

# Norwalk Youth Voices Count Survey Results, Fall 2022

Presented by Margaret Watt, MPH, MA, Prevention Director, Positive Directions



# Background

In late October 2022, we conducted the third Norwalk Youth Survey to gather data on teen mental health and substance misuse and related risk and protective factors.

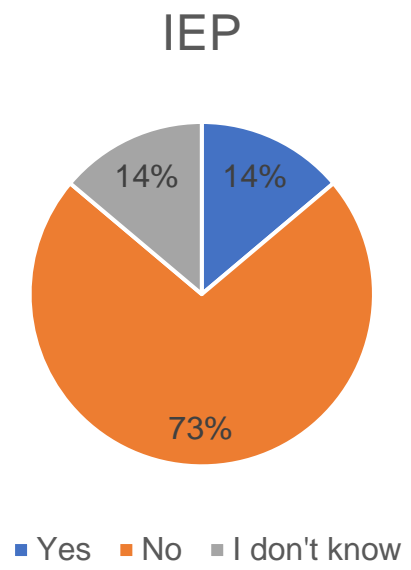
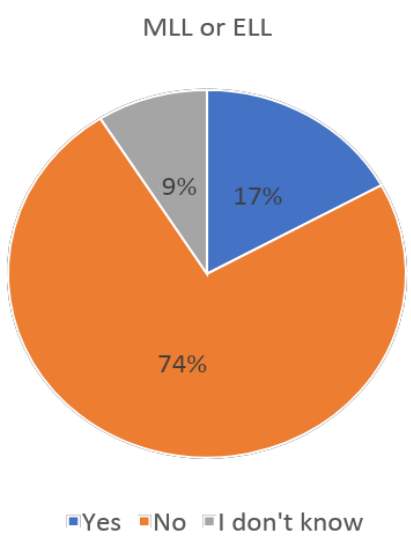
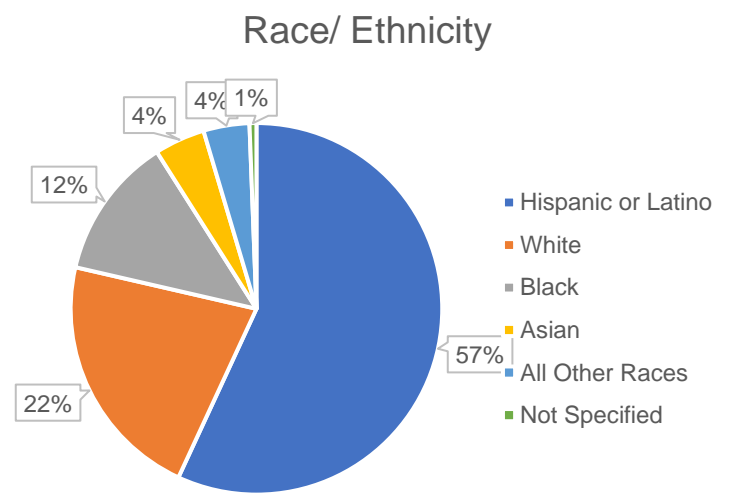
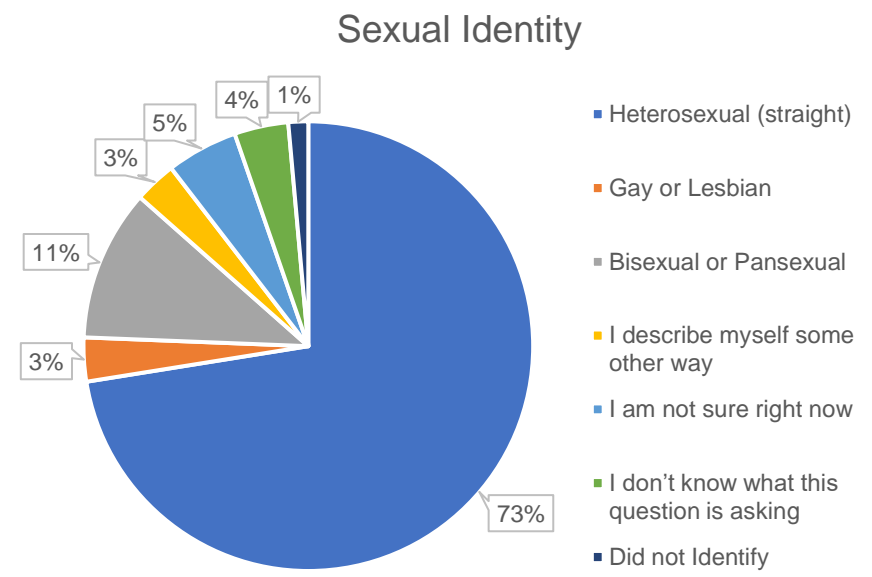
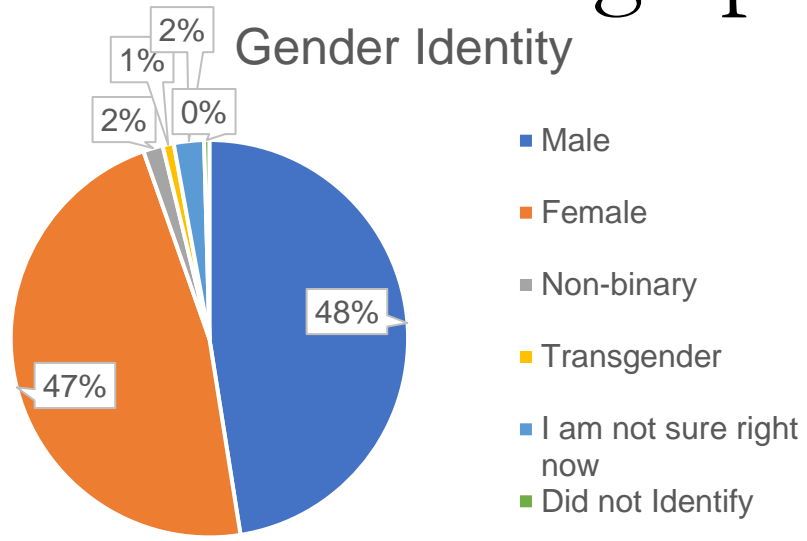
- Used “Youth Voices Count” survey tool
- Administered to students in grades 7-12
- All NPS middle and high schools participated
- Funded by Positive Directions through the CDC Drug-Free Communities grant which supports The Norwalk Partnership (TNP)
- Completely anonymous; no identifying information collected

# Demographics

# Response Rate

Sample Response Rates	Sample Count	Population Count	Response Rate (%)
Grade 7	725	847	86%
Grade 8	775	906	86%
Grade 9	787	1028	77%
Grade 10	637	1051	61%
Grade 11	533	987	54%
Grade 12	512	962	53%
<b>Middle (Grades 7-8)</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>1753</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>High (Grades 9-12)</b>	<b>2469</b>	<b>4028</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>All (Grades 7-12)</b>	<b>3969</b>	<b>5781</b>	<b>69%</b>

# Respondent Demographics



# Analysis

- Full survey report will be available on The Norwalk Partnership website
- Subgroup analysis was performed by race/ethnicity, biological sex and gender identity to allow identification of higher risk groups or behaviors
- All statistically significant demographic differences are identified under each table in the full report and summarized in boxes on the data slides.

## *Abbreviations used in charts:*

MS: Middle School; HS: High School

IEP: Individualized Education Plan

MLL: Multi Language Learner

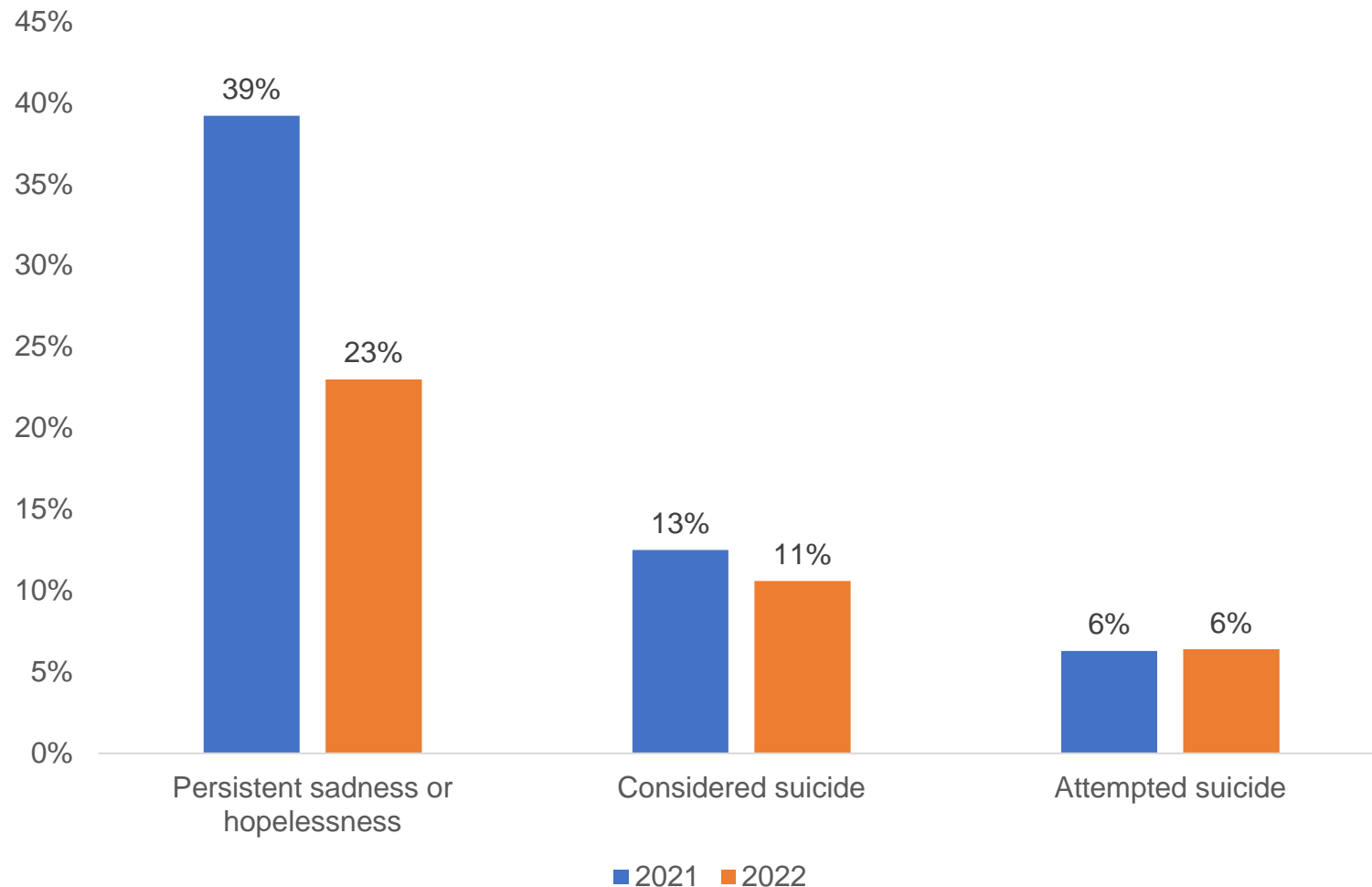
LGBS: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Pansexual, Self-Describe sexual identity

LGBTQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Pansexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning. LGBTQ is used here when *both* LGBS youth and youth identifying as Transgender, Nonbinary, or Unsure of their gender identity are identified as higher risk.

# Mental Health:

Depression, Suicidal Ideation & Attempt, Anxiety,  
Other Emotional Health Indicators

# Depression & Suicidality among NPS Students, June 2021 and October 2022

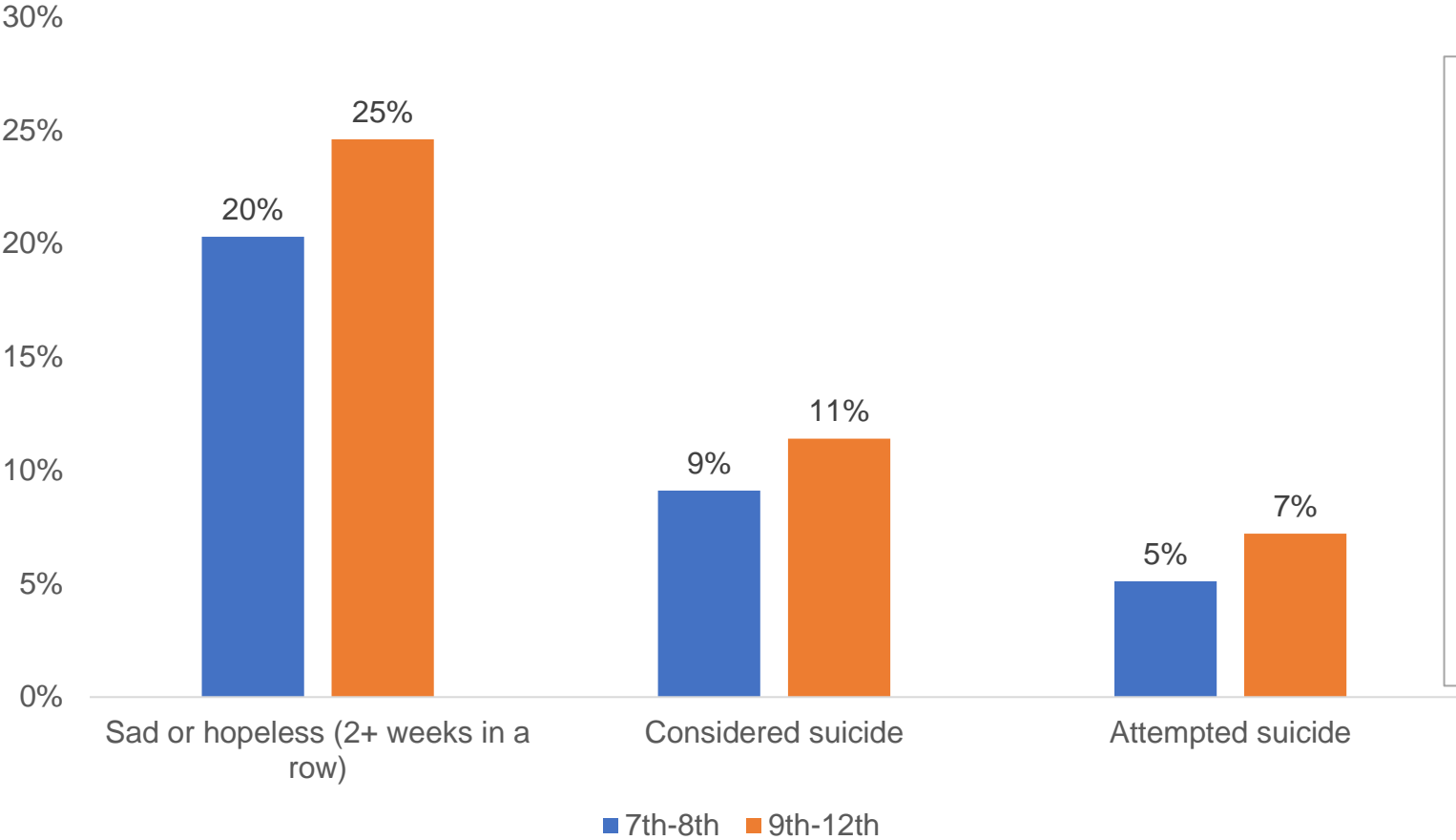


2022 data for shows the following changes from 2021:

- Depression rate *decreased* by 41%
- Suicidal ideation rate *decreased* by 15%
- Suicide attempt rate *increased* by 1.6% overall
- Suicide attempt rate *increased* by 20% among HS students (from 6% to 7.2%)



# Depression and Suicidality among NPS Students in 2022, by Middle and High School



The following groups report statistically significant higher levels of:

- **Depression:** LGBTQ, female, high school+Hispanic, middle school+all other races
- **Suicidal ideation:** LGBTQ, female, high school+Black, middle school+MLL, IEP

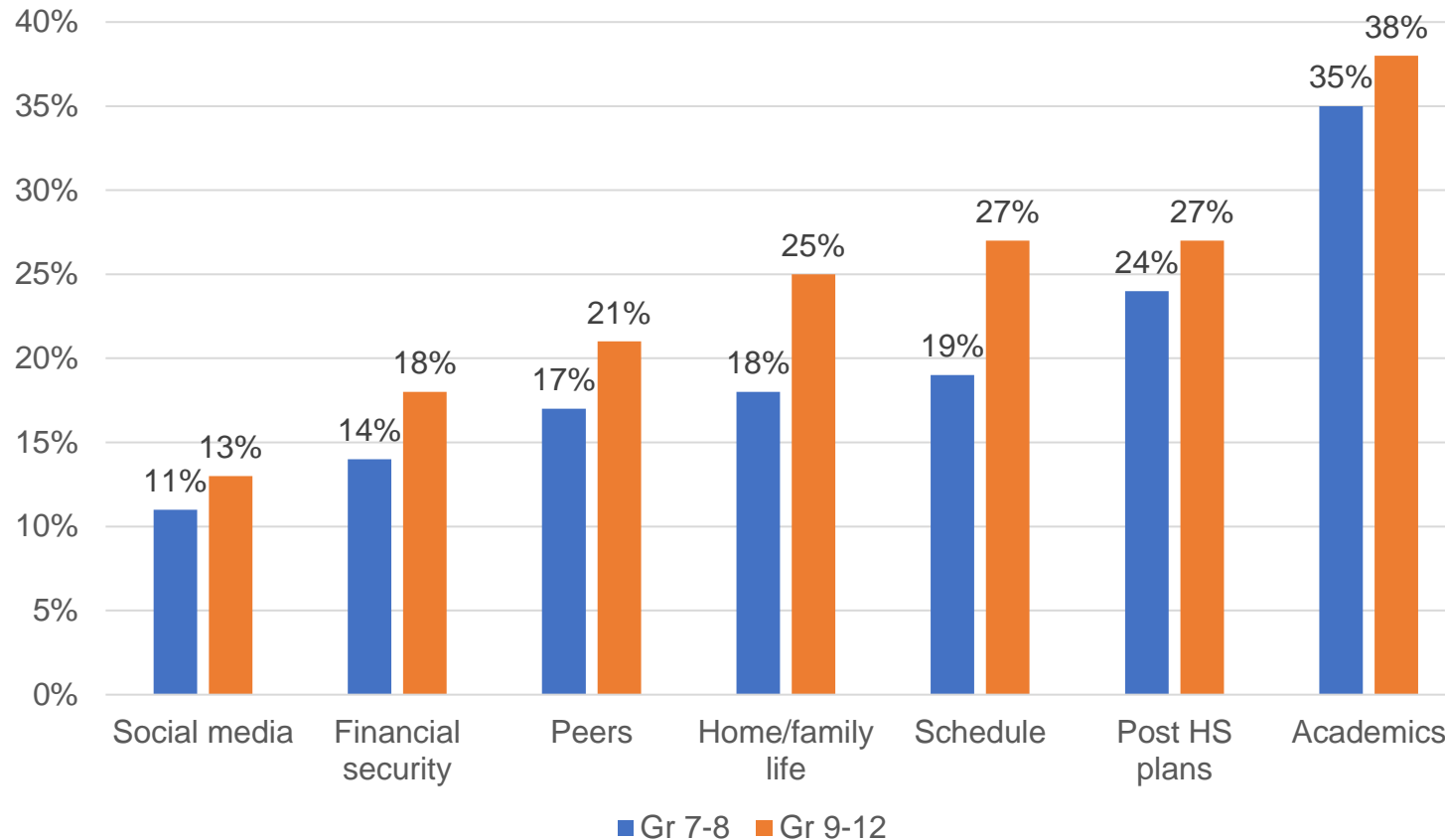
In 2021, 32% of NPS MS and 46% of NPS HS students reported depression.

# Anxiety among NPS Students, 2022

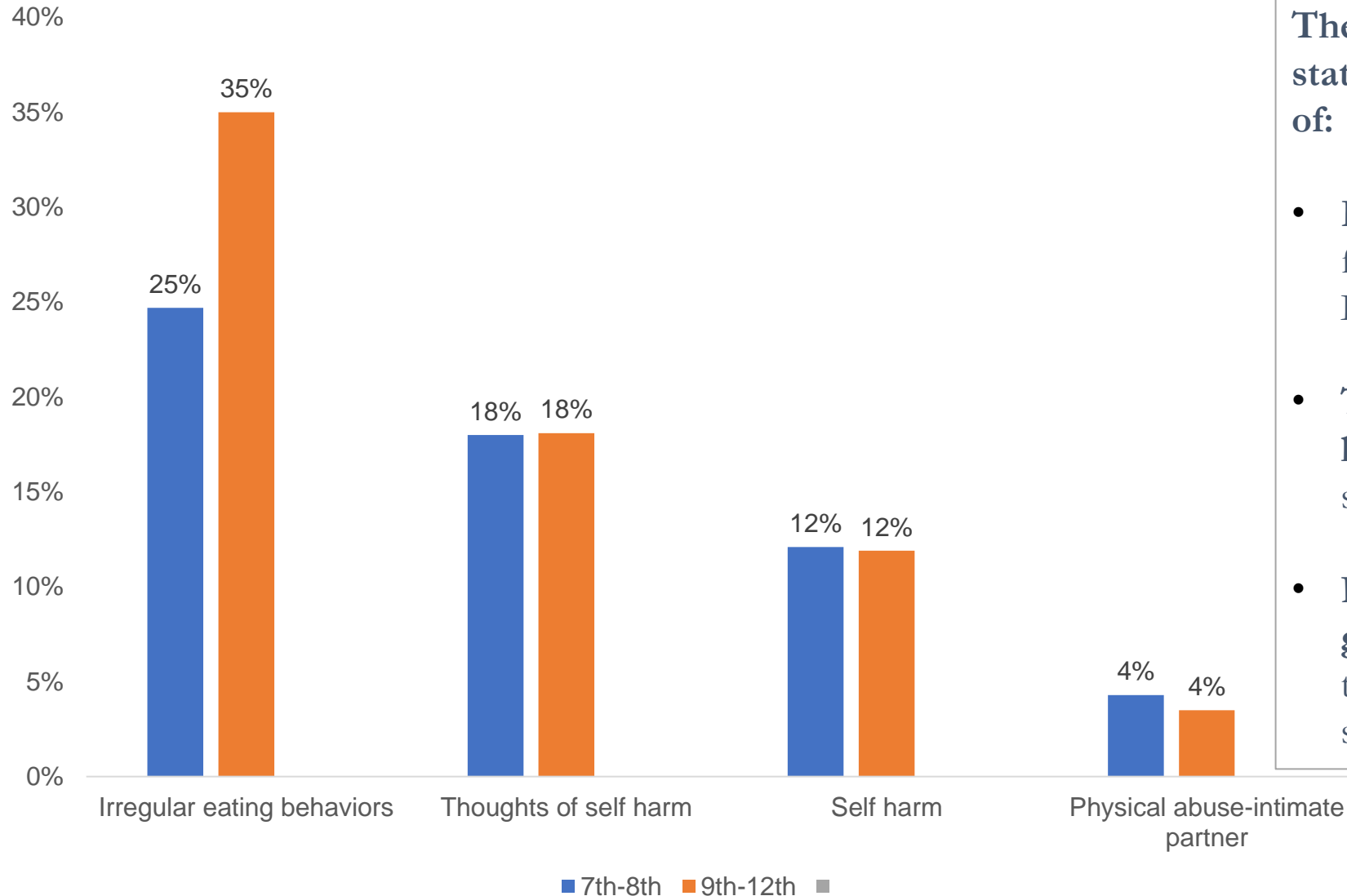
- 27.1% report “almost always” or “always” feeling anxious or nervous
- 27.4% report anxiety makes their life difficult “almost always” or “always”

Female students and those identifying as LGBTQ were more likely to report anxiety

Percent of Students Reporting “High” Anxiety from Home & School Stressors, by Middle & High School



# Other Emotional Health Indicators among NPS Students in 2022, by Middle and High School



The following groups report statistically significant higher levels of:

- **Irregular eating behaviors:** females, MS Hispanic or Black, LGBTQ, students with IEPs, MLLs
- **Thoughts of self-harm and of self-harm:** females, LGBTQ youth, students with IEPs
- **Physical abuse by boyfriend or girlfriend:** MS students identifying as trans, nonbinary or unsure; HS students identifying as LGBS

# Takeaways: Mental Health

- Efforts are working!
- Schools:
  - Continued attention is needed. While depression rates are dropping, cases are more acute than before the pandemic
  - Target high risk populations (e.g. LGBTQ, students with IEPs)
  - Address eating disorders
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Freshman Forum, QPR training, NorWALK for Mental Health event, support groups in community, training trusted adults...

## Risk Factors:

Toxic Stress, Time Alone, Bullying,  
No Extracurricular Involvement

# Toxic Stress Indicators among NPS Students, 2022, By Past Year & Lifetime

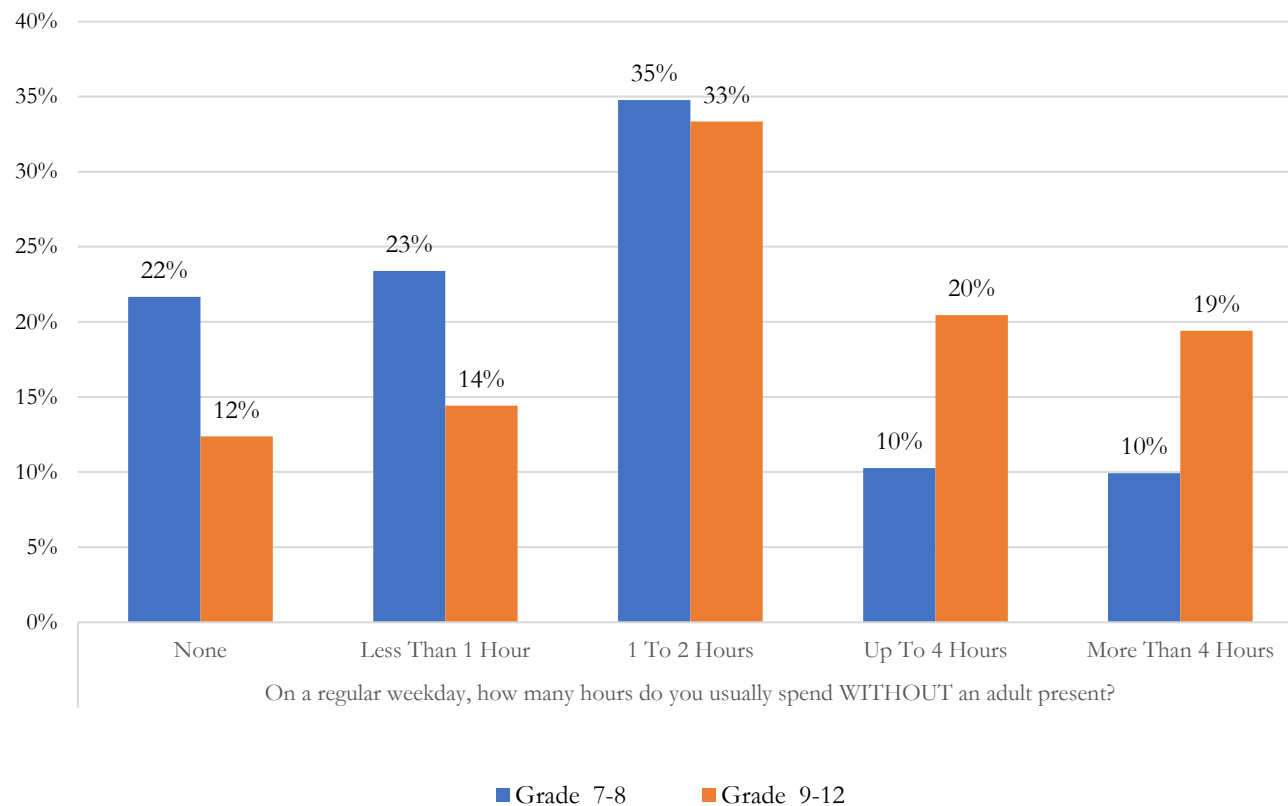


## Groups reporting statistically higher levels of toxic stress:

- **Violence:** LGBS youth
- **Discrimination:** females, LGBTQ, non-whites. In MS, Black and Asian youth were more likely than Hispanic youth to have experienced past-year discrimination
- **Housing problems:** Hispanic and Black youth, MS LGBS
- **Food insecurity:** Non-white HS students, LGBTQ

# Youth Time Alone on Weekdays without Supervision among NPS Students, 2022

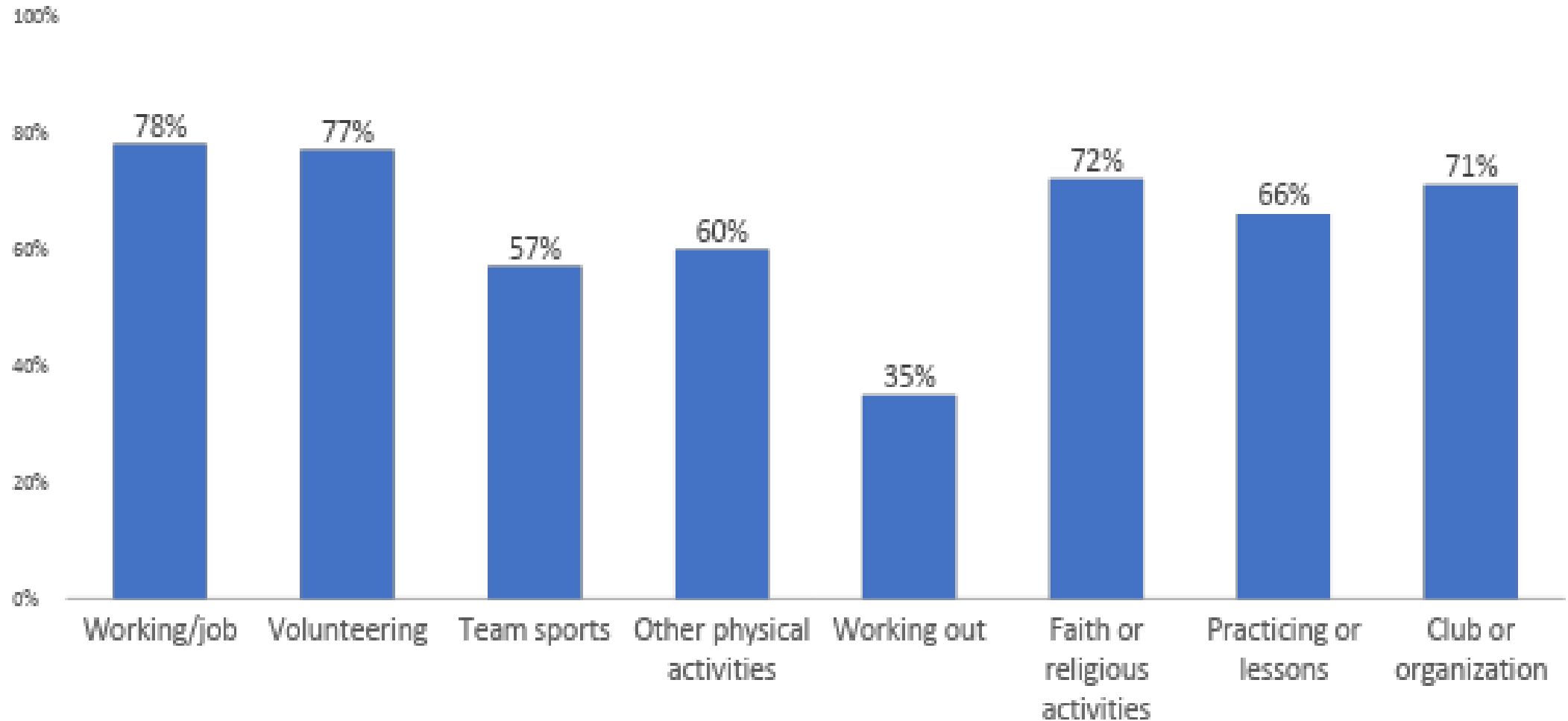
Youth Time Alone on Weekdays without Supervision



**The following groups report statistically significant higher levels of being unsupervised on weekdays:**

- Middle school males
- Middle school Black or Hispanic youth
- High school MLLs

# NPS Youth who report **No Time** spent on any extracurricular, 2022



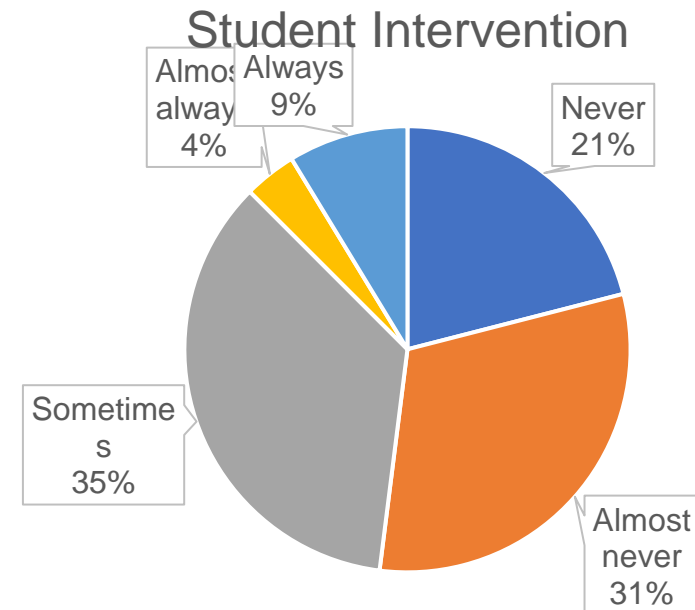
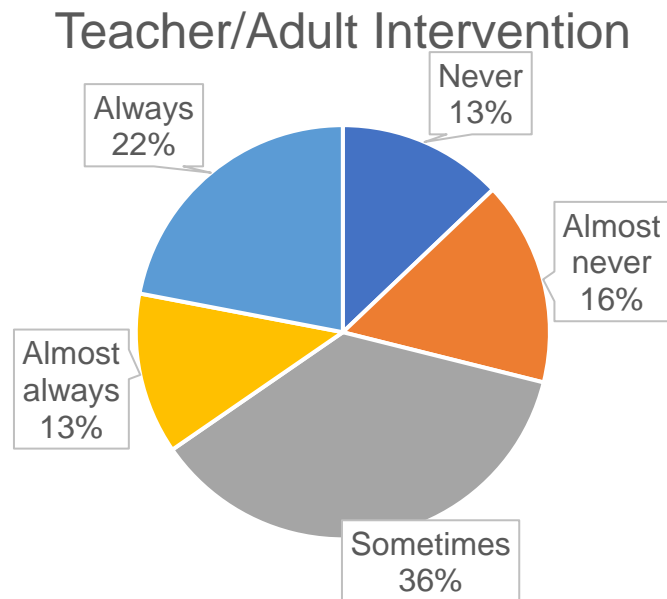


# Bullying as Experienced by NPS Students, 2022, Grades 7-12

- 53% reported they had NEVER been bullied
- 39% reported being bullied in their lifetime
- 9% reported being bullied in past 30 days

**Groups reporting statistically higher levels of bullying:**

- Females
- Hispanic youth
- LGBTQ youth



# Bullying Reported by NPS Students, 2022, continued

## Types of bullying (n=244):

- 80% - Mean names/comments
- 55% - Lies/rumors spread
- 52% - Left out/excluded
- 20% - Threatened
- 19% - Physically hurt
- 9% - Money/things taken

## Locations of bullying (n=244)

- 60% - Classroom**
- 55% - Hallways
- 44% - Online\*
- 43% - Lunchroom
- 24% - After school\*
- 20% - Bathroom
- 17% - School Bus & Gym
- 12% - On way to school\*

*\*Locations outside NPS purview*

# Takeaways: Risk Factors

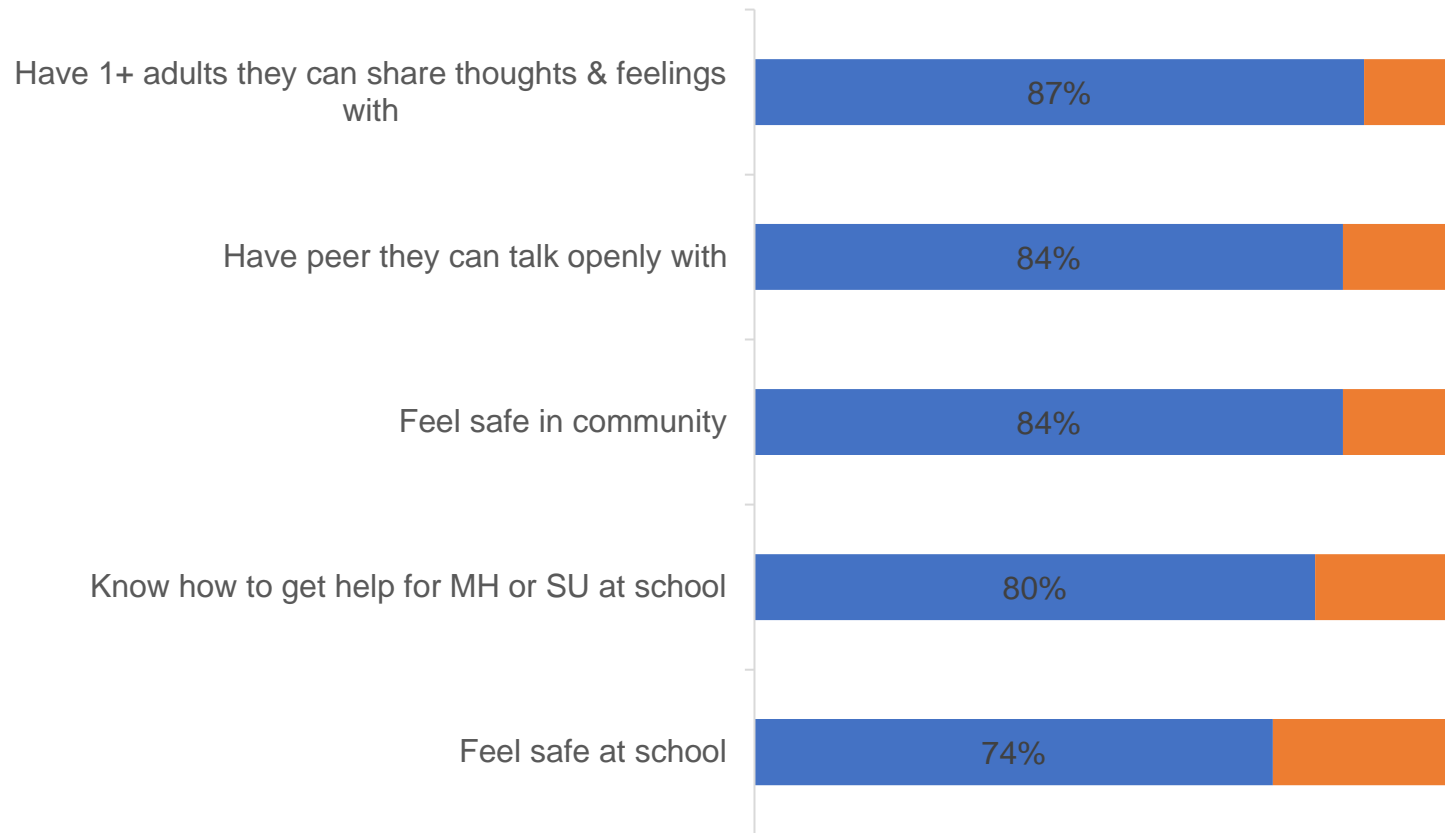
- Schools:
  - Increase work with faculty/staff around bullying
  - Enhance collaboration with community on parent education efforts
  - Promote extracurricular involvement, bring in options after school
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Parent education
  - Recreation & Parks initiatives, Teen Nights Out (TNP/YSB initiative)
  - Positive youth development / youth leadership initiatives
  - Teen center?!

# Protective Factors:

Safety, Know Where to Get Help, Someone to Talk to, Sleep, Physical Activity, Extracurricular Involvement, Connectedness to Teachers & Students, Trusted Adults

# Perceived Safety, Support, Knowledge of Where to Get Help among NPS Students, 2022

% NPS Students Reporting Protective Factors



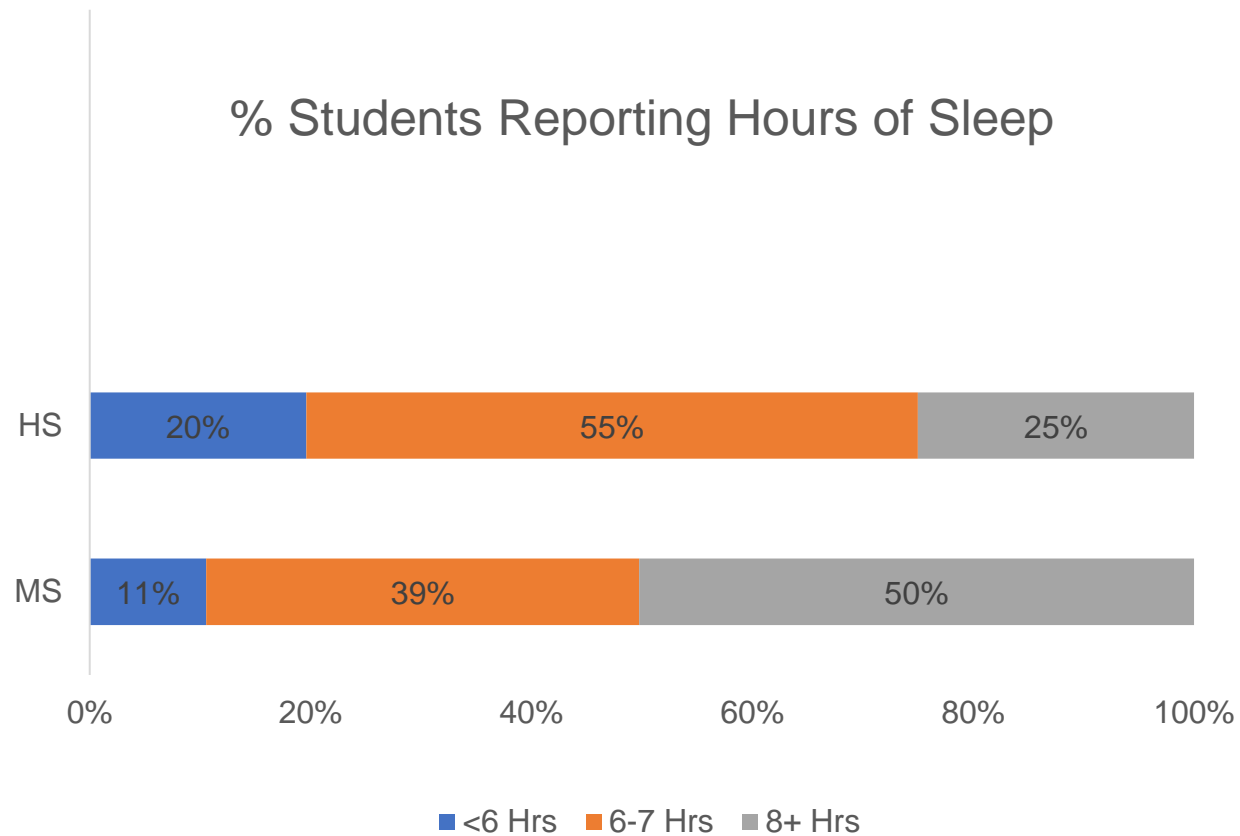
Youth who reported depression were *less likely* to:

- feel safe in the community
- feel safe at school
- know how to get help for themselves or peers for mental health or substance use problems at school
- have one adult they can share thoughts or feelings with

**Groups that are significantly less likely to:**

- **Have a trusted adult:** LGBTQ, MS females, HS non-White students, MS Hispanic students
- **Feel safe in community:** females, HS Black students, LGBTQ, MS MLLs
- **Feel safe at school:** females, LGBTQ
- **Know how to get help at school:** females, LGBS

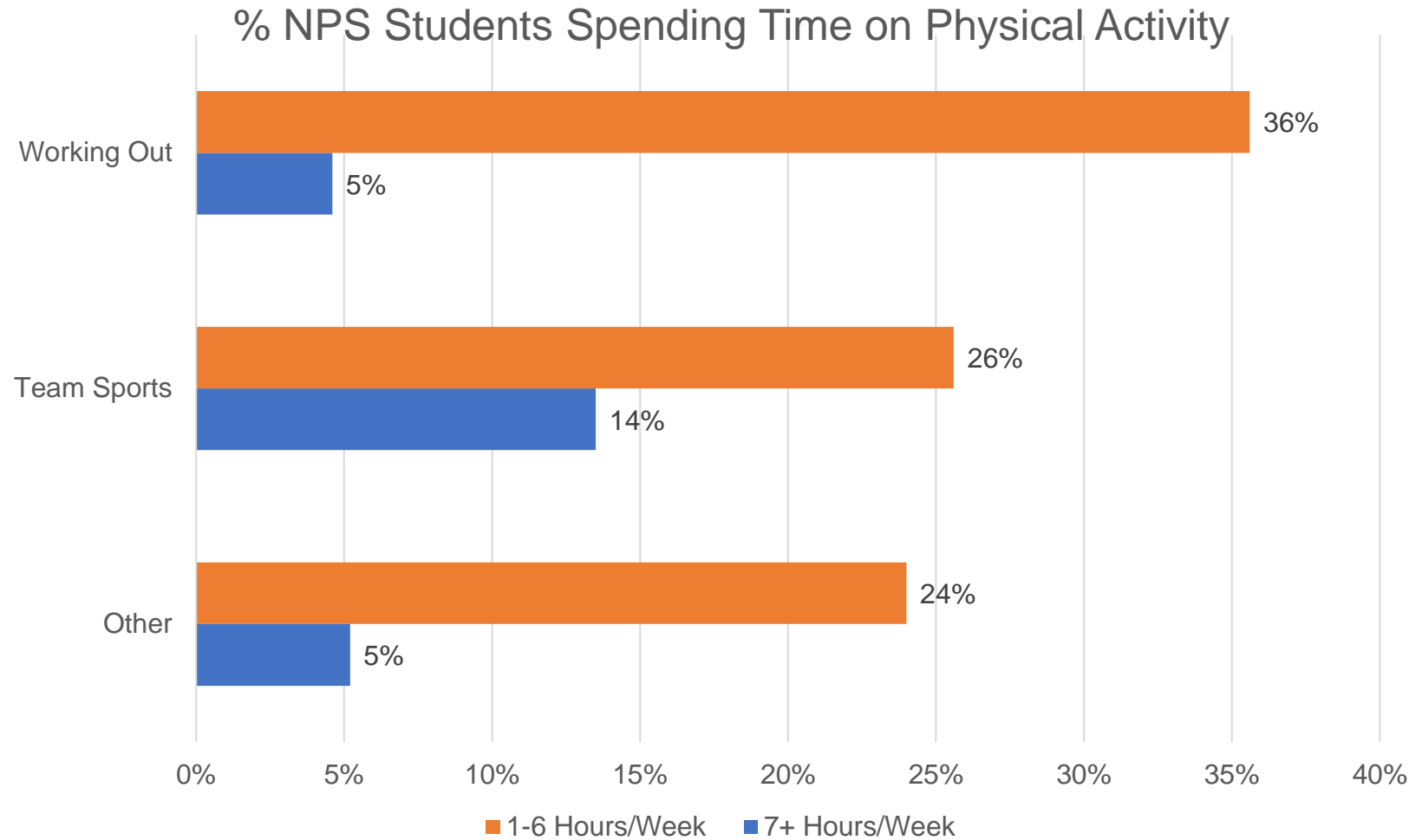
# Amount of Sleep on Weeknights Reported by NPS Students, 2022, by Middle and High School



**Groups reporting statistically significant lower levels of sleep:**

- Females
- LGBTQ youth

# NPS Youth Weekly Hours of Physical Activity, 2022

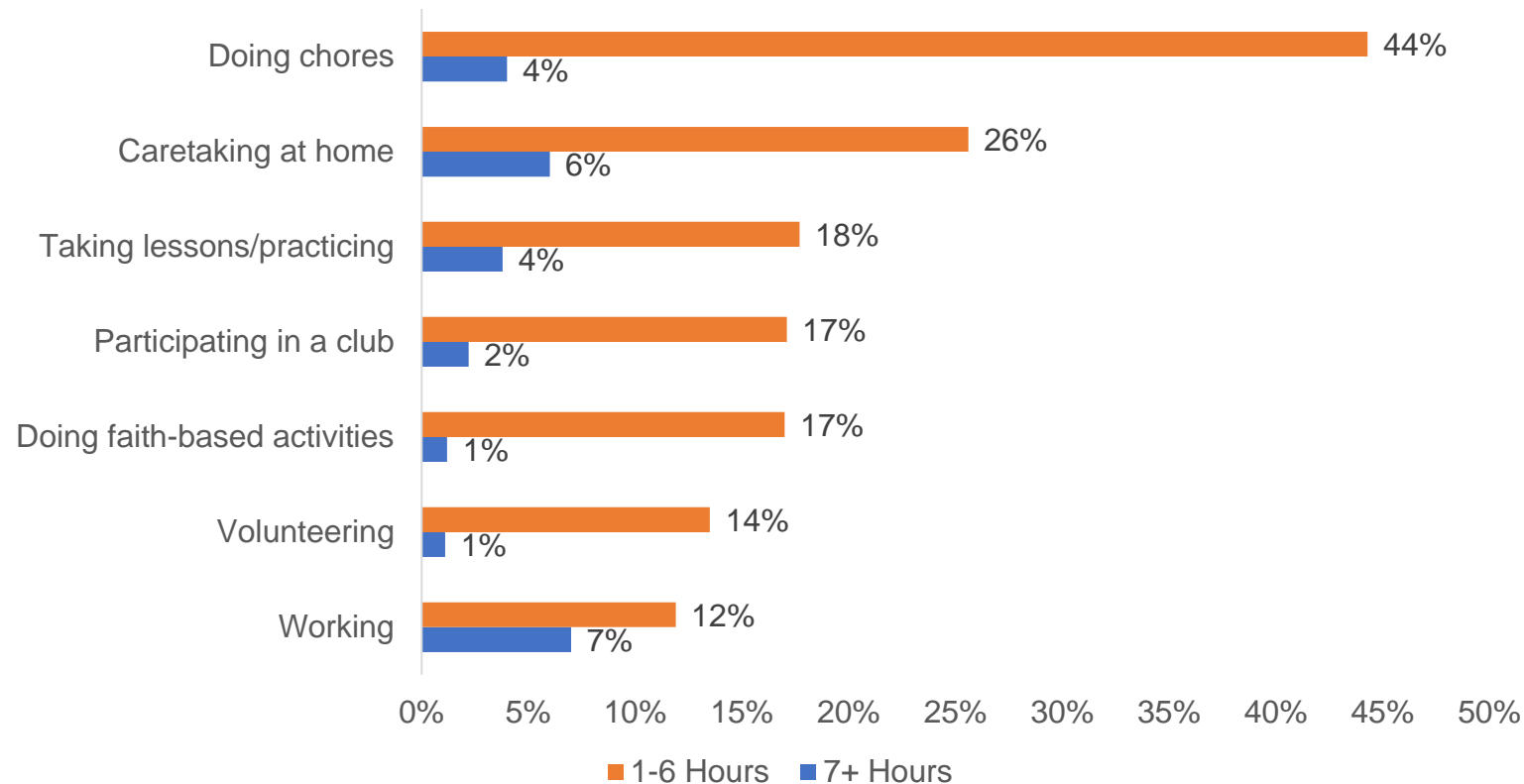


**Groups spending significantly less time on physical activity:**

- Girls
- Non-Whites
- LGBTQ

# NPS Youth Weekly Hours of Extracurricular Involvement, 2022

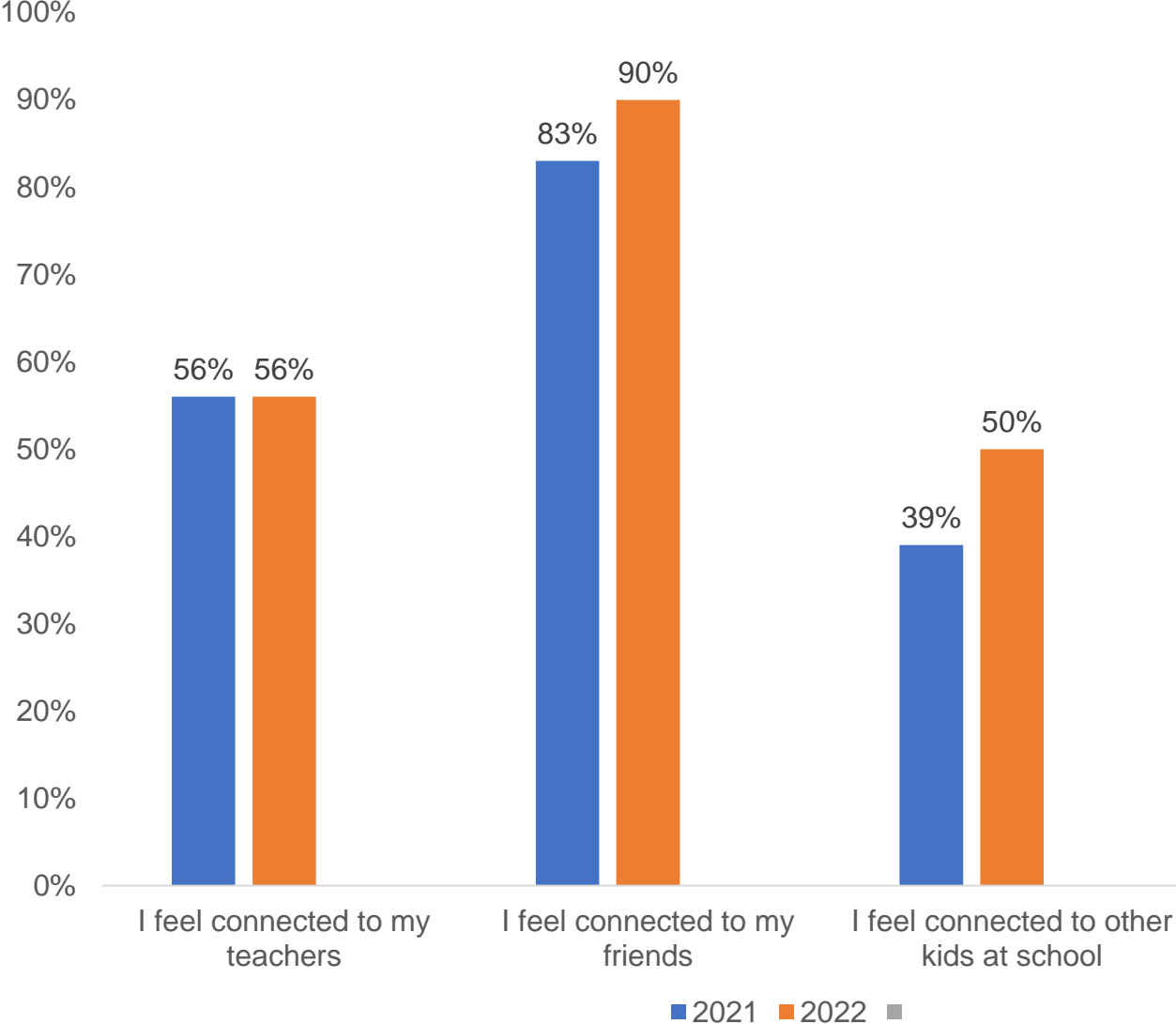
## % NPS Students Spending Time on Extracurriculars



- HS males reported spending less time than females volunteering, taking care of someone at home, and doing chores.
- HS Black youth were less likely than White youth to work at a paying job.
- Black or Hispanic youth were less likely than Whites to volunteer.
- HS Black and Hispanic youth were more likely to spend time taking care of someone at home.
- MS MLLs were more likely to work as a volunteer.



# Connectedness to Teachers, Friends and Peers among NPS Students, 2021 vs 2022

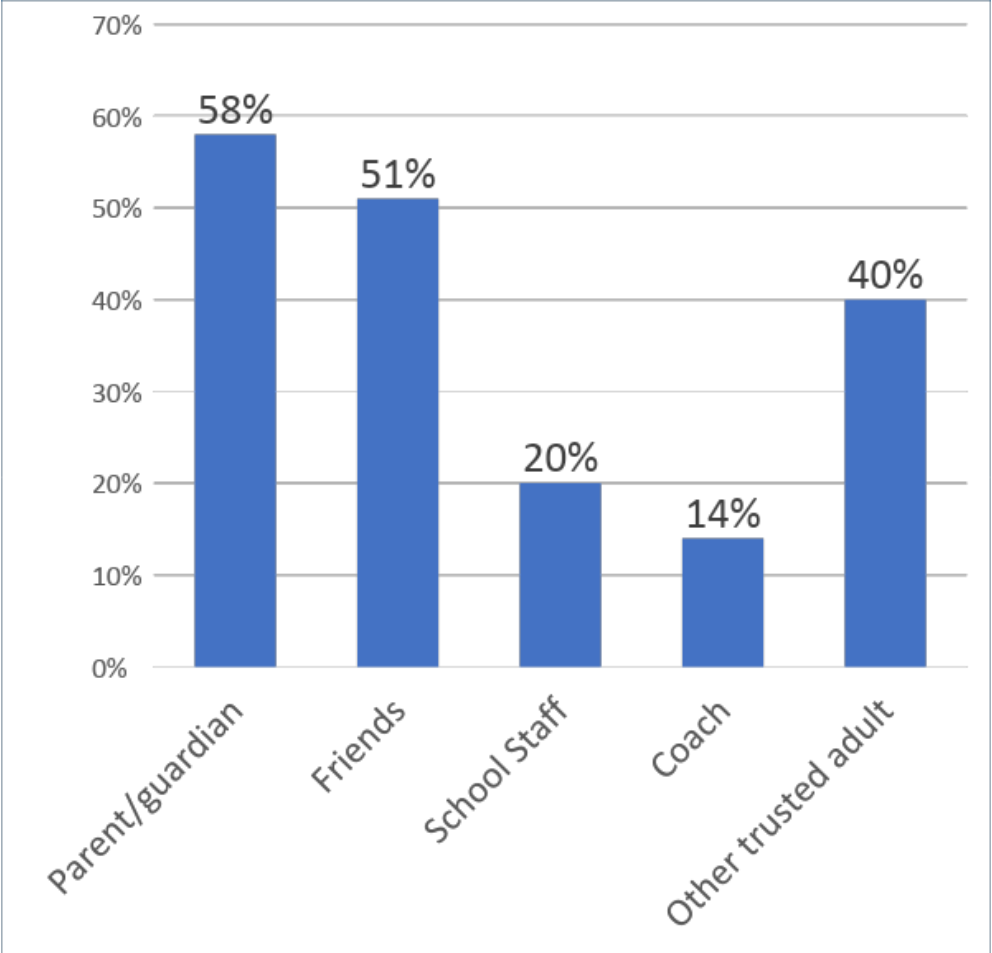


2022 survey finds the following groups report statistically significant higher levels:

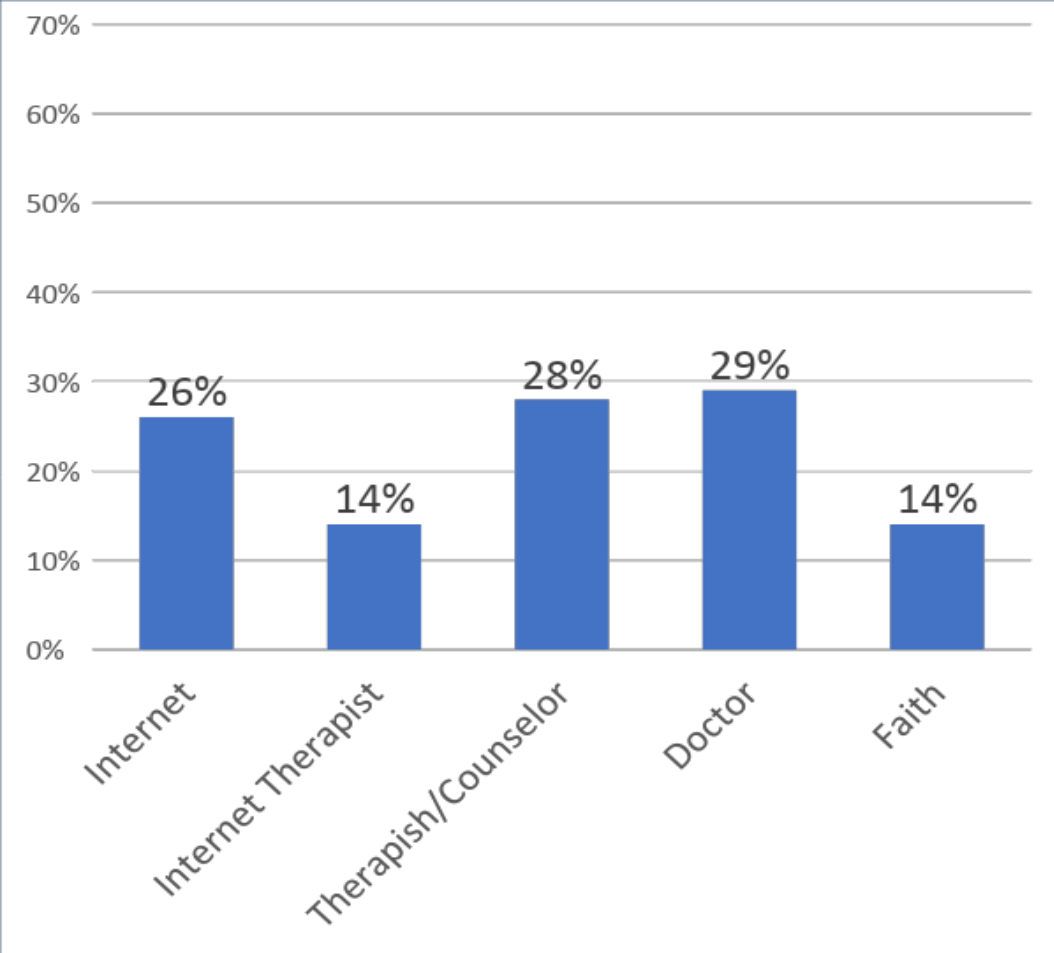
- **Females** were less likely to report feeling connected to teachers and other students at school.
- **LGBTQ youth** were less likely to report feeling connected to other students at school.
- **Non-White youth** were less likely to feel connected to their teachers, their friends and other youth at school.

# Where NPS Students Would Seek Help If They Had a Problem, 2022

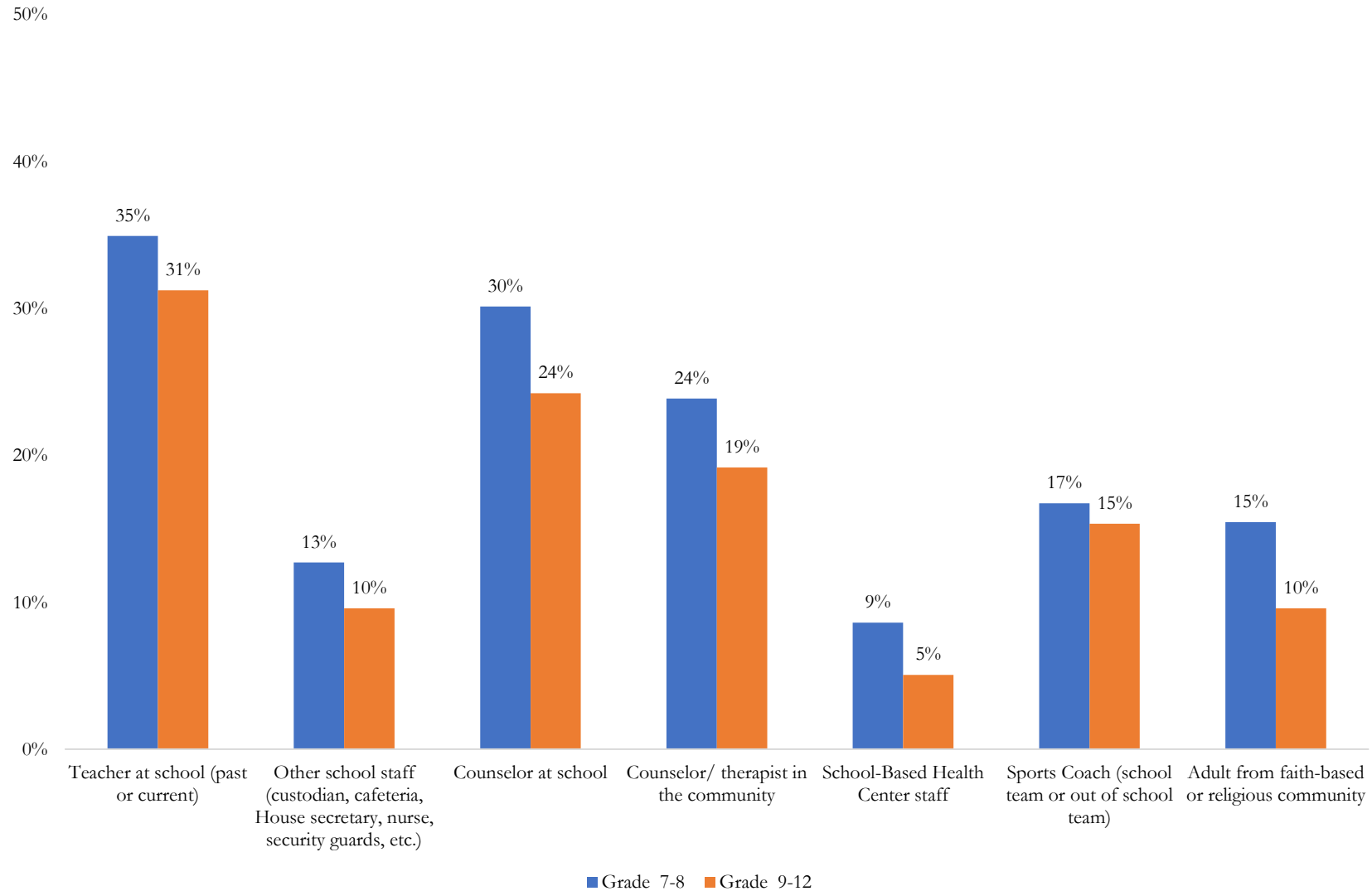
### Family & School



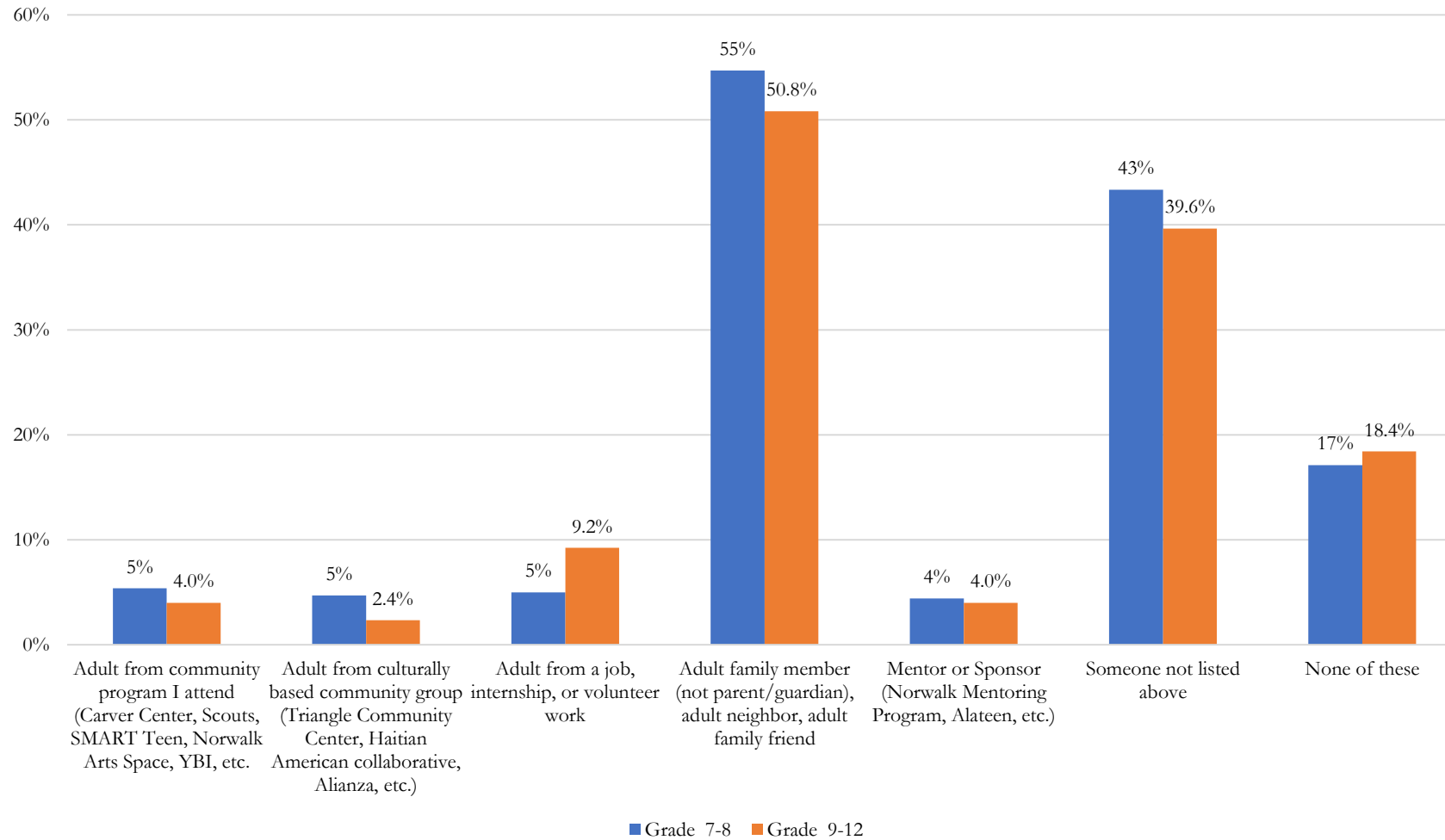
### Community & Internet



# Adults NPS Youth Can Talk Openly To, 2022, part 1: School Staff, Counselors, Faith-Based



# Adults NPS Youth Can Talk Openly To, 2022, part 2: Community, Family, Other



- On average, students reported having **2.8 trusted adults** in their lives who they can speak openly with.
- **488 students** (18%) said “none of these.”

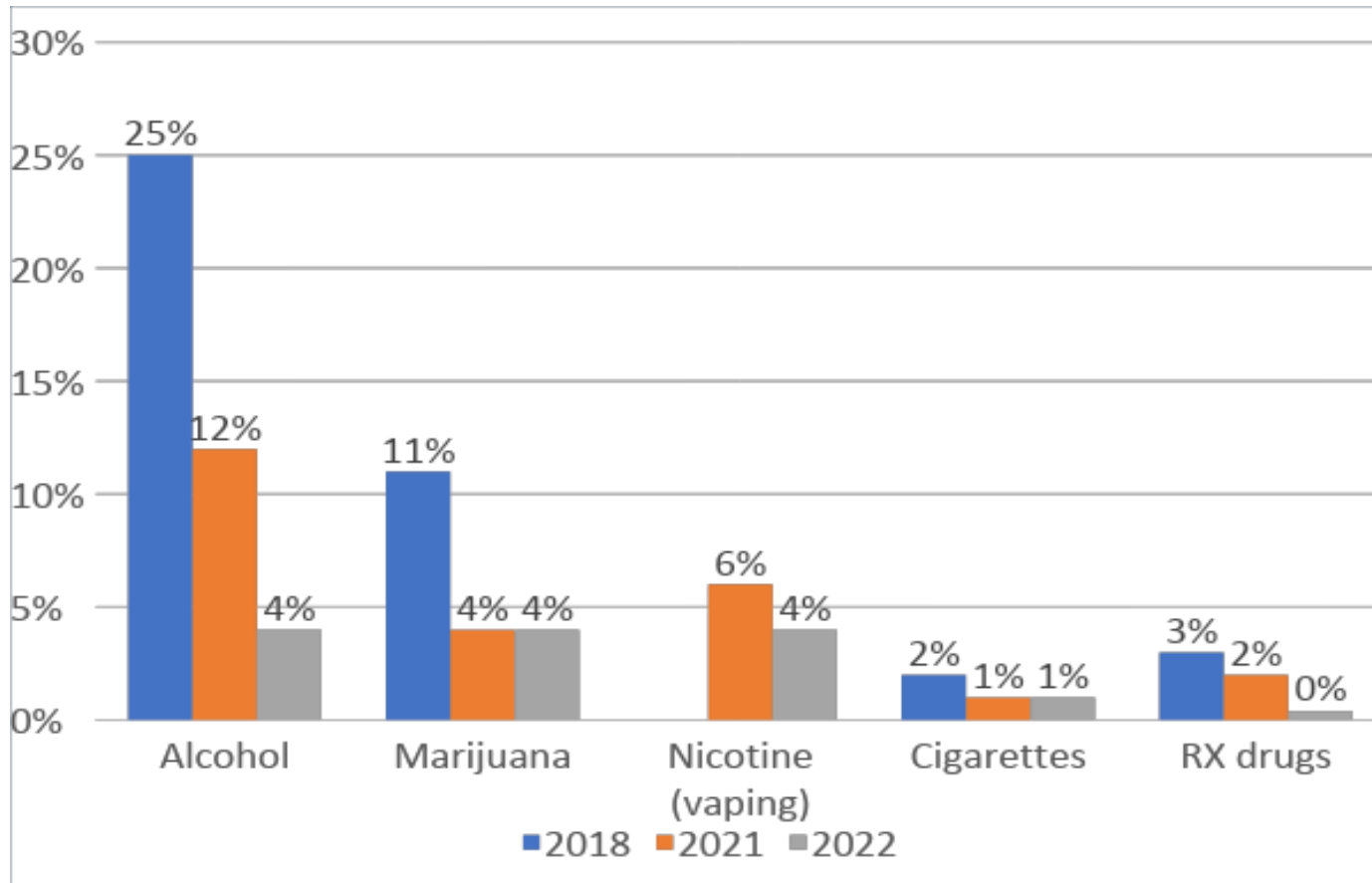
# Takeaways: Protective Factors

- Schools:
  - Increase efforts so that all students feel safe at school
  - Prioritize faculty/staff relationships with students
  - Provide opportunities for faculty/staff to increase their connections with students
  - Identify students without connections to adults in the building and assign staff member
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Provide training workshops to trusted adults in the community (trauma, LGBTQ 101, mental health first aid, suicide prevention, marijuana/vaping...)

# Substance Use:

Recent & current rates of substance use, use at school, youth perceptions, impaired driving & riding, family role

# Recent & Current Substance Use by NPS Students Grades 7-12, 2018 to 2022 *(2018 survey only included grades 7, 9 and 11)*



Other substances reported by HS students, 2022: 2% CBD, 1% synthetic MJ (K2, spice, Delta 8)

## % of 2022 seniors reporting lifetime use (ever having used):

- Alcohol 27%
- Marijuana 20%
- Vapes (nicotine) 18%
- Vapes (liquids) 17%
- Tobacco 6%
- Binge drinking (4+ drinks) 18%

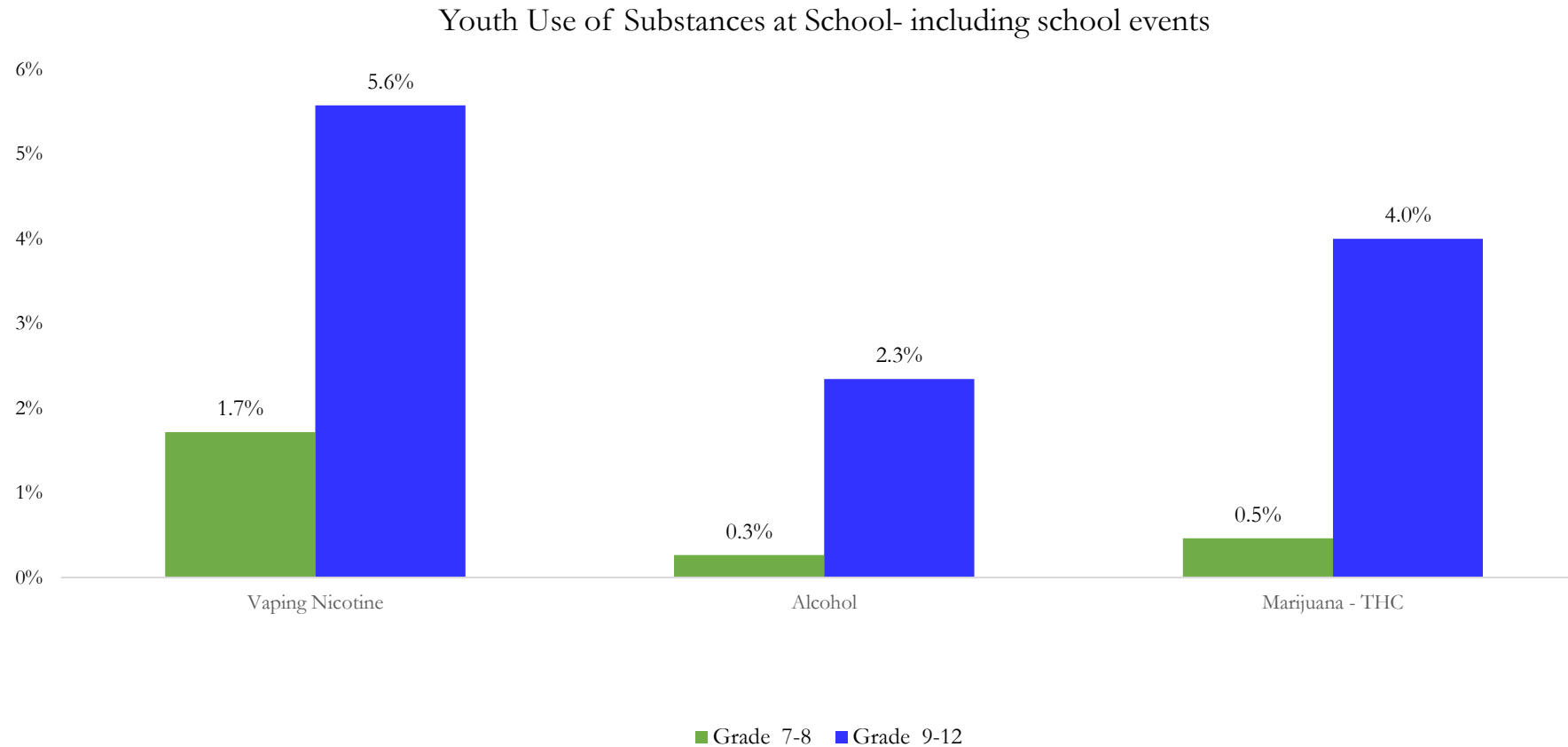
## Methods of marijuana use among youth who used in the past 12 months, 2022 (n=350):

- Smoked or inhaled 69%
- Vaped 60%
- Edibles 48%

13 Age at 1<sup>st</sup> use of alcohol, vapes, 2022

14 Age at 1<sup>st</sup> use of marijuana, cigarettes, 2022

# NPS Students Reporting Ever Using a Substance at School, 2022





# NPS Youth Perceptions Related to Substance Use, 2022

% students who perceive substance use to be harmful is lower than desirable. Marijuana is seen as least harmful:

- 84% misuse of Rx drugs
- 77% alcohol
- 77% cigarettes
- 75% vaping nicotine
- **66% marijuana**

% students reporting substances are sort of or very hard to access (alcohol seen as easiest to get):

- 86% Rx drugs for purpose of getting high
- 82% tobacco
- 79% marijuana
- 73% liquid & THC vape products
- 71% nicotine vapes
- **70% alcohol**

71%-86% students believe their peers disapprove of substance use (% varies based on substance)

Compared with students whose peers send a strong message of disapproval, students who do not perceive peer disapproval are:

- **17x** more likely to use marijuana
- **7x** more likely to vape nicotine
- **4x** more likely to misuse Rx drugs
- **2x** more likely to use alcohol

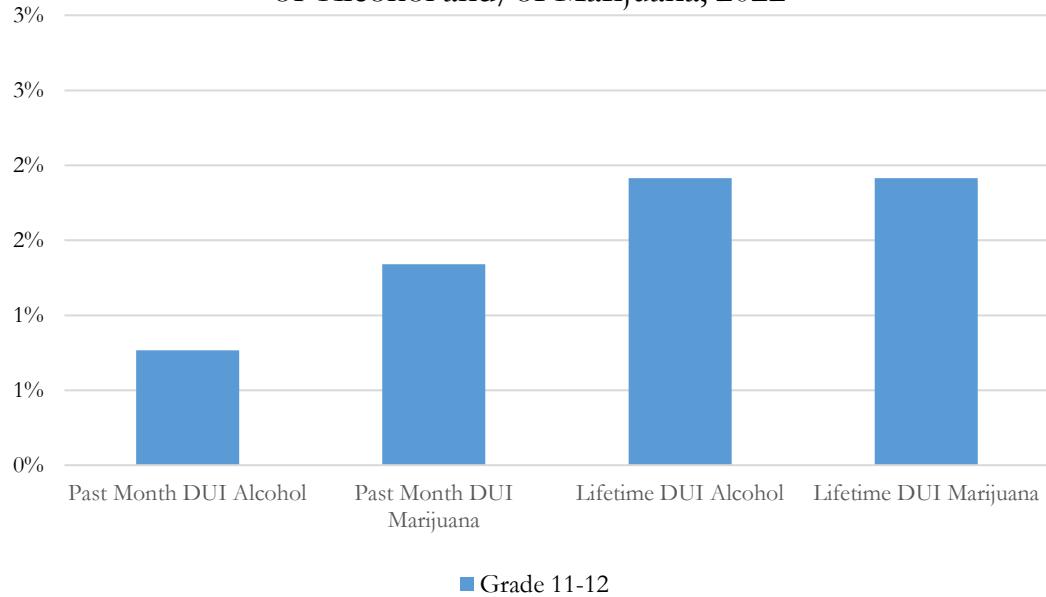
% students who accurately perceive that very few peers have used substances in the past month:

- 74% Rx drugs
- 59% alcohol
- 57% marijuana
- **40% liquid & THC vapes\***

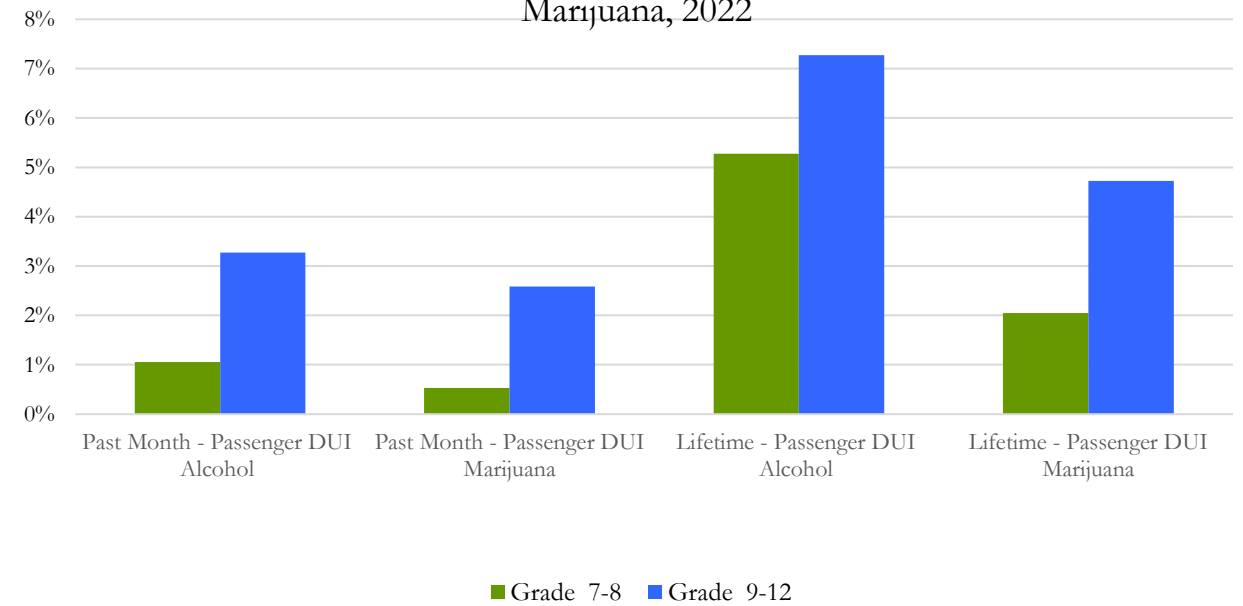
\*35% believe that “most” or “almost all” students are vaping; actual number is 4% of MS+HS students

# Impaired Driving & Riding, NPS Students, 2022

NPS Students Reporting **Driving** Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Marijuana, 2022



NPS Students Reporting Being **Passenger** of a Driver, Age 20 or Younger, Who was Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Marijuana, 2022



# Role of Family in NPS Youth Substance Use, 2022

% students reporting that substance use in their family has **created problems** at home, at work or with friends:

- **23% alcohol**
- 9% gambling
- 8% marijuana/THC
- 6% Rx drugs
- 4% other drugs

% students reporting clear family rules around substance use that discourage use:

- 78% cigarettes
- 77% vaping nicotine
- 77% Rx drugs
- 75% marijuana/THC
- **72% alcohol**

**90%** students report that their parents disapprove of substance use

Compared with students whose parents send a strong message of disapproval, students who do not perceive parental disapproval are:

- **5x** more likely to use marijuana
- **4.5x** more likely to vape nicotine
- **3.5x** more likely to use alcohol

Students who use substances report accessing them at home:

- Home, *with* parents, is the **top source** of alcohol
- Home, without parental knowledge, is the 2nd source of Rx drugs
- Home, without parental knowledge, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> source of nicotine vapes and tobacco products

# Takeaways: Substance Use

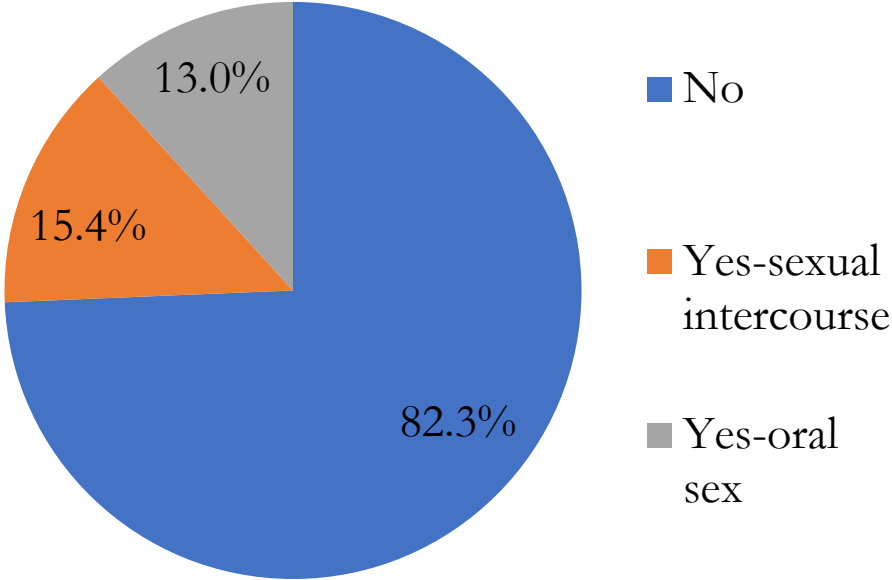
- Schools:
  - Provide earlier and repeated health education around substances & impaired driving
  - Address vaping in the bathrooms and buses
  - Partner with TNP to increase awareness around marijuana, etc.
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Provide professional development to health teachers around current drug trends, local data, today's marijuana
  - Work with Norwalk Strong teen clubs at high schools to raise awareness among peers
  - Support middle schools in raising awareness
  - Provide opioids/Narcan training to faculty & staff
  - Purchase Botvin life skills training curriculum for review

# Sexual Activity

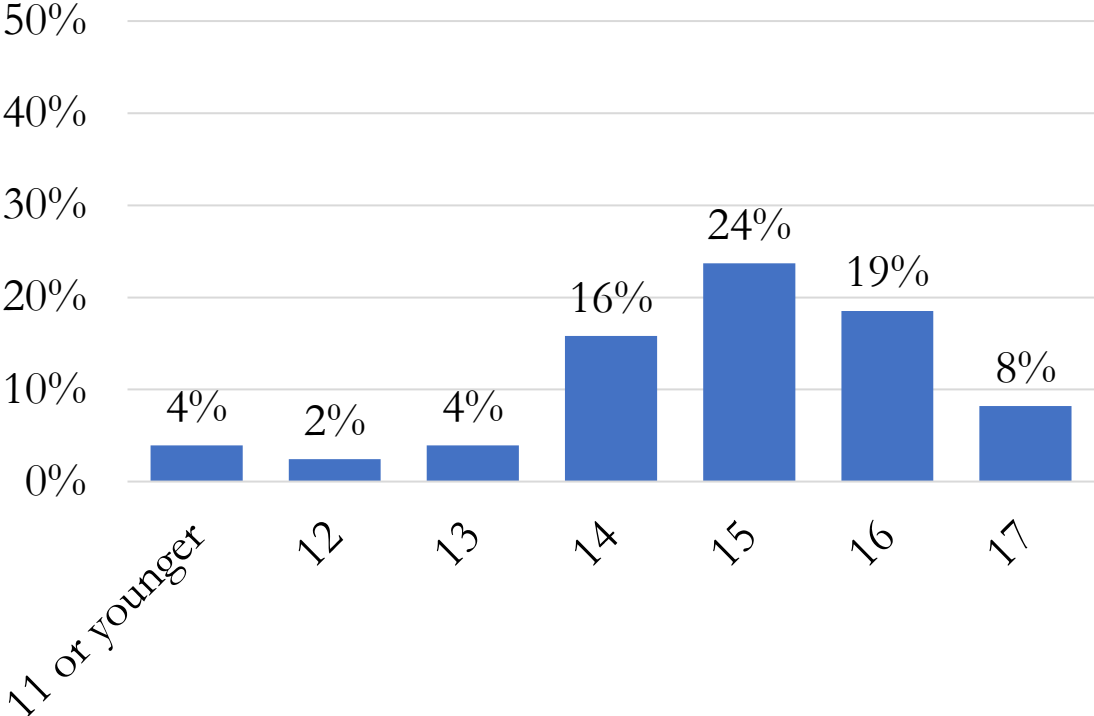
Among NPS High School Students

# Sexual Activity among NPS High School Students, 2022

### NPS 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Graders Reporting Sexual Experience

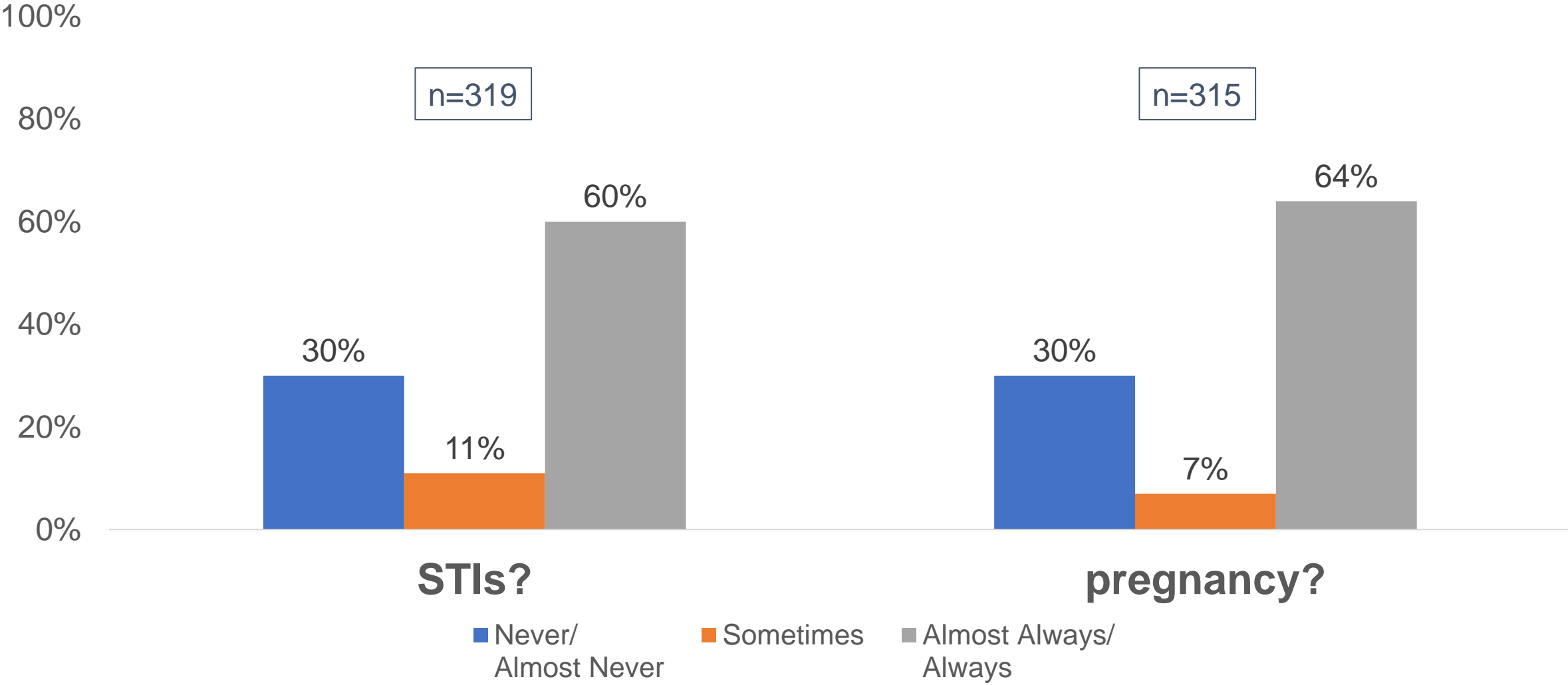


### Sexual Intercourse: Age of Initiation (n=329)

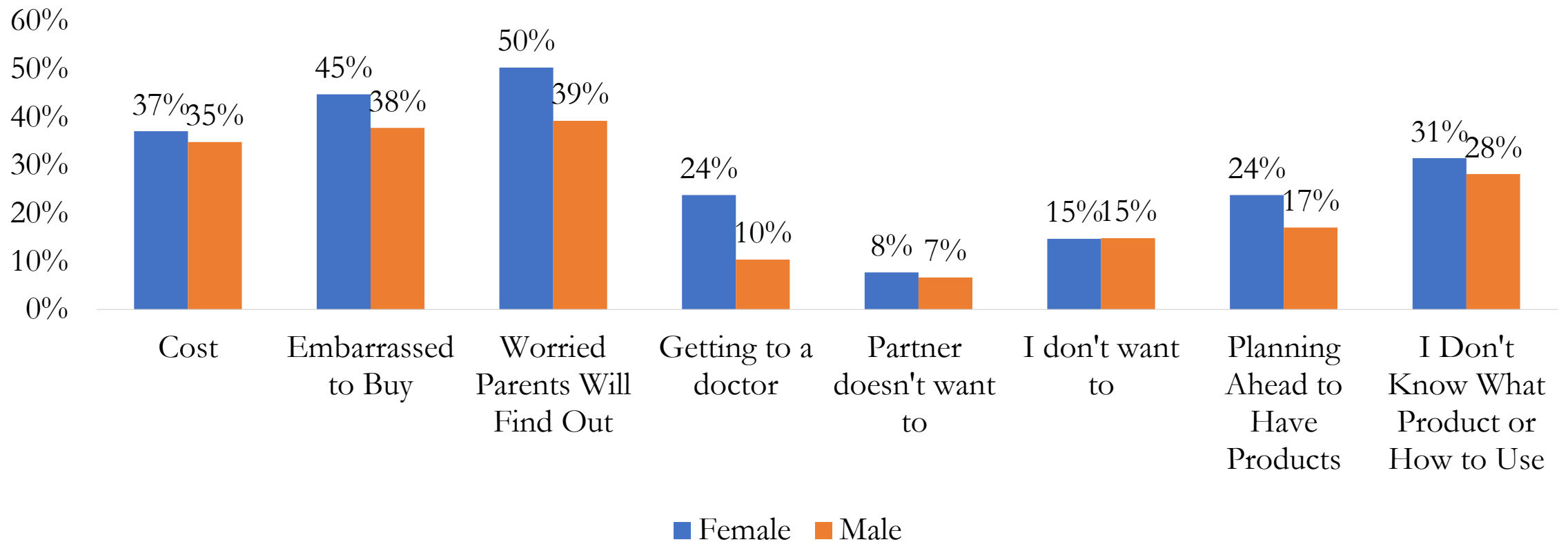


# STI & Pregnancy Prevention by NPS HS Students, 2022

How often do you and your partner use products to prevent...

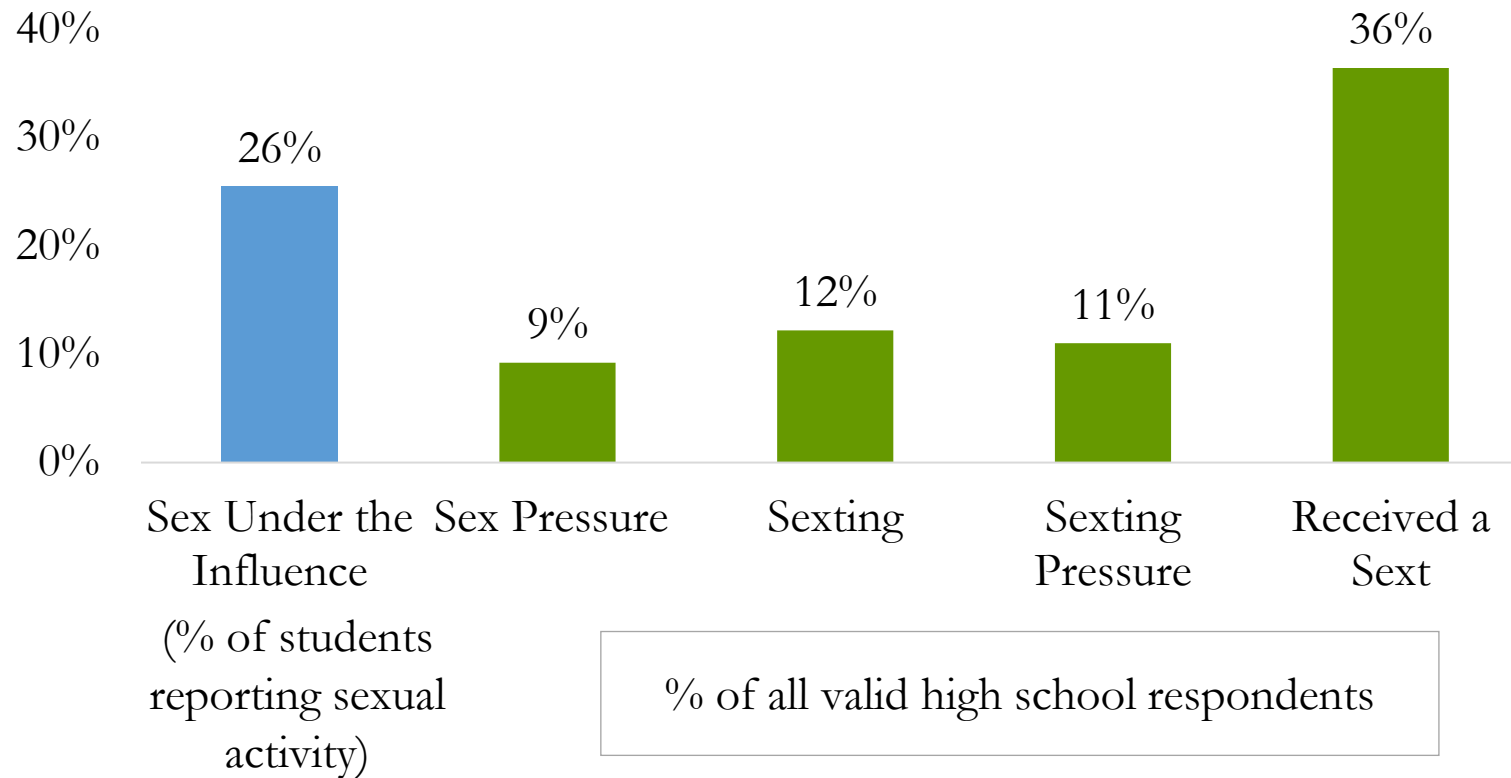


# Perceived Barriers to Prevention of STIs and Pregnancy among NPS High School Students, 2022, by Biological Sex





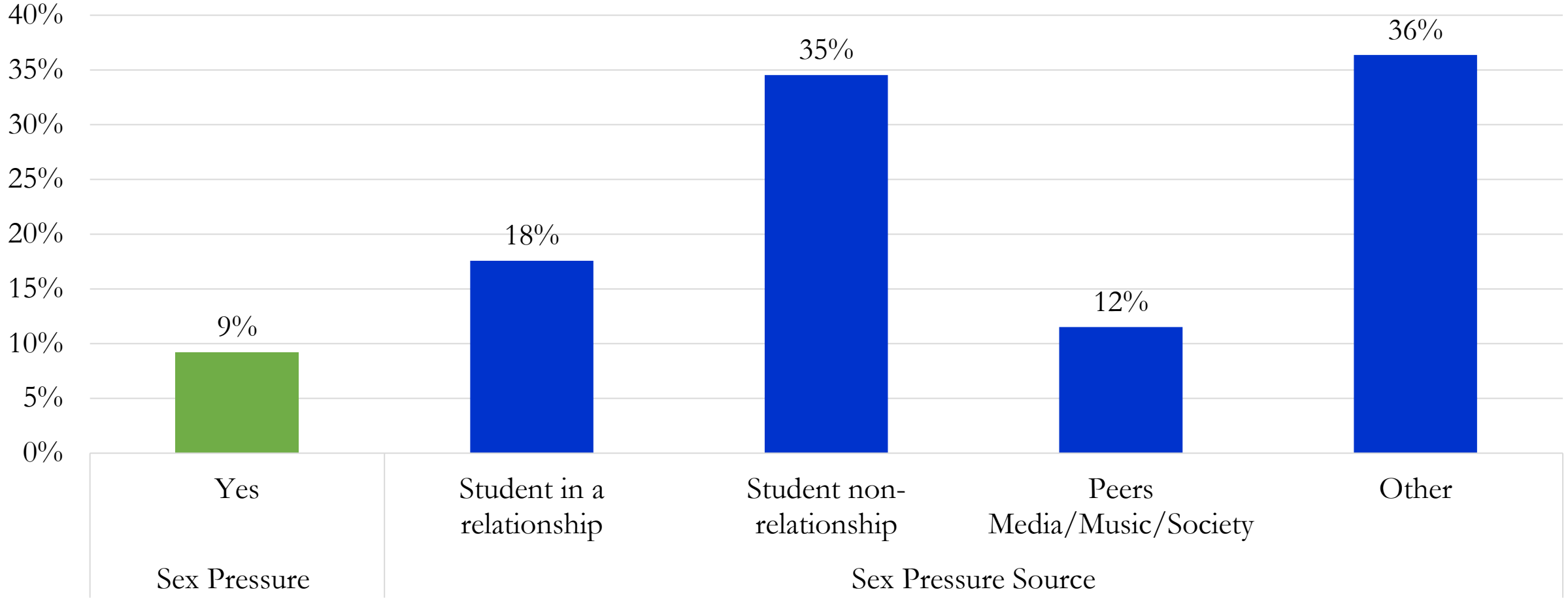
# Risky Sexual Behaviors among NPS HS Students, 2022



**Groups statistically more likely to have engaged in risky sexual behaviors:**

- **Had sex under the influence of drugs/alcohol:** Females, Whites
- **Felt pressured to have sex:** Females, All Other Races, LGBTQ
- **Engaged in sexting:** LGBTQ
- **Felt pressured to send sext:** Females, All Other Races, LGBTQ
- **Received sext:** Females, All Other Races, LGBTQ

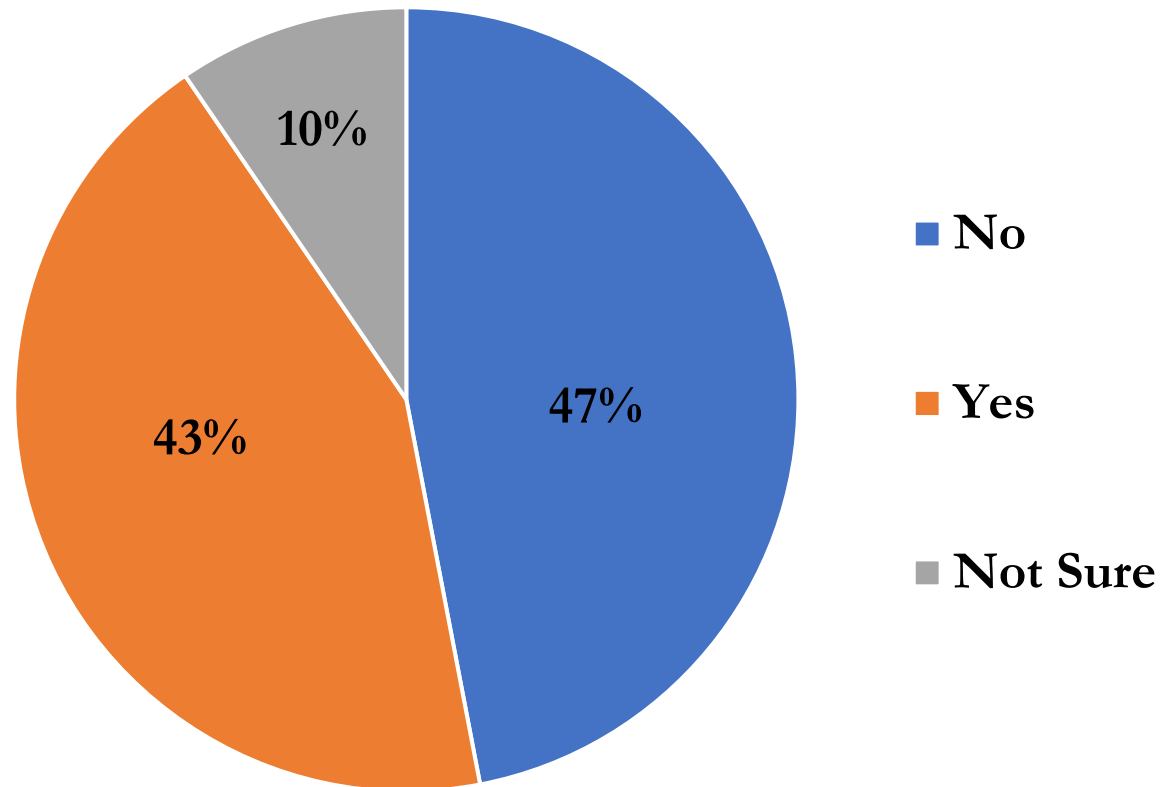
# Sources of Pressure for Sexual Behaviors Grade 9 -12



% of all valid high school respondents

% of those who answered yes to sex pressure

# NPS Students Reporting Having Had Sex Talk with Parents (Birth Control, Risks of STIs, Delaying Pregnancy), 2022



2022 survey finds the following groups were statistically less likely to have talked with their guardian about sex, STIs, delaying pregnancy:

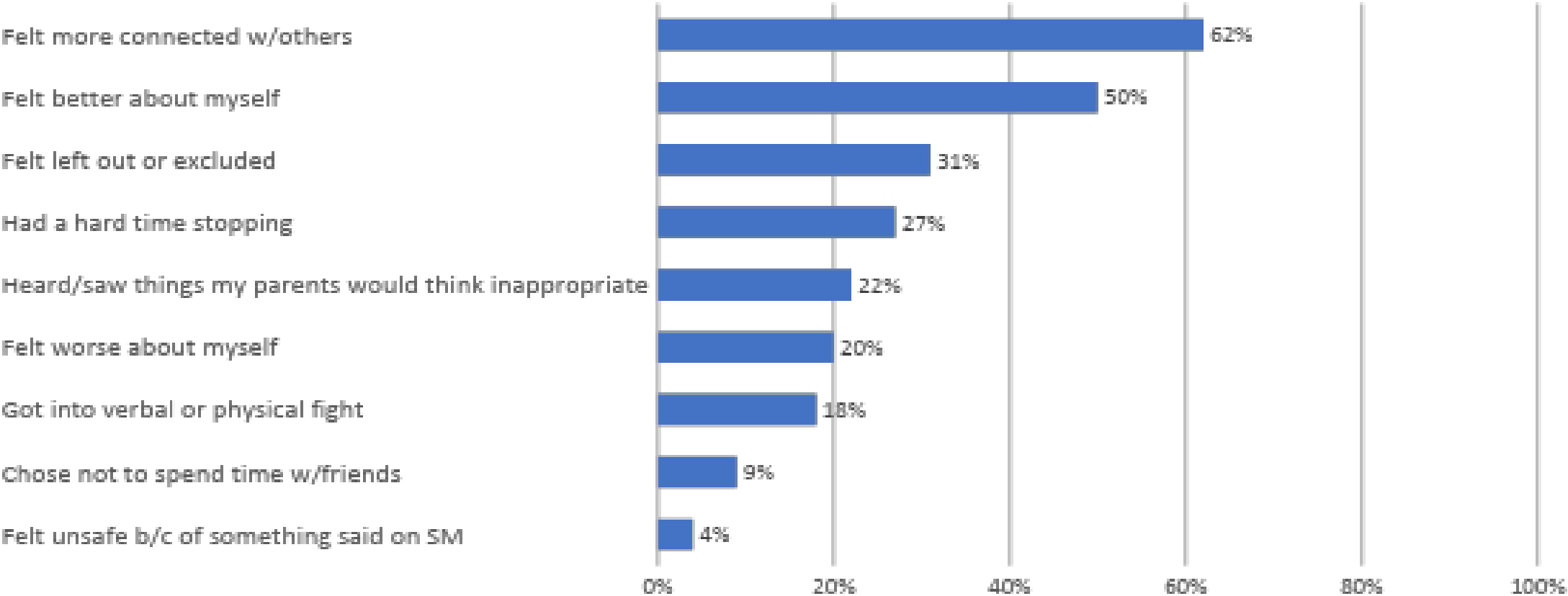
- Males
- Asian youth

# Takeaways: Sexual Behaviors

- Schools:
  - Enhance health education
  - Provide health education earlier
  - Refer students to SBHCs
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Increase visibility and role of SBHCs
  - Consider in-school partnership with DVCC

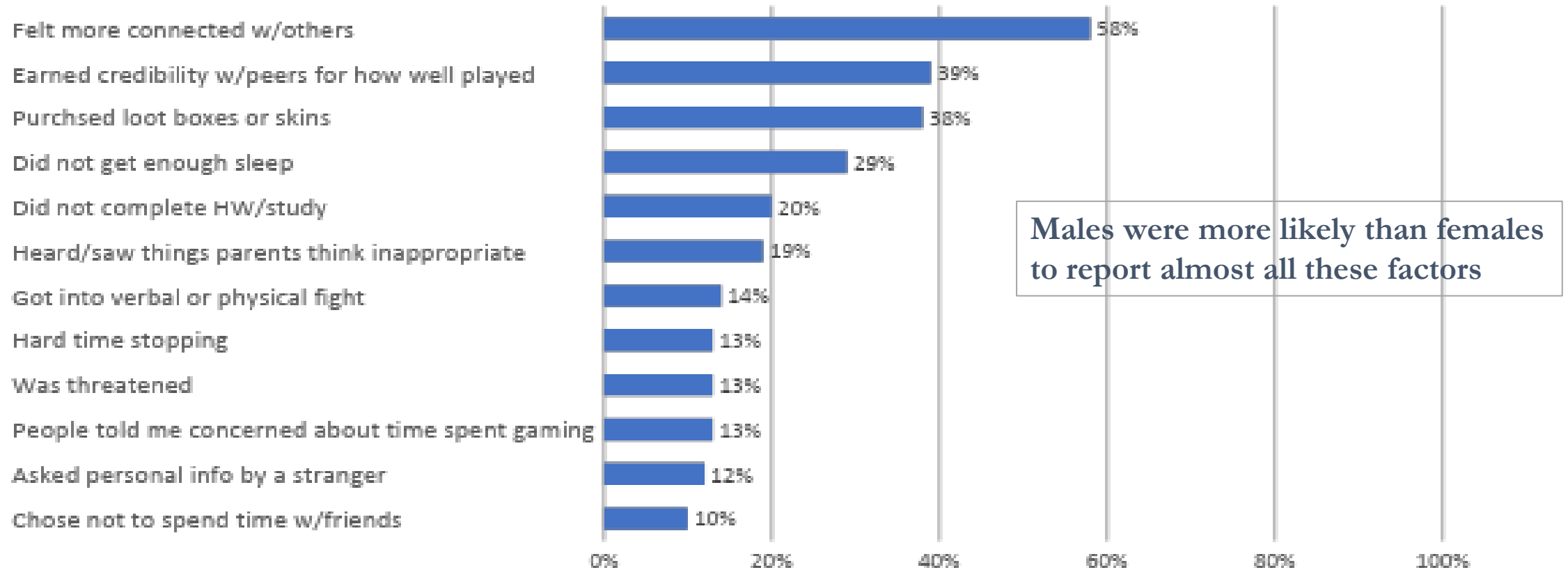
# Use of Technology

# NPS Student Past-Year Experiences Related to Social Media, 2022



Females were more likely than males to report feeling left out or excluded, feeling worse about themselves, and having a hard time stopping.

# NPS Student Past-Year Experiences Related to Video Games, 2022



- 31% NPS youth believe gaming 3+ hours/day poses moderate or great risky
- 47% NPS youth believe their parents disapprove of gaming 3+ hours/day

# Takeaways: Technology

- Schools:
  - Share information with students
  - Provide professional development to health teachers around video gaming and relationship to problem gambling
- Community role (TNP, Norwalk ACTS, etc.):
  - Provide awareness to parents



# NPS Student Interest in Seeing the 2022 Survey Results

