



2023 - 2024 Youth Survey Fact Sheet

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

1 Insights

All indicators of mental health concerns continued to improve vs. 2021.

This was the case across all grades, genders, and racial/ethnic groups.



of students **who used any substance** in the past month **reported feeling sad** or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row (depressive symptoms; vs. **22%** who did not use any substance)



of students **who reported physical abuse from a parent/guardian reported depressive symptoms** (vs. **23%** of those who did not experience abuse)



of students **who did not have enough food to eat at home reported considering suicide** (vs. **8%** of those with enough food to eat at home)

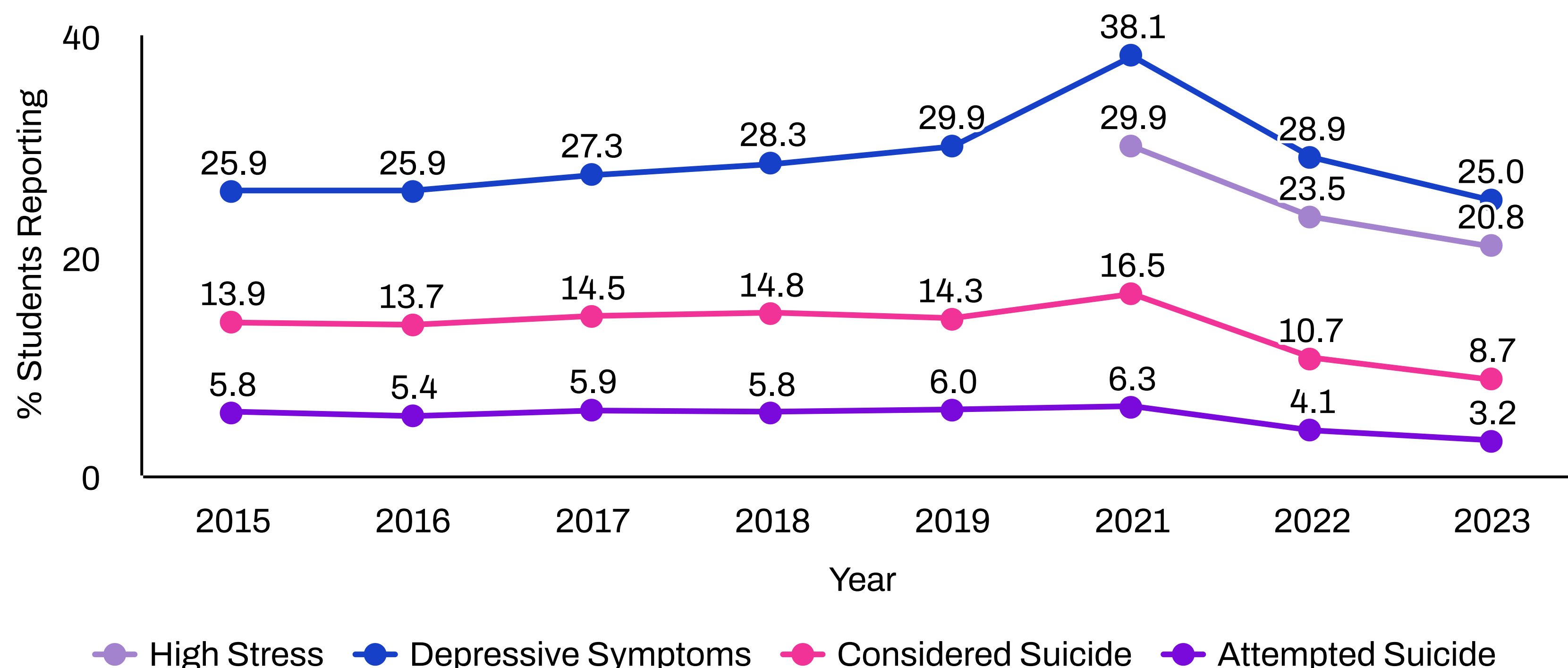


of those **who were bullied in school said they considered suicide** (vs. **7%** of those who were not bullied)

2 Trends

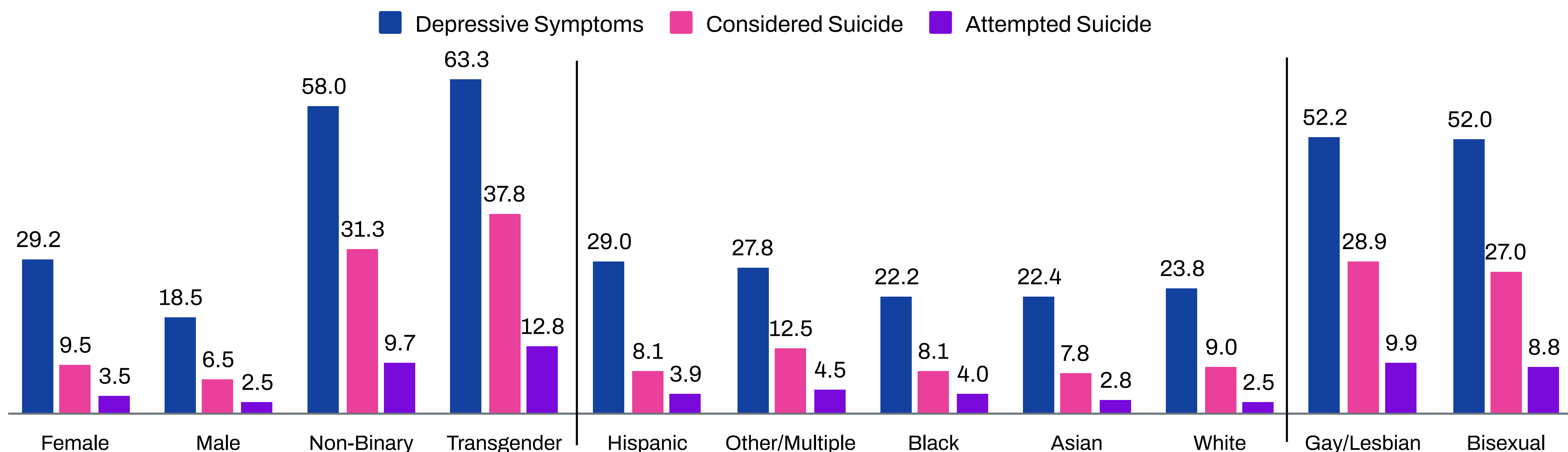
Since 2015, the percentage of students who reported depressive symptoms had been steadily climbing, peaked in 2021 before falling in 2022 and 2023.

Depressive symptoms among 6th grade students stayed constant from last year's rate at 29%.



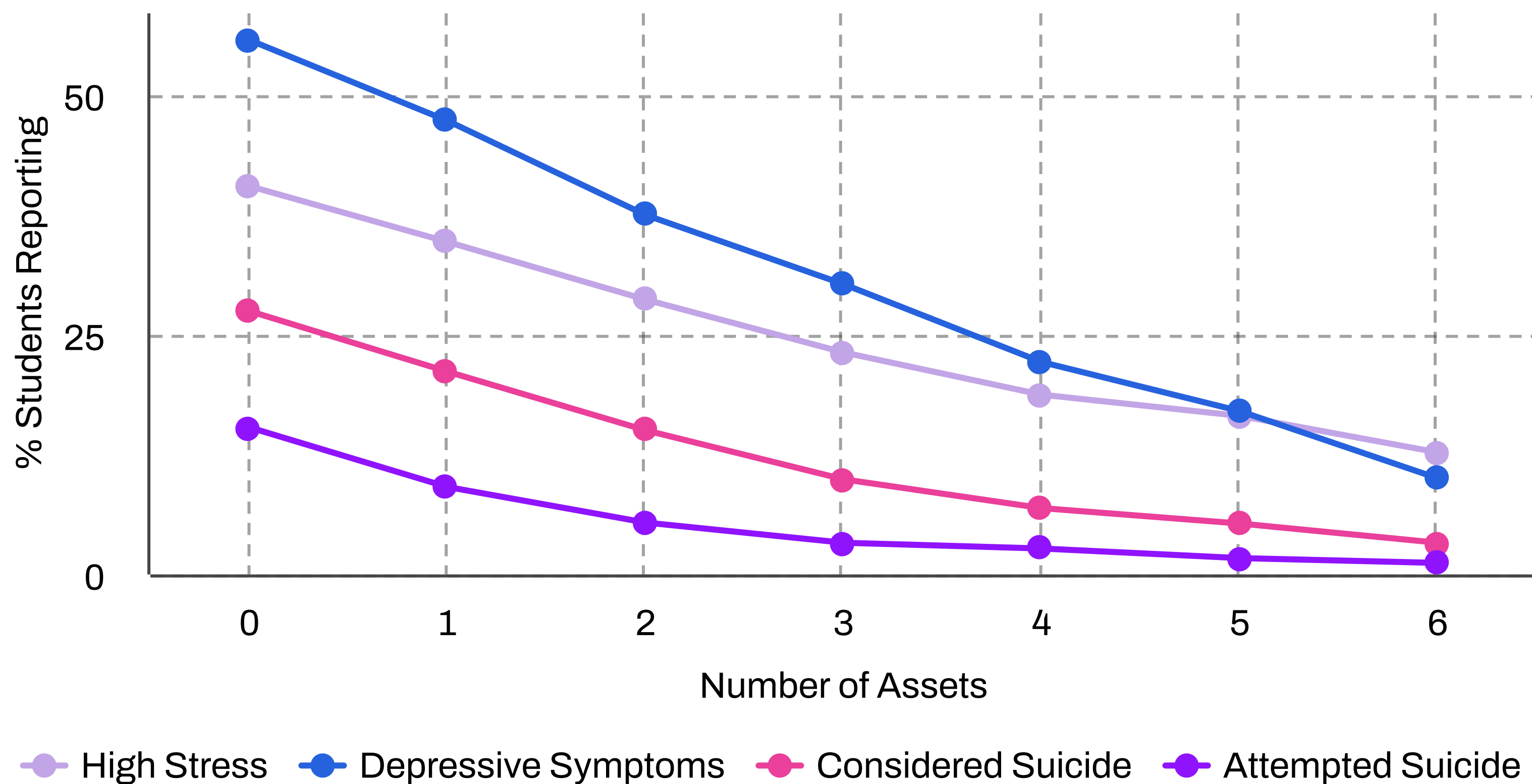
3 Differences by Demographic Factors

LGBTQ, female, Hispanic and students of Other/Multiple races were more likely to experience depressive and suicidal symptoms than their peers, highlighting the need to understand the underlying factors and to target prevention and intervention strategies. (For comparison within the chart below: Heterosexual: Depressive Symptoms – 20.3%. Considered Suicide – 5.7%, Attempted Suicide – 2.2%; Not Transgender: Depressive Symptoms – 23.5%, Considered Suicide – 7.6%, Attempted Suicide – 2.8%.)



About the Youth Survey data: All data are self-reported from the 2023 - 2024 Youth Survey for 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students, unless otherwise noted. The survey was not administered in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the question on experiencing stress was changed, therefore, a direct comparison with data prior to 2021 is not recommended.

4 Three to Succeed



Data shows that having at least three protective factors, or assets, reduces the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors and builds resilience among youth:

- Accepting responsibility for one's actions
- Having teachers recognize good work
- Participating in extracurricular activities
- Performing community service
- Having community adults to talk to
- Having parents available for help

Be an asset in a young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community for all.

5 What We Can Do



Know The Signs

Know the signs of depression and suicidal thoughts, such as talking about wanting to die, self-harm, feeling hopeless, suddenly withdrawing or changing behavior.



Listen & Reflect

Listen nonjudgmentally in a supportive, nonconfrontational way. Be genuine, let them know they are not alone and that help is available.



Ask Questions

Ask if they've thought about hurting and/or killing themselves. Asking won't put the idea in their head.



Foster Relationships

Encourage youth to identify and join activities that foster healthy relationships and connectedness.



Connect To Help

Connect them to a qualified therapist. Schools can help: connect to a school social worker, psychologist or counselor.

6 For Help & Information

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB)

www.bit.ly/FairfaxCSB
Entry & Referral: 703-383-8500
24-Hr Emergency Services: 703-573-5679

CSB Wellness, Health Promotion & Prevention

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/prevention

HopeLink Behavioral Health

www.hopelinkbh.org
Crisis Services (24-Hr Response):
Call or Text 988

Fairfax County Public Schools Student Safety and Wellness Office

www.bit.ly/FCPSSafetyWellness
571-423-4270

Community Regional Crisis Response

www.cr2crisis.com
24-Hr Emergency Response
844-N-Crisis or
571-364-7390

- **Our Minds Matter:** www.ourmindsmatter.org
- **Healthy Minds Fairfax:** www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax/
- **Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia:** www.suicidepreventionnva.org
- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** www.afsp.org
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness:** www.bit.ly/NatAllianceMI

- **The Steve Fund:** www.stevelfund.org
- **The Jed Foundation:** www.jedfoundation.org
- **The AAKOMA Project:** www.aakomaproject.org/
- **Child Mind Institute:** www.childmind.org
- **Developmental Assets Framework | Search Institute:** www.searchinstitute.org/resources-hub/developmental-assets-framework

