



Chloe Lee, PhD
Principal Data Scientist
Countywide Data Analytics, Department of
Management and Budget



2021-2022 FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH SURVEY

FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH SURVEY

- COMPREHENSIVE
- ANONYMOUS
- VOLUNTARY



BEHAVIORS



EXPERIENCES



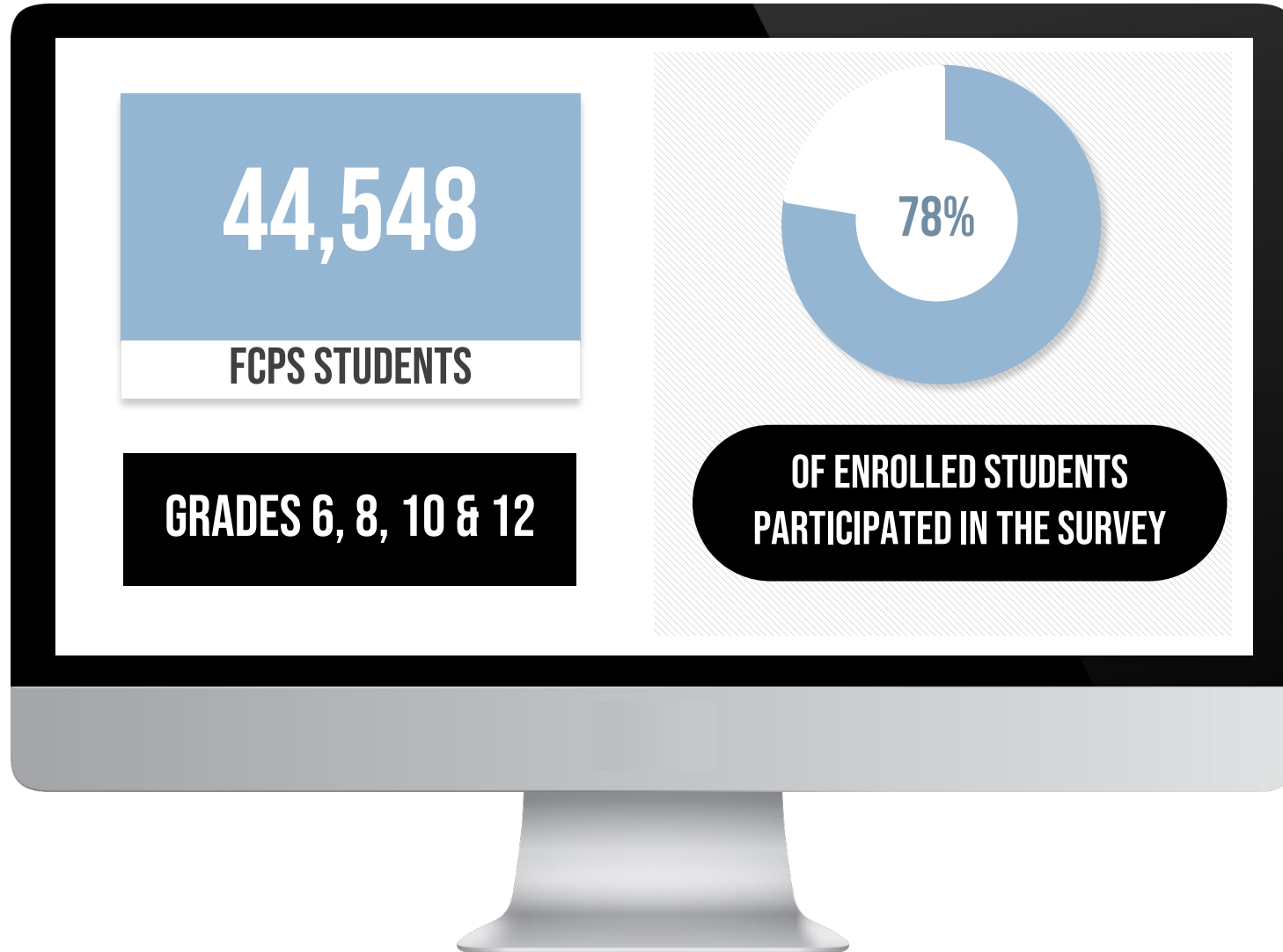
RISK AND
PROTECTIVE
FACTORS



Questions are based on the **Monitoring the Future Survey** (NIH) and **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey** (CDC)

2021 FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH SURVEY

PARTICIPATION



Youth Survey was administered electronically this year



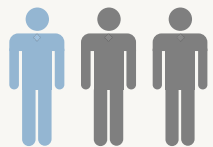
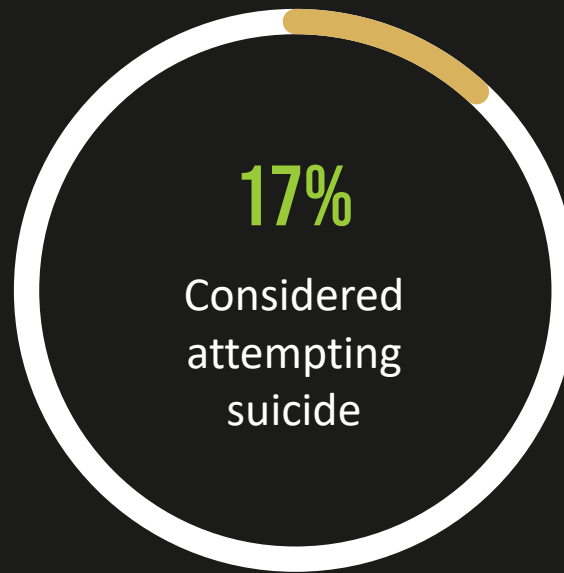
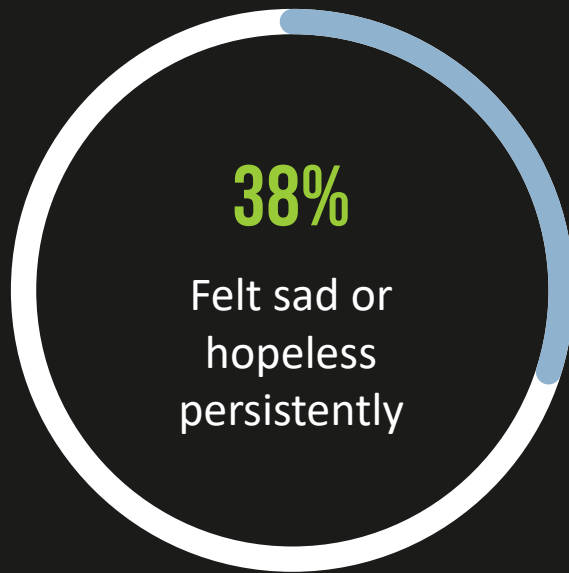
Youth Survey was available in the 8 official languages of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) for the first time this year





MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS ARISE FOR YOUTH

Percent reporting past year mental health challenges by students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grades

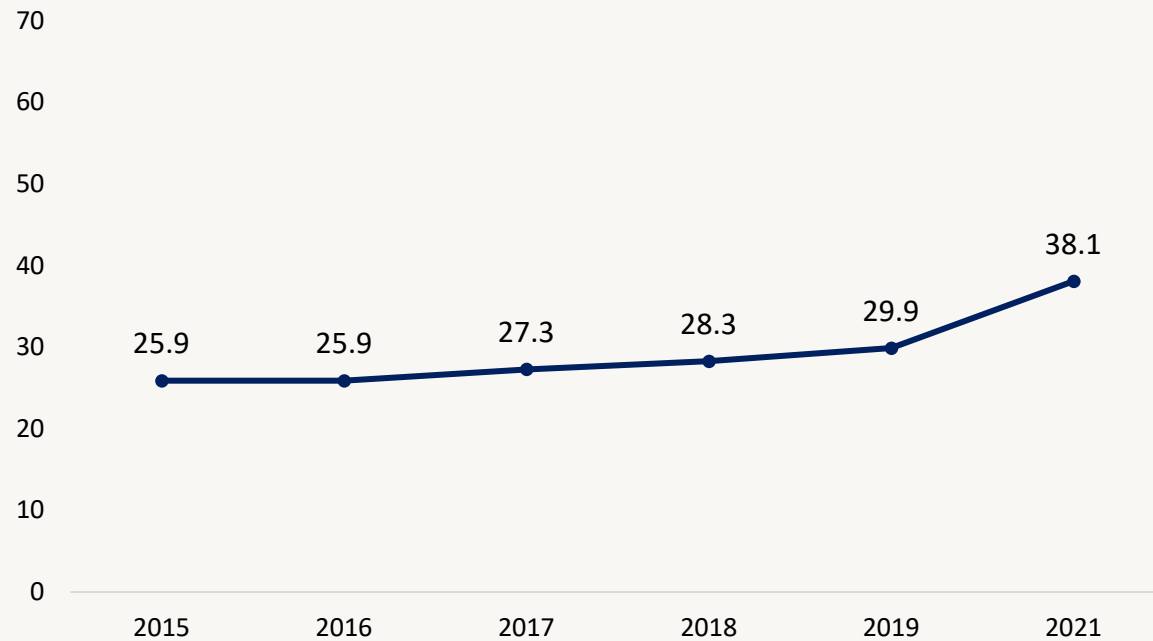


One in three (33%) 6th grade students reported feeling so sad or hopeless that they stopped engaging in regular activity for two or more weeks in the past year.

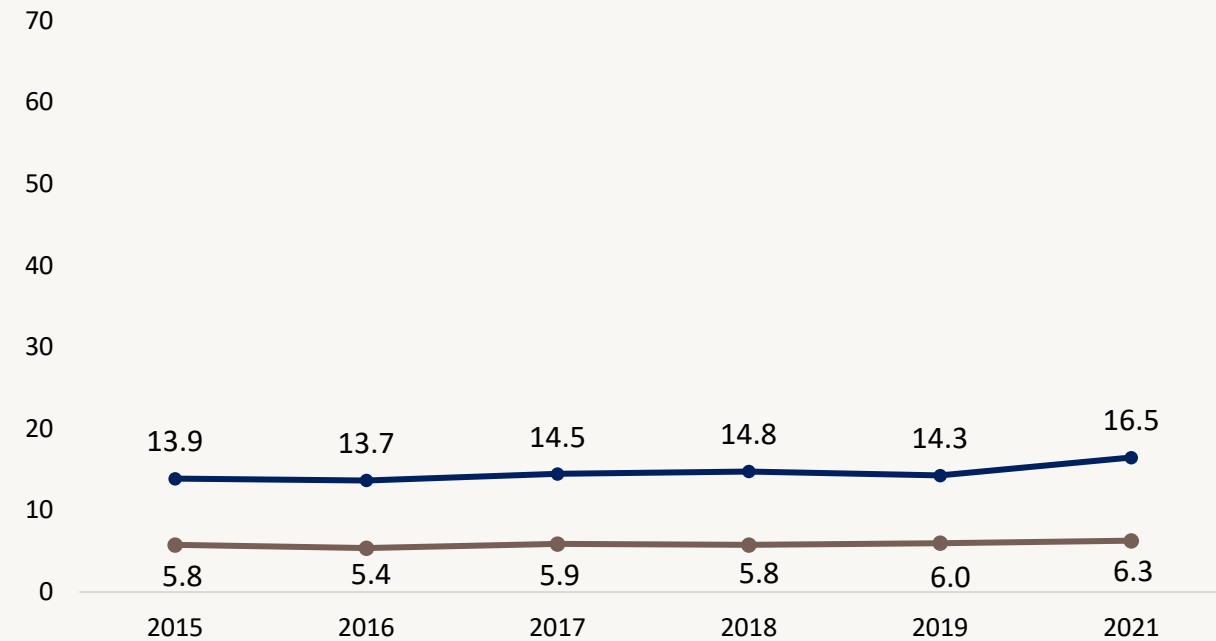


MENTAL HEALTH DATA TRENDS: 2015-2021

PERCENT OVERALL 8TH, 10TH & 12TH GRADE
PERSISTENT SADNESS OR HOPELESSNESS PAST
YEAR, FAIRFAX 2015-2021



PERCENT OVERALL 8TH, 10TH & 12TH GRADE
SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR PAST YEAR, FAIRFAX 2015-
2021



Despite the increase this year, **Fairfax County youth** had **consistently lower rates** of persistent sadness/hopelessness, considered attempting suicide, and attempted suicide **compared to their national peers** (based on the CDC's Adolescent Behaviors and Experience Survey)

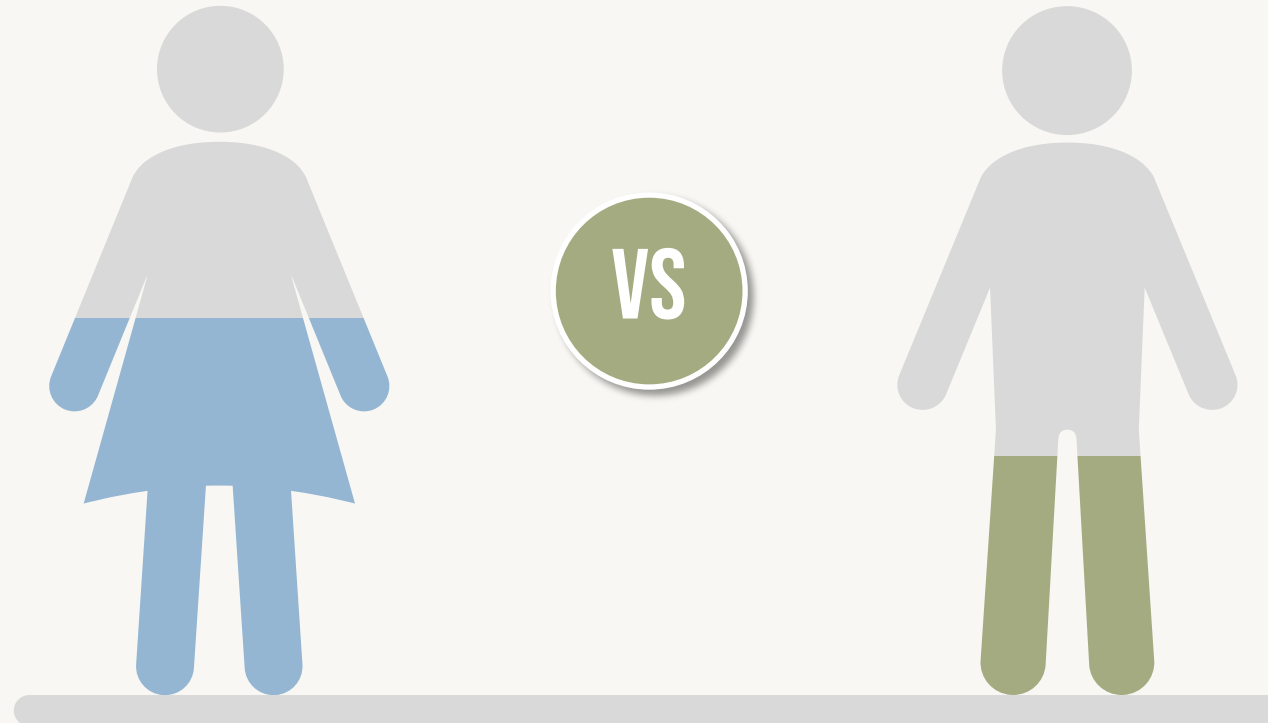
WHO ARE AT MORE AT RISK? SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS THAT DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Female students are at a greater risk

48%
FEMALE

Reported persistently
feeling sad or hopeless

21% reported suicidal
thoughts
8% reported suicide
attempts



VS

27%
MALE

Reported persistently
feeling sad or hopeless

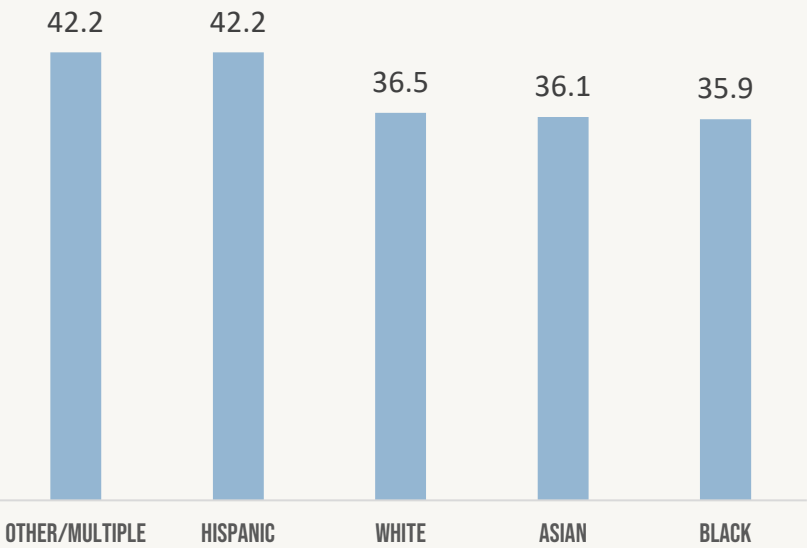
11% reported suicidal
thoughts
4% reported suicide
attempts



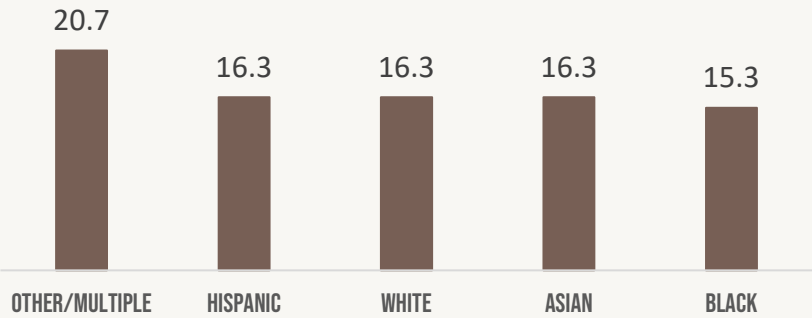
RACE & ETHNICITY MATTERS

Percent reporting mental health challenges by race/ethnicity

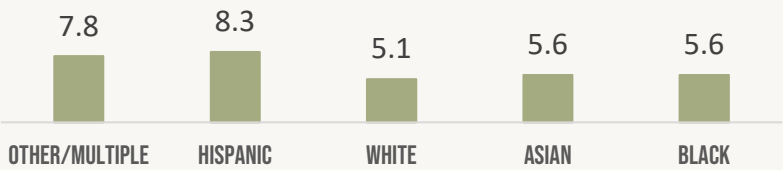
PERSISTENT SADNESS/HOPELESSNESS



CONSIDERED SUICIDE



ATTEMPTED SUICIDE



TRANSGENDER STUDENTS ARE AT A GREATER RISK

75%

Of transgender students reported **feeling persistent sadness/hopelessness** compared to **36%** of non-transgender students

61%

Of transgender students **considered attempting suicide** compared to **14%** of non-transgender students

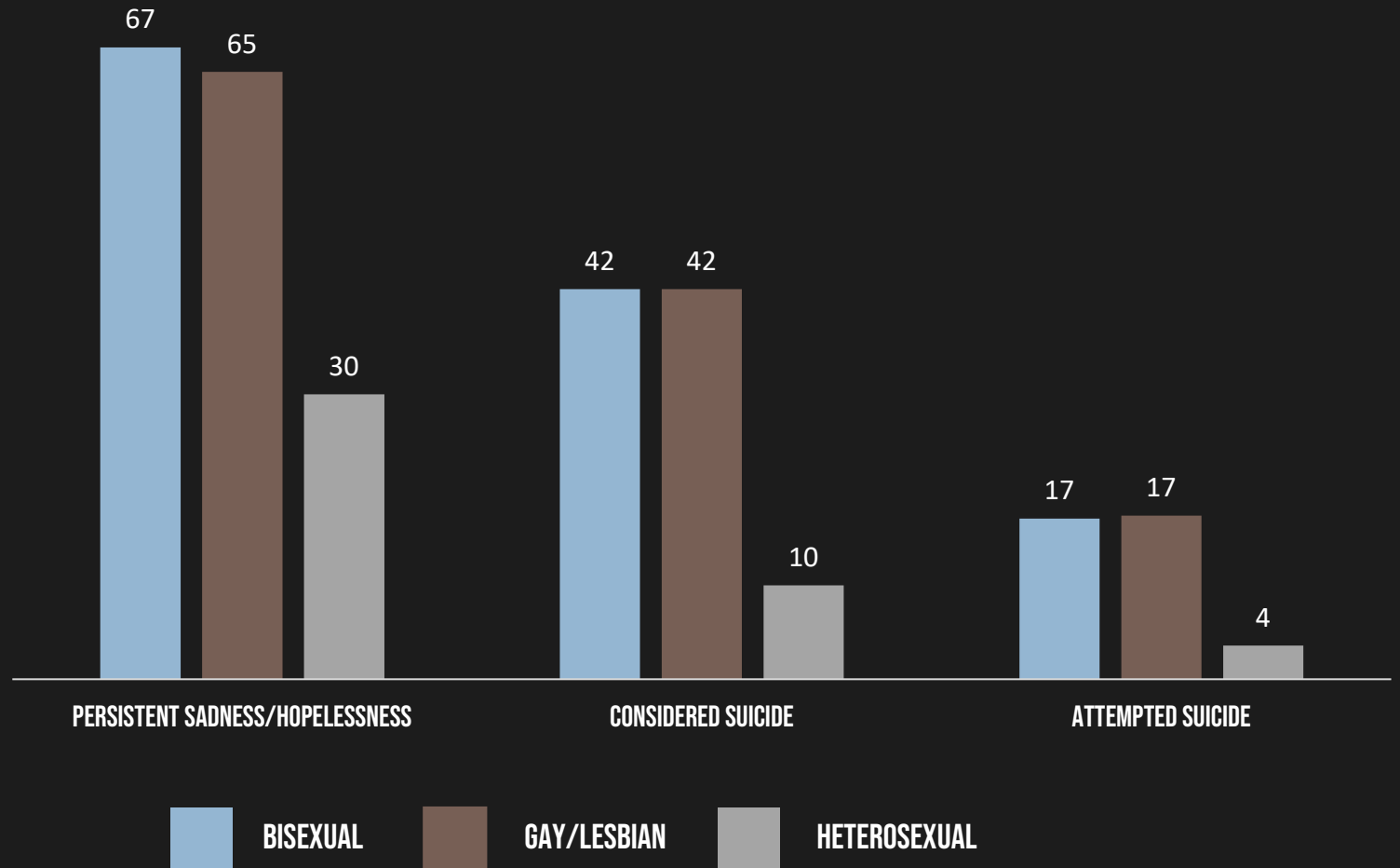
24%

Of transgender students **attempted suicide** compared to **5%** of non-transgender students

STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY AS GAY, LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL ARE AT A HIGHER RISK

Students who identify as **gay, lesbian or bisexual** reported **higher rates of feelings of persistent sadness/hopelessness, suicidal ideations and suicide attempts** than heterosexual students.

PERCENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES PAST YEAR BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION



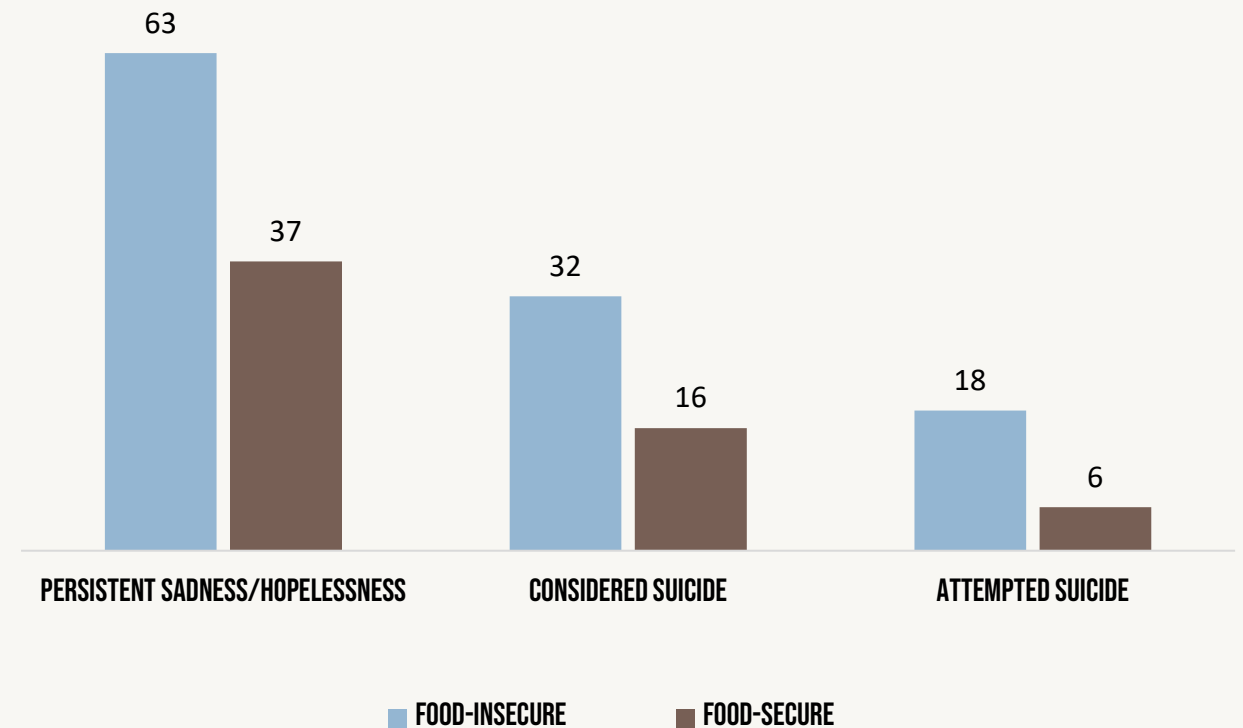


STUDENTS FROM **FOOD-INSECURE** HOMES MAY BE AT A GREATER RISK

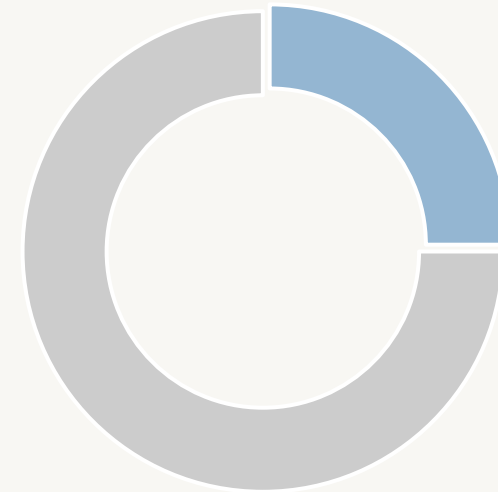
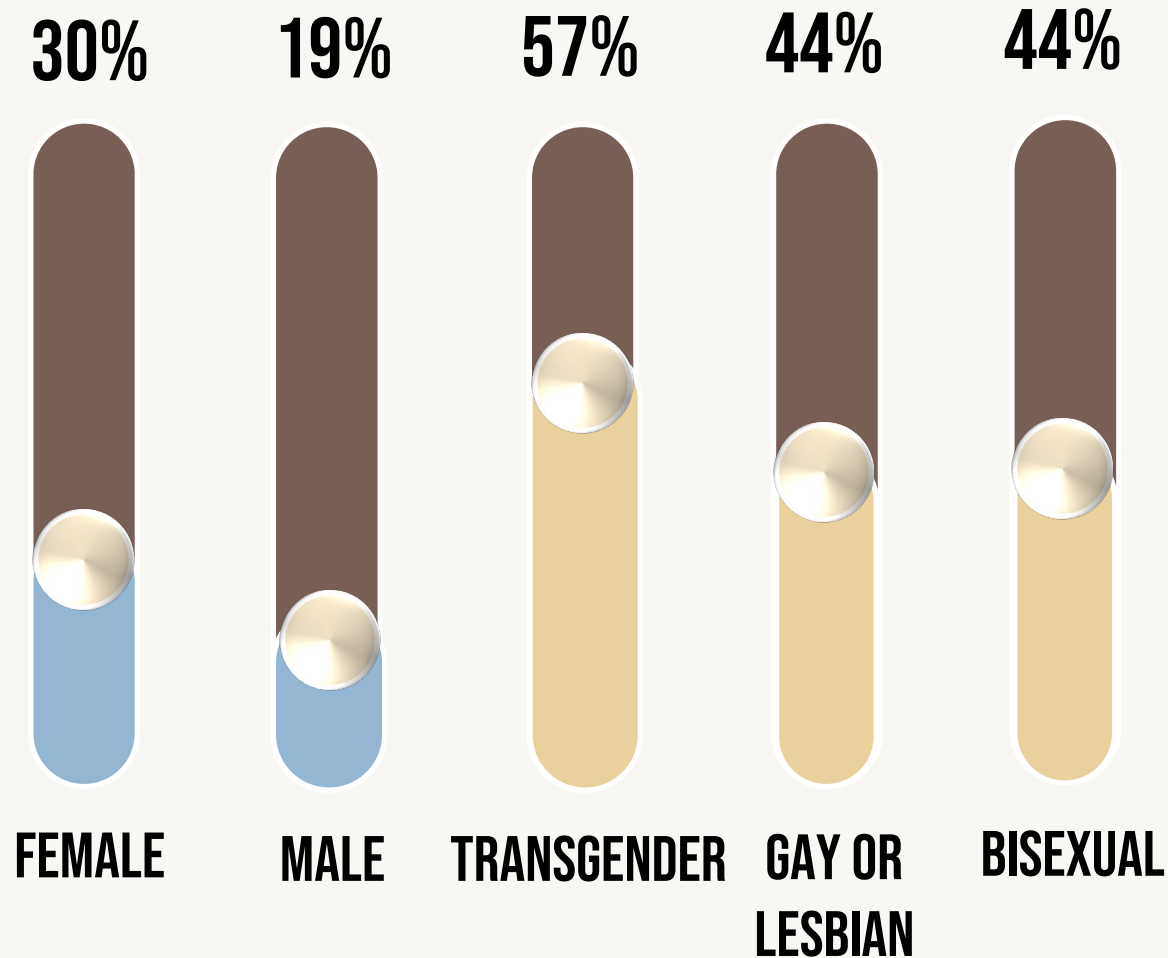
Students who reported **going hungry due to a lack of food** in their home were more likely to report **feeling persistently sad or hopeless, and suicidal thoughts and actions** than students from food secure homes.

NEARLY SEVEN PERCENT OF THE 8TH, 10TH, AND 12TH GRADE STUDENTS REPORTED GOING HUNGRY IN THE PAST MONTH DUE TO A LACK OF FOOD IN THE HOME. INCIDENCE OF HUNGER DUE TO A LACK OF FOOD IN THE HOME VARIED BY RACE/ETHNICITY, RANGING FROM 3% OF WHITE STUDENTS TO 12% OF HISPANIC STUDENTS.

PERCENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES BY FOOD INSECURITY



OTHER CHALLENGES THAT COULD AFFECT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH: EMOTIONAL ABUSE AT HOME

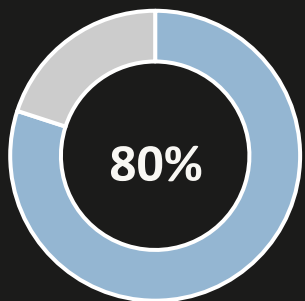
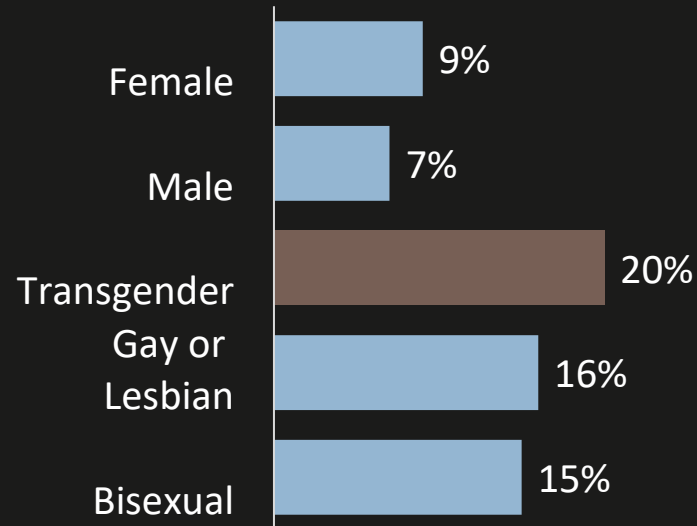


**25% OF FAIRFAX
COUNTY YOUTH**

Reported having been bullied, taunted, ridiculed, or teased by a parent or other adult in their household in the past year (highest in the past 6 years).

PHYSICAL ABUSE AT HOME

PERCENT PHYSICAL ABUSE BY A PARENT OR ADULT PAST YEAR



Nearly 80% of the students who reported physical abuse also responded that they were emotionally abused by a parent or adult in the past year.

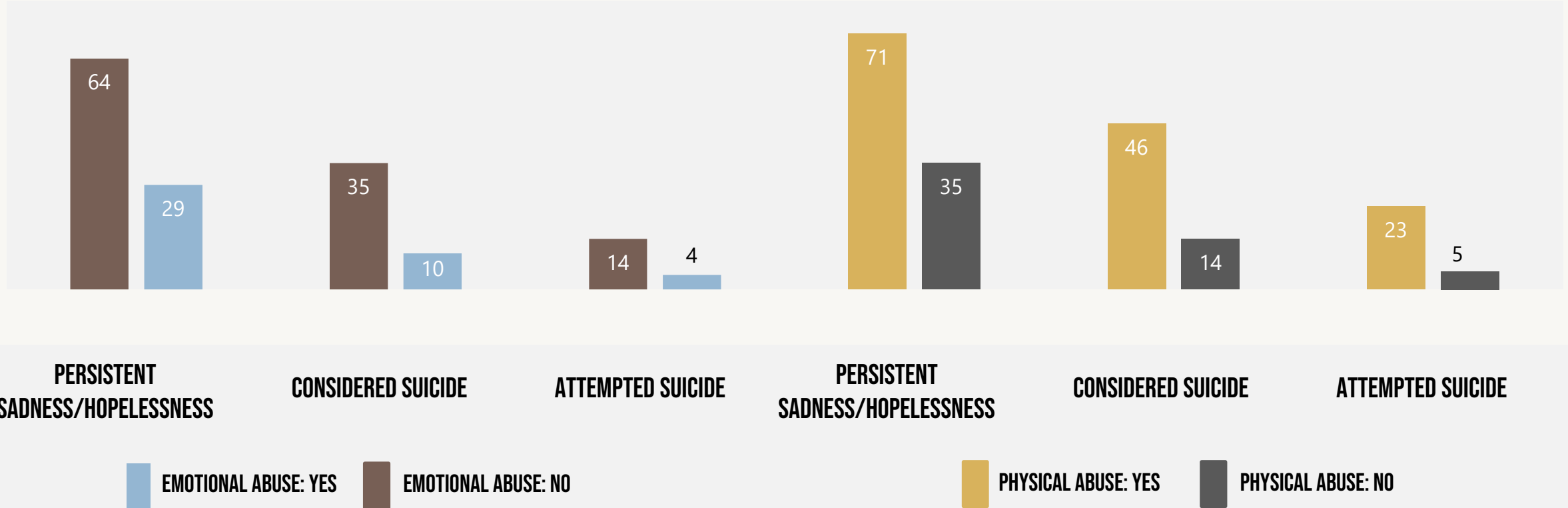
8% OF 8TH, 10TH, AND 12TH GRADE STUDENTS

Reported having been hit, kicked or physically hurt by a parent or adult in the past year.

12% OF 6TH GRADE STUDENTS

Reported having been hit, kicked or physically hurt by a parent or adult in the past year.

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES BY EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE STATUS



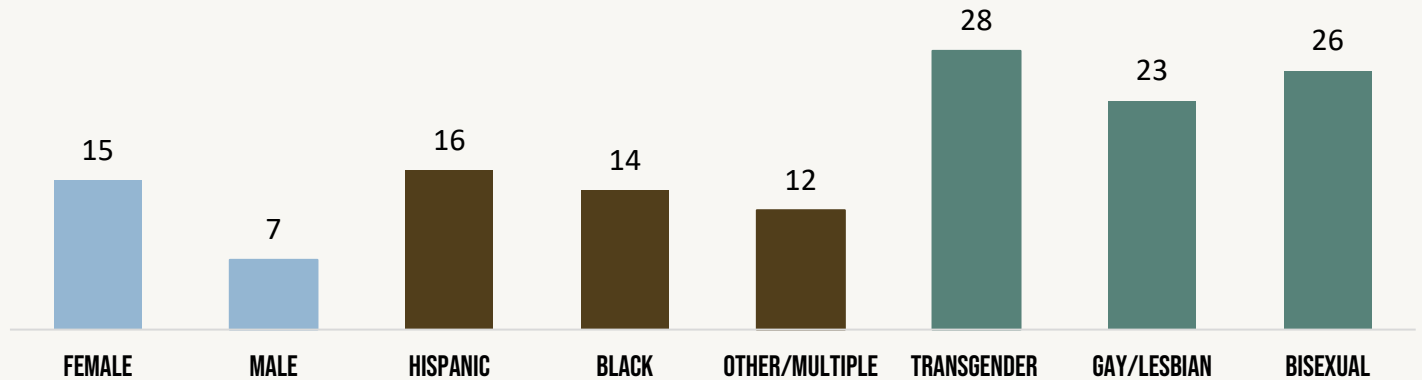
Students who reported emotional or physical abuse at home are more likely to report mental health challenges

FASTING TO LOSE WEIGHT



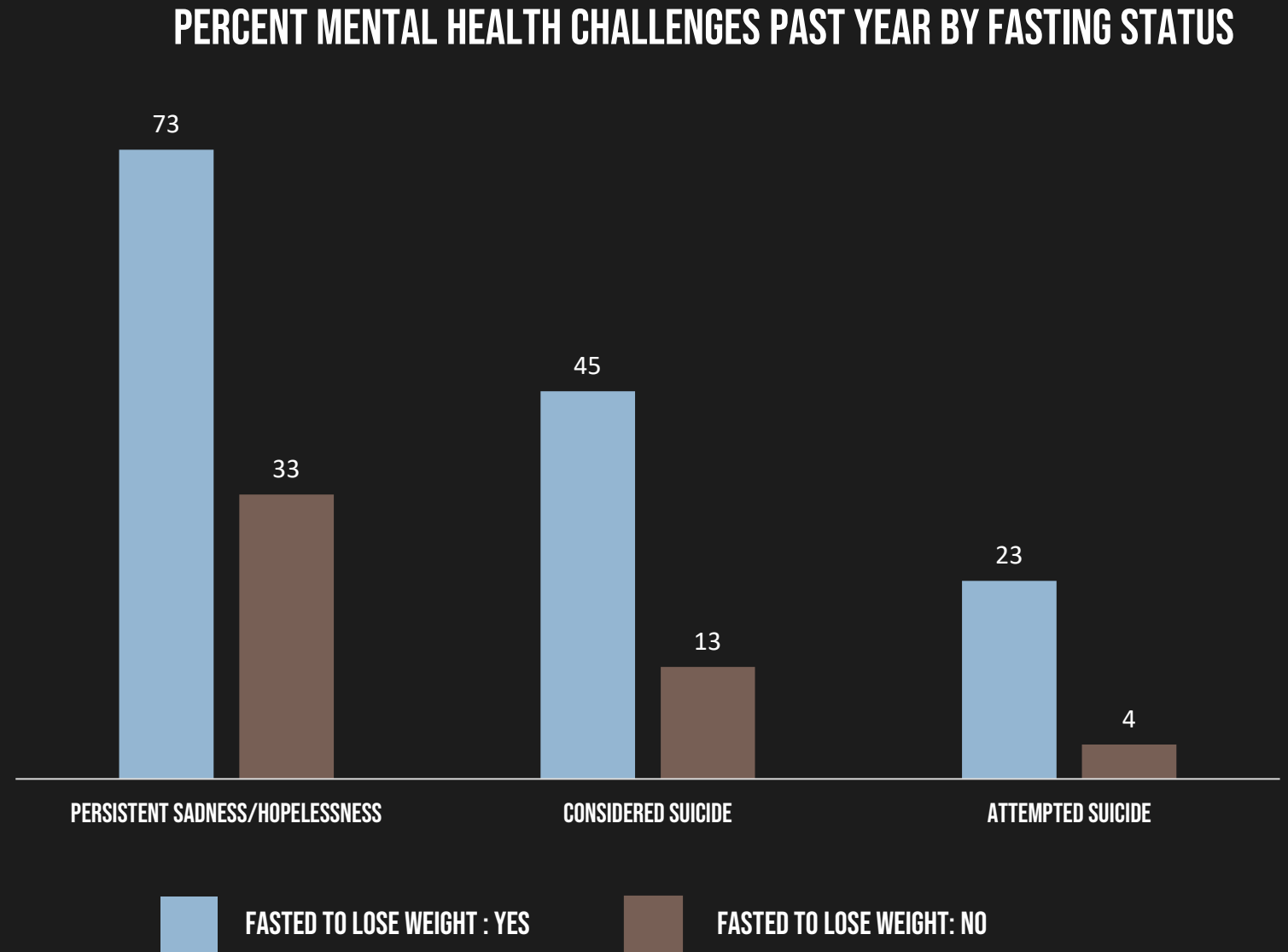
More than one in ten (11%) reported going without eating for 24 hours or more in the past month in order to lose weight or keep from gaining weight in the past month.

PERCENT FASTED TO LOSE WEIGHT PAST MONTH



MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES BY FASTING STATUS

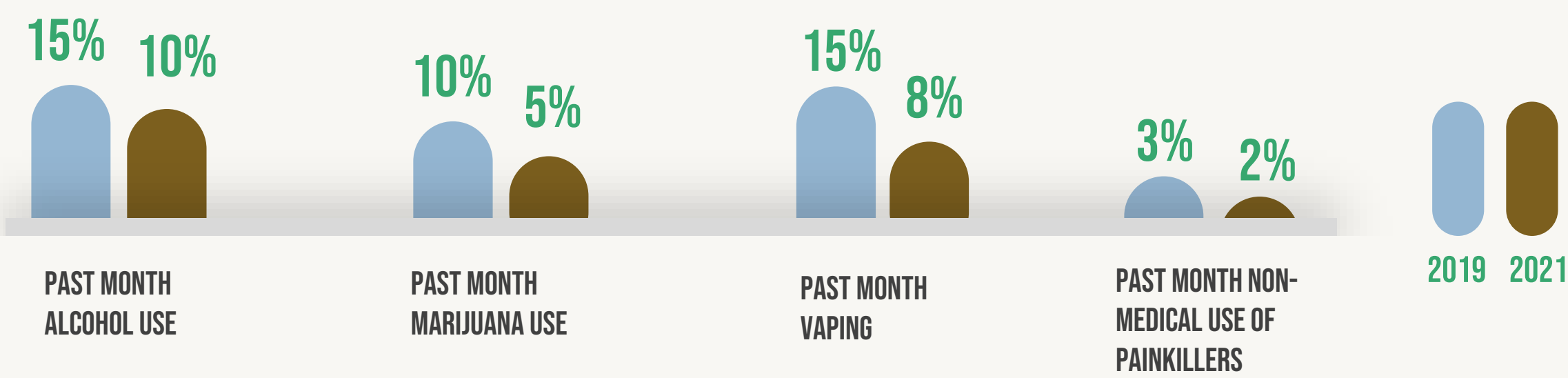
Students who fasted to lose weight in the past month reported significantly higher rates of mental health challenges than those who did not.





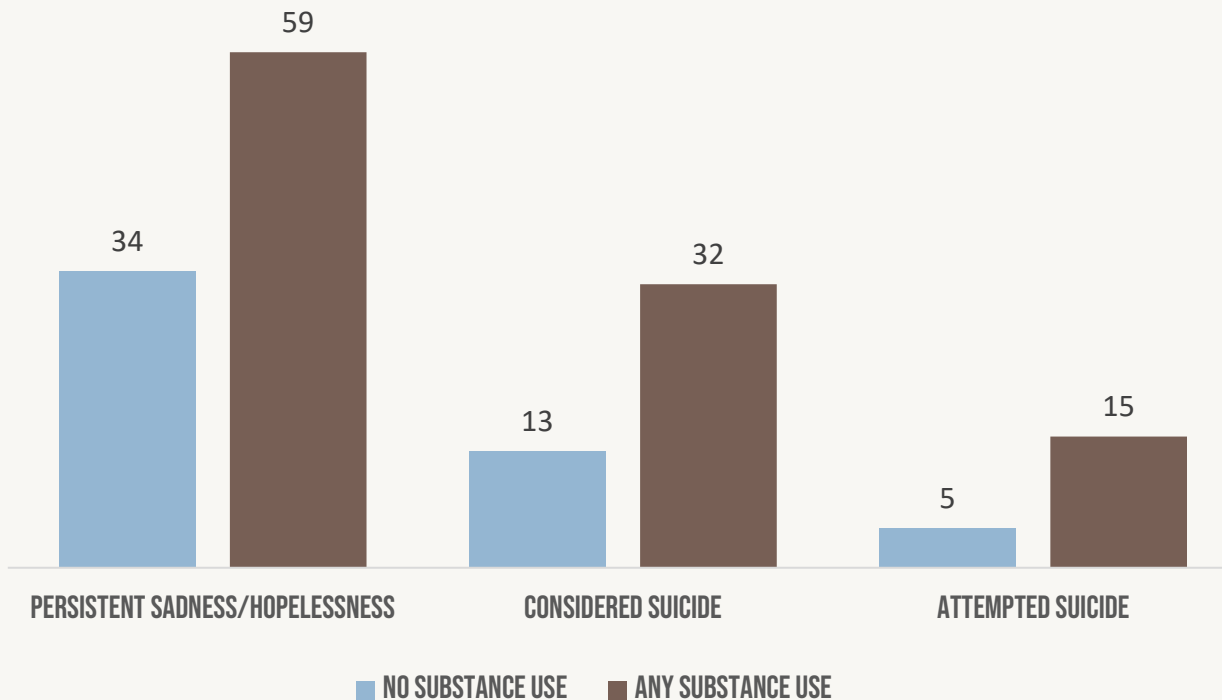
DECREASE IN SUBSTANCE USE: 2019 VS. 2021

In 2021, overall, Fairfax County youth reported **lower rates of substance use**, compared to 2019, including past month use of alcohol, marijuana, vaping any substance, and prescription painkillers.



MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES BY SUBSTANCE USE

PERCENT OVERALL MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES
PAST YEAR BY SUBSTANCE USE PAST MONTH



Despite lower rates of risk behaviors, the data reveals that **risk behaviors are highly associated with mental health issues**. Students who used **any substance** in the past showed **significantly higher rates of feeling persistently sad or hopeless, considered attempting suicide, and attempting suicide** than the students who did not report substance use.

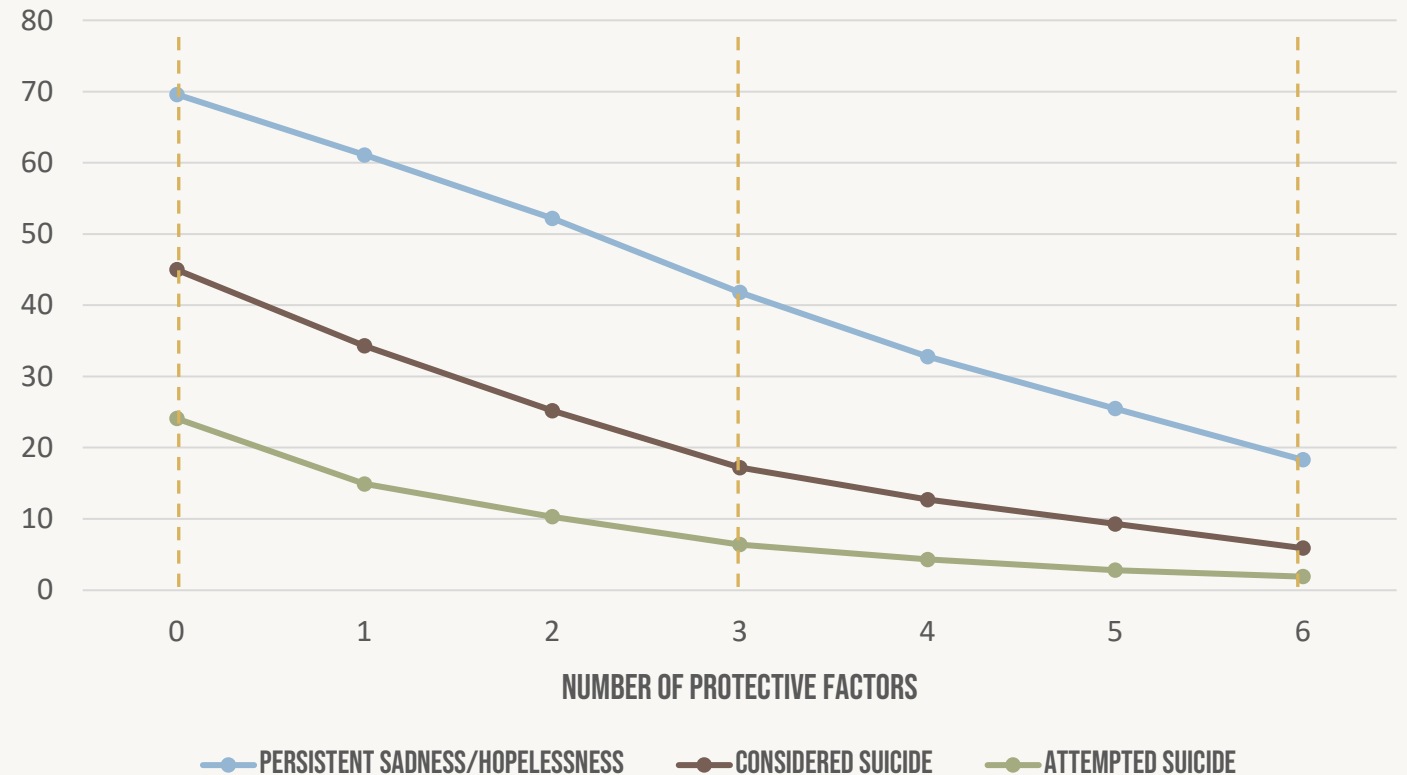
PROTECTIVE FACTORS & MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

The Youth Survey assesses the protective factors that promote well-being and positive development in youth. Overall, **the more protective factors** youth have, **the less likely** they report **mental health-related issues**.

Protective Factors

- 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

PERCENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES PAST YEAR BY NUMBER OF PROTECTIVE FACTORS



VISIT THE YOUTH SURVEY WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION!

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey

Questions? Contact



Chloe Lee

Countywide Data Analytics, Department of
Management and Budget, Fairfax County

DMBDataAnalytics@fairfaxcounty.gov

