



Catalyst CT

The Hub

Adult Voices Count Survey 2026

B. WEYLAND SMITH

C O N S U L T I N G

PROGRAM EVALUATION • GRANT PREPARATION • CAPACITY BUILDING

Background

- Spring 2026 adults in Southwestern Connecticut (DMHAS Region 1) participated in the adult community survey so Catalyst CT- The Hub could learn more about community attitudes and perceptions around substance use, mental health, gambling, and other behavioral health topics for youth and adults in the region. There were 357 responses. After eligibility and data cleaning, 315 responses were included in analysis. Each of The Hub's 14 towns were represented in the sample.
- This survey process was part of Catalyst CT- The Hub's Cannabis Prevention efforts, funded by DMHAS, however other substances and related risk factors were included to allow for comparison and relationships between those and cannabis.

Key Findings

Middle and High School Parents:

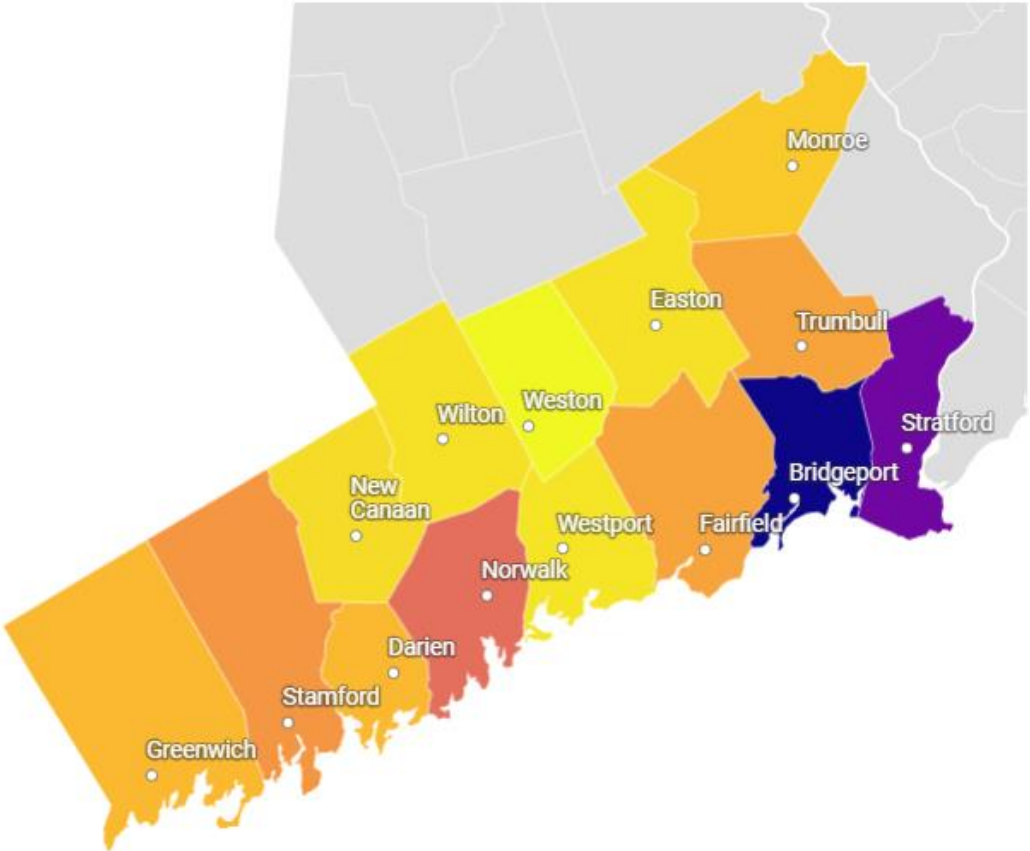
- More parents reported having talked to their children about nicotine and vapes (90%), and alcohol (92%), than marijuana/THC (84%), or prescription drug misuse (73%).
- Mental health and experiences at school were reported as top worries, but also reported as easiest things to talk to their children about
- 54.8% of parents reported they talk to their children about mental health comfortably. For those reporting challenges, the most reported barrier was thinking their child wouldn't be open to it/it would start a conflict (19.4%).
- Parents reported the greatest perception of risk and the greatest parental disapproval for alcohol.

Community Members:

- Adults most frequently reported securely storing alcohol, followed by prescription drugs, firearms, and marijuana/THC.
- 51% reported being very aware of the Social Host Law
- Top substance use concerns for youth were alcohol and nicotine in vapes/oral pouches
- Top mental health concerns for youth were anxiety and depression
- Adults were most interested in learning more about the following wellness topics:
 - Youth- Internet safety/social media, stress management/coping skills, mental health/suicide prevention
 - Adults- Mental health/suicide prevention, stress management/coping skills, healthy communication tools

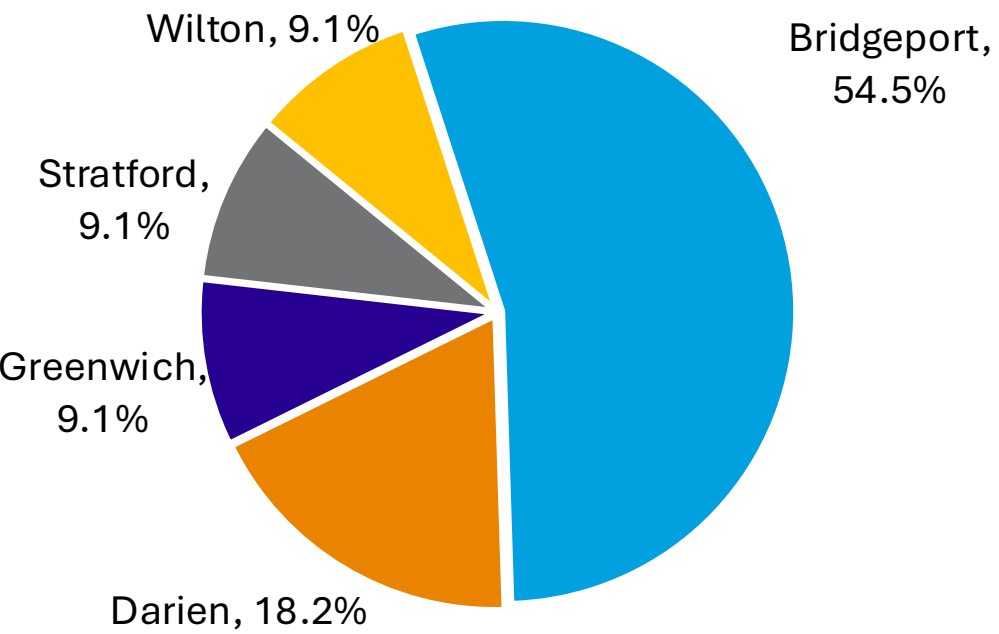
The Sample (n=315)

Responses by Residence



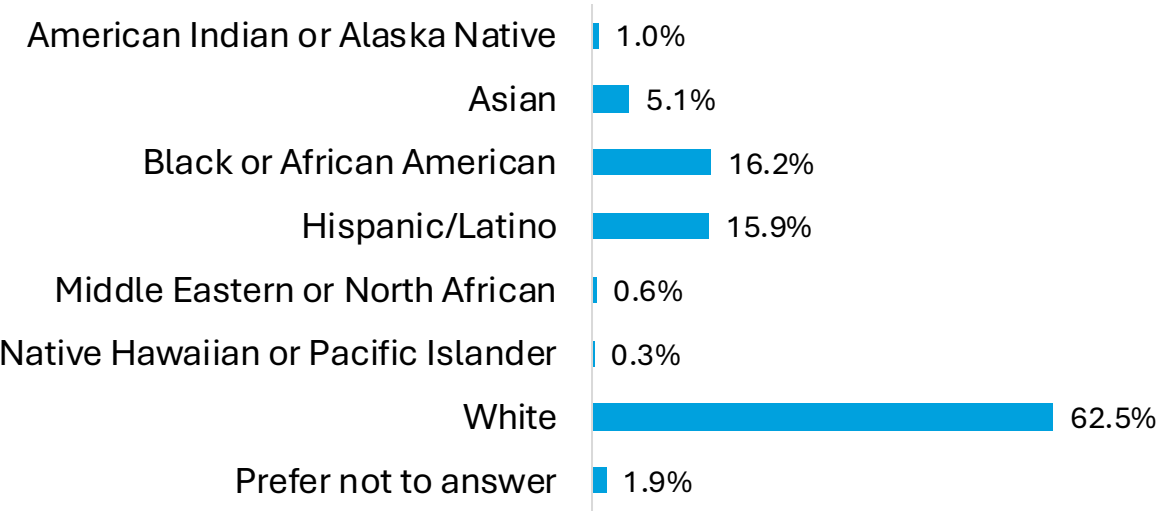
300 individuals reported residing in the region

If you don't **live** in one of the towns listed, but **work** in one of them, which town does your work **PRIMARILY** focus on?

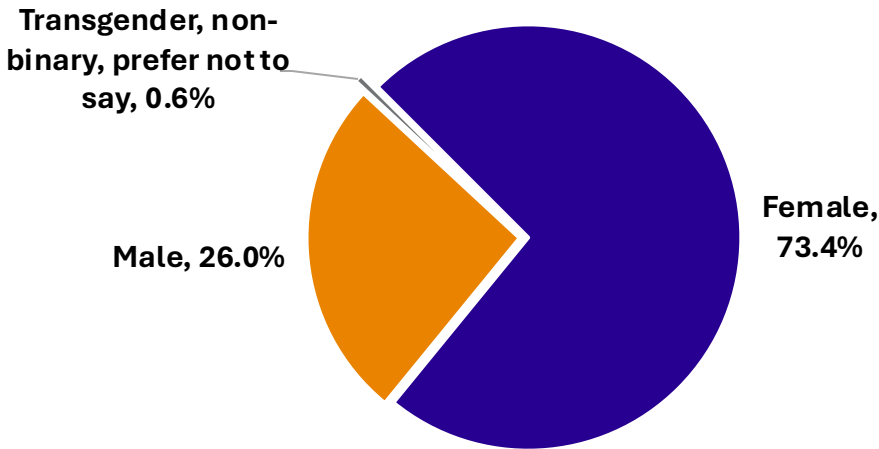


The Sample (Cont.)

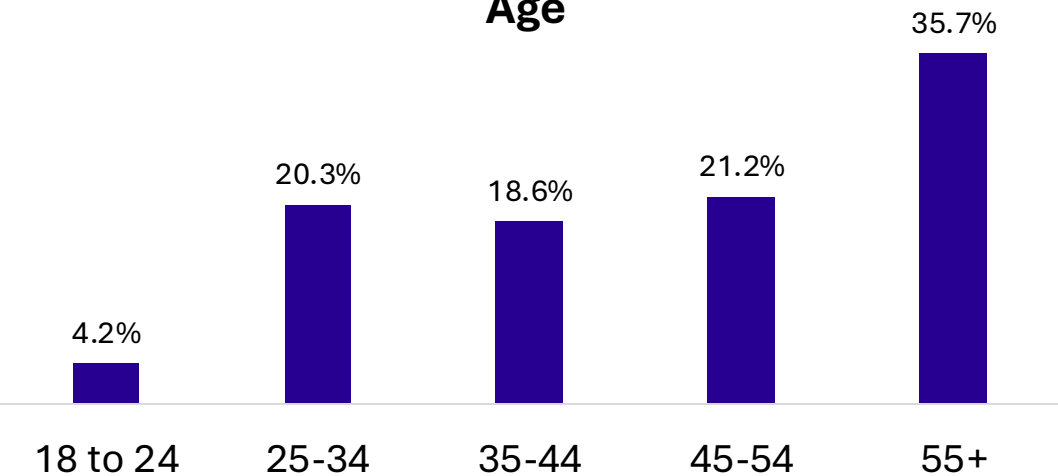
Race and Ethnicity



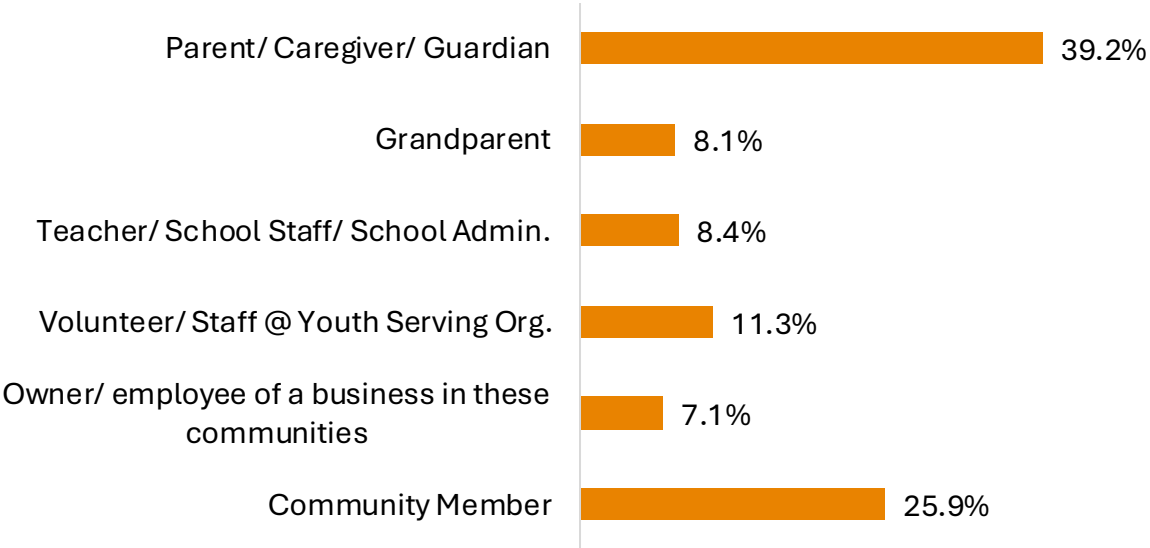
Gender



Age



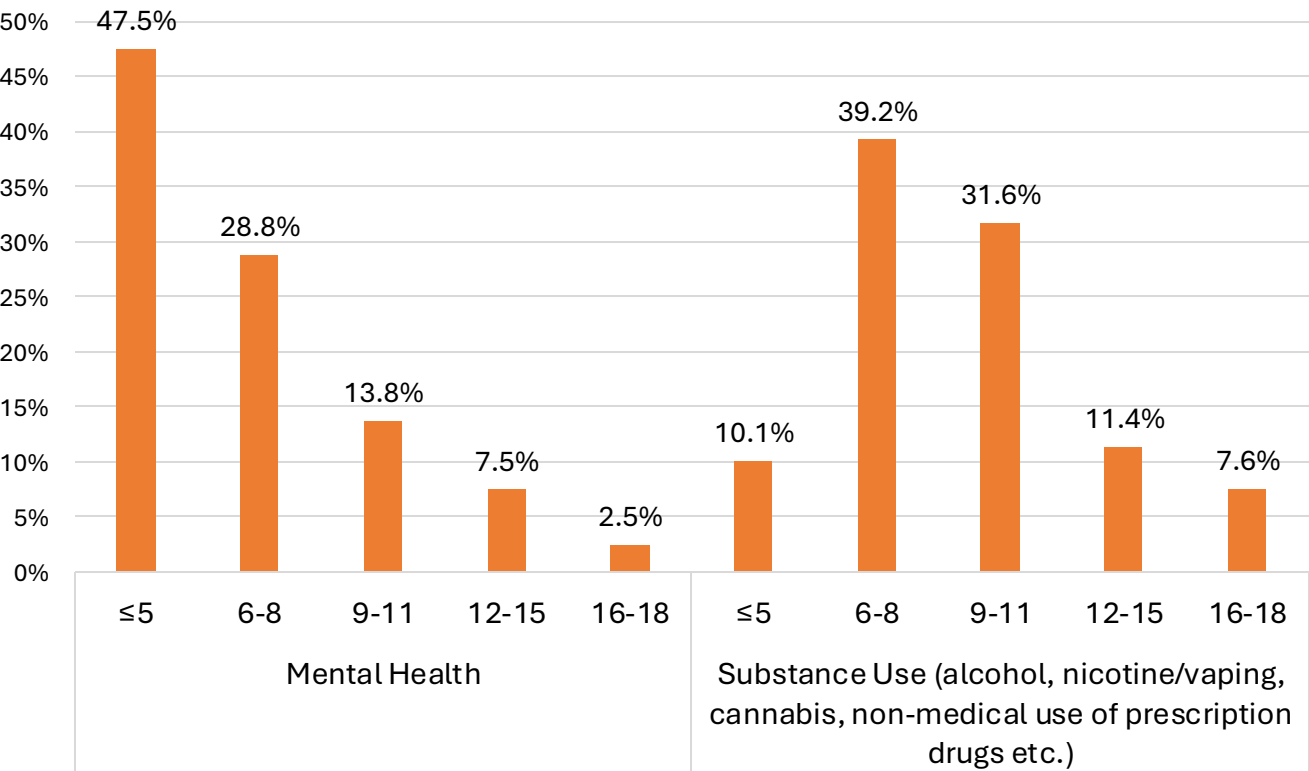
Role*



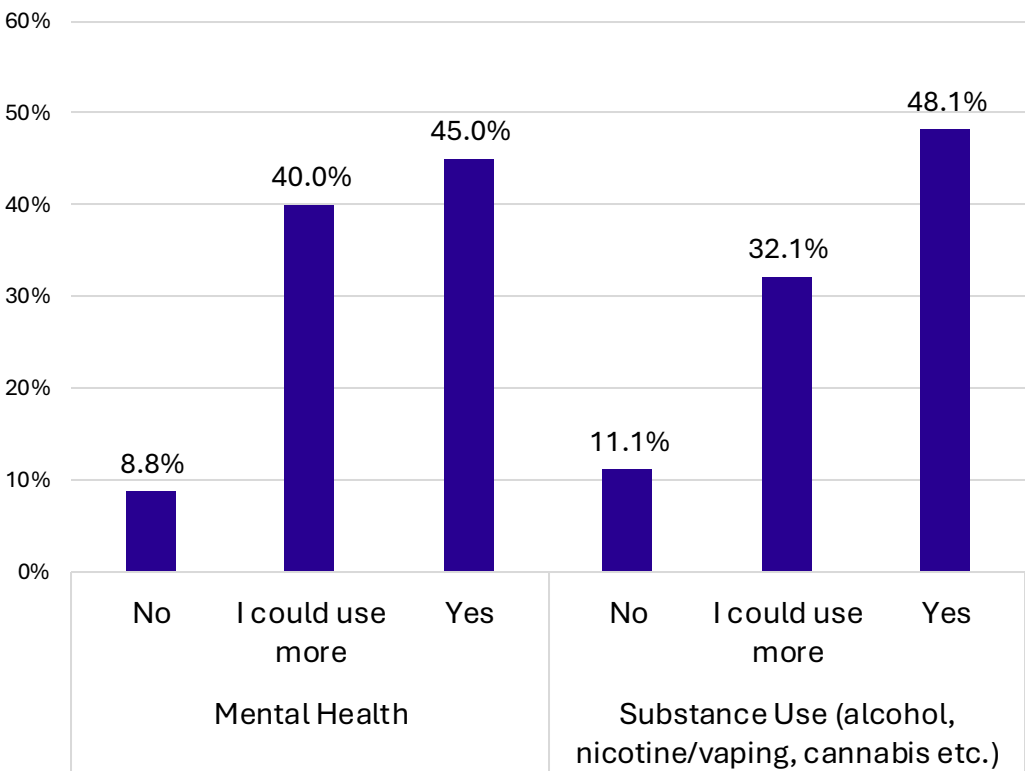
*Which **best** describes your role as it **relates to youth** in Southwestern CT?

Adult Perceptions*

At what age do you feel parents/caregivers should start talking to children about...

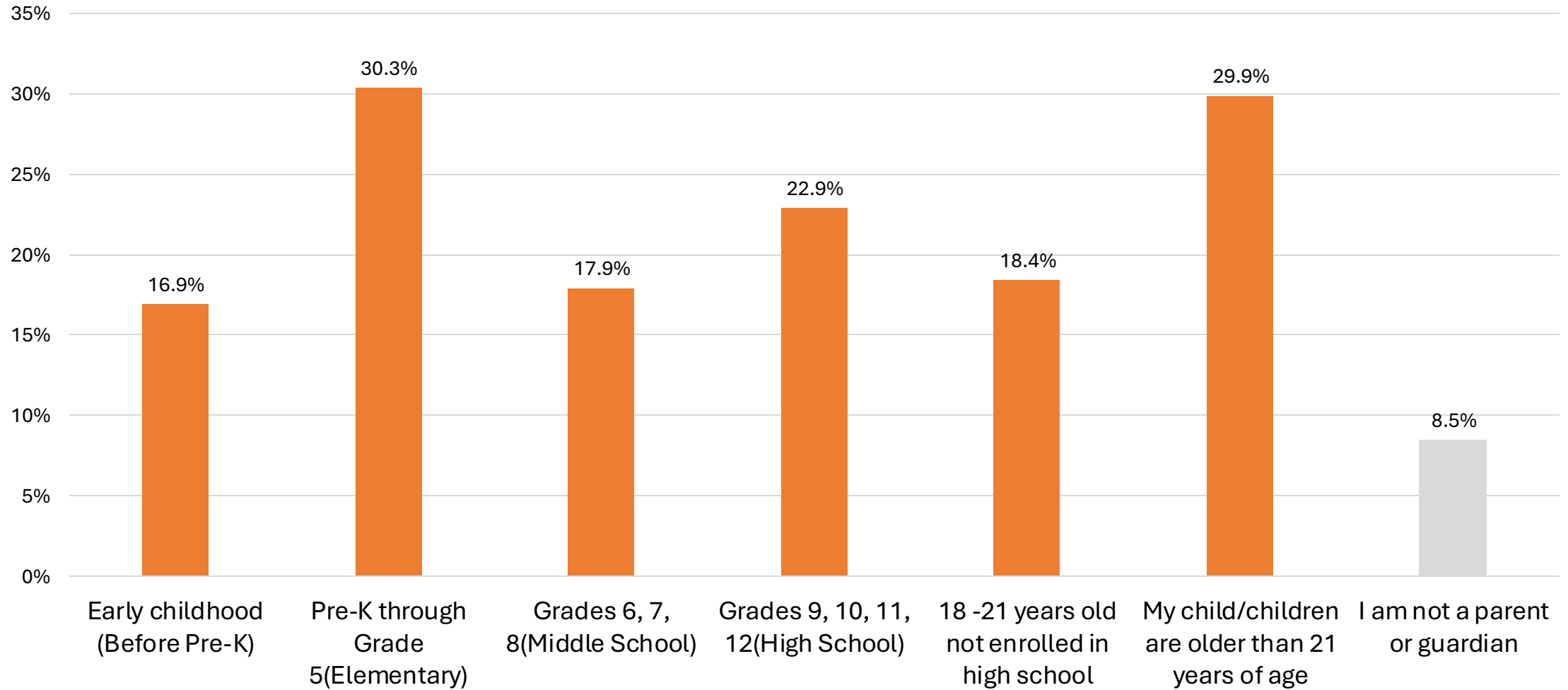


Do you have the information you need to talk to the children in your life about...



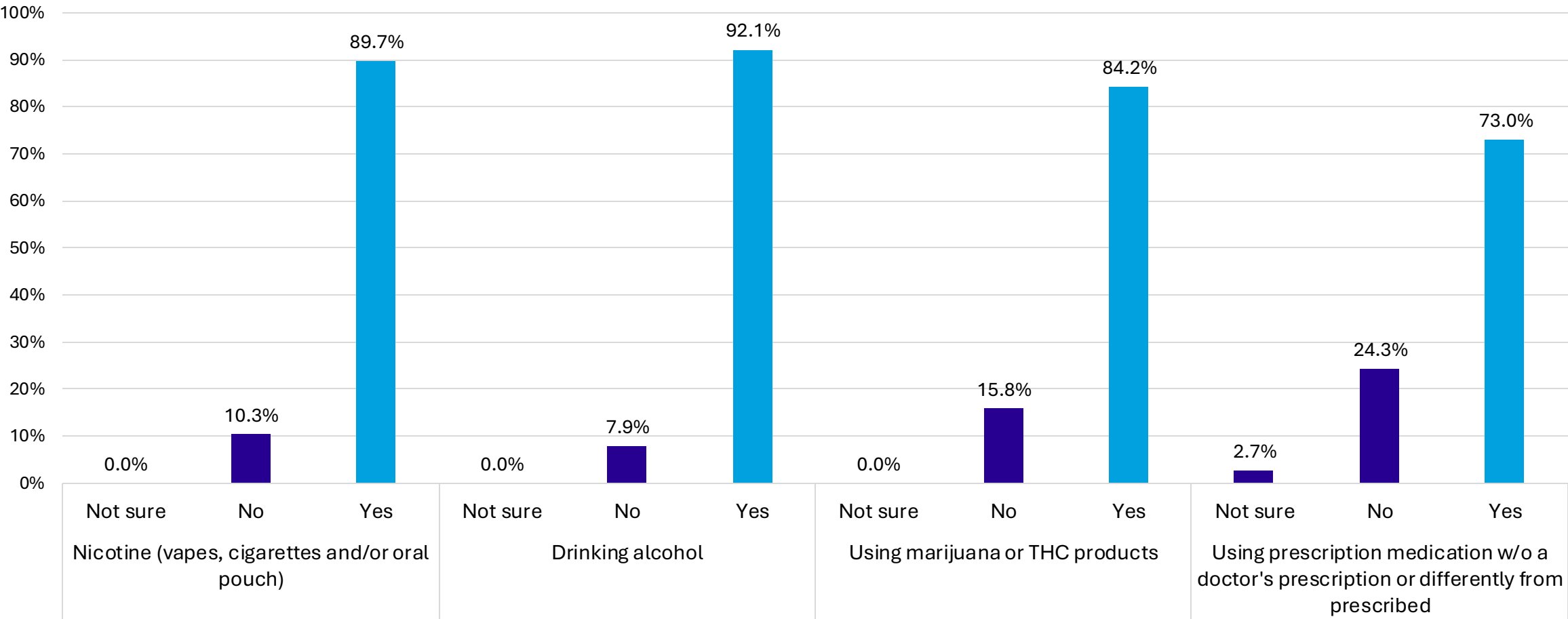
*Teachers, school staff/admin, youth serving org. volunteers and staff, grandparents

Ages of Children (select all that apply)



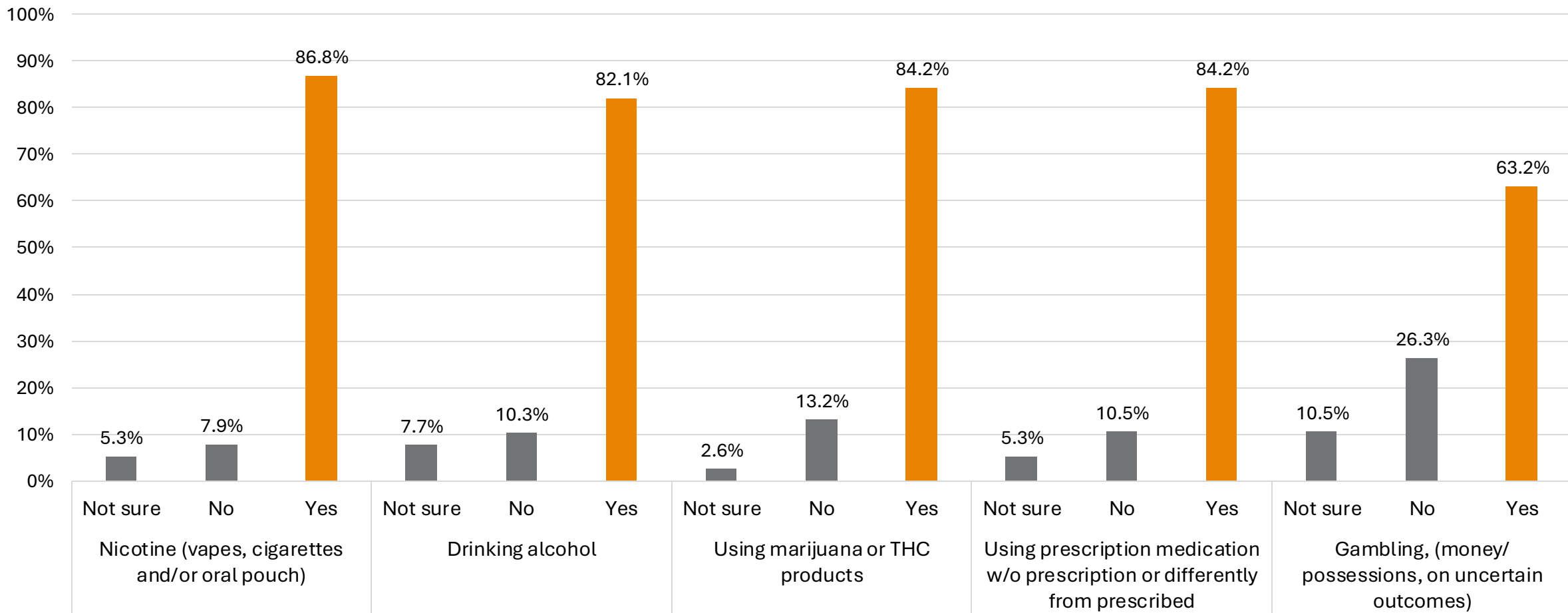
Middle and High School Parents Only

For your child or children in MS or HS, have you EVER **talked to them** about the risks of the substances below



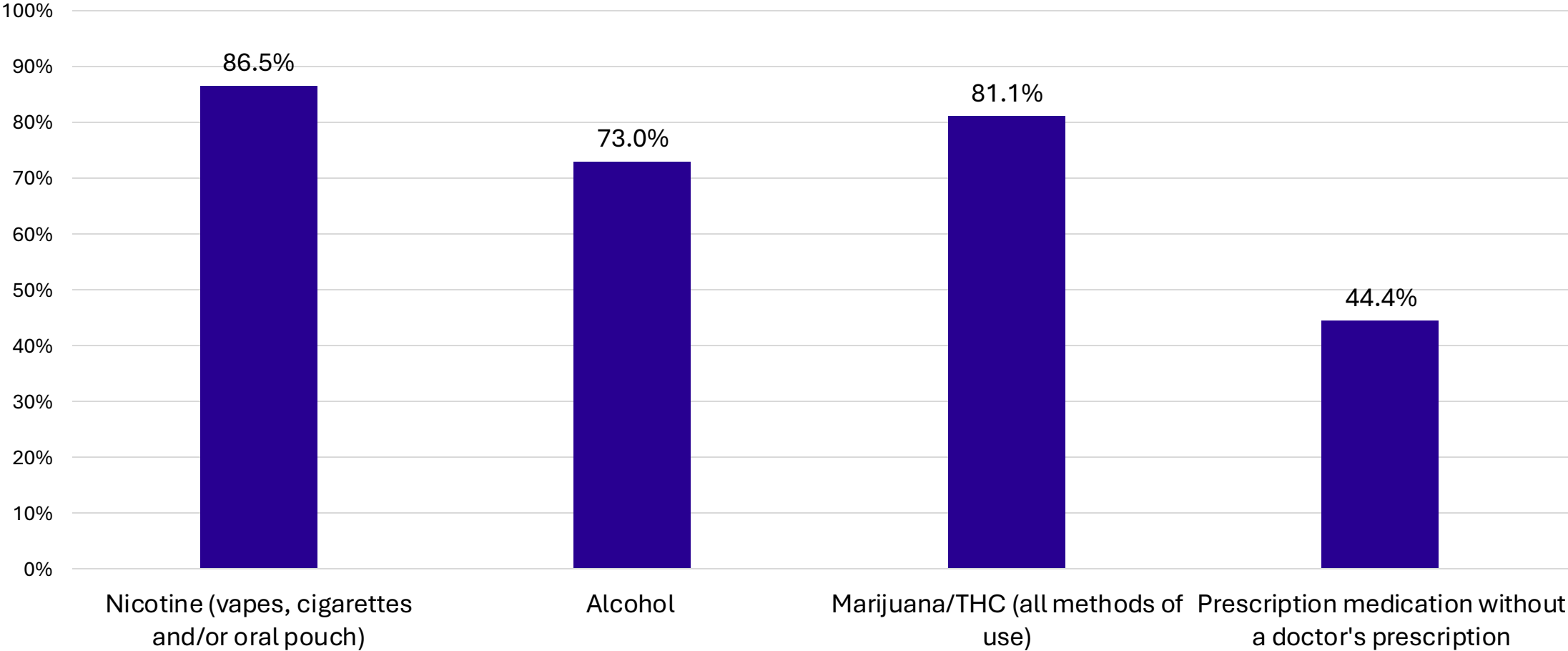
Middle and High School Parents Only

My family has **clear rules or expectations** discouraging my child or children in middle or high school from doing the following



Middle and High School Parents Only

Perception of Ease of Access
(Very Easy/Sort of Easy)

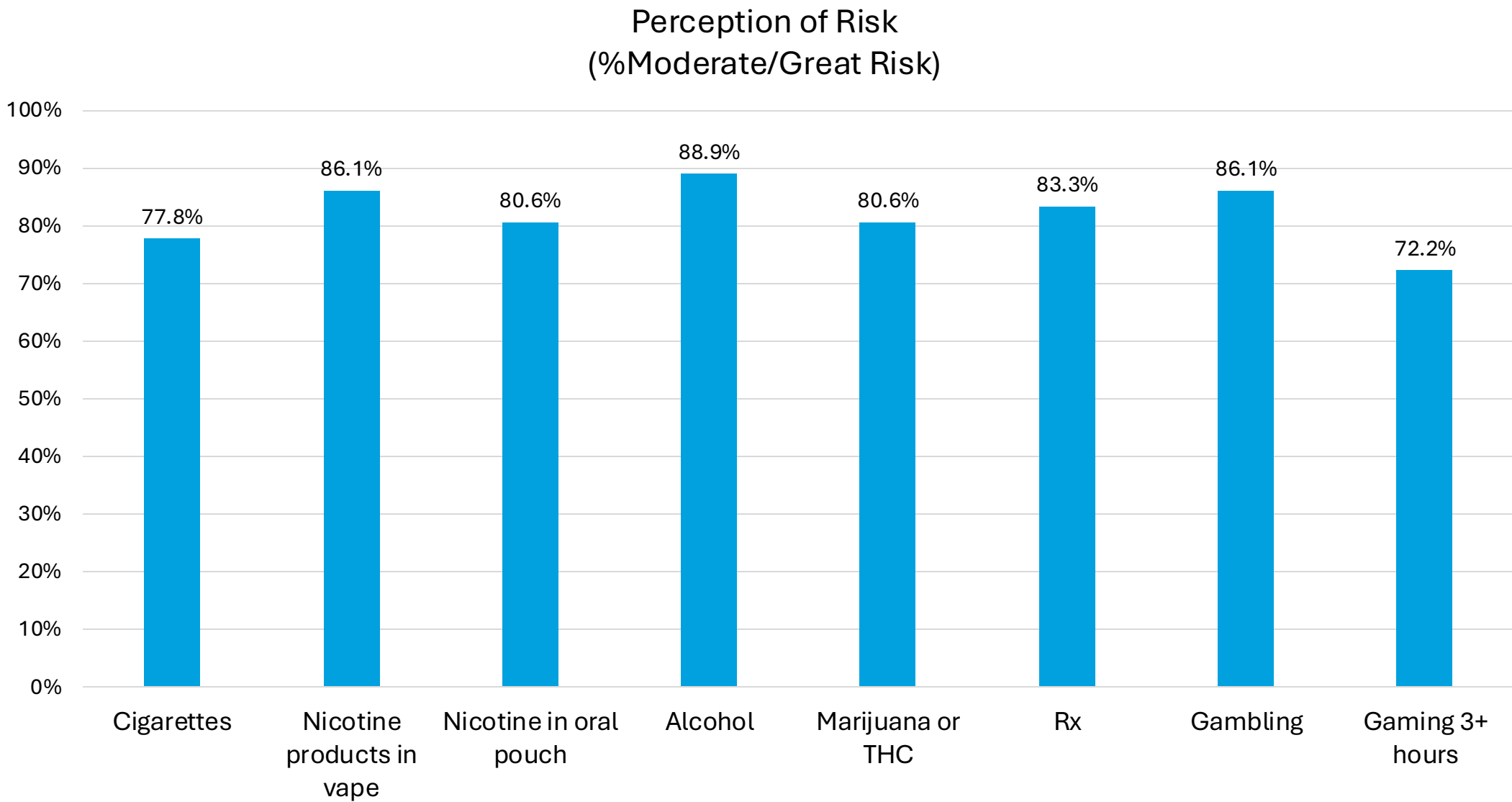


Middle and High School Parents Only

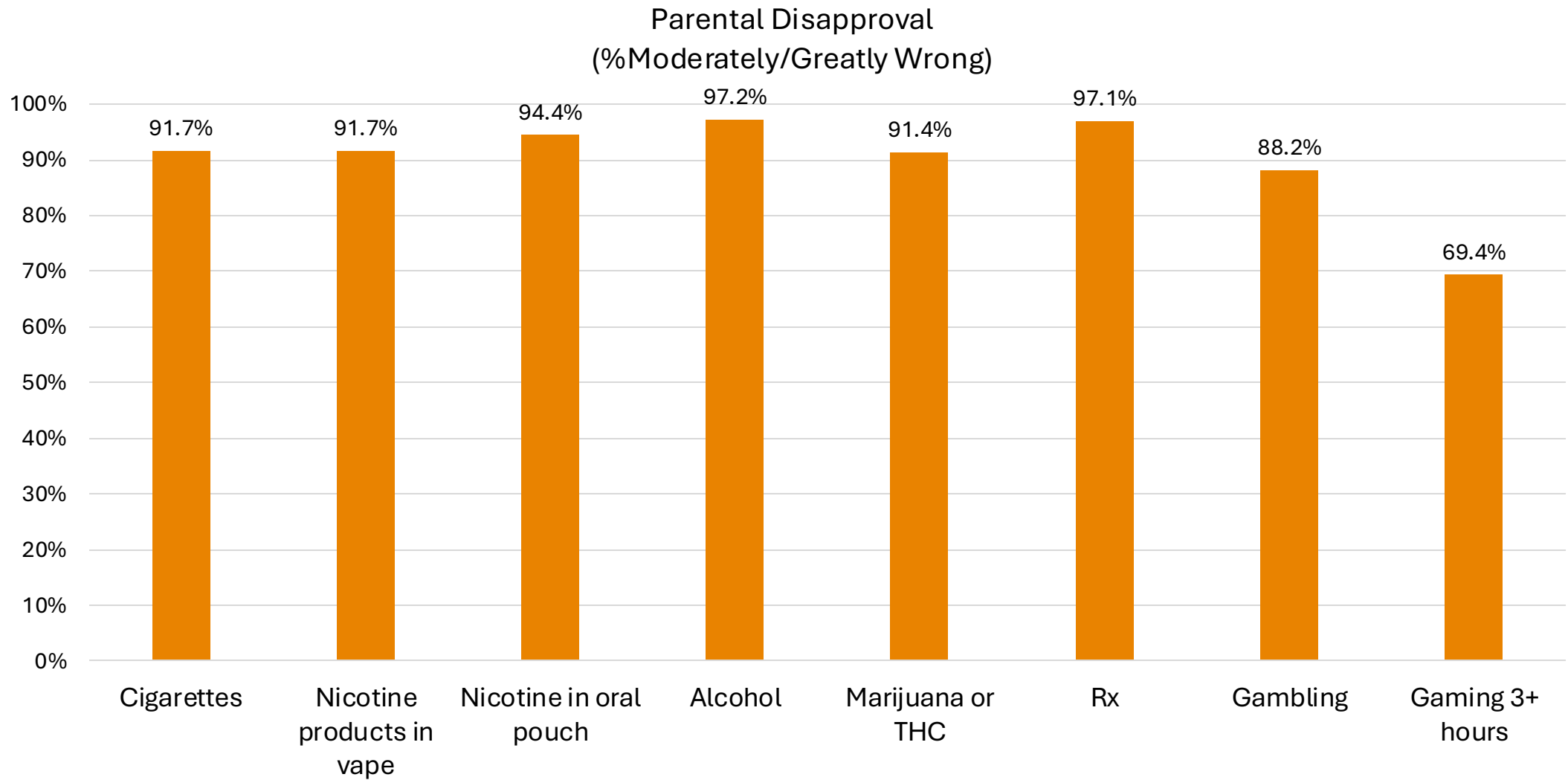
For each substance, select the top 3 ways you think youth in middle or high school who use substances obtain them

	Parents <u>w/</u> permission	Parents <u>w/o</u> permission	Friends/ Peers	Siblings	A party w/ adult permission	Store	Internet	Bar or restaurant
Alcohol	5	2	1	3	4	7	6	8
Marijuana/Cannabis	7	2	1	3	6	5	4	
Nicotine (Vape or Oral Pouch)	6	3	1	4	3	2	5	
Rx (for the Purpose of Getting High)	4	1	1	3	4	5	2	

Middle and High School Parents Only



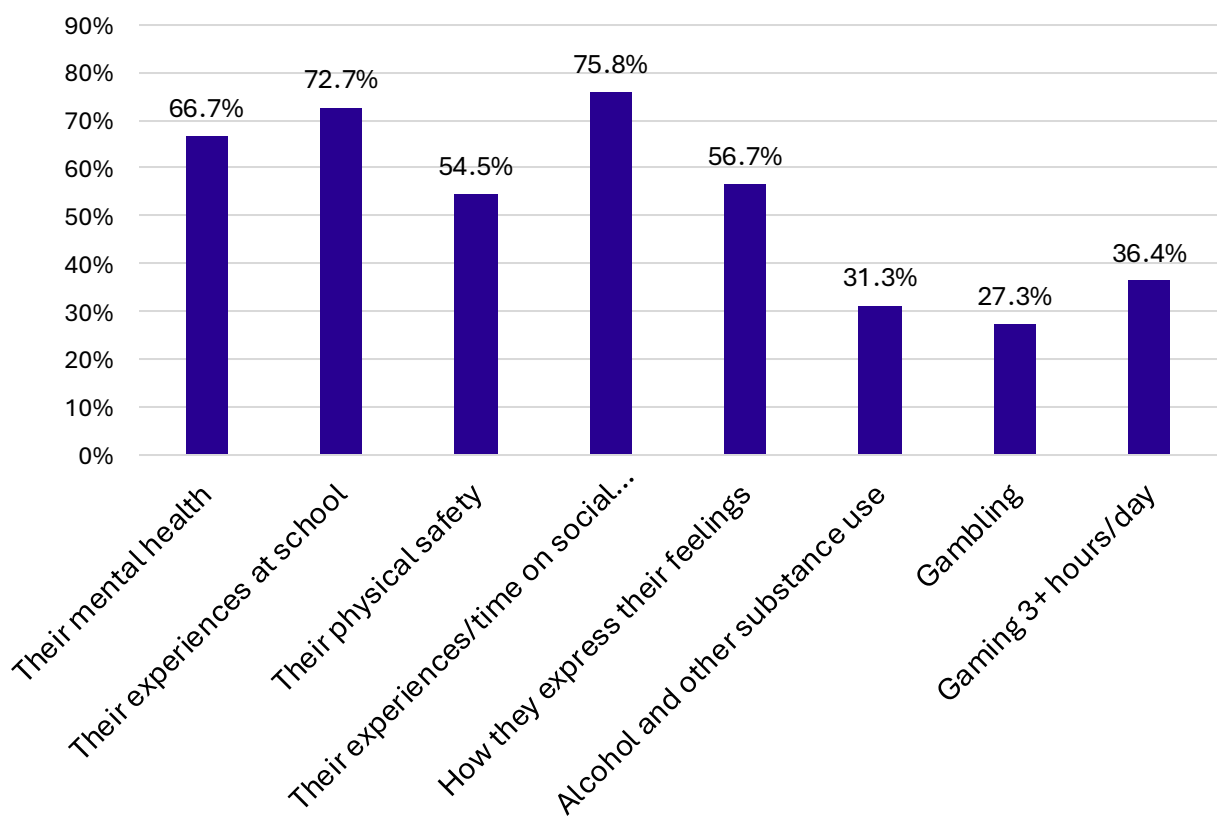
Middle and High School Parents Only



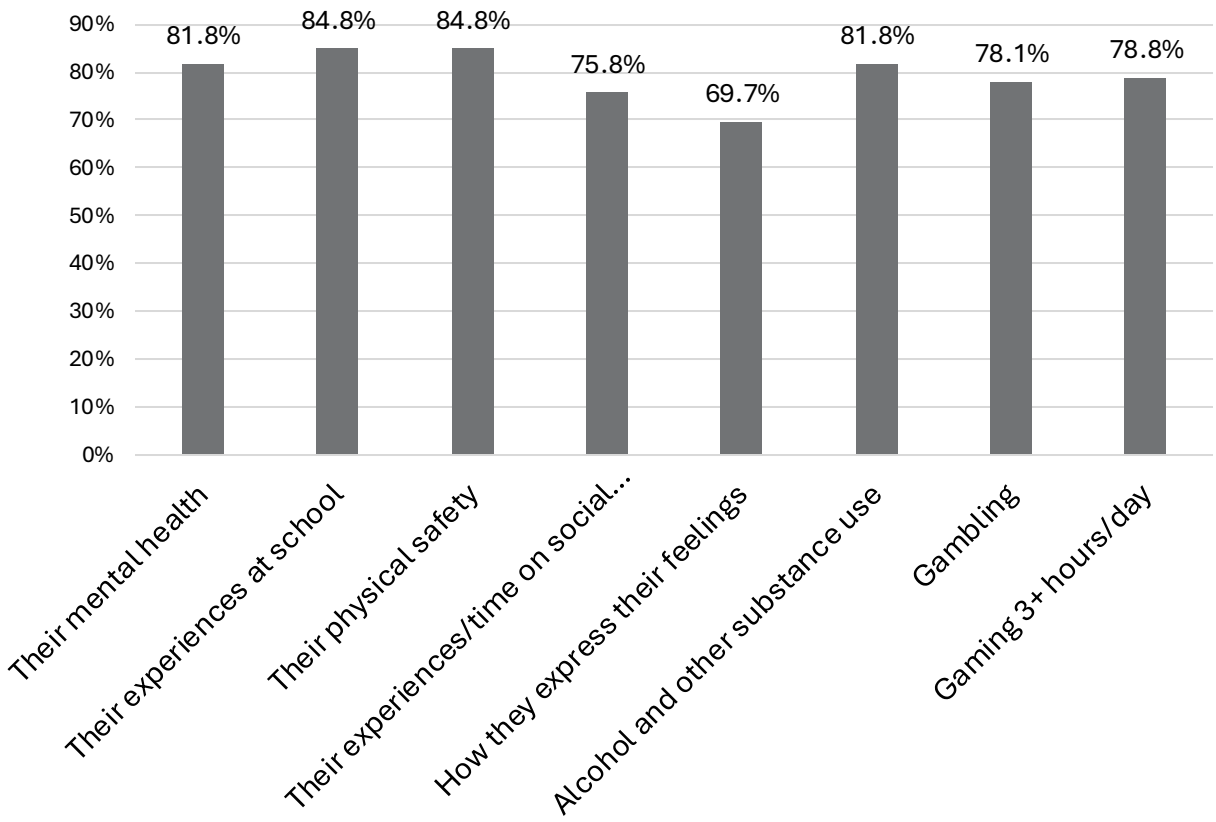
Middle and High School Parents Only

Mental health and experiences at school were reported as top worries, but also reported as easiest things to talk to their children about

How often do you worry about the following regarding your child? (% Very often /Often)



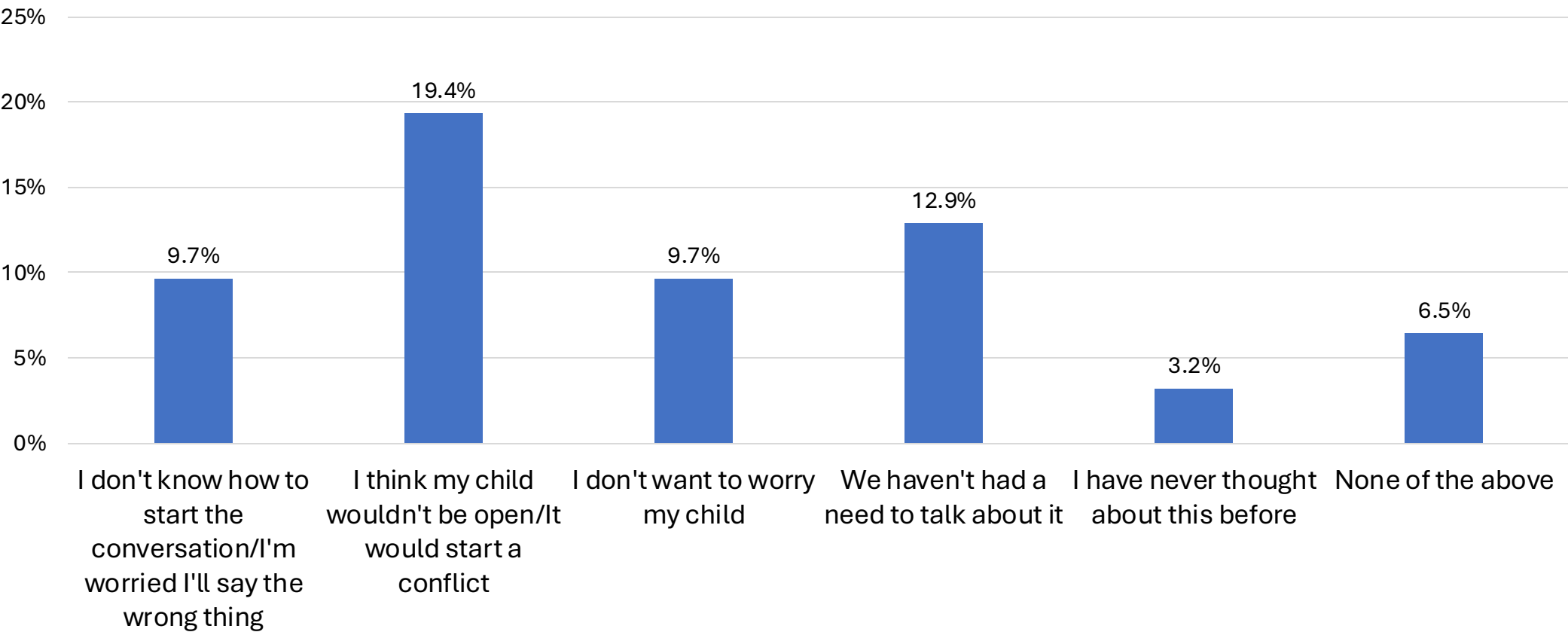
How easy or difficult is it for you to talk to your child about...? (%Very easy /Easy)



Middle and High School Parents Only

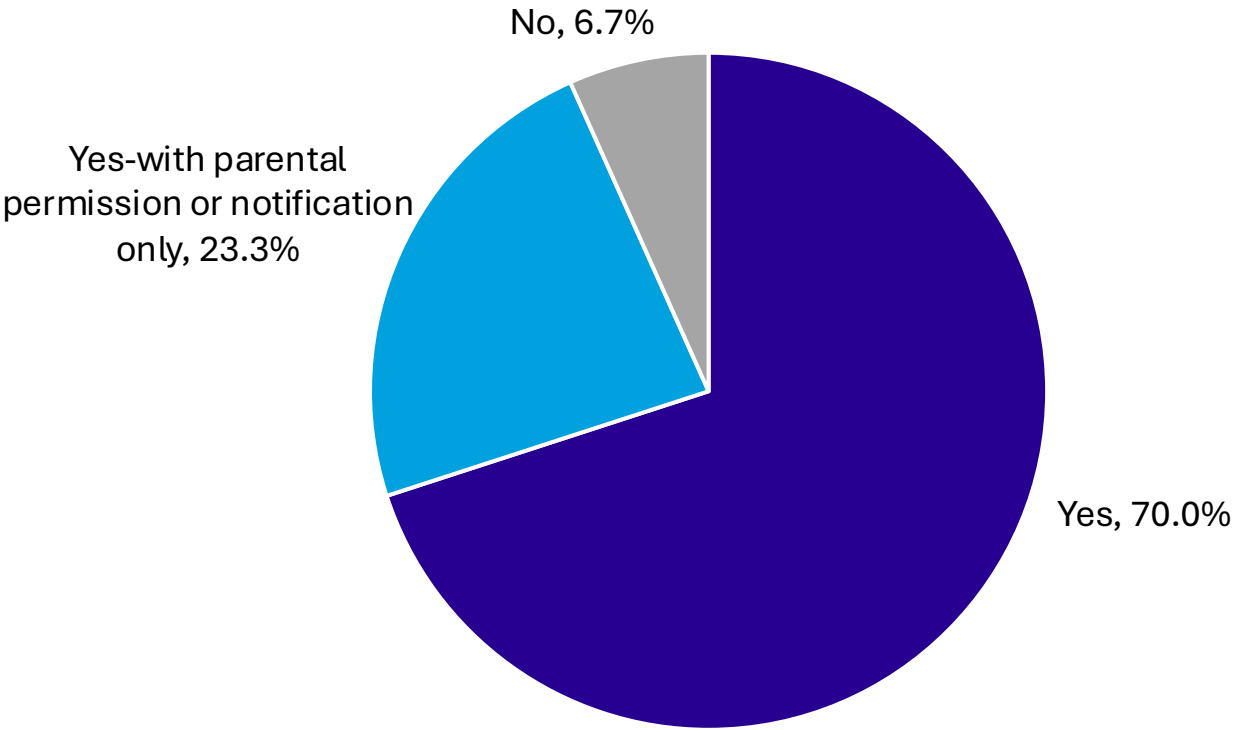
54.8% reported “not applicable- we talk about mental health comfortably”

Which of the following makes it difficult for you to talk to your children about mental health?

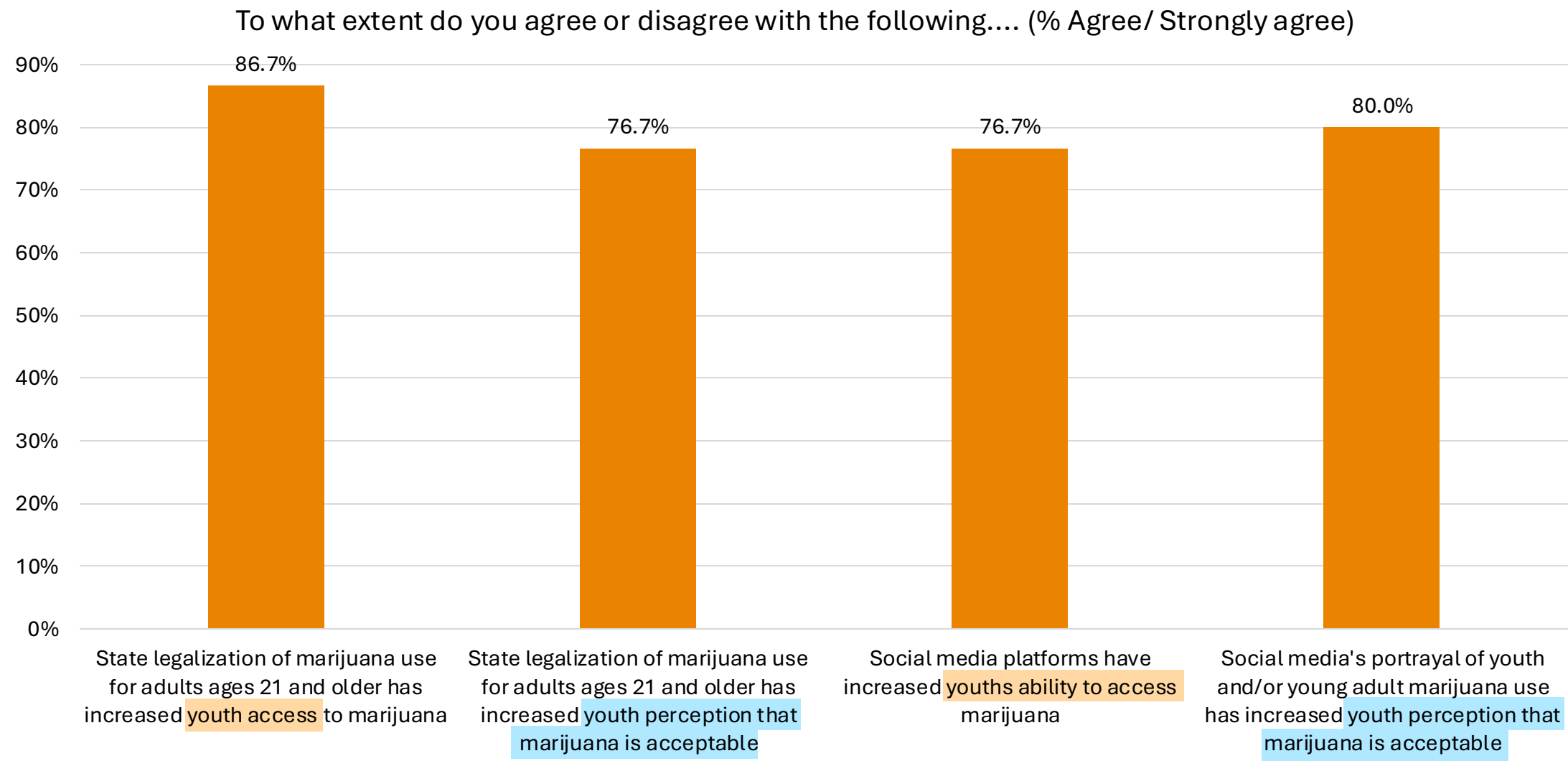


Middle and High School Parents Only

Do you think that free nicotine "quit kits" with information for youth who want to stop or reduce use of vapes and/or oral pouches with nicotine should be accessible to youth from schools, healthcare providers or community organizations?

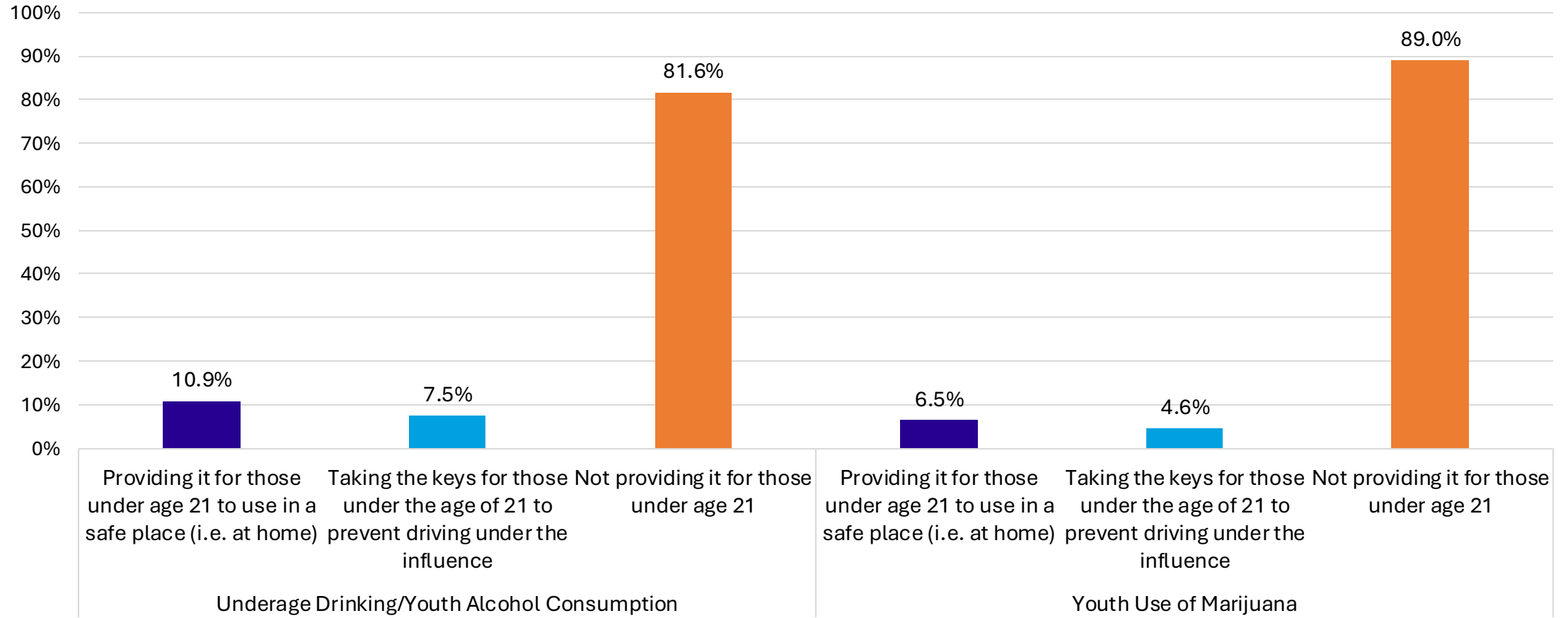


Middle and High School Parents Only



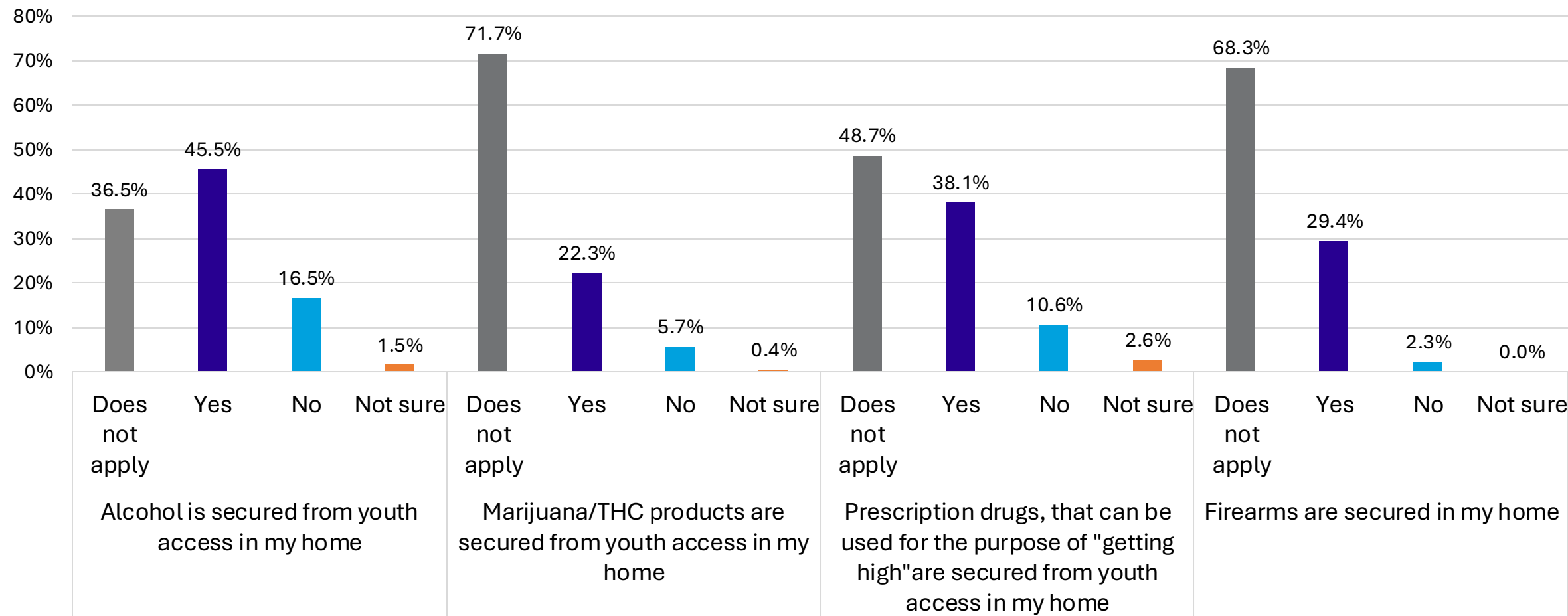
All Community Members

What do you think is the safest decision a parent/guardian or other adult can make regarding youth use of alcohol and marijuana?



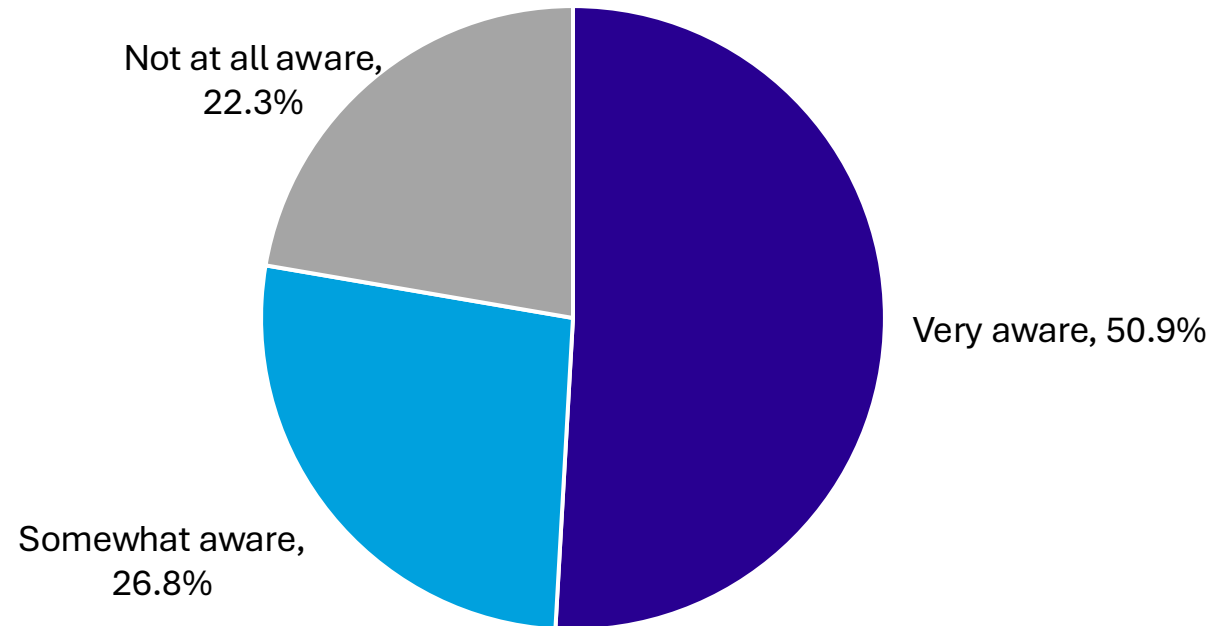
All Community Members

Please select the best response for each of these statements.



All Community Members

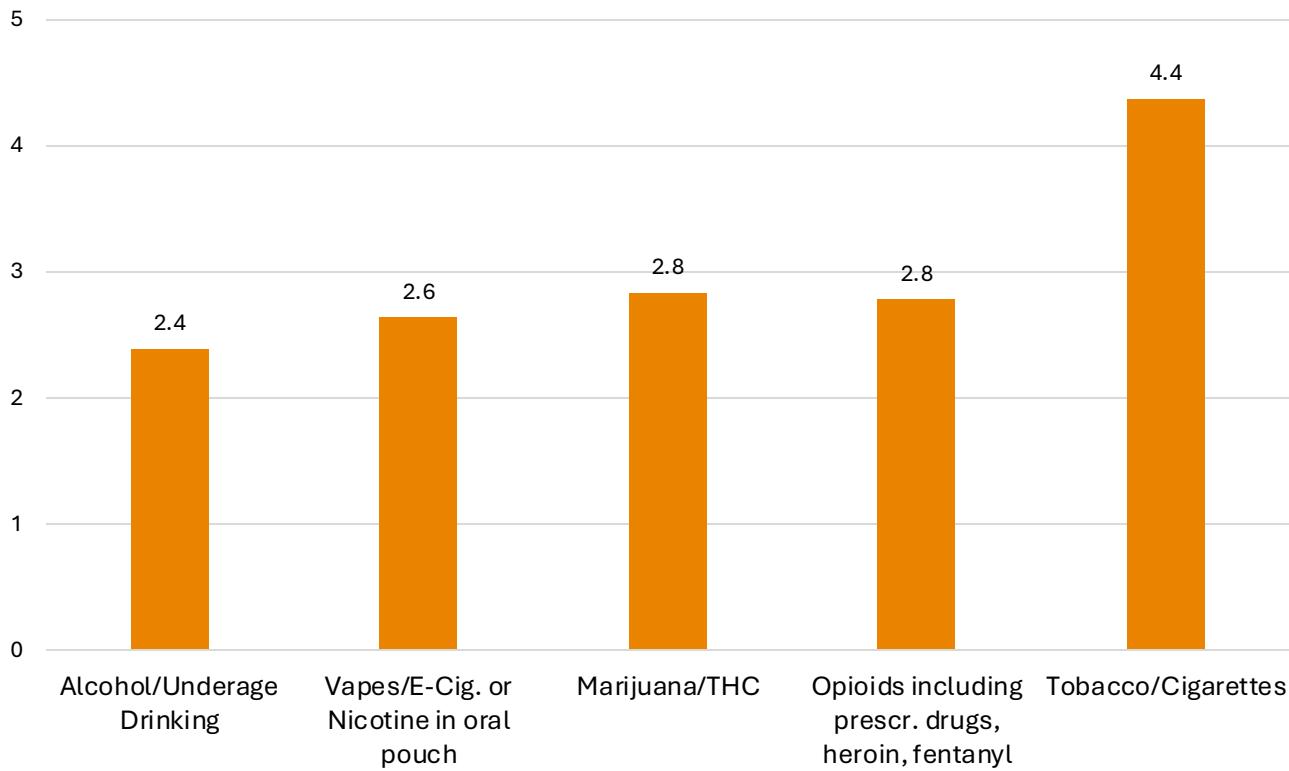
How aware are you of the Connecticut **Social Host Law** that makes it illegal to knowingly allow youth ages 20 or younger to **drink alcohol** or **use cannabis**/marijuana in your home or on your property?



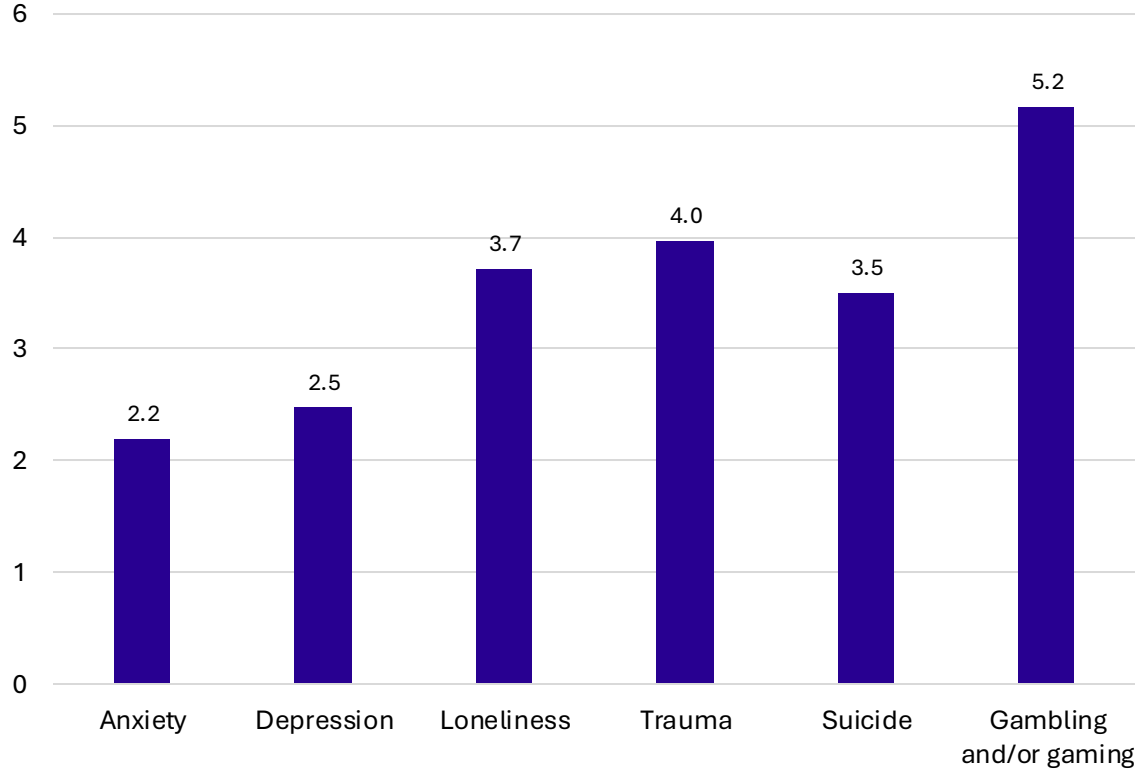
All Community Members

Top Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns

Substance Use
Avg. Ranking
1= most concern, 5 = least

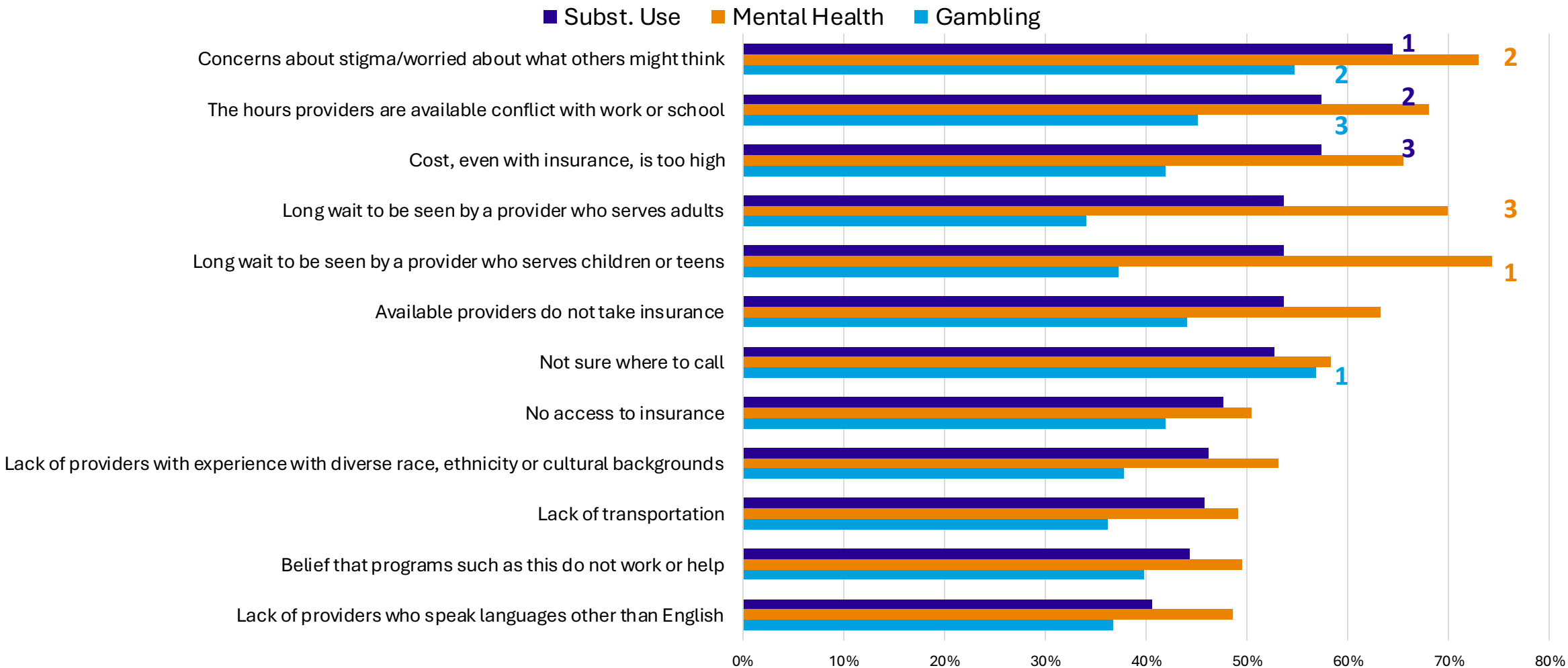


Mental Health
Avg. Ranking
1= most concern, 6 = least



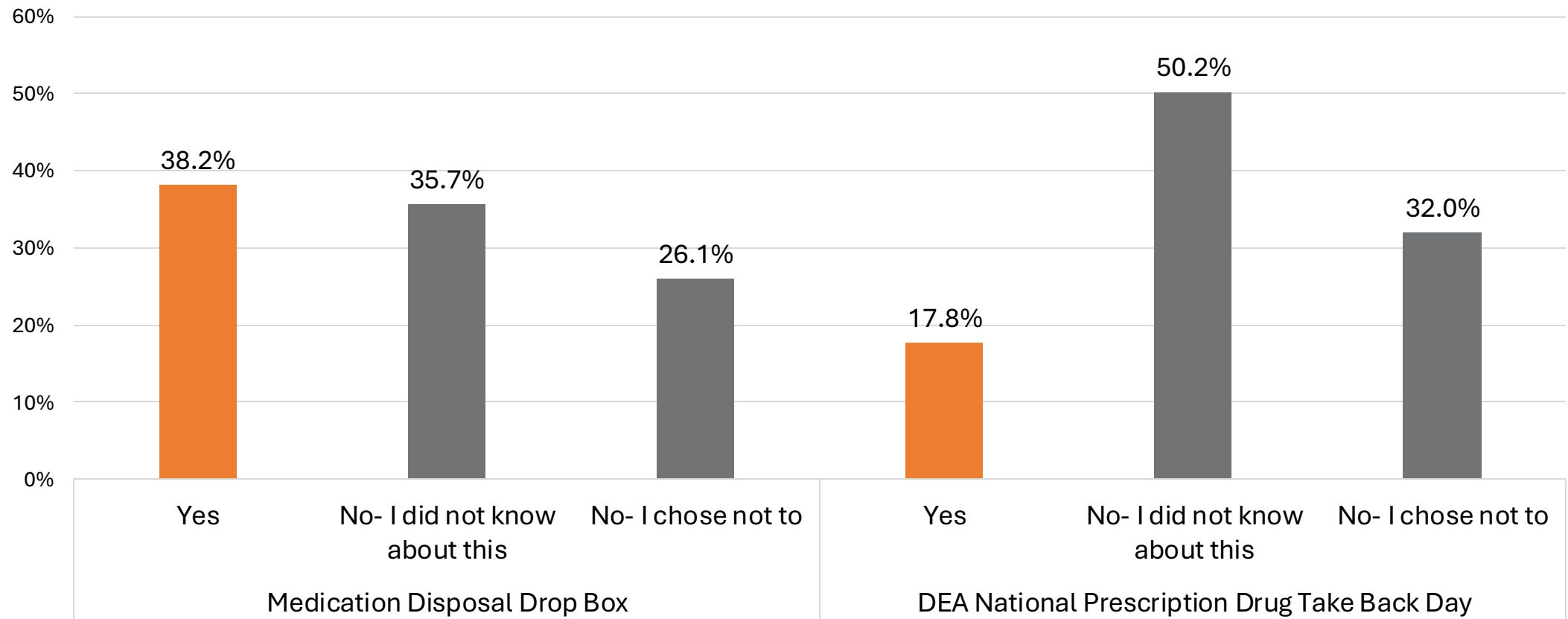
All Community Members

Please select barriers, **you or other adults you know** that live in your community, have experienced when **accessing behavioral healthcare** (Select all that apply)



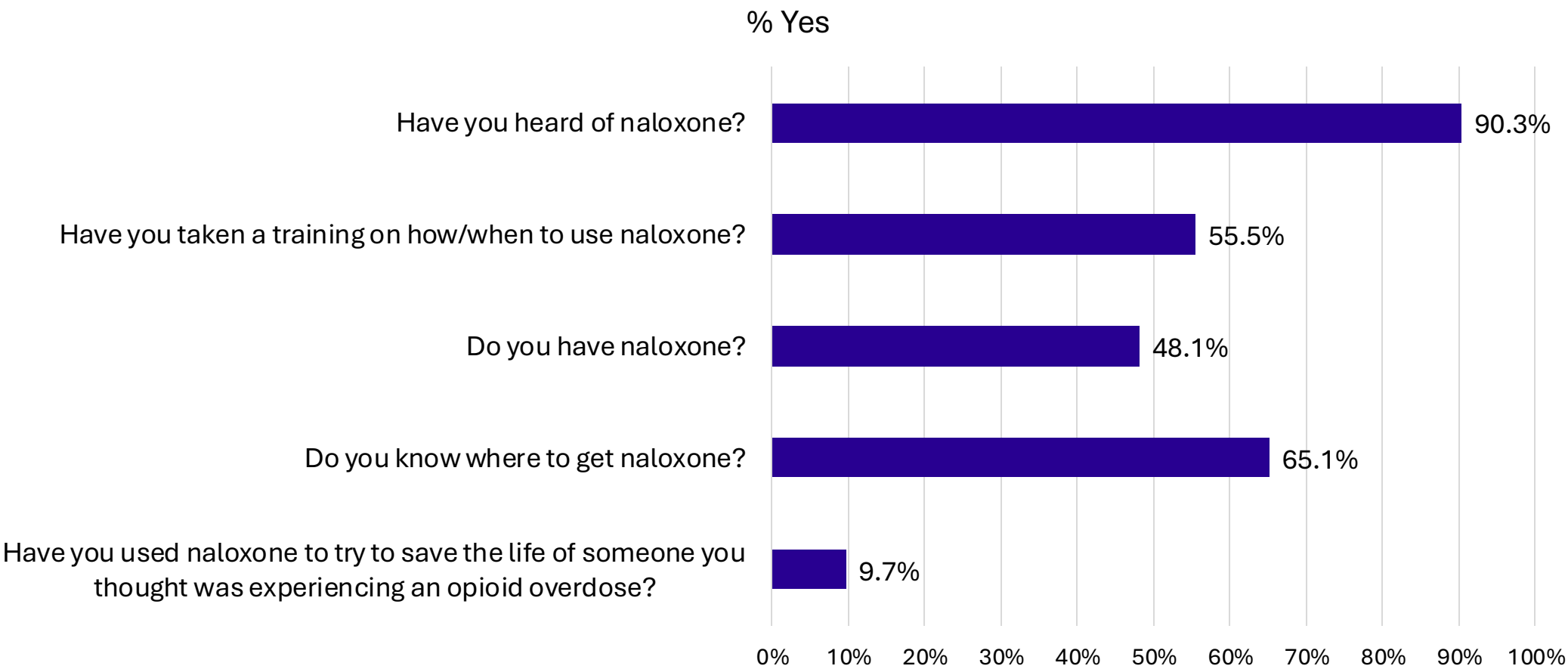
All Community Members

Have you ever returned unused, expired, or no longer needed prescription medications to the medication disposal drop box or the DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day?



All Community Members

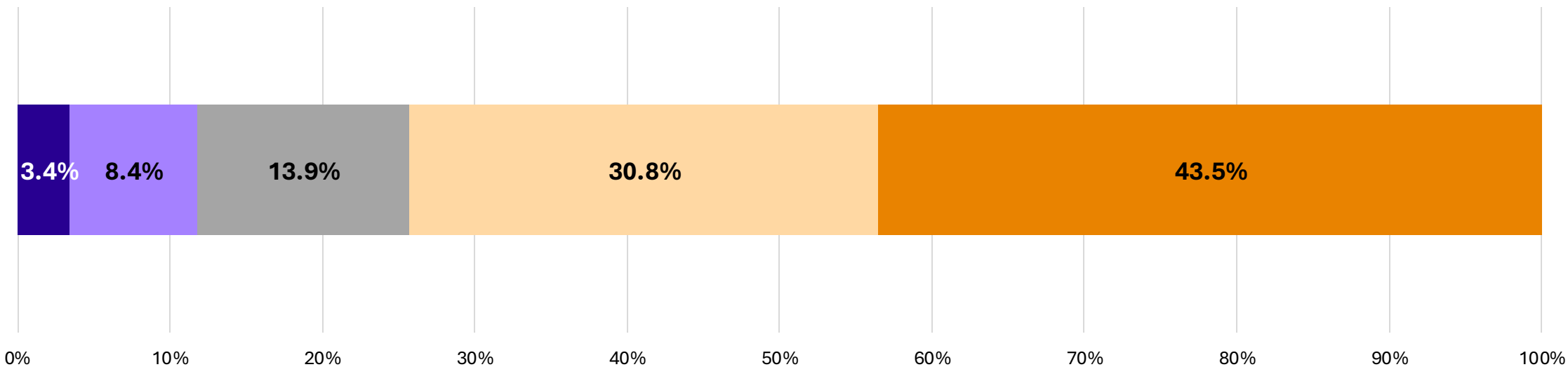
Regarding naloxone (the medication that reverses an overdose, e.g., Narcan) ...



All Community Members

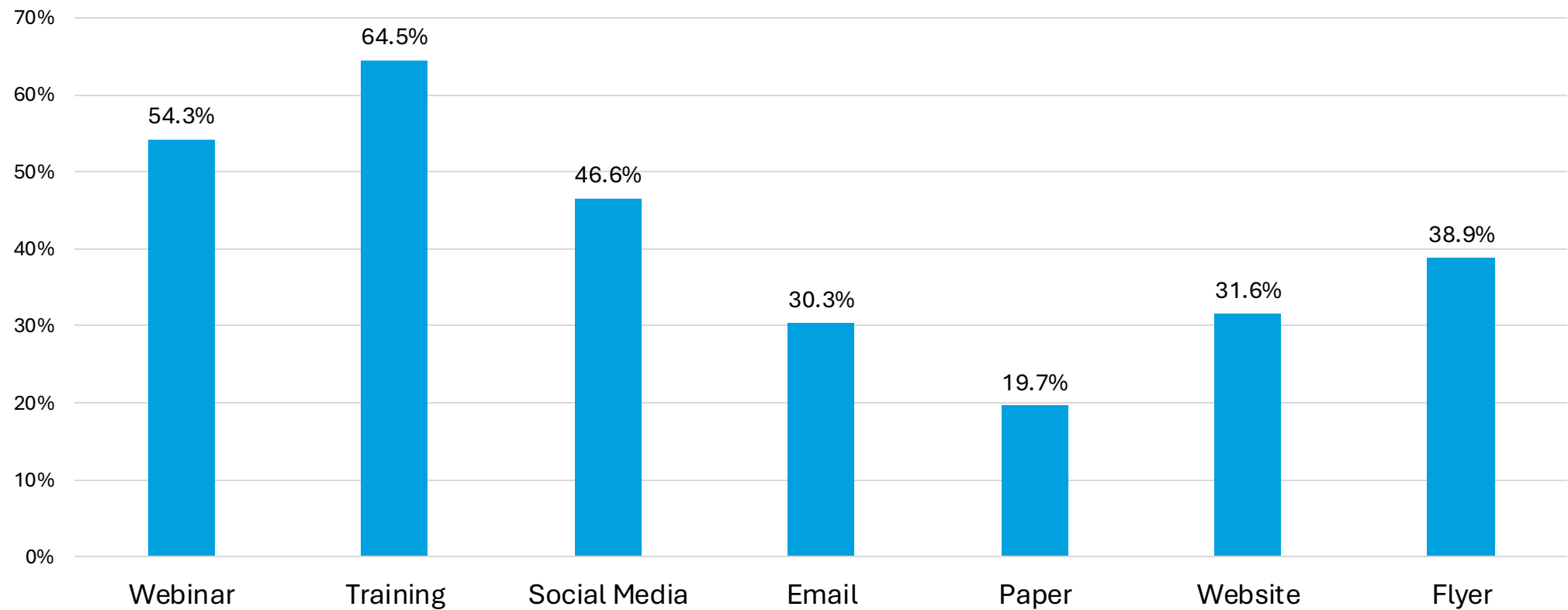
Opioid Use Disorder (opioid addiction) is a chronic medical condition like diabetes.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral - Neither agree or disagree Agree Strongly agree



All Community Members

Where would you prefer to access information about mental health, substance use, problem gambling and related issues for youth and adults?



All Community Members

What topics would you be interested in learning more about related to wellness?
(Select all that apply)

