



Core Four Partnership

Community Meeting

Youth Coalition- Working Group

April 23rd and April 26th 2024

Hosted by The Core Four Partnership & Youth Coalition- Working Group



Community Action, Inc.
of Central Texas

— DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES —



Texas Youth
Action Network

Overview

- **Core Four Partnership Background**
- **Texas Youth Action Network**
- **Youth Coalition Tentative Timeline**
- **Youth Coalition Structure**
- **Community Needs Assessment**
- **Questions**
- **Get Involved**

The Core Four Partnership

Established in February 2020 at **Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas**

- *San Marcos Commission on Children and Youth* transitioned to become **The Core Four Partnership**
 - Core Four Policy Group
 - Core Four Task Force
- *San Marcos Youth Commission* transitioned to **The Youth Task Force**
- **The Core Four Partnership** is comprised of:
 - City of San Marcos
 - Hays County
 - Texas State University
 - San Marcos CISD
- Purpose: To continue the work of **The 2013 Youth Master Plan**
 - The Core Four Partnership Focus Area are:
 - Youth Task Force
 - SMTX Mental Health Coalition
 - Mentoring

Texas Youth Action Network

In fall of 2021, **Youth Services** joined the **TYAN Collaborative**

- **Goal: Create Awareness and Education about Positive Youth Development Philosophy**
 - Establish Youth-Adult Partnerships that promote the culture of PYD
- Aims to strengthen our organizations' abilities to build Youth-Adult Partnerships (YAPs) and integrate youth voices in decision-making
- Evidence based research shows that youth who have an opportunity to have a voice and work alongside adults as partners have:
 - Greater Self-Esteem and Self-efficacy
 - Feel more connected to their community
 - Less likely to have involvement in unsafe behaviors: drinking, smoking, and unsafe sex
 - Organizations and communities benefit to become better equipped to address youth issues in the long-term

- In summer of 2023, **Youth Services** was selected to be a **Regional Pod Leader**

- Goals of **Regional Pod Leader** are to:

- Establish a “pod” (coalition) that would complete a community needs assessment
- Develop a working group for the coalition
- Create goals and activities that would meet the goals set by the coalition





Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education



Services

The project will provide schools with access to licensed mental health specialists and expert training. It will strengthen partnerships with mental health provider organizations, families, and businesses to support school mental health.

Potential Activities and Supports

- o Individual/Group Counseling
- o Family Counseling and Support
- o Curriculum and Guidance Lessons
- o Educator and Community Training
- o Prevention/Awareness Events
- o Increase access to outside services



Rodriguez Elementary – Community Project Manager, Jennifer Parker, LPC-S

Bonham Pre Kindergarten – Mental Health/Behavioral Health Specialist, DiAna Escamilla, LPC

San Marcos High School – Mental Health/Behavioral Health Specialist, Micaela Hernandez, LCSW

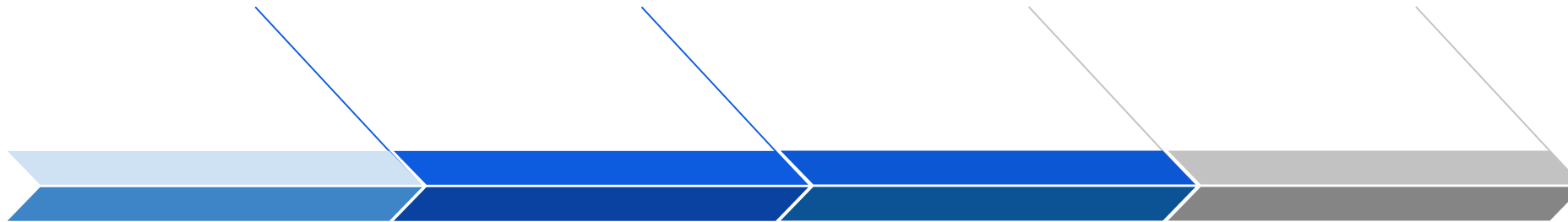
Partnerships: SAMHSA, TEA, Region 13, HHSC, UT Institute For Mental Health

Core Four Partnership- Youth Coalition

June 2023- August 2023

September 2023 - May 2024

June 2024- December 2024



Phase I

Select community partners who work with youth and young adults between the ages of 11-24.

Phase II

1. Establish Priority Areas
2. Develop and Implement the community needs assessment (SOAR)
3. Feedback from youth & parents on survey draft
4. Distribute survey via city, county, community partners and district
5. Facilitate focus groups for youth, young adults, parents, & key stakeholders
6. SOAR Data Analysis and Findings
7. Host Youth Fest for HS on March 7
8. Host Youth Fest for YA on April 26
9. Host Youth Fest for MS TBD (June/July)
10. Host Community Meetings to provide findings from preliminary

Phase III

1. Invite community members, non-profits with an interest in positive youth development who work with youth and young adults to join the coalition.
2. Review and prioritize goals based on the results of the CNA
3. Provide activities, trainings and partnerships that foster a positive youth development culture for youth in the Greater San Marcos Area.

Core Four Partnership- Youth Coalition Structure

Youth Coalition

Facilitated by the Youth Services Director on behalf of the Core Four Partnership
with support of the Youth Coalition- Working Group

Working Group → Steering Committee

Consist of 5 strategic community partners who have committed to the creation of a coalition that will focus on the needs of youth in the Greater San Marcos Area. The partners have signed SOW for 1 Year commitment to help establish the coalition. This initial working group will transition to the steering committee for the coalition. Each partner received \$5,000 for completing benchmarks that supported Youth Services work in establishing this new coalition.



Working Group Membership

Initial partners were selected on the following criteria:

- Youth Age Focus Area i.e. middle school, high school, young adult
- Organization offerings/services provided
- Demographic Focus Area



Working Group Requirements

1. Attend bi-monthly meetings to work towards coalition goals.
2. Complete PYD Training & Pod Collaborative Training.
3. Each partner was required to have 2 youth who represent their organization in the working group.
4. Develop, distribute, and analyze a community needs assessment.
5. Provide programming based on the results of the CNA.
6. Expand to include new members in Phase III

Youth Coalition Working Group Members

- SOAR
- Greater San Marcos Youth Council
- Star Teen from the San Marcos Public Library
- Student Support Services Association
- San Marcos Public Housing Authority- Teen Programs



Youth Coalition Working Group Goals

- Establish Priority Areas
- Develop and implement a community needs assessment
- **Next Steps(Phase III):** Based on the results and findings, discuss and develop action items for the youth coalition
 - Expand membership and seek out grants
 - Provide Activities
 - Provide awareness and education training opportunities
 - Develop partnerships and collaborations to enhance programming/services





Hays County Youth Mental Health Needs Assessment Results

SOAR Scholars: Lydia Harvath, Julianne Ho, Kate Miller, Isha Patel

Mentors: Dr. Gloria Martinez and Dr. Toni Watt

**Department of Sociology, Texas State University,
Funded by: Texas Youth Action Network through Community Action, Inc.
2024**





Overview

- Background
- Research Methods
- Preliminary Results
 - Demographics
 - Current youth mental health conditions
 - Factors
 - Services
- Discussion





Background

- **Core Four Partnership – Youth Coalition Working Group**
- **SOAR** – undergraduate applied research program at Texas State University & part of the Youth Coalition Working Group
- **GOAL:** Conduct youth mental health and wellness assessment





Methods

- **Focus Groups For Input on Developing Survey Question and Feedback After Sending Out Survey**
 - Youth/Young Adults aged 11 – 24
 - Texas State Students
 - Parents
 - Local Agencies + Organizations
- **Survey conducted in Fall of 2023**
- **Survey Sample Results**
 - **415 Youth/Young Adults (Y/YA)**
 - **205 Texas State Students (TXST)**
 - **147 Parents and Stakeholders**





Results

Demographics

Current Mental Health Conditions

Predictors

Services



Y/YA Demographics

Youth/Young Adult Enrollments

Enrolled in Middle School	214 (52%)
Enrolled in High School	172 (42%)
Enrolled in Trade School or College (Part Time/Full Time)	7 (1%)
Not Enrolled	21 (5%)

Gender Identity

Cisgender Female	133 (57%)
Cisgender Male	76 (32%)
Gender Non-Conforming	25 (11%)

Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic	187 (60%)
White	104 (33%)
Black	31 (10%)
Other	50 (15%)

Immigrant Status

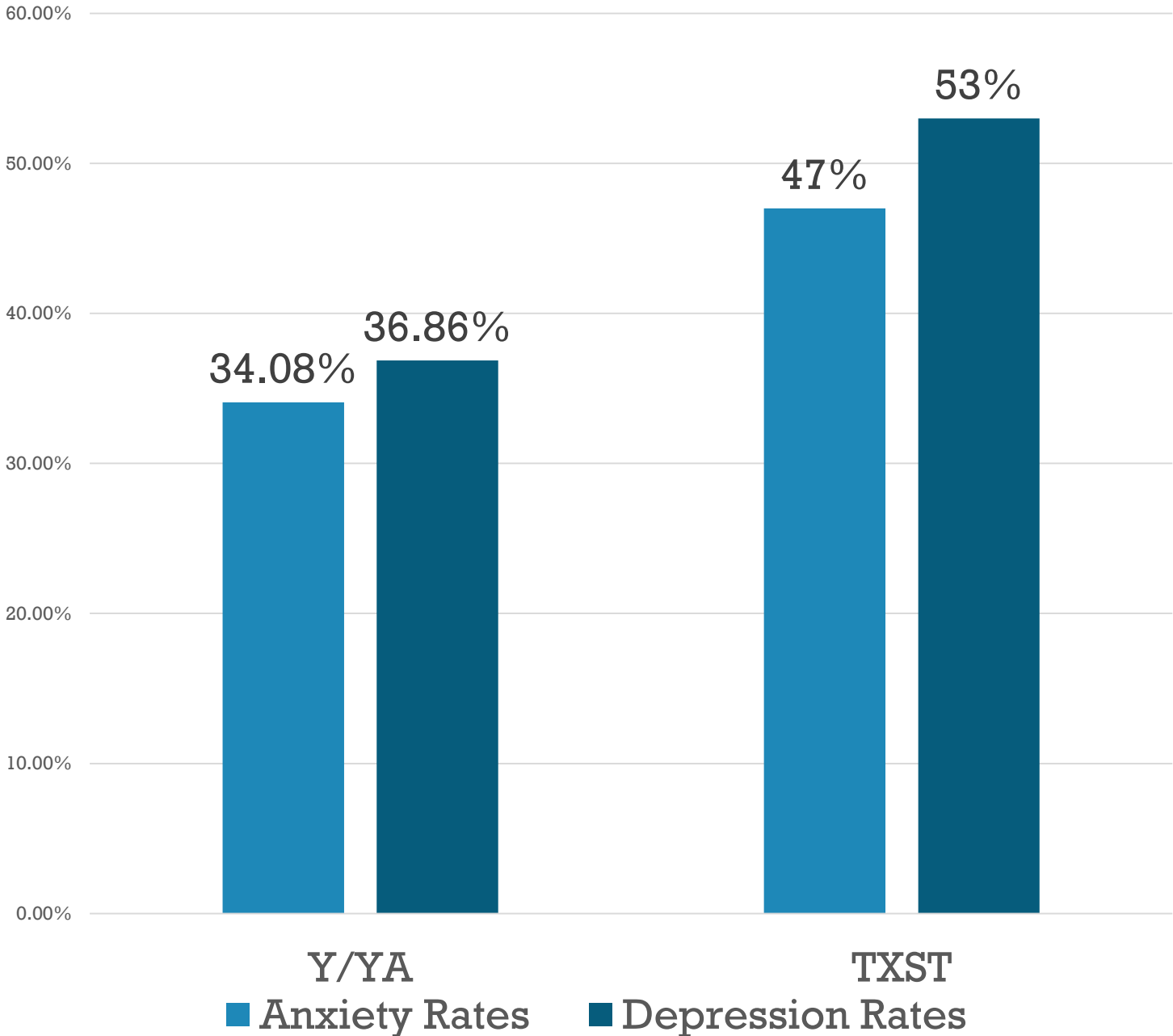
Parent is an immigrant	69 (22%)
Respondent is an immigrant	19 (6%)

TXST Student Demographics

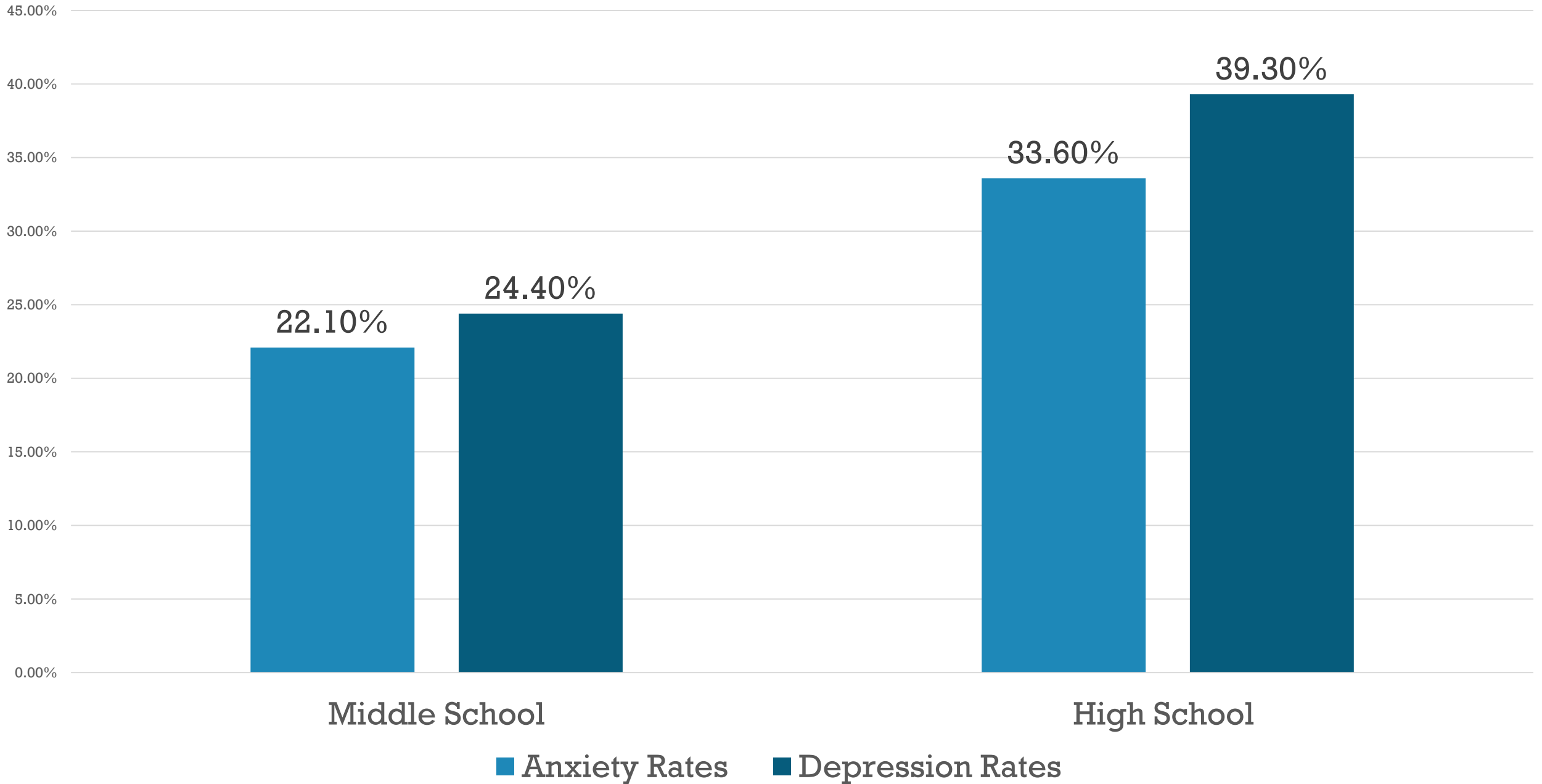
Texas State Student Education	
Enrolled in School	205 (100%)
Gender Identity	
Cisgender Female	120 (72%)
Cisgender Male	41 (25%)
Gender Non-Conforming	6 (3.6%)
Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic	112 (58%)
White	94 (49%)
Black	17 (9%)
Other	12 (6.5%)
Immigrant Identity	
Parent is an immigrant	47 (24.6%)
Respondent is an immigrant	6 (3.1%)

Youth Mental Health

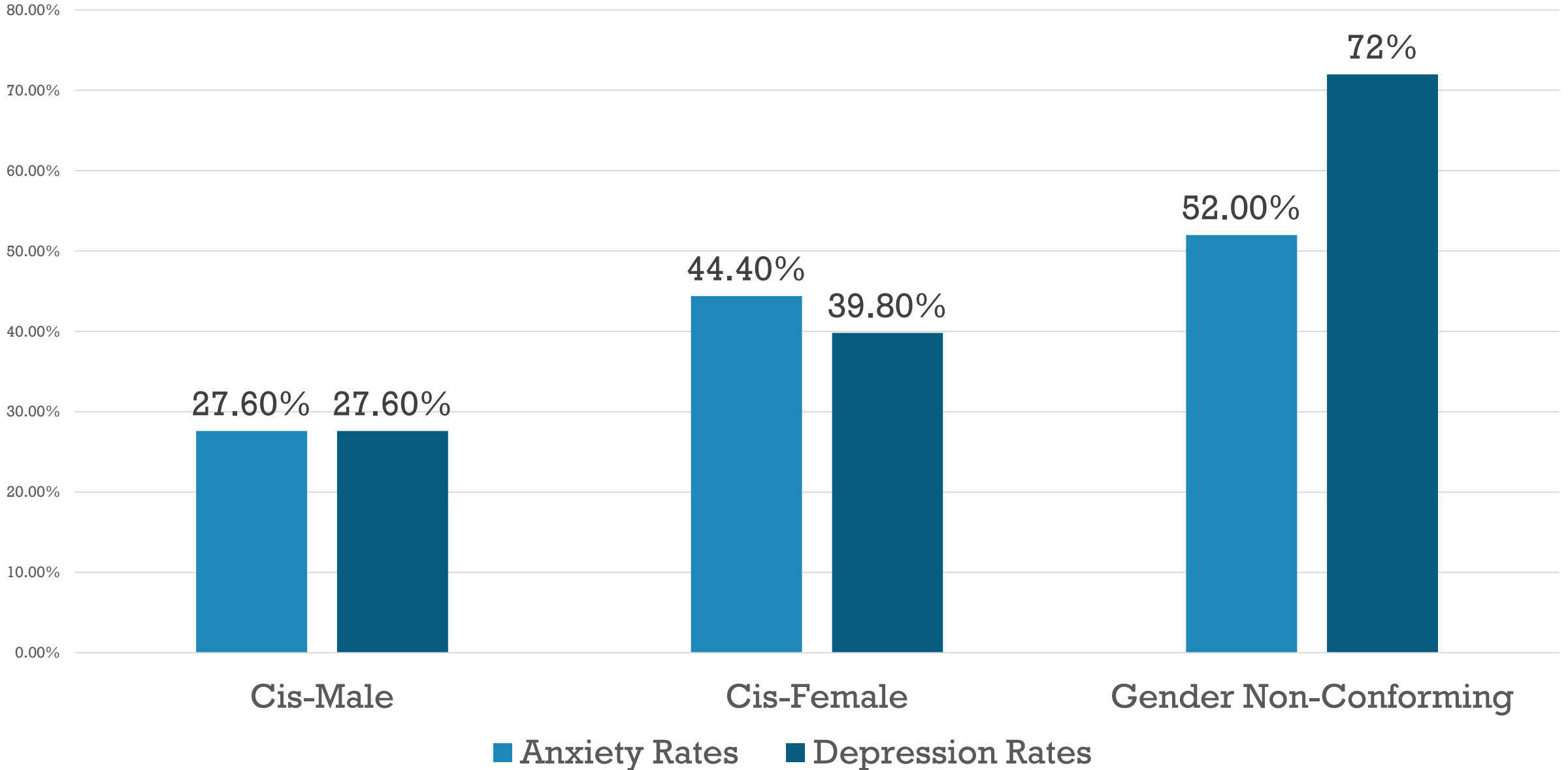
Anxiety/Depression Rates



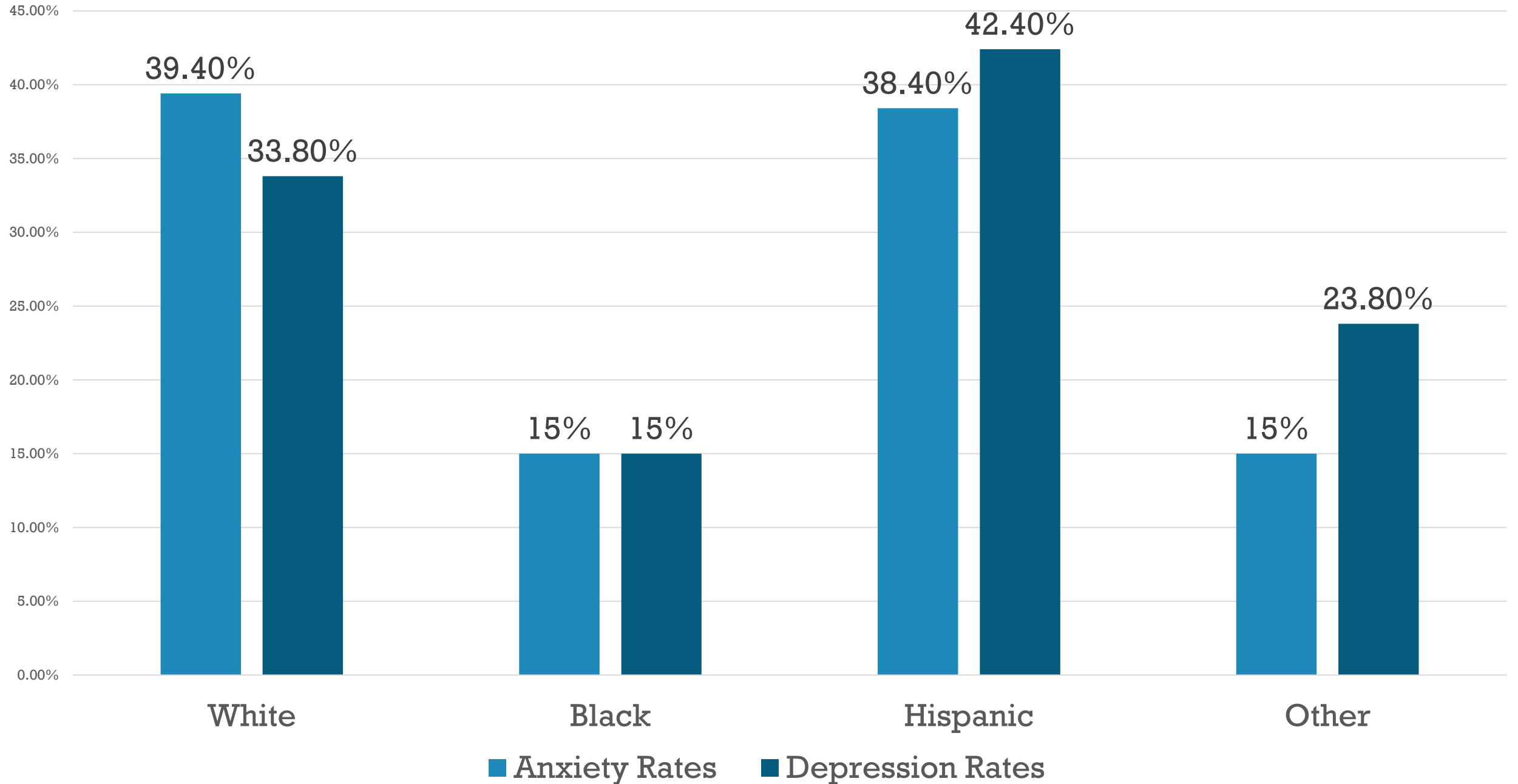
Anxiety/Depression Rates for Middle School and High School



Anxiety/Depression Rates in Y/YA Across Gender Identity



Anxiety/Depression Rates in Y/YA Across Race/Ethnicity





Factors

Social and Emotional Support

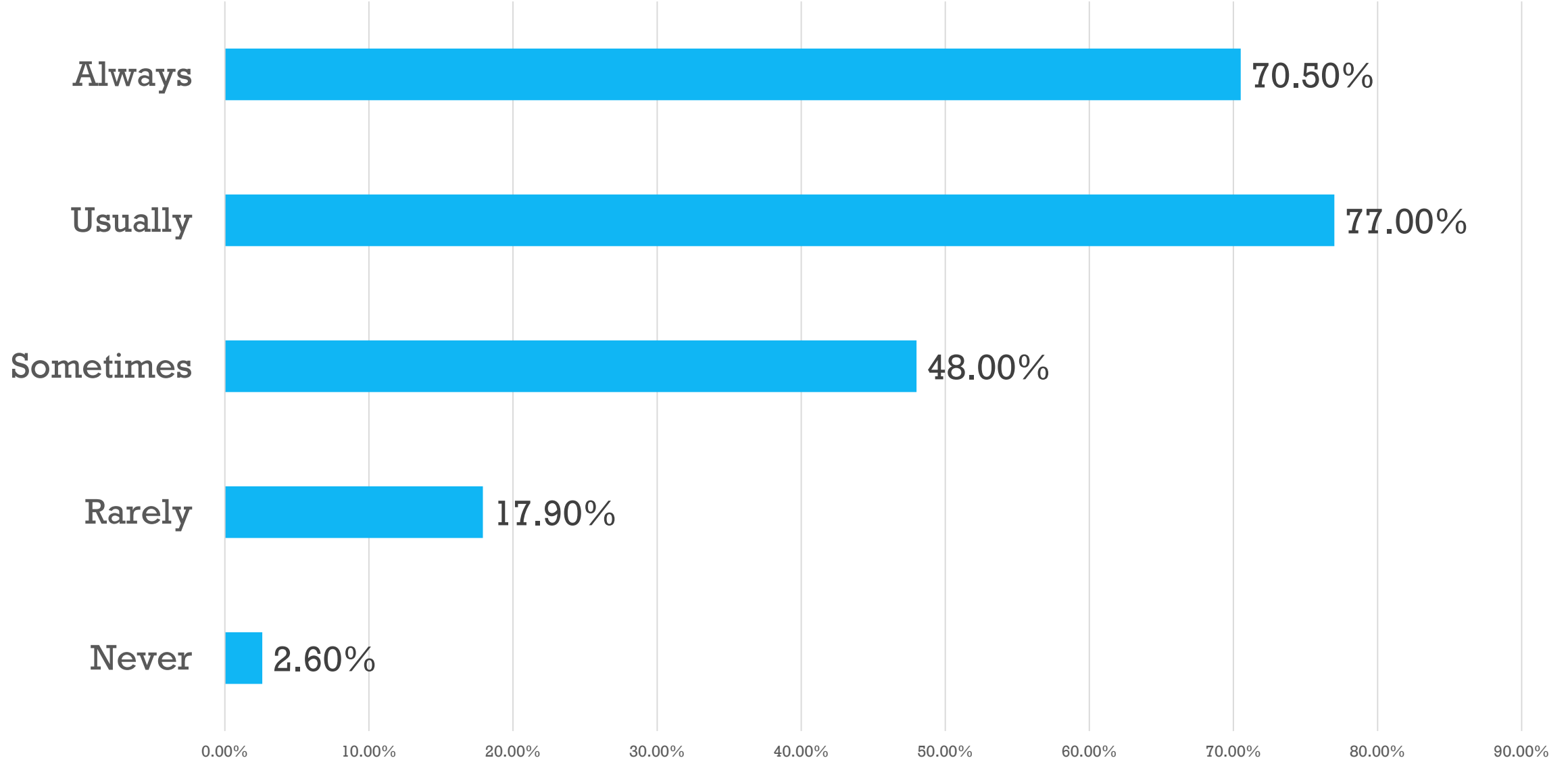
Basic Needs

Safety

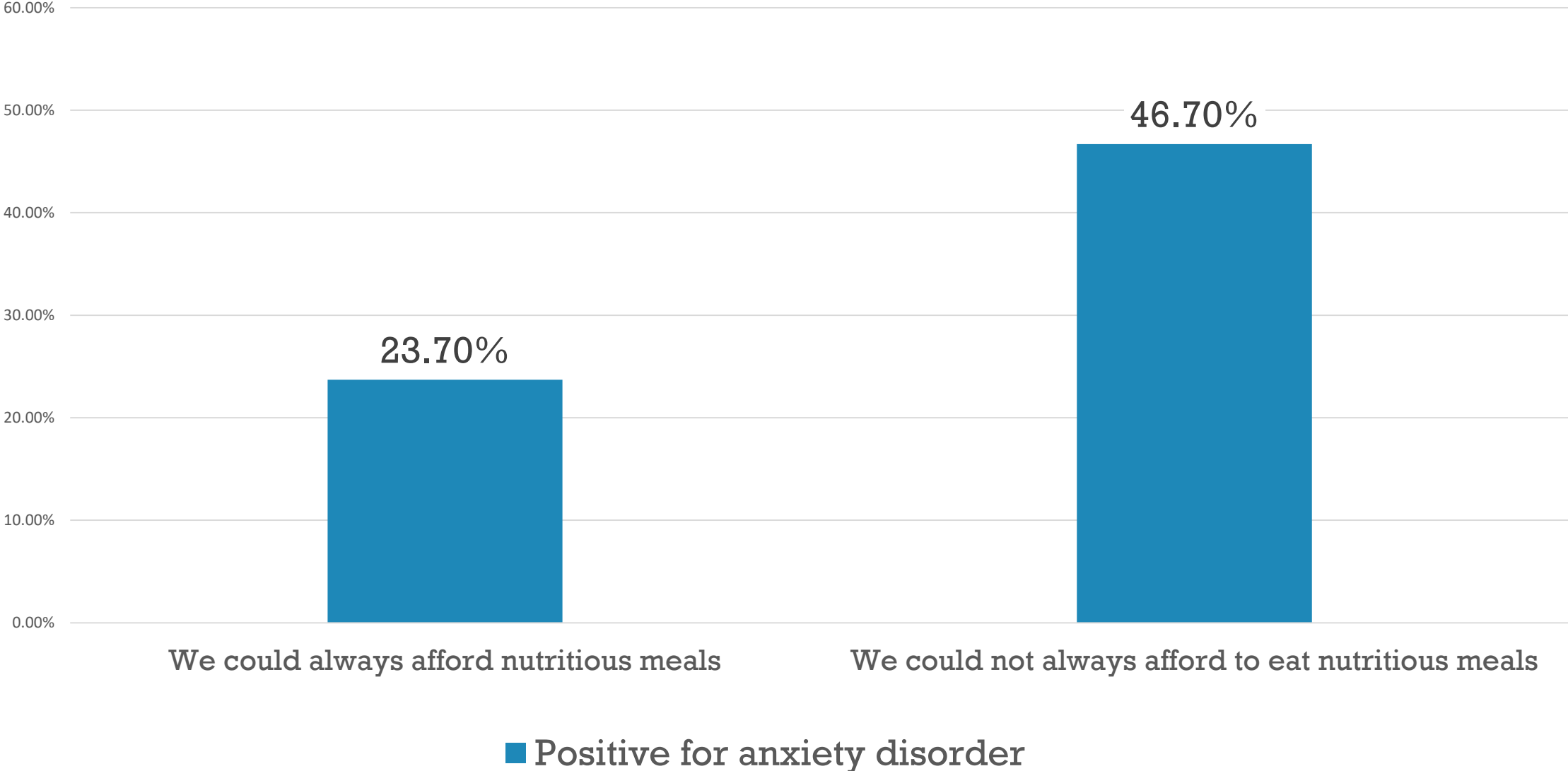
Academics and Career



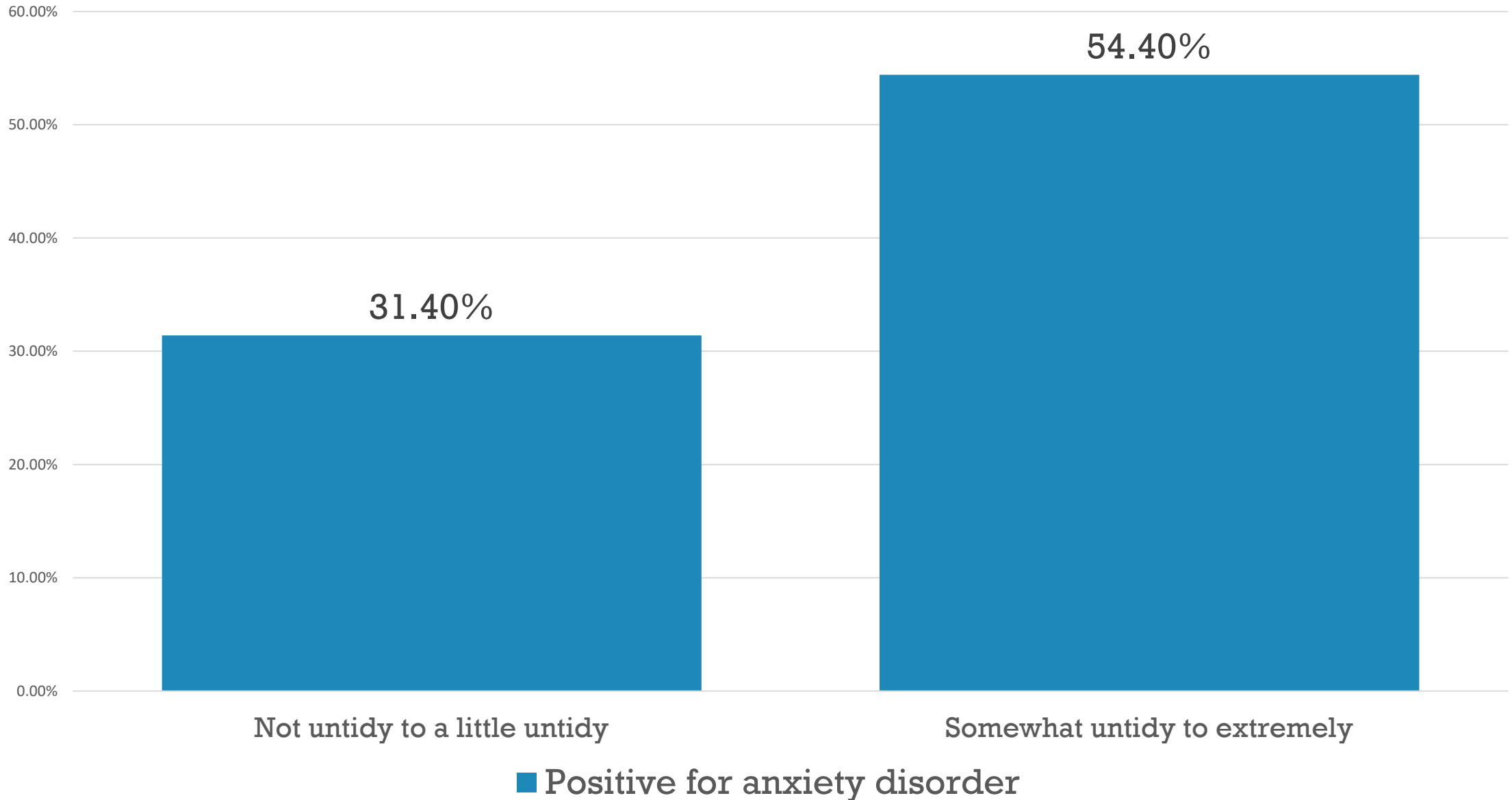
Y/YA - Rates of Depression/Anxiety based on how often Y/YA feels socially distant



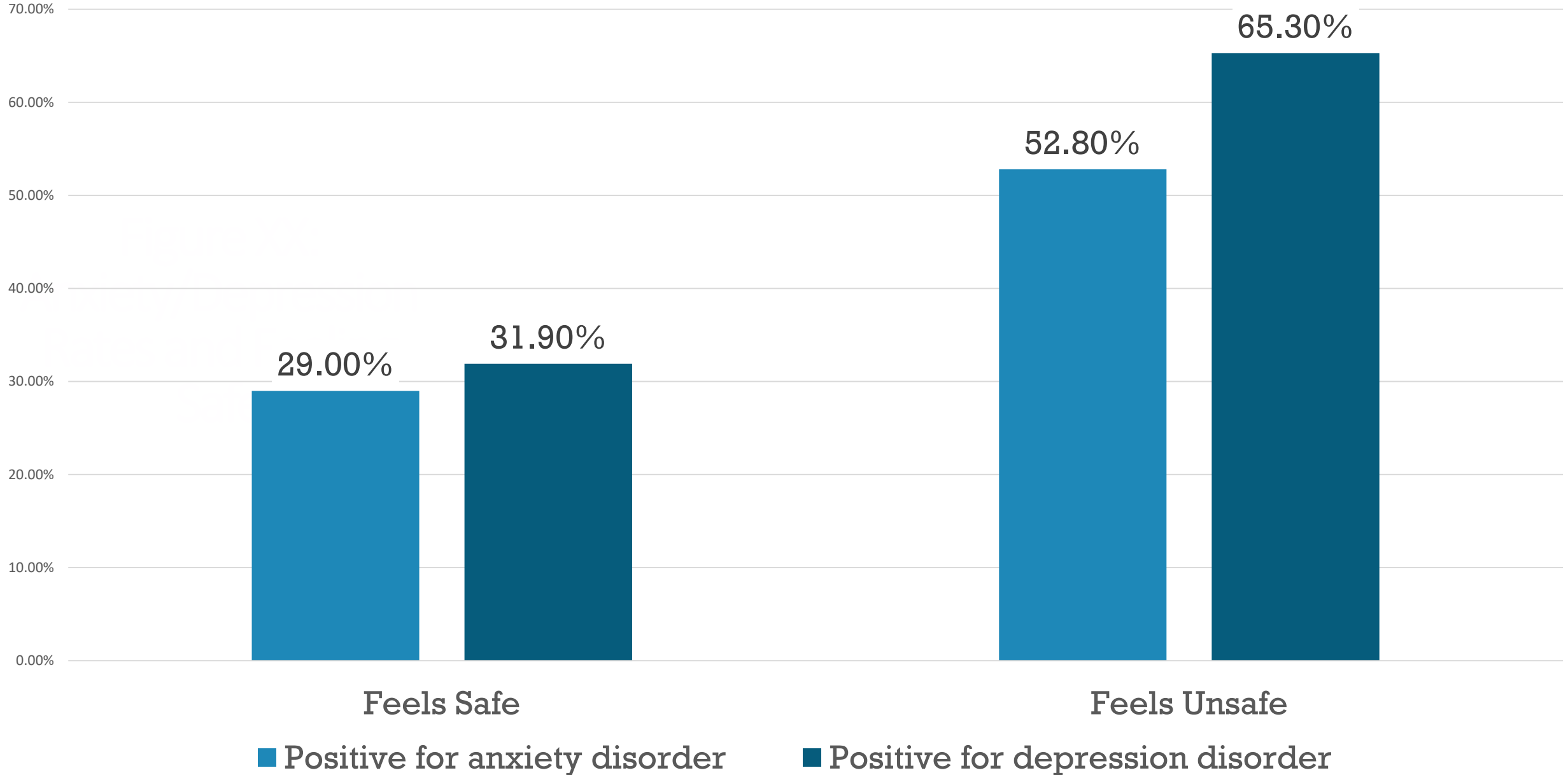
Comparing anxiety rates for Y/YA who could always afford nutritious meals and those who could not



Comparing anxiety rates of Y/YA who live in visibly tidy neighborhoods and those who do not



Anxiety/depression rates comparing Y/YA who feel safe and Y/YA who feel unsafe in their schools





Y/YA Focus Group Comments Regarding Stressors

What are some issues you see with youth mental health and well-being?

- “The hop from middle school to high school, in middle school they don't prepare you at all... in middle school, I had no homework all three years, and then all of a sudden in high school, on the first week of school, I already had nine assignments that I had to do in one weekend.”
- “School seems like it's one of the most important things up there in your life, so when you're not doing great in it, you don't feel too great.”





Career Confidence

- Most HS students reported receiving more guidance regarding plans for higher education than guidance on exploring/planning their careers.
- Although most HS students feel adequately equipped to handle a future career, they report low career-planning confidence.



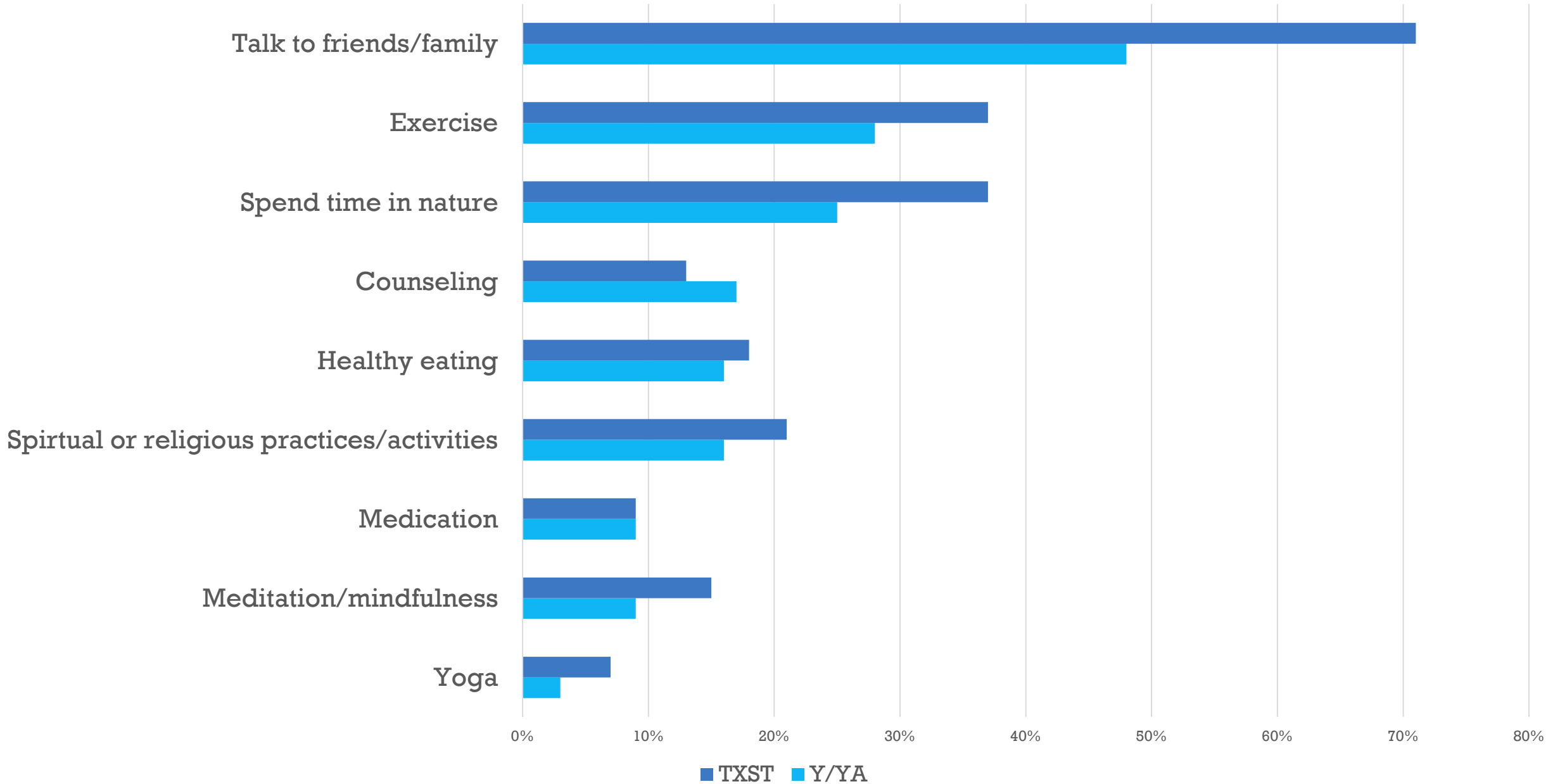
Services

How Do Youth Take Care of Their Mental Health

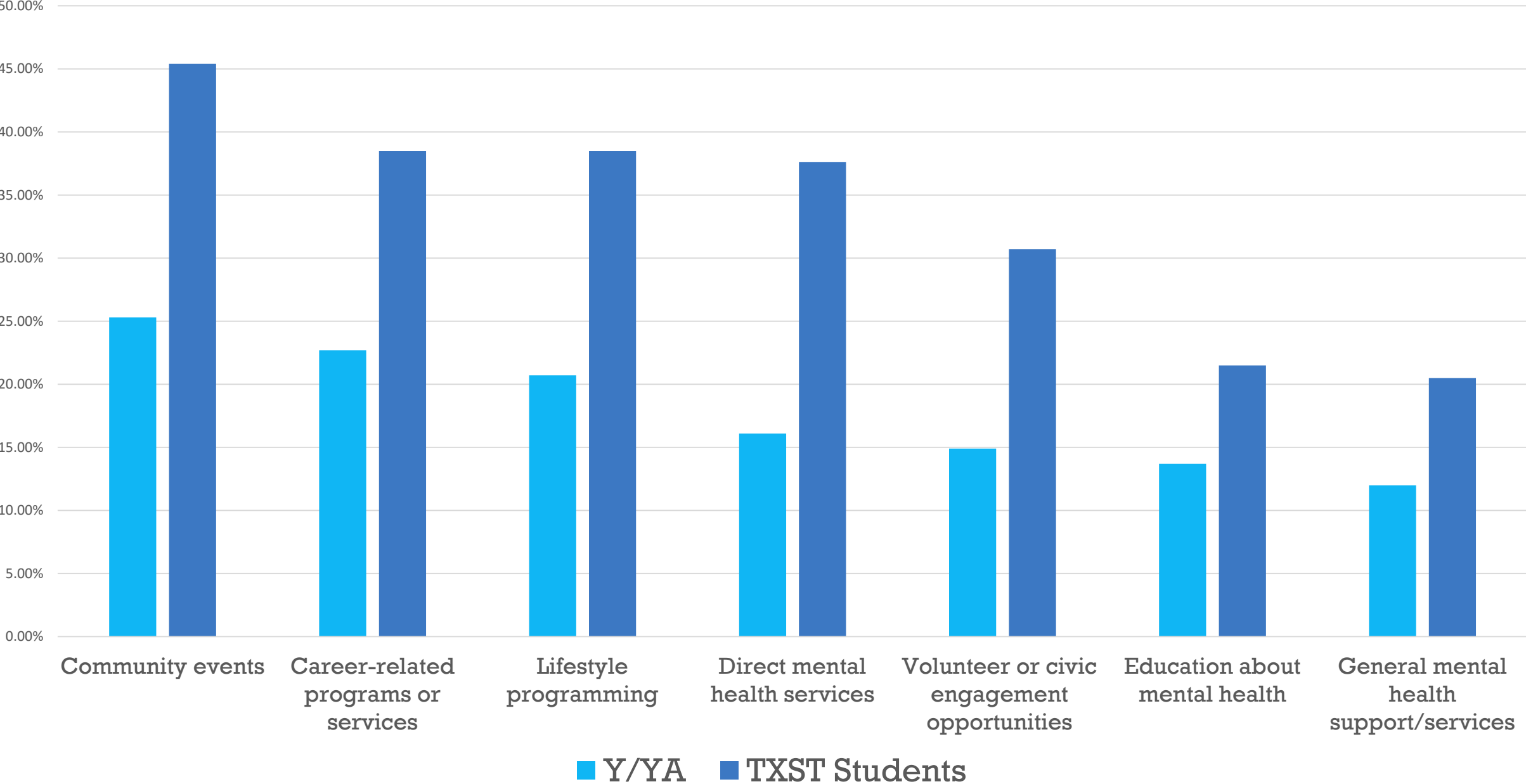
**What Services Do Youth, Parents and Stakeholders
Want**

**How Do Youth Typically Receive Information About
Community Events and Services**

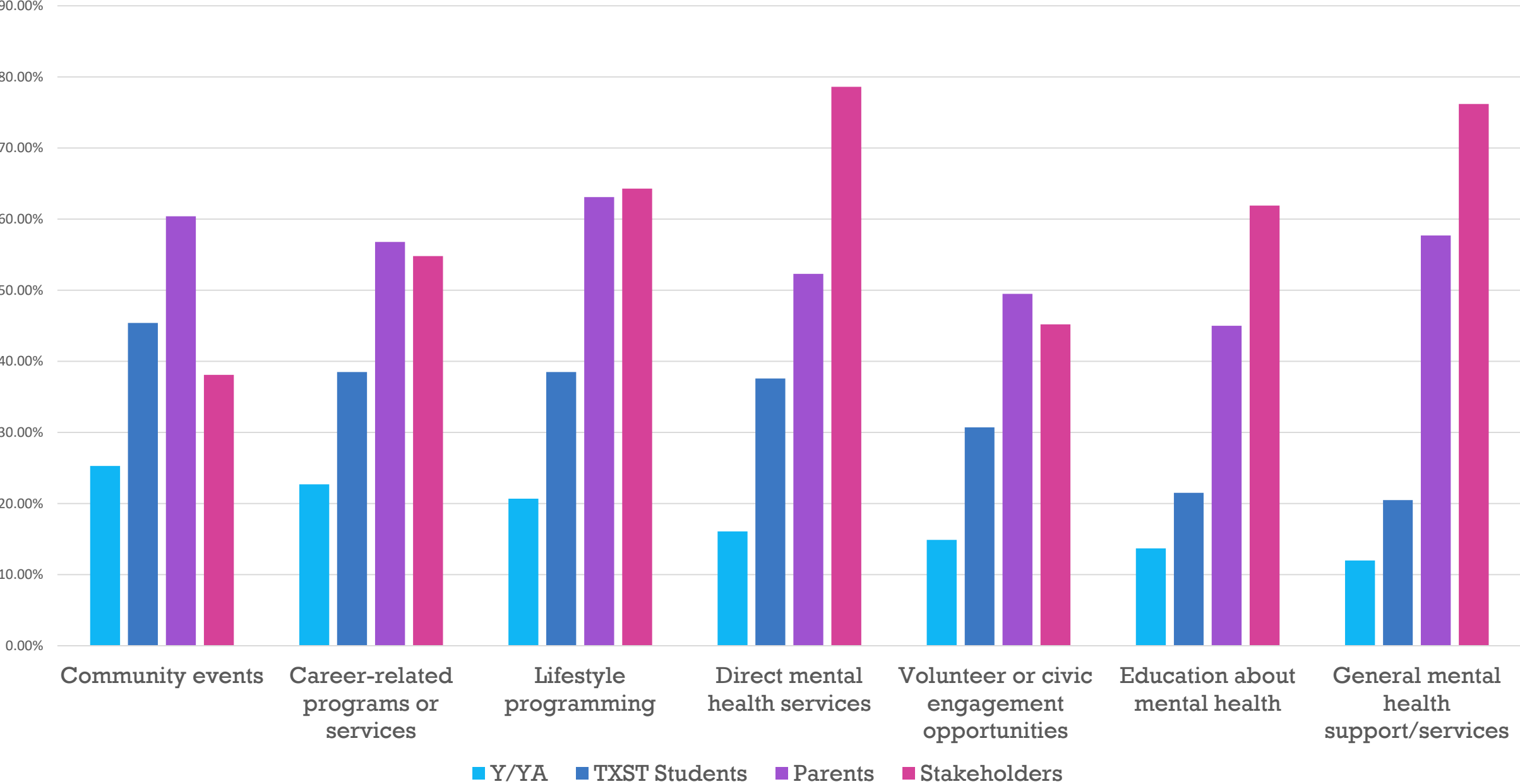
What Youth Do To Take Care of Their Mental Health



Services Youth Want

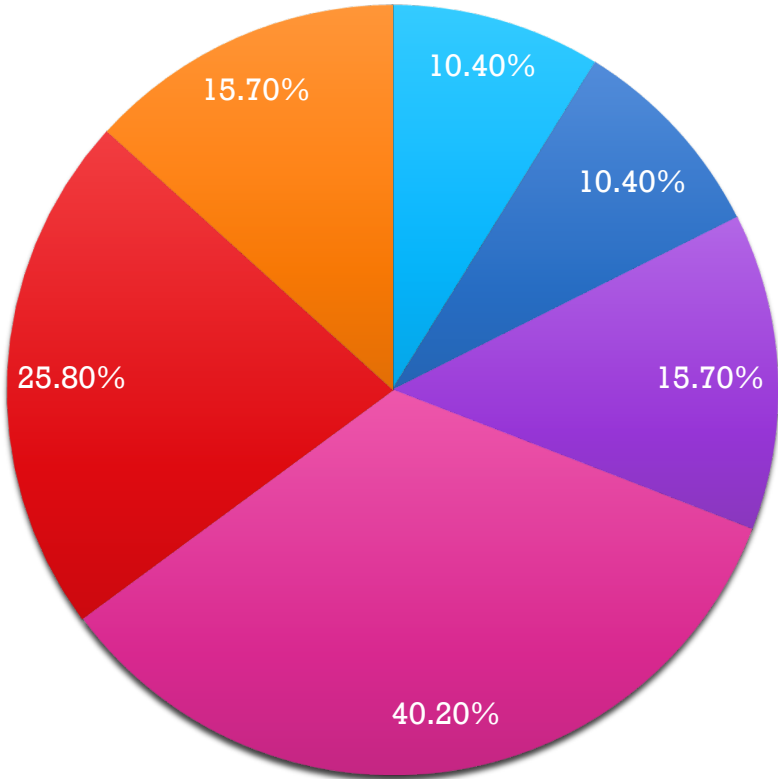


Expanding Services



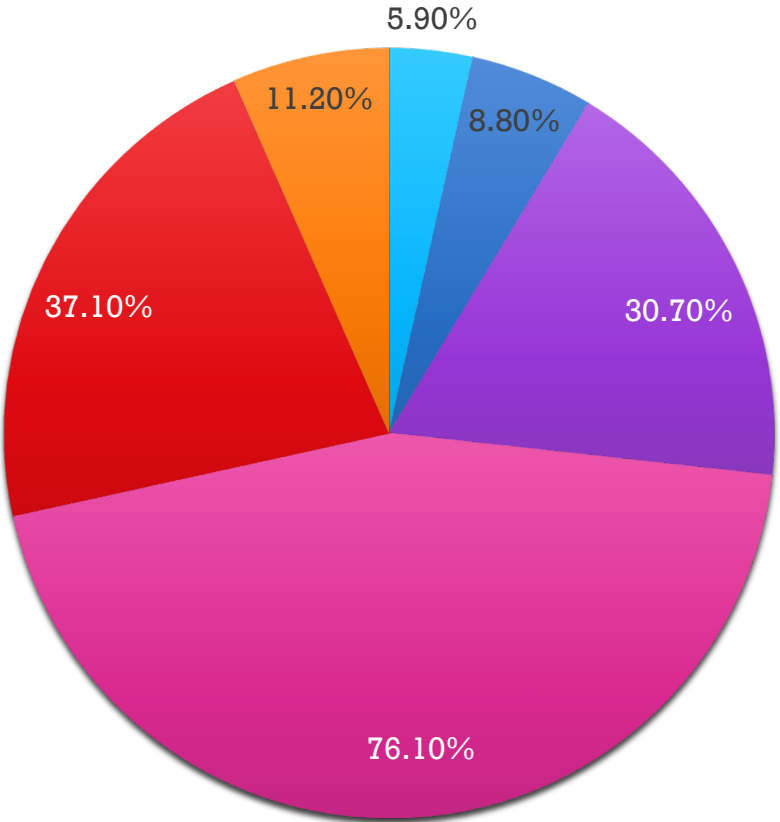
How Youth/Young Adults and TXST Students Receive Information about Community Events and Services

Y/YA



- Library
- Local TV/News
- Websites
- Social Media
- Word of Mouth
- Don't know where to find info

TXST Students



- Library
- Local TV/News
- Websites
- Social Media
- Word of Mouth
- Don't know where to find info



No Statistical Association

- **Social Media**
 - Literature suggests social comparison and bullying on SM is more important than frequency of use
- **Participating in Out-of-School Activities, such as:**
 - Clubs, Organizations, Paid or Volunteer Work
- **Needs further exploration in future focus groups and/or surveys**



Wrap-Up

- Overall, a significant portion of youth in Hays County are suffering from poor mental health
- Main factors include social isolation, basic needs, safety, and academic/career concerns.
- Y/YA want additional community events, lifestyle programs, and career planning services.

S.O.A.R.
Student Opportunities
for Applied Research

TEXAS STATE CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND GENDER STUDIES TEXAS STATE SOCIOLOGY



Recommendations

- As we are programming community events and activities, community organizations can implement the mental health awareness and education into the events or services.



Thank You
Questions and/or
Comments

Thank you to our partners who have supported this work and have taken an active role in developing, distributing, and collecting data for the youth survey.



Interested in joining the Youth Coalition or participating in any youth services initiatives.

Get Involved



Scan the QR Code to sign-up or bit.ly/ytfinfo

