

Whatcom County

Highlights from the Healthy Youth Survey 2023

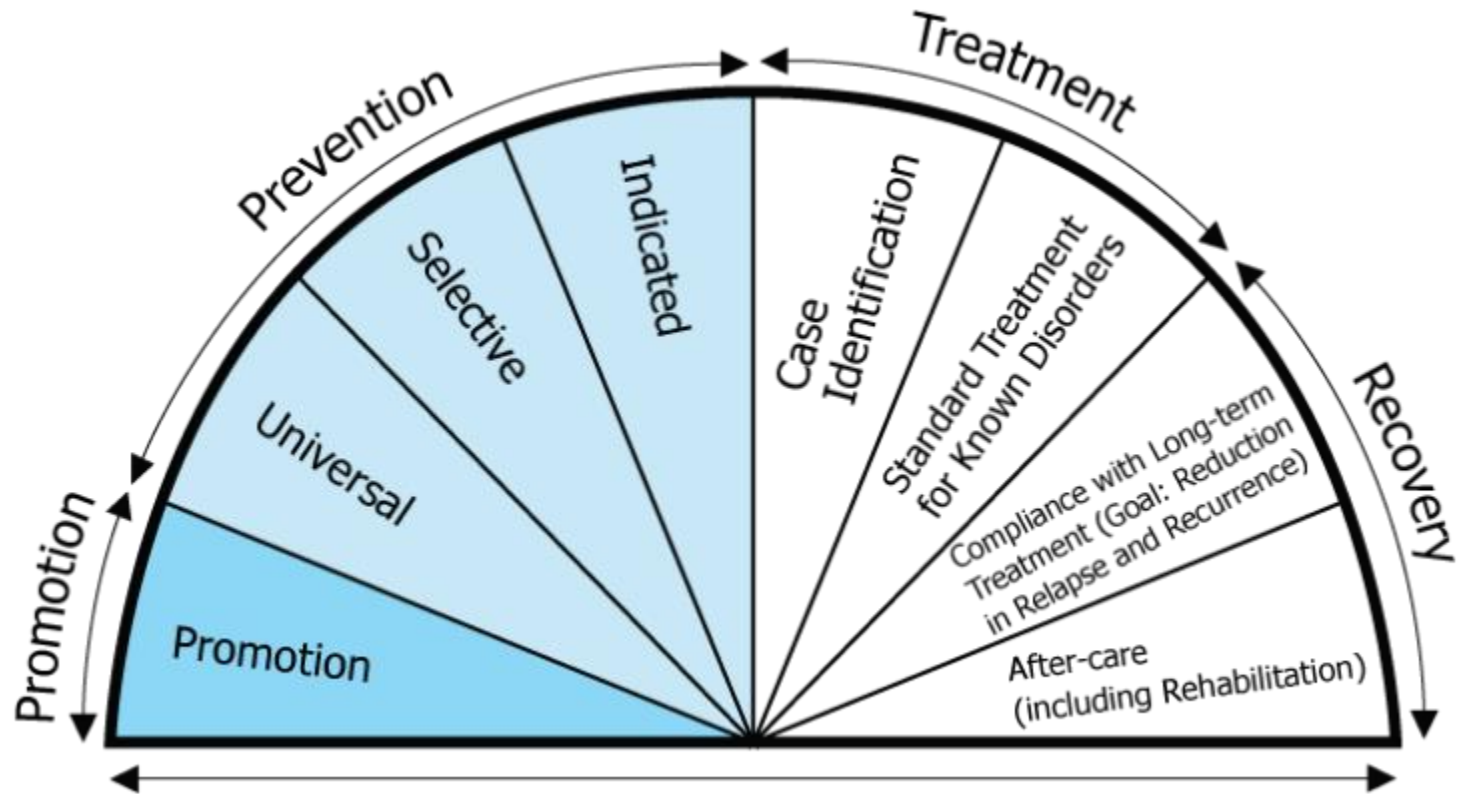


WHATCOM COUNTY
HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES



*"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."
Benjamin Franklin*

Substance Use Continuum of Care



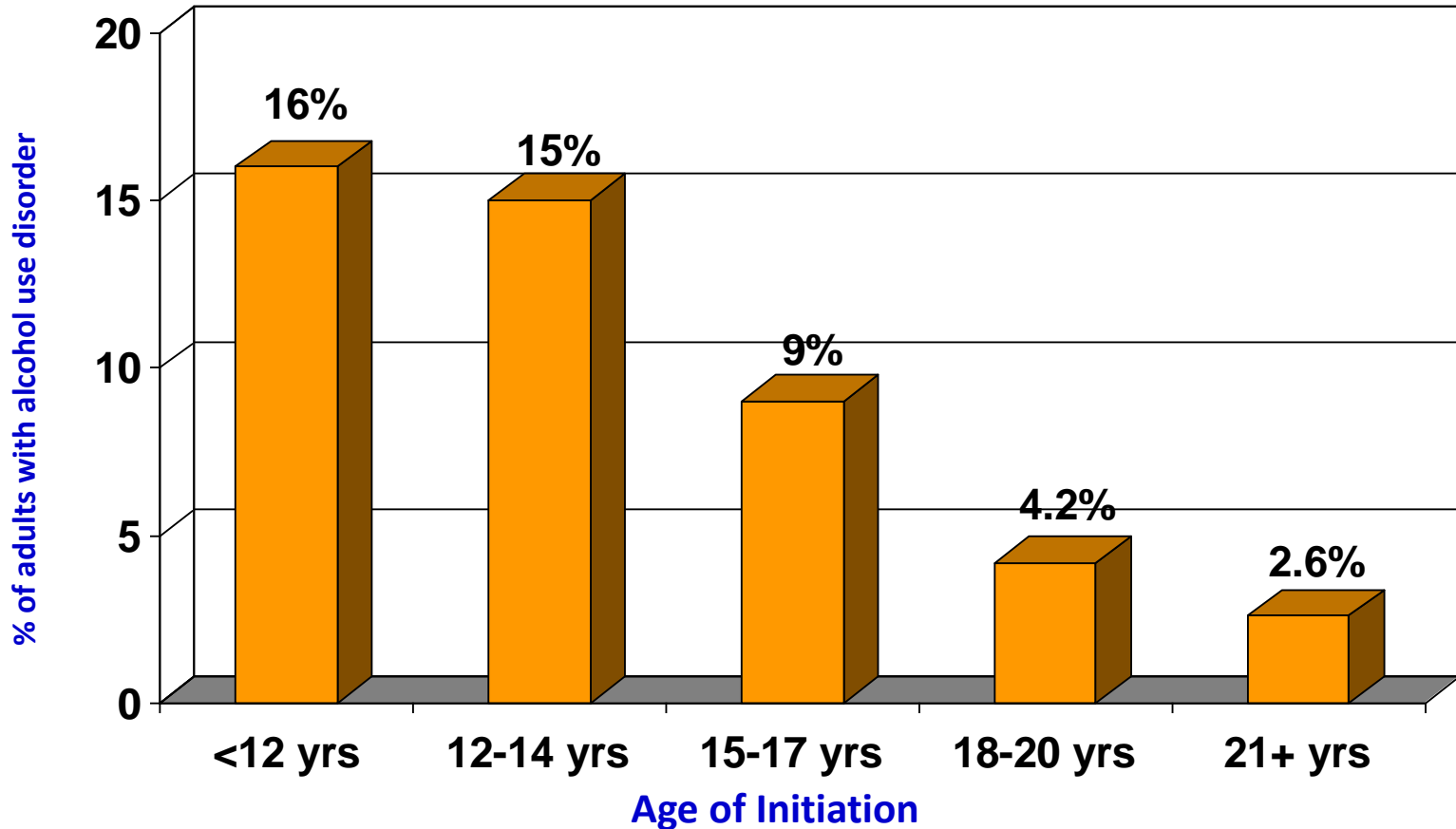
Shared Risk & Protective Factors

You can reduce risk for multiple problems simultaneously!

Risk factors are conditions that increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in drug use, delinquency, school dropout and/or violence

	Substance Abuse	Delinquency	Teen Pregnancy	School Drop-Out	Violence	Depression & Anxiety
Community	Low Neighborhood Attachment	✓	✓		✓	
	Perceived Availability of Drugs	✓			✓	
	Perceived Availability of Handguns		✓		✓	
	Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use, Firearms and Crime	✓	✓		✓	
Family	Family History of Antisocial Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Poor Family Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Family Conflict	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Drugs and Antisocial Behavior	✓	✓		✓	
School	Academic Failure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Low Commitment to School	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Rebelliousness	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Gang Involvement	✓	✓		✓	
Peer / Individual	Perceived Risk of Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior and Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Friend's Use of Drugs	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Interaction with Antisocial Peers	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Depressive Symptoms	✓			✓	✓

Percentage of Past Year Alcohol Use Disorder* (among adults aged 21 or older) by Age of First Use



*Abuse or Dependence
(Source: SAHMSA, 2005)

Early Prevention Matters

Heroin use is part of a larger substance abuse problem.

Nearly all people who used heroin also used at least 1 other drug.

Most used at least 3 other drugs.

Heroin is a highly addictive opioid drug with a high risk of overdose and **death** for users.

People who are addicted to...



ALCOHOL

are

2x



MARIJUANA

are

3x



COCAINE

are

15x



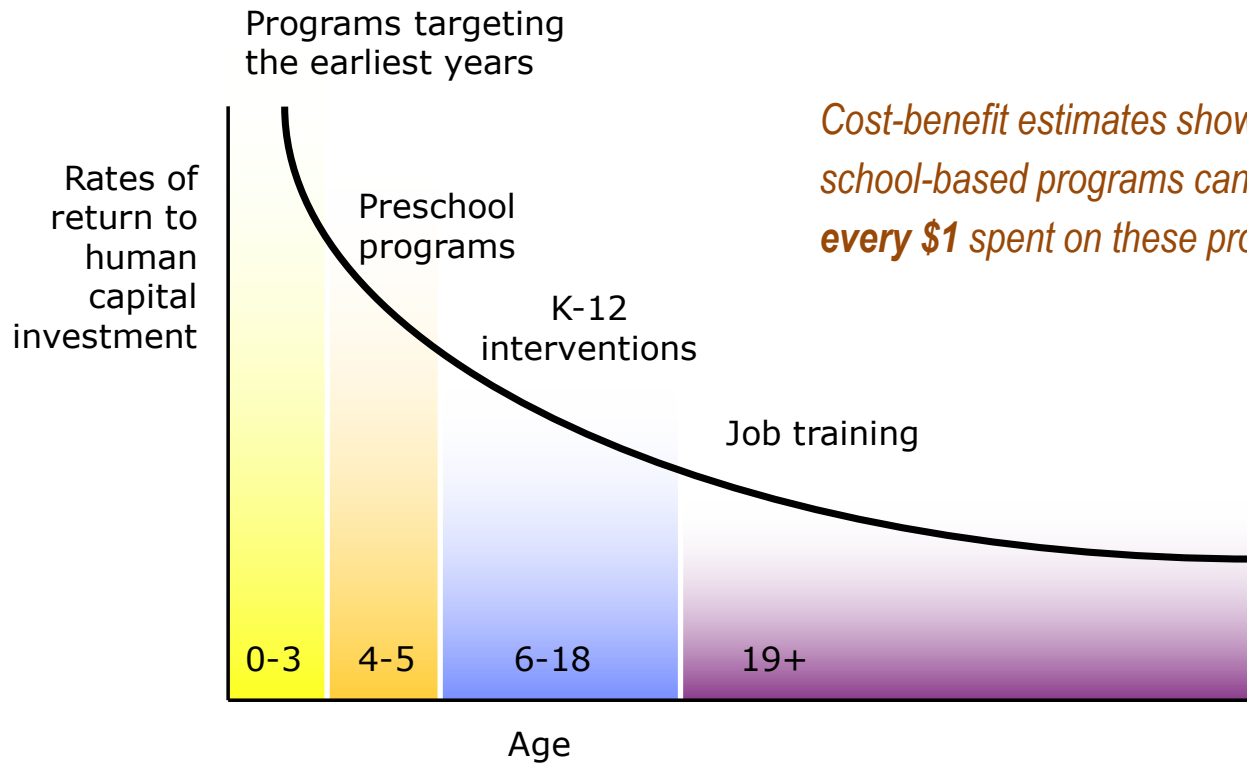
Rx OPIOID PAINKILLERS

are

40x

...more likely to be addicted to heroin.

Preventive Intervention is More Efficient and Produces Higher Returns than Later Remediation



*Cost-benefit estimates show that effective school-based programs can **save \$18 for every \$1** spent on these programs.*

Heckman, J. (2007)



Interpreting trends with 2021 & 2023 data

Use caution when trying to interpret trends using data from the 2021 survey.

A lot has changed...



The switch to odd year survey administration means we are surveying a different cohort of students



Switch to online survey format



First year of HYS



Pandemic



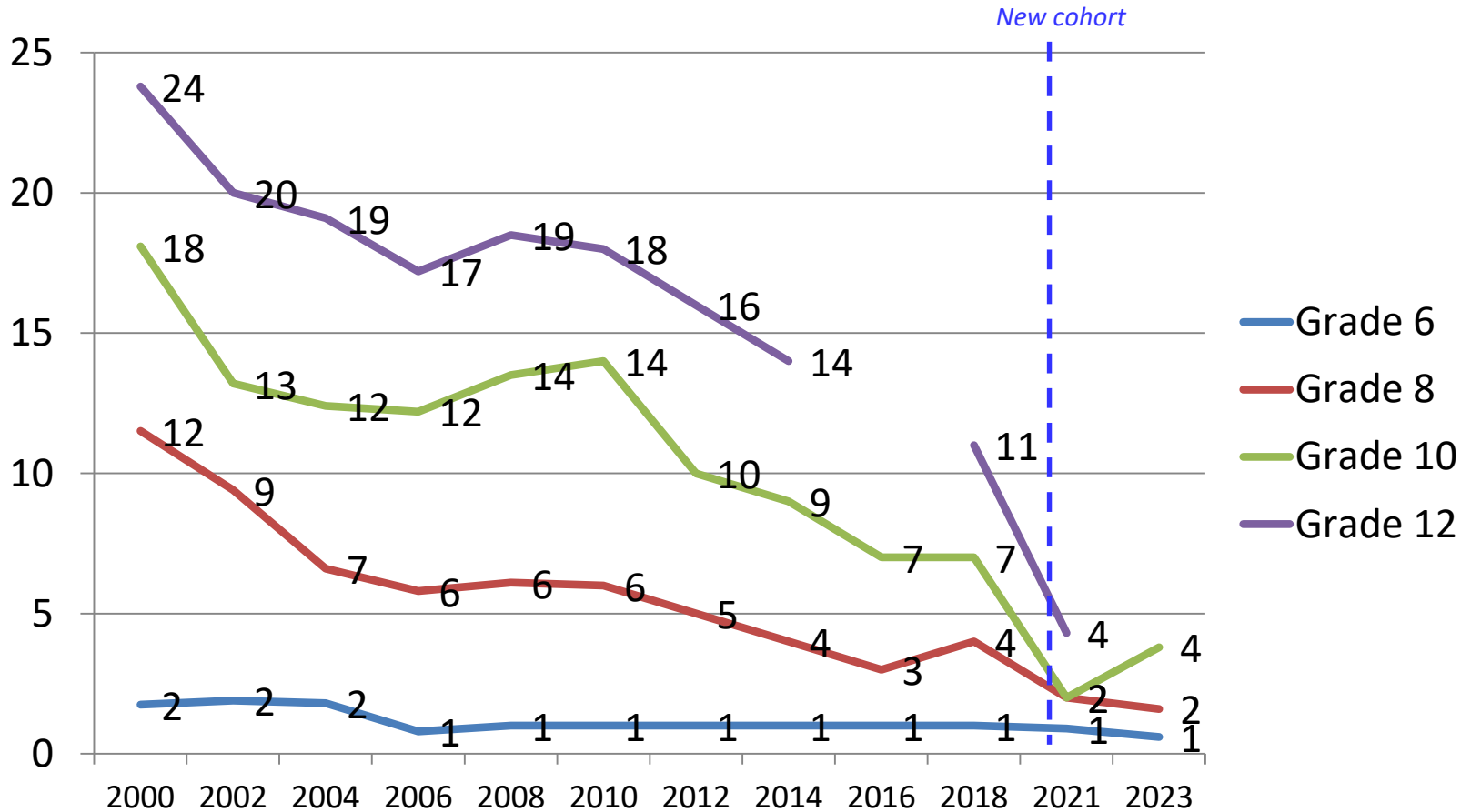
Student Participation

Whatcom County

- 1,561 (81%) of Grade 6 students
- 1,536 (79%) of Grade 8 students
- 1,466 (67%) of Grade 10 students
- 791 (36%) of Grade 12 students

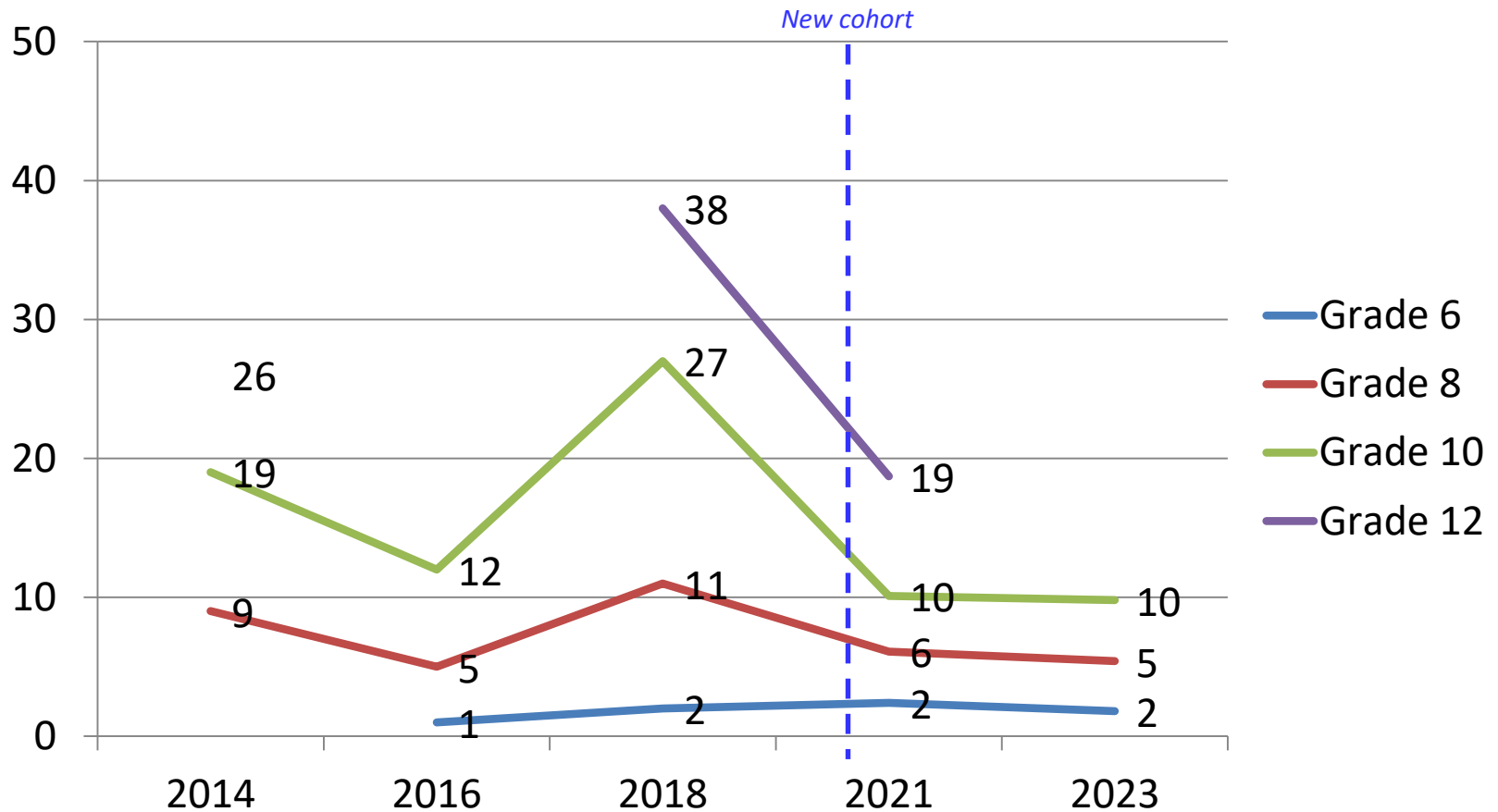
30-Day Use of Smoking Tobacco

Whatcom County (2000-2023)



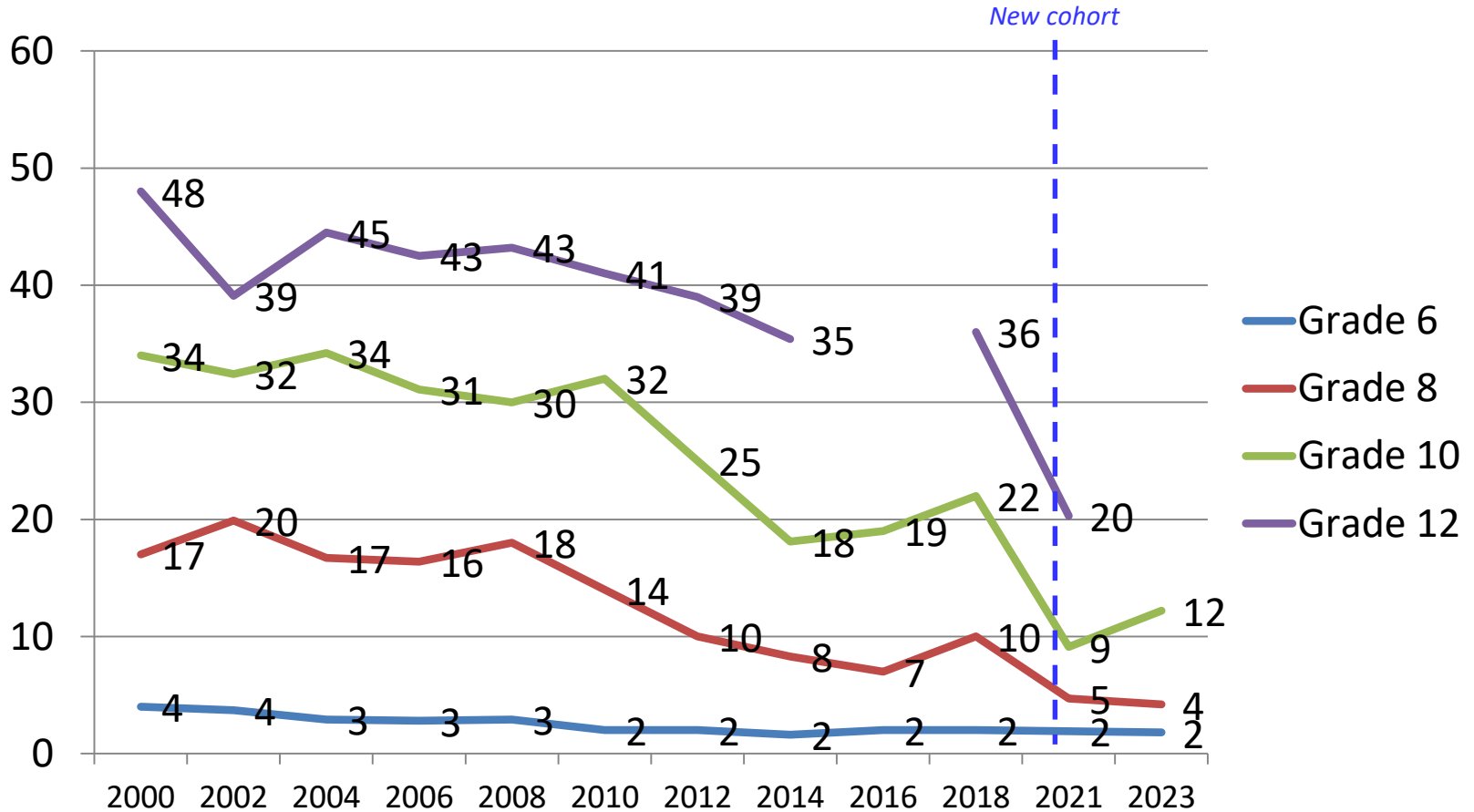
Current E-Cigarette Smoking or Vaping

Percent of students who report using an electronic cigarette, e-cig or vape pen in the past 30 days



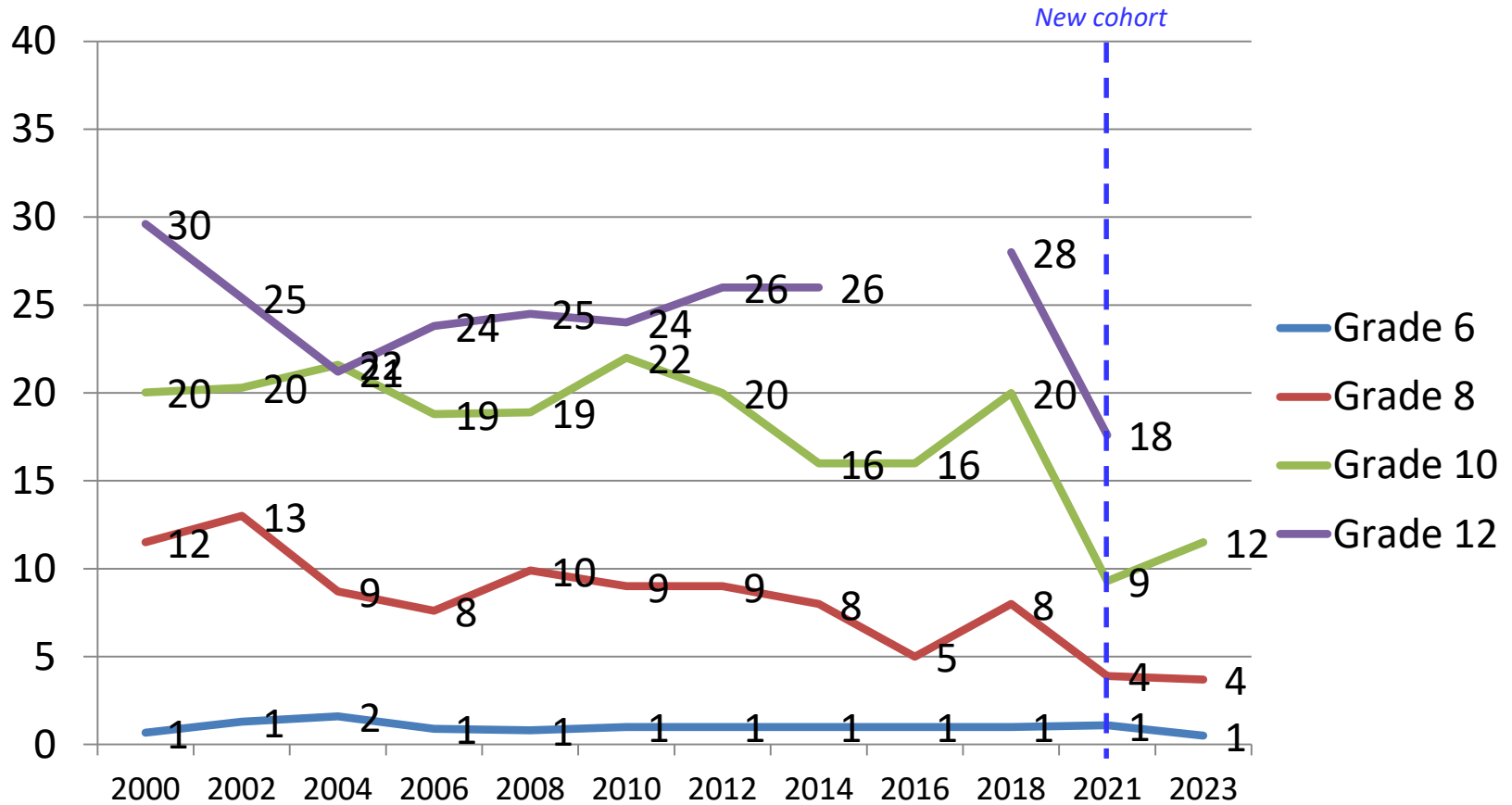
30-Day Use of Alcohol

Whatcom County (2000-2023)



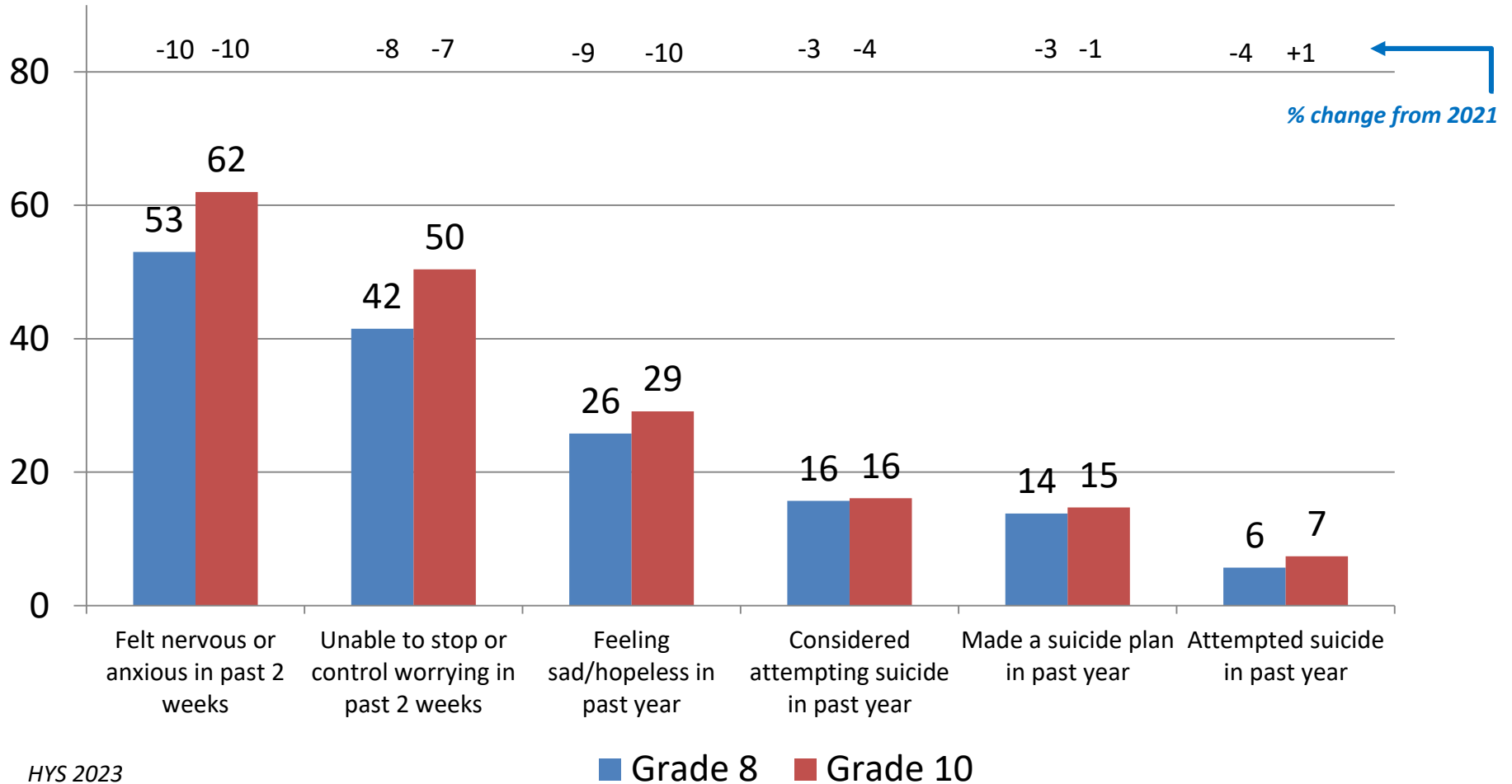
30-Day Use of Marijuana

Whatcom County (2000-2023)



Mental Health Status

Nearly two in three 10th graders reported feeling anxious.
One in six 10th graders reported making a plan for suicide in the past year.



Mental Wellness in the Classroom

Impact on a classroom

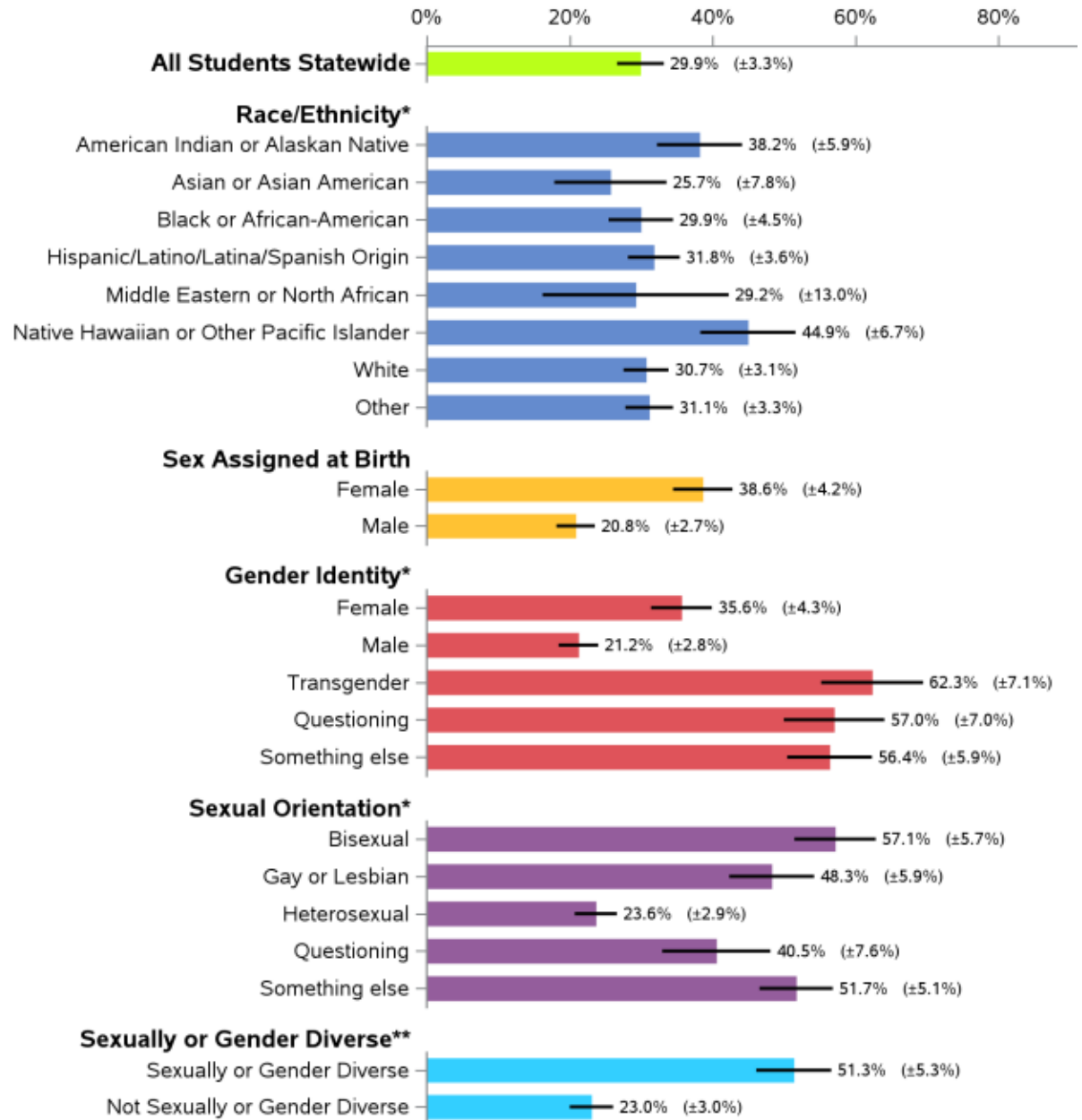


*In a class of 30 students in grade 10 in
Whatcom County:*

- 19** are dealing with anxiety*
- 9** are dealing with depression
- 5** have contemplated suicide
- 5** have made a suicide plan
- 2** have attempted suicide

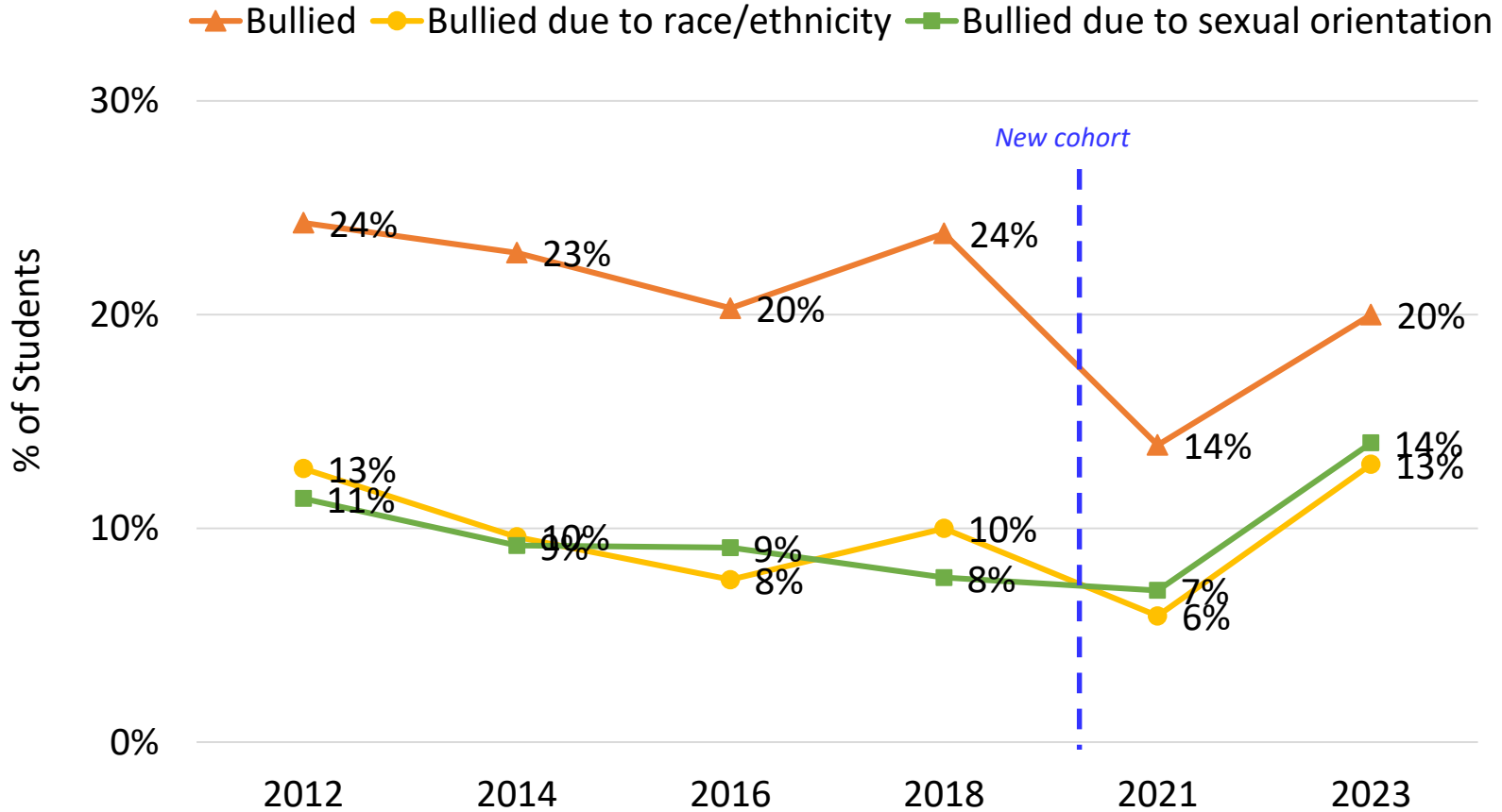
Statewide

relationship between
feeling sad/hopeless
and demographics
(Grade 10)



Bullying and Harassment

Percent of 10th graders reporting bullying on any days in the past 30 days



Whatcom County - Source: 2012 through 2023 Healthy Youth Survey

Adverse Childhood Experiences Affect Adult Outcomes

- **Abuse:** Physical (31%*), Emotional (20%*), Sexual (15%*)
- **Neglect:** Physical, Emotional
- **Household Dysfunction:** Household substance abuse, mental illness, divorce, incarceration, mother treated violently

**Whatcom County 10th Grade Students (Healthy Youth Survey 2023)*

Probability given 1,000 American adults

ADULTS WITH 0 ACEs

1 in 69 are alcoholic
1 in 480 uses IV drugs
1 in 96 attempts suicide

ADULTS WITH 3 ACEs

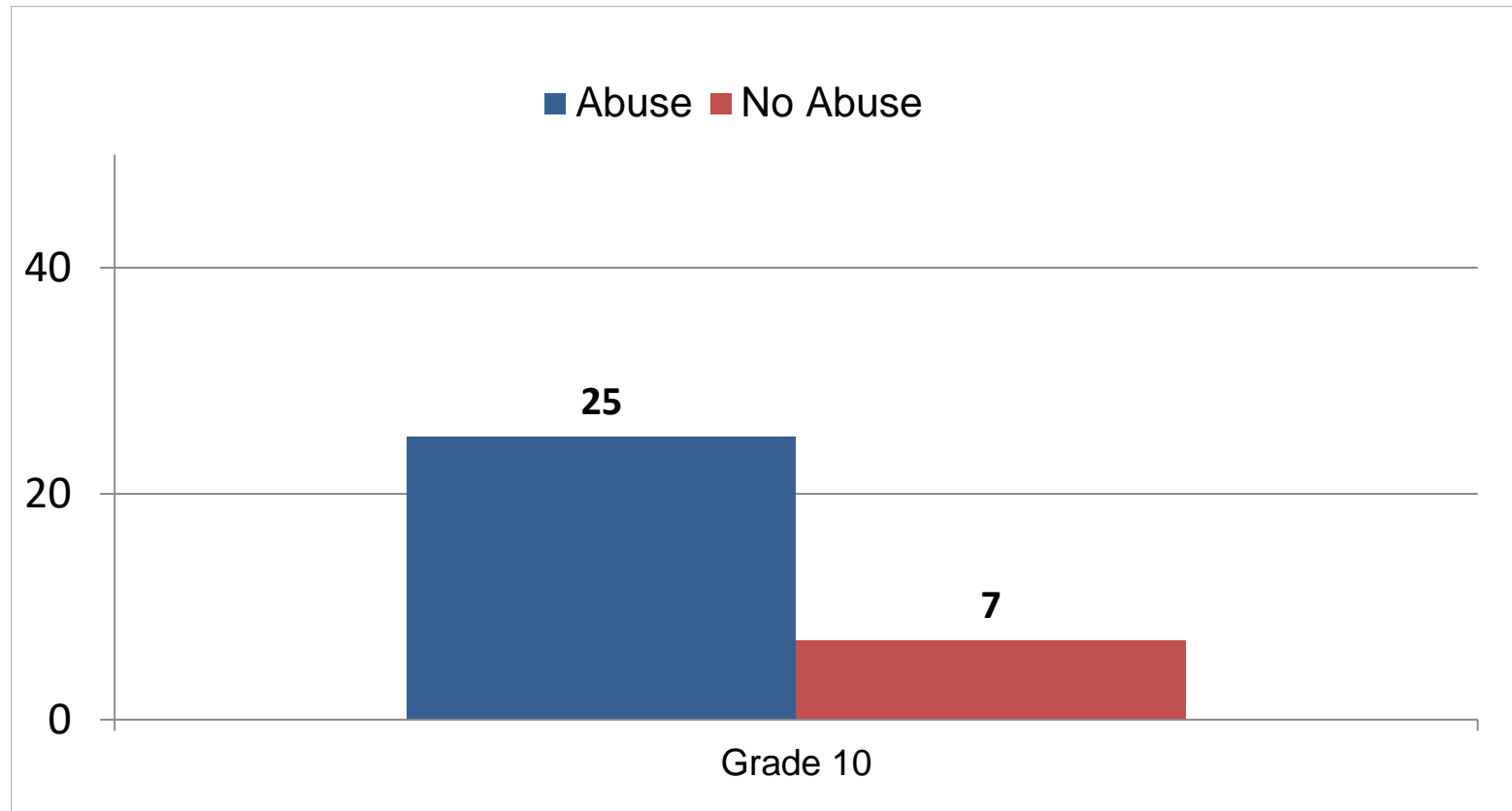
1 in 9 are alcoholic
1 in 43 uses IV drugs
1 in 10 attempts suicide

ADULTS WITH 7+ ACEs

1 in 6 are alcoholic
1 in 30 use IV drugs
1 in 5 attempts suicide

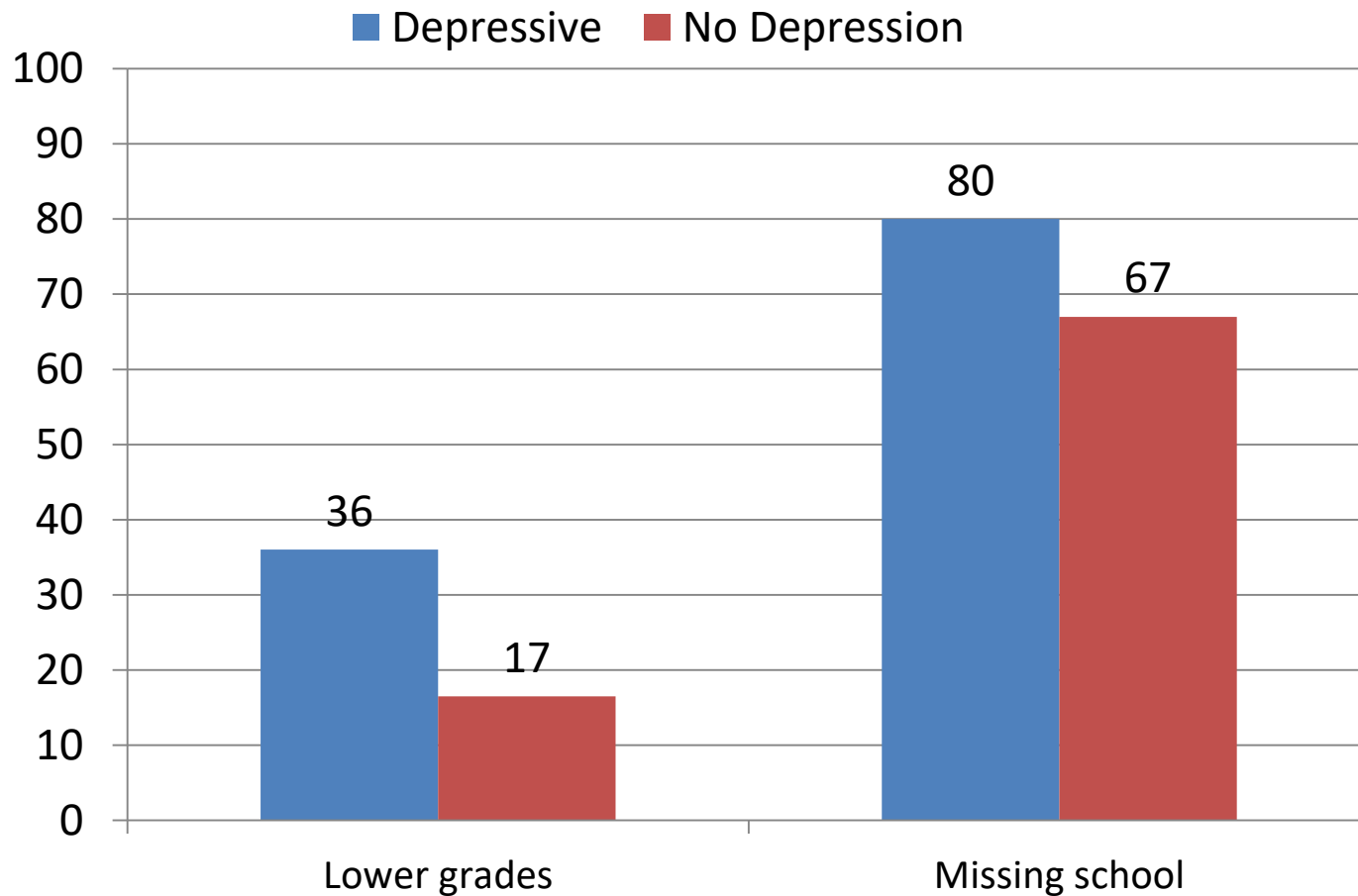
Physical Abuse & Current Drinking

Current drinking is higher among students who report having ever been physically hurt by an adult (Has an adult ever physically hurt you on purpose-like pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or punched you).



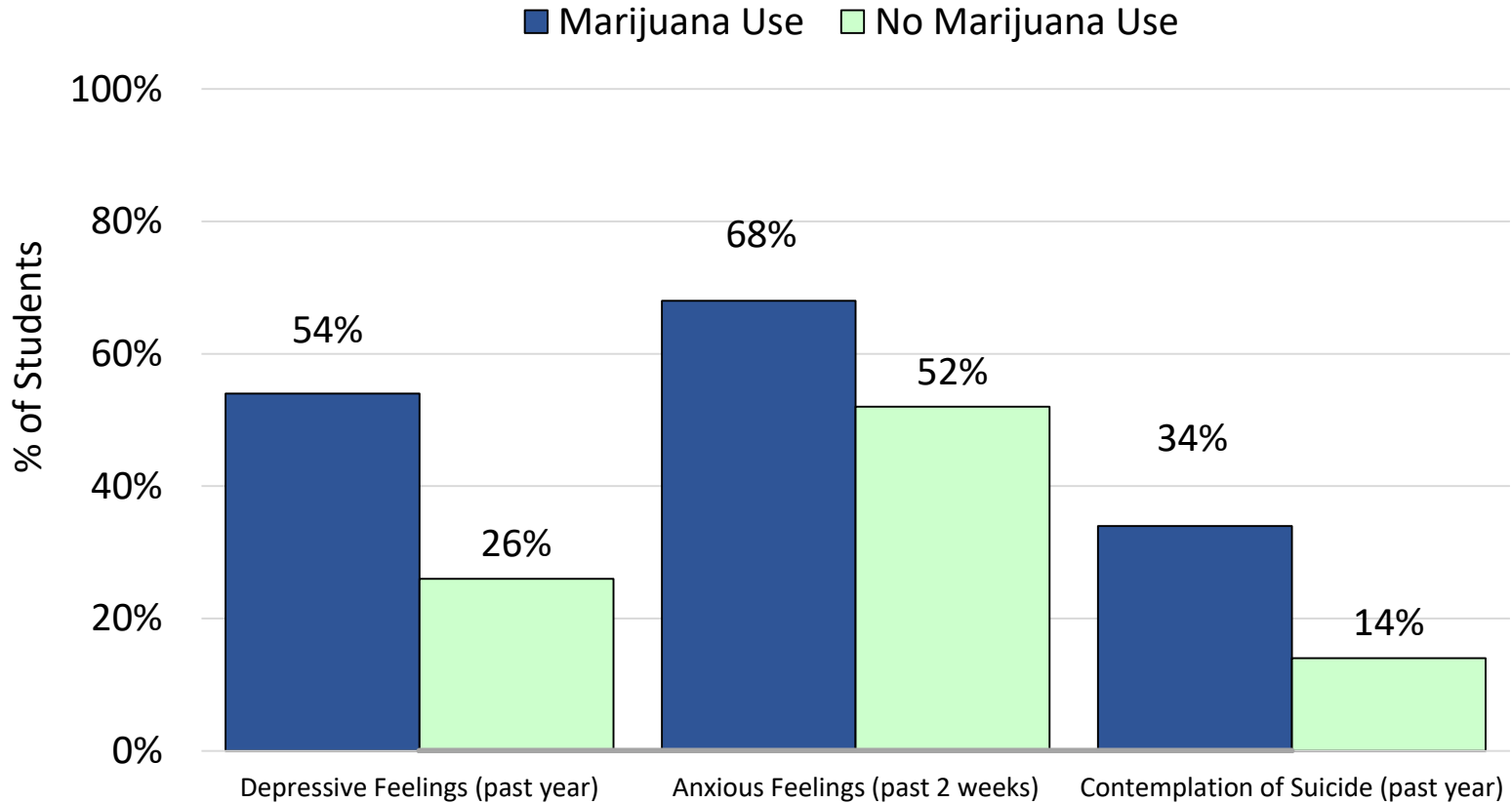
Depressive Feelings and School

Percent of students in 10th grade that reported **depressive feelings** in the past year experienced **lower grades** and **missing school**.



Current Marijuana Use and Mental Wellbeing

10th grade students that report current marijuana use, report higher rates of depressive/anxious feelings and contemplation of suicide



Protective Factors

Encourage opportunities in all 4 domains!

Peers

- Knowing right from wrong
- Interaction with healthy peers
- Social skills

Family

- Have fun with parents
- Eat dinner together
- Family rules about drugs are clear
- Could ask parents for help with a personal problem
- Involvement in family decisions
- Opportunity for healthy family involvement



School

- Participate in supervised after-school activities
- Have friends who participate in school clubs or activities
- Opportunities for students outside of class (sports, clubs, etc.)
- Opportunities for healthy school involvement

Community

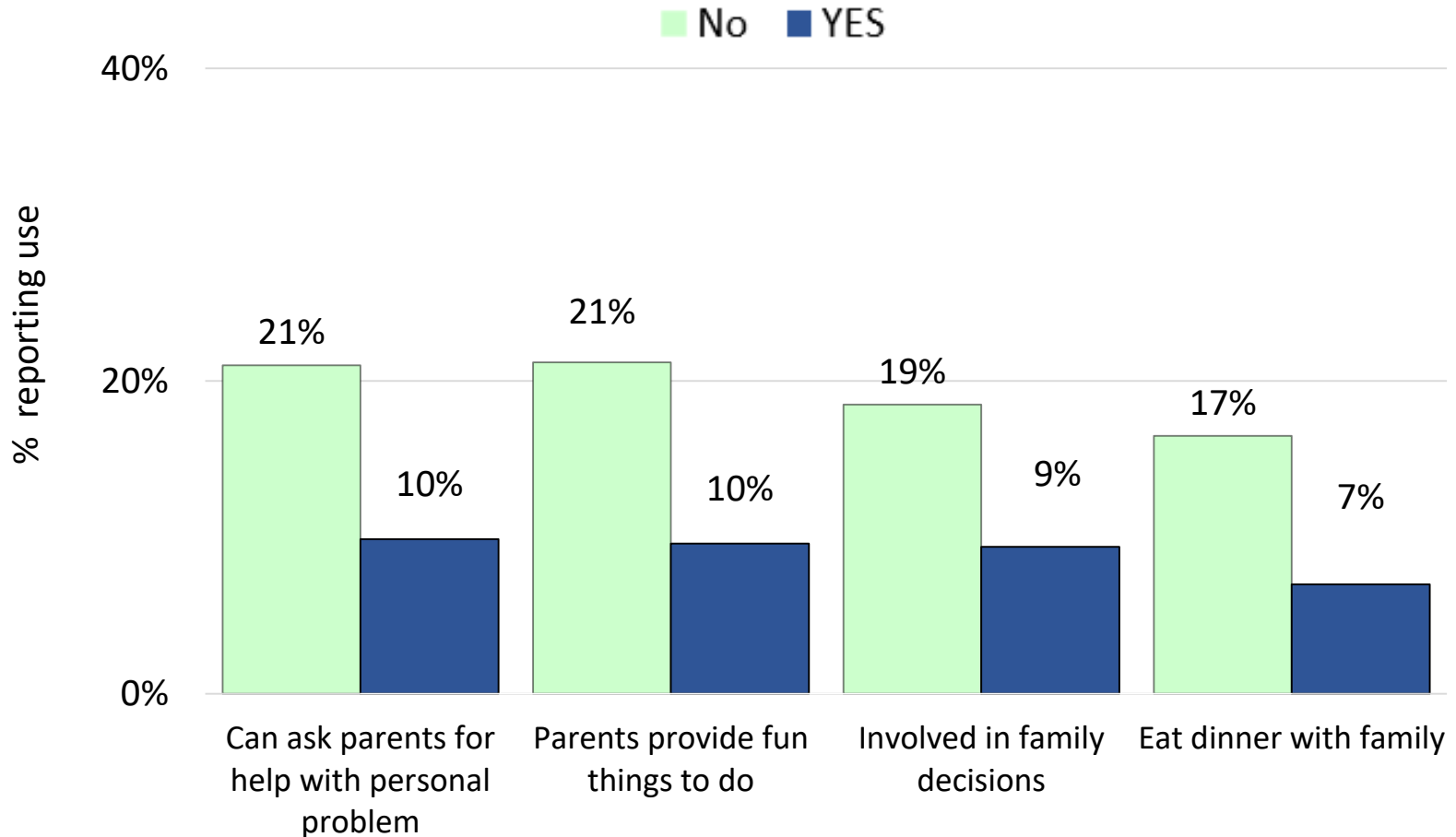
- Can talk to neighbors
- Activity clubs available (YMCA, B&G Club)
- Service clubs available (scouts, camp, 4-H)
- Sports and Recreation
- Opportunities for healthy community involvement

*Connection to one healthy adult
can make the difference!*

Current Marijuana Use & Family Protective Factors



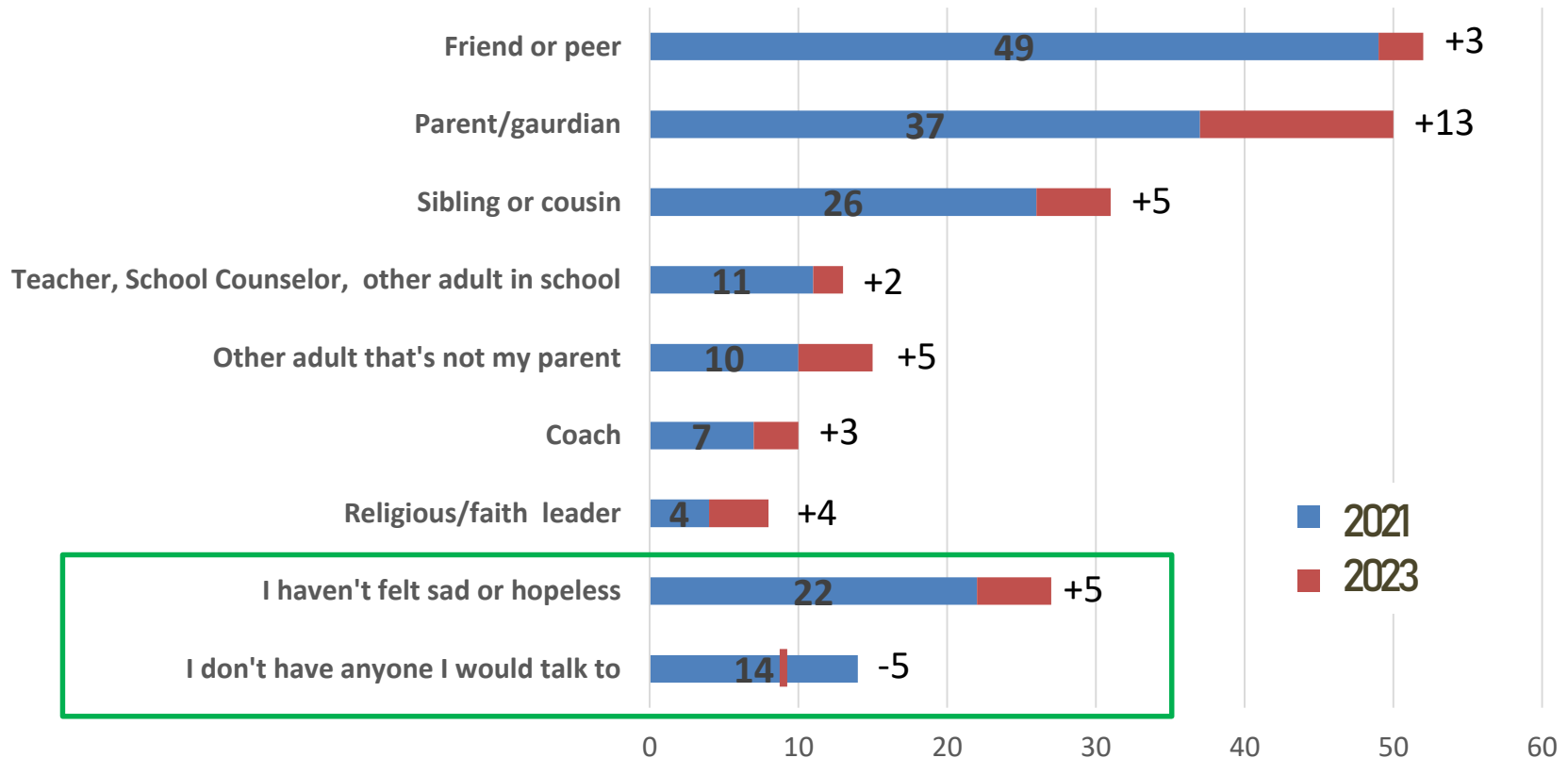
10th grade students that report family protective factors report less 30-day marijuana use



Support

If you feel sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row, to whom would you most likely turn to for help?

(Grade 10 - choose all that apply)



More from Whatcom 10th Graders

Excessive Screen Time: 69%

Percent of students who report 3 or more hours of screen time on an average school day (time spent in front of a TV, computer, smart phone, or other electronic device watching shows or videos, playing games, accessing the Internet, or using social media)

Less than 8 hours sleep on a School Night: 65%

Percent of students who report sleeping less than 8 hours on an average school night

60 Minutes of Physical Activity per Day: 26%

Percent of students who report being physically active 60 minutes per day, 7 days/week

Eating Breakfast: 57%

Percent of students who report eating breakfast

Benefits of Hope

(Among 10th graders)

Compared to students with No or Low hope, “Highly Hopeful” students reported:



3x less alcohol use

4x less depression



3x less marijuana use

4x less contemplation of suicide



3.5x less use of prescription drugs*



2x less likely to miss school

2x more likely to get better grades

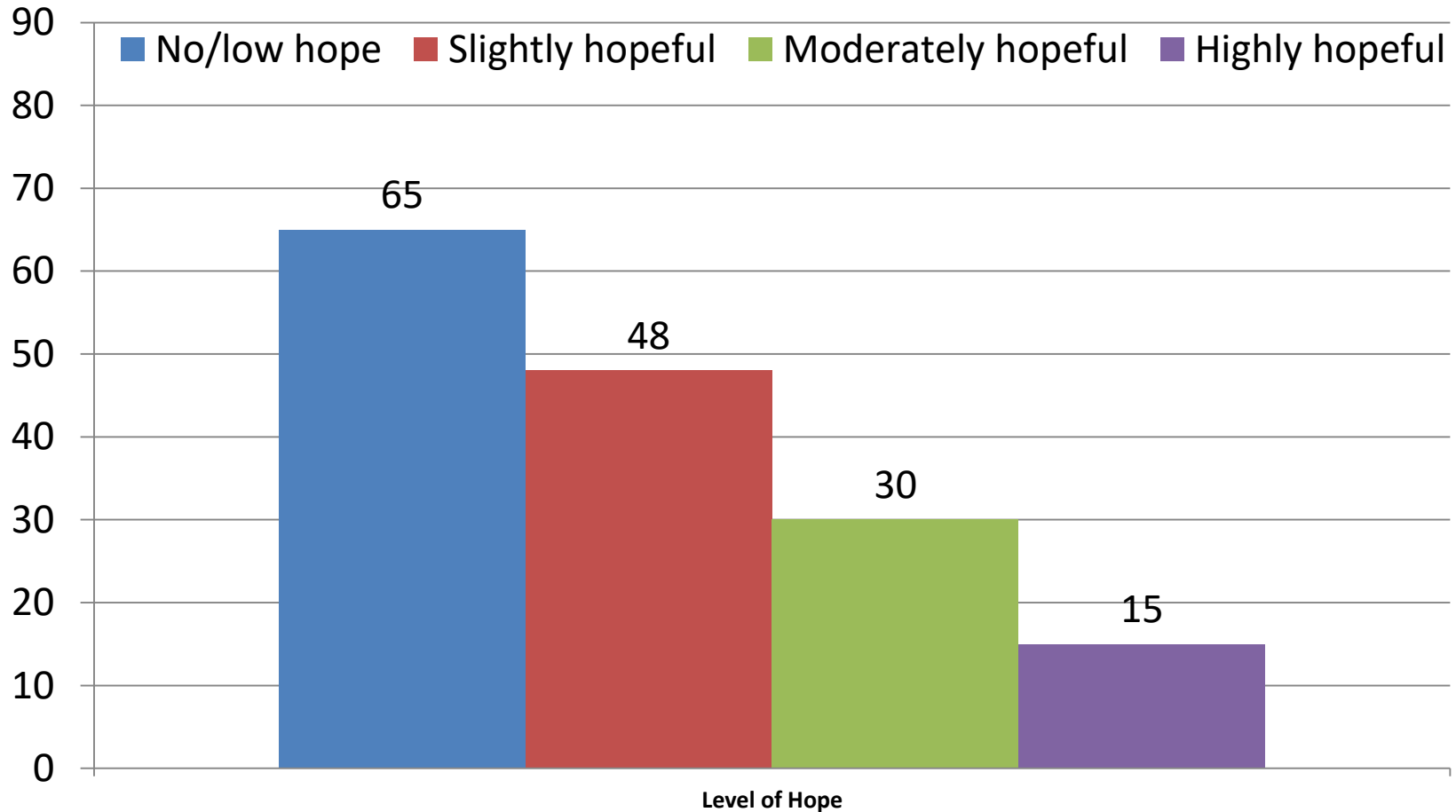


Source: Healthy Youth Survey 2023

*regionally

Impact of HOPE on Depression

Percent of **depression** among 10th grade students by Hope Scale.



Ongoing Efforts

- School-based contracts (see school report)
- Community-based contracts (Strengthening Families Program, etc.)
- Prevention Coalitions (Bellingham, Blaine, Ferndale, and Mt. Baker)
 - Community Assessment and Strategic Planning
 - Community and Capacity Building
 - Direct Services (youth and families)
 - Training (coalition members and broader community)
 - Environmental Strategies (e.g. Vaping In Public Places Ordinance)
- Regional Youth Cannabis & Commercial Tobacco Prevention Program (YCCTP)
- Opioid Task Force

Questions?



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