Stamford Youth Voices Count Survey Results 2026

youth VOICES count

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CONSULTING

Background

- May 2026, students from Stamford public schools in grades 7-12 participated in the Youth Voices Count Survey on youth lifestyles, substance use, mental health, bullying and related risk and protective factors.
- The survey was completely anonymous, no identifying information was collected.

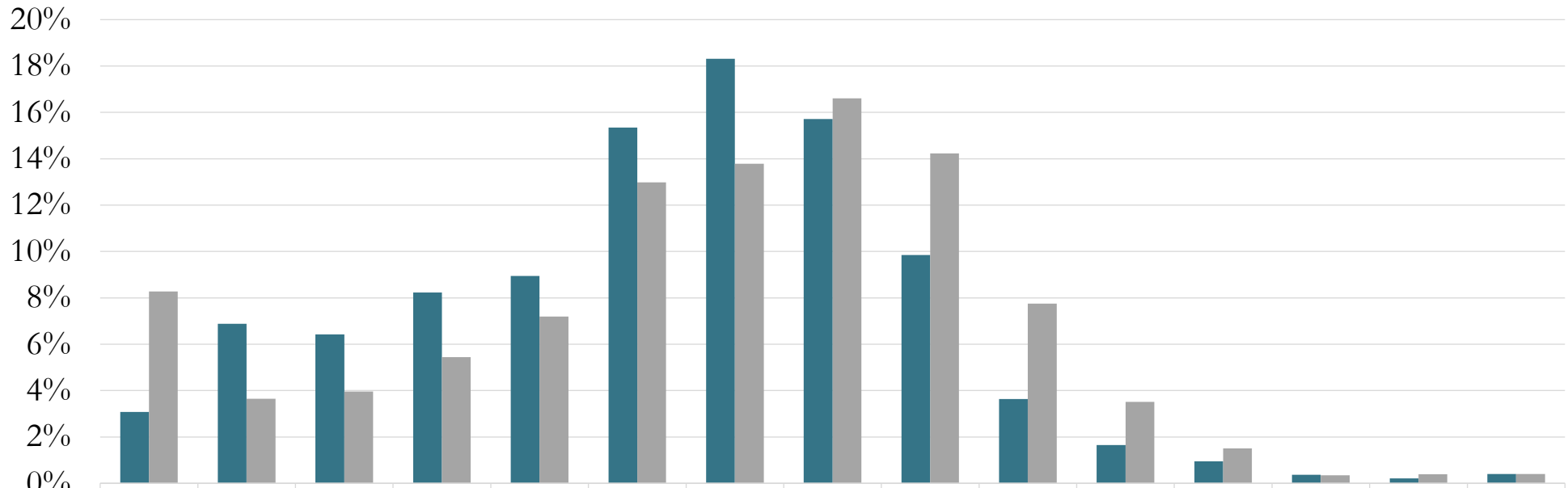
Response Rate

Response Rates	Sample Count	Population Count	Response Rate (%)
Grade 7	1033	1168	88.4%
Grade 8	1011	1125	89.9%
Grade 9	914	1194	76.5%
Grade 10	882	1168	75.5%
Grade 11	766	1065	71.9%
Grade 12	711	1160	61.3%
Grades 7-8	2044	2293	89.1%
Grades 9-12	3273	4587	71.4%
Grades 7-12	5317	6880	77.3%



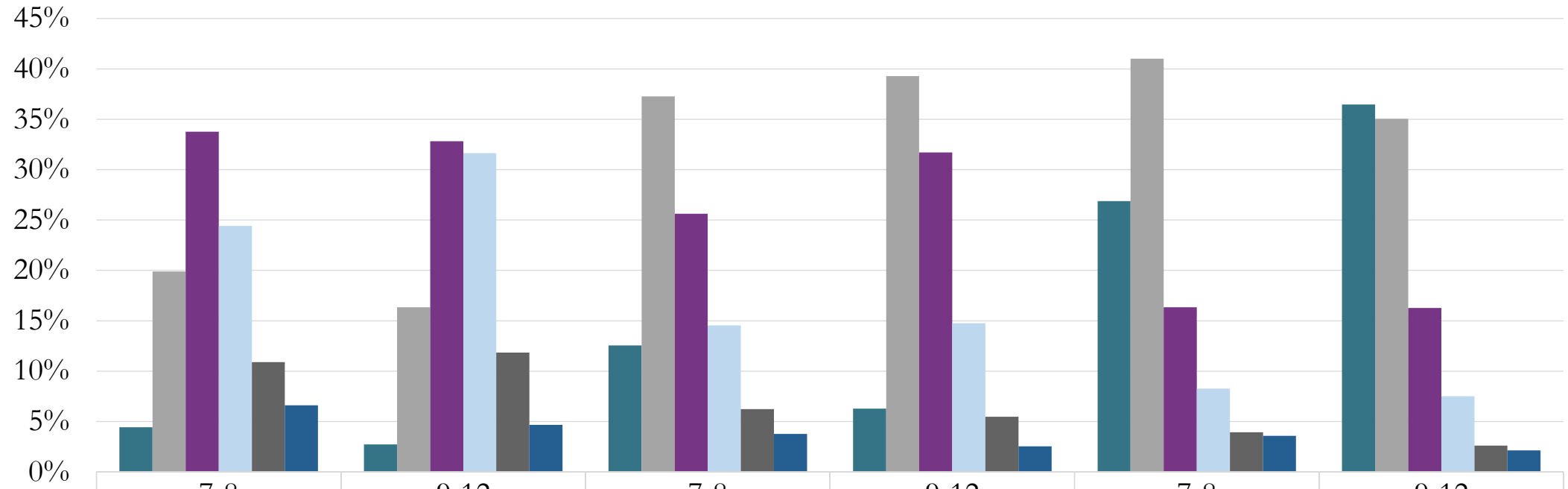
Youth Lifestyles

Smartphone and Social Media Age of Access



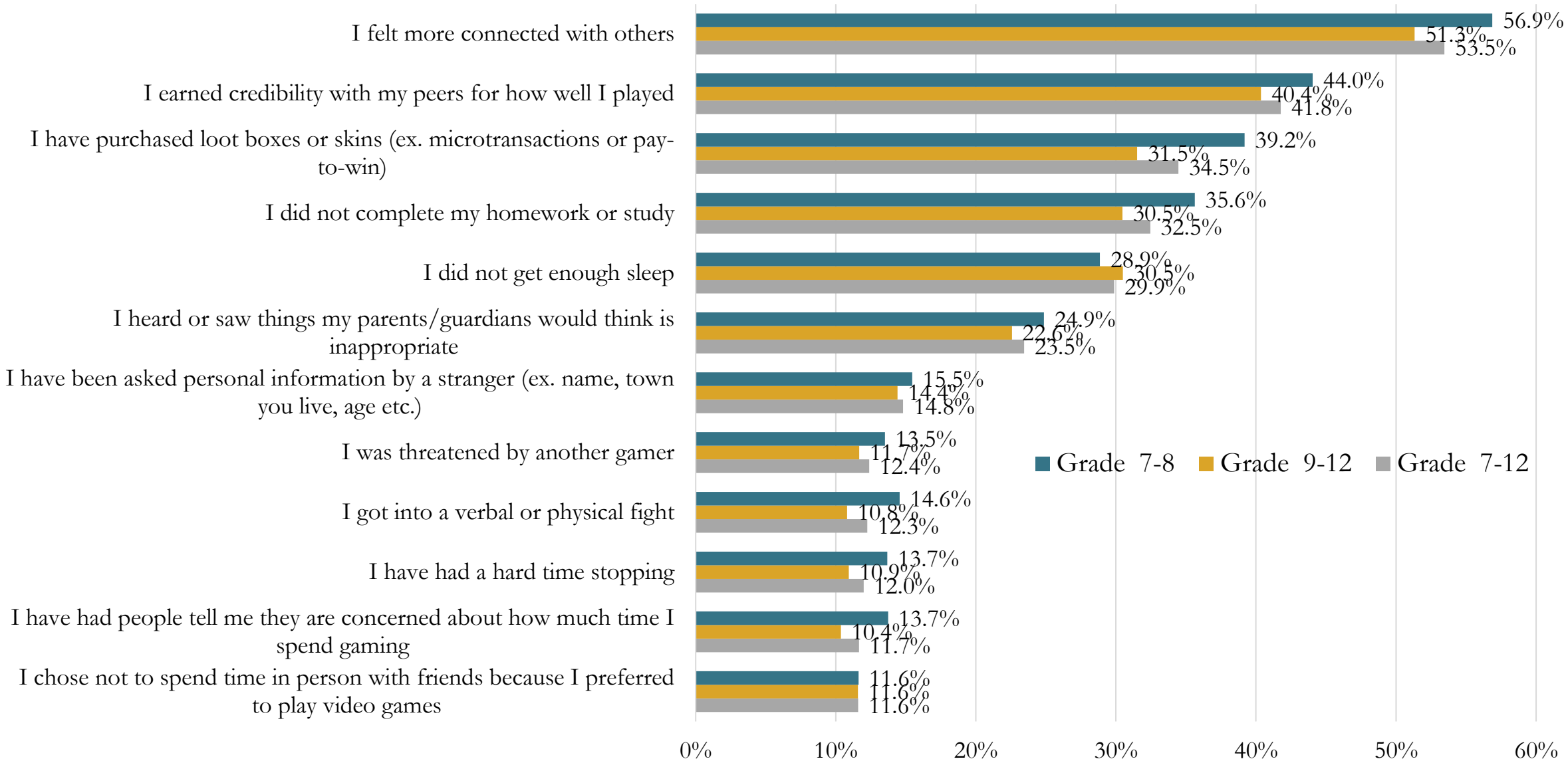
	I do not have this	6 or less	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Smartphone or iPhone - Age	3.1%	6.9%	6.4%	8.2%	8.9%	15.3%	18.3%	15.7%	9.9%	3.6%	1.7%	1.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.4%
Social media account - Age	8.3%	3.6%	4.0%	5.4%	7.2%	13.0%	13.8%	16.6%	14.2%	7.8%	3.5%	1.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%

Daily Hours Spent Scrolling Internet, Social Media, or Gaming

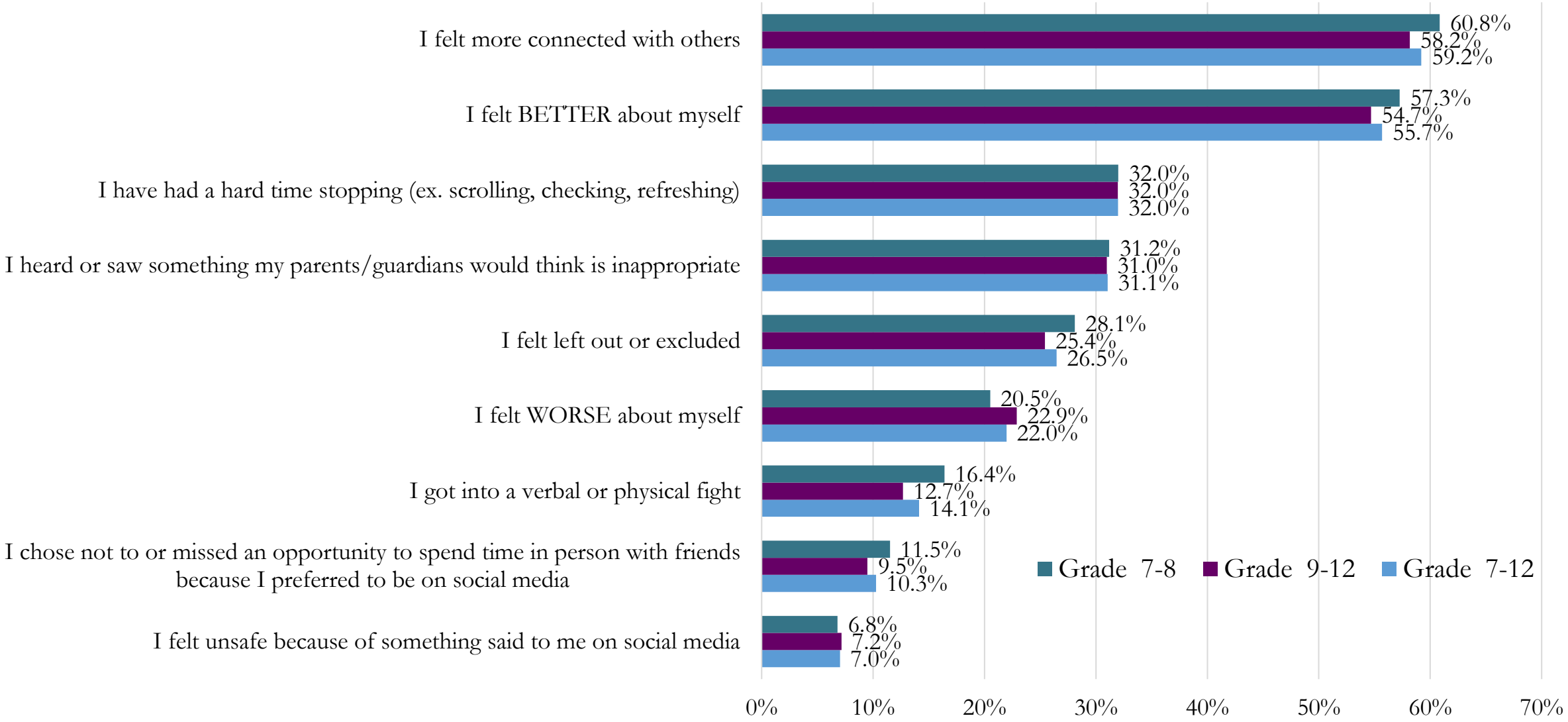


	Internet Overall		Social Media		Gaming	
	7-8	9-12	7-8	9-12	7-8	9-12
None	4.4%	2.7%	12.6%	6.3%	26.9%	36.5%
1-2 hours	19.9%	16.3%	37.3%	39.3%	41.0%	35.0%
3-4 hours	33.8%	32.8%	25.6%	31.7%	16.3%	16.3%
5-7 hours	24.4%	31.6%	14.5%	14.7%	8.3%	7.5%
8-10 hours	10.9%	11.8%	6.2%	5.5%	3.9%	2.6%
11 or more hours	6.6%	4.7%	3.8%	2.5%	3.6%	2.1%

Perceived Gaming Assets and Consequences

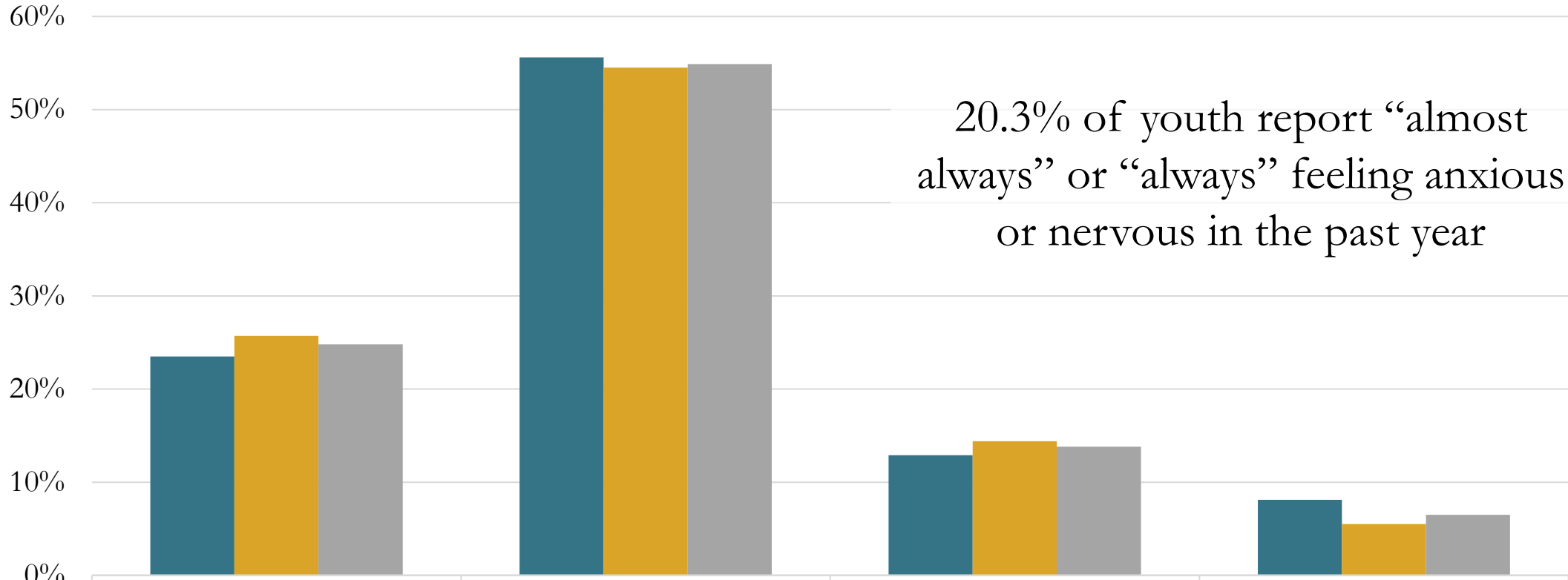


Perceived Social Media Assets and Consequences



Emotional Health

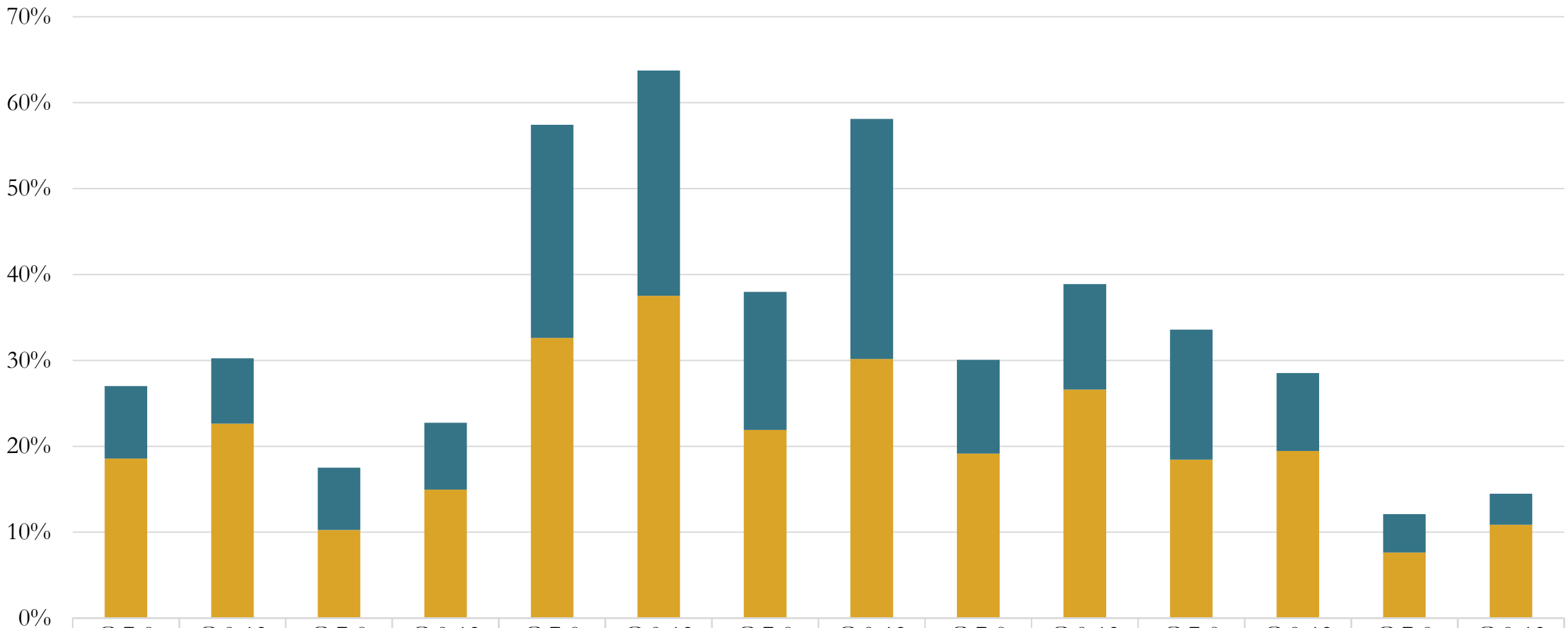
Past Year Stress, Worry, or Anxiety



20.3% of youth report "almost always" or "always" feeling anxious or nervous in the past year

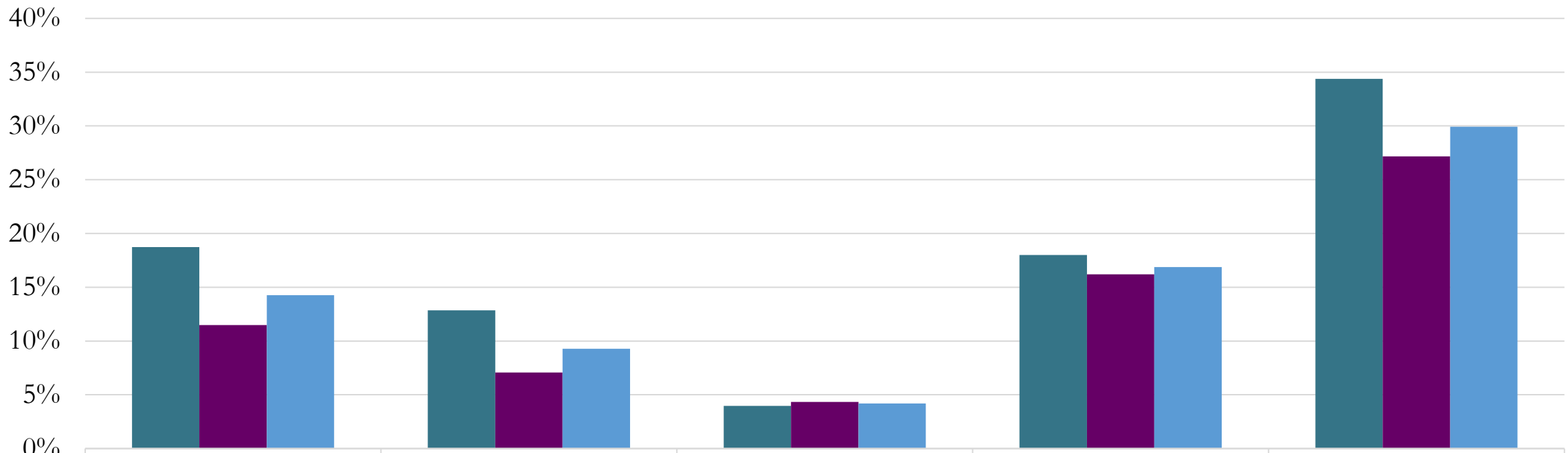
	Never	Some of the time	Almost always	Always
Grade 7-8	23.5%	55.6%	12.9%	8.1%
Grade 9-12	25.7%	54.5%	14.4%	5.5%
Grade 7-12	24.8%	54.9%	13.8%	6.5%

Sources of Stress, Anxiety, or Worry



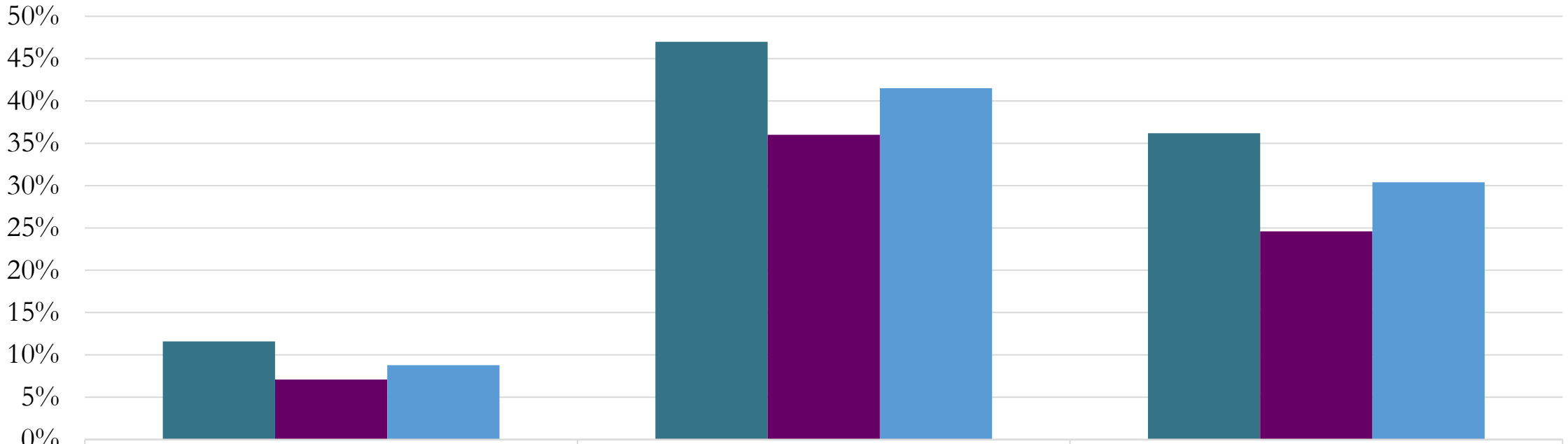
	Home/family life		Financial Security		Academics		Post High School Plans		Schedule		Peers		Social media	
	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12	G 7-8	G 9-12
High	8.4%	7.6%	7.2%	7.8%	24.8%	26.2%	16.1%	27.9%	10.9%	12.3%	15.1%	9.1%	4.5%	3.6%
Medium	18.6%	22.6%	10.3%	15.0%	32.6%	37.5%	21.9%	30.2%	19.1%	26.6%	18.4%	19.4%	7.6%	10.9%

Other Emotional Health Indicators in the Past Year, % Responding "Yes"



	Thoughts of Self Harm	Self Harm	Physical Abuse - Intimate Partner	Sad or Hopeless (2 weeks in a row)	Felt Lonely Often
Grade 7-8	18.7%	12.8%	4.0%	18.0%	34.4%
Grade 9-12	11.5%	7.1%	4.3%	16.2%	27.2%
Grade 7-12	14.3%	9.3%	4.2%	16.9%	29.9%

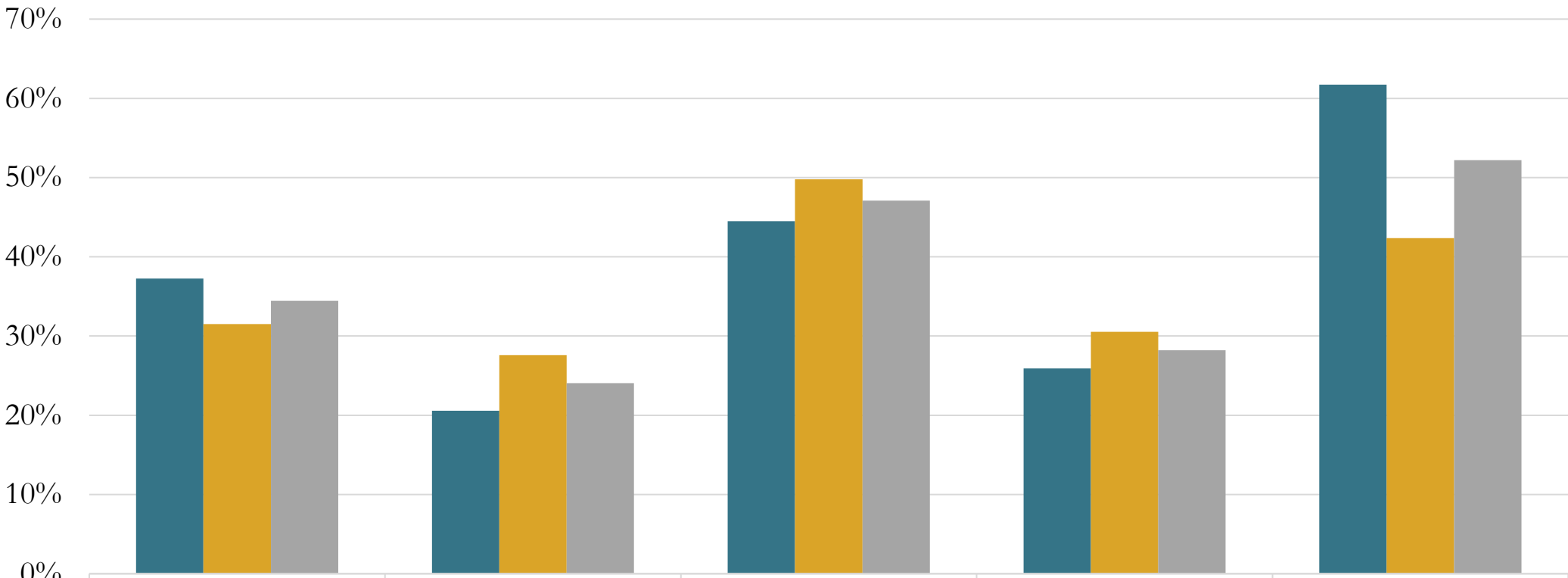
Understanding Suicide



	Considered Suicide in the past 12 months	Made a Plan	Attempted it
Grade 7-8	11.6%	47.0%	36.2%
Grade 9-12	7.1%	36.0%	24.6%
Grade 7-12	8.8%	41.5%	30.4%

% of those who considered suicide

Suicide and Perceptions of Supports

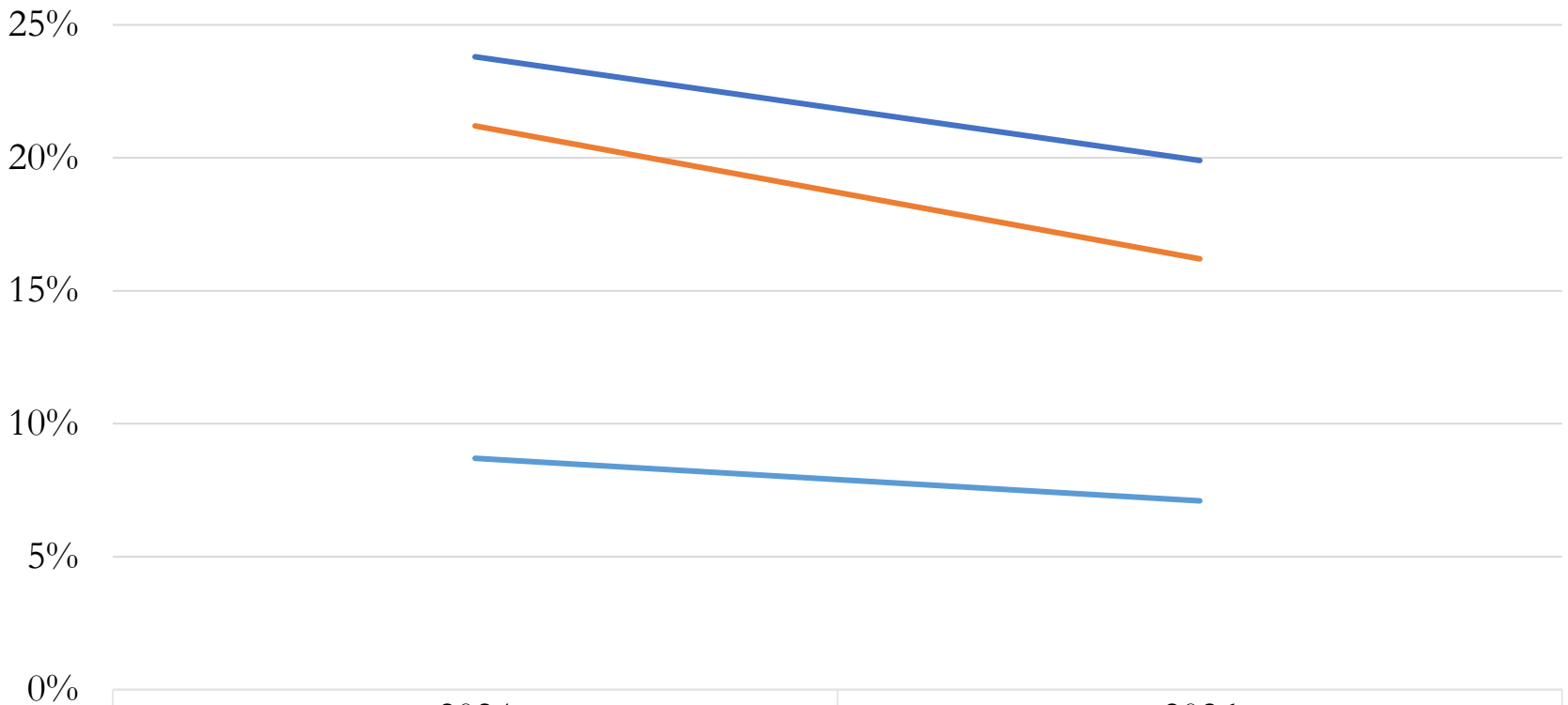


	Talked to a friend	Talked to a parent	Know where to get help	Got help	Felt like no support
Grade 7-8	37.2%	20.6%	44.5%	25.9%	61.7%
Grade 9-12	31.5%	27.6%	49.8%	30.5%	42.4%
Grade 7-12	34.4%	24.1%	47.1%	28.2%	52.2%

% of those who considered suicide

Trend Emotional Health Indicators, 2024-2026

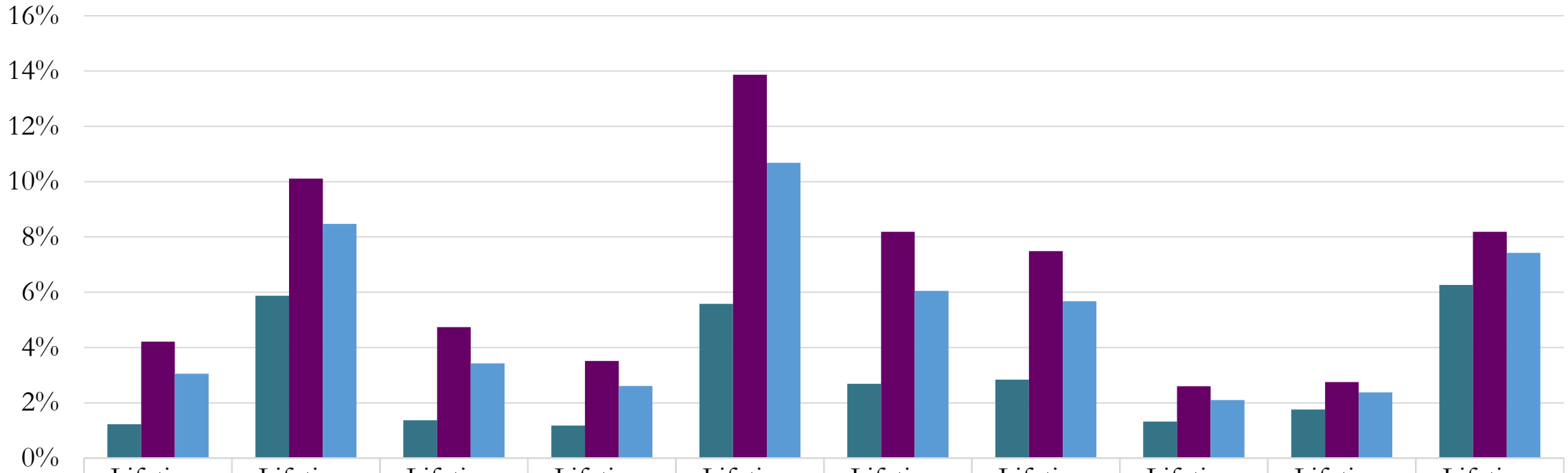
Grades 9-12



	2024	2026
Anxiety Almost Always/Always	23.8%	19.9%
Sad/Hopeless 2+ Weeks	21.2%	16.2%
Thoughts of Suicide	8.7%	7.1%

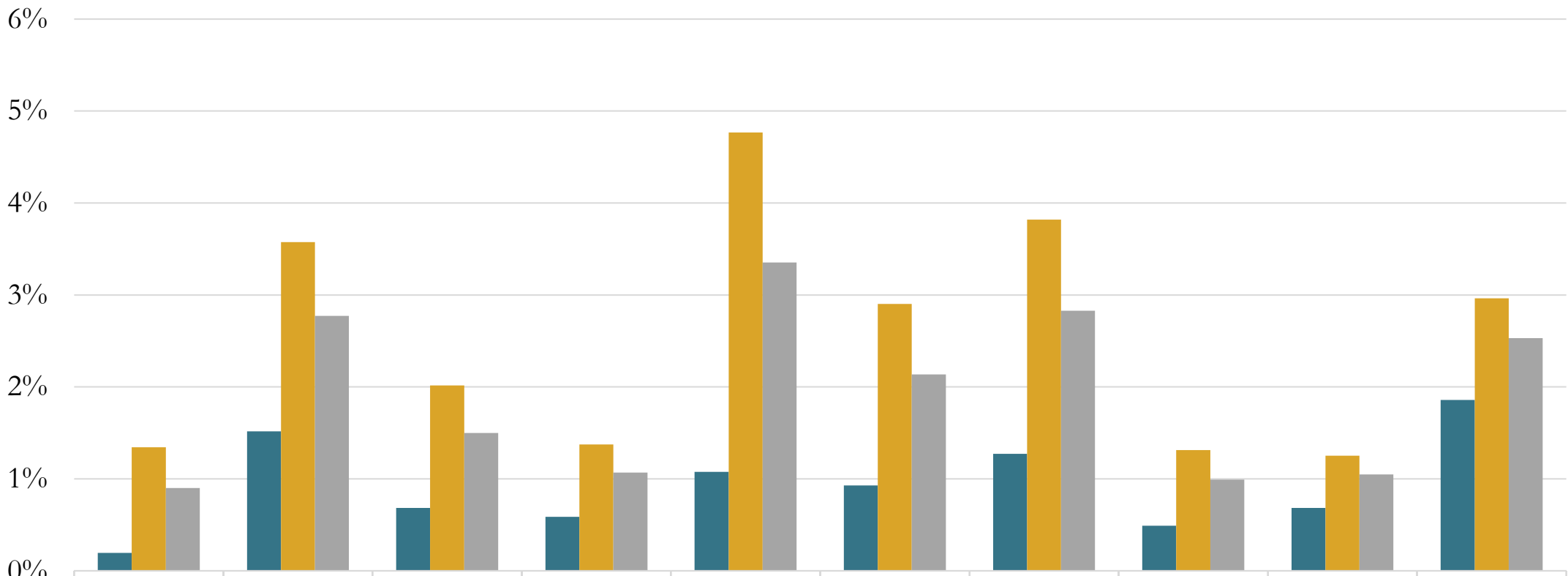
Substance Use and Perceptions

Lifetime Use of CORE Substances and Gambling



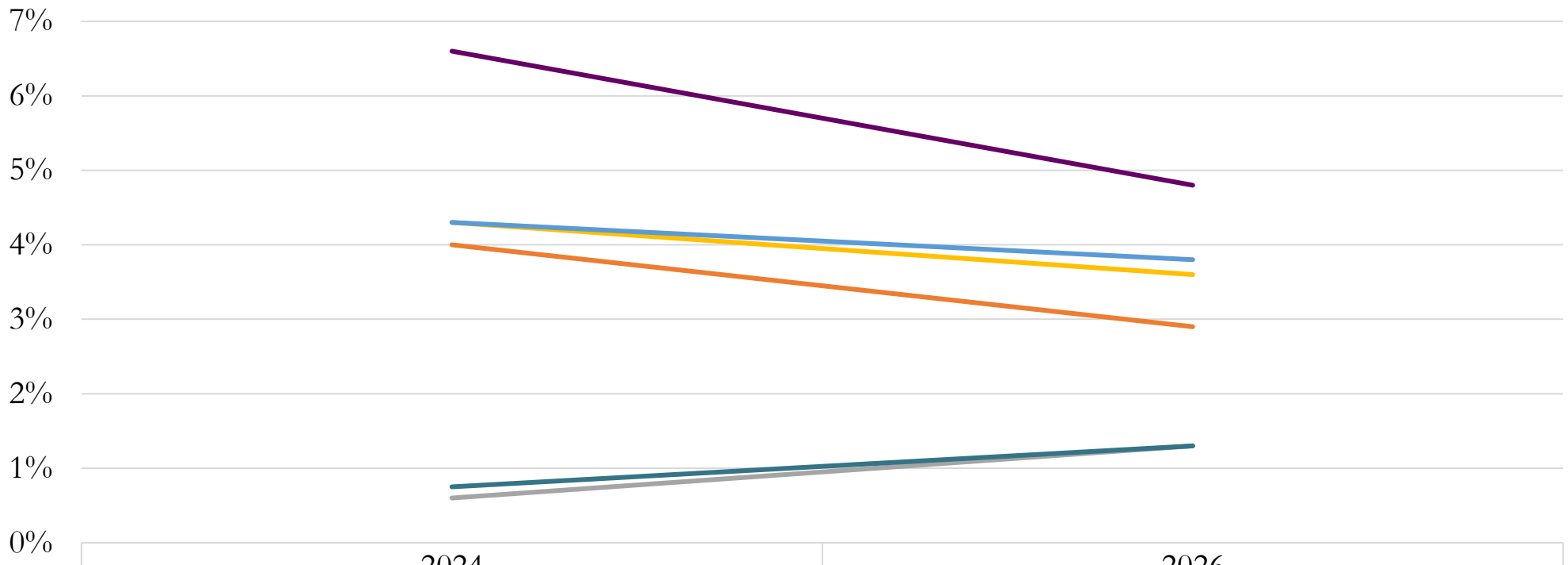
	Lifetime Cigarettes	Lifetime Vape Products Nicotine	Lifetime Nicotine in an Oral Pouch	Lifetime Tobacco	Lifetime Alcohol	Lifetime Alcohol - 4 or more	Lifetime Marijuana / THC	Lifetime RX	Lifetime OTC	Lifetime Gambling
Grade 7-8	1.2%	5.9%	1.4%	1.2%	5.6%	2.7%	2.8%	1.3%	1.8%	6.3%
Grade 9-12	4.2%	10.1%	4.7%	3.5%	13.9%	8.2%	7.5%	2.6%	2.7%	8.2%
Grade 7-12	3.1%	8.5%	3.4%	2.6%	10.7%	6.1%	5.7%	2.1%	2.4%	7.4%

Past Month Use of CORE Substances and Gambling



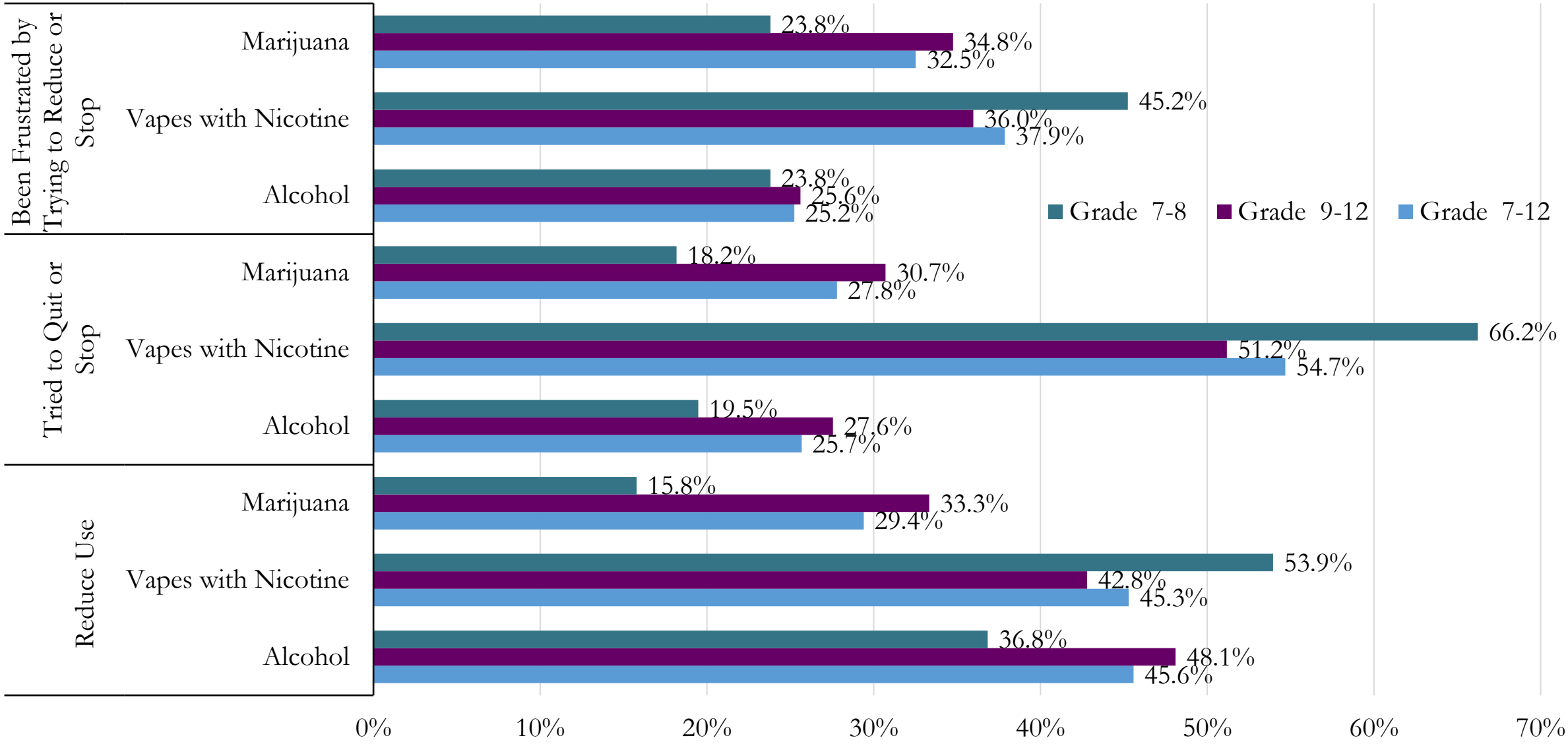
	Past Month Cigarettes	Past Month Vape Products Nicotine	Past Month Nicotine in an Oral Pouch	Past Month Tobacco	Past Month Alcohol	Past Month Alcohol - 4 or more	Past Month Marijuana / THC	Past Month RX	Past Month OTC	Past Month Gambling
Grade 7-8	0.2%	1.5%	0.7%	0.6%	1.1%	0.9%	1.3%	0.5%	0.7%	1.9%
Grade 9-12	1.3%	3.6%	2.0%	1.4%	4.8%	2.9%	3.8%	1.3%	1.3%	3.0%
Grade 7-12	0.9%	2.8%	1.5%	1.1%	3.4%	2.1%	2.8%	1.0%	1.0%	2.5%

Trend Past Month Use of CORE Substances, Grades 9-12

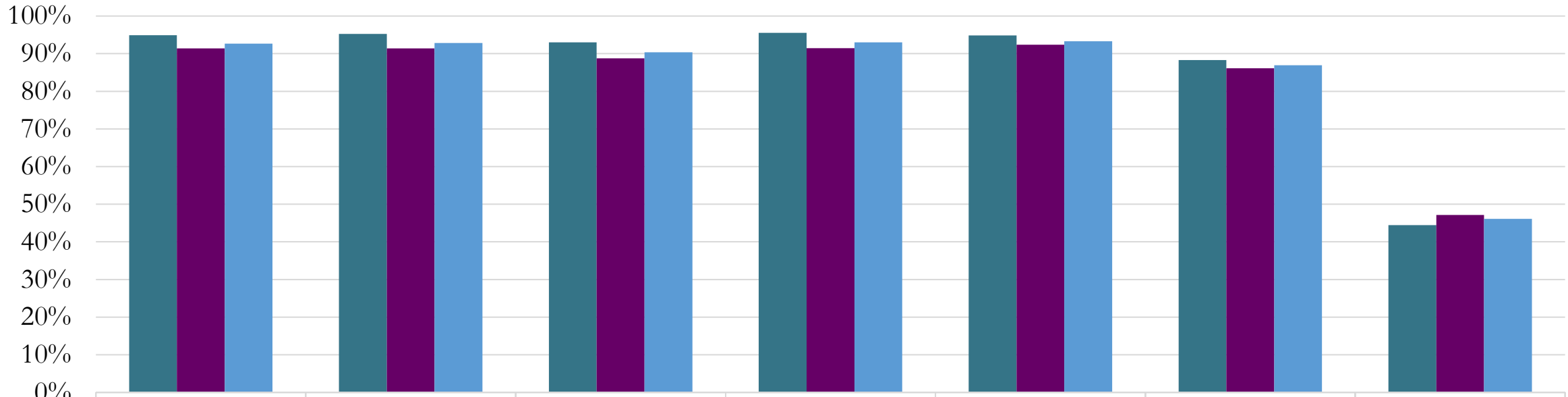


	2024	2026
Alcohol	6.6%	4.8%
Binge Drinking	4.0%	2.9%
Cigarettes	0.6%	1.3%
Vaping Nicotine	4.3%	3.6%
Marijuana	4.3%	3.8%
Prescription Drugs	0.8%	1.3%

Substance Use Reduction or Trying to Quit, Among Youth Who Have Used

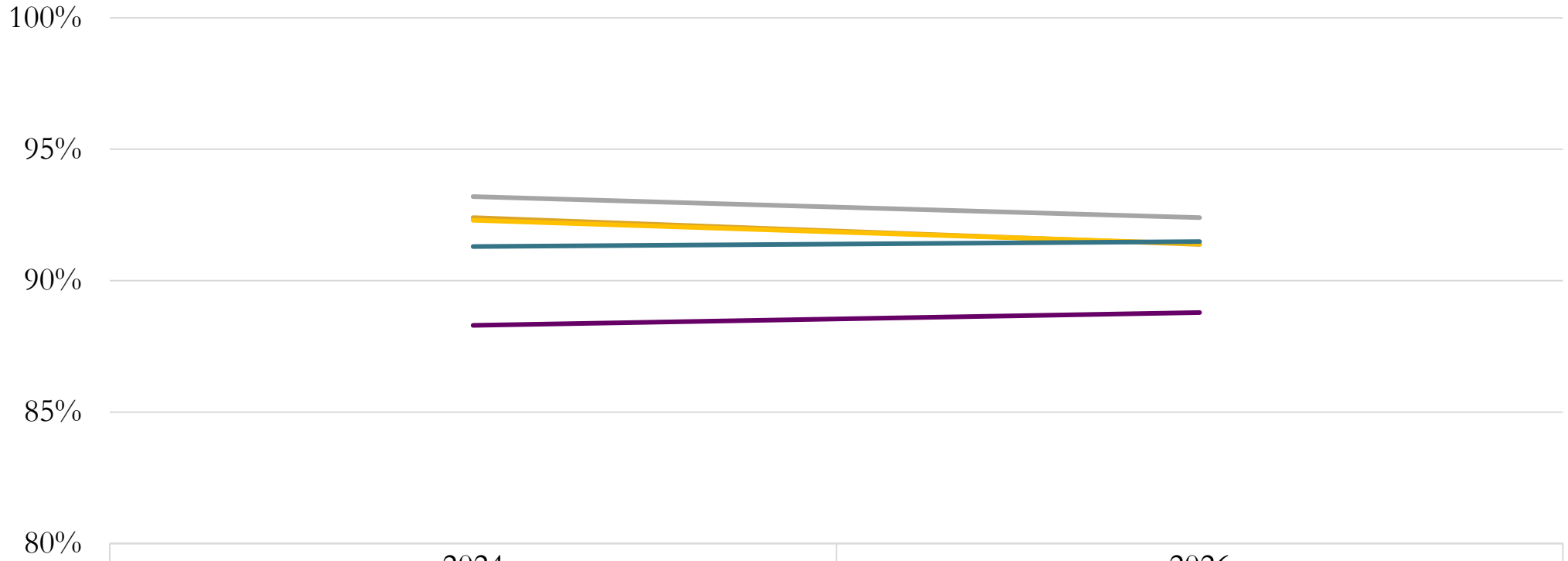


Perception of Parental Disapproval



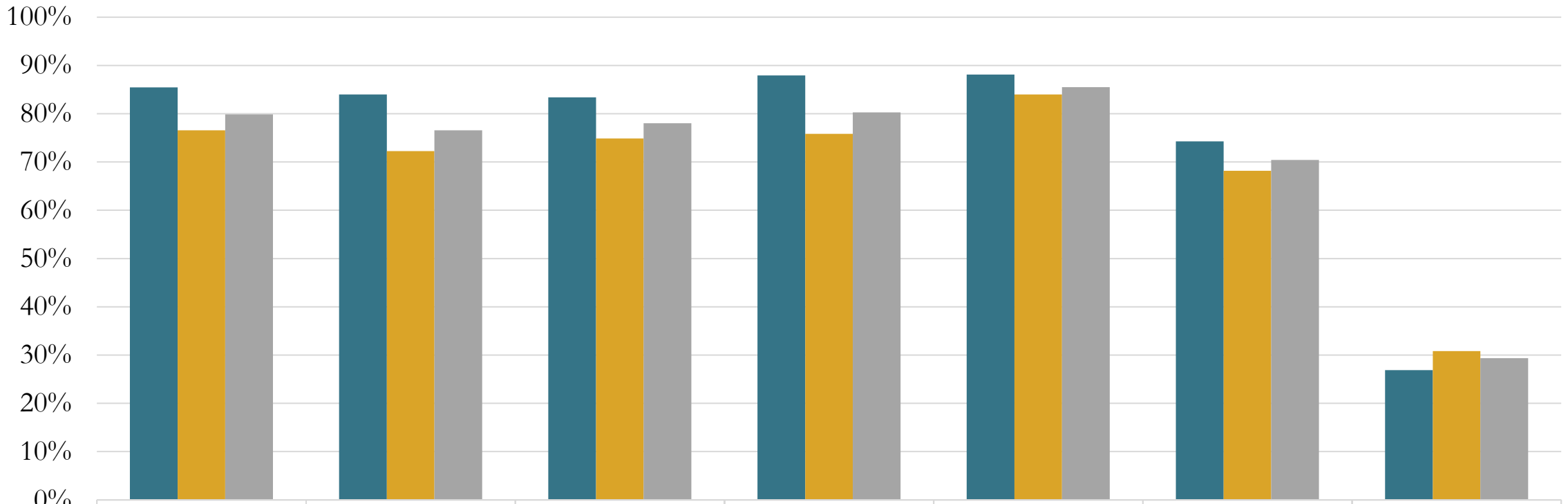
	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Smoking Cigarettes	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Vaping Nicotine	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Drinking Alcohol	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Marijuana/THC	Moderately / Greatly Wrong RX	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Gambling	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Gaming more than 3+ hrs per day
Grade 7-8	94.9%	95.2%	93.0%	95.5%	94.8%	88.3%	44.4%
Grade 9-12	91.4%	91.4%	88.8%	91.5%	92.4%	86.1%	47.1%
Grade 7-12	92.7%	92.8%	90.3%	93.0%	93.3%	86.9%	46.1%

Trend Perception of Parental Disapproval (Moderately/Greatly Wrong), Grades 9-12



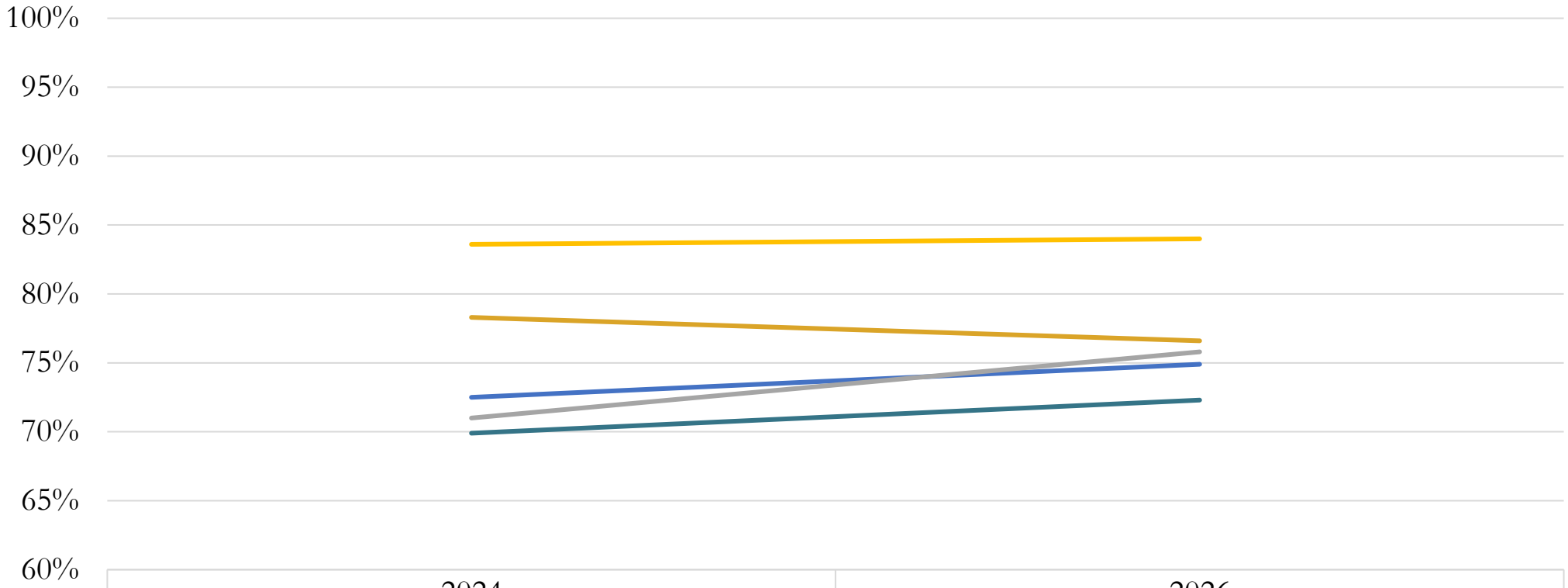
	2024	2026
Alcohol	88.3%	88.8%
Cigarettes	92.4%	91.4%
Vaping	92.3%	91.4%
Marijuana	91.3%	91.5%
Prescription Drugs	93.2%	92.4%

Perception of Peer Disapproval



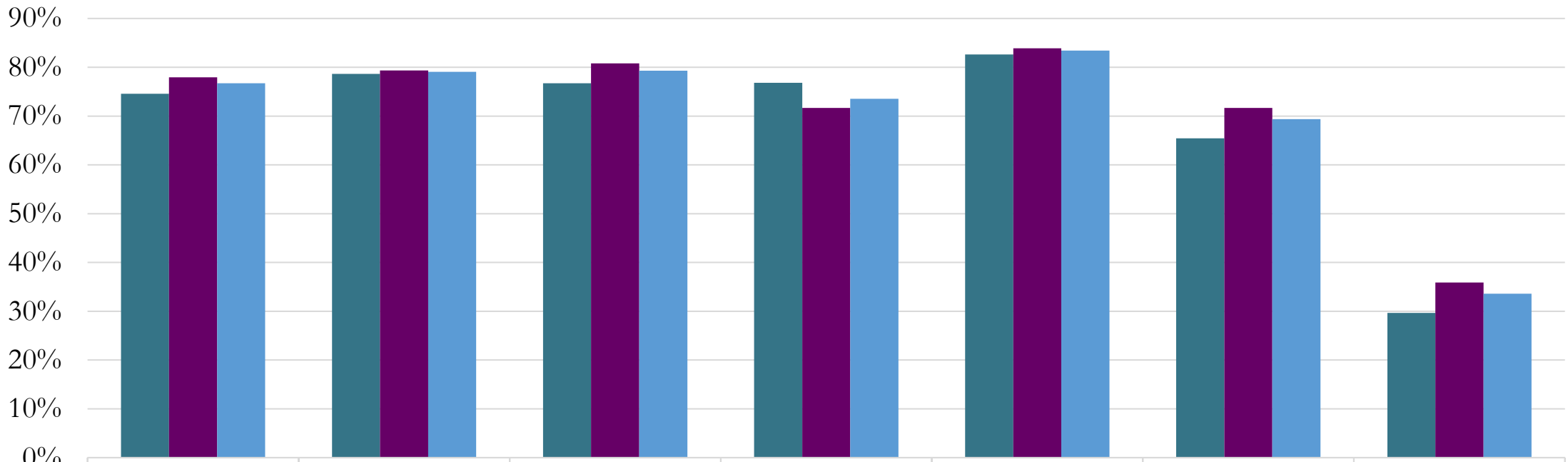
	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Smoking Cigarettes	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Vaping Nicotine	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Drinking Alcohol	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Marijuana/THC	Moderately / Greatly Wrong RX	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Gambling	Moderately / Greatly Wrong Gaming more than 3+ hrs per day
Grade 7-8	85.5%	84.0%	83.4%	87.9%	88.1%	74.3%	26.9%
Grade 9-12	76.6%	72.3%	74.9%	75.8%	84.0%	68.2%	30.8%
Grade 7-12	79.9%	76.6%	78.0%	80.3%	85.5%	70.4%	29.4%

Trend Perception of Peer Disapproval (Moderately/Greatly Wrong), Grades 9-12



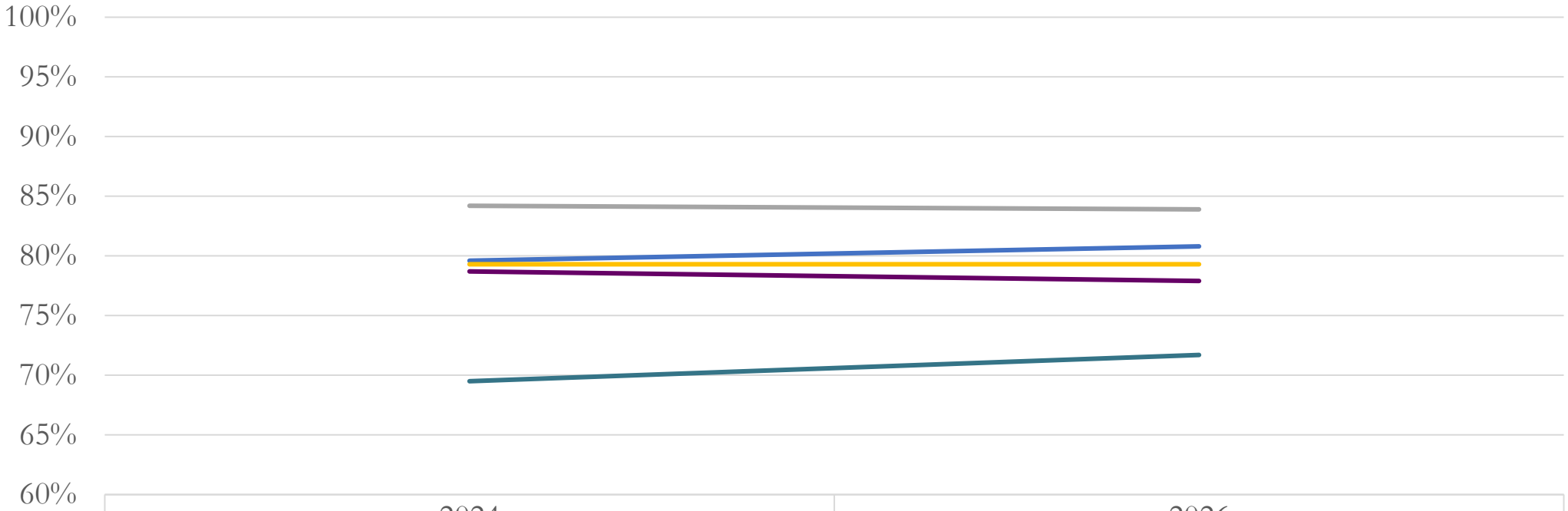
	2024	2026
Alcohol	72.5%	74.9%
Cigarettes	78.3%	76.6%
Vaping	69.9%	72.3%
Marijuana	71.0%	75.8%
Prescription Drugs	83.6%	84.0%

Perception of Risk/Harm



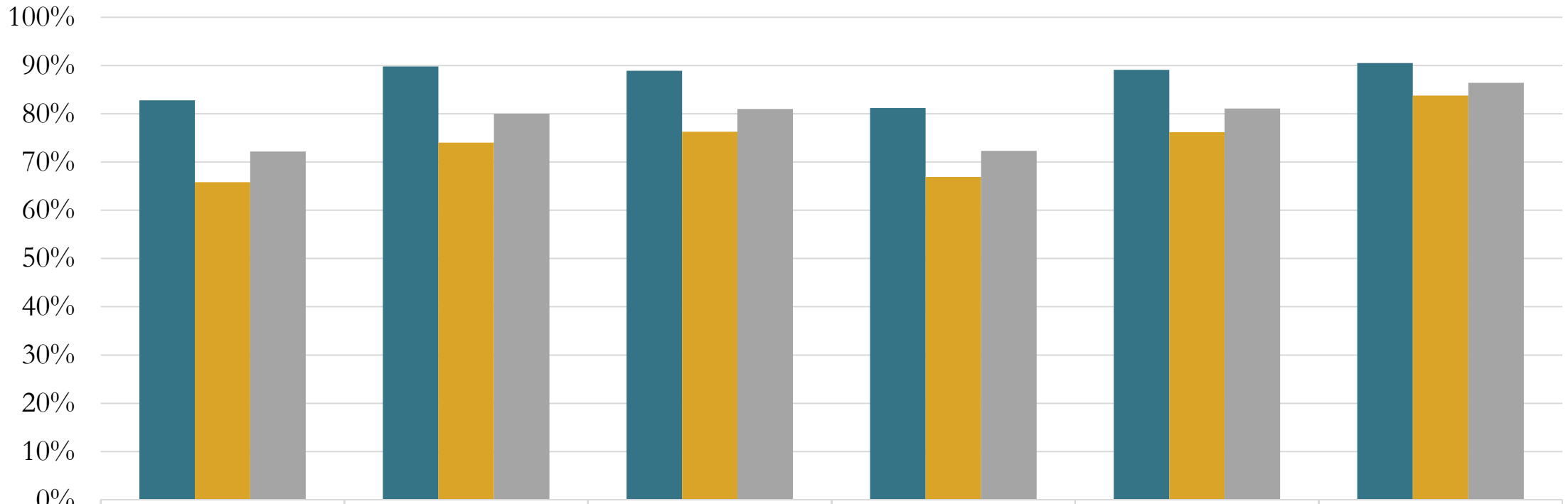
	Moderate / Great Risk Smoking Cigarettes	Moderate / Great Risk Vaping Nicotine	Moderate / Great Risk Drinking Alcohol	Moderate / Great Risk Marijuana/THC	Moderate / Great Risk RX	Moderate / Great Risk Gambling	Moderate / Great Risk Gaming more than 3+ hrs per day
Grade 7-8	74.6%	78.6%	76.7%	76.8%	82.6%	65.4%	29.7%
Grade 9-12	77.9%	79.3%	80.8%	71.7%	83.9%	71.7%	35.9%
Grade 7-12	76.7%	79.1%	79.3%	73.6%	83.4%	69.4%	33.6%

Trend Perception of Risk/Harm (Moderate/Great Risk), Grades 9-12



	2024	2026
Alcohol	79.6%	80.8%
Cigarettes	78.7%	77.9%
Vaping	79.3%	79.3%
Marijuana	69.5%	71.7%
Prescription Drugs	84.2%	83.9%

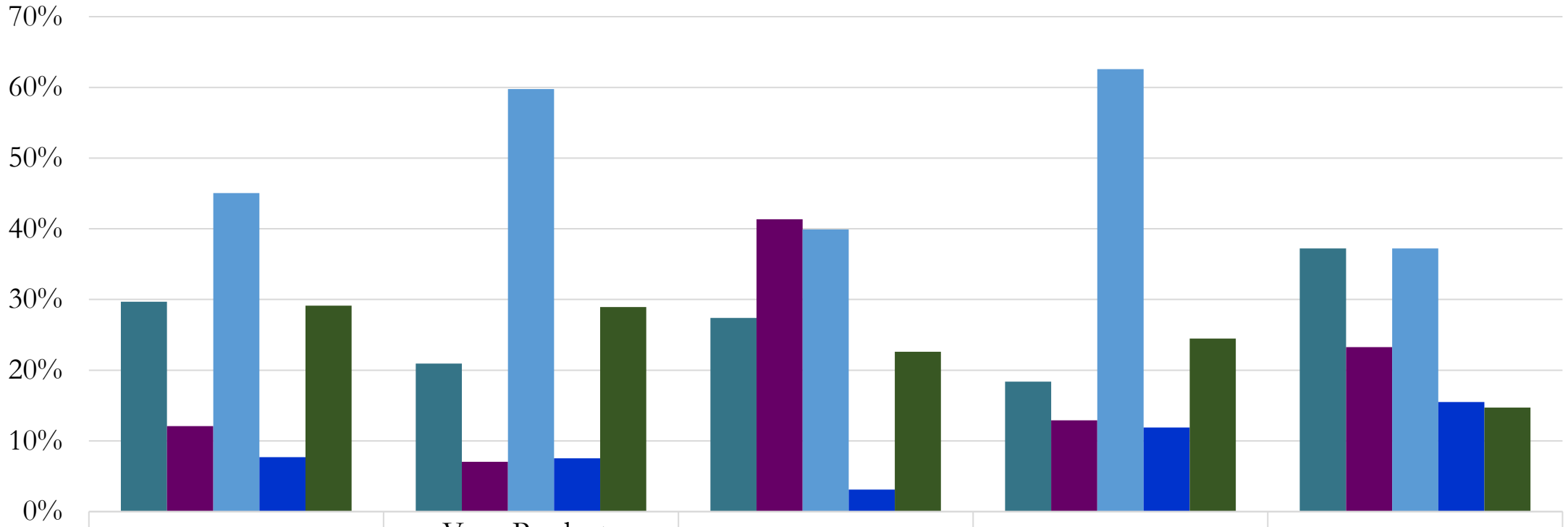
Perception of Access



	Very Hard / Sort of Hard Vape Products Nicotine	Very Hard / Sort of Hard Nicotine in an Oral Pouch	Very Hard / Sort of Hard Tobacco	Very Hard / Sort of Hard Alcohol	Very Hard / Sort of Hard Marijuana / THC	Very Hard / Sort of Hard RX
Grade 7-8	82.8%	89.8%	88.9%	81.2%	89.1%	90.5%
Grade 9-12	65.8%	74.0%	76.3%	66.9%	76.2%	83.8%
Grade 7-12	72.2%	80.0%	81.0%	72.3%	81.1%	86.4%

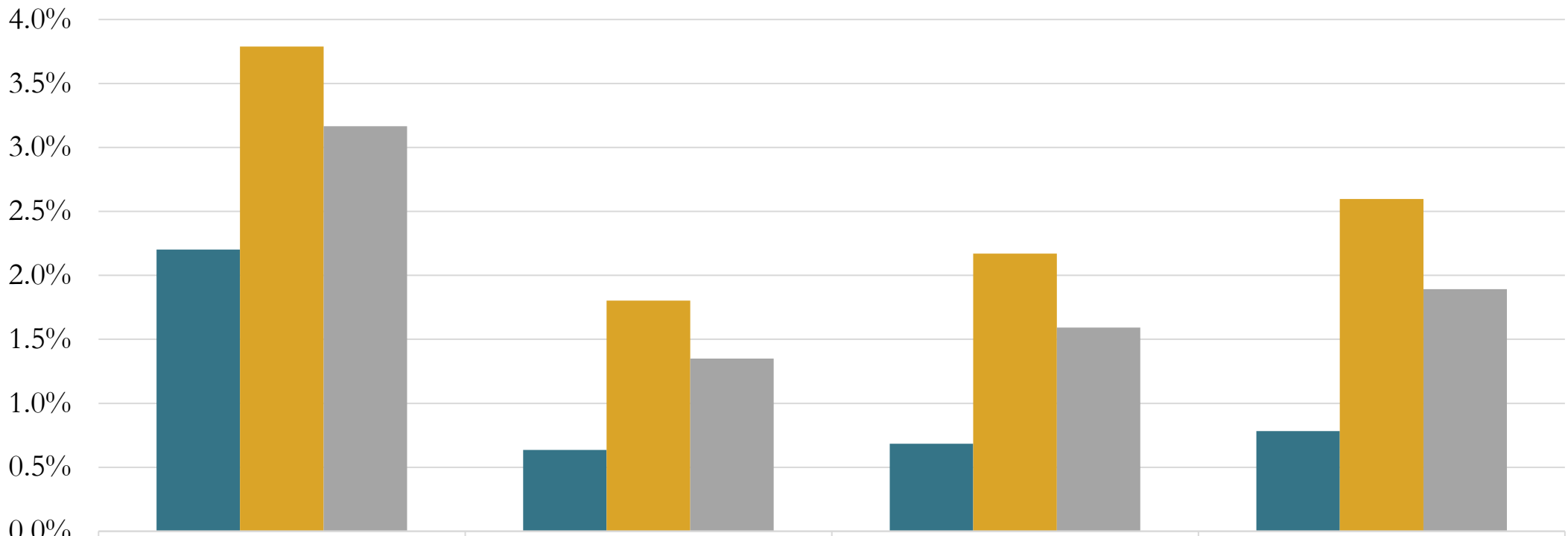
Where Substances Are Acquired Most Often

Amongst Lifetime Users Grades 7 -12



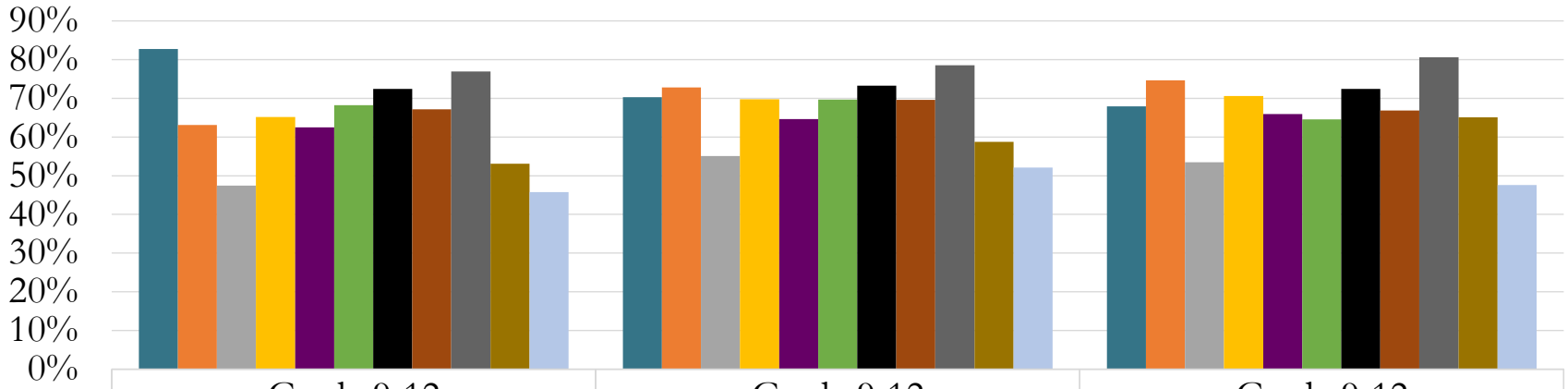
	Tobacco	Vape Products Nicotine	Alcohol	Marijuana / THC	RX
Home w/o Parents	29.7%	20.9%	27.4%	18.4%	37.2%
Home w/ parents	12.1%	7.1%	41.4%	12.9%	23.3%
Friends/Peers	45.1%	59.8%	39.9%	62.6%	37.2%
Internet	7.7%	7.5%	3.1%	11.9%	15.5%
Store	29.1%	28.9%	22.6%	24.5%	14.7%

Youth Use of Substances at School - Including School Events



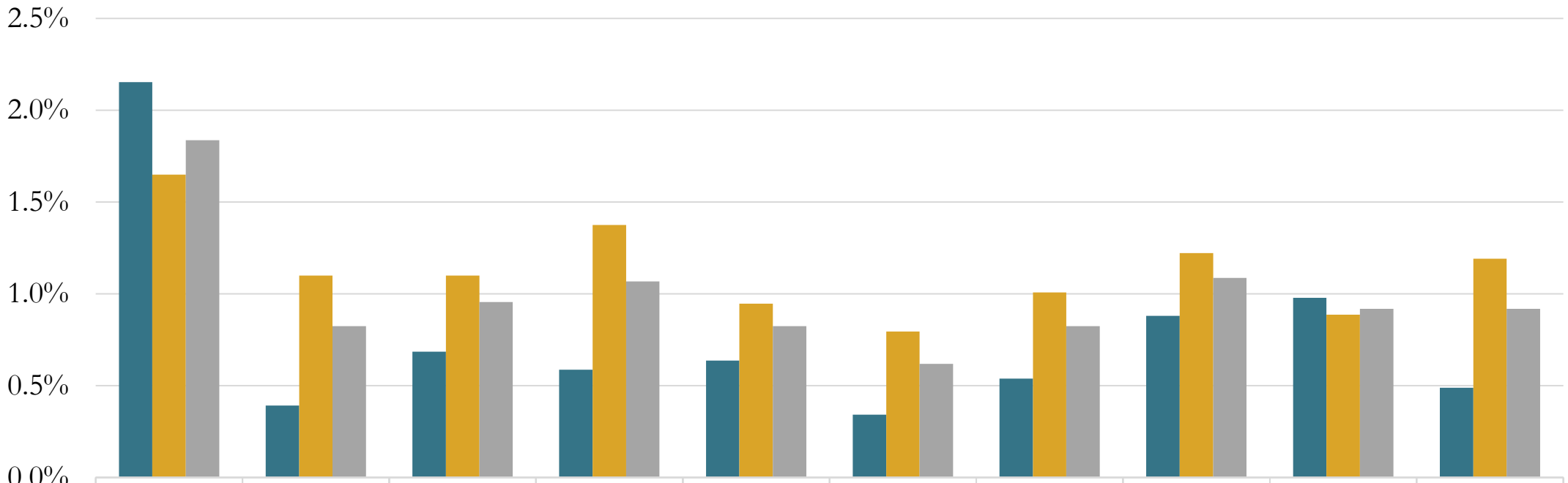
	Vaping Nicotine	Nicotine in an Oral Pouch	Alcohol	Marijuana - THC
Grade 7-8	2.2%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%
Grade 9-12	3.8%	1.8%	2.2%	2.6%
Grade 7-12	3.2%	1.3%	1.6%	1.9%

Reasons Why Substances are not Used, Grades 9-12



	Grade 9-12 Alcohol	Grade 9-12 Marijuana	Grade 9-12 Vaping
Underage	82.8%	70.3%	67.9%
I don't approve	63.1%	72.8%	74.7%
My friends don't approve	47.4%	55.1%	53.5%
Fear of Consequences - Parent/Guardian	65.2%	69.7%	70.6%
Fear of Consequences - School	62.5%	64.6%	65.9%
Fear of Consequences - Police	68.2%	69.7%	64.6%
Don't Want to Lose Control	72.5%	73.2%	72.5%
School Work	67.2%	69.6%	66.8%
Physical Health	76.9%	78.6%	80.6%
Enviromental Impacts	53.1%	58.7%	65.1%
I don't know how to get it	45.8%	52.1%	47.6%

Lifetime Other Substance Use



	Lifetime Inhalants	Lifetime Cocaine or Crack	Lifetime Ecstacy or Molly (MDMA)	Lifetime Hallucinogens including microdosing	Lifetime Heroin / Fentanyl	Lifetime Ketamine (Special K)	Lifetime Methamphetamine	Lifetime Synthetic marijuana (Spice, K2, Delta-8)	Lifetime Bath Salts	Lifetime Kratom
Grade 7-8	2.2%	0.4%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.9%	1.0%	0.5%
Grade 9-12	1.6%	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	1.2%
Grade 7-12	1.8%	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%	0.8%	0.6%	0.8%	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%

Lifetime Substance Use and Associated Risk Factors, Grades 7-12

Stamford youth who have used any substance in their lifetime are more likely to have increased behavioral health concerns in the past year including;

- Feeling anxious or worried "always" or "almost always"
- Experiencing loneliness
- Having thoughts about self-harm and harming themselves
- Feeling sad or hopeless two or more weeks in a row
- Considering suicide

The list above includes youth reported experiences and perceptions that are statistically associated with lifetime use of any substance use. It is important to note association should not be considered causation.

More of similar data are seen in an addendum Excel that allows for sorting risk and protective factors. Example below:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1					Middle School		High School	
2	Risk/Protecti	Domain	Survey Section	Test Description	Lifetime User	Non User	Lifetime User	Non User
3	Protective Factor	Technology	Screen Time	Internet Hours-4 hours or less			46.40%	60.30%
4	Risk Factor	Technology	Screen Time	Internet Hours-5 hours or more			53.60%	39.70%
5	Protective Factor	Technology	Electronic/Online Gaming	Gaming Consequence-Homework-No			68.80%	81.80%
6	Risk Factor	Technology	Electronic/Online Gaming	Gaming Consequence-Homework - Yes			31.30%	18.20%
7	Protective Factor	Technology	Electronic/Online Gaming	Gaming Consequence- Inappropriate Things-No	68.20%	82.80%	67.40%	85.30%
8	Risk Factor	Technology	Electronic/Online Gaming	Gaming Consequence- Inappropriate Things-Yes	31.80%	17.20%	32.60%	14.70%
9	Protective Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Fights -No			78.40%	92.50%
10	Risk Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Fights -Yes			21.60%	7.50%
11	Protective Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Excluded -No	59.50%	76.00%	58.80%	78.30%
12	Risk Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Excluded -Yes	40.50%	24.00%	41.20%	21.70%
13	Protective Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Felt Worse-No	58.10%	79.50%	59.80%	72.50%
14	Risk Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Felt Worse-Yes	41.90%	20.50%	40.20%	27.50%
15	Protective Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Felt Unsafe-No	79.10%	96.50%		
16	Risk Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Felt Unsafe-Yes	20.90%	3.50%		
17	Protective Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Inappropriate Things-No	51.20%	78.60%	37.10%	72.00%
18	Risk Factor	Technology	Social Media	Social Media - Inappropriate Things-Yes	48.80%	21.40%	62.90%	28.00%

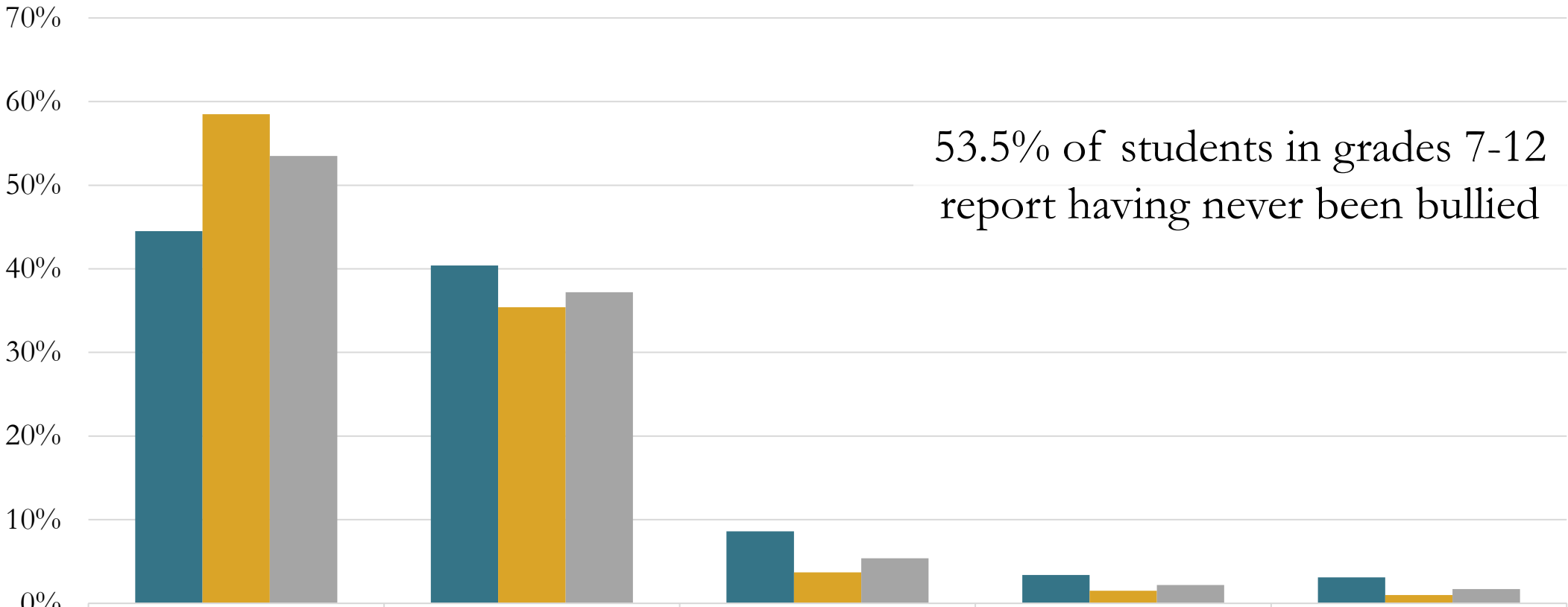
Lifetime User Factors

Bullying and Perceptions of Safety

B. Weyland Smith

Consulting

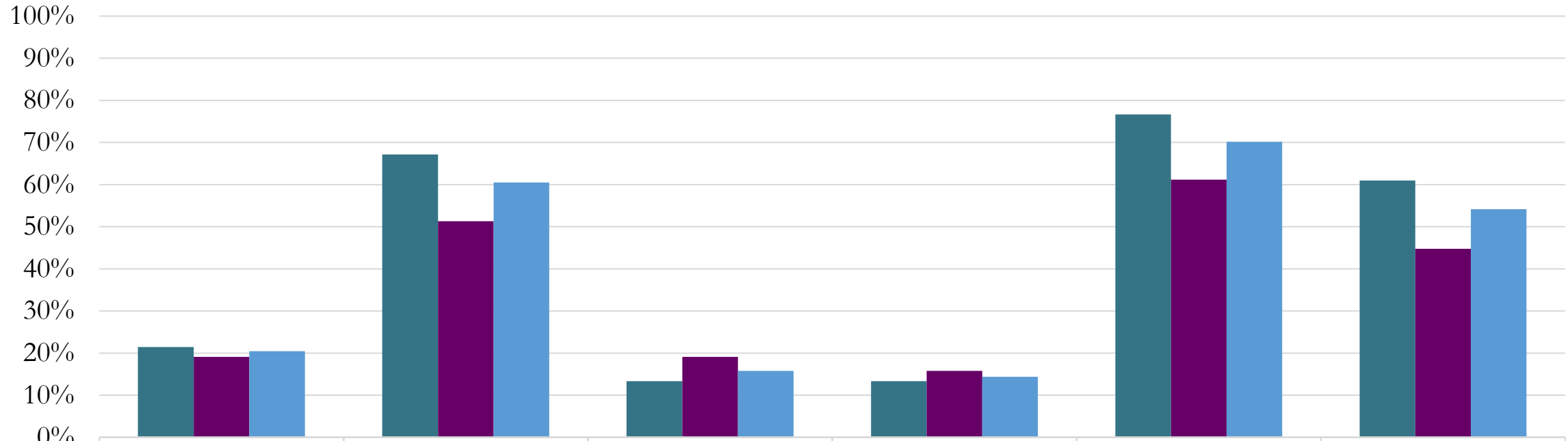
Bullying Frequency



53.5% of students in grades 7-12 report having never been bullied

	I have NEVER been bullied before.	I have been bullied before, but not in the past 30 days.	Occasionally (1 - 5 days)	Frequently (6 - 20 days)	Almost every day (21 days or more)
Grade 7-8	44.5%	40.4%	8.6%	3.4%	3.1%
Grade 9-12	58.5%	35.4%	3.7%	1.5%	1.0%
Grade 7-12	53.5%	37.2%	5.4%	2.2%	1.7%

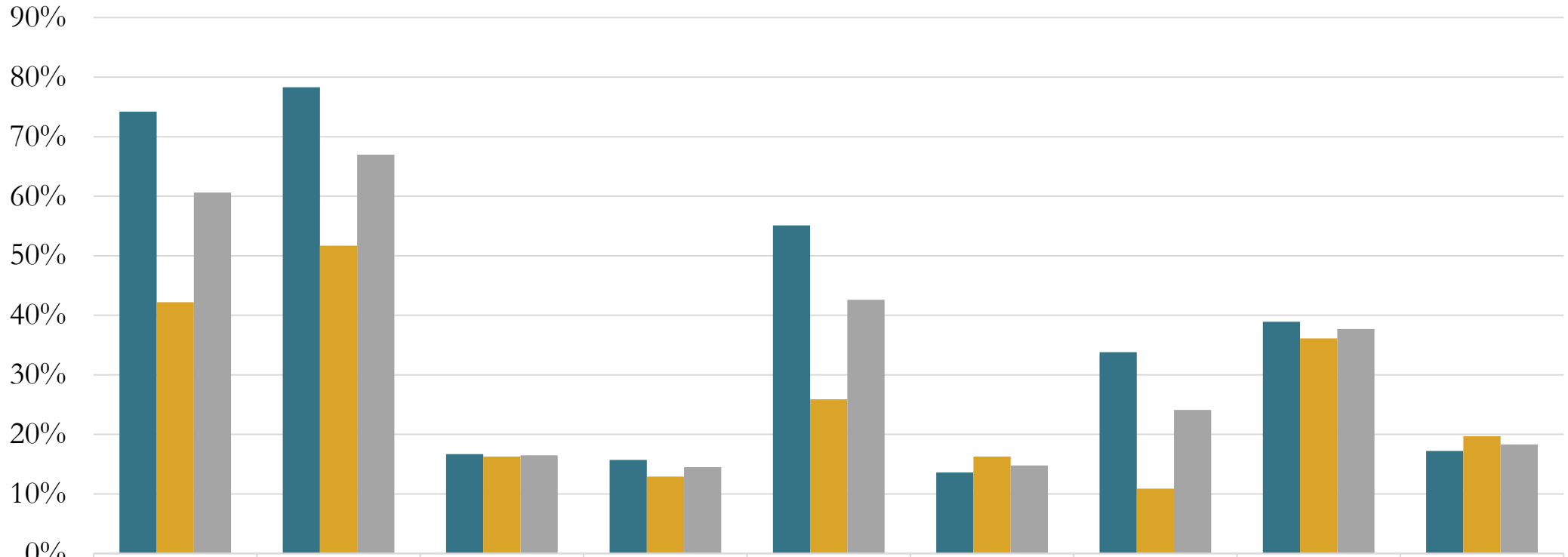
Ways Students Report Being Bullied-
of those who report being bullied in the past 30 days



	Physical	Rumors	Money	Threats	Names	Exclusion
	During the past 30 days, I have been bullied in the following ways					
Grade 7-8	21.4%	67.1%	13.3%	13.3%	76.7%	61.0%
Grade 9-12	19.1%	51.3%	19.1%	15.8%	61.2%	44.7%
Grade 7-12	20.4%	60.5%	15.7%	14.4%	70.2%	54.1%

Locations of Bullying-

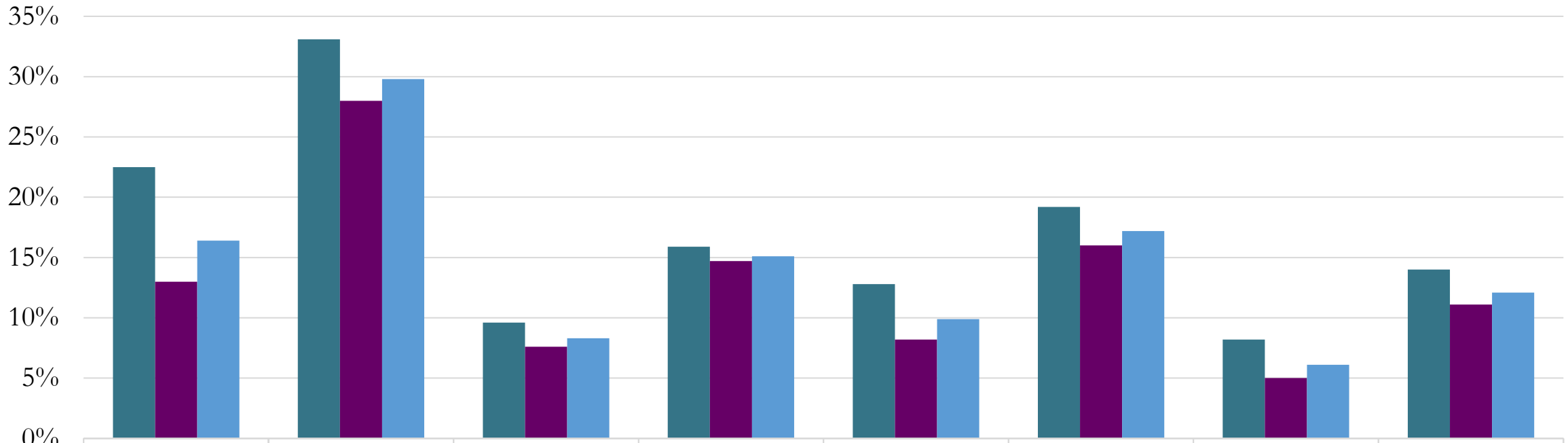
of those who report being bullied in the past 30 days-



	Hallways	Classroom	Bathroom	Gym	Lunch	Walking to School	Bus	Online	After School
Grade 7-8	74.2%	78.3%	16.7%	15.7%	55.1%	13.6%	33.8%	38.9%	17.2%
Grade 9-12	42.2%	51.7%	16.3%	12.9%	25.9%	16.3%	10.9%	36.1%	19.7%
Grade 7-12	60.6%	67.0%	16.5%	14.5%	42.6%	14.8%	24.1%	37.7%	18.3%

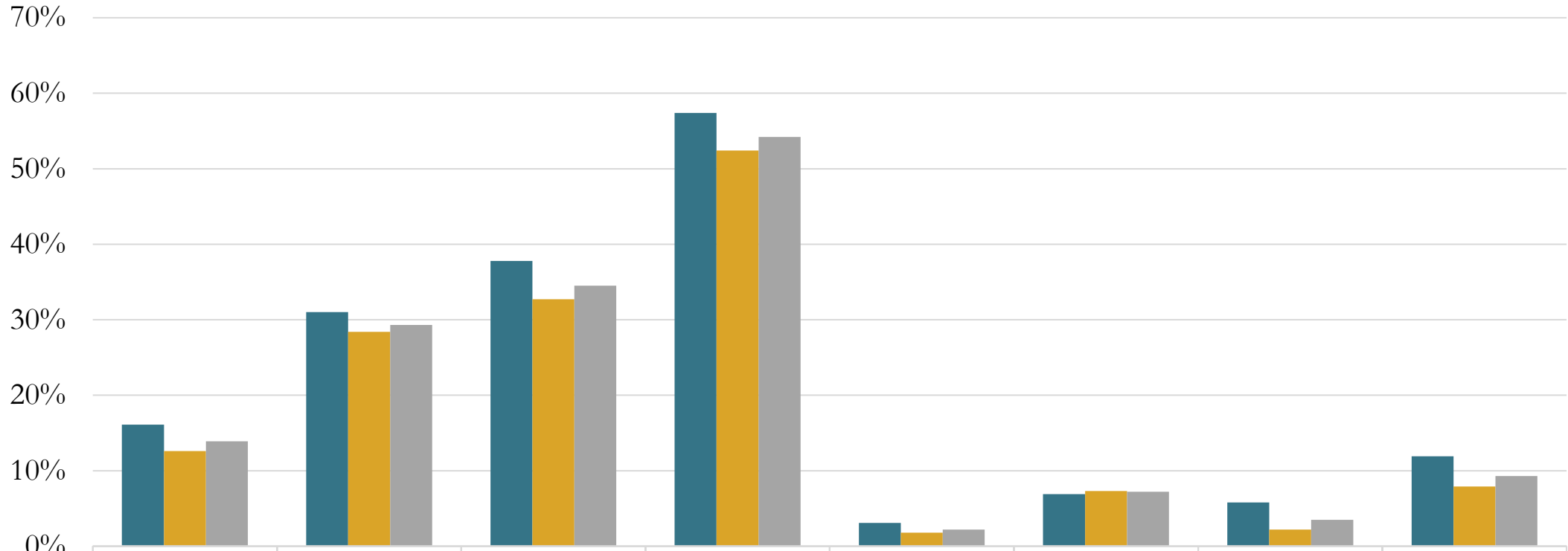
Toxic Stress

Toxic Stress - Discrimination
(% Yes)



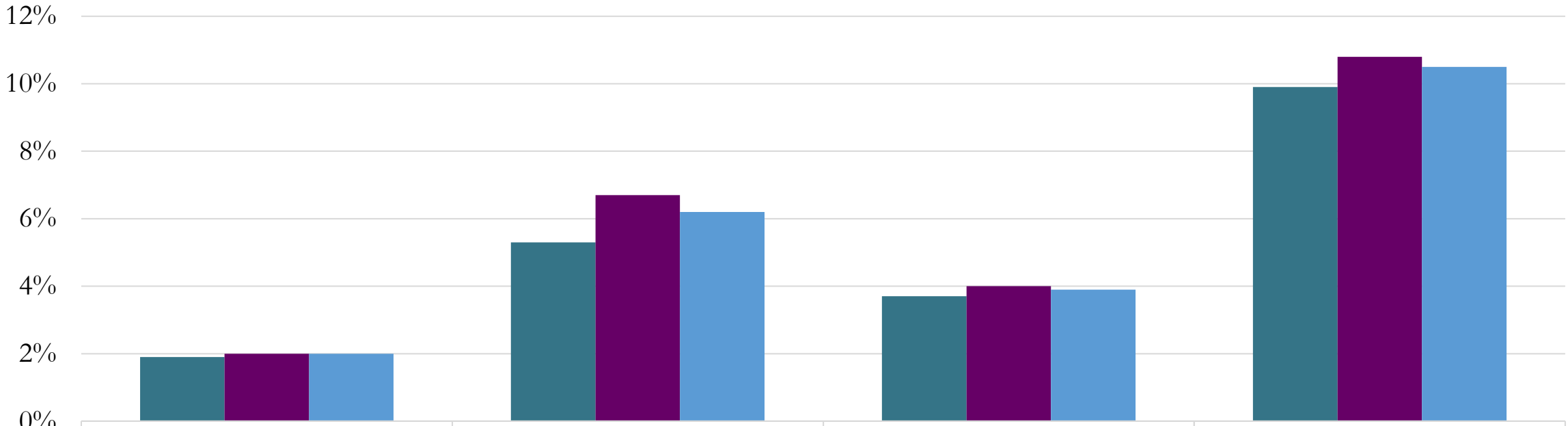
	Discrimination-Race/Ethnicity		Discrimination-Gender/Sexual Orientation		Discrimination- Religion / Cultural		Discrimination - Learning Disability	
	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime
Grade 7-8	22.5%	33.1%	9.6%	15.9%	12.8%	19.2%	8.2%	14.0%
Grade 9-12	13.0%	28.0%	7.6%	14.7%	8.2%	16.0%	5.0%	11.1%
Grade 7-12	16.4%	29.8%	8.3%	15.1%	9.9%	17.2%	6.1%	12.1%

Toxic Stress - Violence
(% Yes)



	Seen Violence - Community		Seen Violence - At School		Violence Victim - Community		Violence Victim- At School	
	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime
Grade 7-8	16.1%	31.0%	37.8%	57.4%	3.1%	6.9%	5.8%	11.9%
Grade 9-12	12.6%	28.4%	32.7%	52.4%	1.8%	7.3%	2.2%	7.9%
Grade 7-12	13.9%	29.3%	34.5%	54.2%	2.2%	7.2%	3.5%	9.3%

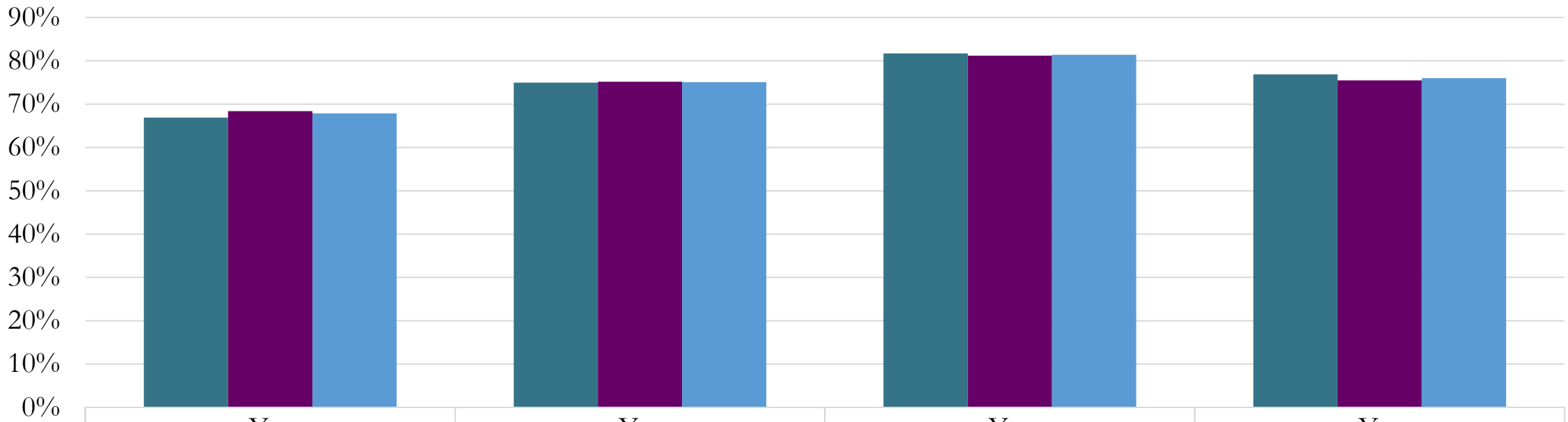
Toxic Stress – Basic Needs
(% Yes)



	Housing Problems		Food Insecurity	
	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime	Past 12 Mo	Lifetime
Grade 7-8	1.9%	5.3%	3.7%	9.9%
Grade 9-12	2.0%	6.7%	4.0%	10.8%
Grade 7-12	2.0%	6.2%	3.9%	10.5%

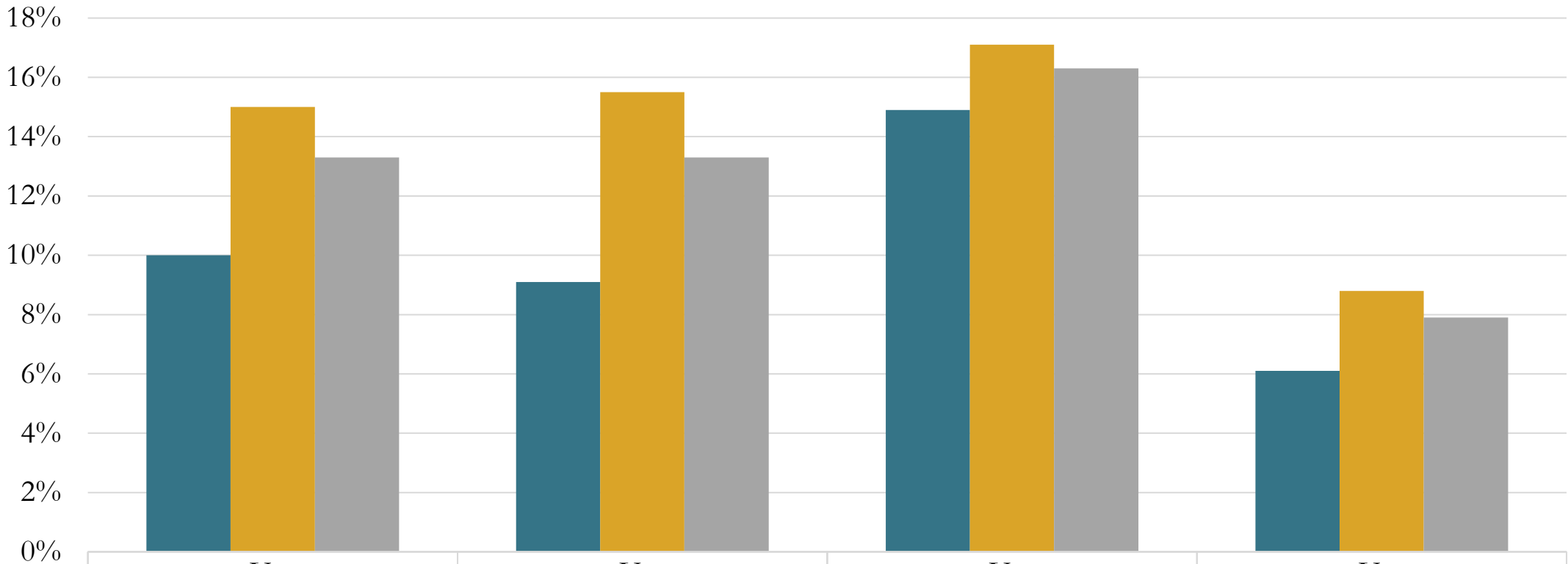
Connected and Thriving Factors

Connected and Thriving Youth-Direction, Confidence and Supports



	Yes Life- Positive Direction	Yes Supports- School Based	Yes Supports - External to School	Yes Future Confidence-College, Job
Grade 7-8	66.9%	75.0%	81.7%	76.9%
Grade 9-12	68.4%	75.2%	81.2%	75.5%
Grade 7-12	67.9%	75.1%	81.4%	76.0%

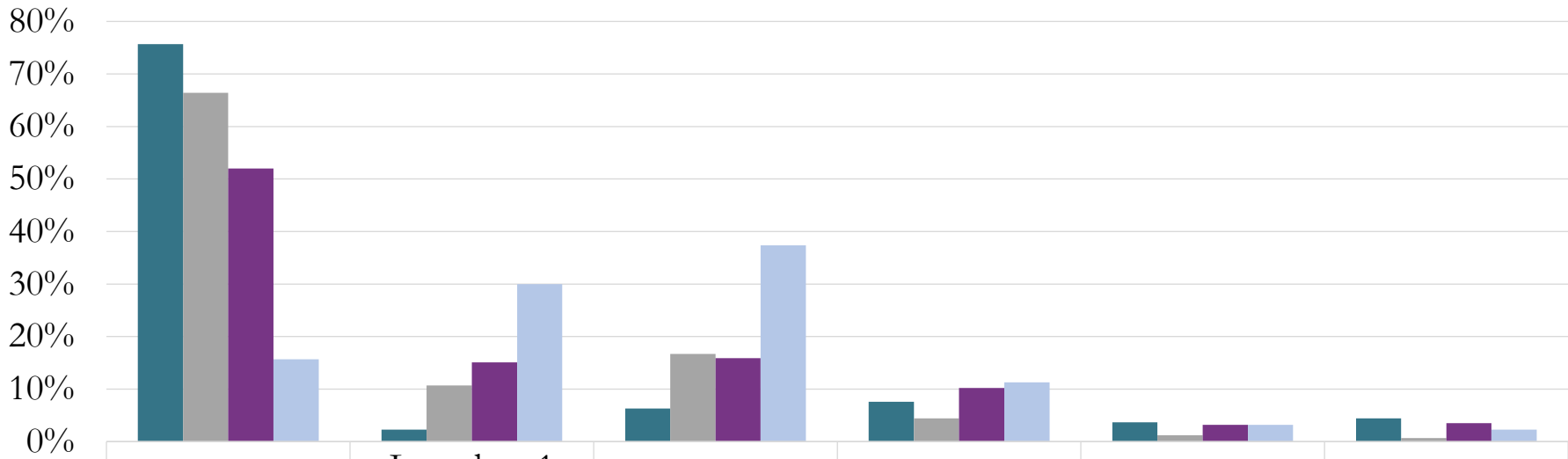
Connected and Thriving Youth-Risk Factors



	Yes Absent More Frequently	Yes Moved 4 or More Times	Yes Suspended or Expelled	Yes Legal Trouble
Grade 7-8	10.0%	9.1%	14.9%	6.1%
Grade 9-12	15.0%	15.5%	17.1%	8.8%
Grade 7-12	13.3%	13.3%	16.3%	7.9%

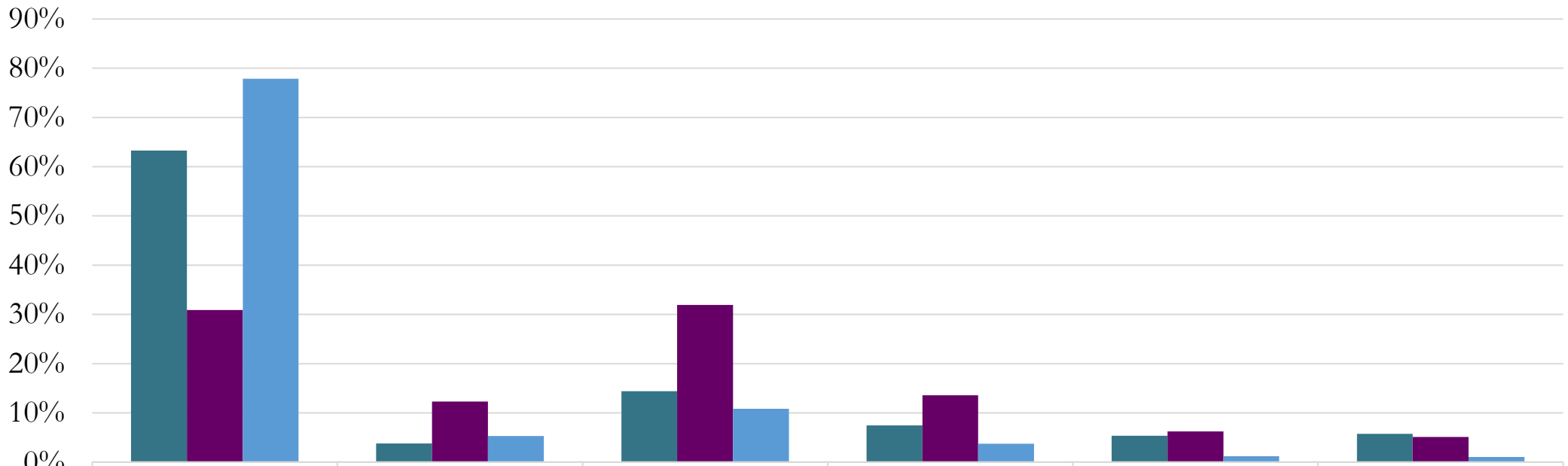
Extracurricular Activities

Time Spent on Jobs & Volunteering, Weekly
Grades 7-12



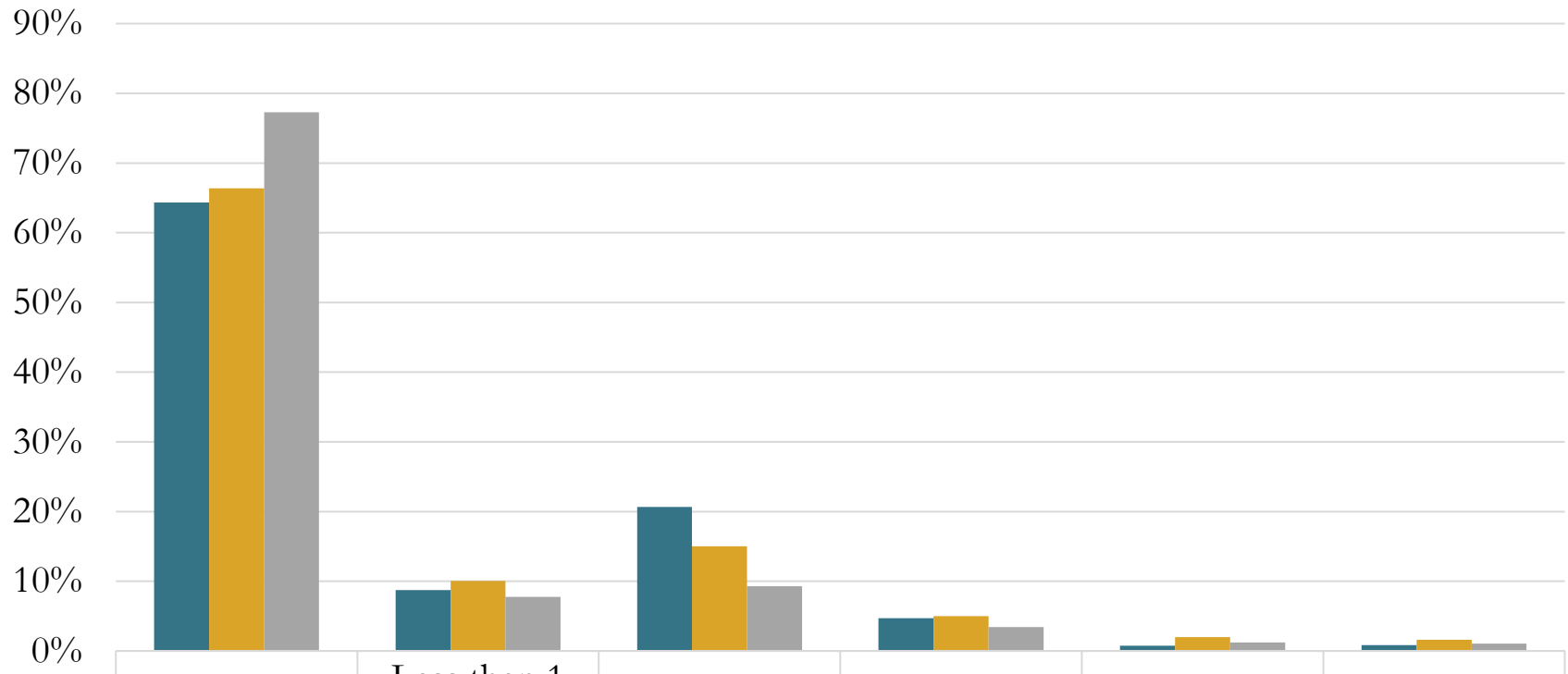
	None	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	7-10 hours	11 or more
Working at a job	75.7%	2.3%	6.3%	7.6%	3.7%	4.4%
Volunteering	66.4%	10.7%	16.7%	4.4%	1.2%	0.7%
Taking care of someone at home (sibling, older relative)	52.0%	15.1%	15.9%	10.2%	3.2%	3.5%
Doing chores	15.7%	30.0%	37.4%	11.3%	3.2%	2.3%

Time Spent on Physical Activities, Weekly
Grades 7-12



	None	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	7-10 hours	11 or more
Team Sports	63.3%	3.8%	14.4%	7.4%	5.4%	5.7%
Other Physical Activities	30.9%	12.3%	31.9%	13.6%	6.2%	5.1%
After School Programs	77.9%	5.3%	10.8%	3.7%	1.2%	1.1%

Time Spent on Faith-based Activities, Taking Lessons, Clubs or Orgs, Weekly, Grades 7-12

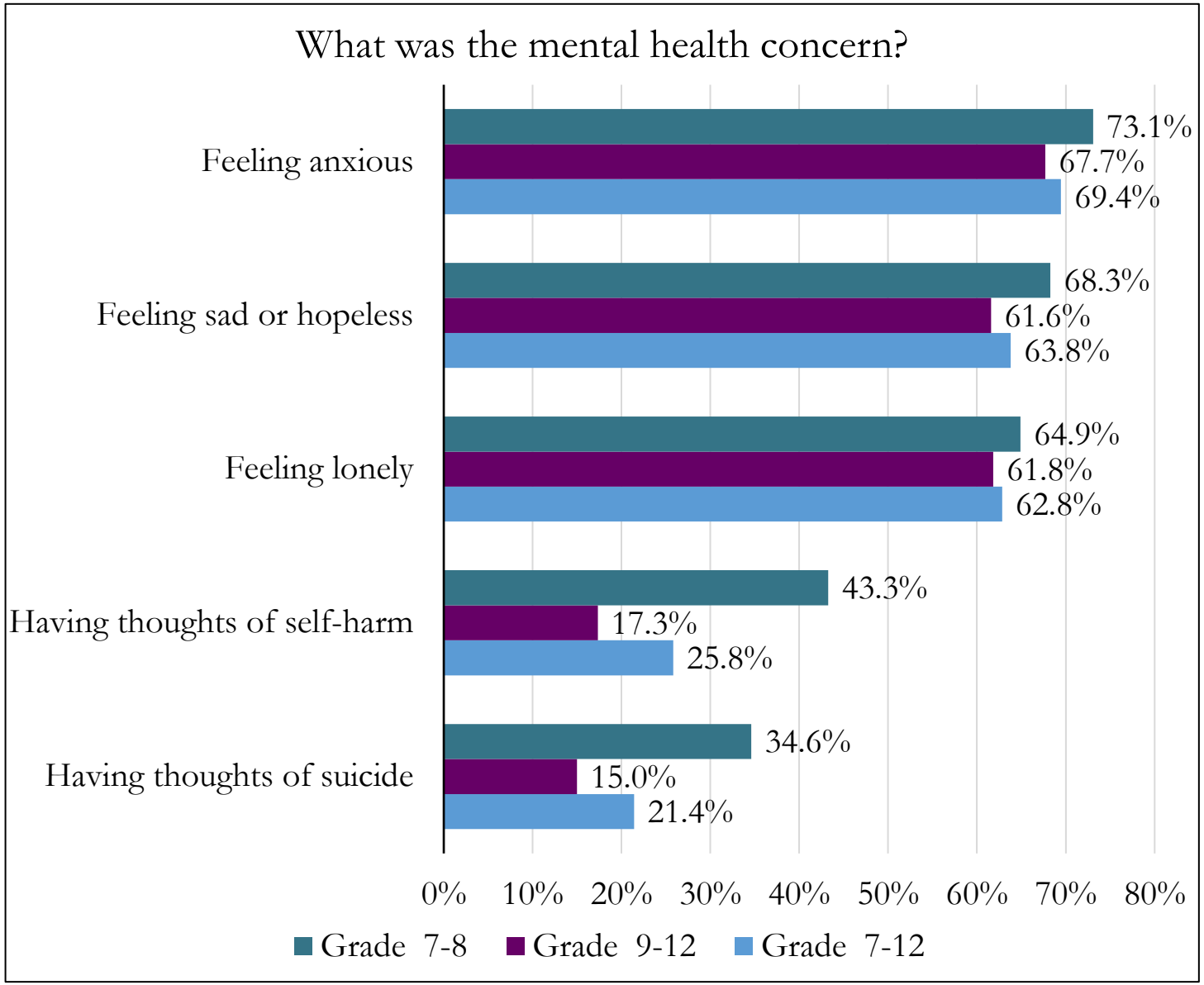


	None	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	7-10 hours	11 or more
Faith or Religious Activities	64.3%	8.7%	20.6%	4.7%	0.7%	0.9%
Practicing /Taking lessons (music, art)	66.4%	10.0%	15.0%	5.0%	2.0%	1.6%
Club or organization (theater, Scouts)	77.3%	7.8%	9.3%	3.4%	1.2%	1.0%

AI Addendum

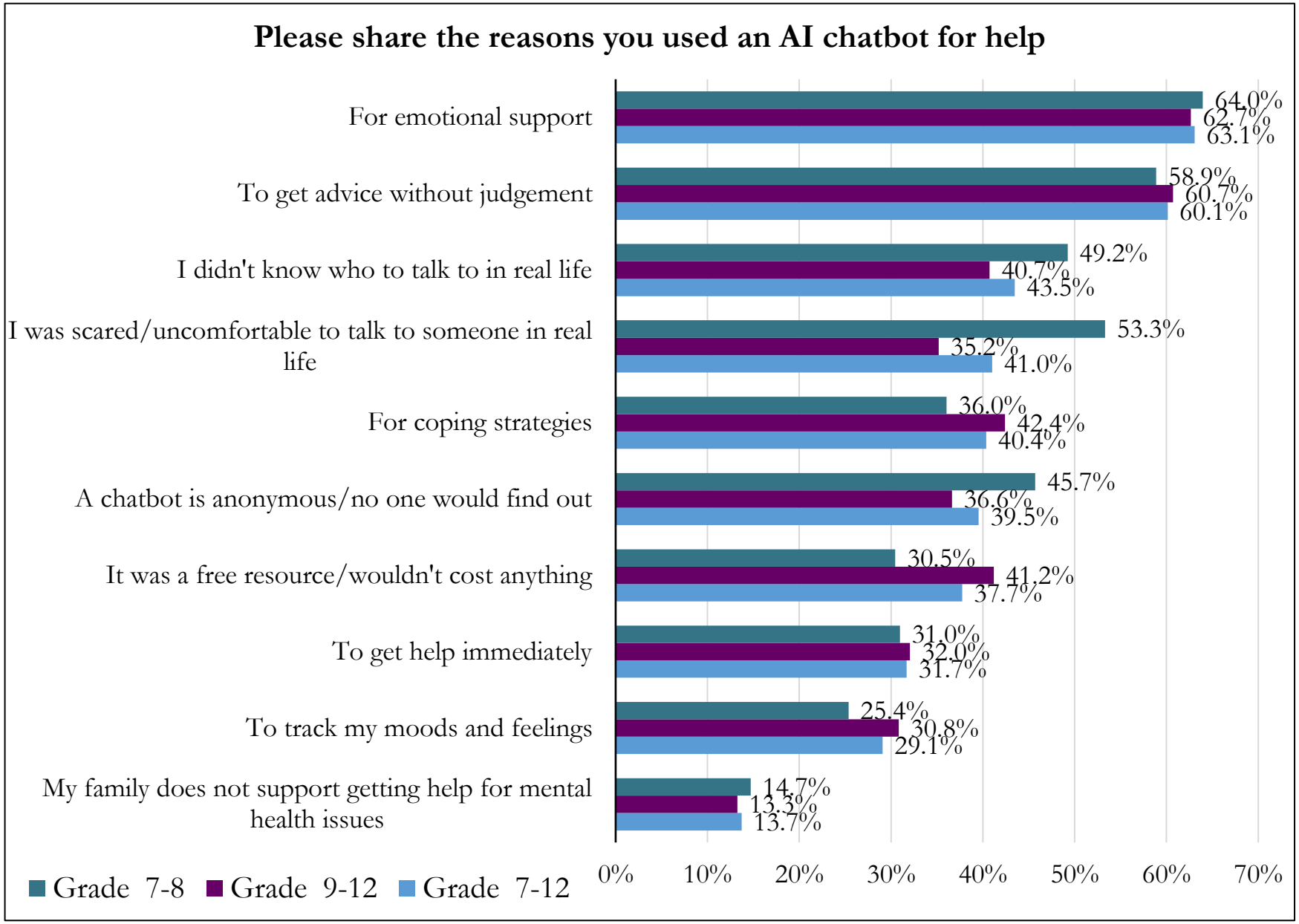
Use of AI for help with Mental Health Concerns

16.8% of Stamford youth in grades 7-12 have used AI to get help for mental health concerns…..

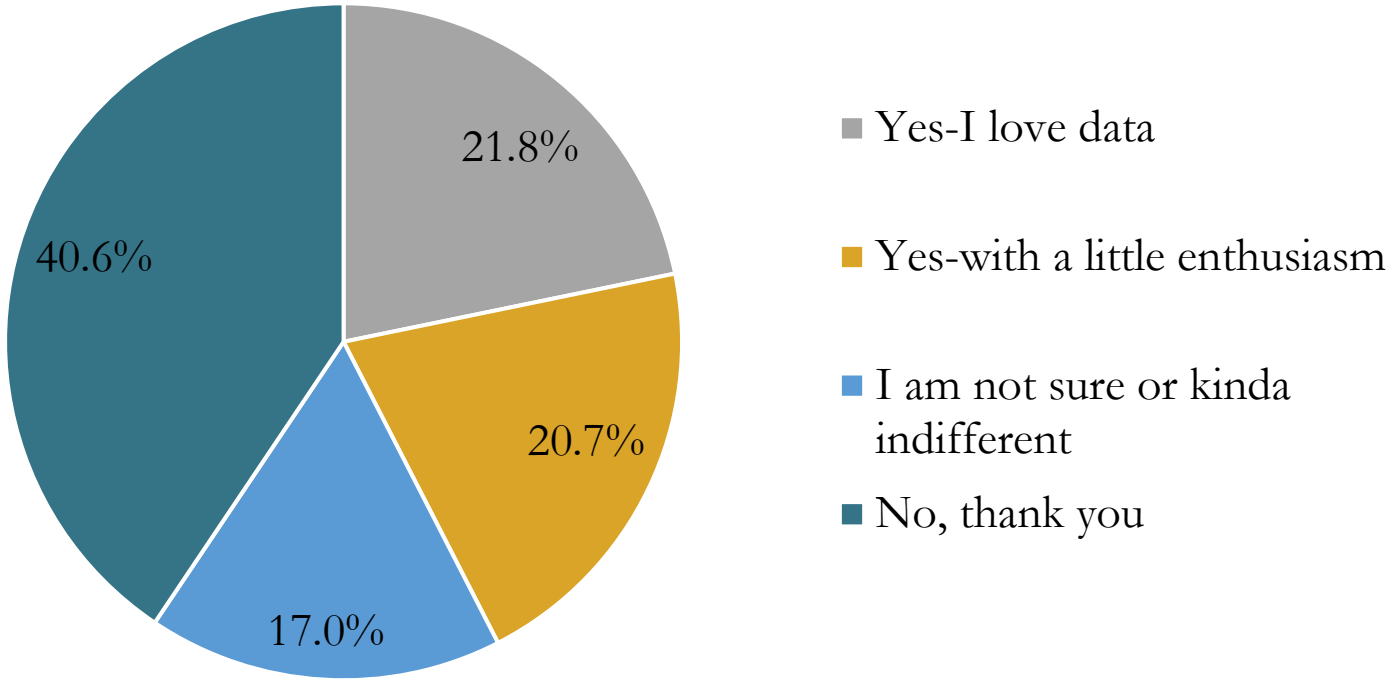


Use of AI for help with Mental Health Concerns cont.

62.4% of Stamford youth in grades 7-12 who have used AI to get help for mental health concerns found it helpful



Would you like to see the outcomes of this survey when the data are available?



42.5% of students report they would like to see the data from the survey.