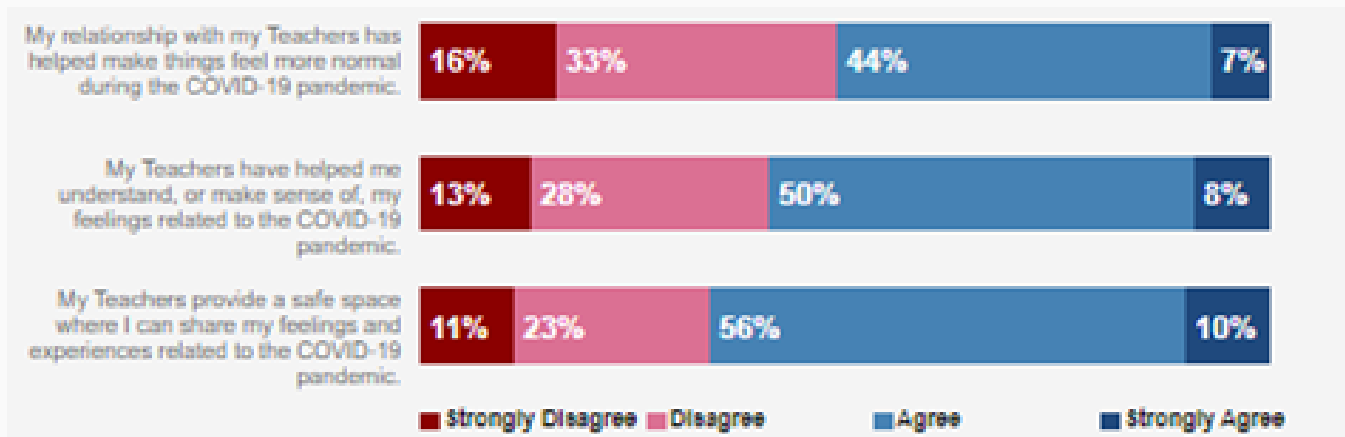
Connections during COVID:

- More than half (56%) feel connected to staff in school
- Majority (**83%**) feel connected to friends
- **39%** feel connected to other students at school

COVID-related Change in Relationship Quality:



COVID-specific Social-Emotional Support from Teachers*:



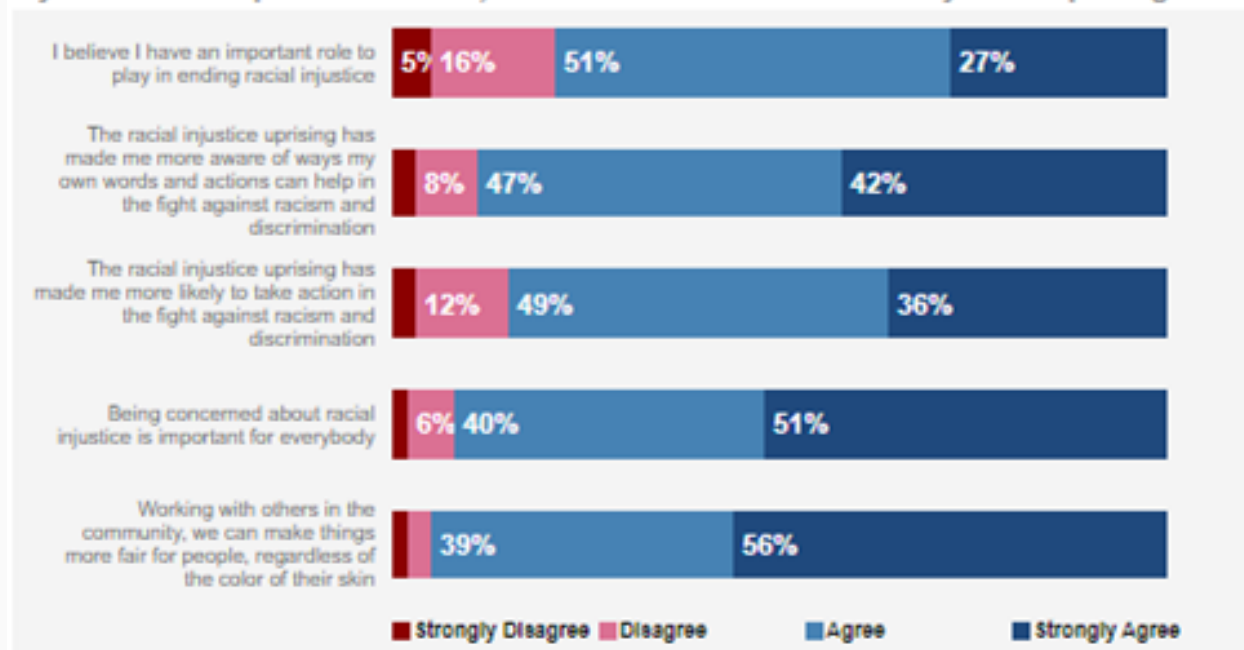
**Grades 9-12 only*

Questions on the COVID Module?

6. Current Events: Racial Injustice Module

(grades 9-12 only)

Following the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor (and many other people of color), there has been increased attention and unrest around the issue of racial injustice. In the questions below, we refer to this as the “racial injustice uprising”.



Questions on the Racial Injustice Module?

7. Our Supplemental Questions on Mental Health & Suicide

Mental Health & Suicide

During the past 12 months...	Grade	2021 Norwalk %
did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities? YES	7-8	32
	9-12	46
	7-12	39
did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide? YES	7-8	12
	9-12	13
	7-12	13
how many times did you <u>actually attempt</u> suicide? 1 or more times	7-8	7
	9-12	6
	7-12	6



In the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?	7-8 %	9-12 %	7-12 %
0 times	93	94	94
1 time	4	3	4
2 or 3 times	2	2	2
4 or more times	1	1	1

Groups reporting higher than average percentages of:

Sad or depressed (overall average 39%)

- Gender: Prefer to self-describe (76%), Female (49%)
- Sexuality: LGB+ (70%), Not sure (52%), Prefer to self-describe (51%)
- Financial strain: Shelter insecurity (48%), Food insecurity (44%)
- Race: Multiracial (46%), Black & Hispanic (43%)
- IEP (45%)
- ELL (43%)

1 or more suicide attempts (overall average 6%)

- Sexuality: LGB+ (20%), Prefer to self-describe (13%), Not sure (12%)
- Gender: Prefer to self-describe (20%), Female (7%)
- Financial strain: Food insecurity (14%), shelter insecurity (13%)
- IEP (11%)
- ELL (9%)
- Race: Multiracial (9%), Asian (8%), Hispanic (7%)

Questions on the Mental Health & Suicide Data?

8. Next Steps

NPS:

- Review data with school community:
 - administrators & staff
 - health teachers & coaches
 - counseling staff
 - students
- Recommend / plan for possible curriculum & advisory changes, student programs, PD for health/PE & coaches



Next Steps: Community Partners

TNP:

- Present data to coalition, Norwalk ACTS SEL Committee, & community stakeholder groups such as PTOs
- Develop community-based prevention strategies and plans:
 - information & education (*e.g., Freshman Forum for parents & teens, postcards, newsletter*)
 - skills trainings (*Preventure, suicide prevention, parenting*)
 - youth supports (*peer supports, youth committee, internships, pathways*)
 - environmental (*environmental scans, access, physical design, policies*)



Example of Coalition Education (parent postcard series - front, English)



Example of Coalition Education (parent postcard series - back, English)

Parenting is hard.....

You may not feel comfortable talking about drugs with your kids--but you're the person they need to hear from, especially now that possession of marijuana is legal over age 21.

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT THE *NEW* MARIJUANA:

•Today's marijuana comes in many different forms - and it's been **engineered to be many times stronger than nature.**

•Many young people are “dabbing” (vaping) marijuana in concentrated forms, like oil, wax, and shatter, that are almost pure THC--the addictive drug in the plant.

•Today's high-strength THC affects brain development during adolescence. Teen users can **lose up to 8 IQ points.**

•1 in 6 teens who use marijuana (and 1 in 10 adults) become addicted.

•The number of teens admitted to CT hospitals for marijuana intoxication increased **491% between 2016 and 2019**

•The younger a teen starts using marijuana, the more likely they are to develop psychosis or addiction.

**YOU WORK HARD TO GIVE YOUR KIDS THE BEST OF EVERYTHING.
DON'T LET THEM GET LOST IN THE WEEDS.**

talk early..... talk often

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**The Norwalk
Partnership**
PREVENTING SUBSTANCE MISUSE
AMONG YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

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