



Belmont Middle and High School 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

Data Highlights



Belmont Wellness Coalition Presenters

- **Lisa Gibalerio** MPH, Public Health Educator
- **Maeve Kennelly** Prevention Specialist
- **Wendy Conroy** MPH, Coalition Chair
- **Chantal Hoff** MPH, Evaluator
- **Akshaya Vadive** BHS Sophomore, SMHA

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COMMUNITIES PARTICIPATING IN YRBS (“MIDDLESEX LEAGUE”)

- Arlington
- **Belmont**
- Burlington
- Melrose
- Reading
- Stoneham
- Wakefield
- Wilmington
- Winchester
- Woburn
- Watertown

And now for Belmont's 2023 results...

COUNT OF SURVEY RESPONSES

Middle School

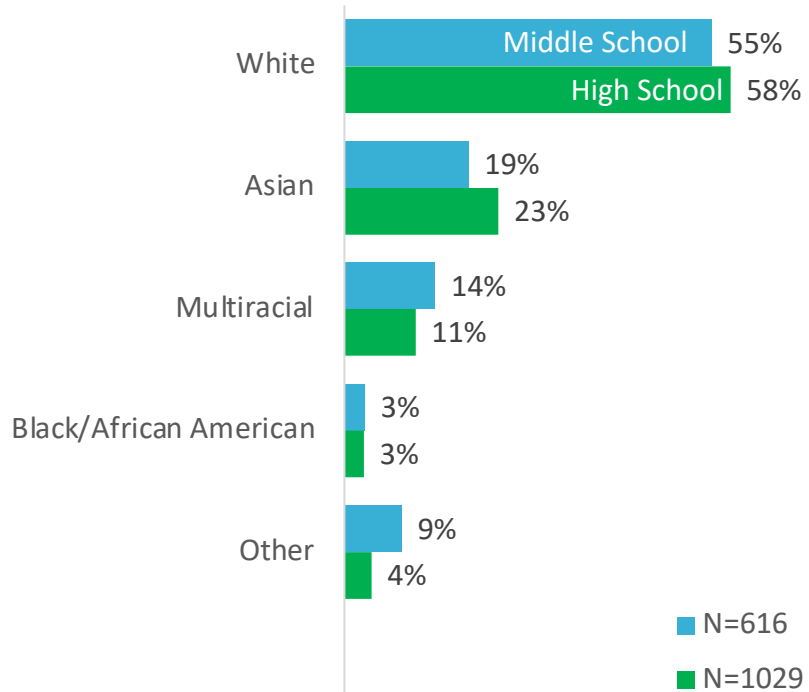
Grade	Responses
7 th	278
8 th	338
Total	616

High School

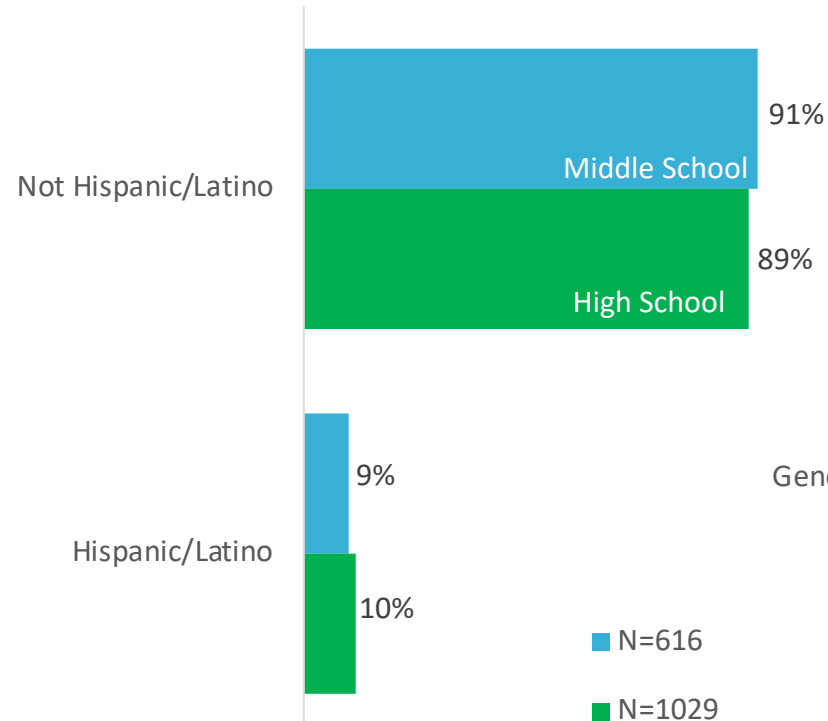
Grade	Responses
9 th	320
10 th	292
11 th	225
12 th	192
Total	1029

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

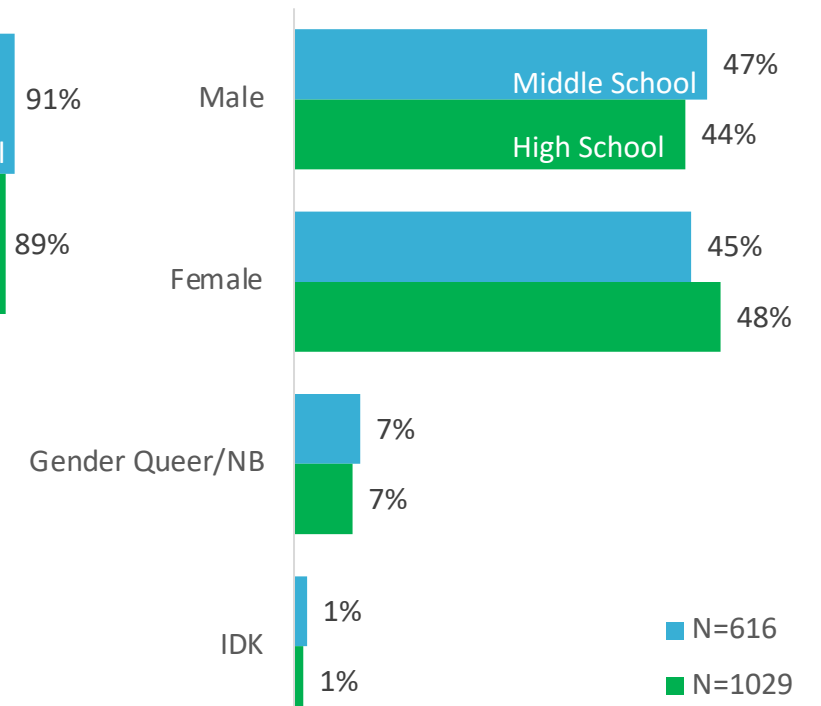
Race



Ethnicity



Gender Identity



Other Areas the YRBS Asks About...

- **Sexual and Dating Violence**
- **Bullying**
- **Sleep**
- **Nutrition**
- **Overall Safety**
- **Physical Activity**



SUBSTANCE USE

Alcohol

Marijuana

Vaping

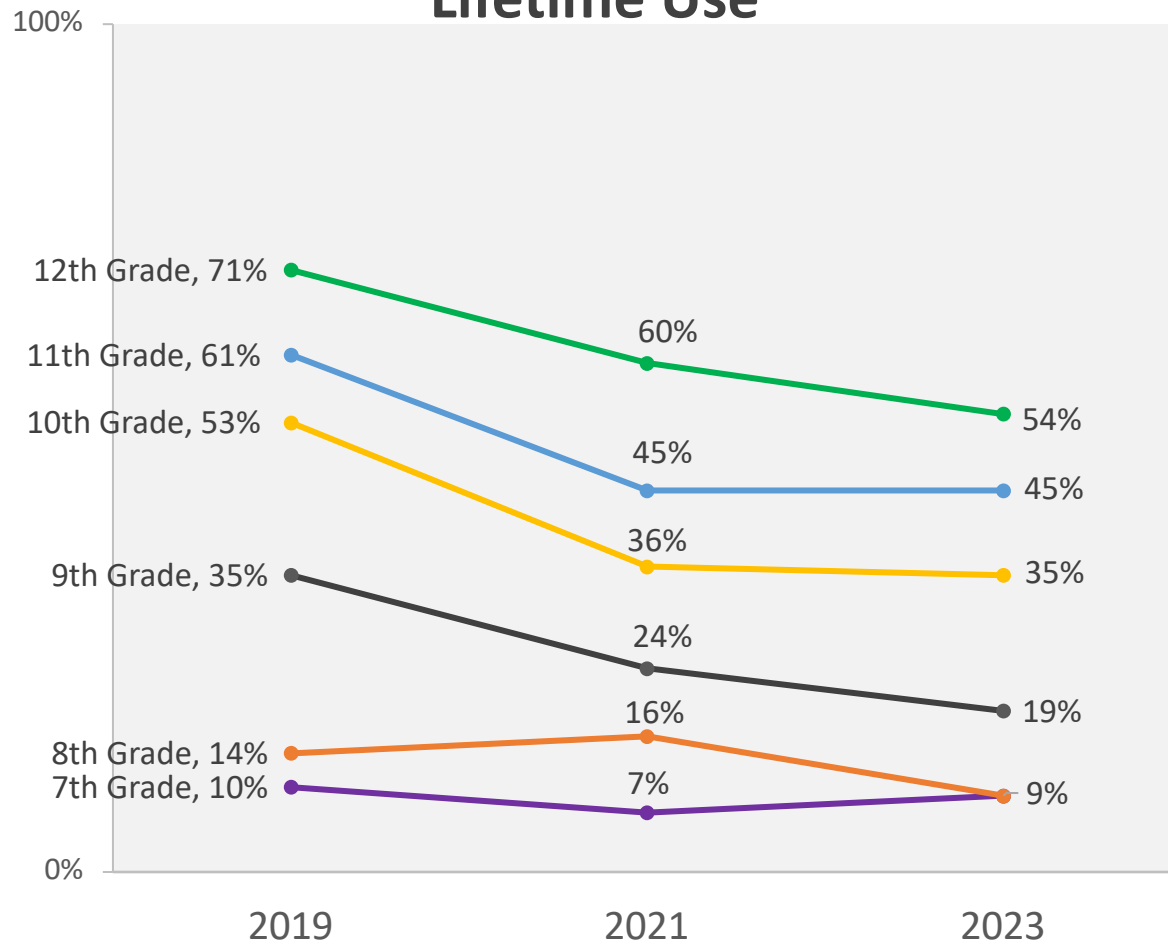
KEY TAKEAWAYS: SUBSTANCE USE

Overall ...

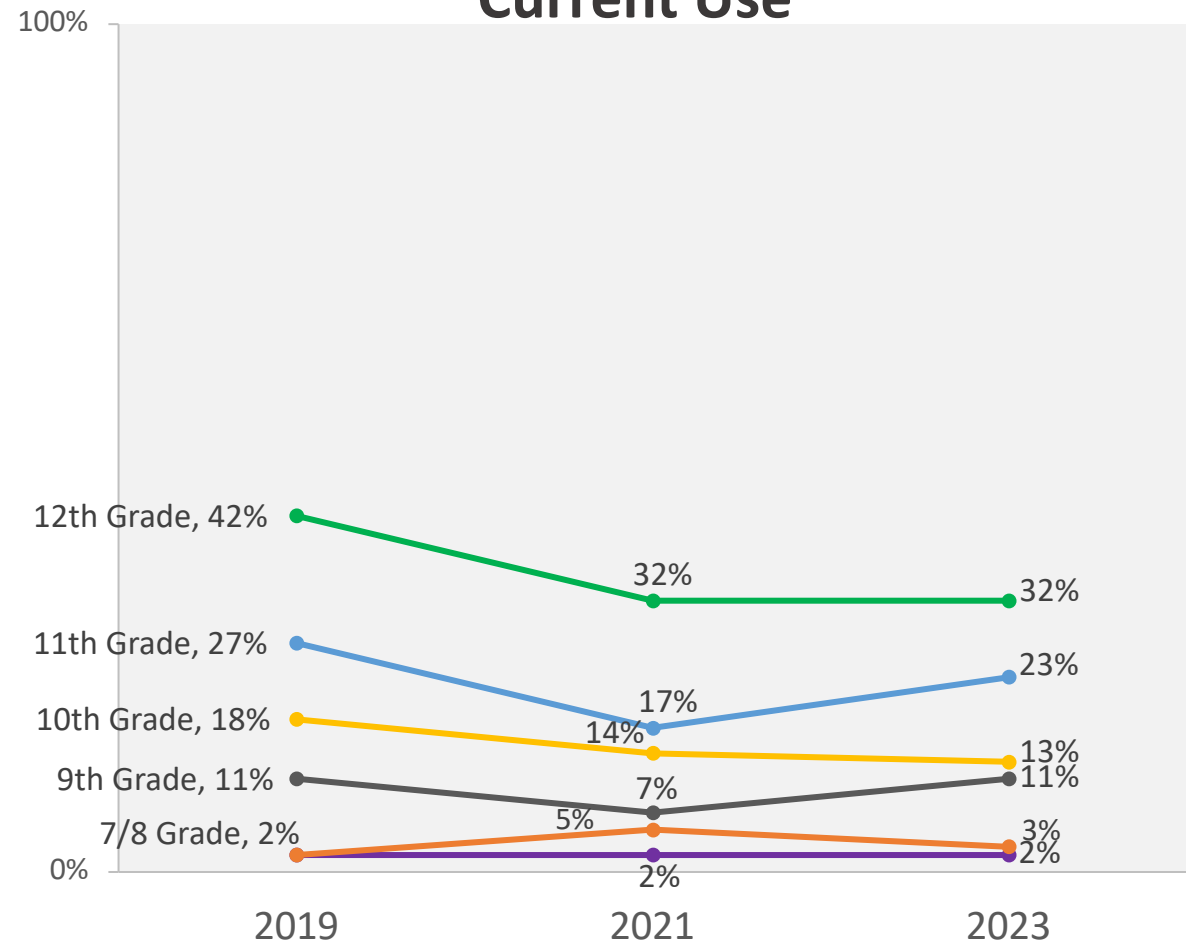
- Lifetime Substance Use is *decreasing* across all grade levels
- Current Substance Use is beginning to *level off* across all grades
- Alcohol is consistently considered the *least risky* substance by all grades
- Current middle school students are perceiving vaping as *more risky* than previous cohorts of middle school students

ALCOHOL USE by grade

Lifetime Use

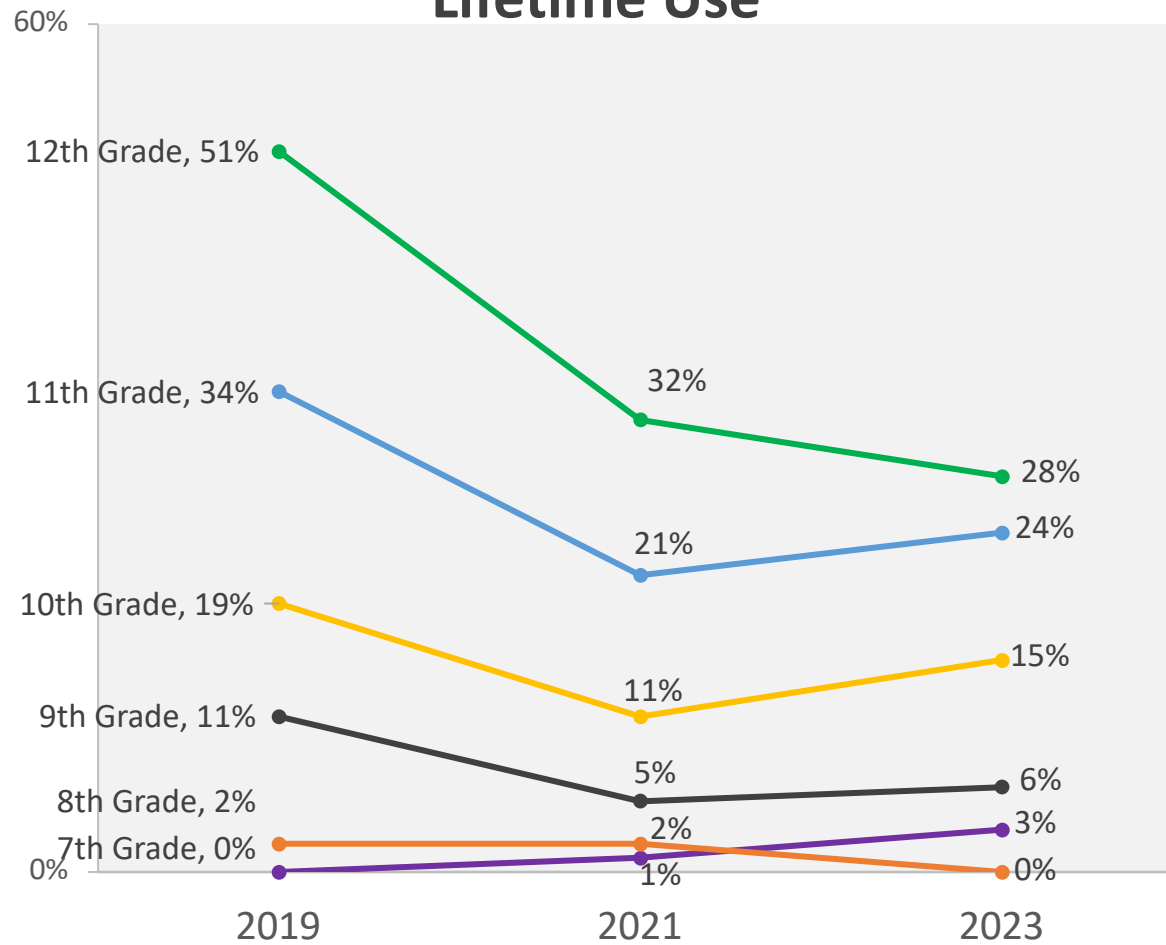


Current Use

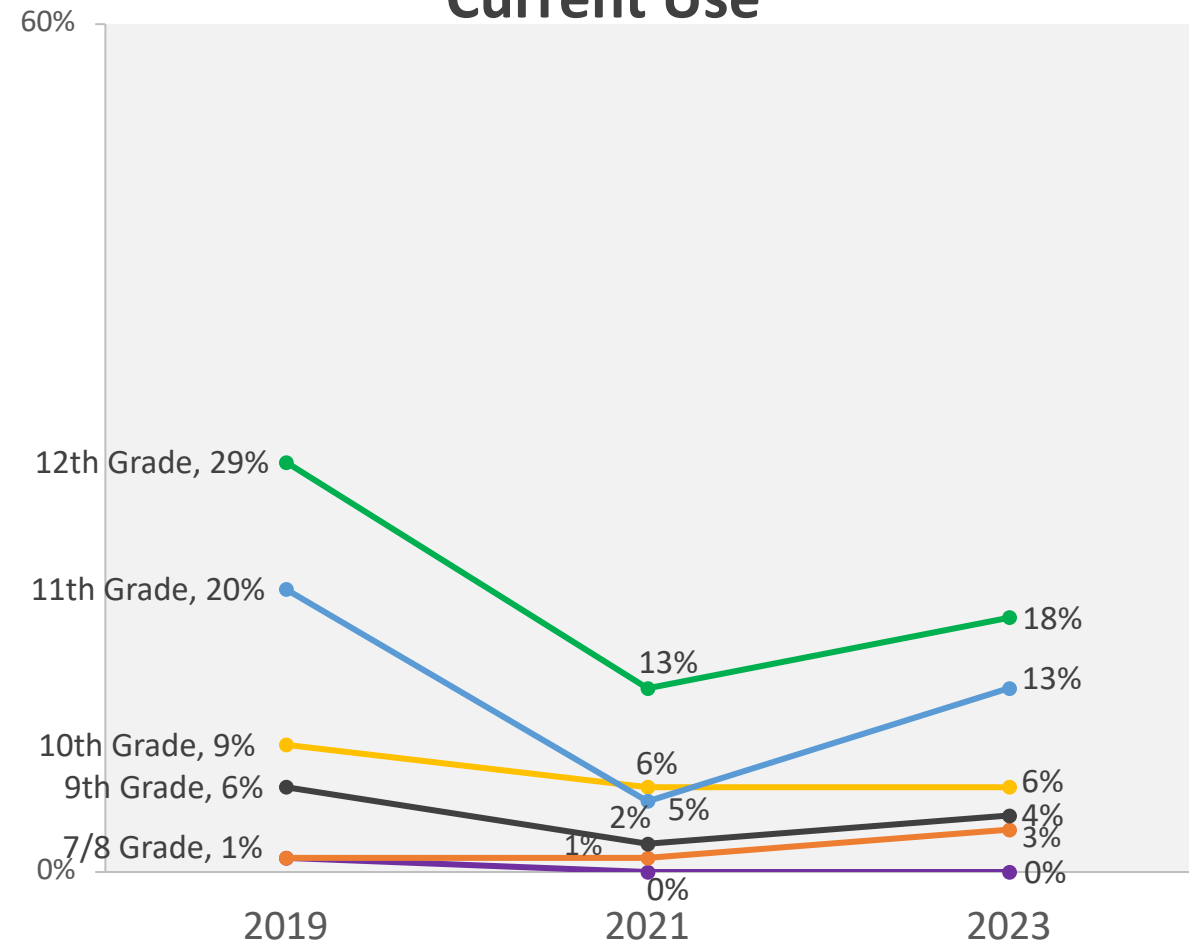


MARIJUANA USE by grade

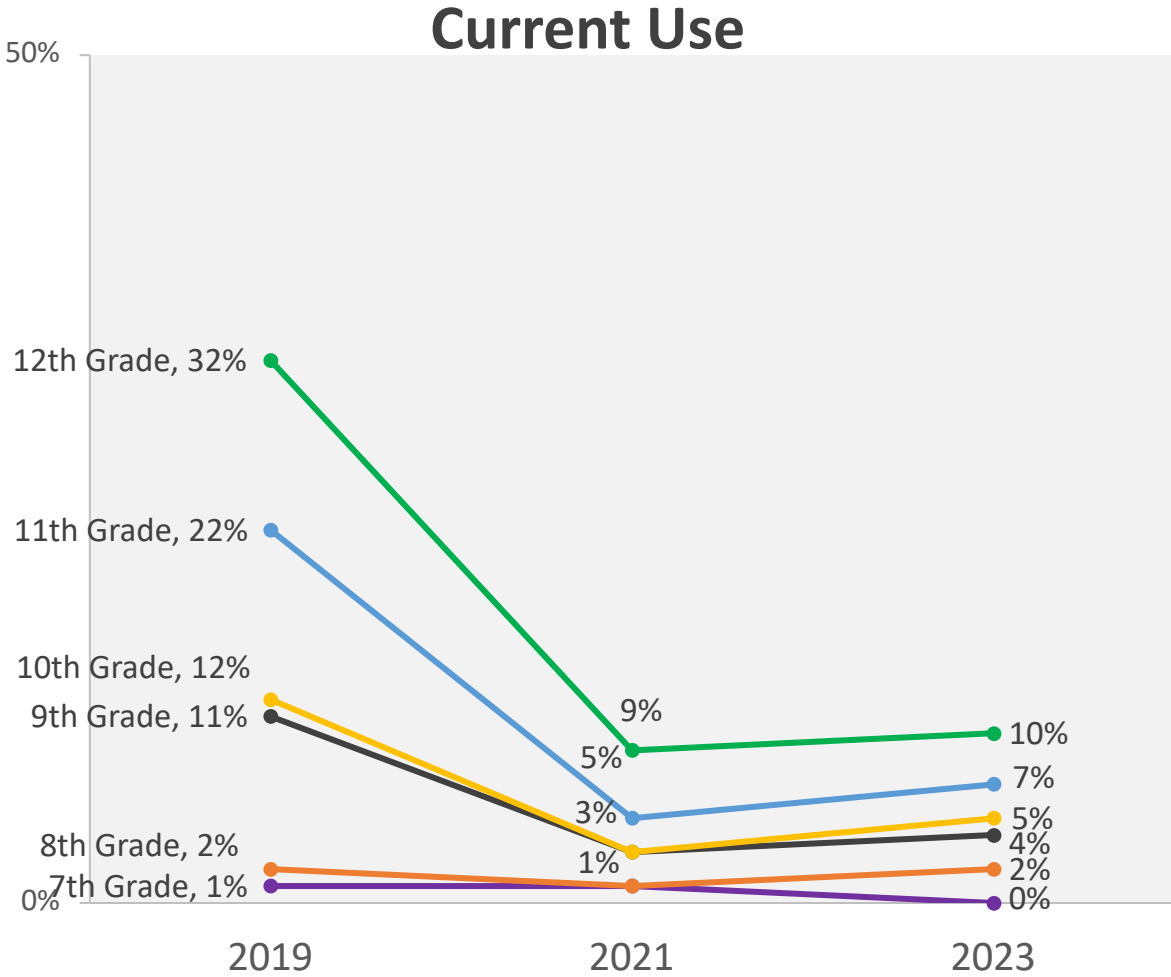
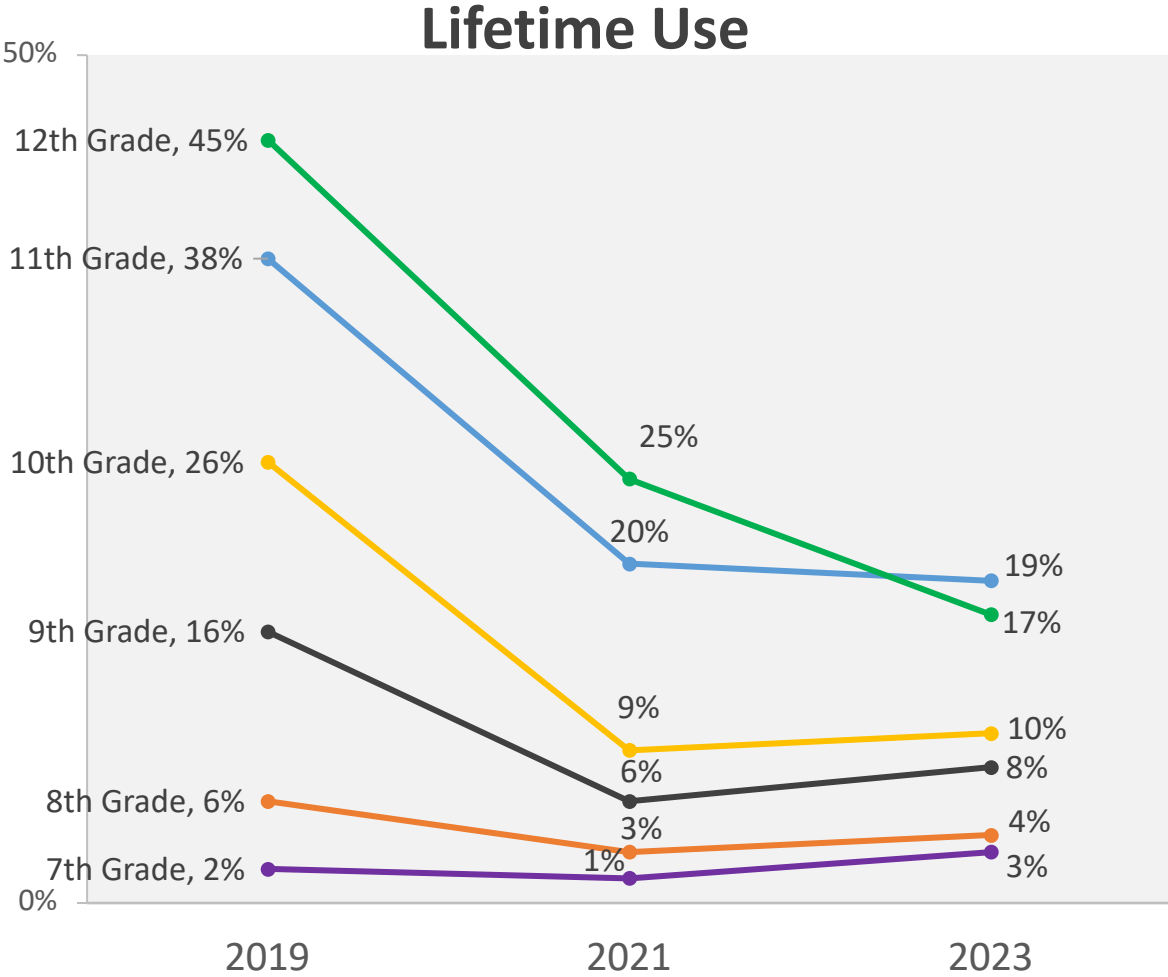
Lifetime Use



Current Use



ELECTRONIC VAPOR USE by grade



STUDENT *PERCEPTION* OF RISK/HARM by grade

	Vaping				Regular Alcohol Use				Marijuana Use			
	2019	2021	2023	Dif.	2019	2021	2023	Dif.	2019	2021	2023	Dif.
7 th Grade	--	95%	84%	▼	83%	81%	73%	▼	78%	88%	76%	▼
8 th Grade	--	89%	89%	---	88%	84%	80%	▼	72%	75%	77%	▲
9 th Grade	78%	85%	85%	---	81%	83%	74%	▼	65%	60%	68%	▲
10 th Grade	74%	88%	80%	▼	79%	80%	77%	▼	53%	56%	57%	▲
11 th Grade	71%	83%	85%	▲	80%	80%	74%	▼	38%	47%	46%	▼
12 th Grade	71%	82%	88%	▲	81%	81%	73%	▼	32%	44%	43%	▼



MENTAL HEALTH

- Self-Harm/Stress/Depression/Suicide
- Mental Health by grade
- Mental Health by gender identity
- Ranking of Stressors
- Coping Strategy

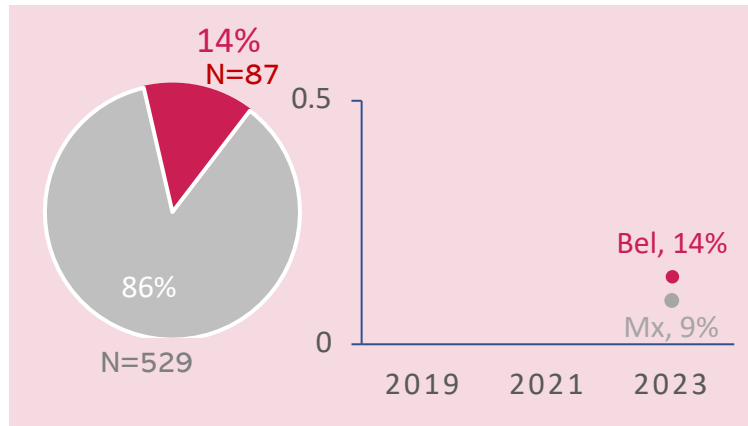
KEY TAKEAWAYS: MENTAL HEALTH

Overall ...

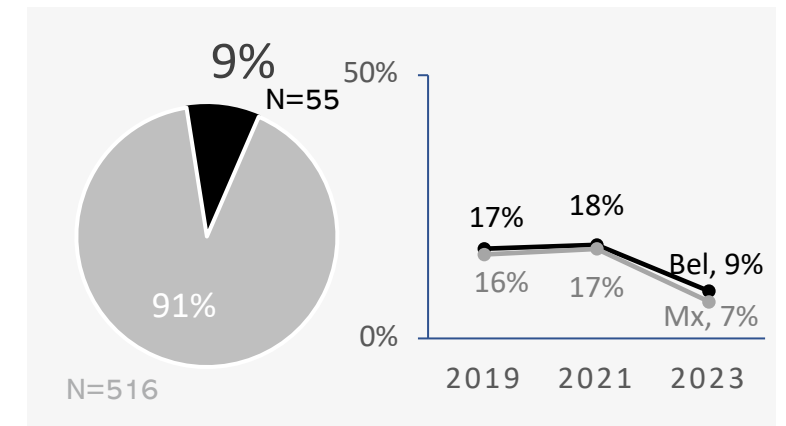
- Experiences of anxiety, depression, and/or considering suicide are associated with *increased substance use* (alcohol, marijuana, and vaping) for middle and high school students.
- Gender queer, black and multiracial students have *higher rates* of mental health issues and substance use across both middle and high school.
- Mental health problems among high school students *remain fairly level with time* and are generally comparable to the mental health rates across the Middlesex region.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES Middle School

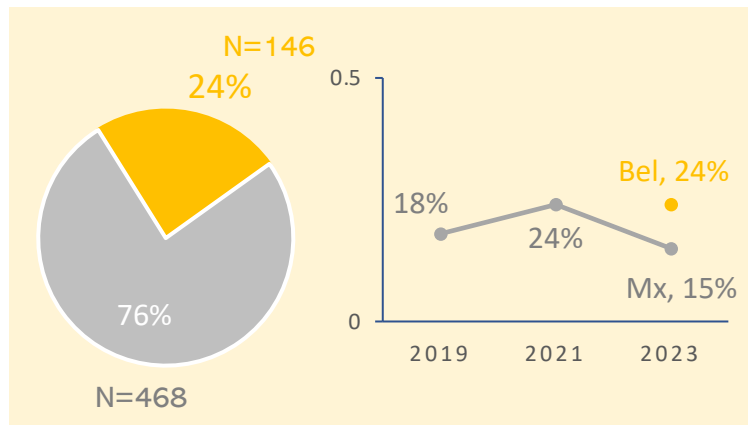
Self-harm*



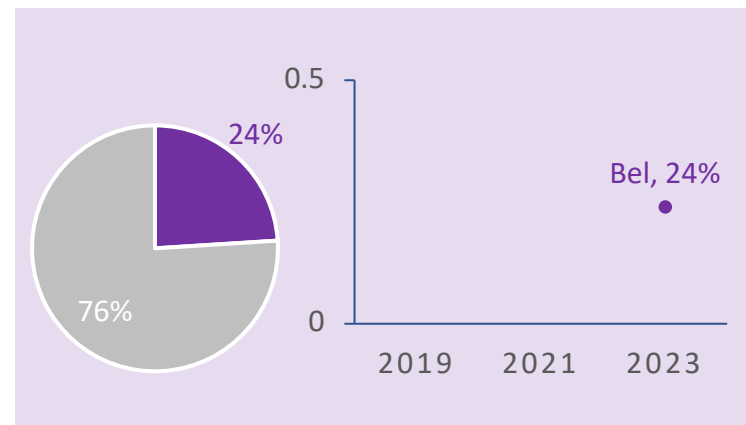
Consider Suicide



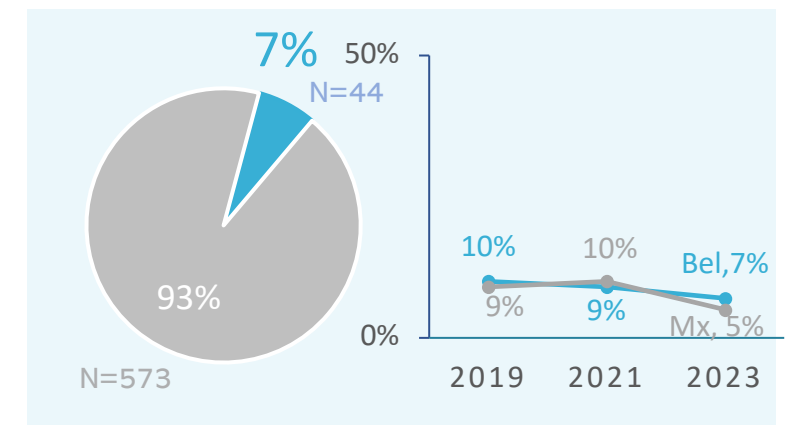
Depression*



Experience Anxiety**



Made a Suicide Plan

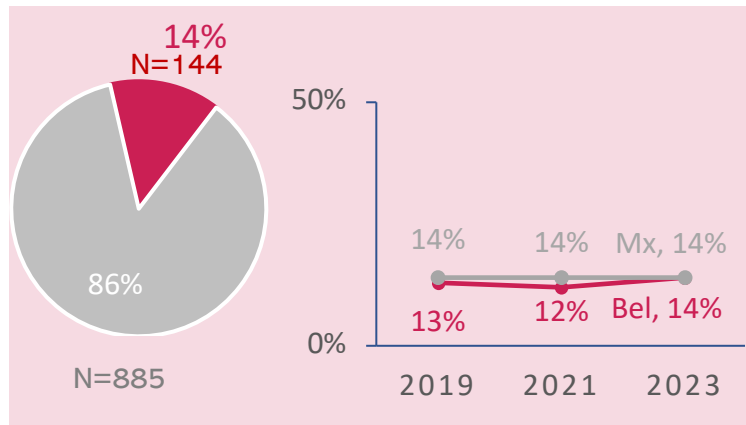


*Belmont asked for the first time in 2023; no trend data available

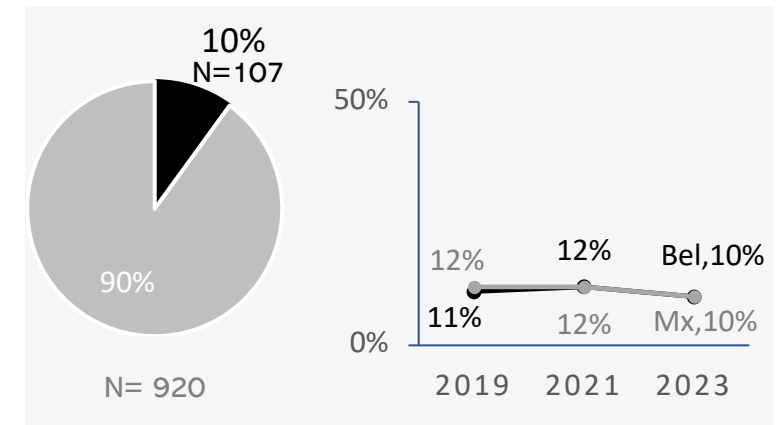
** No Middlesex data available

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES High School

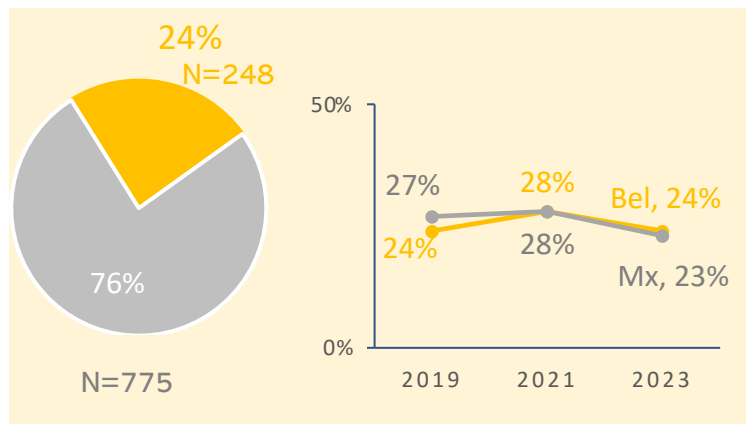
Self-harm



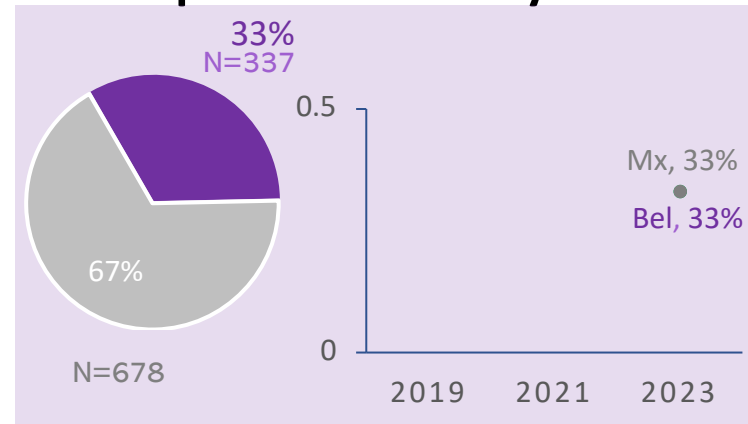
Consider Suicide



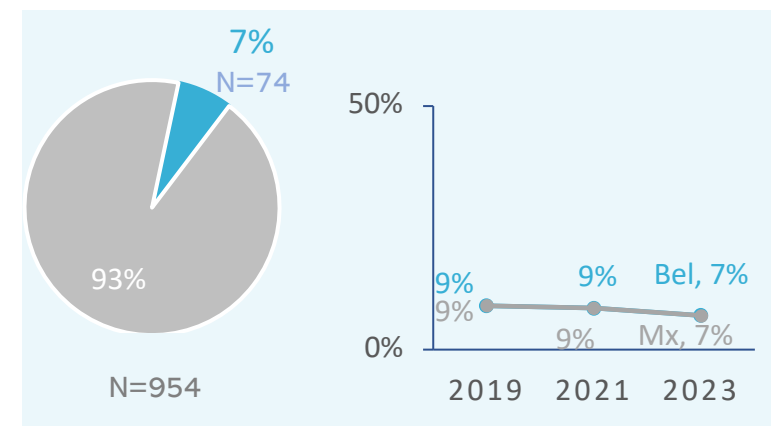
Depression



Experience Anxiety*



Made a Suicide Plan

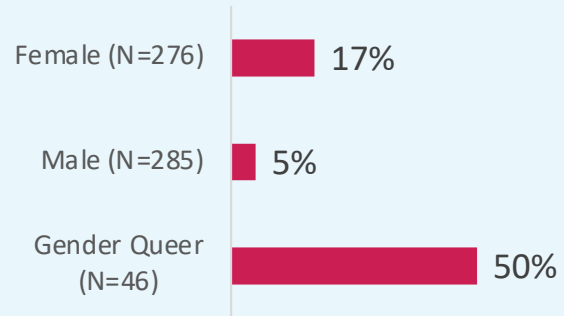


*Asked for the first time in 2023; no trend data available

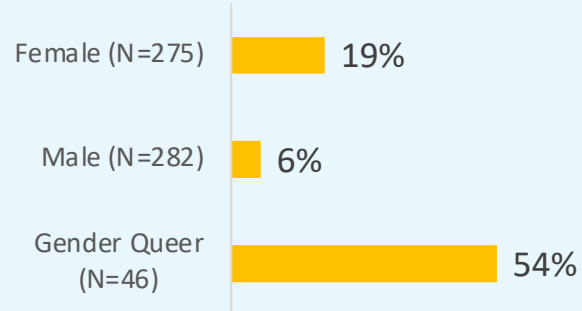
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by gender identity

Middle School

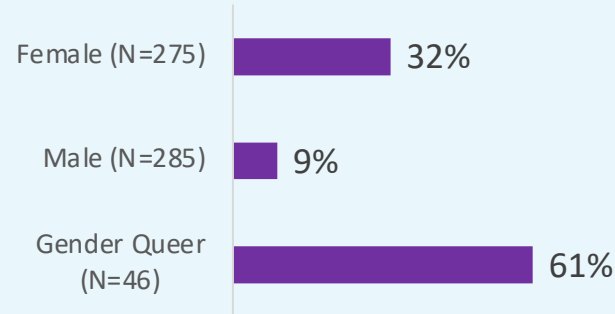
Self-harm



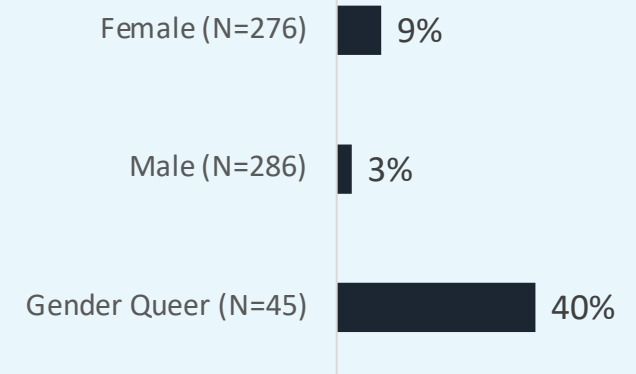
Depression



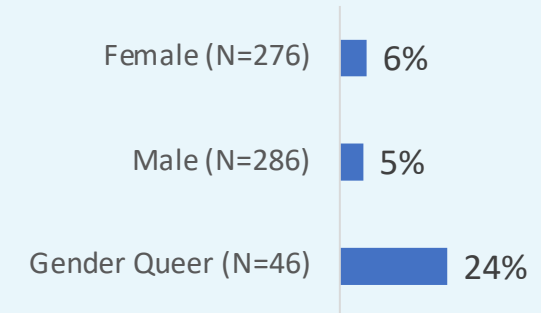
Experience Anxiety



Consider Suicide



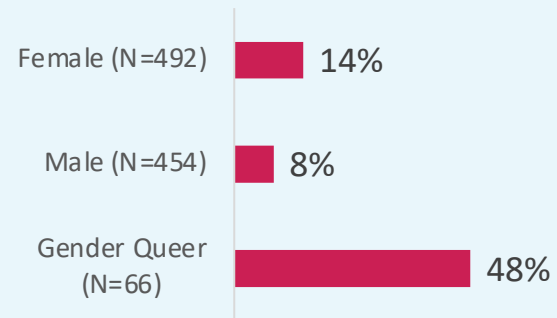
Made a Suicide Plan



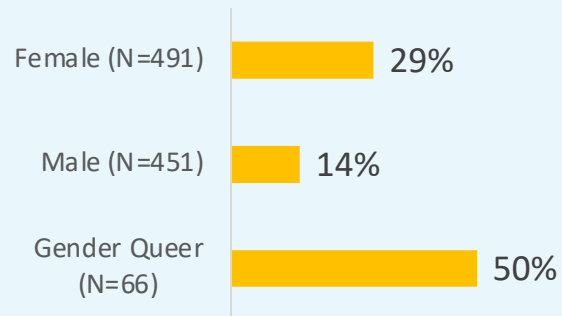
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by gender identity

High School

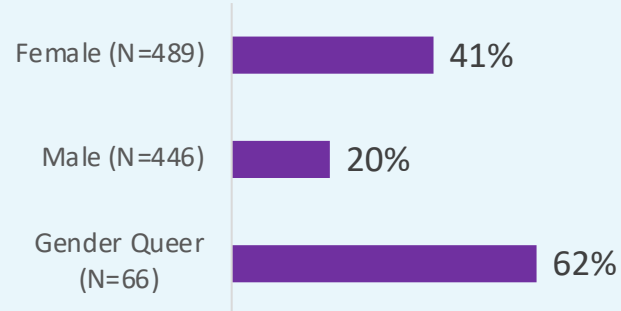
Self-harm



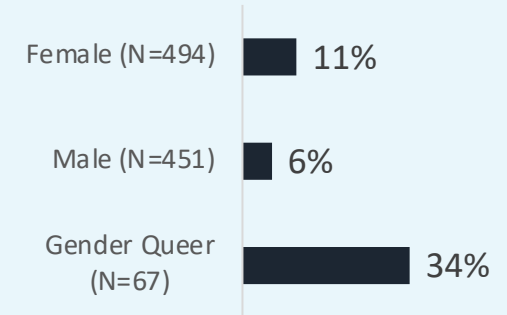
Depression



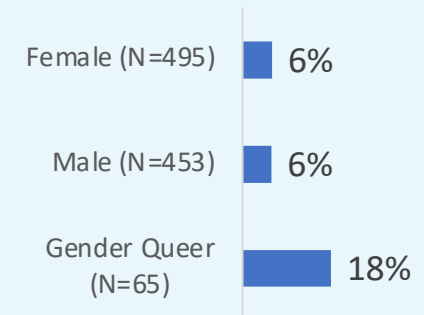
Experience Anxiety



Consider Suicide



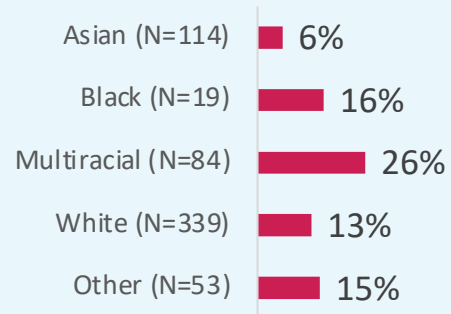
Made a Suicide Plan



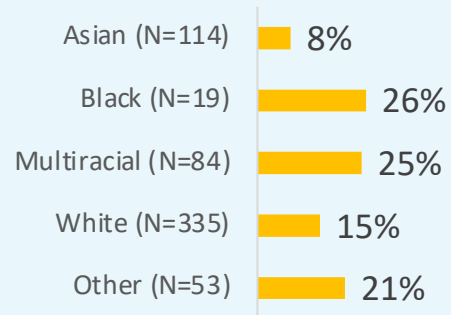
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by race

Middle School

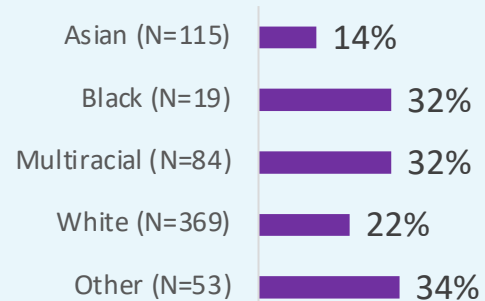
Self-harm



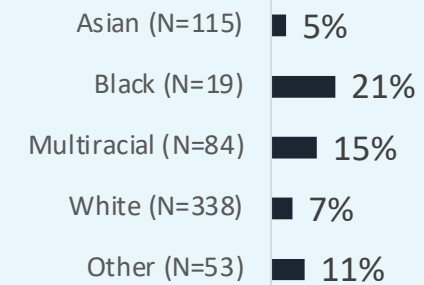
Depression



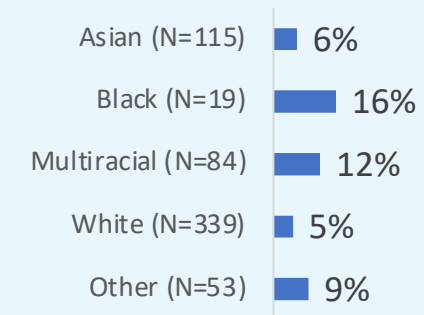
Experience Anxiety



Consider Suicide



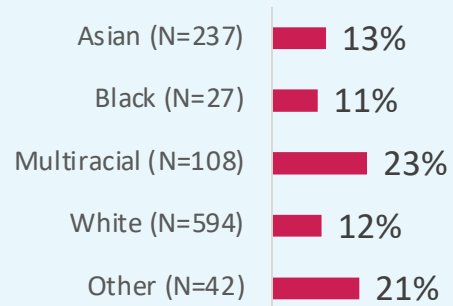
Made a Suicide Plan



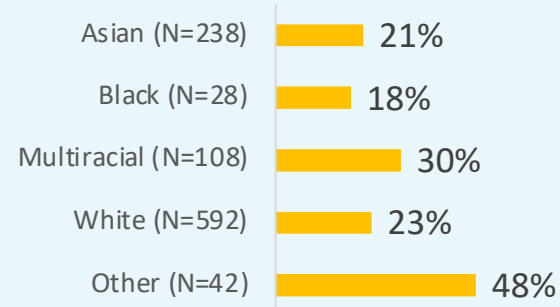
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by race

High School

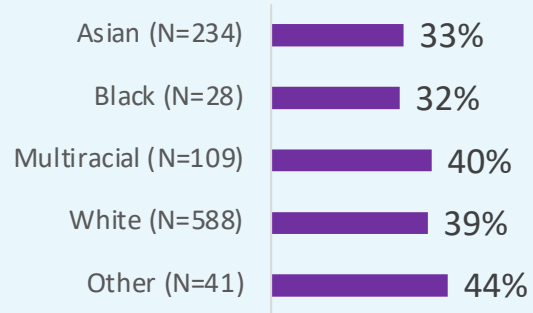
Self-harm



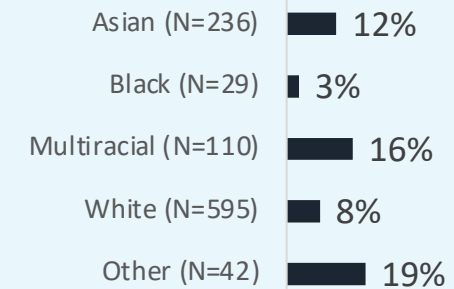
Depression



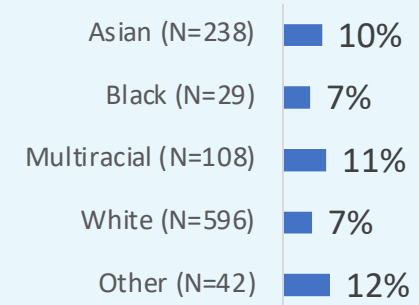
Experience Anxiety



Consider Suicide



Made a Suicide Plan



RANKING OF STRESSORS

Middle School (N=610-617)

Appearance Issues
31%

1

School Issues
29%

2

Future Issues
28%

3

Social Issues
25%

4

Family Issues
15%

5

High School (N=1023-1028)

School Issues
54%

Future Issues
46%

Appearance Issues
32%

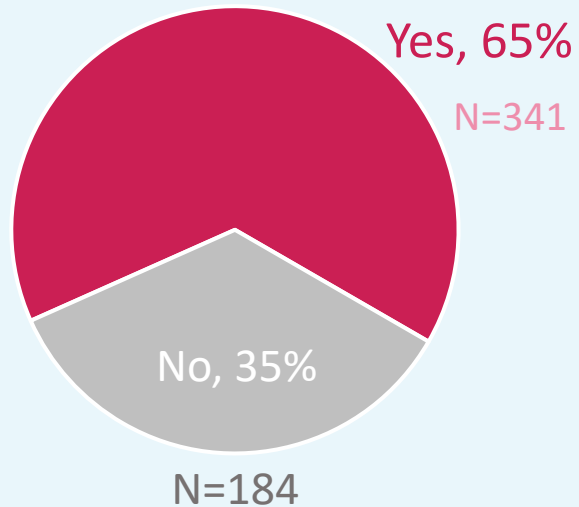
Social Issues
28%

Family Issues
15%

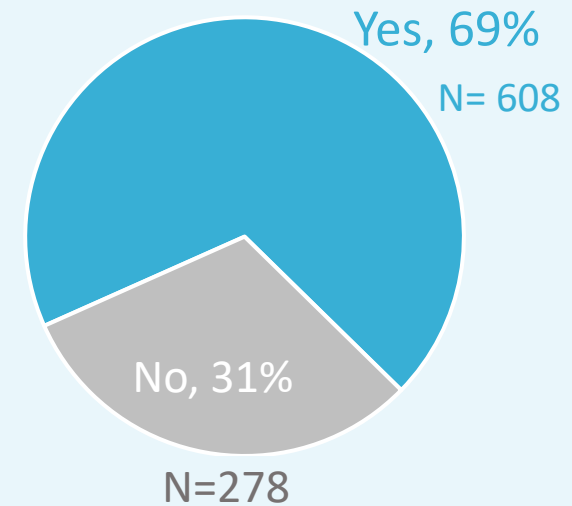
COPING STRATEGY

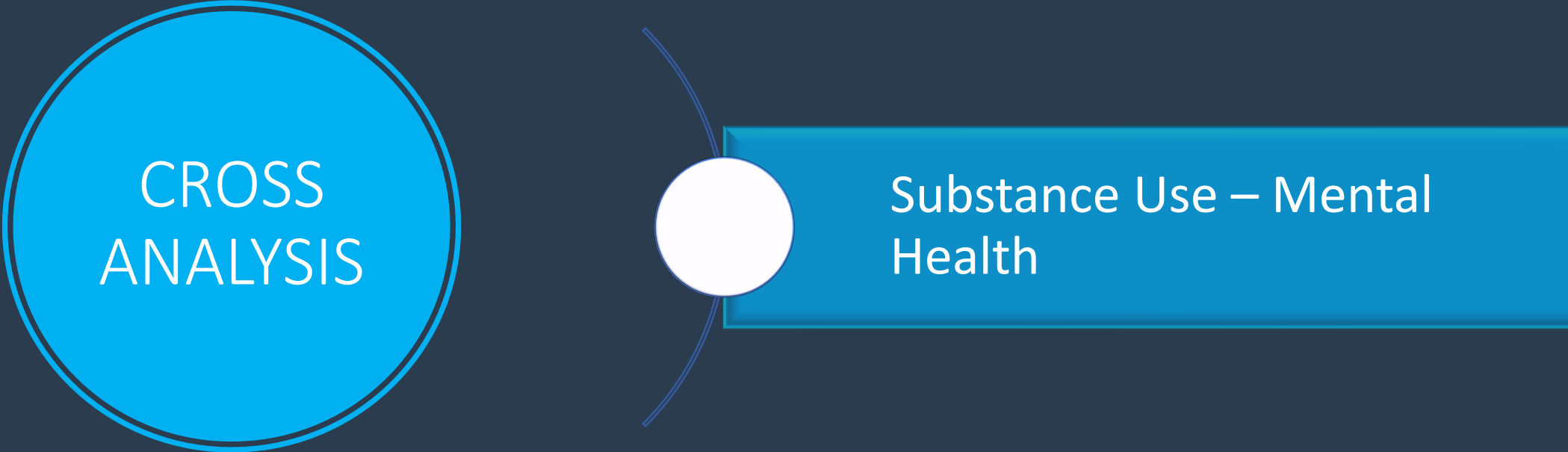
Do you have a healthy activity/behavior to help relieve stress?

Middle School



High School





A diagram consisting of a large blue circle on the left and a blue rectangular box on the right. A white circle is positioned between them, with two thin blue curved lines connecting the circle to the rectangle. The text 'CROSS ANALYSIS' is inside the circle, and 'Substance Use – Mental Health' is inside the rectangle.

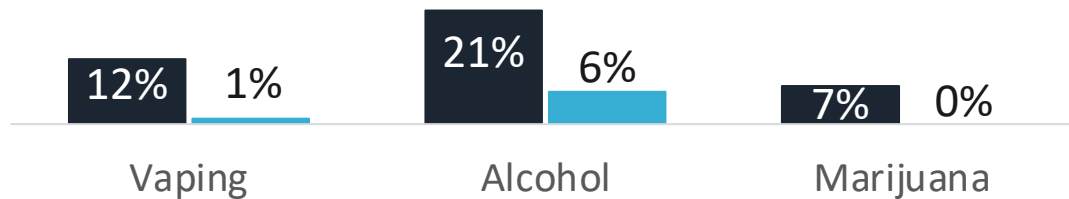
CROSS
ANALYSIS

Substance Use – Mental
Health

Lifetime substance use among students who *experience anxiety*

Middle School

Percentage of students using substances



■ Experience anxiety (N=144-146)

■ Not experiencing anxiety (N=467-468)

Of those MS students who experience anxiety...

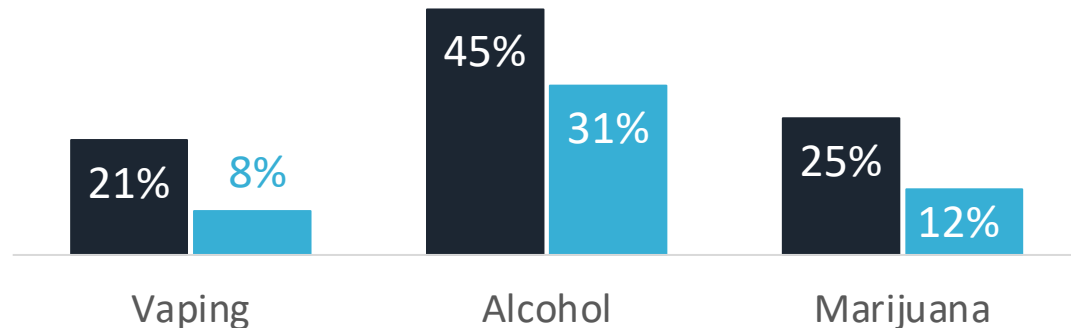
- 12% vape
- 21% consume alcohol
- 7% use marijuana

Those who don't experience anxiety are less likely to use substances.

Lifetime substance use among students who *experience anxiety*

High School

Percentage of students using substances



■ Experience anxiety (N=336)

■ Not experiencing anxiety (N=674-676)

Of those HS students who experience anxiety...

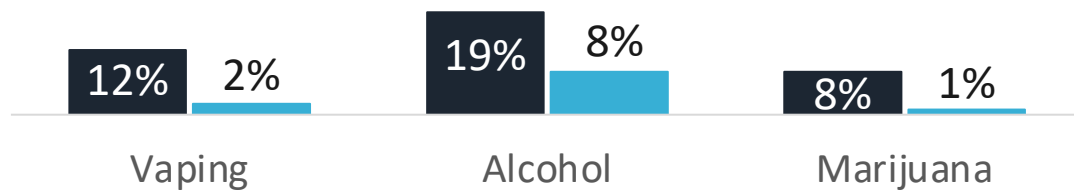
- 21% vape
- 45% consume alcohol
- 25% use marijuana

Those who don't experience anxiety are less likely to use substances.

Lifetime substance use among students who *experience depression*

Middle School

Percentage of students using substances



Of those MS students who experience depression...

- 12% vape
- 19% consume alcohol
- 8% use marijuana

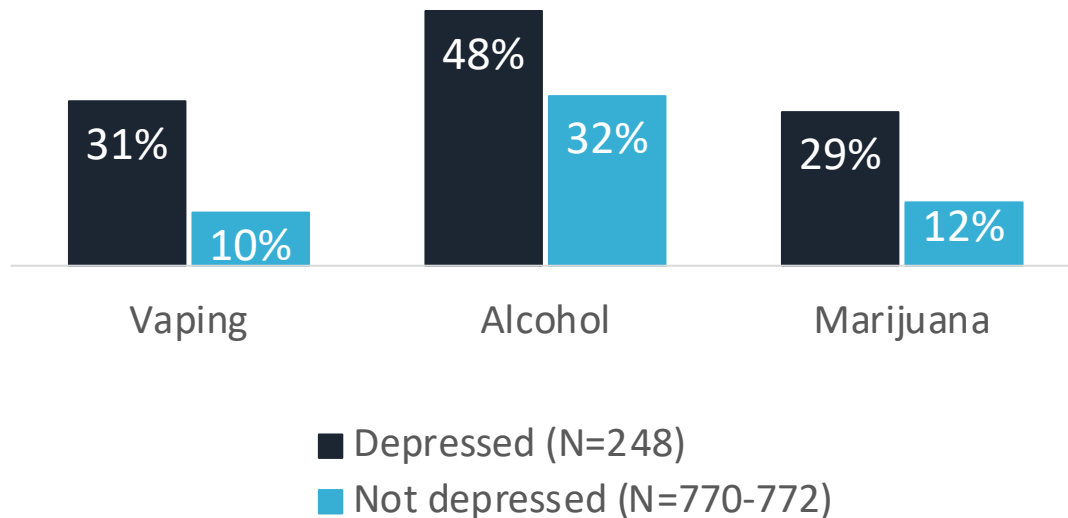
Those who don't experience from depression are less likely to use substances.

■ Depressed (N=98-99) ■ Not depressed (N=511-513)

Lifetime substance use among students who *experience depression*

High School

Percentage of students using substances



Of those HS students who experience depression...

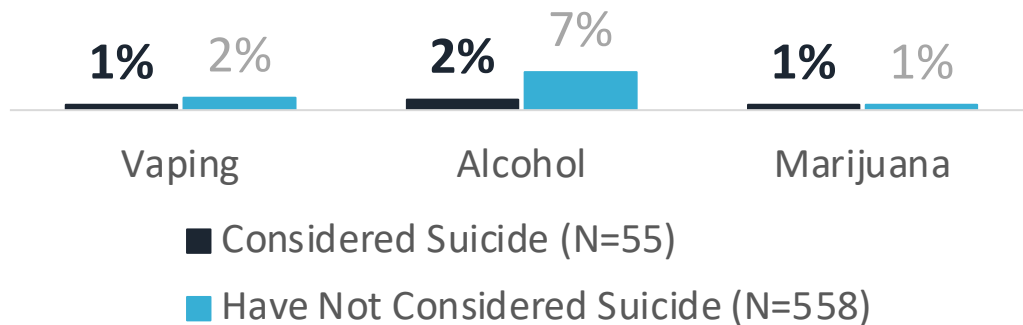
- 31% vape
- 48% consume alcohol
- 29% use marijuana

Those who don't experience depression are less likely to use substances.

Lifetime substance use among students who *consider suicide*

Middle School

Percentage of students using substances



Of those MS students who consider suicide...

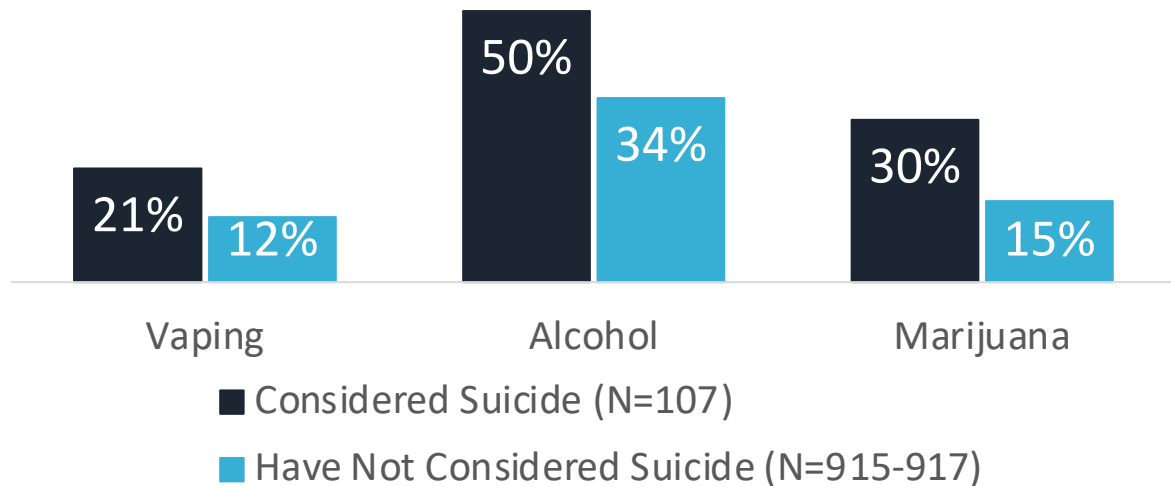
- 1% vape
- 2% consume alcohol
- 1% use marijuana

No differences in use between those who have/have not considered suicide.

Lifetime substance use among students who *consider suicide*

High School

Percentage of students using substances



Of those HS students who consider suicide...

- 21% vape
- 50% consume alcohol
- 30% use marijuana

Those who have not considered suicide are less likely to use substances.

NEXT STEPS:

The BWC will meet with the School Dept./School Committee to explore how this data might be used to best support students.

Questions/Discussion

Have more questions? Please contact:

Lisa Gibalerio

lisa_gibalerio@waysideyouth.org

Maeve Kennelly

maeve_kennelly@waysideyouth.org