

Greenwich Youth Survey 2021: Results and Key Takeaways

Correlations with Assets and Risks, and Comparisons with Parents' Perceptions



October 12, 2021

Context For Tonight's Discussion

WHO we are

Greenwich Together – Local Prevention Council

- Convened January 2016
- 30+ Members
- Many ways to be involved



If you would like more information about Greenwich Together or would like to have a presentation to your group please email ebrezovsky@kidsincrisis.org

PURPOSE

Mobilize community members to strengthen youths' relationships, skills and opportunities to promote mental health, reduce risky behavior, strengthen healthy choices

HOW

Use data to plan and implement actions that promote healthy choices



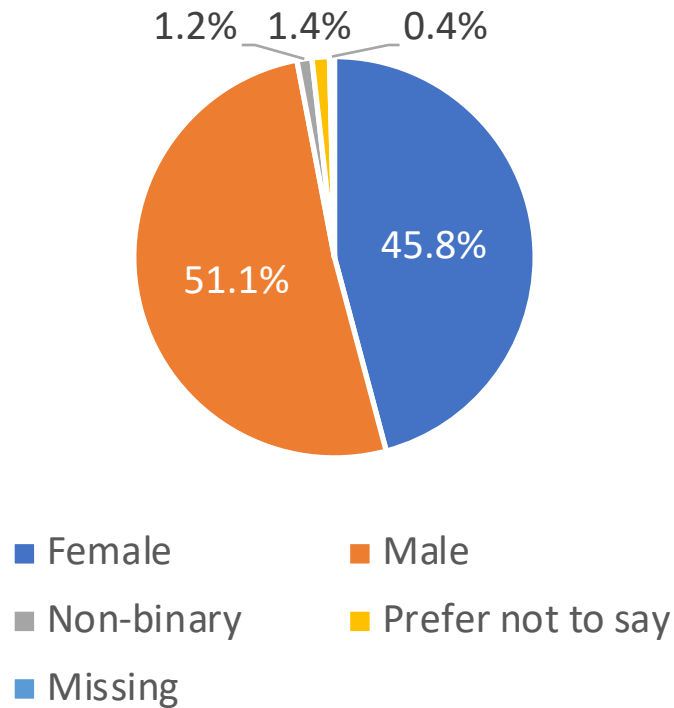
Analyses of Results from Greenwich Youth and Parent Surveys

- This review will include a look at:
 - Survey Results from February 2021
 - Demographics
 - Substance use
 - Prevalence and trends
 - Correlations with assets and risks
 - Comparison with parents' perceptions
 - Comparisons with 2018 results
 - Mental Health
 - Prevalence
 - Sources of stress
 - Comparison with parents' perceptions
 - Key Takeaways – 2021

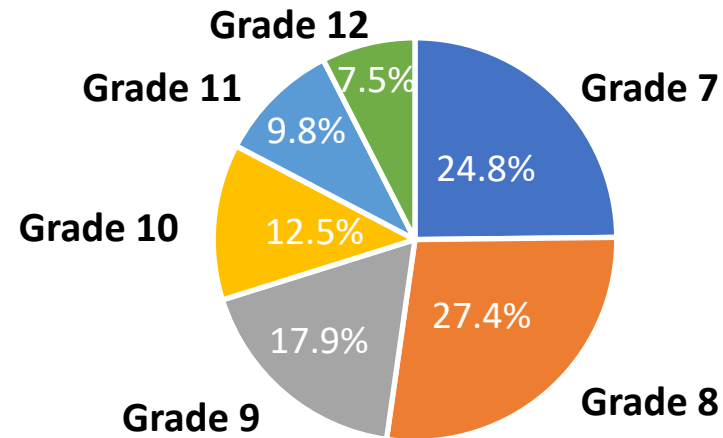


Demographics of Youth Surveyed

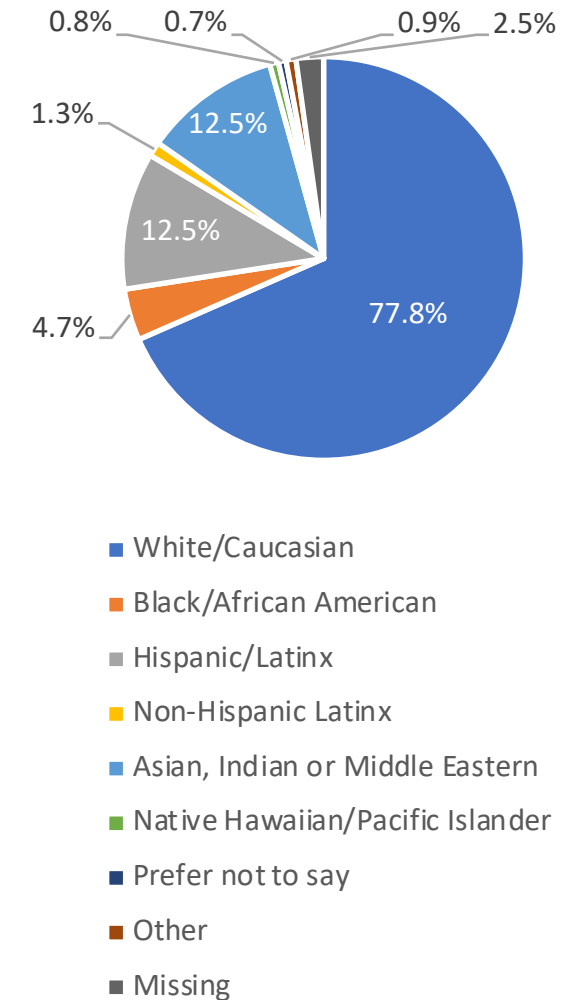
Gender



Grade



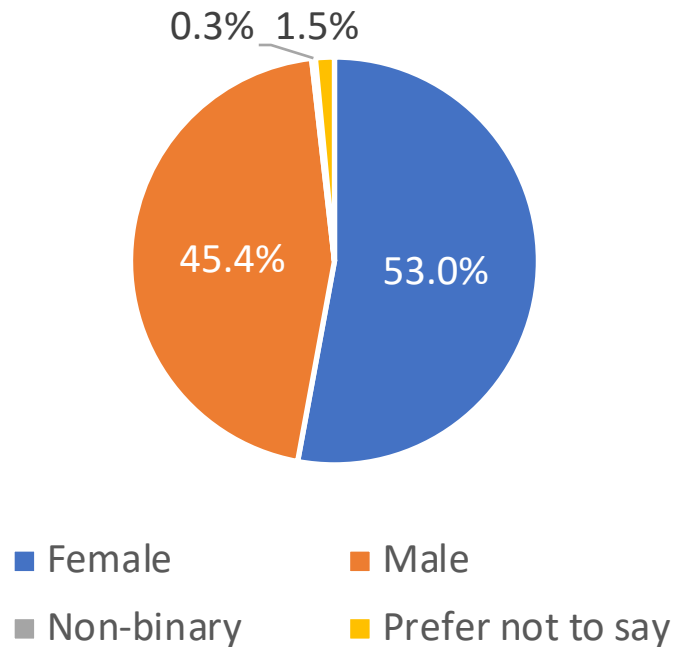
Race/Ethnicity



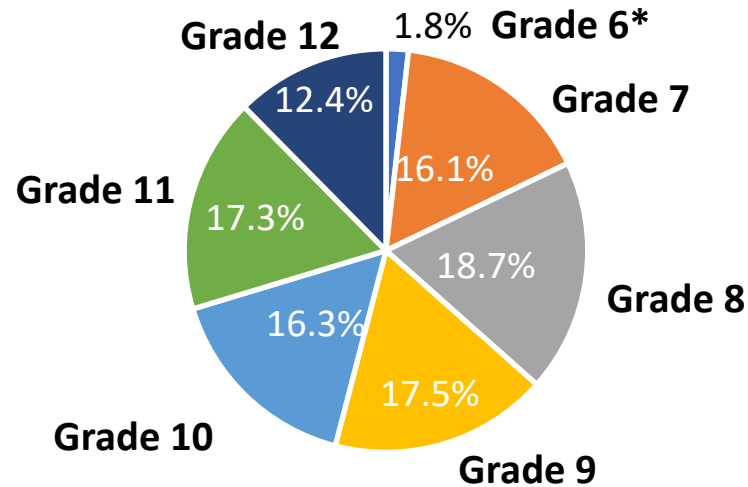
N=2804

Demographics of Parents Surveyed

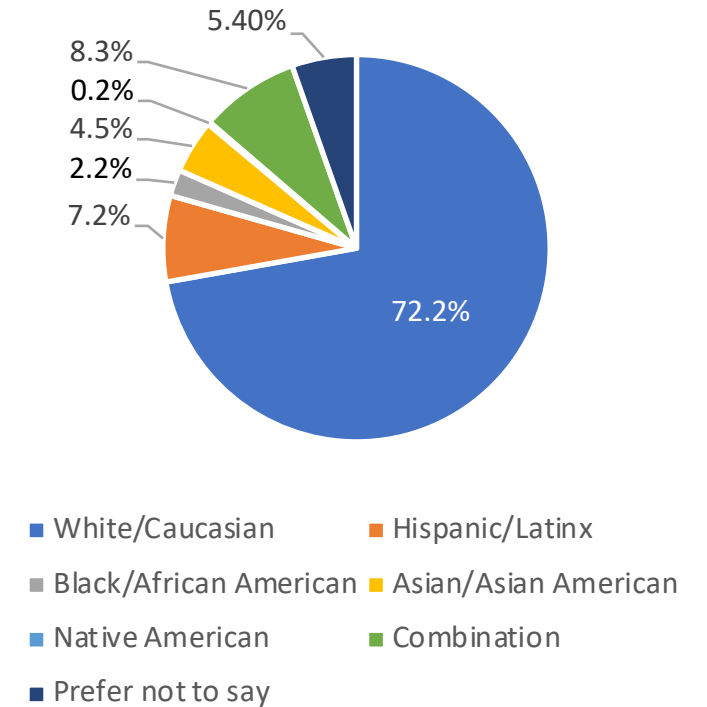
Gender of Child



Grade of Child



Race/Ethnicity



N=1310 Note: Parents responded based on eldest child

*Responses from parents of students in Grade 6 were not included in comparisons

Methods

- Youth:
 - 2018:
 - two separate surveys (assets, risky behaviors)
 - 2021:
 - One survey (merged to allow correlations between developmental assets and risky behaviors)
 - Asked questions on mental health
 - Data on prevalence assessed by grade and gender
- Parents:
 - Late November 2020, first-ever parent survey
 - Allowed some comparisons with youth survey results

What were we measuring?

- ✓ Risky behaviors: 4 core measures
 - Past-30-day use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
 - Perceptions of risk
 - Perceptions of parental disapproval
 - Perceptions of peer disapproval
- ✓ Search Institute Developmental Assets (refer to handout)
 - “The Developmental Assets® are 40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible, successful adults.”
- ✓ Comparisons between youth and parents
- ✓ Association of risk/protective factors with prevalence



Methods

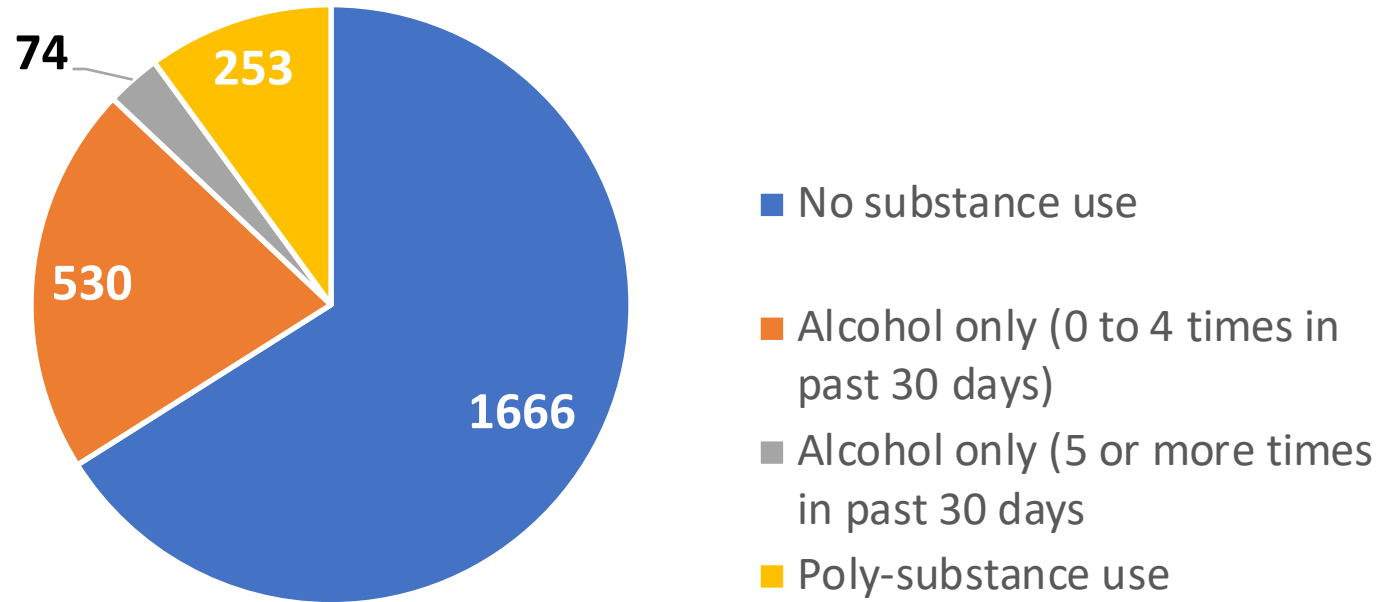
- Predictors
 - Two approaches were used to assess risk factors associated with alcohol use
 1. Associations with past-30-day use (yes/no)
 2. Cluster analysis for any past alcohol use (no substance use, alcohol use only [0-4 times in past 30 days], alcohol use only [5 or more times in past 30 days], poly-substance use)
 - For mental health issues (depression, loneliness, anxiety), associations of factors associated with past-30-day occurrence were assessed (cluster analysis)

Substance Use

Prevalence, Trends, and Predictors

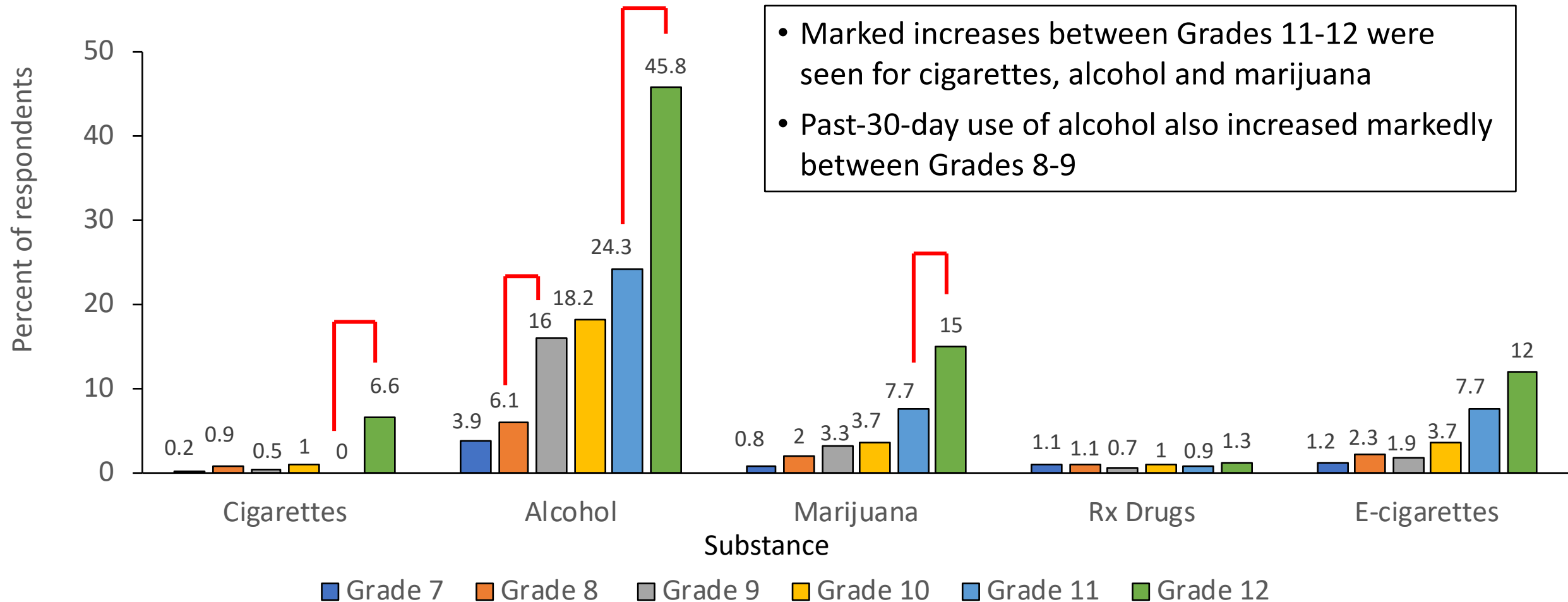
Youth Alcohol Use

Across all grades, most youth did not use any substances



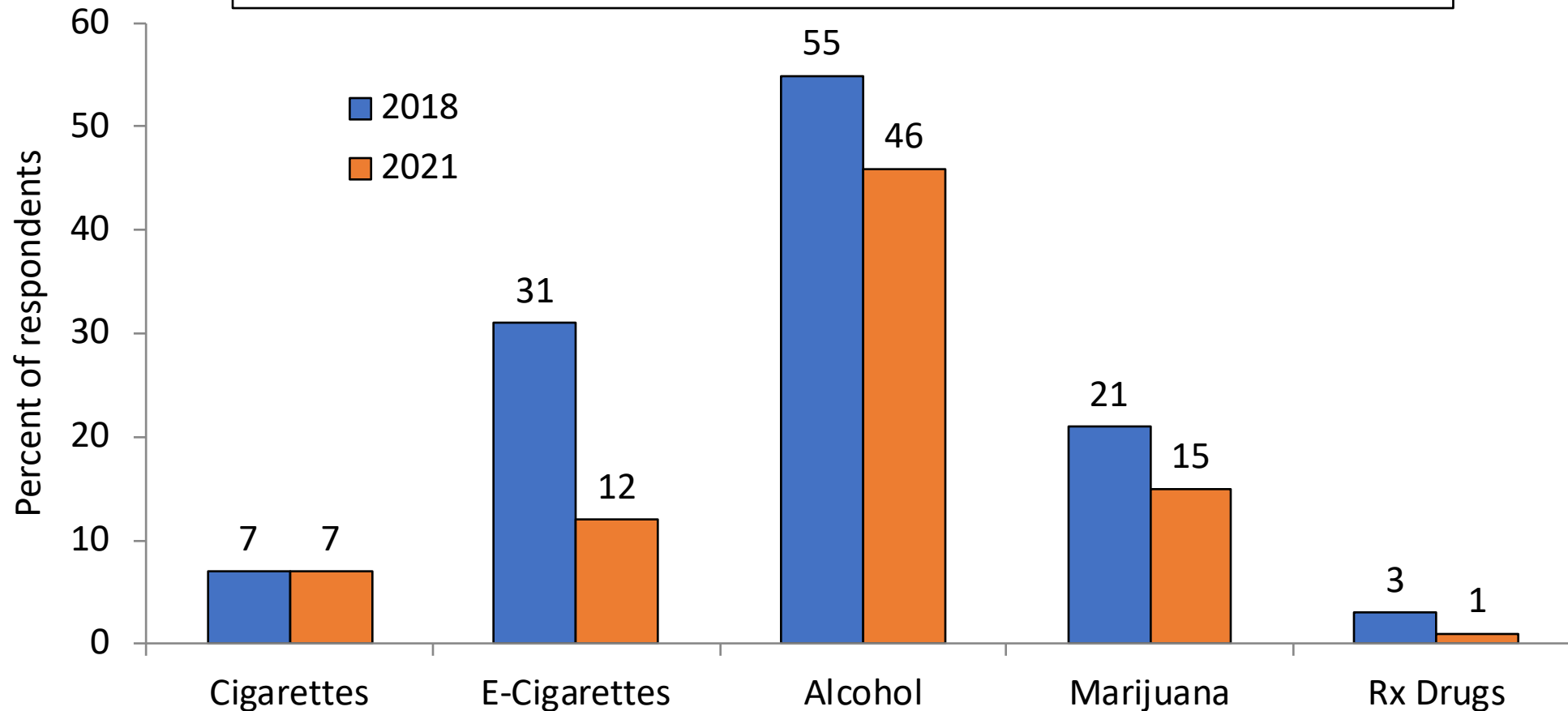
Youth Survey: Past-30-Day Use by Grade

Across all grades, *alcohol* was the most frequently reported substance used in the past 30 days



Trends in Past-30-Day Substance Use for 12th Graders 2018 vs. 2021

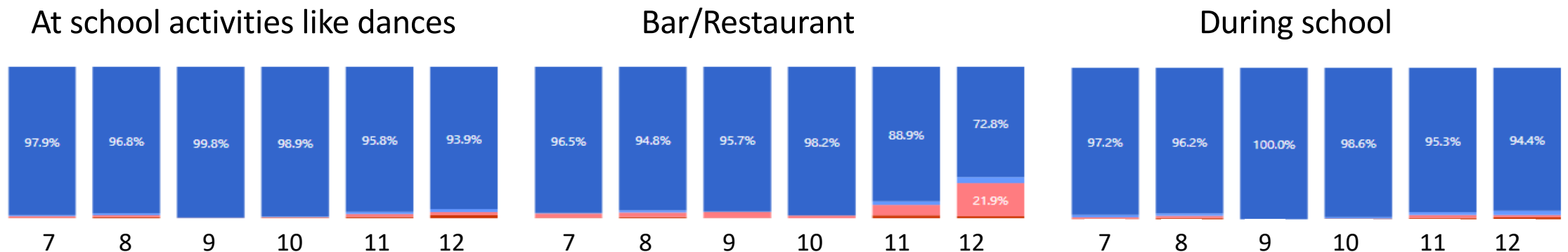
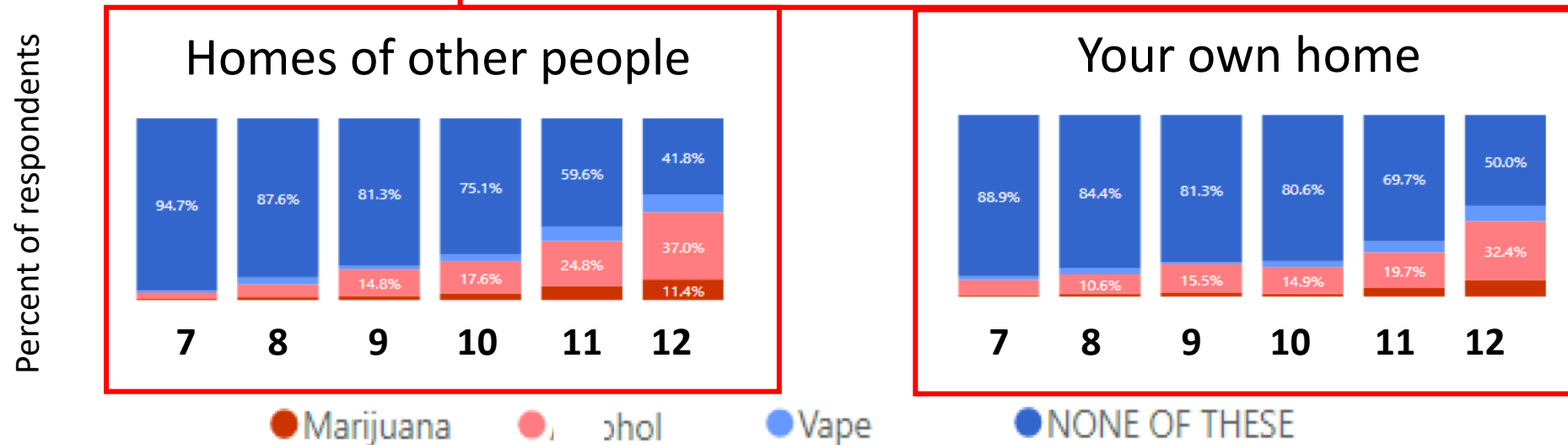
Past-30-day use has decreased for almost all substances.
An effect of COVID?



Where Youth are Using Substances

YOUTH QUESTION: “In the past 30 days, did you drink alcoholic beverages/vape/use marijuana at any of these places?”

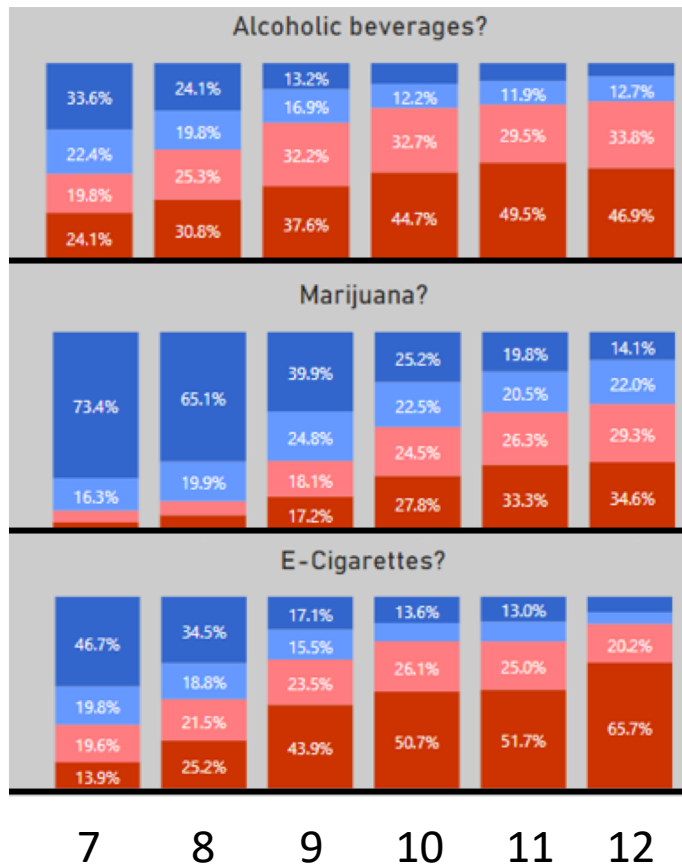
Most substance use is happening in peoples' homes



Trends in Ease of Access, 2018 vs 2021

YOUTH QUESTION: "If you wanted to, how easy would it be to get..."

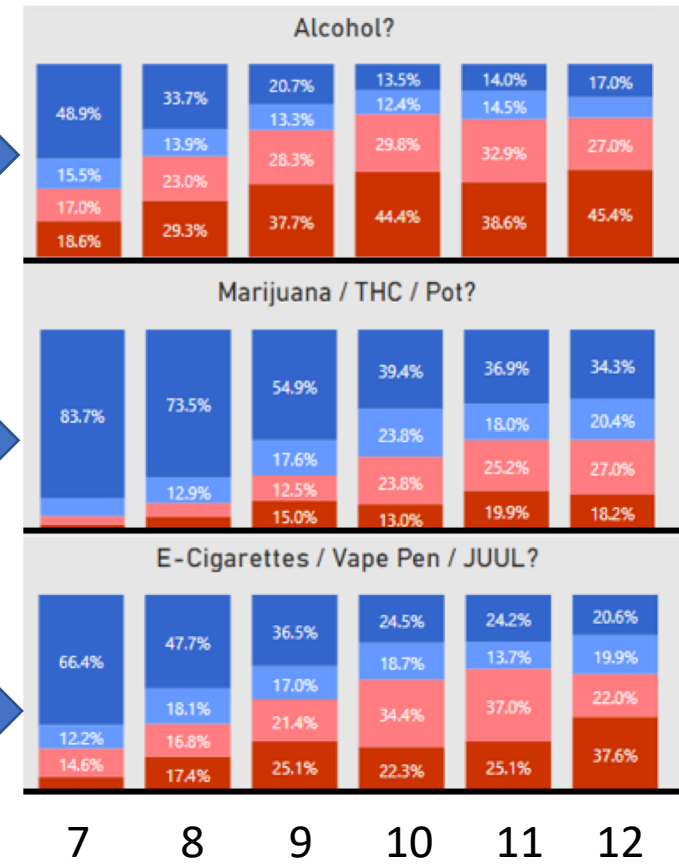
2018



Alcohol remains fairly easy to access for many youth

Trends for ease of access to marijuana and e-cigarettes are decreasing but access is still fairly easy for many youth

2021



● Very Difficult
● Somewhat Difficult
● Somewhat Easy
● Very Easy

Grade

Factors Associated With Past-30-Day Use

- To identify potential risk/protective factors and perceptions associated with alcohol use, responses on relevant survey questions were compared between respondents who reported past-30-day alcohol use (Drinkers) and those who did not (Non-Drinkers)
- The following table shows those factors that were **most significantly*** different between these 2 groups **across all grades**
 - Analyses across grades included associations with past-30-day use, any alcohol use (none, light-moderate, heavy, poly-substance use)



Comparison of Drinkers vs Non-Drinkers

- Predictors of substance use comparing drinkers with non-drinkers across all grades common to past-30-day use and any alcohol use

Drinker

- Less likely to have clear rules around alcohol and marijuana
- Less likely to have conversations about SU in last 3mos
- Less likely to avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy
- Less likely to resist bad influences



Non drinker

- **More likely to have a family that knows where they are and what they are doing**
- More likely to recognize family rules discouraging drinking
- More likely to have healthy habits and be sociable
- More likely to sense risk of drinking excessively/smoking marijuana
- More likely to feel that friends and family would disapprove



Substance Use

Comparisons With Parents' Perceptions

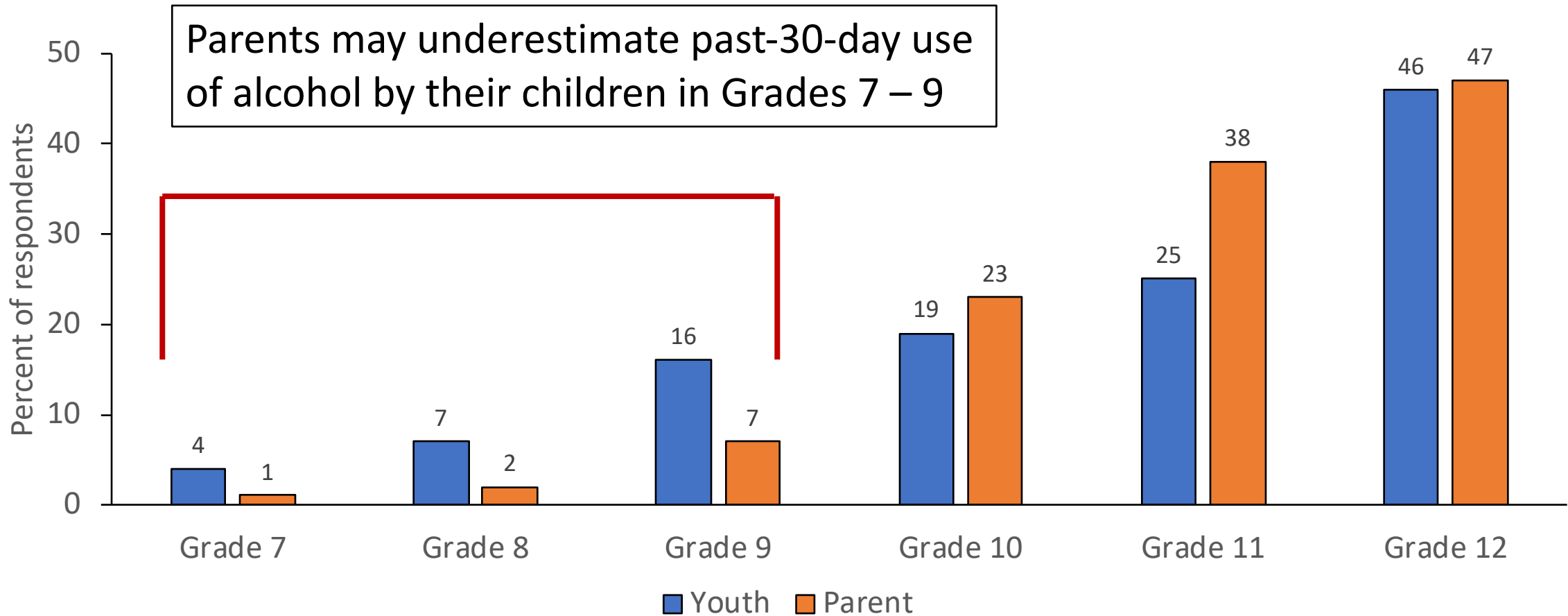
Any Past-30-Day-Use of Alcohol: Youth Reports vs Parents' Perceptions

YOUTH QUESTION: "Have you ever had one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage?"

RESPONSES: "Yes, 1-4 times in the past 30 days" or "Yes, 5 or more times in the past 30 days"

PARENT QUESTION: "In the past 30 days, how many days do you think your child has had an alcoholic beverage?"

RESPONSES: "1-5 days" or "More than 5 days"



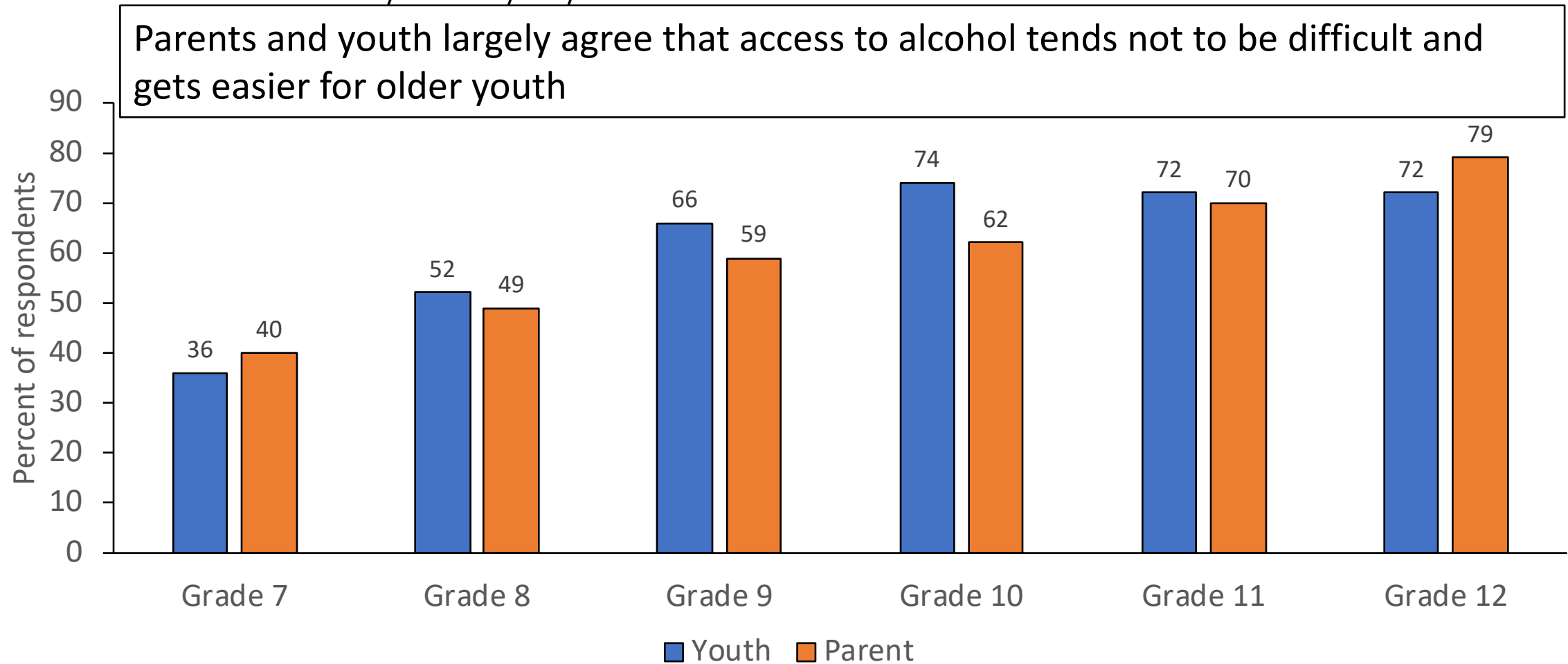
Ease of Access to Alcohol: Youth Reports vs Parents' Perceptions

YOUTH QUESTION: "If you wanted to, how EASY would it be to get alcohol?"

RESPONSES: "Somewhat easy" or "Very easy"

PARENT QUESTION: "If my child wanted to, how easy or difficult would it be for him/her to get alcoholic beverages?"

RESPONSES: "Somewhat easy" or "Very easy"



Family Rules Around Alcohol: Youth Reports vs Parents' Perceptions

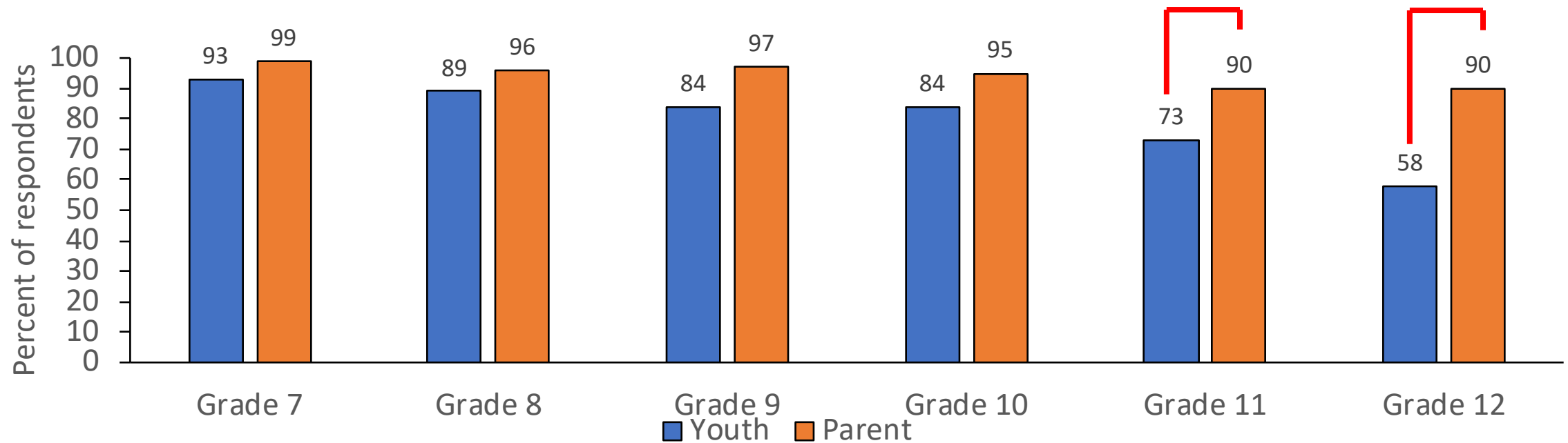
YOUTH QUESTION: "My family has clear rules for me discouraging drinking alcohol"

RESPONSES: "Mostly true" or "Definitely true"

PARENT QUESTION: "My family has clear rules that discourage my child from drinking alcohol"

RESPONSES: "Mostly true" or "Definitely true"

Parents may overestimate the clarity of family rules around alcohol, especially for youth in higher grades
Almost half of youth respondents reported not having a recent family conversation about substance use



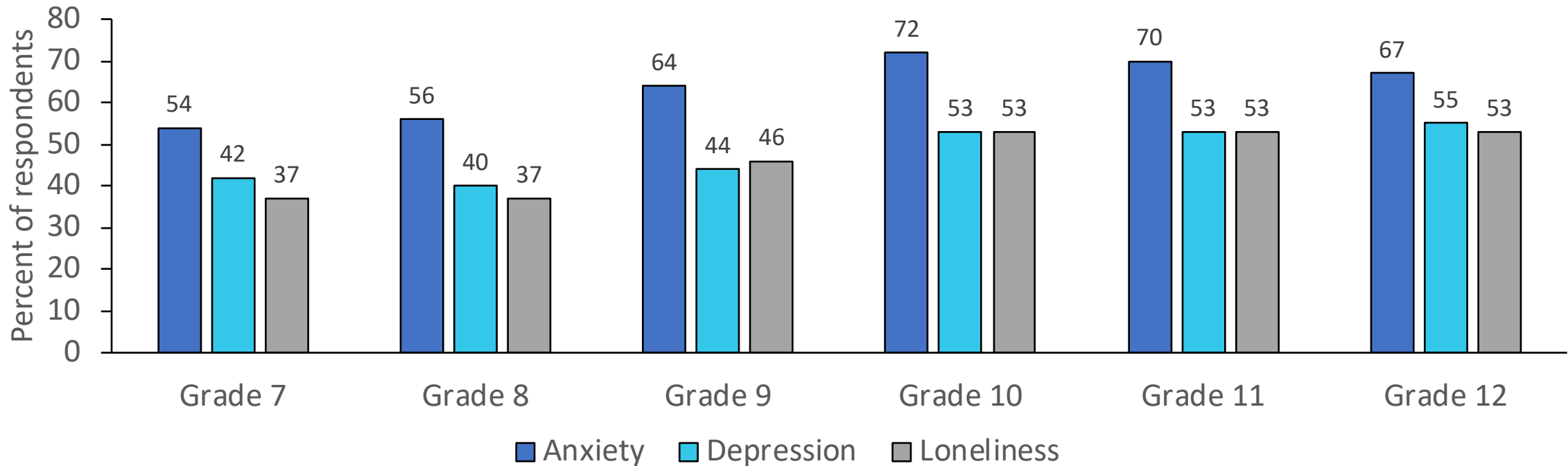
Mental Health

Prevalence, Sources of Stress, Predictors, and Developmental Assets

Youth Survey: Anxiety, Depression, and Loneliness

YOUTH QUESTION: “In the past 30 days, I have...” (1) “Felt anxious”; (2) “Felt quite sad or depressed”; (3) “Felt lonely”
RESPONSES: “Sometimes” or “Frequently”

More than one half of youth in all grades reported feeling anxious and/or sad/depressed and/or lonely in the past 30 days
Mental/emotional health issues were more frequently reported by older students than by younger students

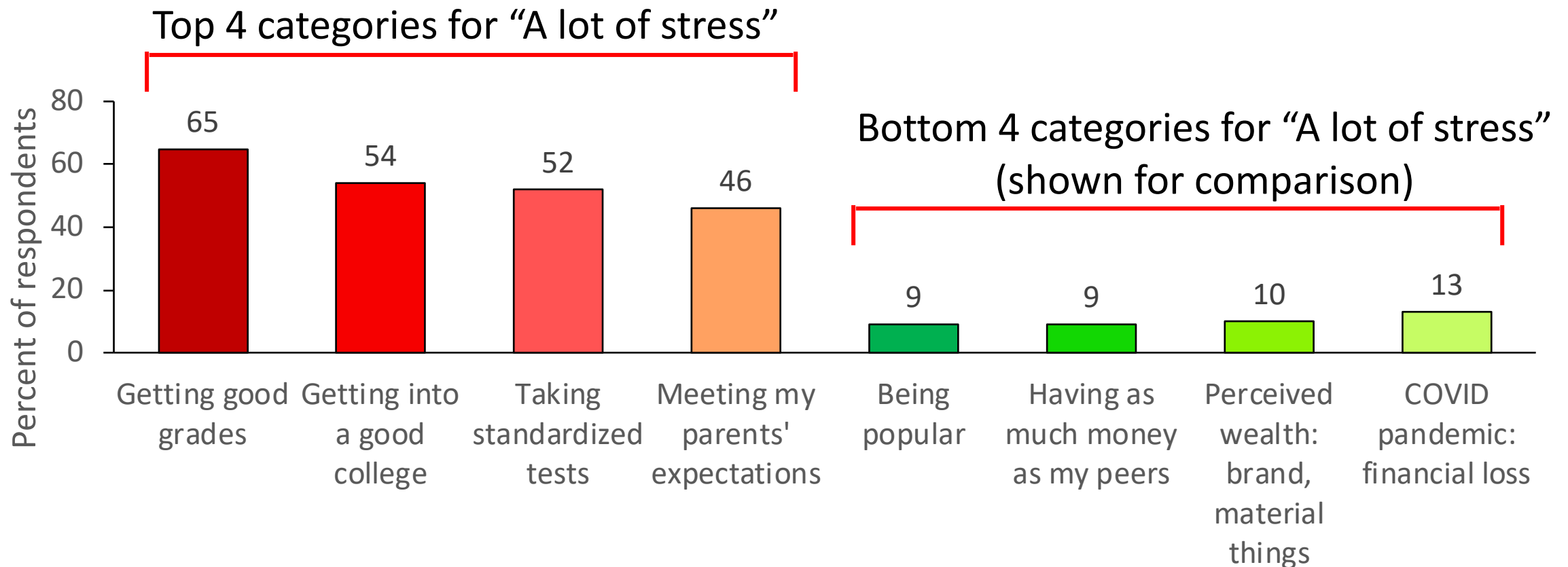


Most Frequently Reported Sources of “A Lot of Stress” by Youth

YOUTH QUESTION: “How much stress do you feel from...” [Responses shown in graph below]

RESPONSE: “A lot of stress”

Youth across all grades most frequently reported “A lot of stress” from measures of academic performance and from parental expectations

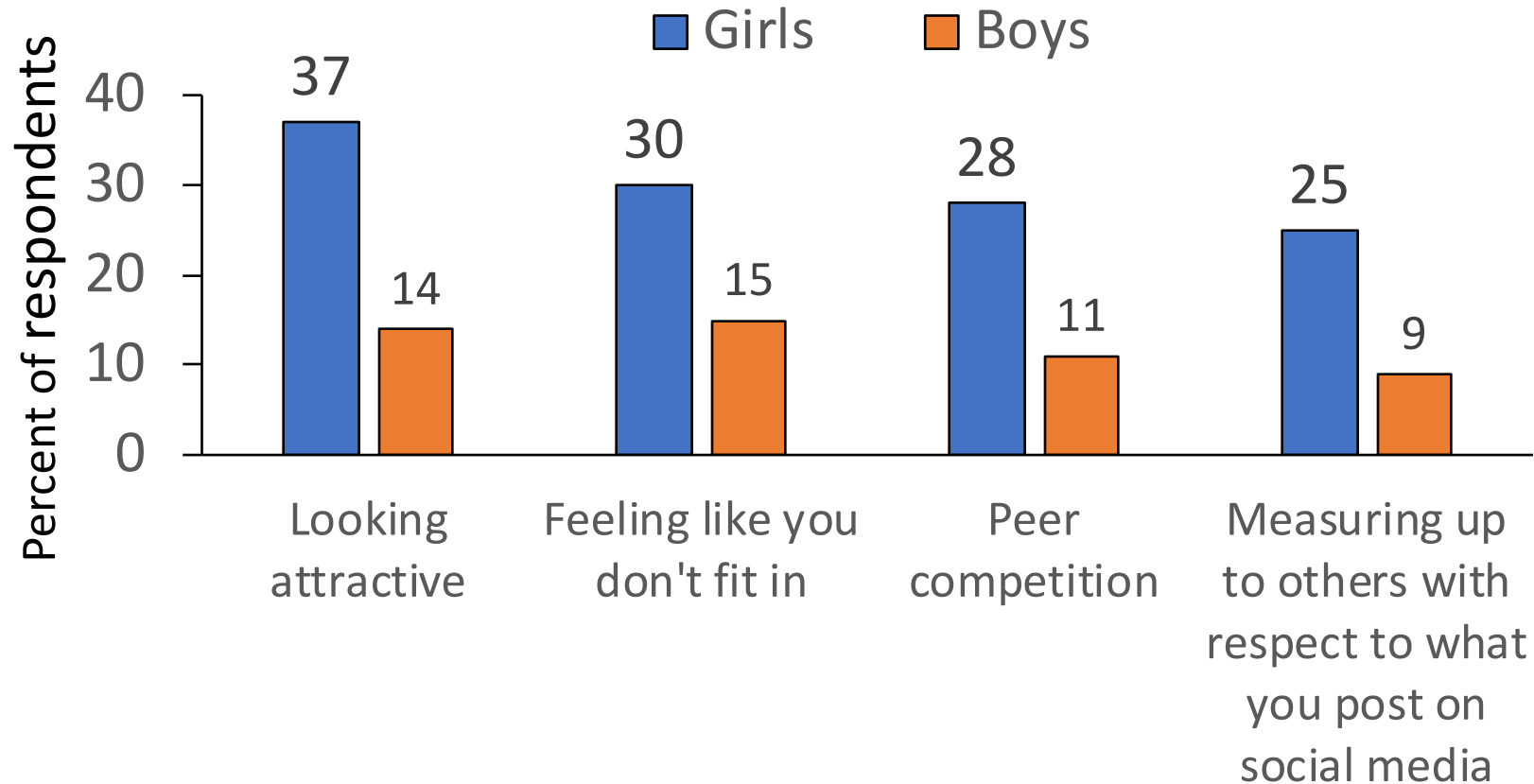


Sources of Stress that Differ by Gender

YOUTH QUESTION: "How much stress do you feel from..." [Responses shown in graph below]

RESPONSE: "A lot of stress"

Girls frequently reported greater levels of stress than boys for many sources of pressure (examples shown in graph)



Boys who reported mental health issues were more likely to report "a lot of stress" from academics

Developmental Assets

➤ Developmental assets associated positively with mental health:

1. **“I feel good about myself”**
2. **“I feel valued and appreciated by others”**
3. “I avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy”
4. “I am developing a sense of purpose in life”
5. “I am spending quality time at home with my parents”



Sources of Stress from Standardized Tests: Youth Reports vs Parents' Perceptions

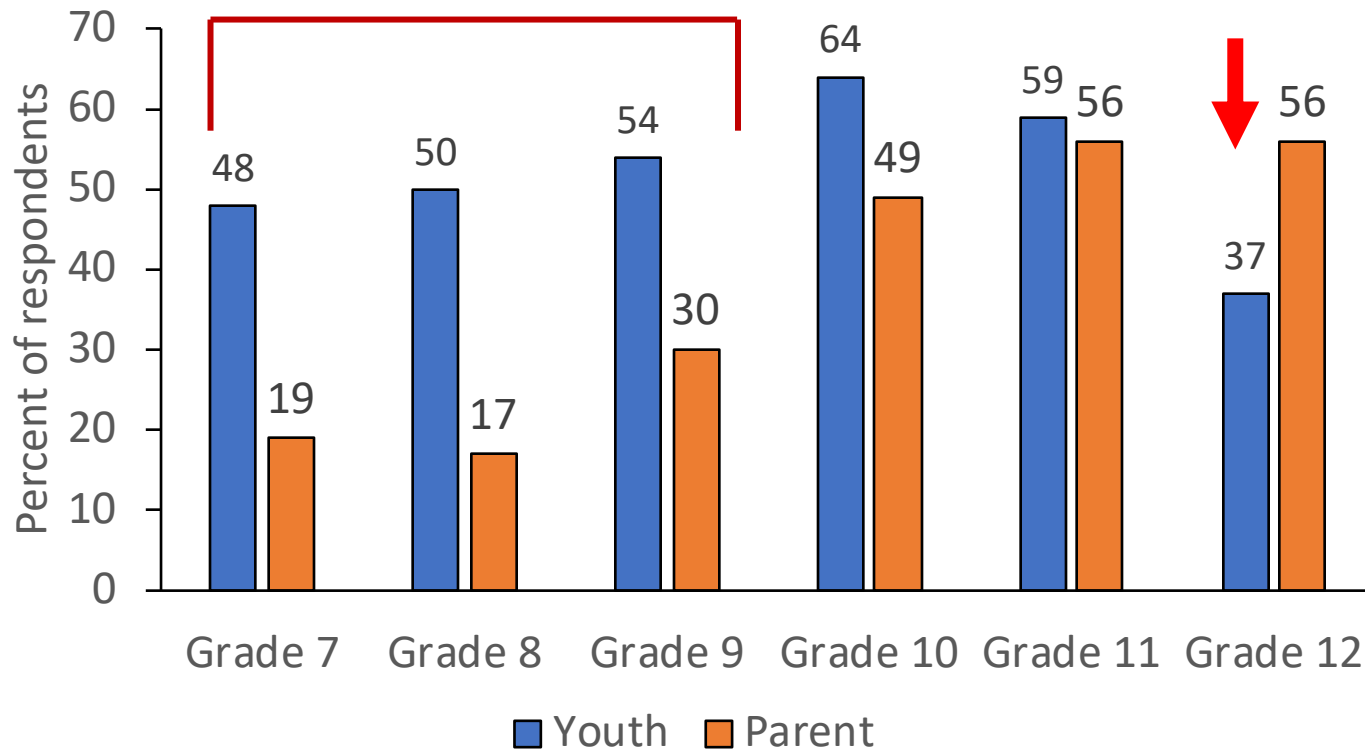
YOUTH QUESTION: "How much stress do you feel from: Taking standardized tests (SAT, ACT, etc)?"

RESPONSES: "A lot of stress"

PARENT QUESTION: "What do you think are the biggest sources of stress for your kids? Taking standardized tests (SAT, ACT, AP, etc)"

RESPONSES: "Big stress"

Youth and parents appear to largely agree that anxiety and depression are prevalent in youth across all grades



However, parents may underestimate stress from academics in their children in earlier grades and overestimate it in Grade 12

This graph shows results for "Taking standardized tests"; similar results were observed for "Getting good grades" and "Getting into a good college"



Key Takeaways: Substance Use (1)

- Alcohol is the most frequently used substance reported by youth
 - Use of alcohol, marijuana, and vaping products increased with increasing grade level
- Parents may underestimate alcohol use by their child in Grades 7-9 but overestimate use by other children
 - Parents may overestimate the clarity of family rules around alcohol with their children in higher grades

Key Take-Aways: Substance Use (2)

- Predictors of substance use comparing drinkers with non-drinkers across all grades:

Drinker

- Less likely to have *clear* rules around alcohol and marijuana
- Less likely to have conversations about SU in last 3mos
- Less likely to avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy
- Less likely to resist bad influences



Non drinker

- **More likely to have a family that knows where they are and what they are doing**
- More likely to recognize family rules
- More likely to have healthy habits and be sociable
- More likely to sense risks of drinking /smoking marijuana
- More likely to feel that friends and family would disapprove



Key Takeaways: Mental Health

- Youth across all grades reported feeling anxious and/or depressed in past 30 days
- Mental/emotional health issues were more frequently reported by older students than by younger students
 - Most reported a lot of stress around measures of academic performance and parental expectations
- Mental/emotional health issues were more frequently reported by girls than by boys
- A substantial proportion of parents also report anxiety and/or depression in their children across all grades
 - Parents may underestimate academic pressures felt by their children in earlier grades and overestimate them for their children in Grade 12
- Developmental assets are associated with positive mental health

Thank you!

If you would like a presentation to your group or would like to learn more about Greenwich Together please contact:

Ellen Brezovsky, Greenwich Together Prevention Coordinator

Email: ebrezovsky@kidsincrisis.org



<https://www.greenwichtogether.org/>