

TOWN COUNCIL
Town of Trumbull
CONNECTICUT
www.trumbull-ct.gov

TOWN HALL
Trumbull

TELEPHONE
(203) 452-5000



EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MARCH 28, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL: The clerk called the roll call and recorded it as follows:

PRESENT: Thomas Whitmoyer, Chairman, Dawn Cantafio, Vice Chairman, Bill Mecca, Mary Isaac, Lissette Colón, Olga Leiva

ABSENT: Jason Marsh, Alternate, Donna Seidell, Alternate

ALSO

PRESENT: Chief Administrative Officer Cynthia Katske, Town Council members Joy Colon and Kelly Mallozzi

DISCUSSION ITEM: TPAUD, Trumbull's Prevention Partnership Student Survey Results – Melissa McGarry, TPAUD Project Director

Ms. McGarry presented the attached TPAUD Trumbull's Prevention Partnership Student Survey Results, (Presentation Attached)

Points of discussion are as follows:

- Councilman Leiva noted she has been an educator for 54 years and this is a great endeavor, this is the first time hearing of this and really values and appreciates what is being done.
- Ms. McGarry explained there were not questions directly related to fentanyl but there are about opioids. The numbers are small for the high school, but historically have seen opioid use is a progression of substance use. For some young people, they start with alcohol, marijuana, then start dabbling with prescription drugs, and maybe they're more likely to start with getting Xanax from their mom's medicine cabinet. After high school,

it could lead to opioid use and now we're finding fentanyl in just about every substance. Connecticut's the first state to document fentanyl in marijuana. They don't think it is intentional, they think it's cross contamination in marijuana, it's being packaged in the same place where illicit fentanyl is.

- We don't have a heroin problem anymore, the DA isn't finding blocks of heroin anymore, and they're finding 1000s and 1000s of pills. The risk is that a student thinks they're taking a benzodiazepine, they think they're taking an ADD drug or a steroid, and they can get something laced with fentanyl. We're in the third wave of the opioid crisis with that. We're all having to adapt our education.
- One of the campaigns they got acknowledgment for nationally is a statewide website called www.youthinkyouknowct.org which originated from discussions at TPAUD. There was a family in trouble who tragically lost their son during COVID shutdown, he thought he was taking a Xanax, he took a quarter of it to help sleep and he died. That family reached out and said, people don't know what they can do. So the new website was developed and now other states want to know how to use our website. You'll see more promotion with resources for families, they wanted it to be comprehensive.
- They are promoting Narcan. All the school nurses were trained two weeks ago, to use Narcan. And all have kits in all of the health office, nurses offices, in every school in the district, and every nurse got a kit to carry on them throughout their day. There's been a bit of controversy about harm reduction, helping drug users minimize their risk of overdosing and dying, such as fentanyl strips that measure whether there's fentanyl in the drugs and clean pipes and needle exchanges. That is harm reduction and is different than what TPAUD does. They can't get help if they've died of a fatal overdose. They are dipping their toes into it. They provide Narcan kits for free with our grant.
- Councilman Mecca spoke in favor of how this has evolved and TPAUD has made a significant difference since they it started in 2007.
- Ms. McGarry stated a conversation will have to take place as to what will happen when their grant funding ends. They are approaching the max at ten years. They can't just turn off the lights and leave. The question is sustainability. The Town Council and BOE will have to decide if this is something to continue.
- The Chair asked what the BOE's action plan may be. He knows students and staff are suffering, there needs to be an action plan and to collaborate together. To have all this data and not act on it is speechless and needs to be followed up on how this fits in with social and emotional learning and where to go for help. There's nothing wrong with offering people help, it's called being kind when they're in need. That's a very important point to follow up on and ask some questions of the board. The prevention needs to continue.
- Ms. McGarry explained they work with youth advisors, and recently they used yellow flyers all over the high school that said if you or a friend are in crisis here's what to do. There was quite a buzz and many good suggestions came of it. It didn't cost a lot of money but it had a big impact. They even had four more youth advisors volunteer as a result.
- Ms. Hayes-O'Brien a TPAUD volunteer explained early members focused on alcohol, what the next drug was, and then vaping came out of nowhere. This is the first time in a long time that they had to focus on mental health, and talking about breaking the stigma. The Board of Ed and all are wading through this and trying to figure it out. The Board of

Ed sees this and recognizes these issues. For those that have been doing this since day one, it feels different, it looks different. A lot of the things talked about will be developing, it's actually exciting to kind of be on the forefront of it and to finally have kids involved because they're the ones who are really speaking and telling us things that we never really even knew about and now are talking about what they're feeling and thinking. The board, and the school system is starting to open up and focus groups are going to be eye opening for all. As far as real action plans there are some they know will make a difference, but the question is how everyone is going to make a difference. As we have more of these conversations, and people are really knowing what's going on with our kids, she thinks those are going to be the changes that will happen. She is in awe of the work they have been able to do as a coalition. She hopes a lot of time will be spent as a town looking at how to sustain this unbelievable group she is so proud of.

- Ms. McGarry explained they just started getting this data out and has a meeting with the high school administration on Monday. Part of the conversation will be how are we getting this to the staff, how are they getting this to the students, and what the next steps to support the work and what they want to do? They will talk to kids about how to take pieces of the data and put it on social media and put it into their homeroom or into the morning announcements or making videos. They have a partnership with Trumbull Community Television. They have planning team time and actually being able to present the data because she also wants the students to be able to ask questions, make suggestions, and tell us what they want. That's their plan at the moment.
- They presented to the BOE on March 8th and are presenting to the schools now. They will prompt the BOE and administration that each school needs their own plan, every building is different. TPAUD can support them and sometimes it is just reminding them they are there and have money to help. They will need the support of the BOE. There is urgency but there needs to be long term planning as well.
- Chairman Gaudiano extended her gratitude to them for all of their hard work.
- Councilman Cantafio extended her gratitude to them for their work and wanted to let people know they involve many people in the community, the police department, their Forum Night was taken by many communities and used it as a template.
- Inclusion week has two assemblies this week, over the last two years because of COVID they had to be creative and find different resources such as videos, because they could not assemble the students in large groups. Many other tools have been used.
- The "Truth About Hate" program no longer exists, there is a new program called "Names". There is a new program for the 9th and 10th graders. The theme of the week is that every student should feel comfortable and feel valued.
- The Chair noted we are in a constant state of change and people in town need to understand school is very different than when they were in school. The schools have been asked and in some cases mandated to take on the ills of society in many different ways. He hopes they can act as a liaison between TPAUD and the BOE and Town to make their vision come true.

End of Presentation and discussion.

The Chair asked the committee members to consider what the TC Education Committee could do in any area. The committee would not meet monthly but should have a connection and communication between the Council and the BOE.

Councilman Leiva spoke in favor of the TPAUD program and the work they are doing. She would like to see it incorporated into the education system, this would help the community as a whole. She likes the program and will look into it further. This is so valuable

Councilman Mecca suggested spending time in flushing out the committee's role and to work proactively, there is value in raising questions along the way.

Councilman Isaac stated TPAUD's meetings are highly attended and have worked with the schools and are trying to bring the school system in.

The Chair noted the initiatives of TPAUD are going to affect the culture into buildings, if the culture is positive, the social emotional learning will be less of an issue. The Chair will try to get an appointment with the Superintendent, there may be a plan in place and we are not aware but it would be good to hear.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss the Education Committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastroni
Town Council Clerk



2021 Student Survey Results

Melissa McGarry,
TPAUD Project Director

TPAUD is a grant-funded community coalition whose mission is to prevent youth substance use, foster social and emotional health, and build a safe and healthy Trumbull.



The Trumbull Public Schools, as a unit of the Town of Trumbull, serves as TPAUD's fiduciary agent.

Melissa McGarry, TPAUD Project Director, and Kiersten Naumann, TPAUD Program Coordinator, are TPS employees.

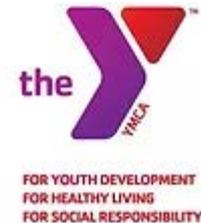
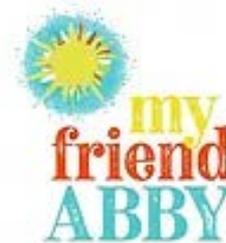
Our Members



Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center
Building Healthy Families & Communities



CONFIDANT HEALTH



TPAUD has secured > \$1.8 million in prevention funding for TPS since 2006.

Drug Free Communities (DFC) Support Program grant from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) - \$125,000 per year until 9/29/2024.

Priority: alcohol, marijuana, and Rx drugs

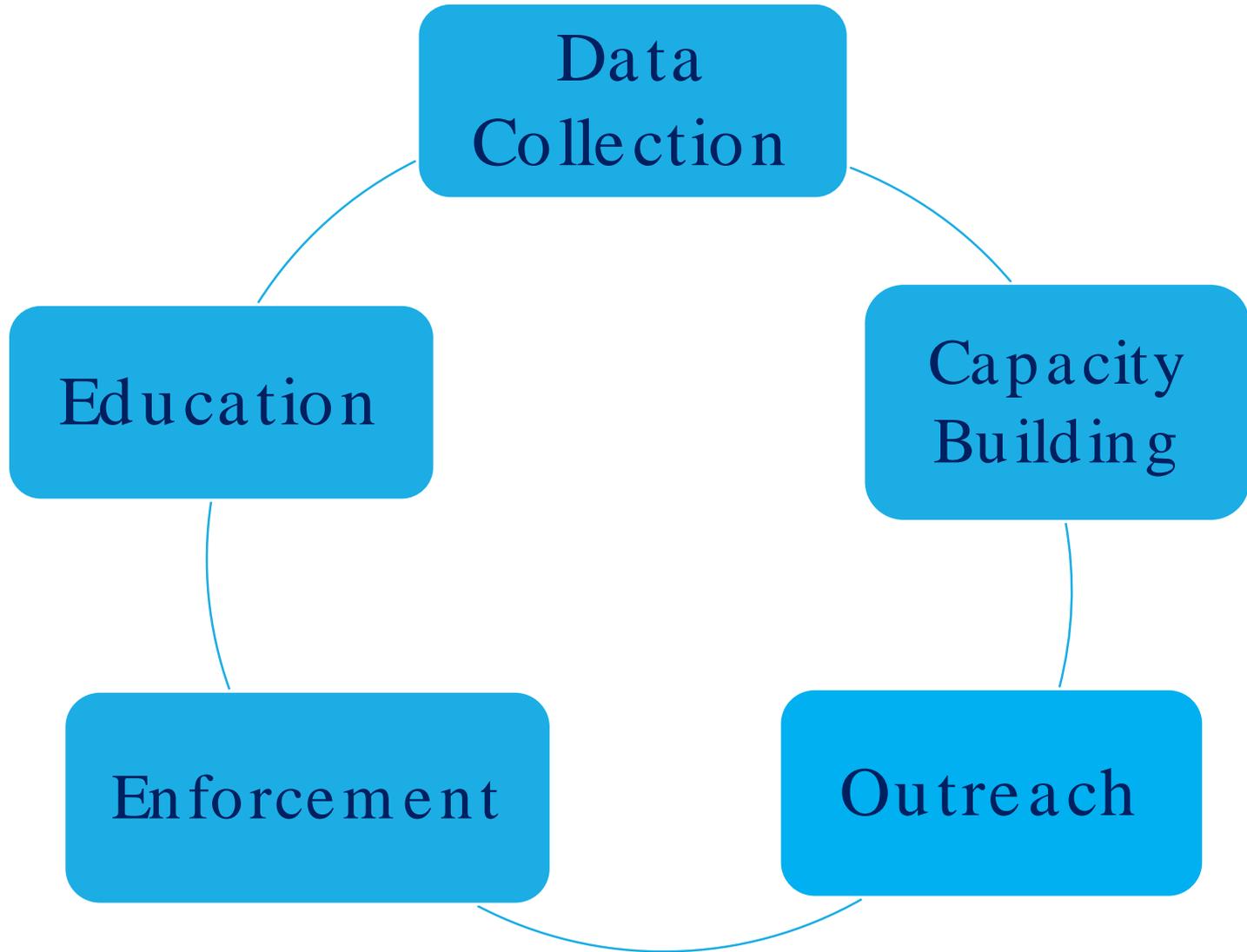
Local Prevention Council funding from CT Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) - \$9,662.90 for 2021-22.

Priority: vaping, mental health

State Targeted Response (STR) Opioid Prevention Grant from CT DMHAS - \$5,000 through September, 2022.

Priority: opioids

Our Work



Accomplishments

- Engaged coalition with **growing membership**
- Strong **partnerships** within Trumbull, the region, and statewide.
- Recent **national recognition** of TPAUD's collaborations with other CT prevention partners to develop two prevention campaigns around alcohol sales and the risks of counterfeit medications.
- Since 2007, TPAUD has collected **extensive student survey data** that informs our prevention activities and provides us with opportunities to apply for competitive grants.



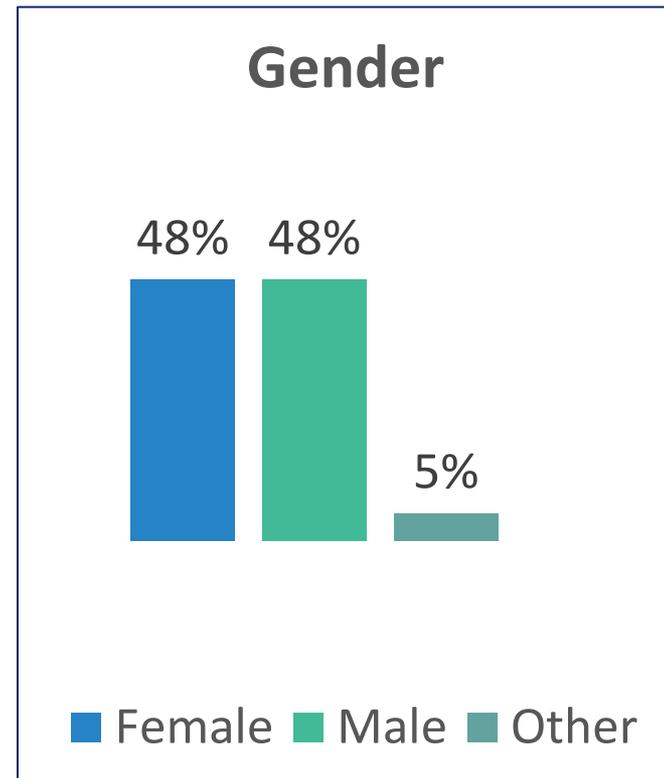
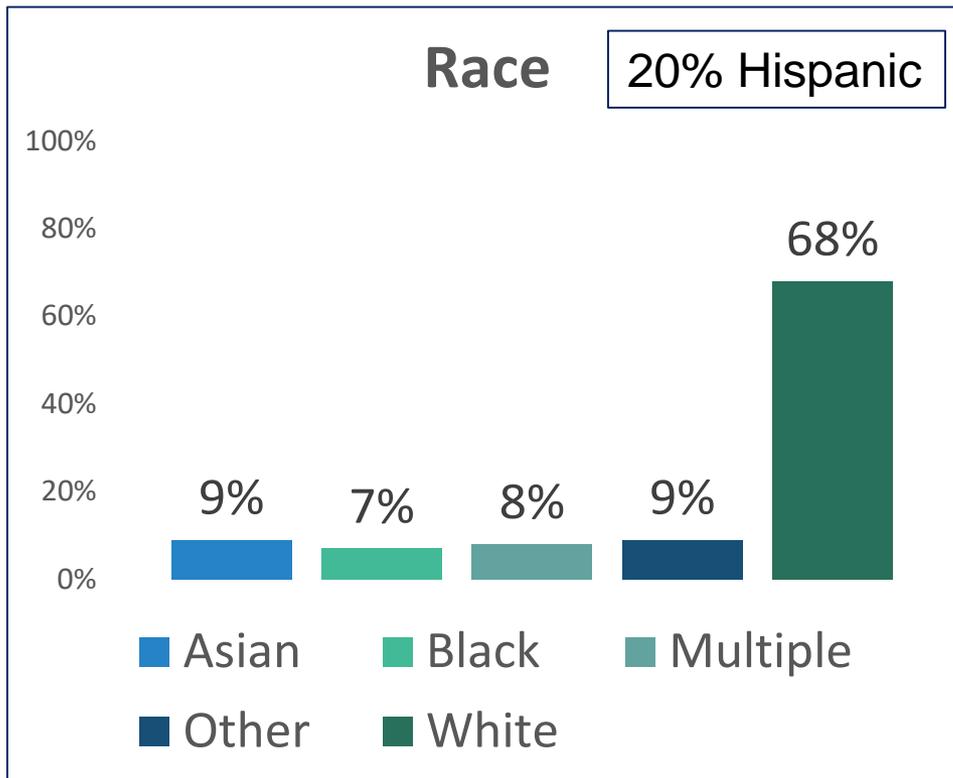
2021 Student Survey Results



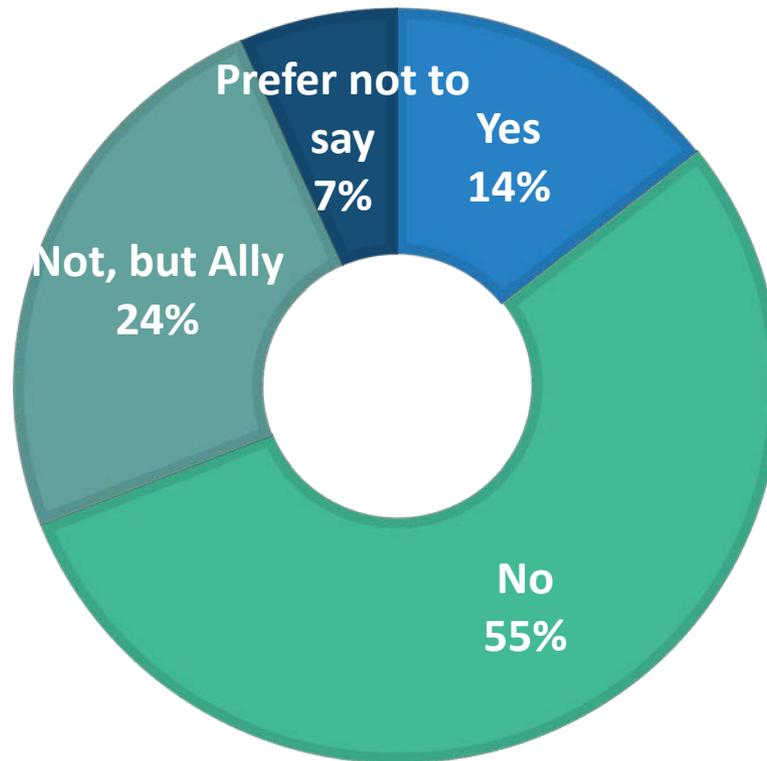
Demographics

TPAUD administered surveys to all students in grades 7-12 in November and December, 2021.

837 MS students and 1,944 THS students completed the survey.

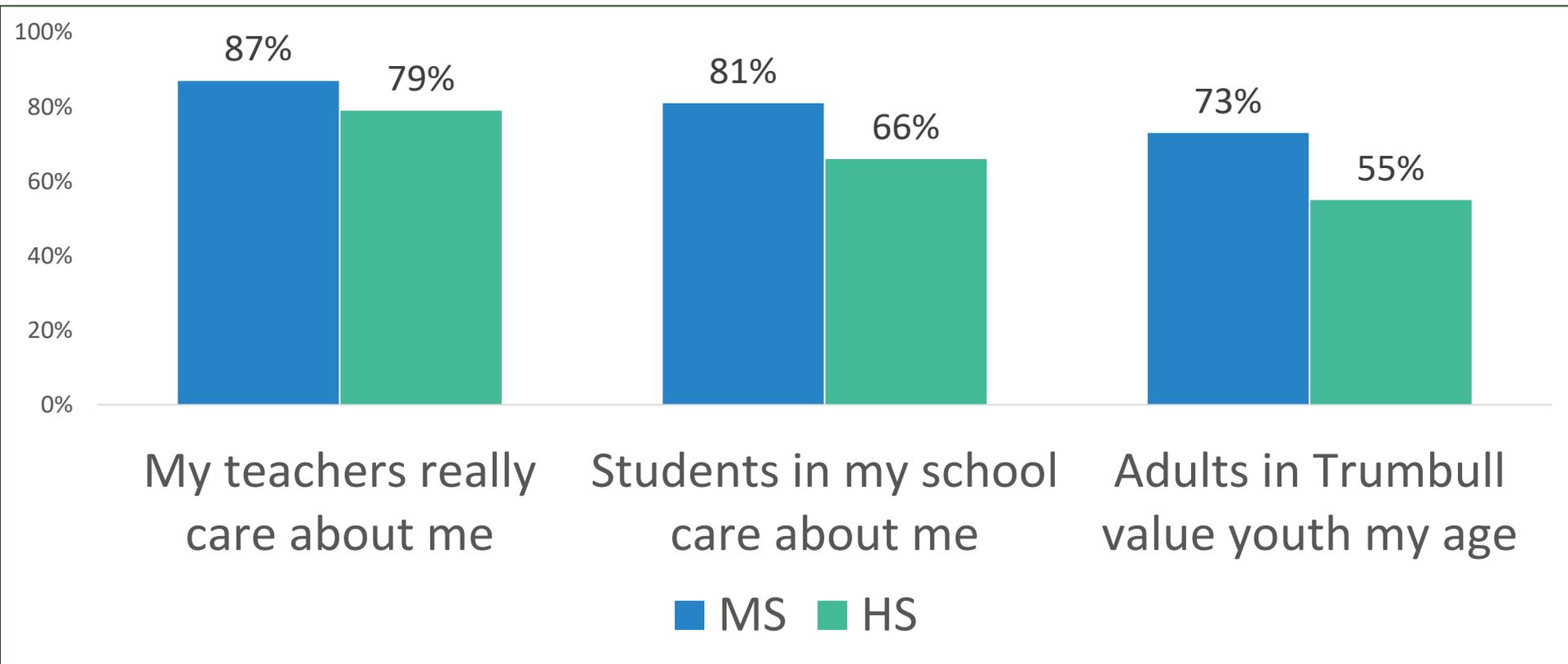


Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBT community?

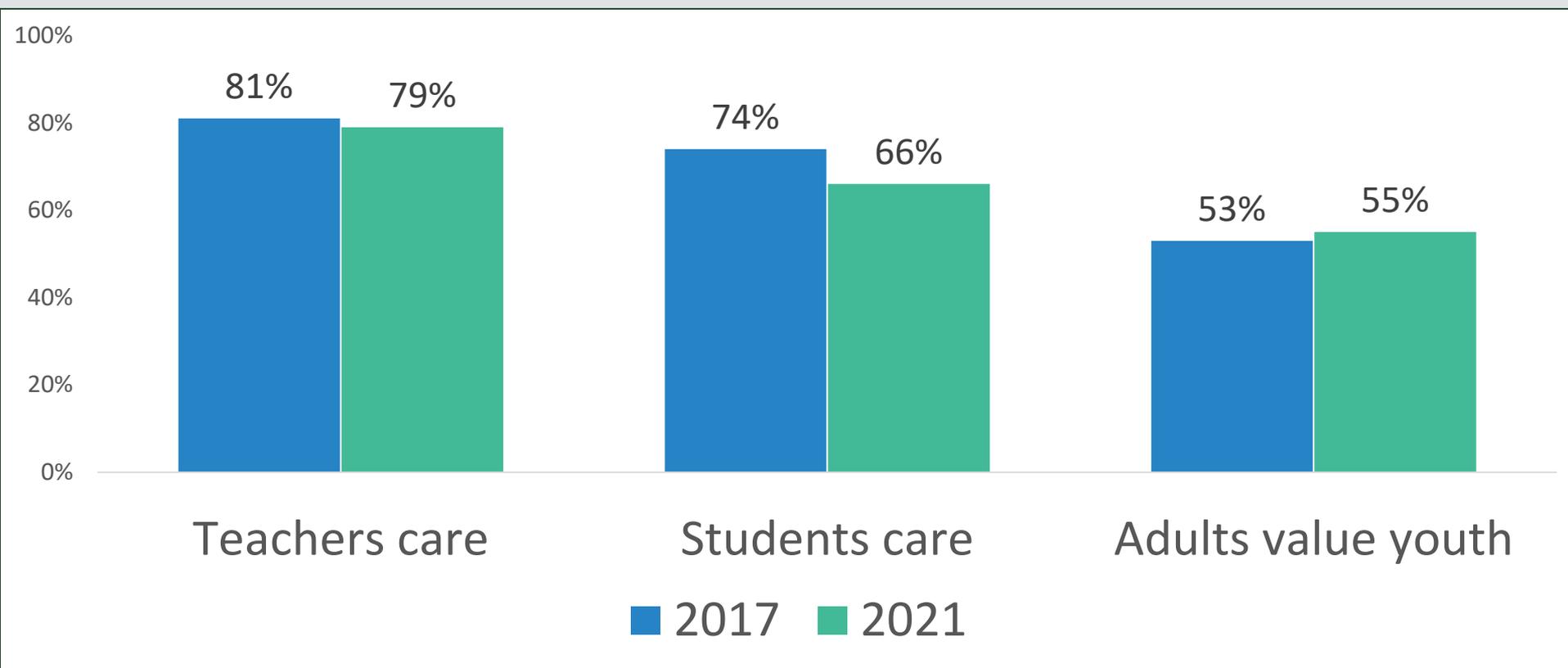




2021 reports on school climate and feeling valued by adults.



High school youth reports from 2017 to 2021 on school climate and feeling valued by adults.



A closer look at climate:

Youth who reported lower rates of 'Teachers really care about me' identified:

- Gender as Other
- Ethnicity as Hispanic
- Race as Multiple and Other
- as LGBT
- as Sad or Hopeless in the past year

Youth who reported lower rates of 'Students in my school care about me' identified:

- Gender as Other
- Ethnicity as Hispanic
- Race as Black and Multiple
- as LGBT
- as Sad or Hopeless in the past year
- 12th graders reported lowest rates compared to other grades

A closer look at climate:

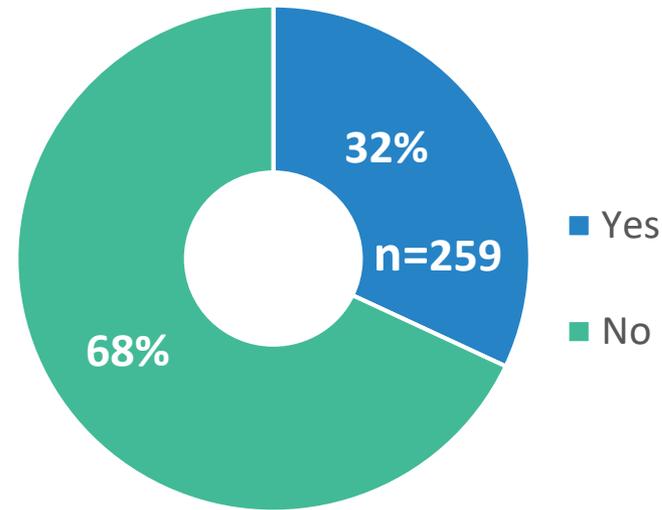
Youth who reported lower rates of 'Adults in Trumbull value youth my age' identified:

- Gender as Other
- Older students
- as LGBT
- as Sad or Hopeless in the past year

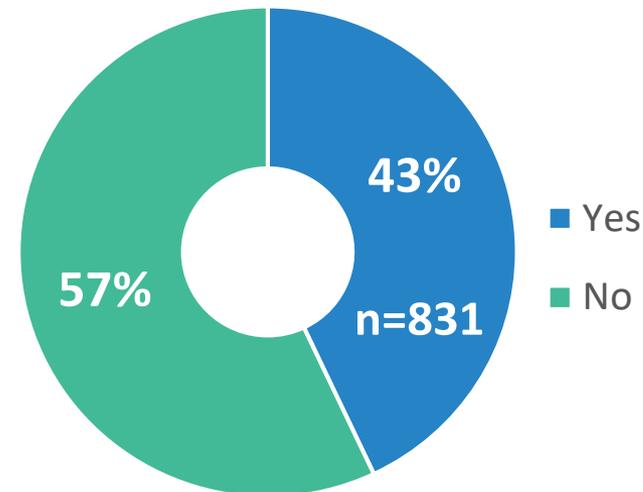
During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?

MS, n=837; HS, n=1944

Middle school youth



High school youth

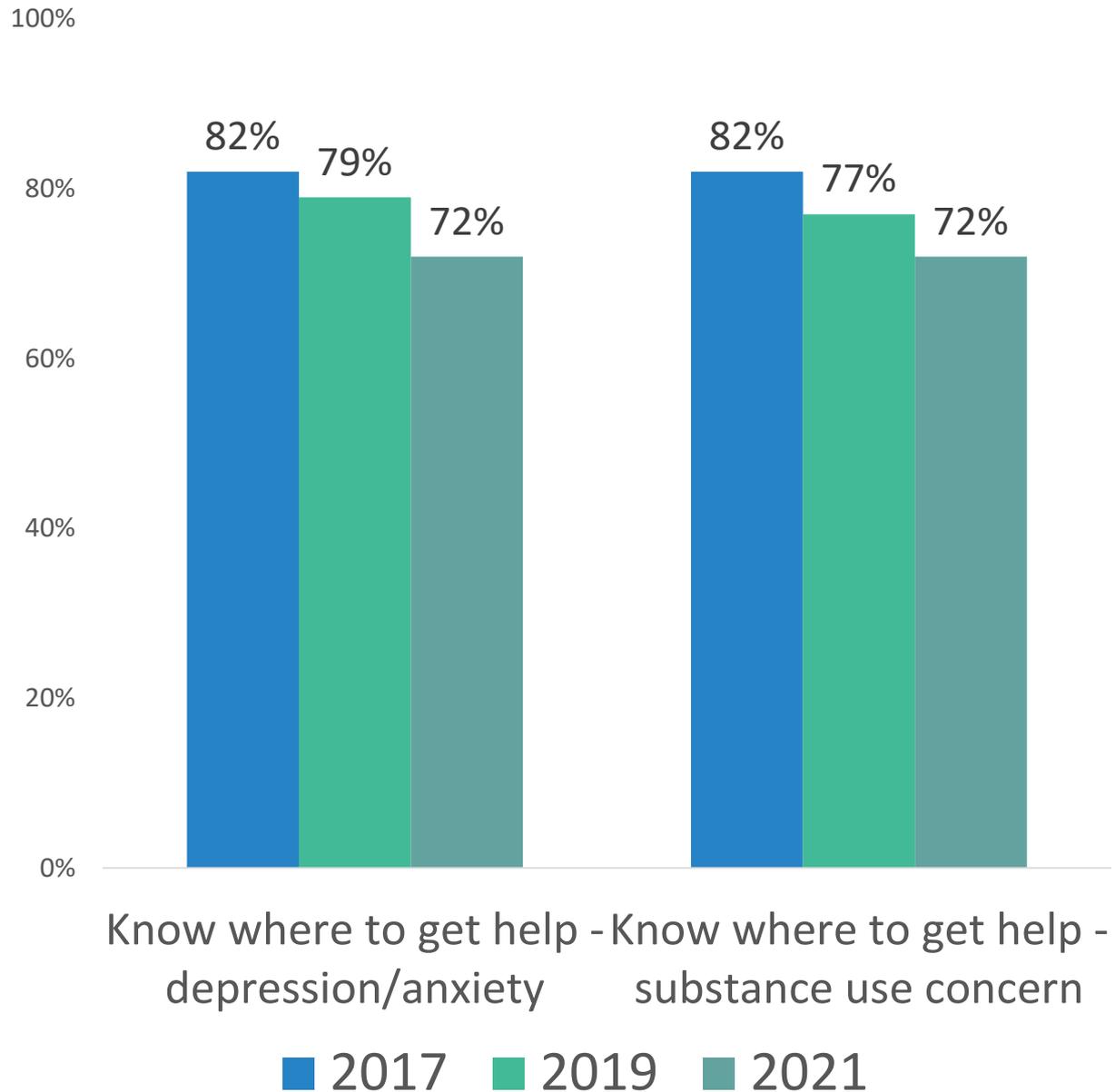




28% of high school youth do not know where to get help if they are concerned about depression/anxiety or substance use.

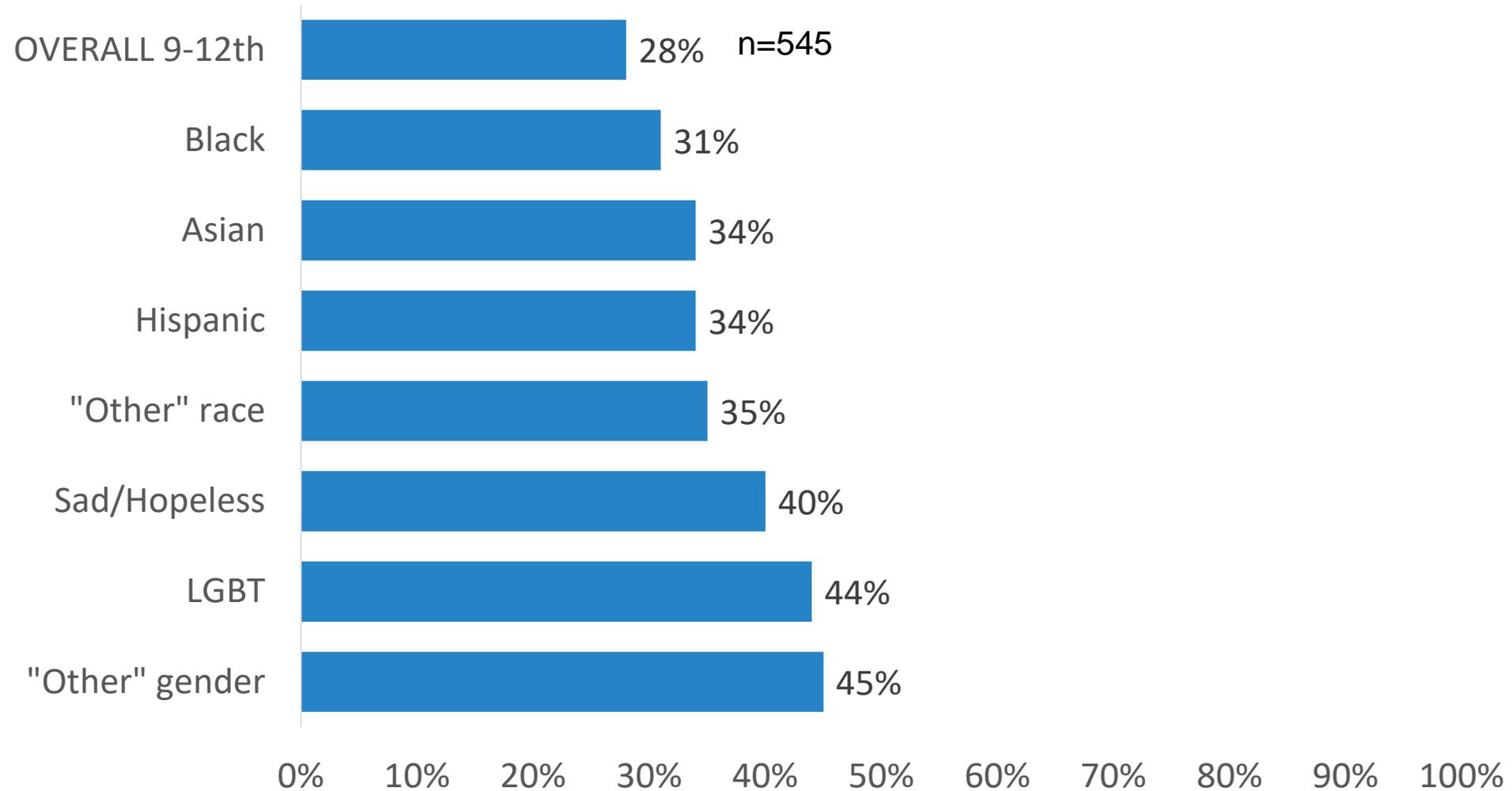
Since 2017 rates have steadily decreased.

HS, n=1944





Groups reporting lower rates of NOT KNOWING where to go to get help if they had a concern about depression or anxiety

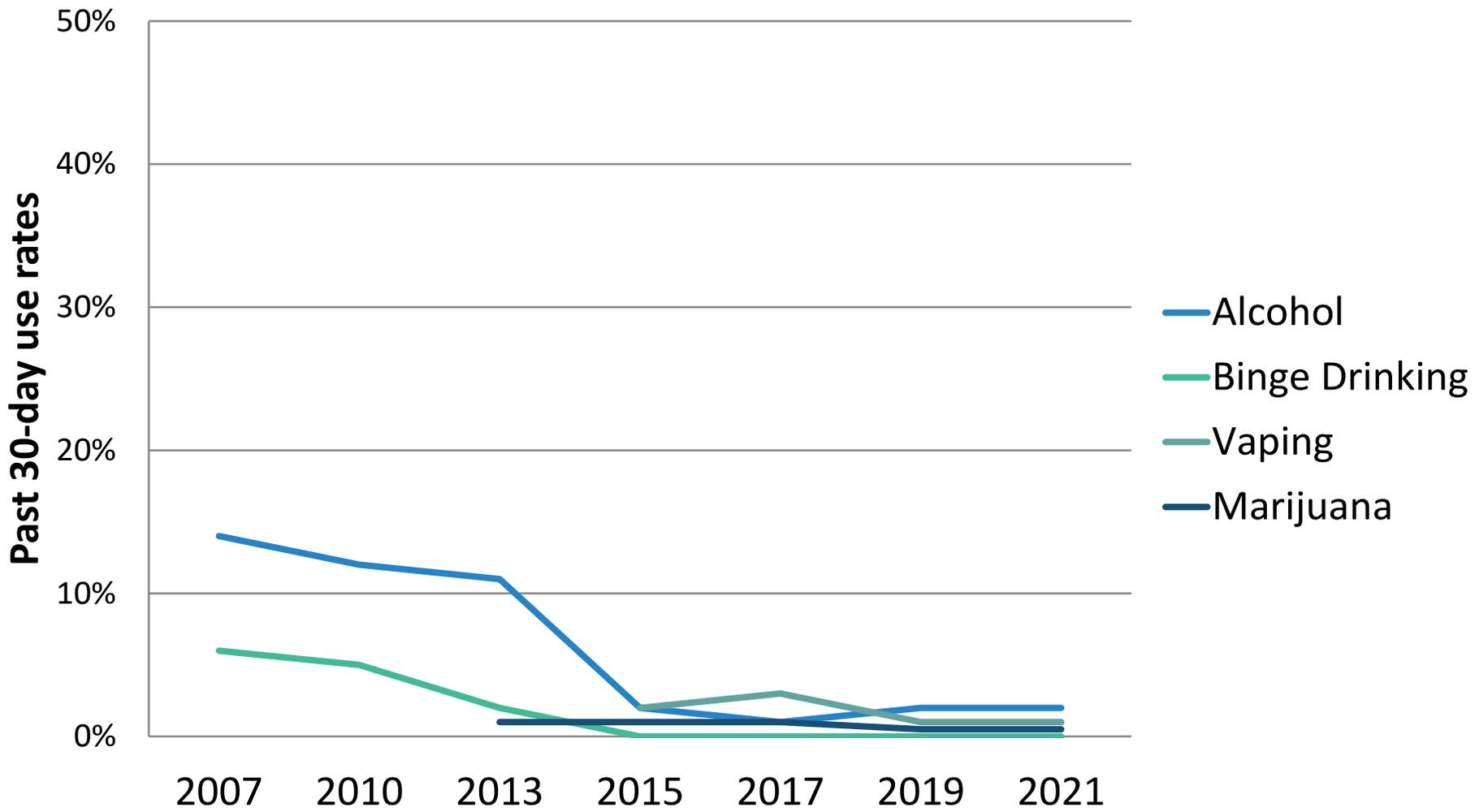




Reducing Substance Use

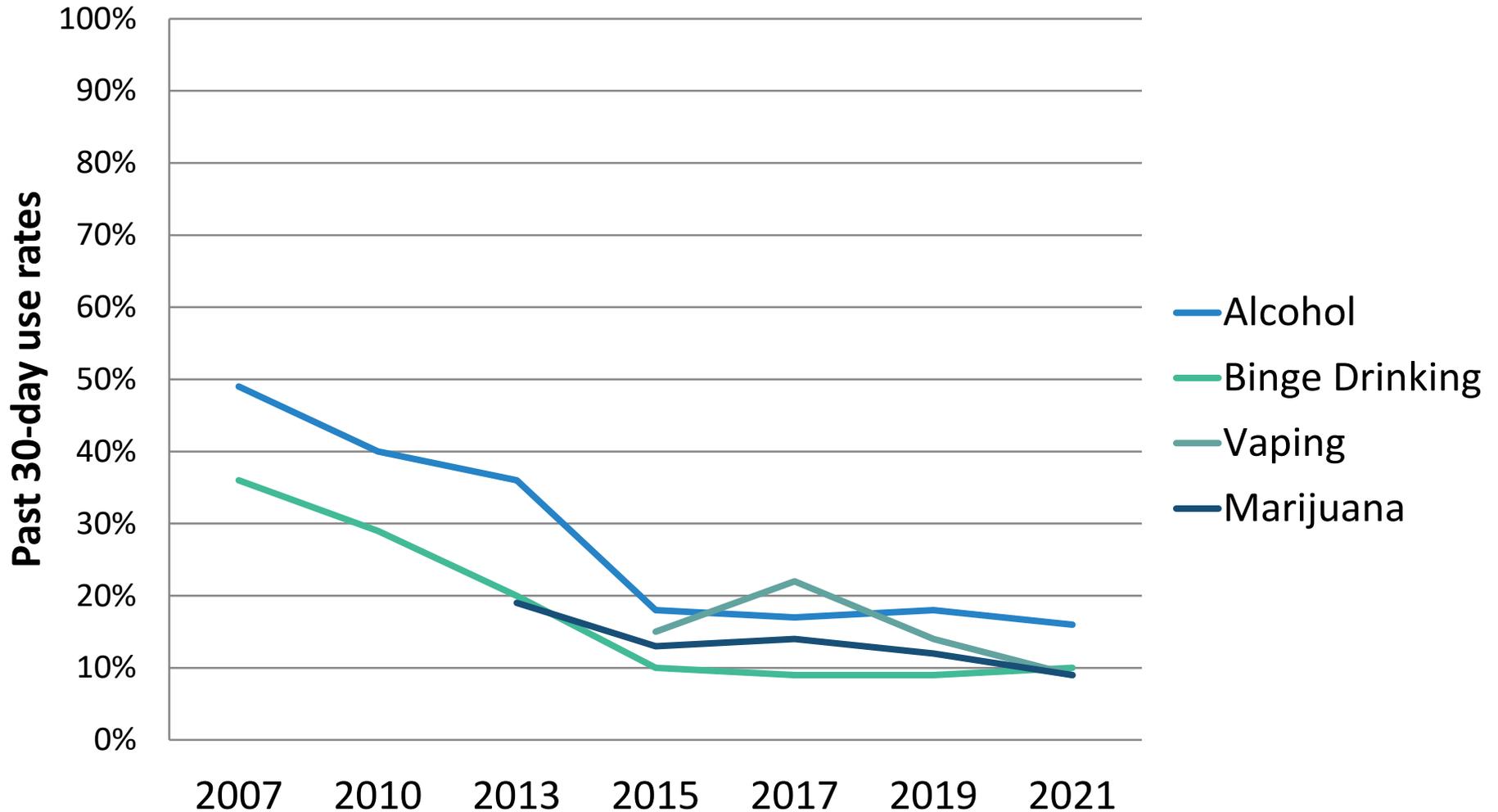


Substance use rates among MS youth remain low.



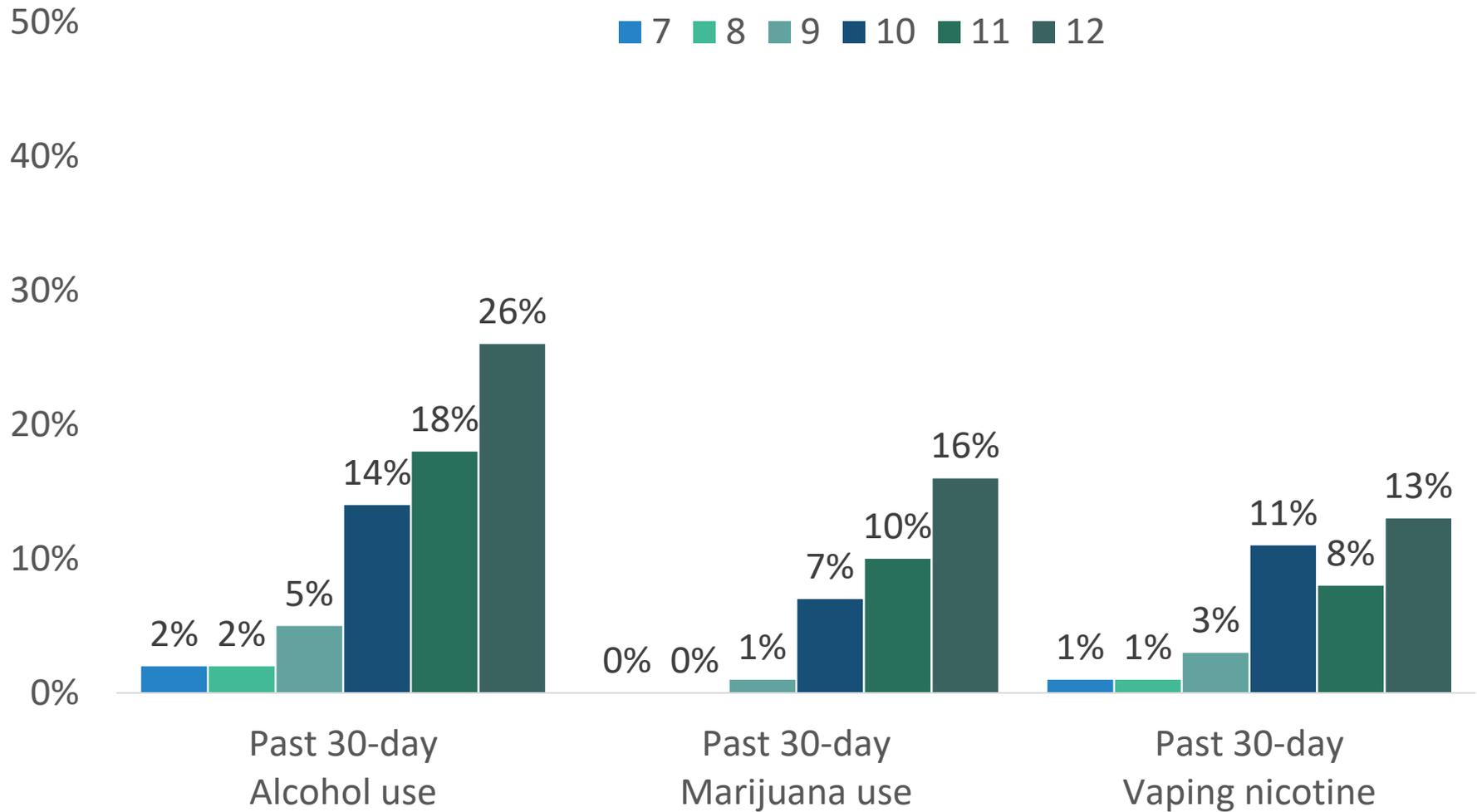


Substance use rates have decreased among HS youth in Trumbull.





Substance use rates increase in older youth.





A closer look at 30-day use rates

Groups reporting **significantly lower** ↓ alcohol use rates. Youth who:

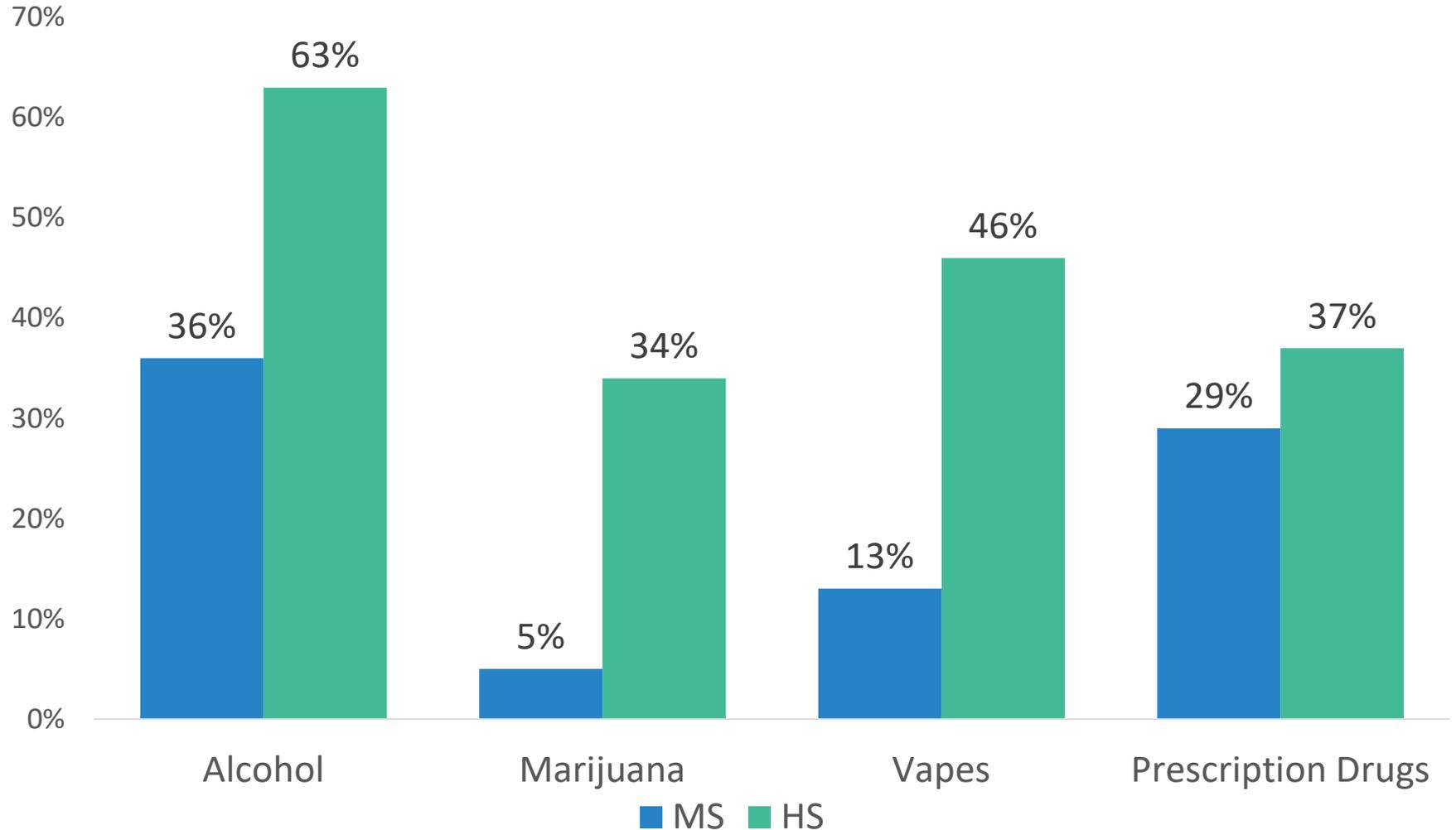
- feel valued by adults
- feel that teachers care about them
- feel students at school care about them
- believe their parents disapprove of alcohol use
- feel their parents monitor their whereabouts

Groups reporting **significantly higher** ↑ alcohol use rates:

- Other (gender) – higher than male or female
- LGBT – higher than non LGBT
- White – higher than Asian, Black, Other
- Reported being sad or depressed in past year

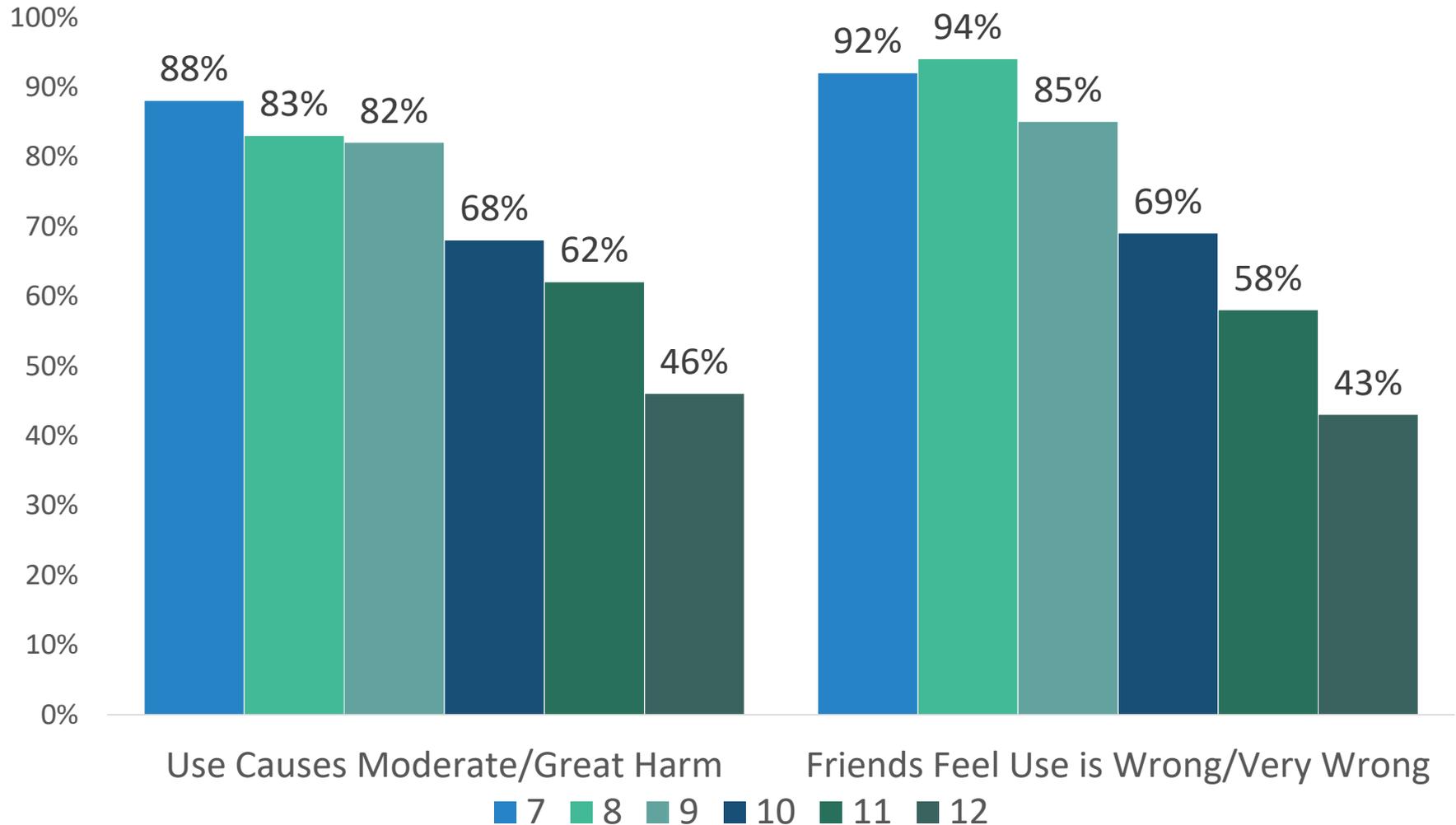


Perception that access is easy



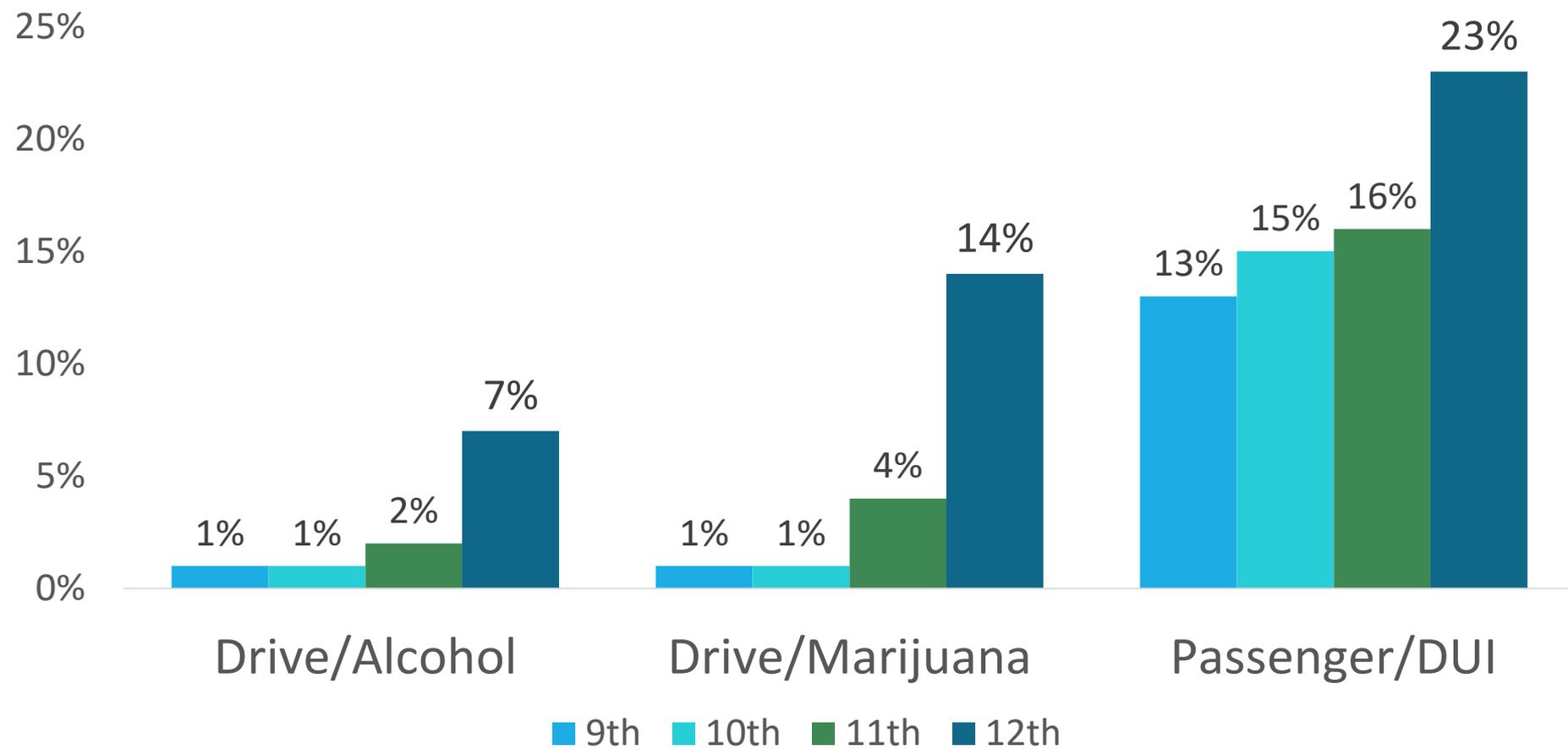


Perception of harm and peer disapproval of marijuana decreased among older youth.



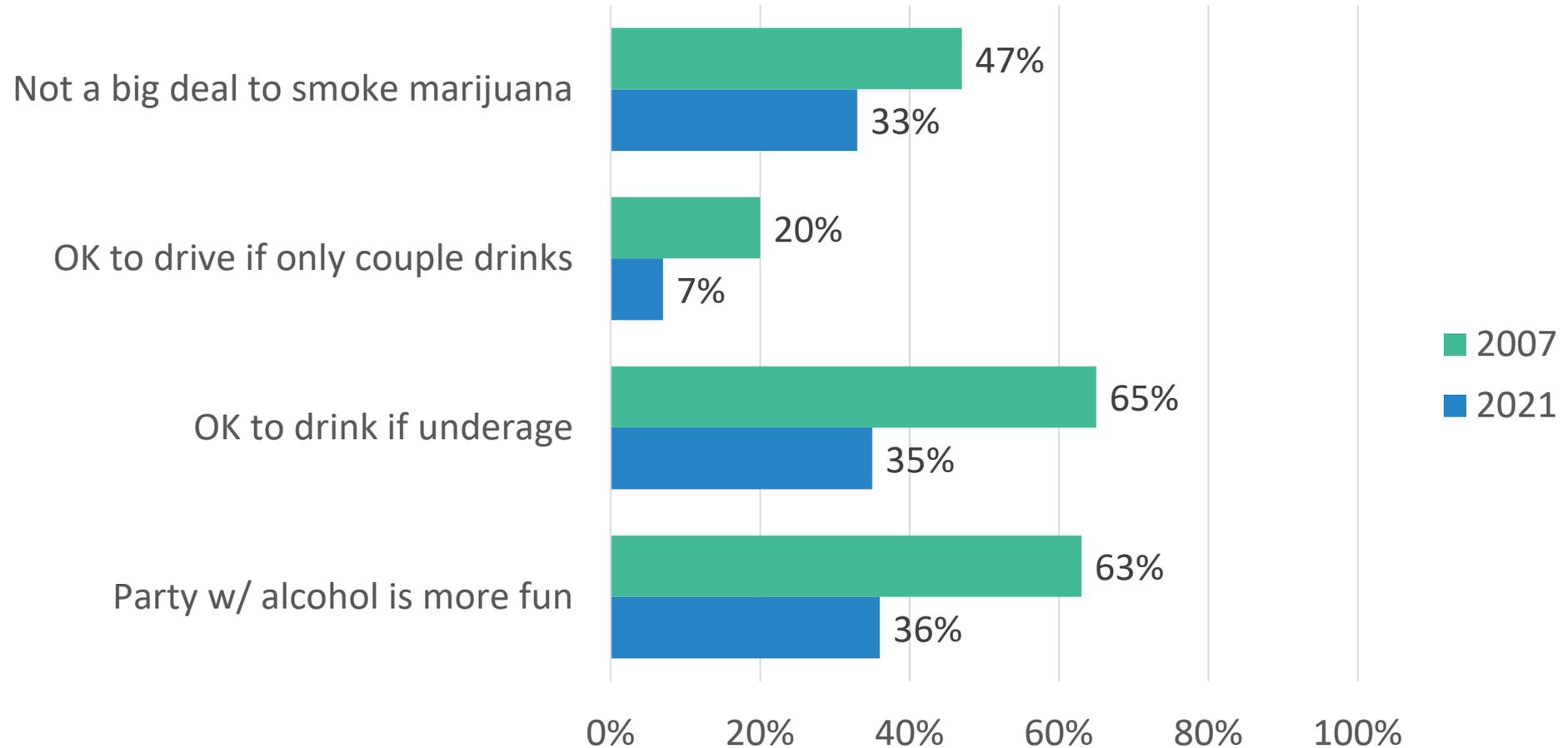


12th graders were more likely to drive under the influence or ride with someone under the influence.



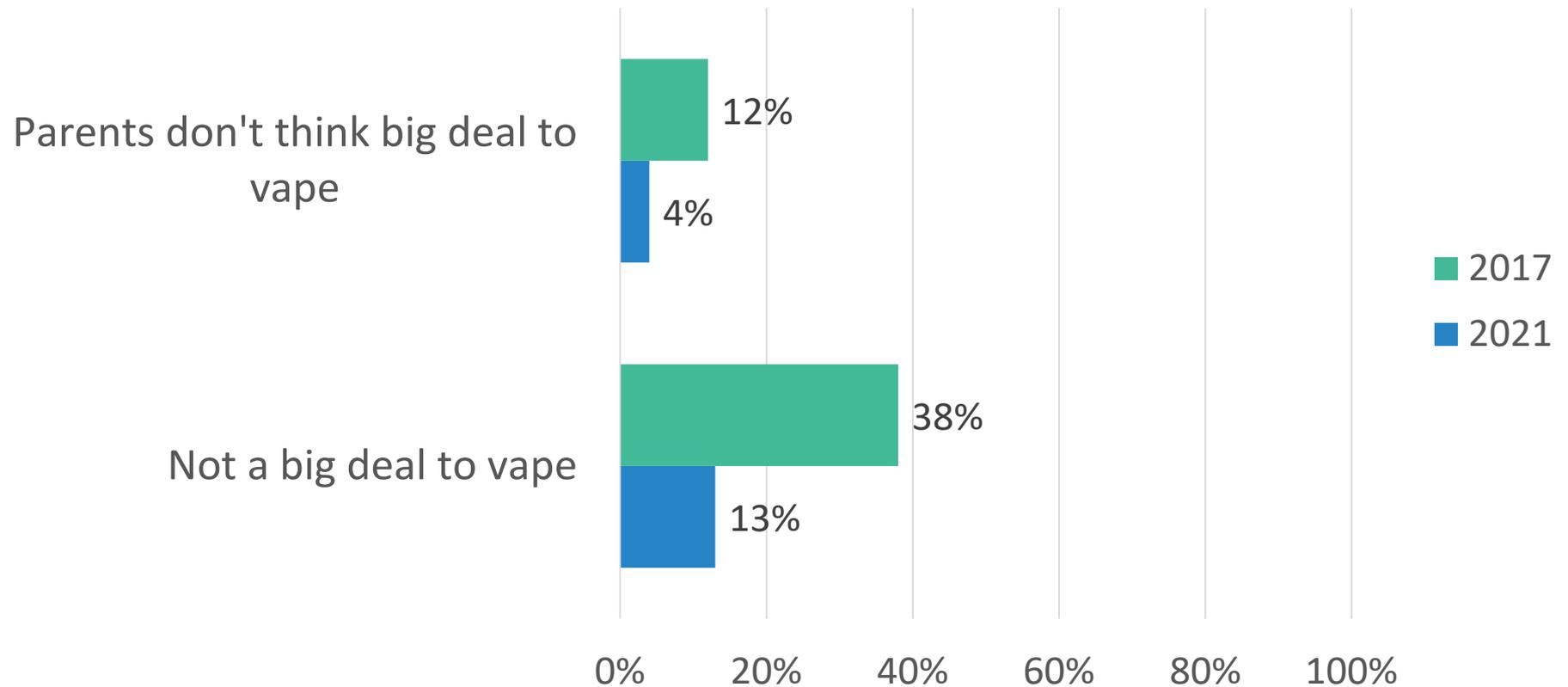


Since 2007, there have been significant shifts in alcohol and marijuana use norms among Trumbull HS students.





Since 2017 there have been very positive shifts in norms around vaping among Trumbull HS students.



Needs:

- ❖ Increased awareness of mental health resources available in school and in the community.
- ❖ Prevention & health education, especially for older students and high-risk youth.
- ❖ Continued education around the specific harms of marijuana, especially for older students and their families.
- ❖ Continued focus on preventing youth access to all substance.

Action Steps:

- ❖ High-visibility promotion of mental health resources (in school buildings, website, social media).
- ❖ Provide mental health peer intervention training to youth, staff, community.
- ❖ Provide training and resources to health and wellness educators.
- ❖ Marijuana education campaign to students, families, community, staff.
- ❖ Retailer engagement, family education around access/ safe storage.

Upcoming Programs:

- ❖ Opioid Overdose & Naloxone/Narcan Training to St. Joseph HS admins, coaches, wellness teachers – March 31st
- ❖ Community Opioid Overdose & Naloxone/Narcan Training – April 7th at 7:30 at Trumbull EMS
- ❖ Let's Talk Mental Health, Trumbull! “Supporting the Mental Health of Our LGBTQ+ Youth” with Triangle Community Center – April 25th at 7pm
- ❖ Community Youth Mental Health First Aid virtual training - May 11th and 12th 5-8:30

TPAUD's full *2021 Student Survey Data Report*, including disaggregated data, can be found at www.TPAUD.org/whatweknow

Questions, Comments?

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