



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
- **Eda Galvez** 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

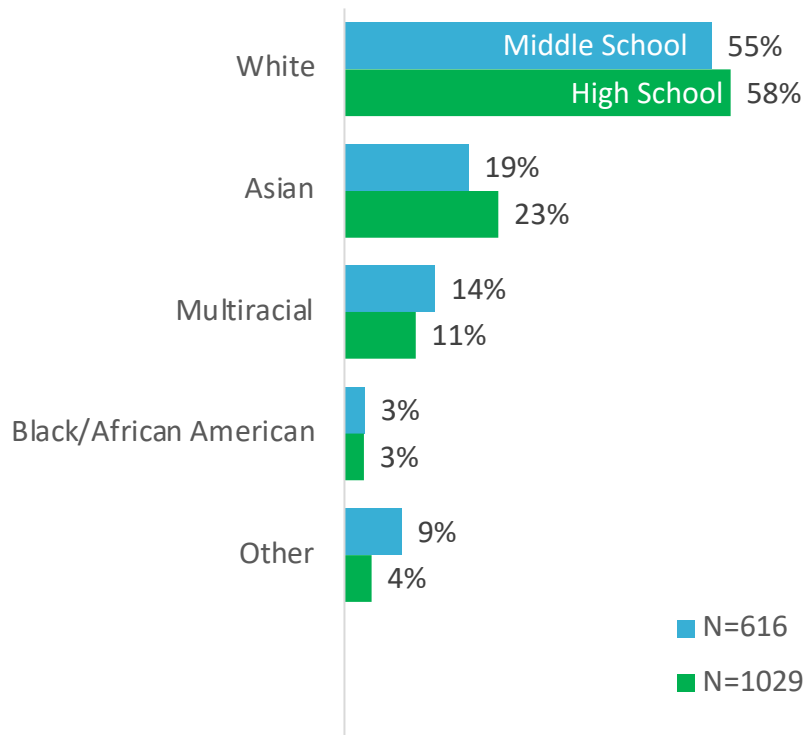
Grade	Responses
7 <sup>th</sup>	278
8 <sup>th</sup>	338
<b>Total</b>	<b>616</b>

## High School

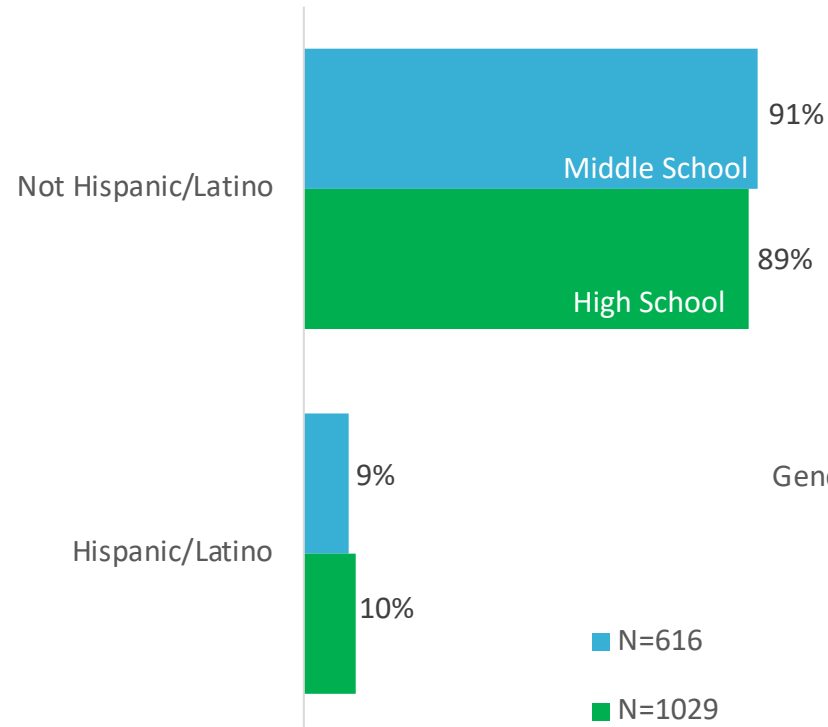
Grade	Responses
9 <sup>th</sup>	320
10 <sup>th</sup>	292
11 <sup>th</sup>	225
12 <sup>th</sup>	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>1029</b>

# RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

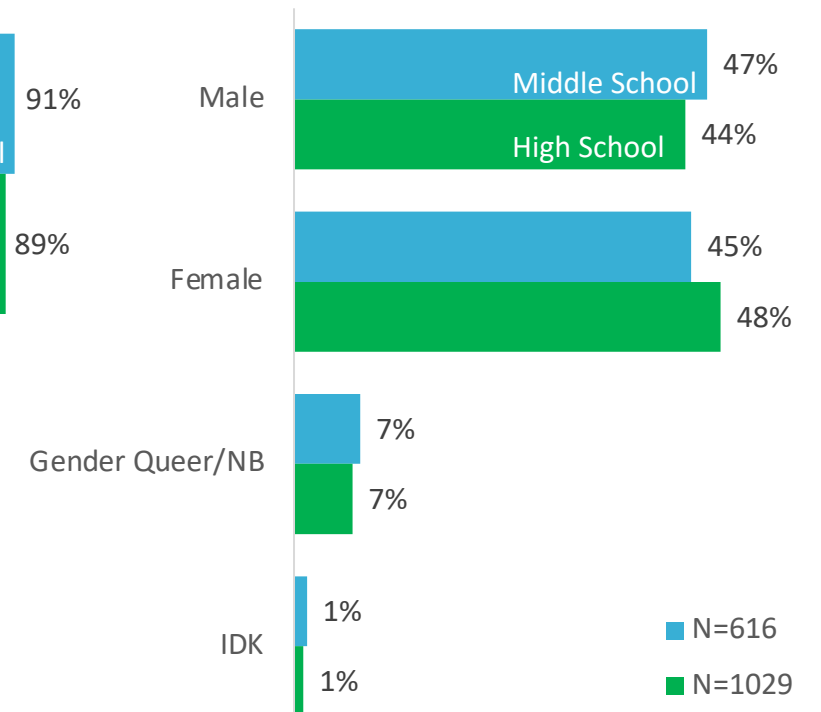
## Race



## Ethnicity



## Gender Identity



SUBSTANCE  
USE

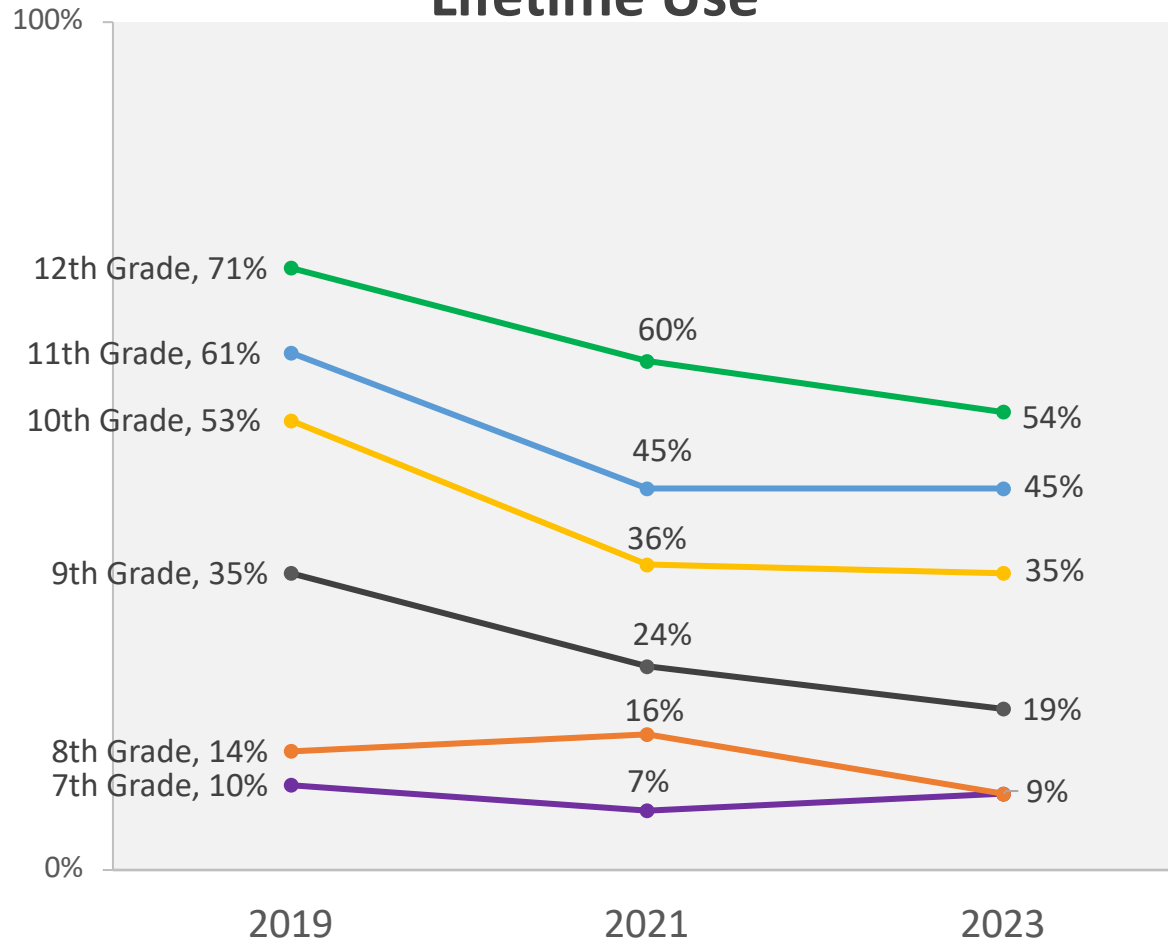
Alcohol

Marijuana

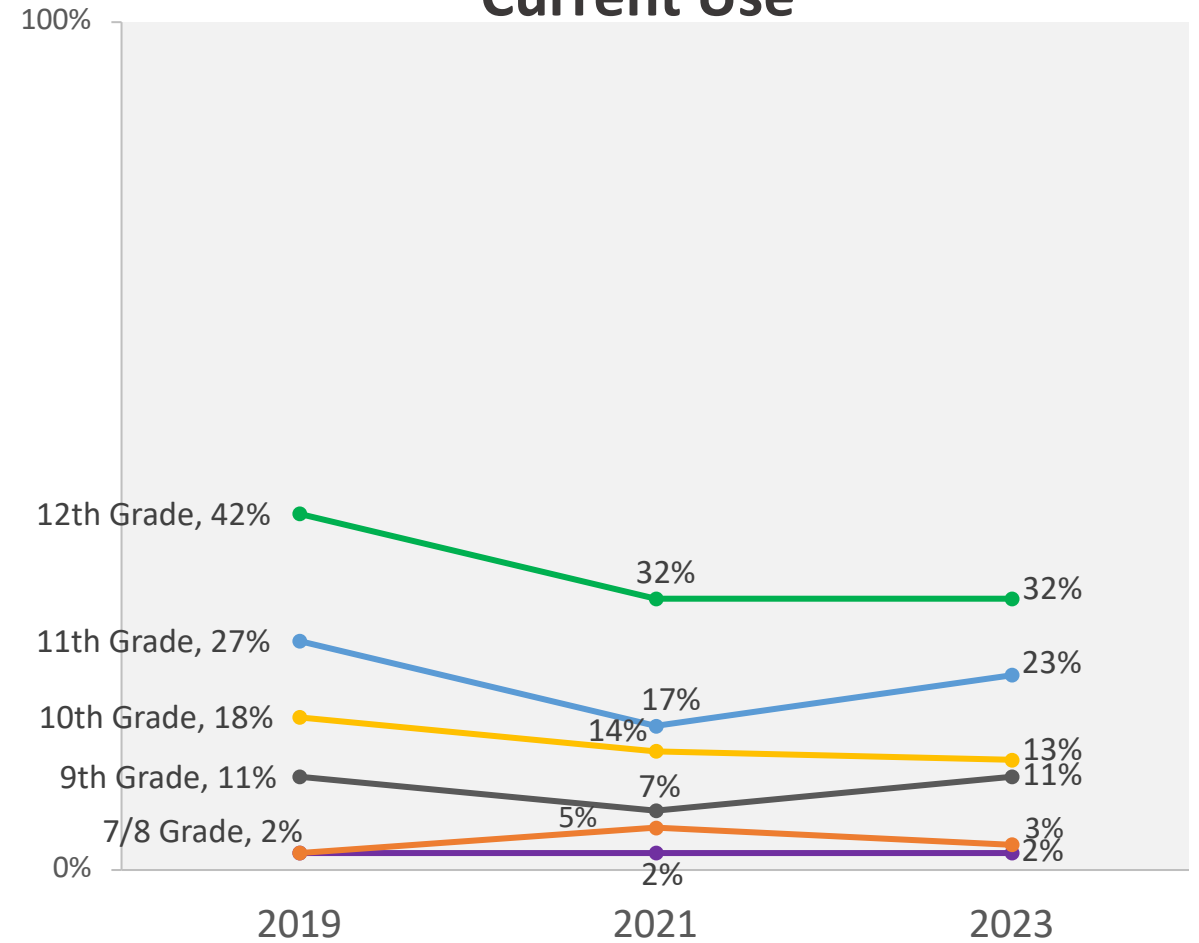
Vaping

# ALCOHOL USE by grade

## Lifetime Use

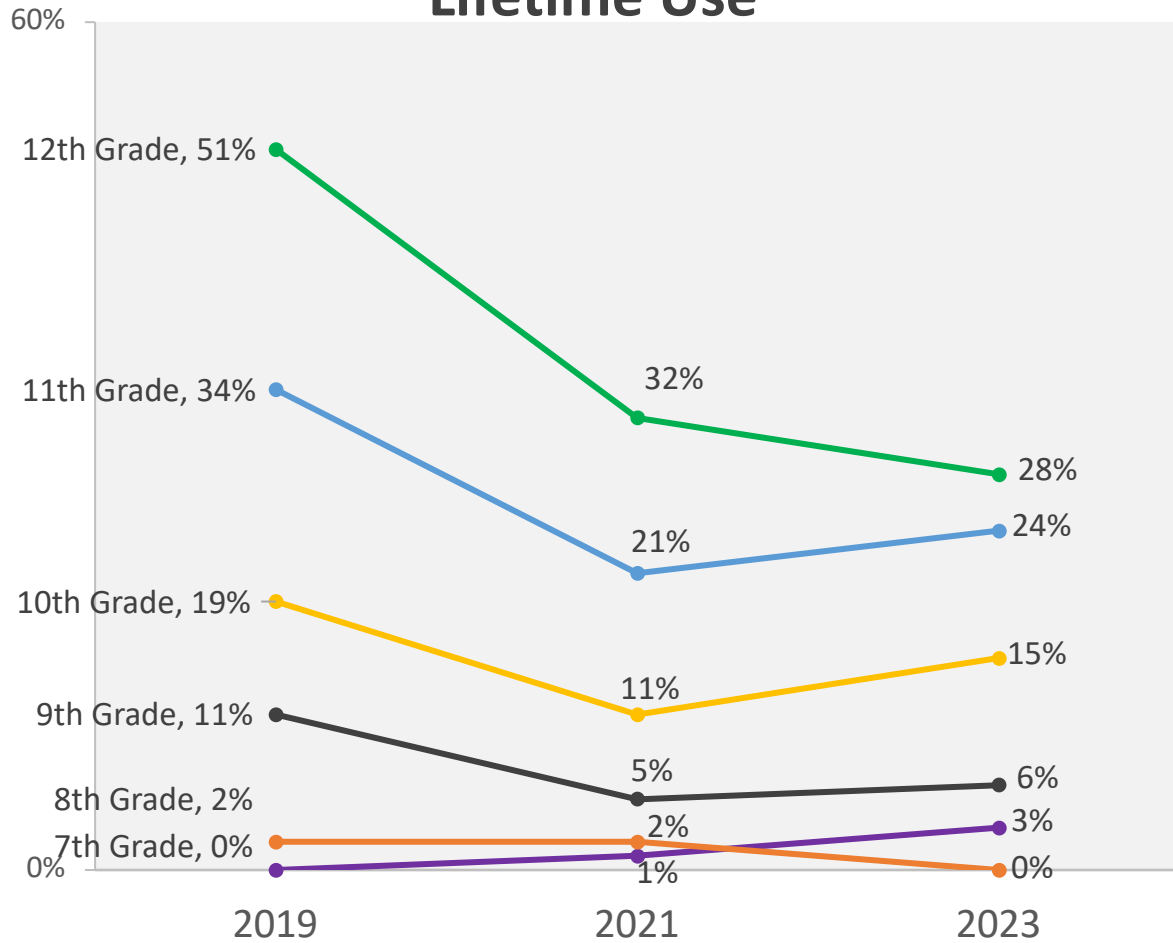


## Current Use

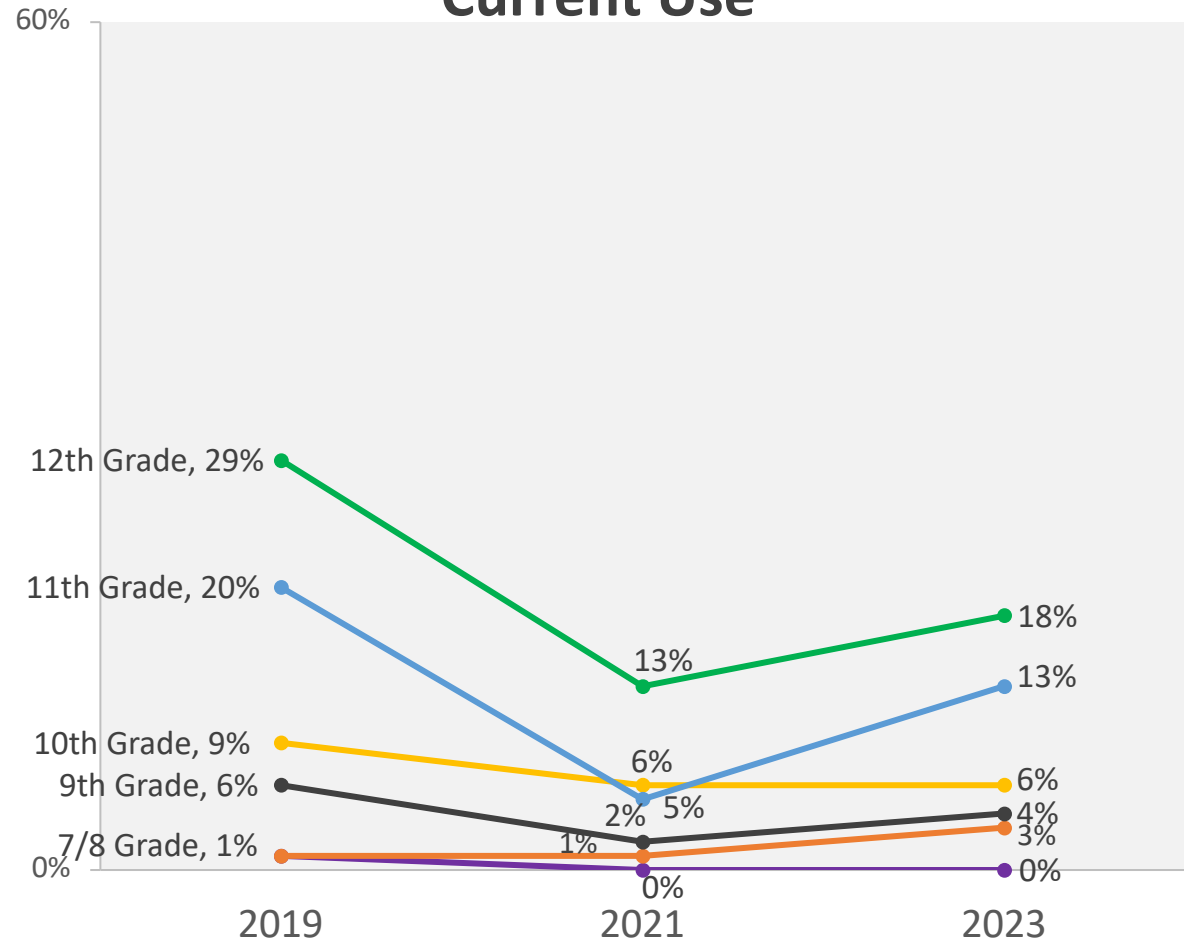


# MARIJUANA USE by grade

## Lifetime Use



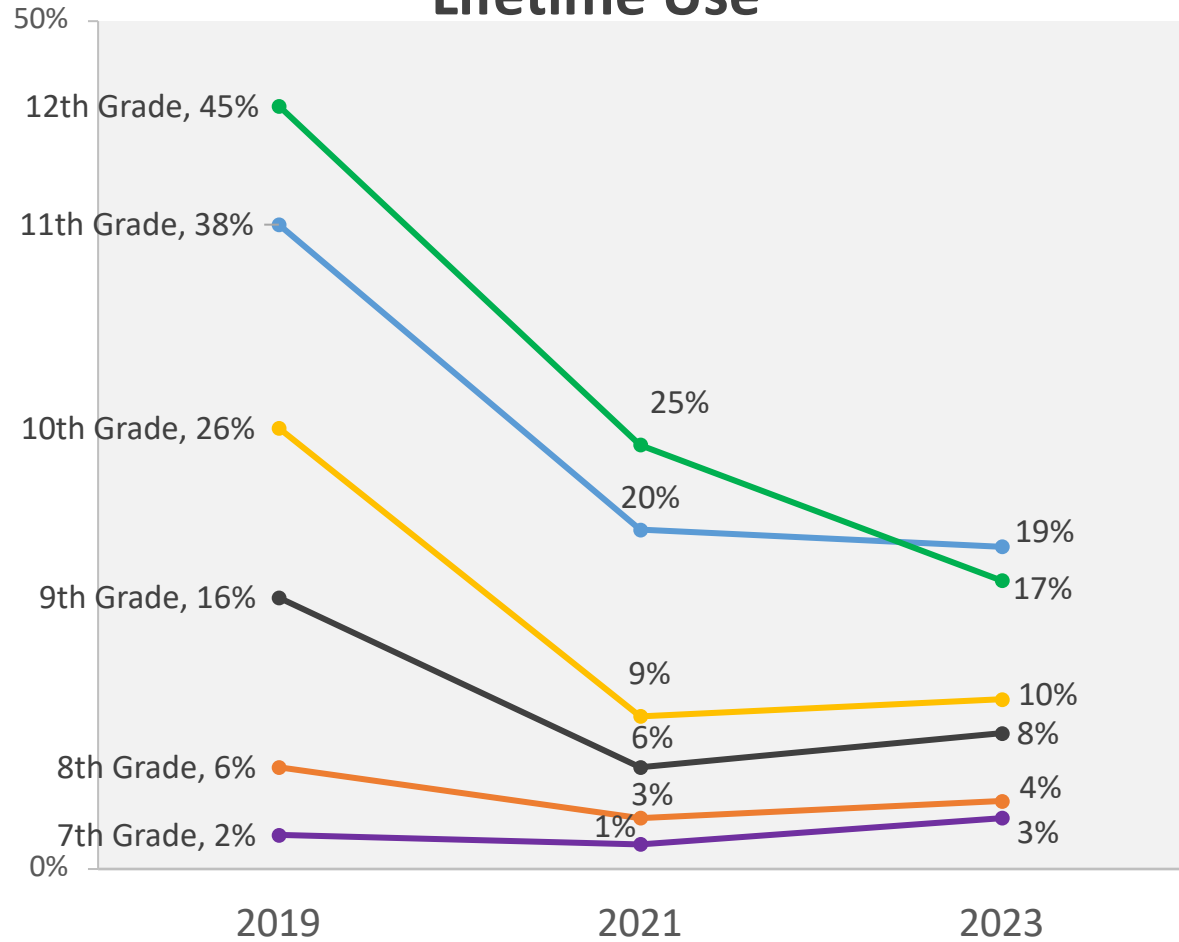
## Current Use



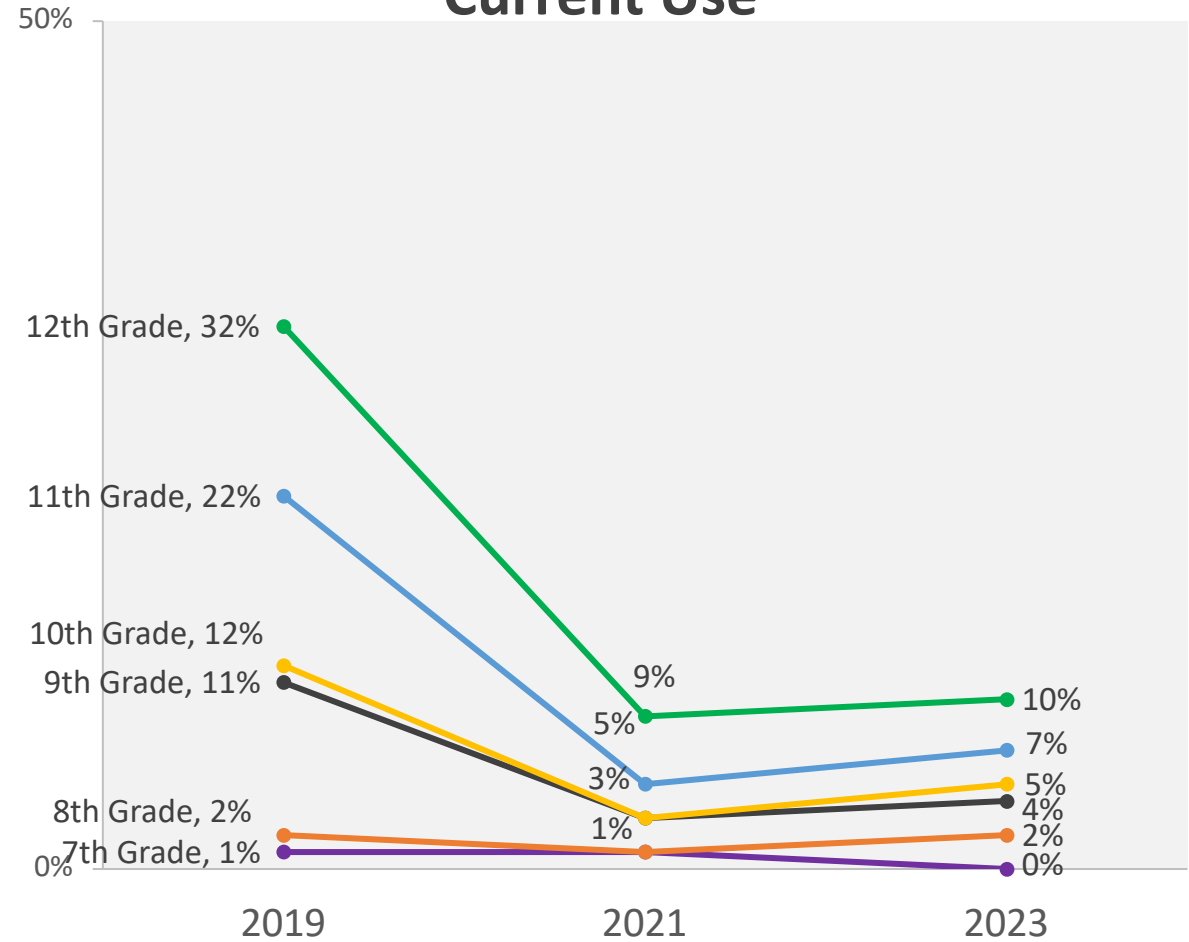


# ELECTRONIC VAPOR USE by grade

## Lifetime Use



## Current Use



# 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 <sup>th</sup> Grade	--	95%	84%	▼	83%	81%	73%	▼	78%	88%	76%	▼
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	--	89%	89%	---	88%	84%	80%	▼	72%	75%	77%	▲
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	78%	85%	85%	---	81%	83%	74%	▼	65%	60%	68%	▲
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	74%	88%	80%	▼	79%	80%	77%	▼	53%	56%	57%	▲
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	71%	83%	85%	▲	80%	80%	74%	▼	38%	47%	46%	▼
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	71%	82%	88%	▲	81%	81%	73%	▼	32%	44%	43%	▼

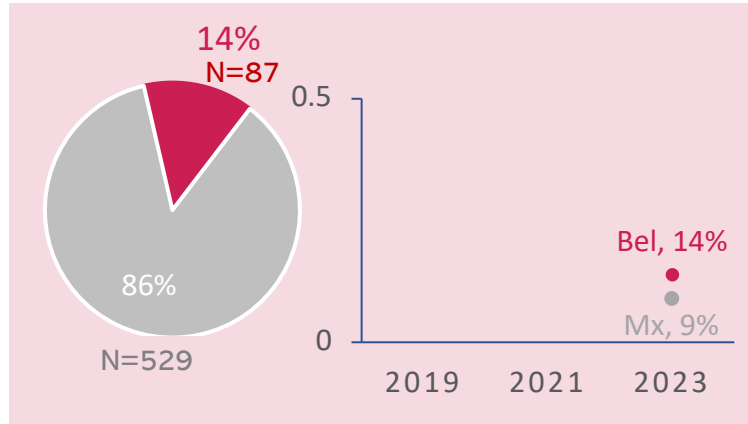


# MENTAL HEALTH

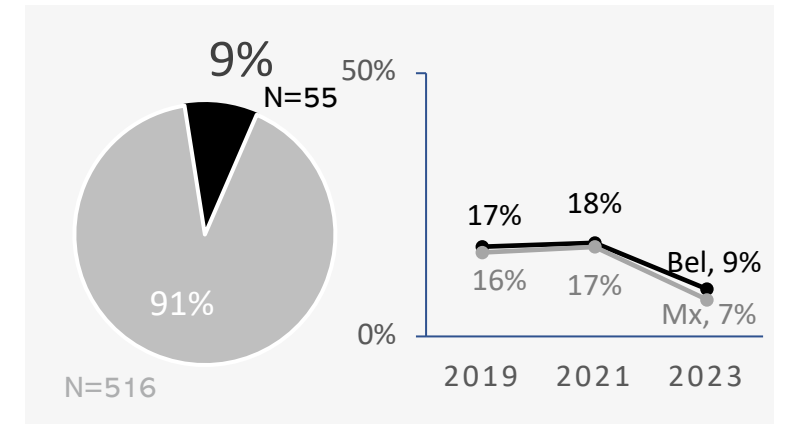
- Self-Harm/Stress/Depression/Suicide
- Mental Health by grade
- Mental Health by gender identity
- Ranking of Stressors
- Coping Strategy

# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES Middle School

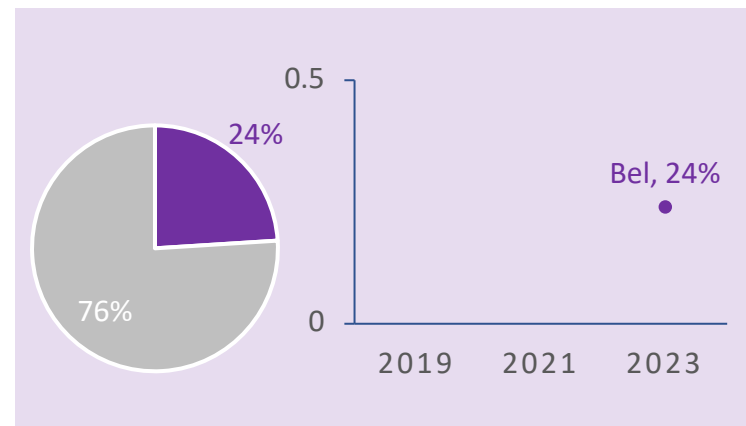
## Self-harm\*



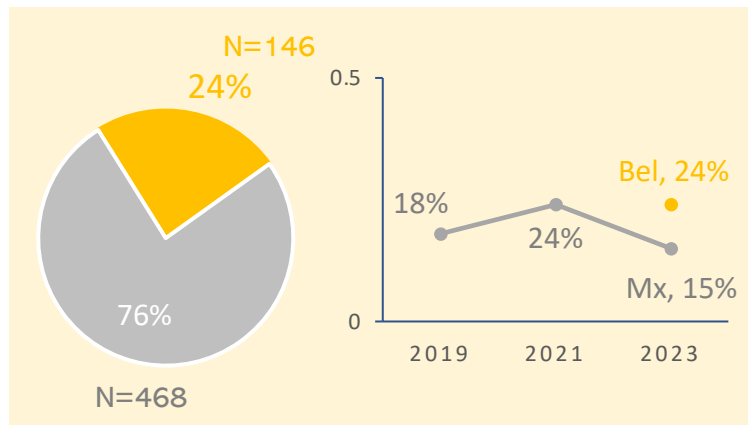
## Consider Suicide



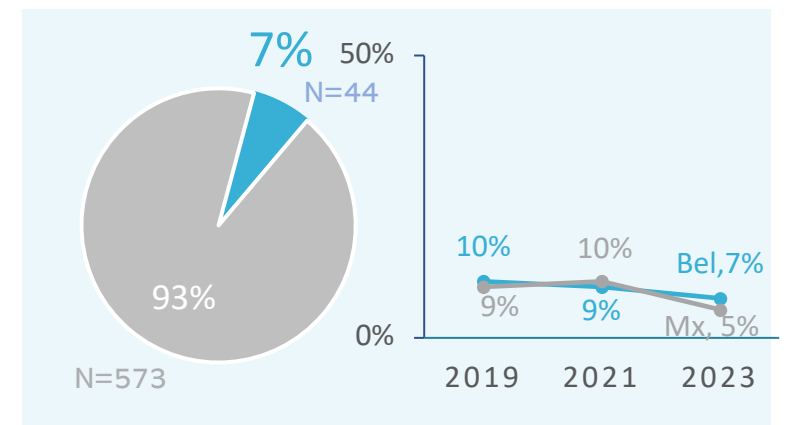
## Experience Anxiety\*\*



## Depression\*



## Made a Suicide Plan

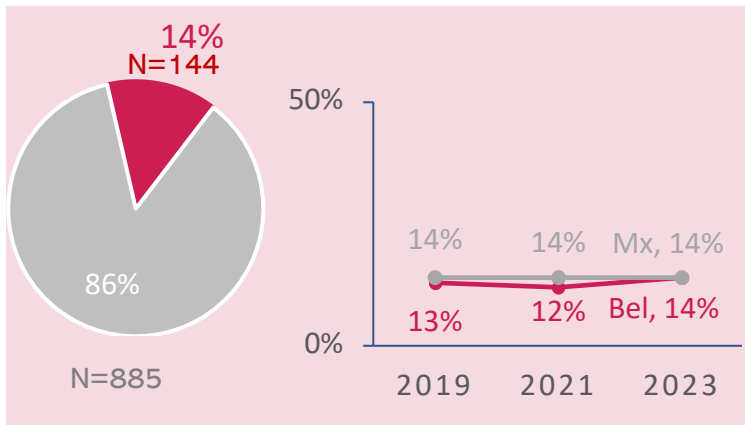


\*Belmont asked for the first time in 2023; no trend data available

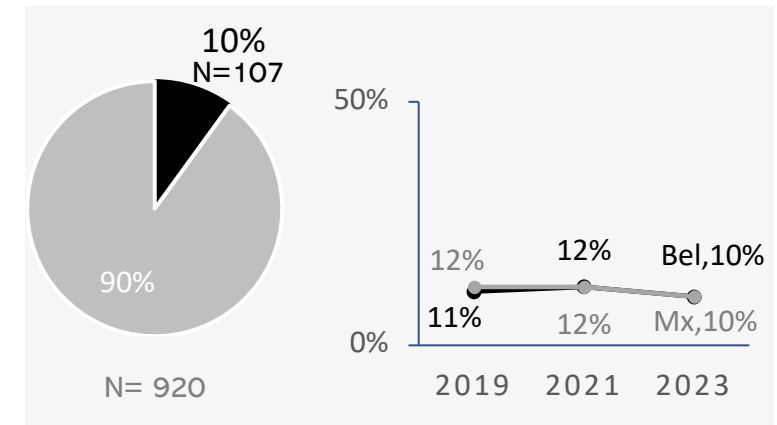
\*\* No Middlesex data available

# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES High School

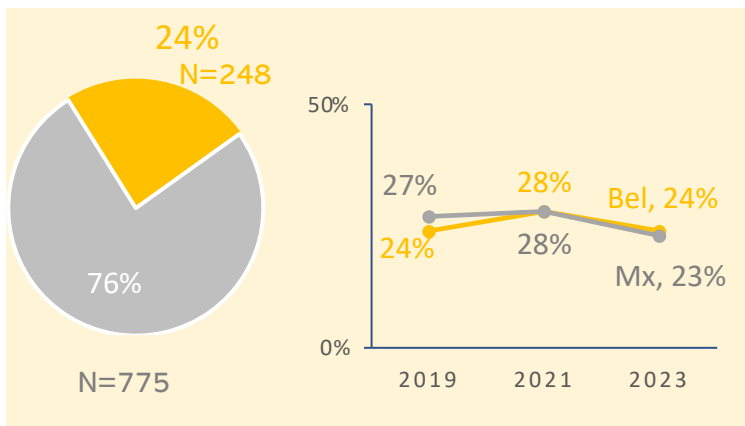
## Self-harm



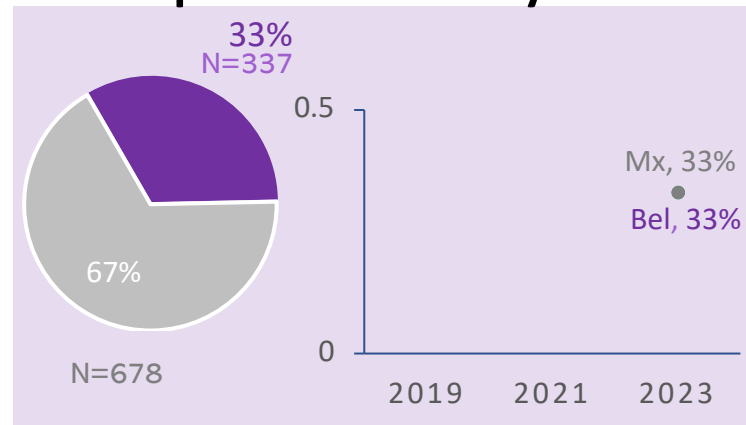
## Consider Suicide



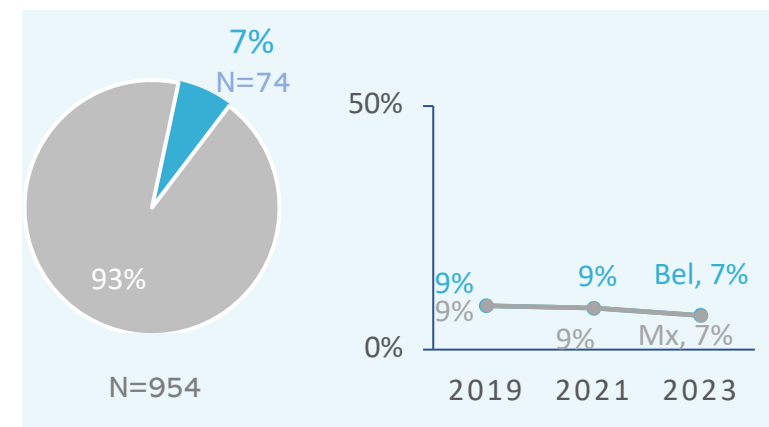
## Depression



## Experience Anxiety\*



## Made a Suicide Plan

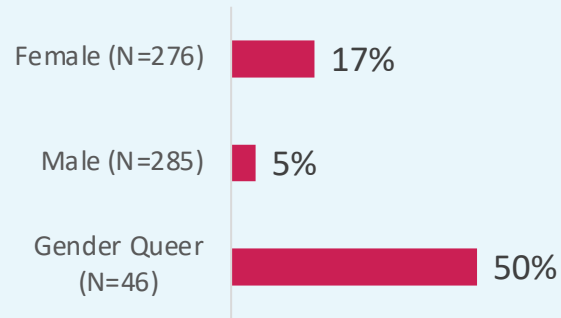


\*Asked for the first time in 2023; no trend data available

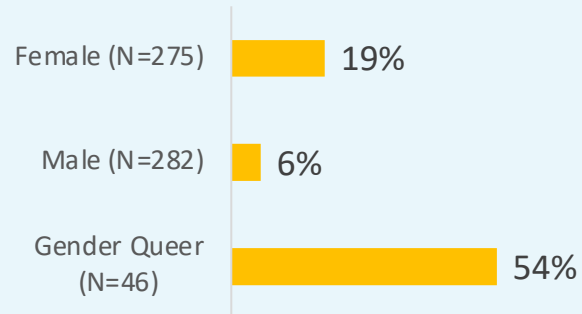
# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by gender identity

## Middle School

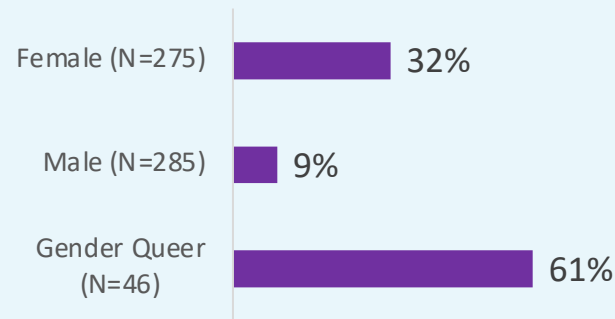
### Self-harm



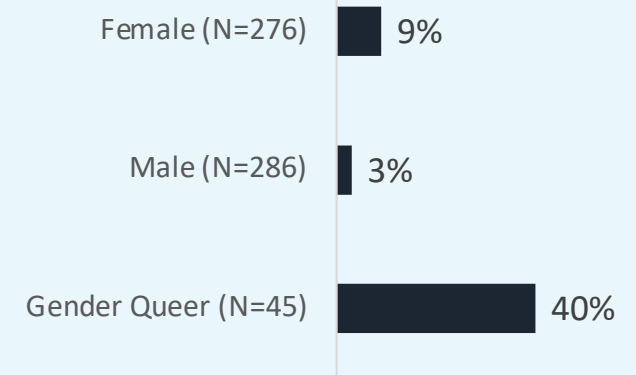
### Depression



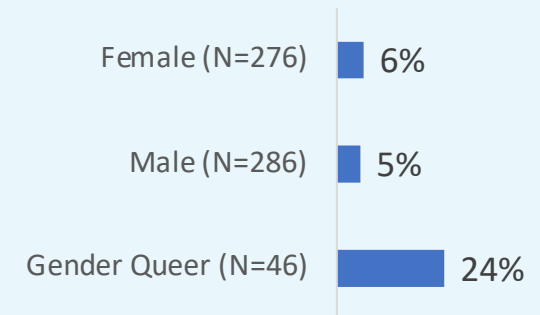
### Experience Anxiety



### Consider Suicide



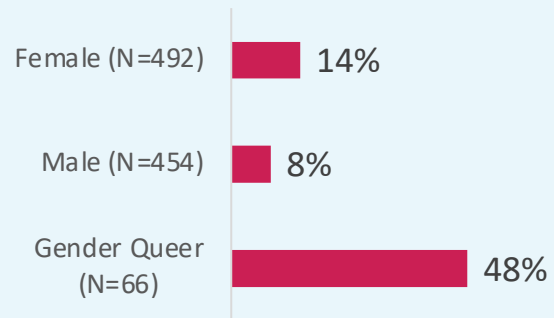
### Made a Suicide Plan



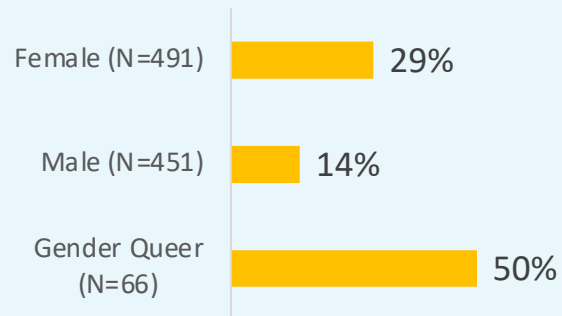
# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by gender identity

## High School

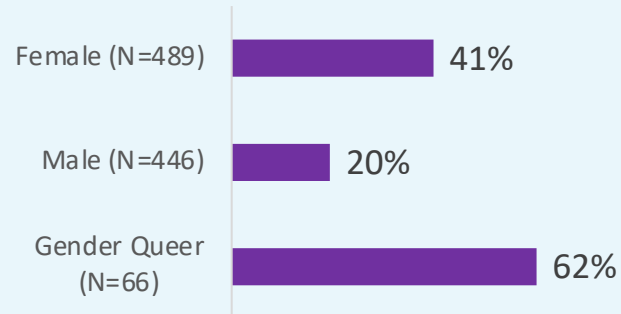
### Self-harm



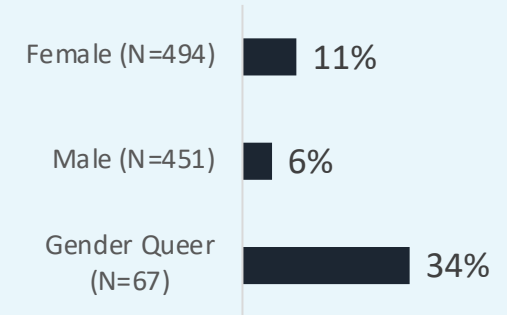
### Depression



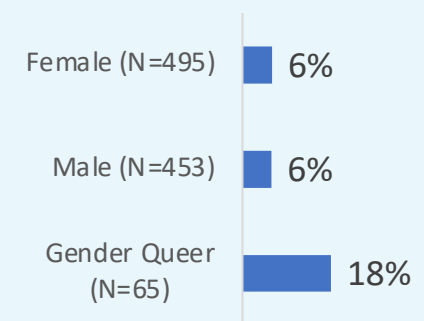
### Experience Anxiety



### Consider Suicide



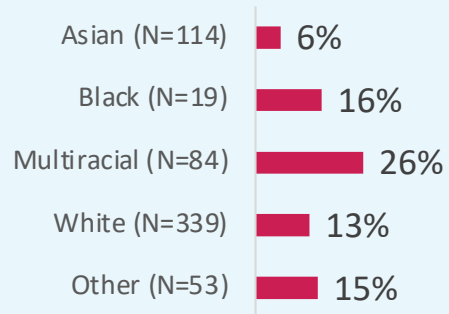
### Made a Suicide Plan



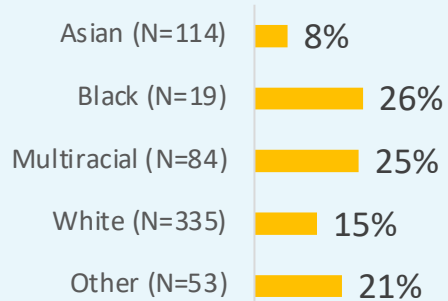
# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by race

## Middle School

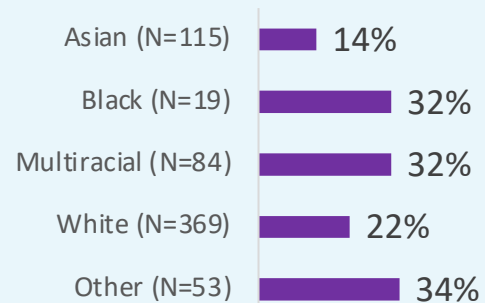
### Self-harm



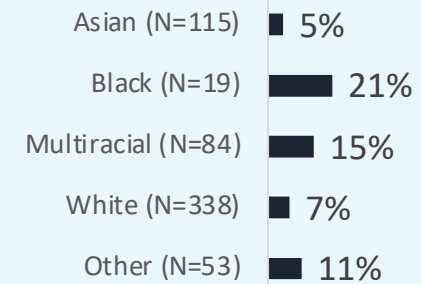
### Depression



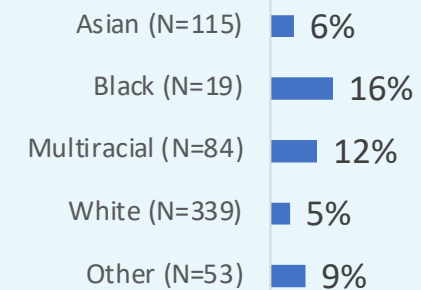
### Experience Anxiety



### Consider Suicide



### Made a Suicide Plan

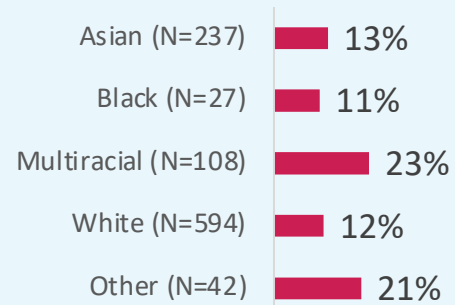




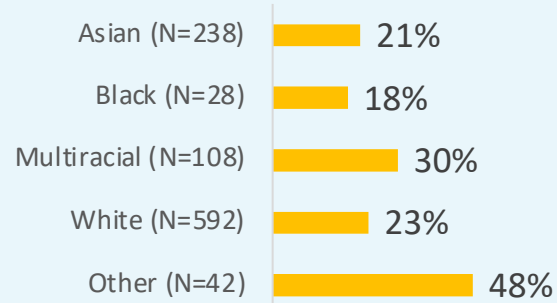
# MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES by race

## High School

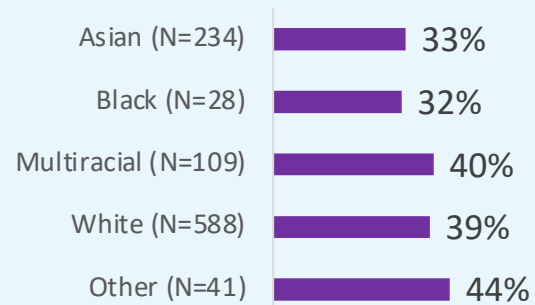
### Self-harm



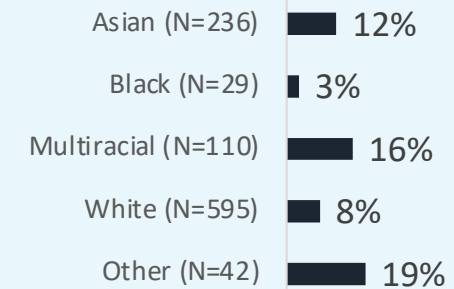
### Depression



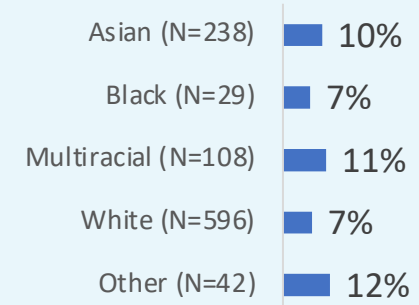
### Experience Anxiety



### 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%

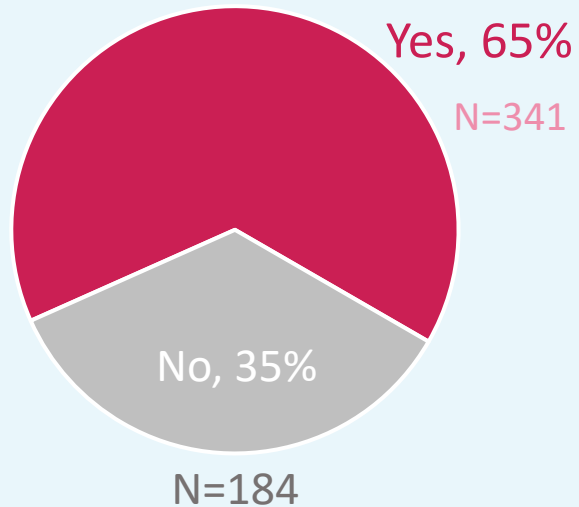
Social Issues  
28%

Family Issues  
15%

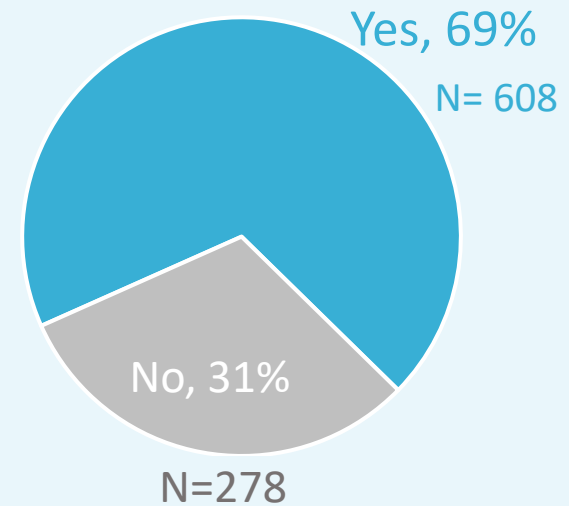
# COPING STRATEGY

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

## Middle School



## High School



# BULLYING

- Bullied on school / electronically
- Bullying by grade
- Bullying by gender identity
- Bullying by race

# EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING by grade

## Bullied on School Property

	2023*	Mx 2023
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	14%	42%
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	16%	57%

## Electronically Bullied

	2023*	Mx 2023
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7%	45%
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11%	55%

	2019	2021	2023	Dif.	Mx 2023
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	15%	4%	3%	▼	31%
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9%	4%	7%	▲	29%
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11%	3%	12%	▲	22%
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10%	3%	12%	▲	19%

	2019	2021	2023	Dif.	Mx 2023
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9%	14%	3%	▼	31%
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9%	9%	7%	▼	28%
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10%	9%	7%	▼	22%
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6%	5%	6%	▲	19%

\*For 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the wording of the bullying questions changed, so direct comparisons to previous years are not available.

# EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING by gender identity

## Bullied on School Property

## Electronically Bullied

### Middle School



### High School

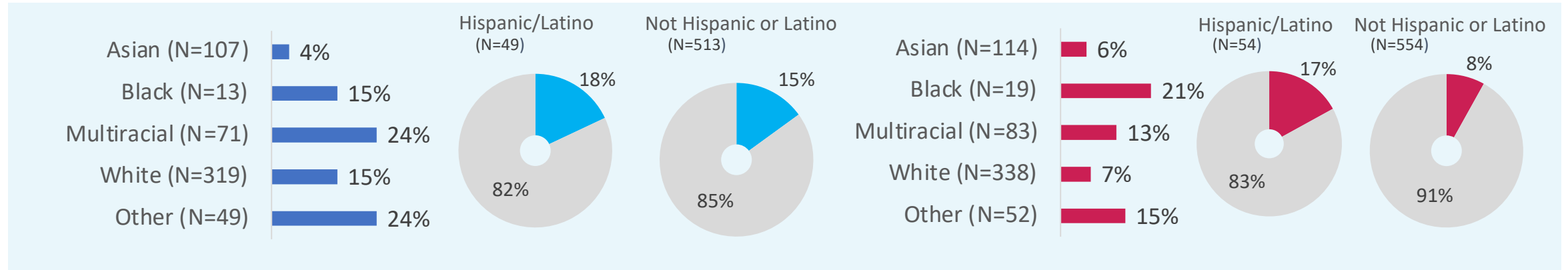


# EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING by race and ethnicity

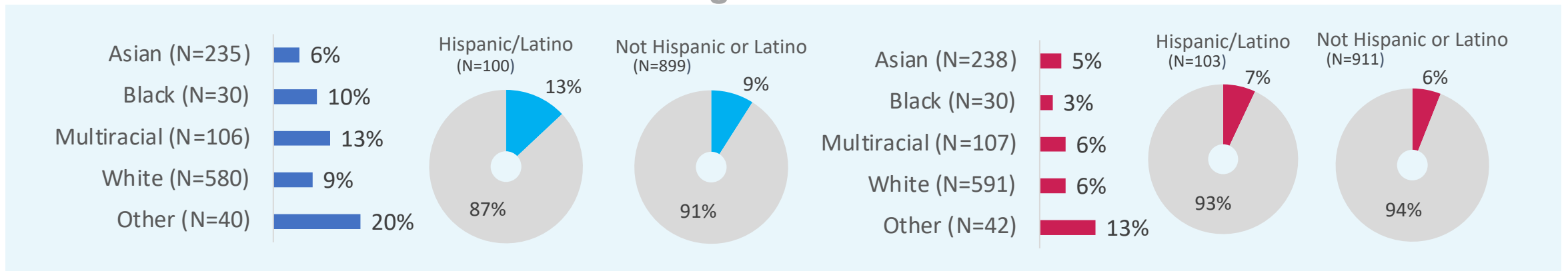
## Bullied on school property

## Electronically bullied

### Middle School



### High School



CROSS  
ANALYSIS

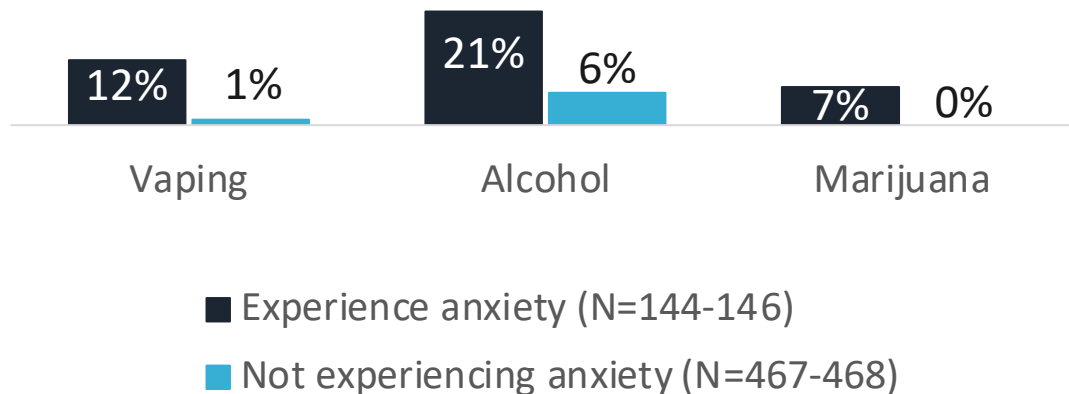
Substance Use – Mental  
Health



# Lifetime substance use among students who *experience anxiety*

## Middle School

Percentage of students using substances



Of those MS students who experience anxiety...

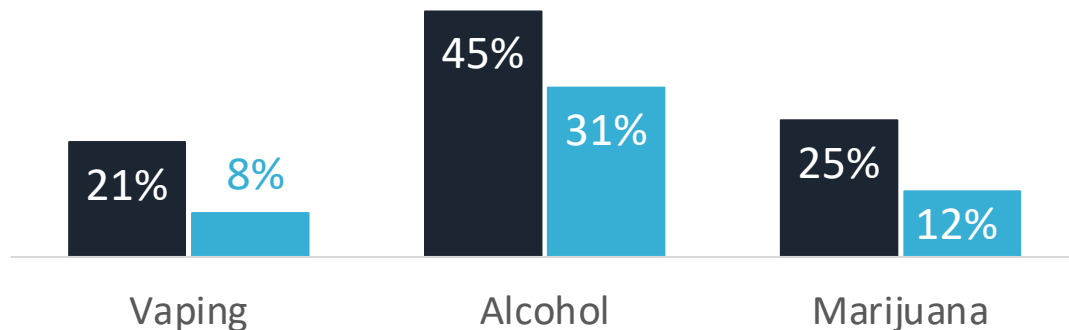
- 12% vape
- 21% consume alcohol
- 7% use marijuana

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...

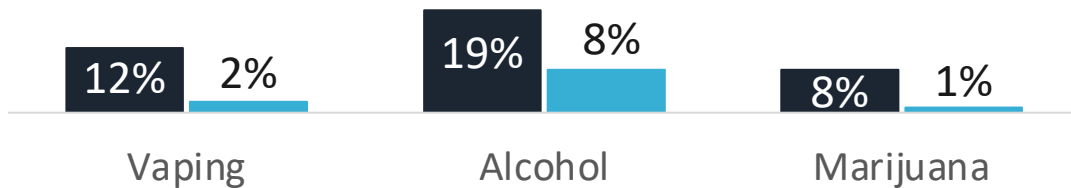
- 21% vape
- 45% consume alcohol
- 25% use marijuana

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

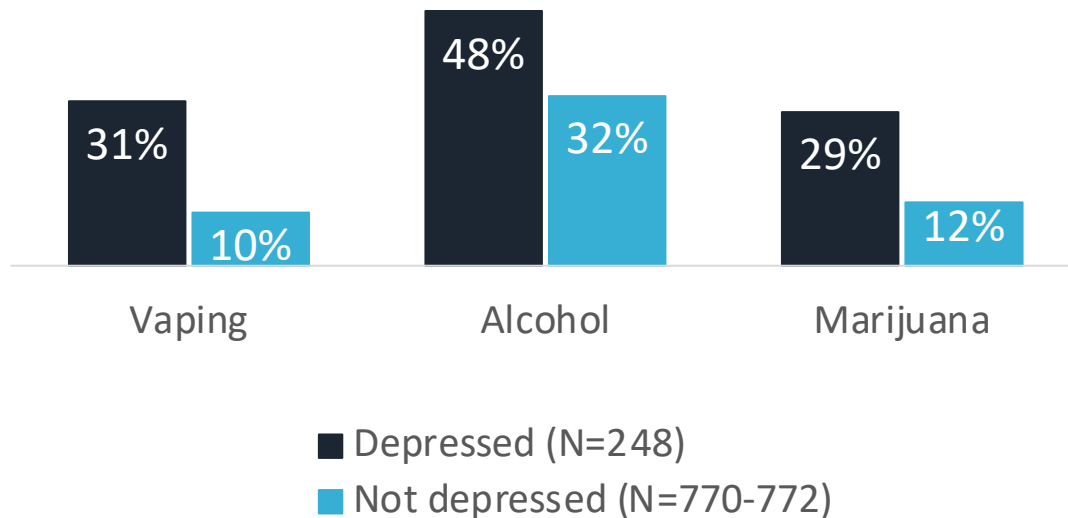
Those who don't experience from depression are less likely to use substances.

■ 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...

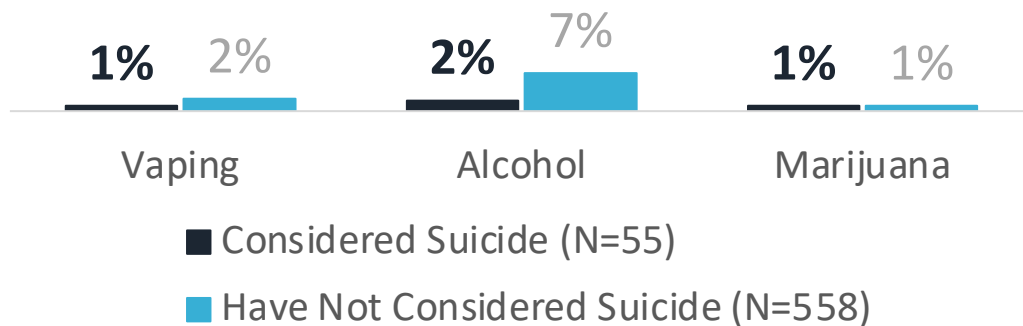
- 31% vape
- 48% consume alcohol
- 29% use marijuana

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...

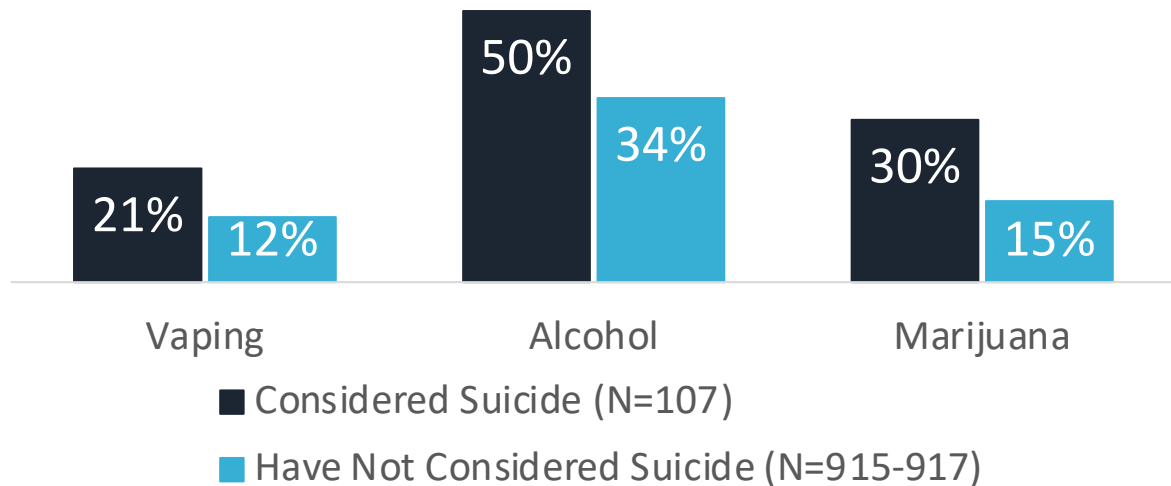
- 1% vape
- 2% consume alcohol
- 1% use marijuana

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.

# 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

# 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.
- Genderqueer, black and multiracial students have *higher rates* of mental health issues, substance use, and experiences of bullying 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.



## NEXT STEPS

- Take some time to absorb the data.
- Let's meet again to explore how the data might be used to best support students.

**Have more questions? Please contact:**

**Lisa Gibalerio**

[lisa\\_gibalerio@waysideyouth.org](mailto:lisa_gibalerio@waysideyouth.org)

**Maeve Kennelly**

[maeve\\_kennelly@waysideyouth.org](mailto:maeve_kennelly@waysideyouth.org)

# Questions/Discussion