



State Public Health Symposium

Youth Mental Health Legislative Trends and Policy Options

June 23, 2022

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Children & Youth Mental Health Trends

○ Mental Health Conditions

- Any Mental Illness (AMI) can include,
 - Anxiety, panic disorders and depression
- Serious Mental Illness (SMI) can include,
 - Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Manic Depressive Disorder

Rising Rates of Mental Health Disorders

Approximately 1 in 11 children 3-17 years of age were diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety disorders.

1 in 5 adolescents have experienced a major depressive episode or seriously considered suicide.

Rates of suicide and suicidal ideations have increased most among: females, non-Hispanic whites, Blacks, sexual minorities and 12th-grade students.

National Institute of Mental Health

Children & Youth Behavioral Health Trends

Mental Health + Substance Use = Behavioral Health

○ Substance Use Disorder

- A recurrent use of alcohol, legal or illegal drugs that can cause clinical harm to one's health, disability or major responsibilities such as work, school and home.

Rising Rates of Behavioral Health Disorders

1 in 8 youth have reported using illicit substances within the last year.

Illicit use of alcohol, cannabis, opioids and prescription drugs have been reported most commonly among youth and young adults.

For adolescents and young adults, opioid overdose deaths have increased 500% since 1999.

Children and Youth Mental Health Legislative Trends

- Creation of task forces, committees or executive agencies to better understand and respond to youth mental health challenges
 - [Iowa SF479](#) (2019)
 - [Louisiana SR205](#) (2022)
- Increased awareness, access and treatment services for mental health
 - [Kentucky SR34](#) (2021)
 - [Colorado HB21-1258](#) (2021)



Children and Youth Mental Health Legislative Trends

- Increased coordination and resources with other state systems, such as:
 - Human services [Hawaii SR16](#) (2020)
 - Criminal justice [Montana HJR35](#) (2021)
 - Department of Health [Maryland HB129](#) (2022)

Related policy areas:
adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed care, child maltreatment and social-emotional learning



National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention

Focusing on Youth Mental Health

Kathleen Ethier, PhD

Director, Division of Adolescent and School Health

June 23, 2022








U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

CDC Strives to Help Youth Be Healthy and Successful

We envision a future where all youth in the U.S. will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources for a healthy adolescence and adulthood.



Adolescent Mental Health Was Moving in the Wrong Direction Prior to the Pandemic

THE PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO:	2009 Total	2011 Total	2013 Total	2015 Total	2017 Total	2019 Total	Trend
Experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness	26.1	28.5	29.9	29.9	31.5	36.7	
Seriously considered attempting suicide	13.8	15.8	17.0	17.7	17.2	18.8	
Made a suicide plan	10.9	12.8	13.6	14.6	13.6	15.7	
Attempted suicide	6.3	7.8	8.0	8.6	7.4	8.9	
Were injured in a suicide attempt that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse	1.9	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.4	2.5	

LEGEND



In wrong direction

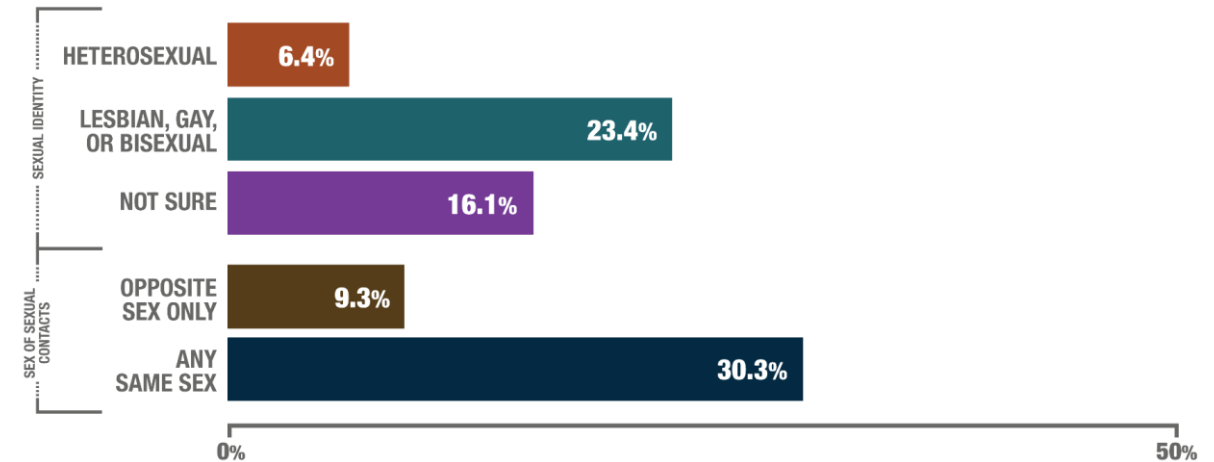
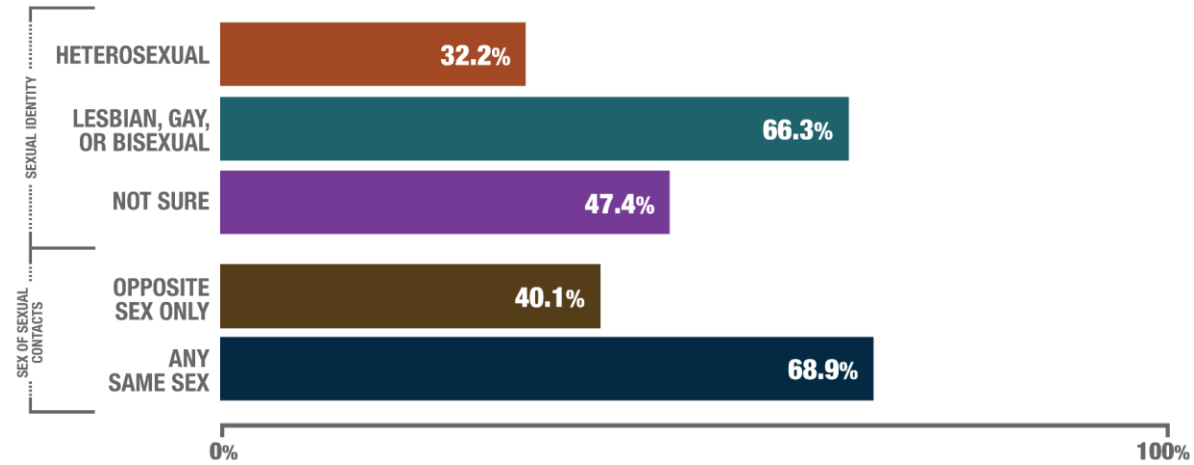


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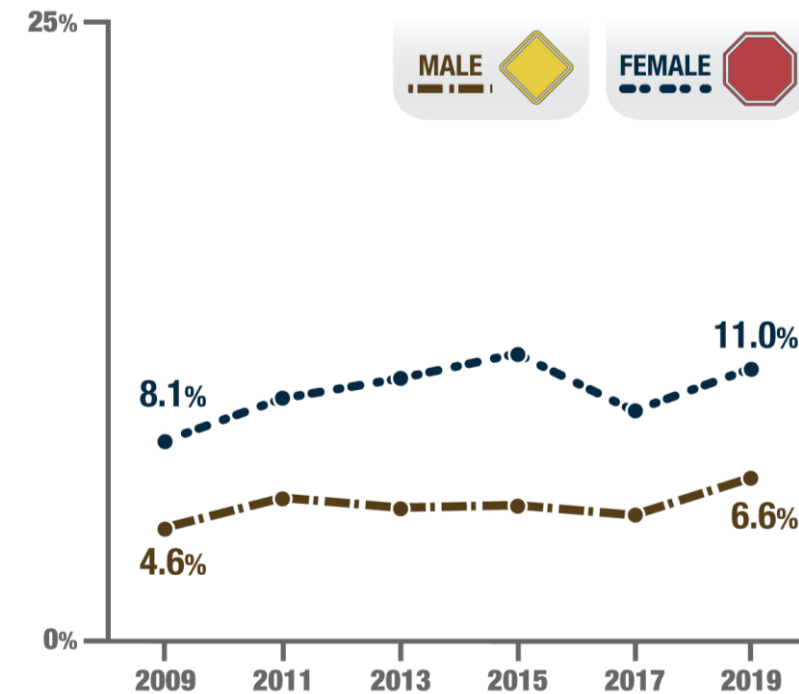
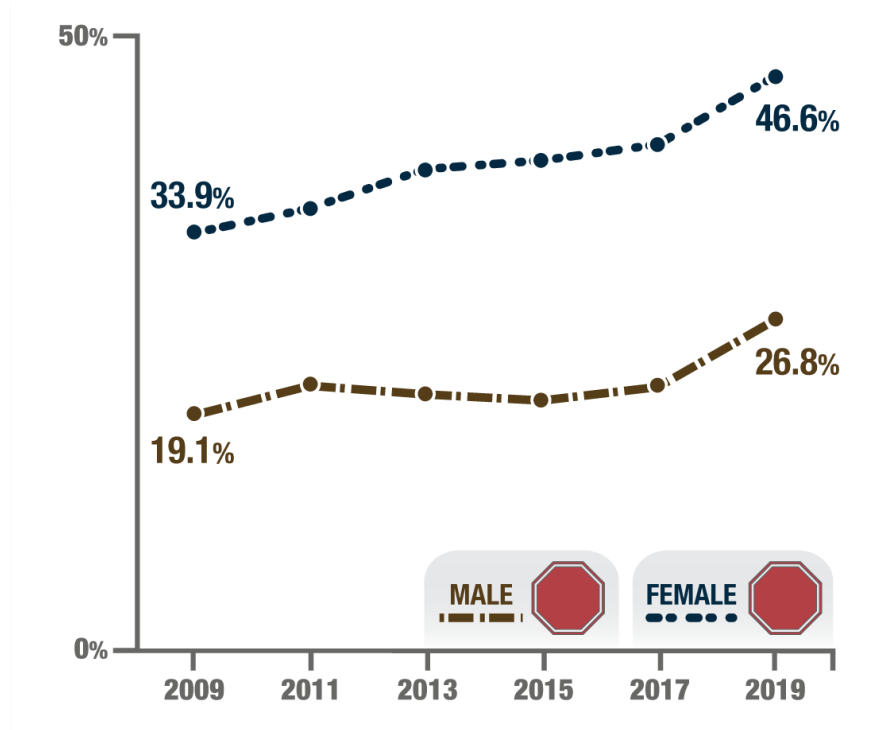


In right direction

Disparities Among LGBTQ Youth



Disparities Among Female Youth



New CDC Data Reveal Magnitude of Adolescents' Challenges During the Pandemic

- CDC developed the Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey modeled on the YRBS and conducted in Spring 2021
 - School-based recruitment, online survey
 - Nationally representative
 - Assessed adolescent health and well-being during the pandemic

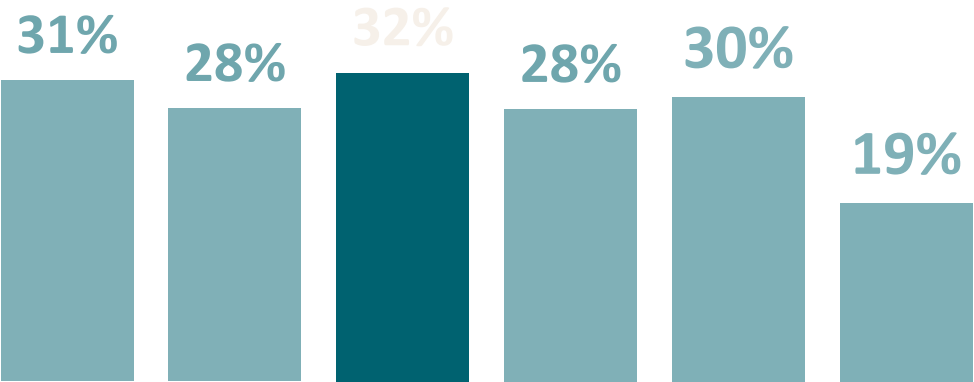




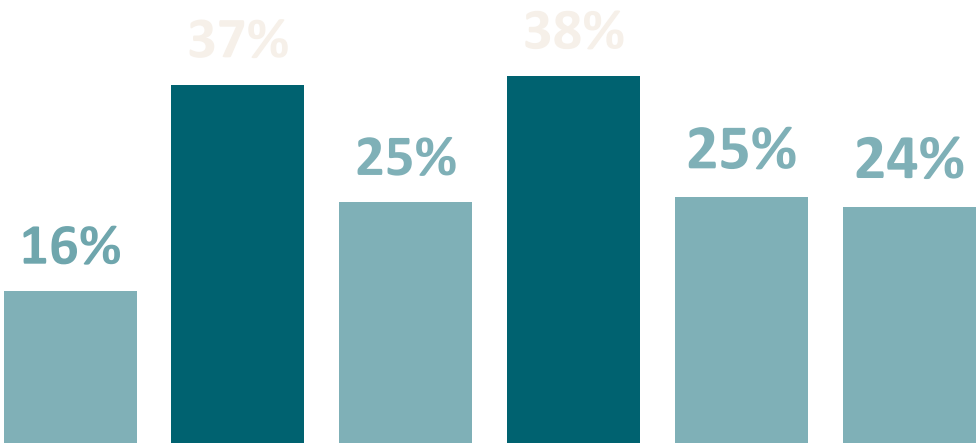
While the pandemic affected all students, it did not affect all students equally.

Students of Color Experienced Greater Levels of Disruption

Black students

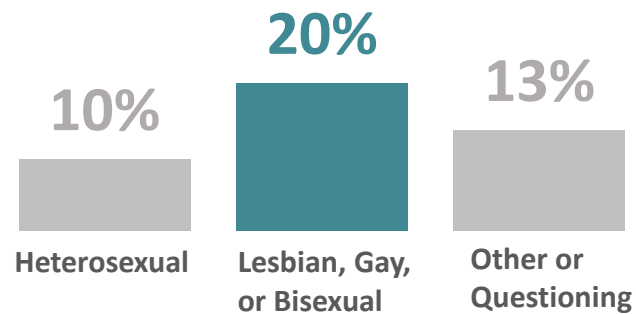


Asian and Hispanic/Latino

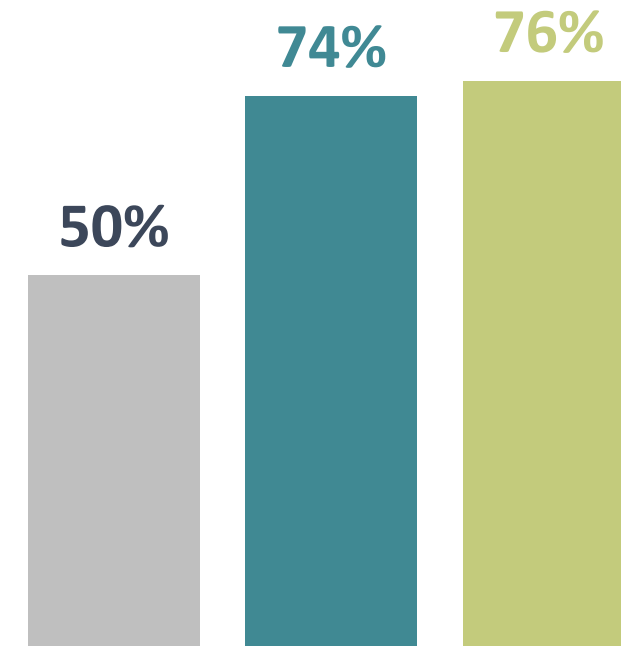


LGBQ Students Were Disproportionately Impacted by Abuse at Home

Lesbian, gay, or bisexual

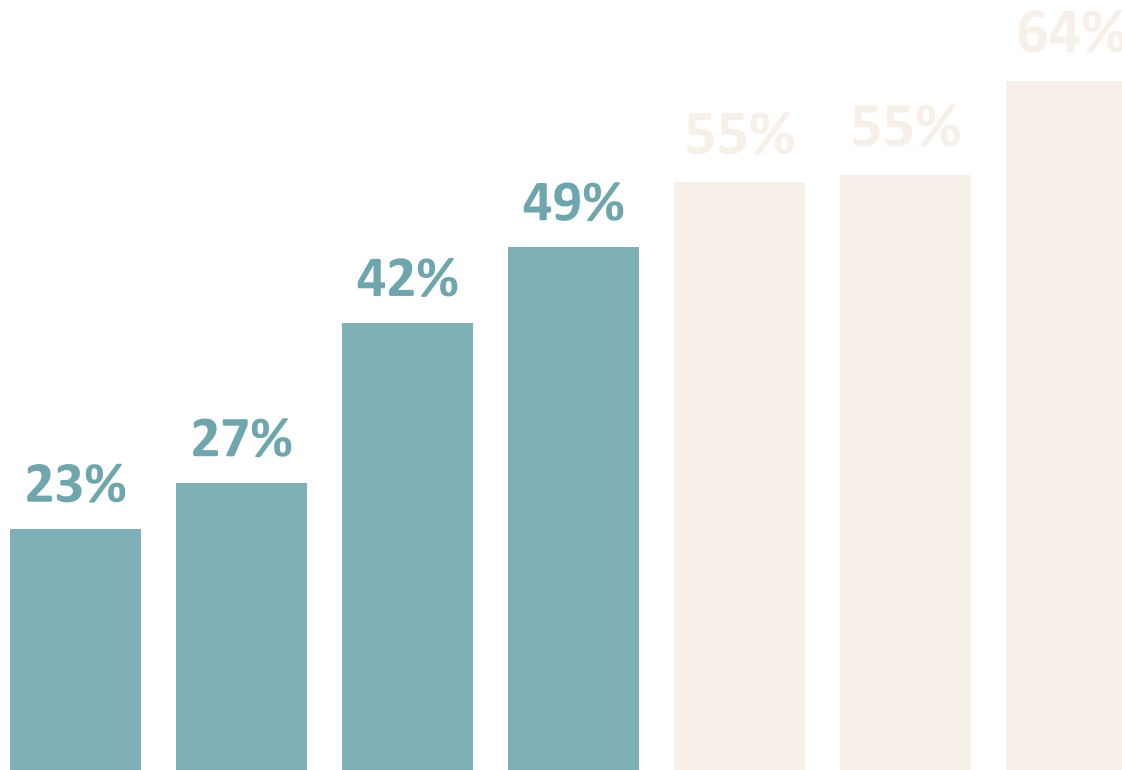


questioning
lesbian, gay, bisexual
other or



Experiences of Racism in School

Asian, Black, and Multiracial



Students who experienced racism in school were **more likely to have poor mental health** and **less likely to feel connected** to people at school.

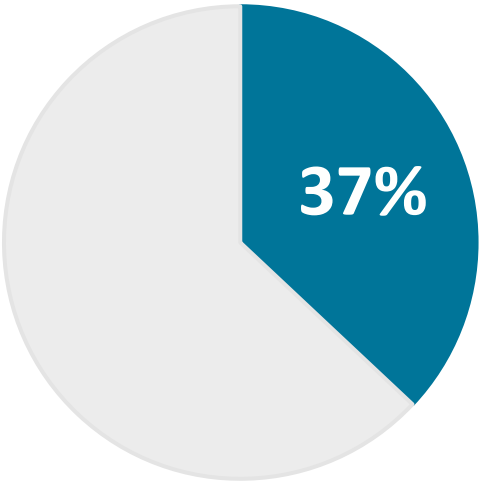


Adolescents are experiencing a mental health crisis.

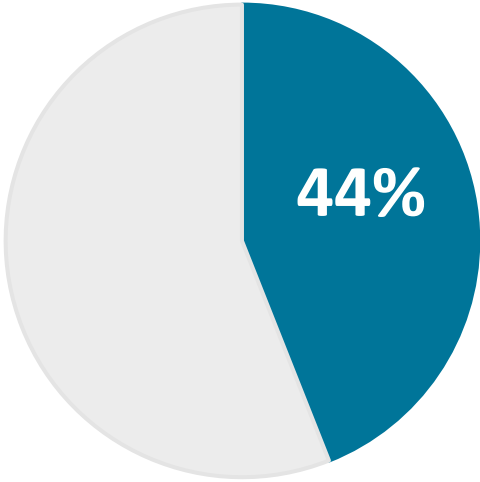
Too Many Adolescents Are Experiencing Poor Mental Health and Suicidality



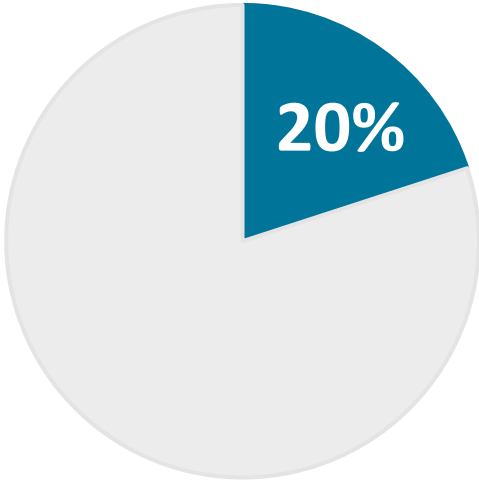
More than 1 in 3 had **poor mental health during the pandemic**



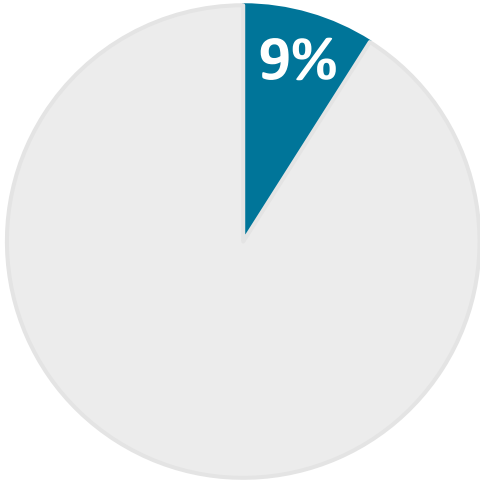
Nearly half **felt persistently sad or hopeless** in the past year



Two in ten **seriously considered suicide** in the past year

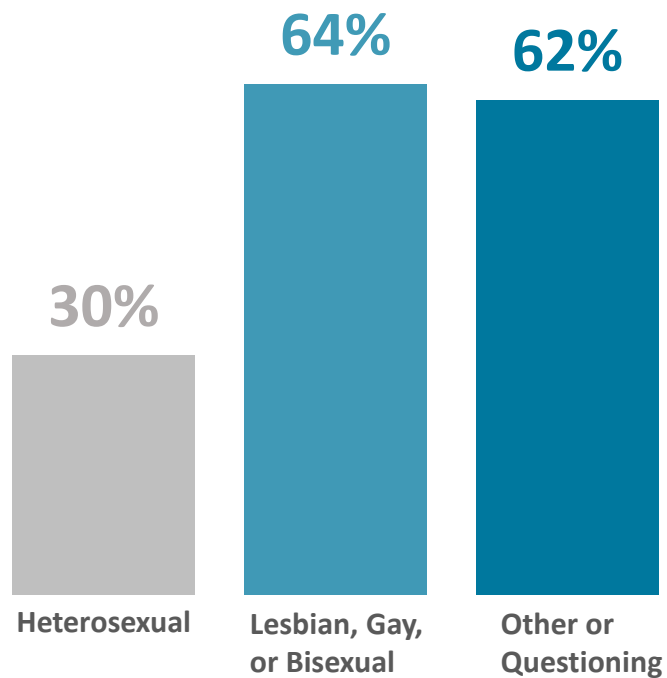


Nearly 1 in 10 **attempted suicide** in the past year

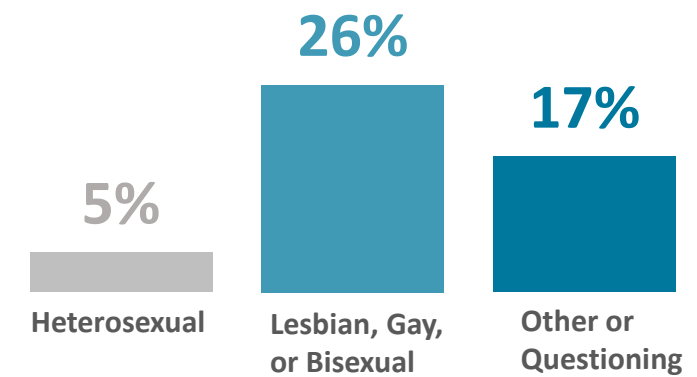


LGBQ Students Are More Likely to Experience Poor Mental Health and Suicidality

LGBQ students experienced

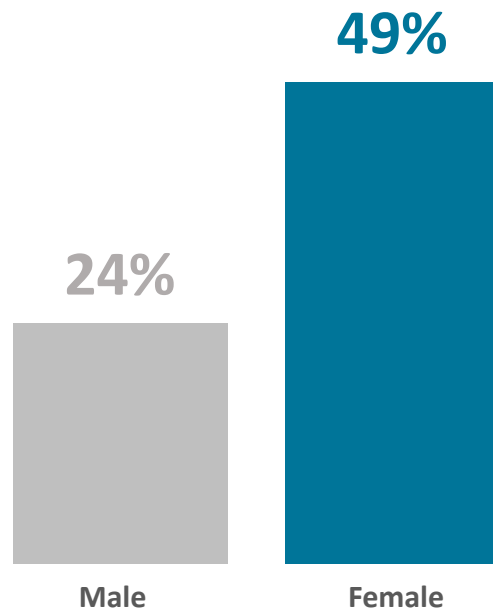


LGBQ students

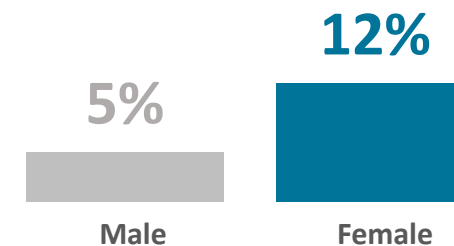


Female Students Are More Likely to Experience Poor Mental Health and Suicidality

Female students

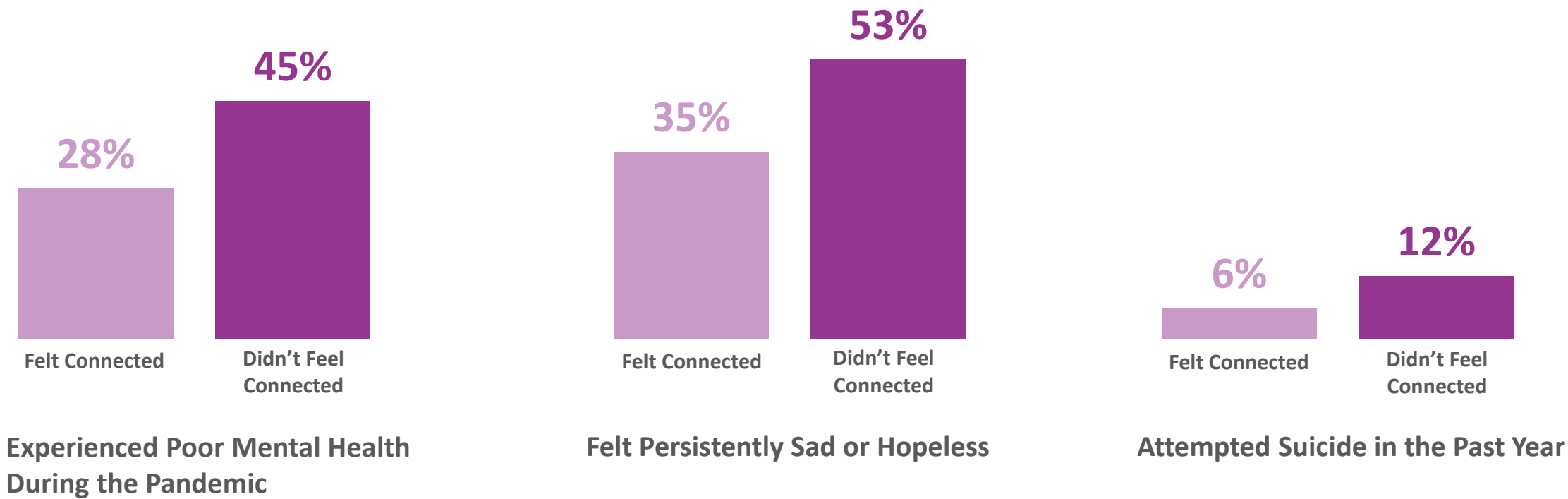


Female students



The Power of School Connectedness Is Clear

Students who **didn't feel close to people at school** had higher levels of poor mental health and suicide-related behaviors.



We Have More Work to do to Improve School Connectedness

- **Support recovery and resilience following the pandemic**
 - Less than half of students felt connected to others at school during the pandemic
- **Address racism in schools**
 - Students who experienced racism in schools were less likely to feel connected at school
- **Make schools safer and more supportive for LGBTQ+ youth**
 - LGBTQ students were less likely to feel connected at school
 - Black LGBTQ students (25%) and Black female LGBTQ students (22%) felt least connected of all groups

Classroom Management	Service-Learning Programs	Mentoring Programs	LGBTQ Supportive Policies and Practices
Providing professional development on classroom management techniques, and policies and practices that support youth	Implementing school-based service-learning programs	Implementing school-based mentoring programs	Implementing policies and practices that support LGBTQ youth

Activities to Improve Inclusivity in Schools

LGBTQ Supportive Policies and Practices			
Genders and Sexualities Alliances (GSAs)	Identifying Safe Spaces	Prohibiting Harassment	Professional Development
Create or enhance student-led clubs that aim to create a safe, welcoming, and accepting school environment for all youth	Identify “safe spaces” (e.g., counselor's office, classroom) where LGBTQ youth can receive support from administrators, teachers, or other school staff	Prohibit harassment based on a student's perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity	Provide professional development to all school staff on creating inclusive environments and supporting LGBTQ youth

When Schools Are Safer and More Supportive, Health and Well-being Improves

In schools implementing this approach within CDC-funded districts, students were **less likely** to:



HAVE EVER
HAD SEX



HAVE 4+
SEXUAL
PARTNERS



BE CURRENTLY
SEXUALLY
ACTIVE



MISS SCHOOL
BECAUSE
OF SAFETY
CONCERNS

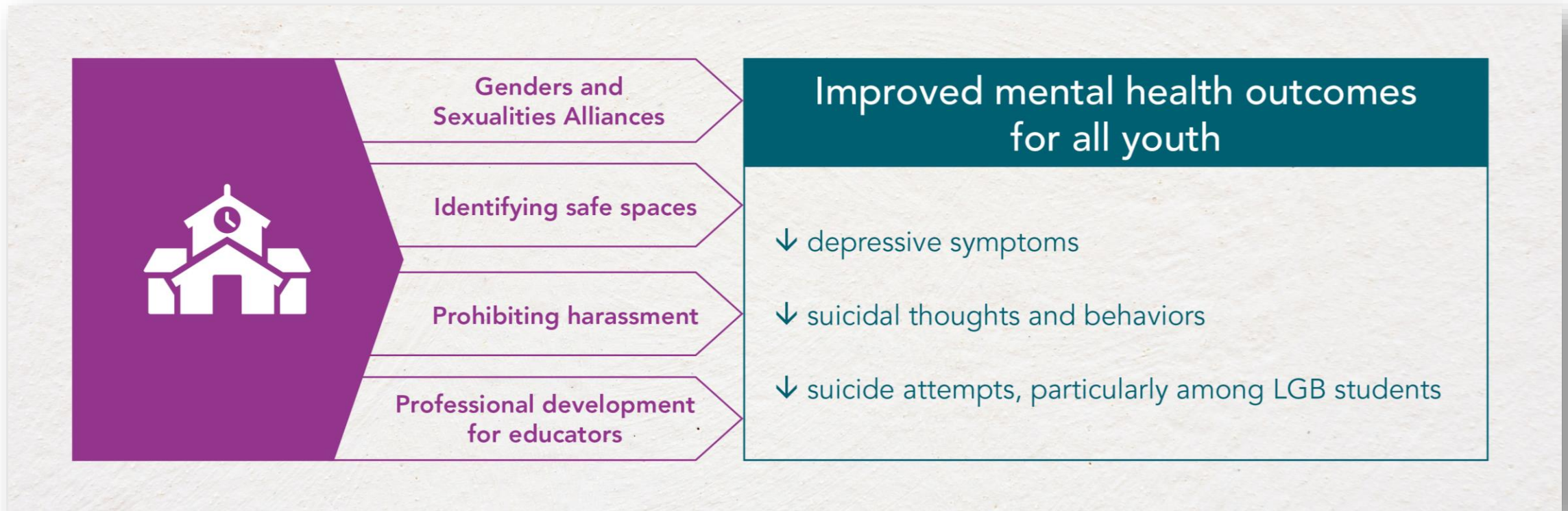


BE FORCED TO
HAVE SEX



USE
MARIJUANA

More Activity = Greater Impact



What States Can do to Support Adolescent Mental Health

- Leverage Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) funding
- Develop, implement, and enforce robust, state-wide school enumerated:
 - Anti-bullying policies
 - Non-discrimination policies for students and staff
- Enhance capacity to support the mental health of students and staff
- Strengthen state education agency-based efforts to foster inclusion
- Support youth health data collection (Youth Risk Behavior Survey & School Health Profiles)

Thank You



For More Information

- Web: www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth
- Twitter: @CDC_DASH
- E-mail: nccddashinfo@cdc.gov
- Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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Questions?



Additional Slides

Children's Behavioral Health and COVID-19

Supporting Children

- Recognize and address fear and stress
 - For adolescents, recognize and address behavior changes
- Help children stay socially connected through technology
- Help children remain healthy
 - Eat health, drink water, be physically active or learn a new hobby
- Teach and reinforce everyday prevention actions
 - Hand-washing, wearing a mask and staying 6 feet apart from others



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

○ Additional Expertise

- Behavioral health for adults and children, tobacco and nicotine policies and neonatal abstinence and neonatal opioid withdrawal

○ Additional Resources

- U.S. Surgeon General Advisory: [Protecting Youth Mental Health](#)
- Health Resource and Services Administration, [Bright Future Program Guidelines](#)
- NCSL, Improving Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health – *Coming Soon!*
- NCSL, [Enhancing School Capacity to Support Children's Mental Health](#)
- Substance Use Disorder Treatment [Legislative Database](#)
- Maternal and Child Health [Legislative Database](#)



Thank You!

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