



# 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

October 2023

Durham County Board of Health

Population Health Division



# About the YRBS

- National survey done every two years – last conducted in 2021.
- CDC selects 2/3 of questions while organizations at the state and local level can contribute 1/3 of their selected questions.
- Durham County is an oversampled county
- Covers several topics.
- CDC analyzes data → State → LHD → Durham County YRBS report.





# YRBS topics

- Bullying
- Mental health
- Nutrition
- Personal Health
- Personal Safety
- Physical Activity
- School support
- Sexual Behavior
- Substance Use
- Tobacco Use
- **LGBTQ+ Mental health**
- **Disability**
- **COVID-19**



# School participation

12 out of 12 eligible middle schools participated

9 out of 10 eligible high schools participated

Administered Fall 2021

Electronic – in person

Random second period classes



# Demographics

- The population are nearly identical weighted race/ethnicity data compared to the DPS sting a well represented sample.
- The middle school sample was equally divided into thirds for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- The high school sample was skewed towards 9<sup>th</sup> grade, representing 1/3 of all students surveyed. 12<sup>th</sup> graders were under-represented accounting for less than 1/5 of students.

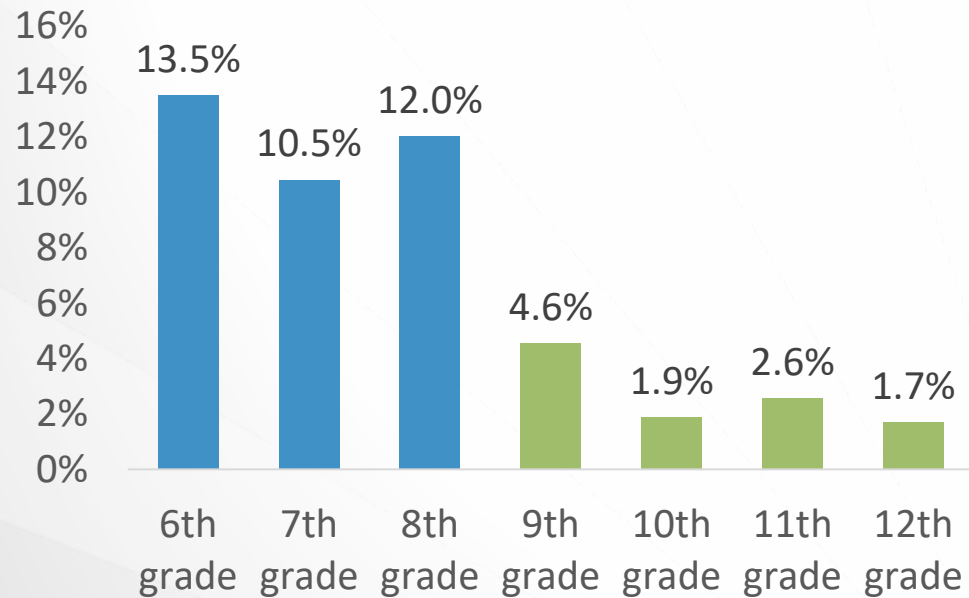


# Racial Inequities

- Black or African American students taught by non-Hispanic white teachers are more likely to receive a worse behavioral assessment than white students and are suspended three times as often.
- Toxic stress: racism at an early age
- Since 2020, the killings of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery ignited increased racism towards Black or African Americans.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic increased racism among Asians.
- 1 in 5 middle schoolers and 1 in 4 high schoolers felt they were treated badly or unfairly because of their race or ethnicity either sometimes, most of the time, or always.

# Bullying

Bullying at school

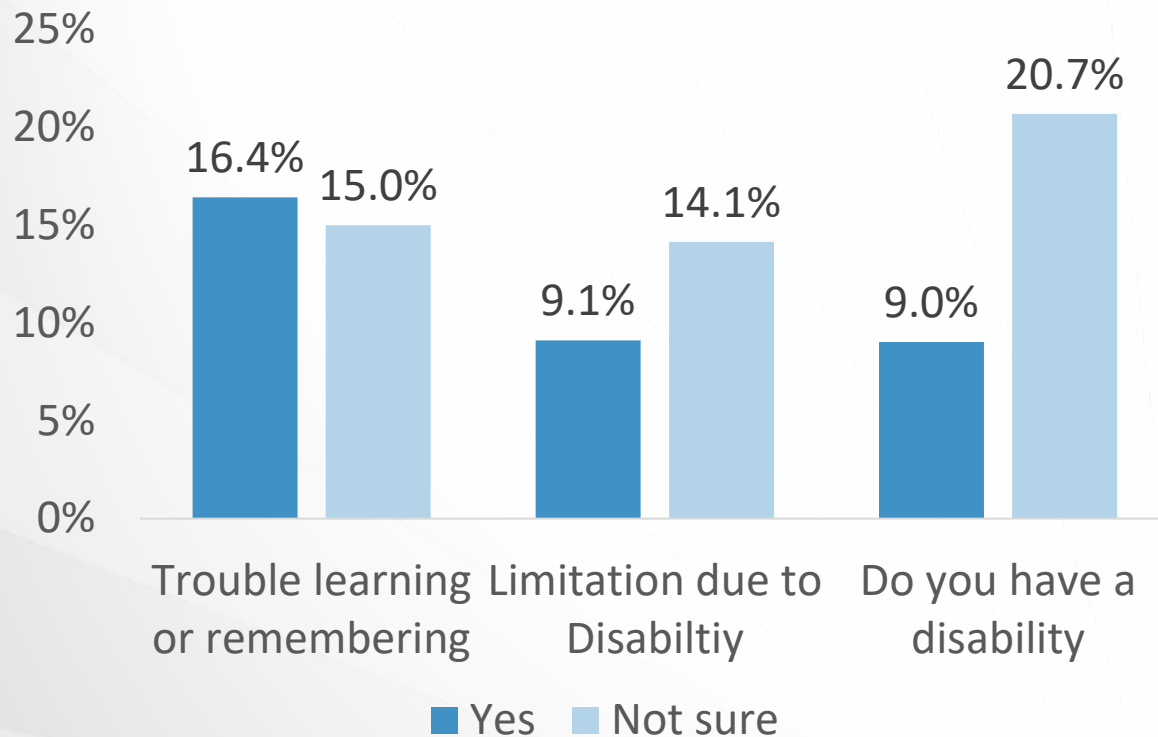


- Middle school bullying increased since 2019 while high school bullying decreased.
- Cyberbullying was experienced more by females - research shows girls bully as much as boys but do it in more subtle, hard to identify ways where as boys will bully physically.
- Twice the amount of middle school students reported being bullied for their sexuality than high school students.



# Disability **\*\*NEW\*\***

Disability among middle schoolers

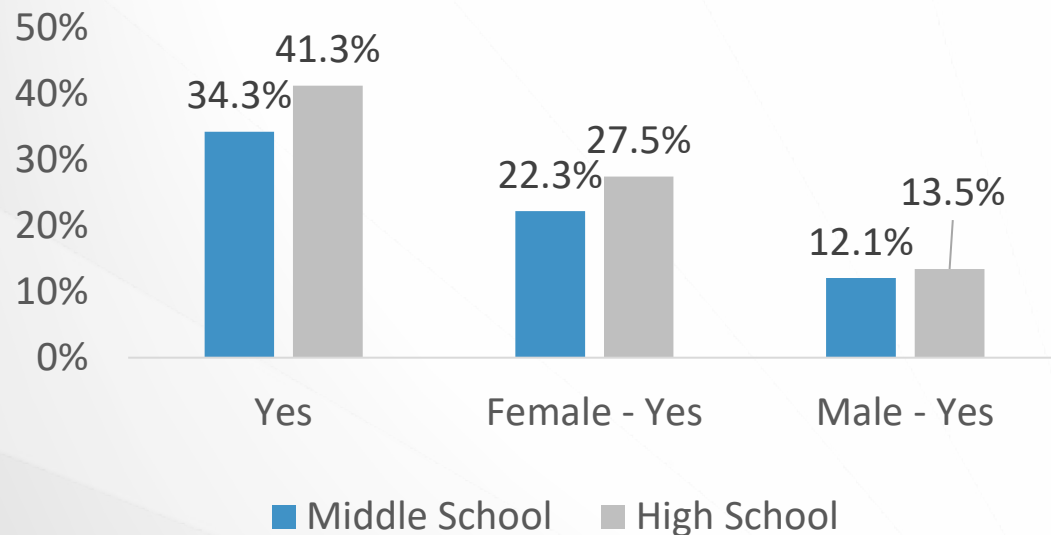


- Many middle schoolers (20.7%) and high schoolers (18.6%) were unsure if they had a disability.
- A similar percentage of students in both middle and high school reported having trouble learning, remembering, or concentrating.
- High schoolers were more likely to report facing limitations due to their disability than middle schoolers.



# Mental Health

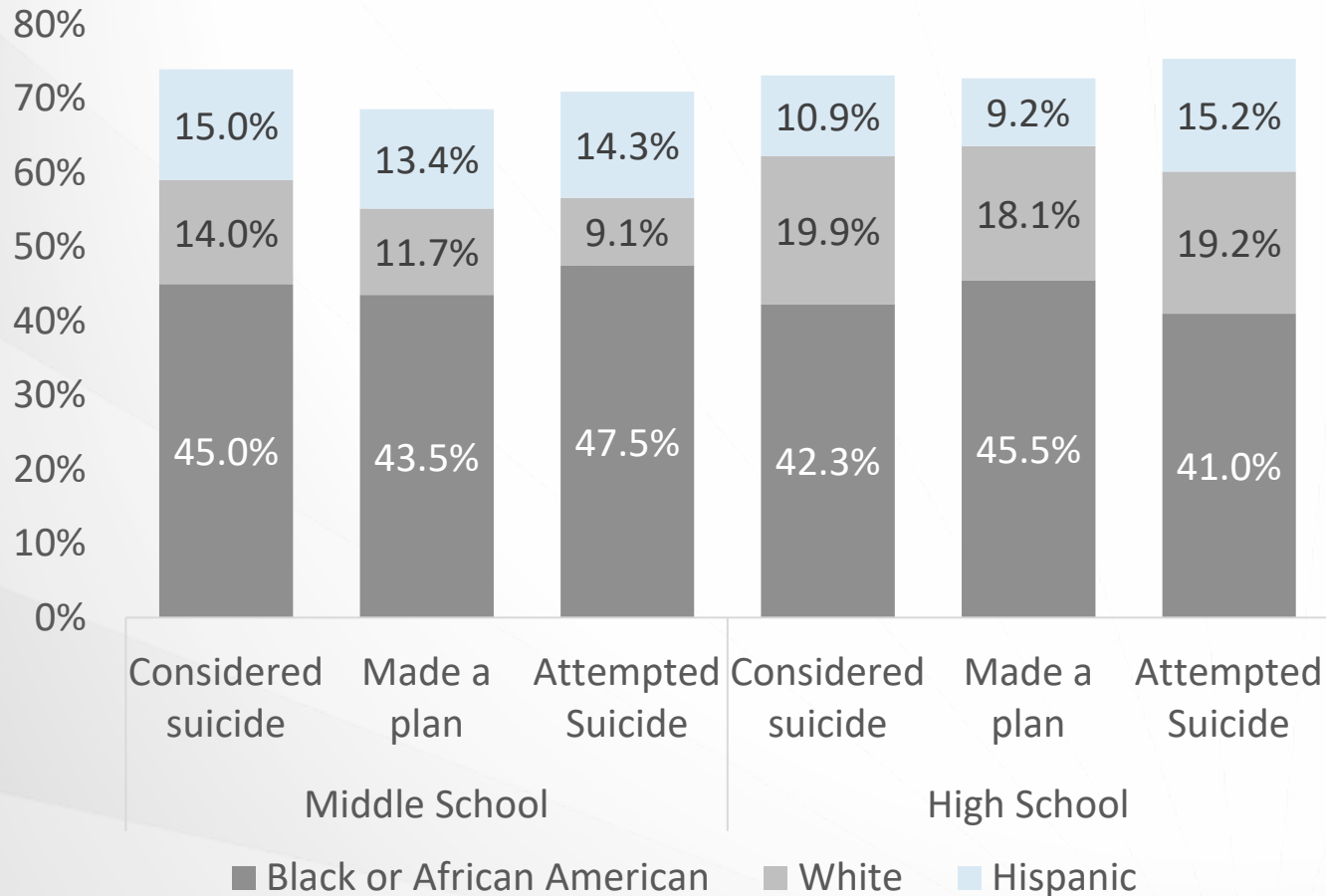
Symptoms of major depressive disorder



- 1 in 3 middle schoolers and 2 in 5 high schoolers experience symptoms of depression as defined by the American Psychiatric Association.
- Most students reported sometimes, most of the time, or always having bad days in the past 30 days.
- Females are more likely to report having bad days most of the time or always compared to male high school students.
- Girls are more likely to internalize their distress and they feel pressure on social media and among their peers to have a 'picture perfect' life.

# Mental Health Continued

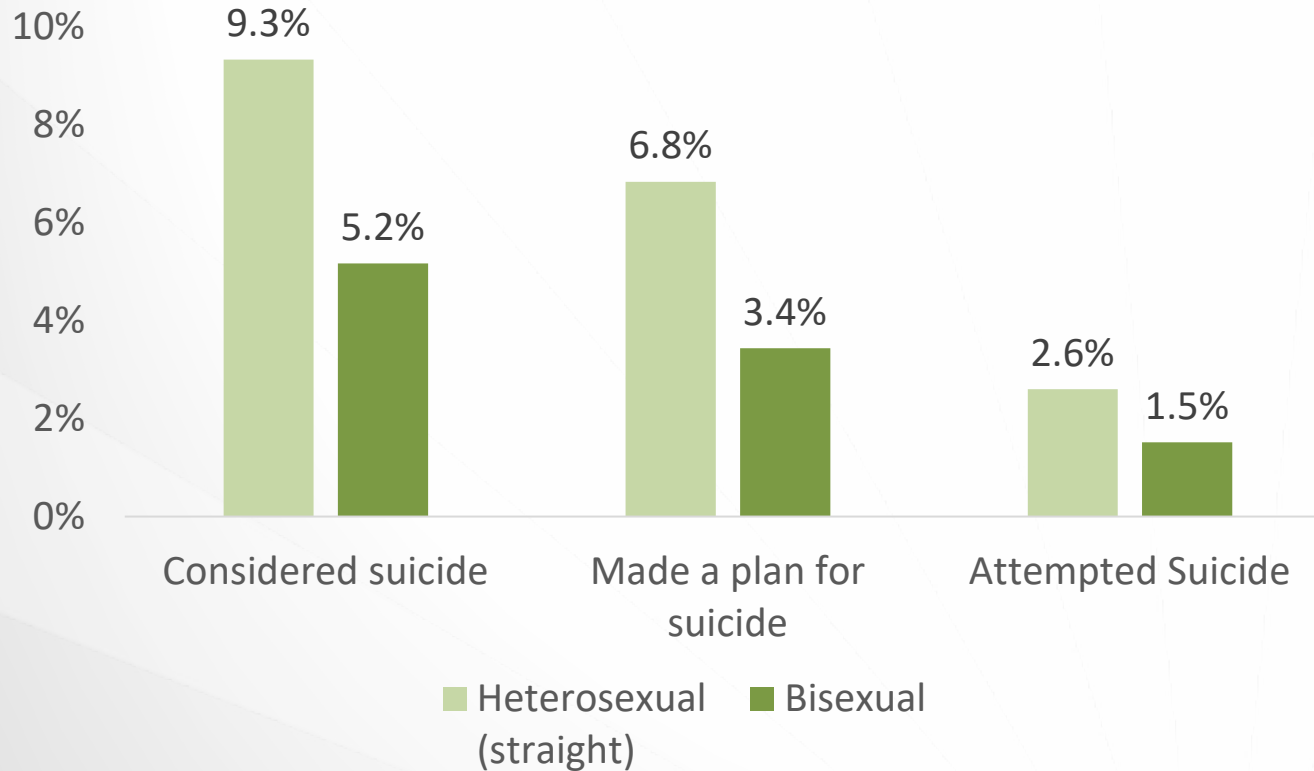
Suicidal ideation among middle and high schoolers.



- 12% of middle schoolers and 9% of high schoolers reported attempting suicide.
- Suicidal ideation nearly doubled for Black or African Americans since 2019.
- Social media plays a significant role in Black or African American suicidal ideation.
- Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) contribute to suicidal ideation among children of color which are over-represented in this population.

# LGBTQ+ Mental Health **\*\*NEW\*\***

Suicidal ideation among LGBTQ+ High schoolers



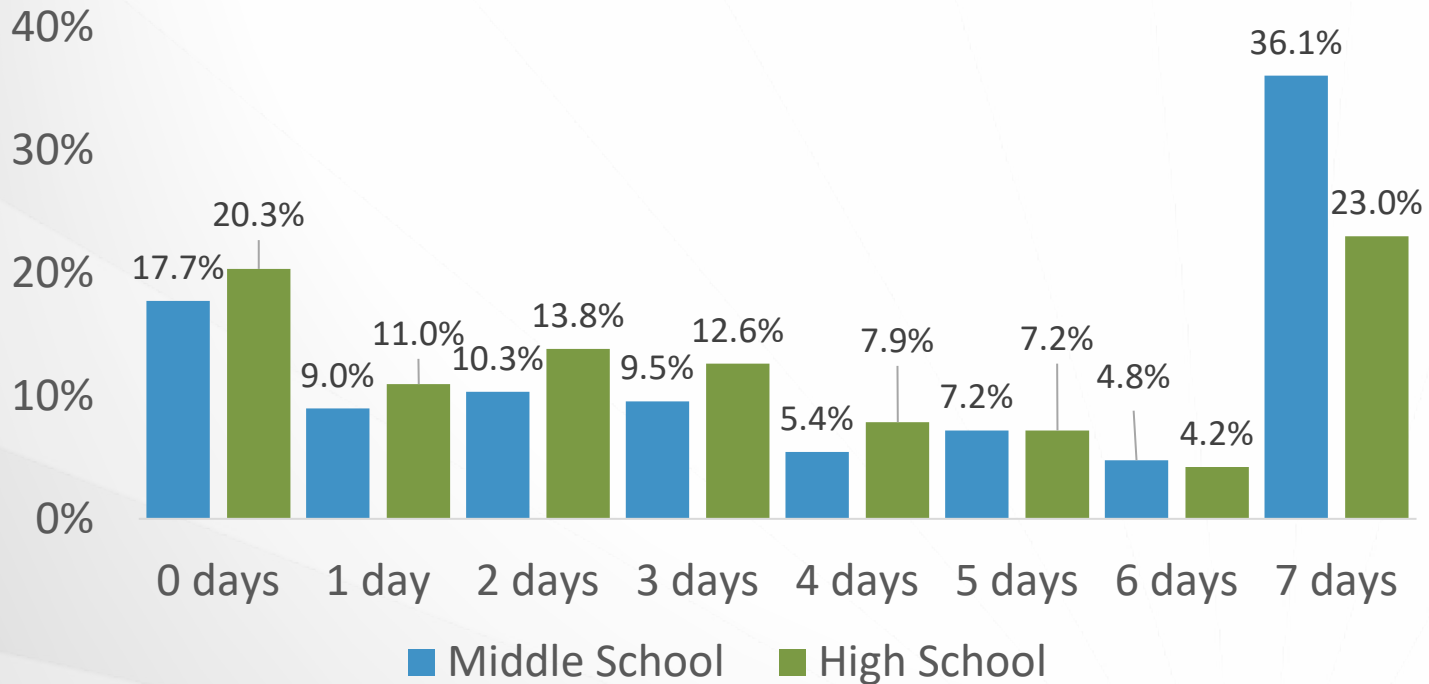
Students that identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community have limited, if any, access to mental healthcare.

Stigma and negative portrayals in the media make it difficult for LGBTQ+ individuals, especially children, to seek help and to be heard and respected while seeking help.

Bisexual students were more likely to report suicidal ideation than their gay or lesbian peers.

# Nutrition

How many days in the past 7 days did you eat breakfast?

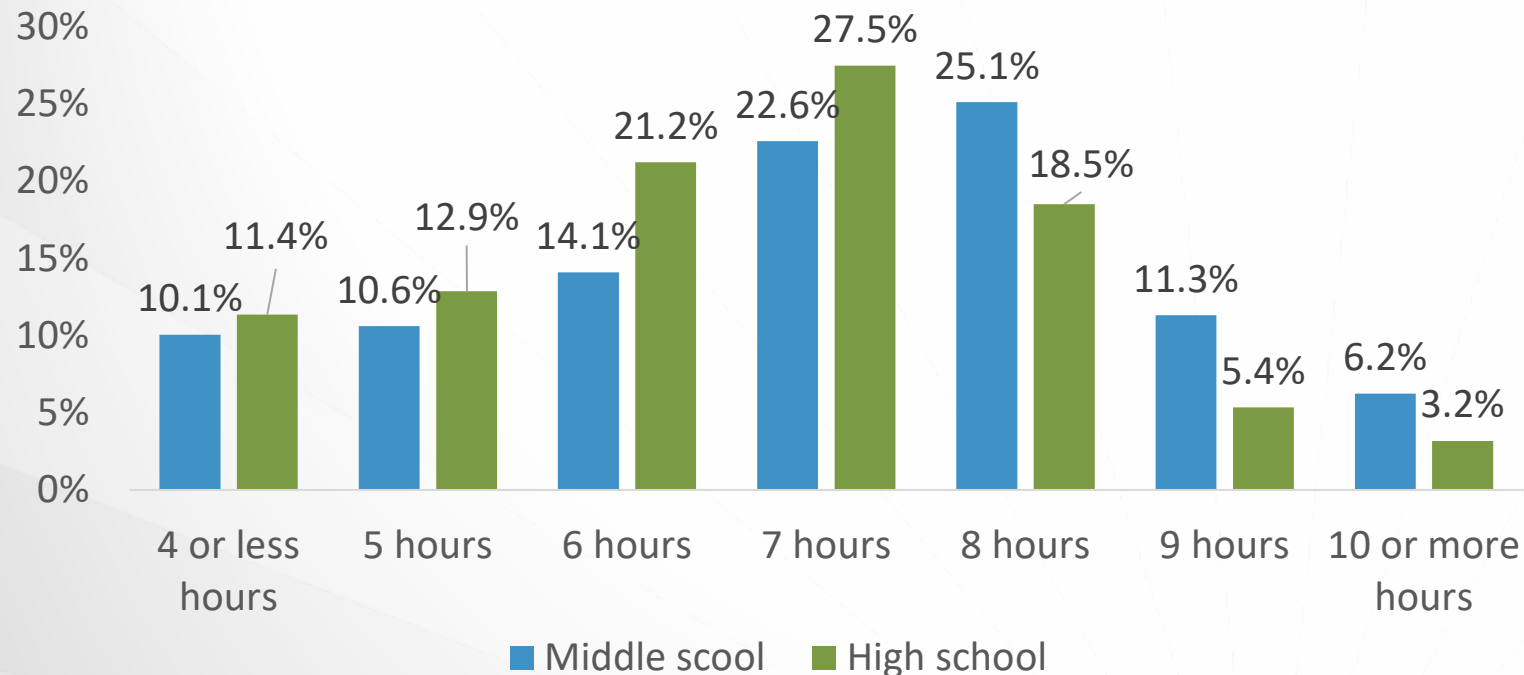


- One in five high schoolers equally reported never eating breakfast in the past week and also eating breakfast every day of the week.
- Middle schoolers are 36.3% more likely to eat breakfast every day than high schoolers.
- Children of color are often more food insecure than their white peers.
- DPS now offers free breakfast.



# Personal Health

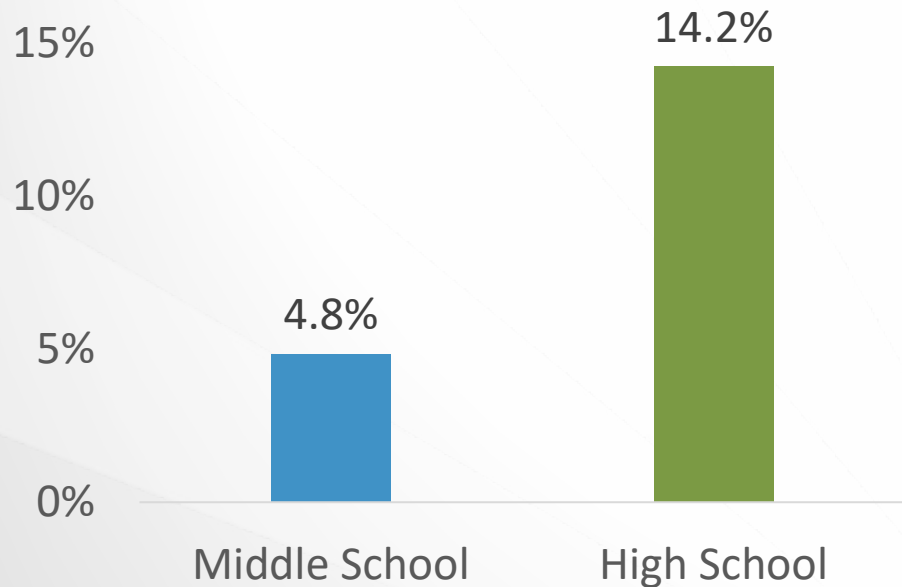
How many hours of sleep do you get a night?



- Most students in both middle and high school report getting more than 6 hours of sleep a night.
- 42.6% of middle schoolers and 27.1% of high schoolers meet the sleep requirements established by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

# Personal Safety

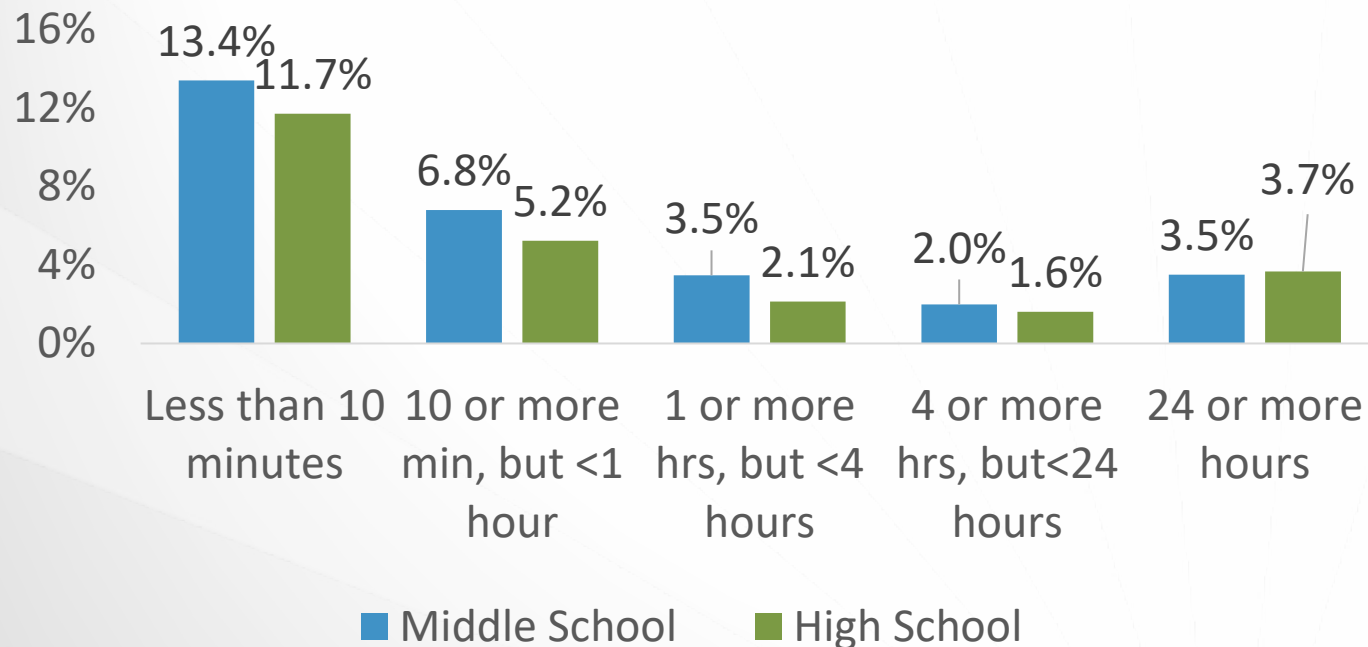
Felt unsafe at or to and from school



- High school students are three times as likely to skip school for personal safety reasons.
- School shootings, bullying, and anxiety are major reasons adolescents skip school.
- Black or African Americans were twice as likely as their white peers to report gang activity in their school.

# Personal Safety continued

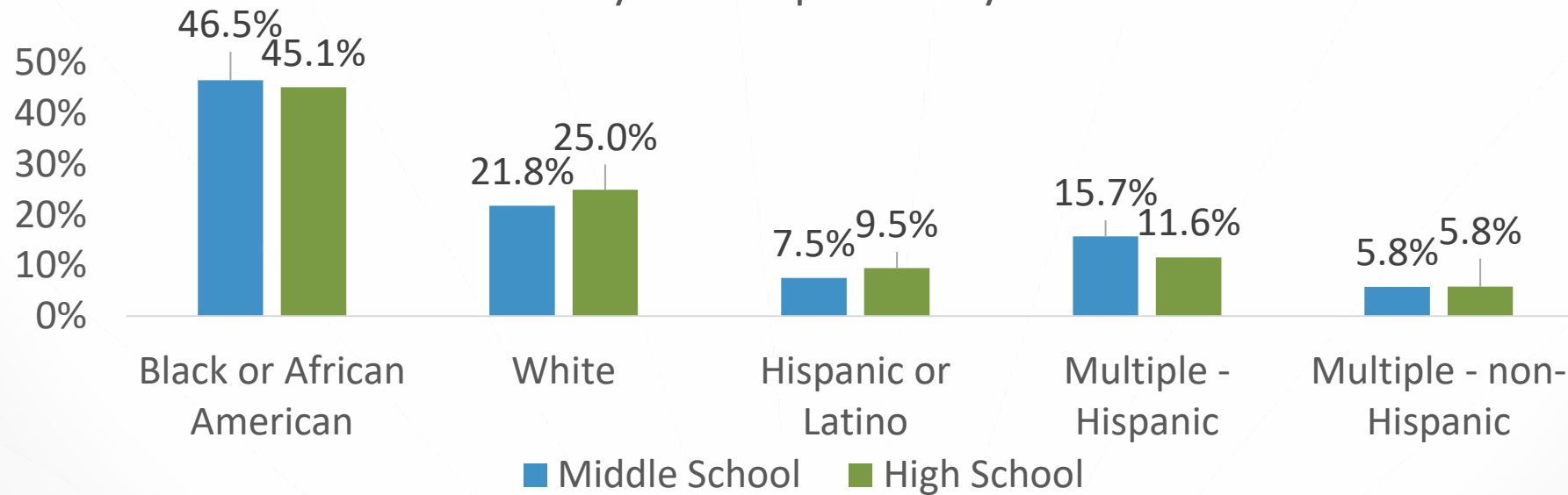
How long would it take you to get, and be ready to fire a gun?



- Middle school students are more likely than high school students to get and be ready to fire a gun in less than 24 hours.
- Free gun locks are available from the Gun Safety Team in Durham County by calling 919-560-7765.

# Physical Activity

Students that were physically active for a total of 60 minutes per day for the past 7 days.

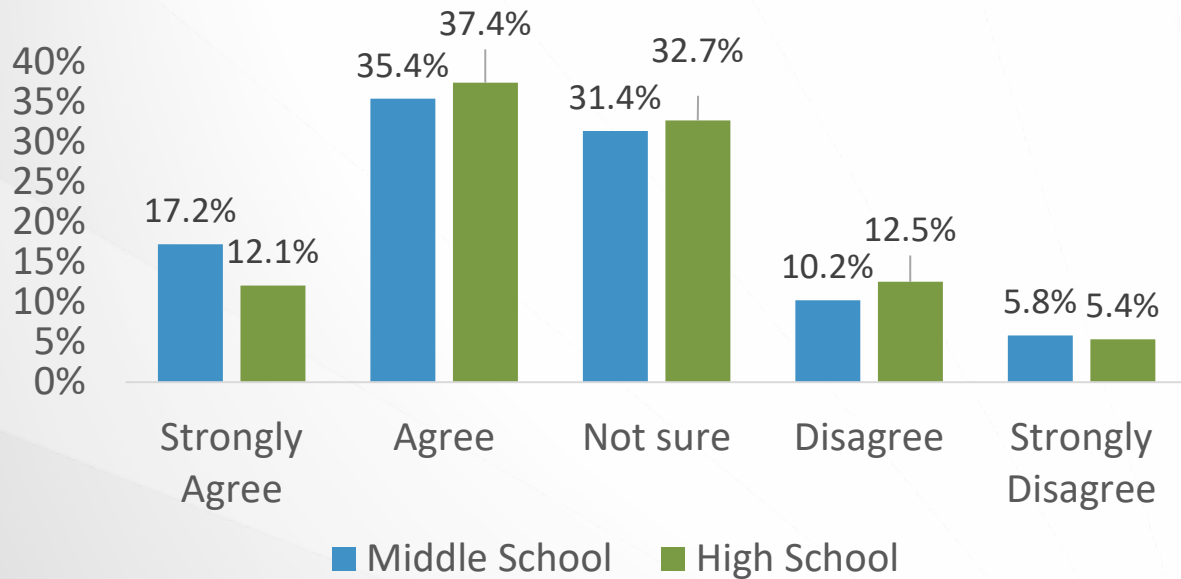


- Black or African Americans were nearly 3 times as likely to play on a sports team than white students.
- White students were over 2 times as likely to exercise for 60 minutes every day in the past week.



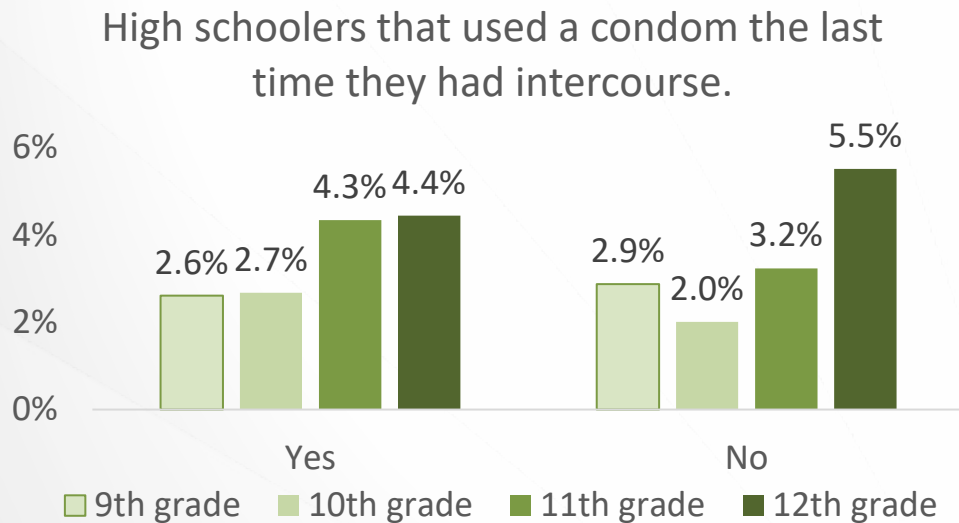
# School Support

Do you have teachers that support you and give you lots of encouragement?



- A fundamental relationship must be built between student and teacher.
- In a national survey, 94% of teachers reported agreeing that students felt comfortable asking for help and 88% of students agreed.

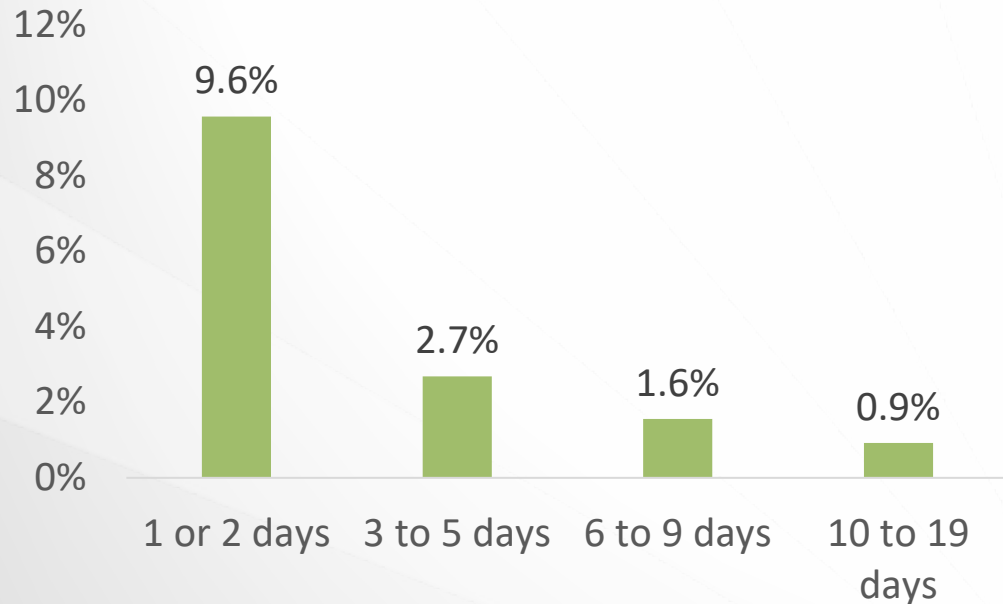
# Sexual Behavior



- Sexual intercourse is uncommon in middle schoolers though more present among 8<sup>th</sup> graders and males.
- 6<sup>th</sup> graders reported being less likely to receive sexual education regarding abstinence.
- Among high schoolers that are sexually active, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders are more likely to use a condom during their last sexual intercourse experience.
- One study reported 1 in 2 high schoolers using a condom the last time they had sex. This is reflected among 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

# Alcohol Use

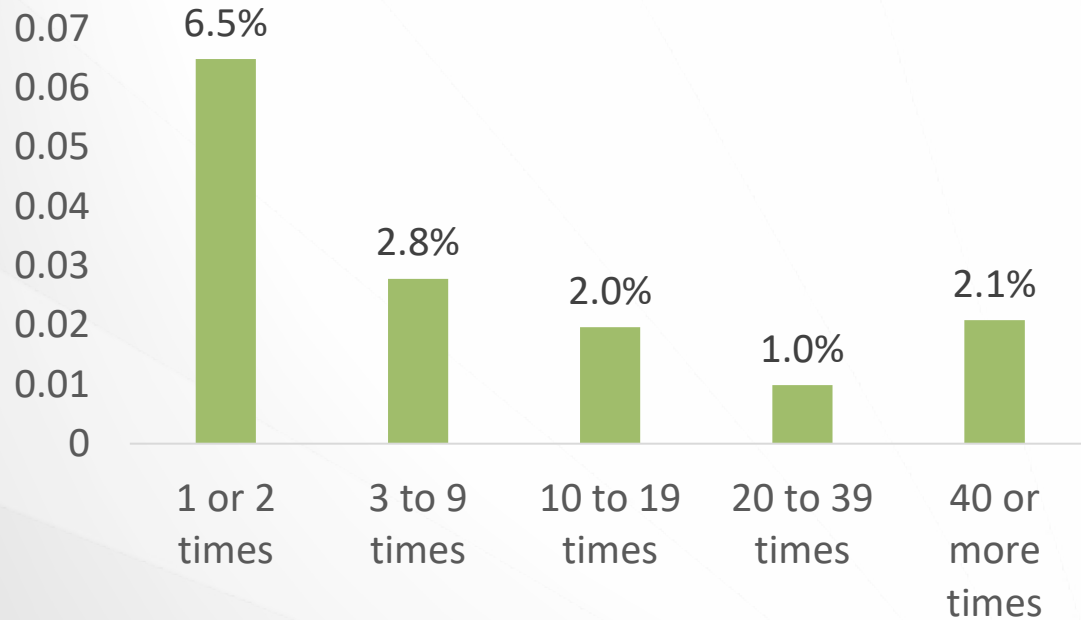
Number of days high schoolers that reported drinking in the past 30 days actually drank. (n=191)



- Among high schoolers that reported drinking alcohol other than a few sips, nearly half reported drinking in middle school or younger.
- High schoolers that tried alcohol before 17, females were more likely to drink
- Females were more likely to drink in the past 30 days.
- Peer pressure, wanting to feel grown up, and exposure (seeing family drink) all increase a child's likelihood of drinking at a young age.

# Substance Use

During the past 30 days, how many times did you use marijuana? (n=1301)

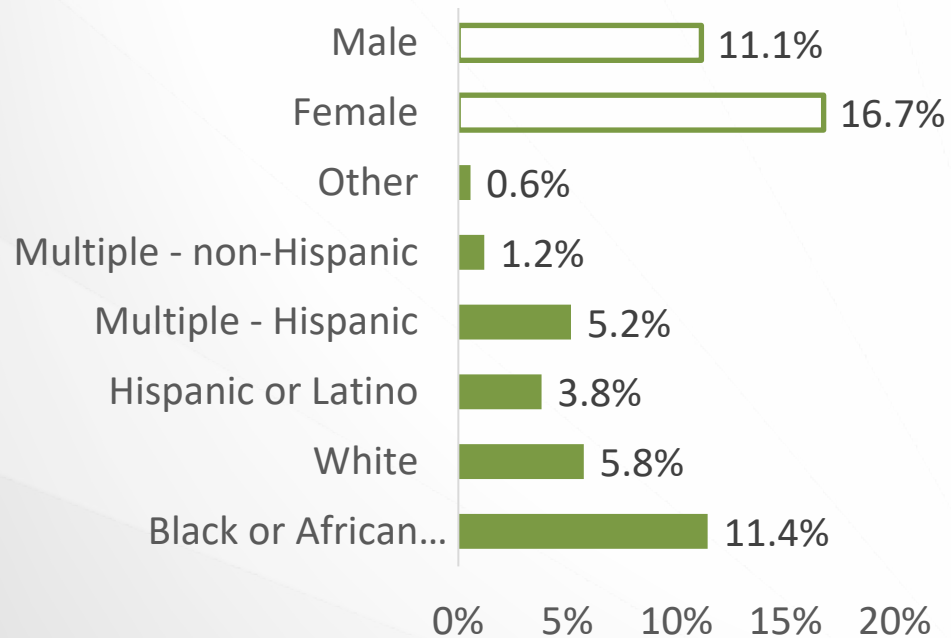


- In 2021, high schoolers reported vaping marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.
- Eighth graders are three times as likely to use marijuana than sixth graders.
- The use of harder drugs is uncommon among Durham County adolescents.
- 8.7% of middle schoolers and 14.3% of high schoolers reported misusing prescription drugs.



# Tobacco Use

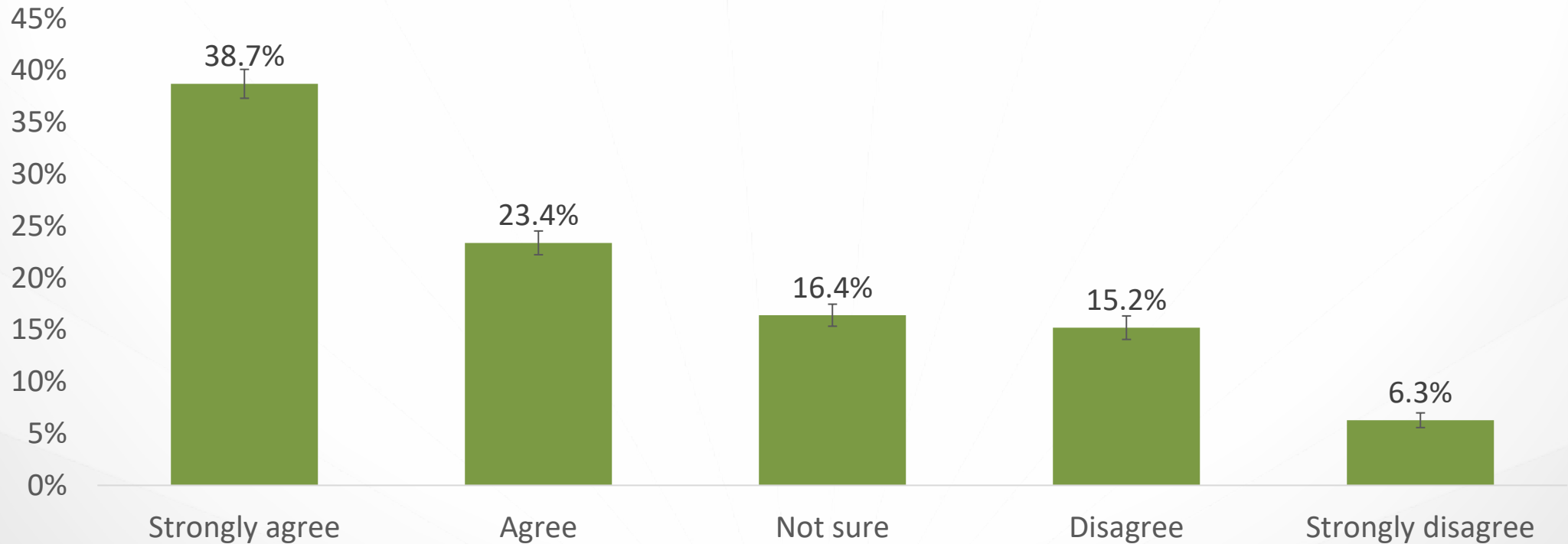
High schoolers that have ever used an electronic vapor product (EVP).



- Only 2.4% of high schoolers and 2% of middle schoolers reported using cigarettes.
- Cigarette use went down since 2019.
- 15.7% of high schoolers and 7.9% of middle schoolers reported using an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days.

# COVID-19 \*\*NEW\*\*

Do you agree or disagree that doing your schoolwork was more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic than before the pandemic started?





# Questions?

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The final 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report is available at [www.healthydurham.org](http://www.healthydurham.org)

The executive report for the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey is available in Spanish at [www.healthydurham.org](http://www.healthydurham.org)



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Thank You!



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