

2022

**Somerville Public Schools
Student Health Survey**

Presentation

2022



Background

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a national school-based survey that monitors health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and young adults. These include:

- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence;
- Sexual behaviors;
- Substance use;
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors; and,
- Inadequate physical activity.

The YRBS also measures other high priority health-related behaviors and protective factors. These include:

- Prevalence of obesity;
- Attitudes and perceptions related to substance use;
- Food and housing insecurity;
- Youth assets;
- Academic achievement; and,
- Sexual identity and sex of sexual contacts.

Somerville High School has administered an adapted version of the YRBS, the Student Health Survey, every two years since 2004. In 2021, Somerville Public Schools engaged with John Snow, Inc. (JSI), a public health consulting firm, to support this initiative.

Sample & Demographics

In March 2022, the Student Health Survey was administered to all high school students. The data were cleaned and surveys not included in the final analysis when a student started but did not complete any of the questions, completed less than 50% of the questions, or took less than 50% of the average time to complete the survey.

Overall, 30% of high school students (N=421) were included in the analyses. Note that the low overall response rate, in particular among 11th and 12th grade students, may skew the results towards those in lower grades.

KEY TERMS AND ACRONYMS

- MA '19: 2019 Massachusetts Youth Health Survey
- 9: 9th grade
- 10: 10th grade
- 11: 11th grade
- 12: 12th grade
- M: Male
- F: Female
- GNC: Gender non-conforming (i.e., transgender, non-binary, questioning, other)

Student Characteristics	YRBS
Grade	
9 th	136
10 th	142
11 th	75
12 th	68
Gender Identity	
Female/Woman/Girl	190
Male/Man/Boy	183
Transgender, Non-binary, Questioning, Other	48
Chose not to respond	2
Race	
Asian	18
Black	35
White	223
Other	29
Multi-Racial	109
Chose not to respond	10
Ethnicity	
Hispanic/Latino	177

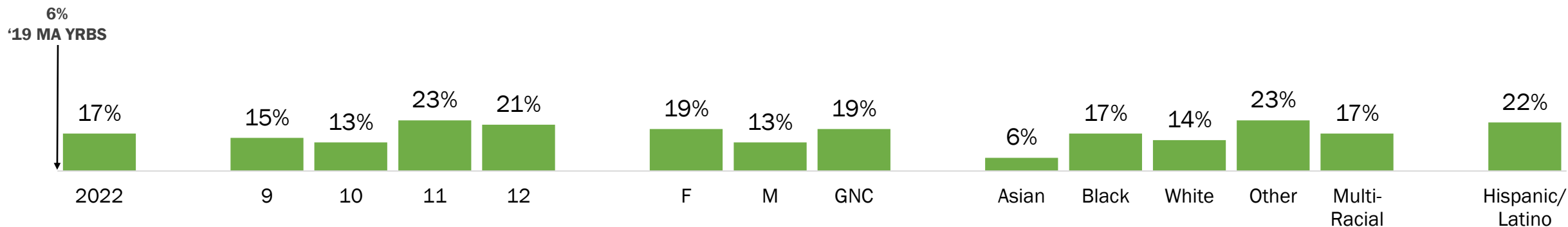


Results

SKIPPED SCHOOL BECAUSE THEY FELT UNSAFE ON THEIR WAY TO OR FROM SCHOOL, PAST 30 DAYS

Overall, 17% of high school students skipped school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school in the past 30 days.

- **Grade:** Students in 11th grade were most likely skip school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school (23%), followed by students in 12th, 9th, and 10th grade. (21%, 15%, and 13%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Female and gender non-conforming students were more likely to skip school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school (19%, respectively) than male students (13%).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Students of an Other Race were most likely to skip school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school (23%), followed by Multi-Racial students, Black students, White students, and Asian students (17%, 17%, 14%, and 6%, respectively). Twenty-two percent of Hispanic/Latino students skipped school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school.
- **Trends:** This was a new question in 2022, so there is no trend data.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were almost three times more likely to report skipping school because they felt unsafe on their way to or from school as Massachusetts 2019 high school students (17% vs. 6%).

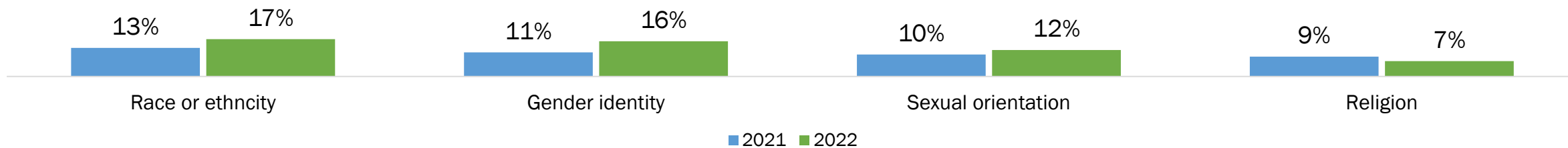


FEELINGS OF BAD OR UNFAIR TREATMENT IN SCHOOL, LIFETIME

(Sometimes, Most of the Time, Always)

High school students were asked how often they felt they were treated badly or unfairly in school. Nine percent of students reported experiencing bad or unfair treatment in school sometimes, most of the time, or always in the past 12 months because of their race or ethnicity, 8% because of their gender identity, 6% because of their sexual orientation, and 4% because of their religion (data not shown).

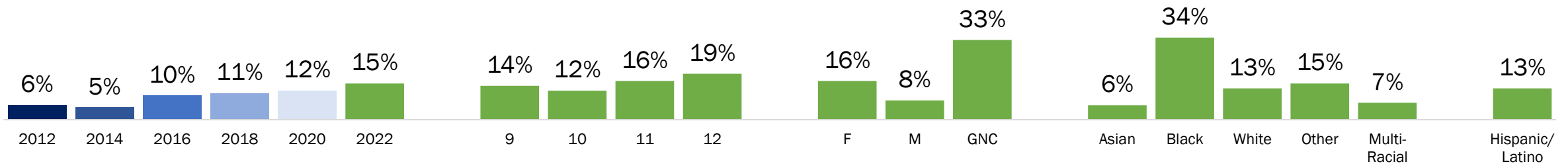
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported feelings of bad or unfair treatment in school over their lifetime because of their race or ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation increased from 2021 to 2022. Student experiences of religious discrimination decreased from 2021 to 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



EVER EXPERIENCED UNWANTED SEXUAL CONTACT OR FORCED TO DO SEXUAL THINGS THEY DID NOT WANT TO

Overall, 15% of high school students have experienced unwanted sexual contact or been forced to do sexual things that they did not want to.

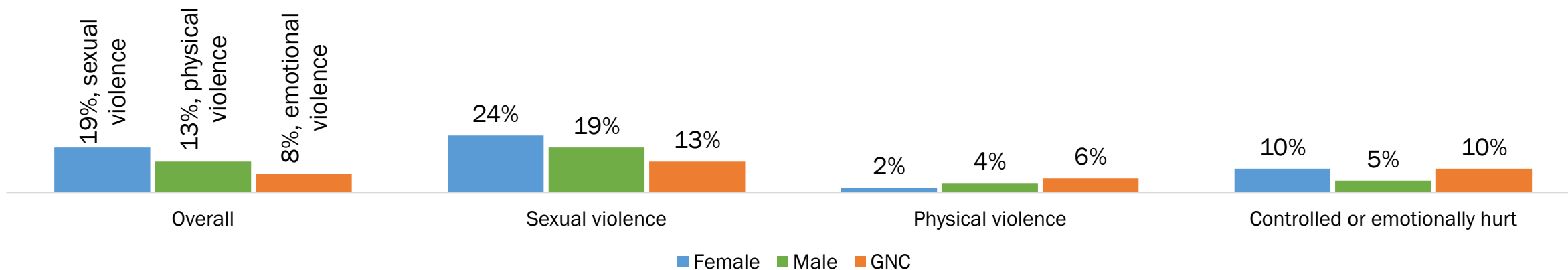
- **Grade:** Students in 12th grade were most likely to have ever experienced sexual violence (19%), followed by students in 11th, 9th, and 10th grade (16%, 14%, and 12%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Gender-non confirming students were more than twice as likely to have ever experienced sexual violence compared to female students (33% vs. 16%). Female students were twice as likely to have experienced sexual violence compared to male students (16% vs. 8%).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Black students were substantively more likely to have ever experienced sexual violence. Thirteen percent of Hispanic/Latino students have ever experienced sexual violence.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students has increased since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



EXPERIENCED SEXUAL, PHYSICAL, OR EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE BY SOMEONE THEY WERE DATING OR GOING OUT WITH, PAST 12 MONTHS

Overall, 19% of high school students have been hurt sexually by someone they were dating or going out with in the past 12 months, 3% have been hurt physically, and 8% have been controlled or emotionally hurt.

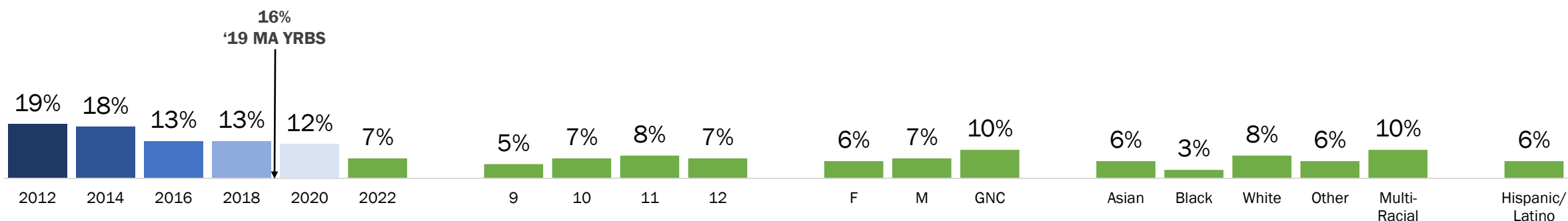
- **Gender:** Female students were most likely to experience sexual dating violence. Gender non-conforming students were most likely to experience physical dating violence. Female and gender non-conforming students were equally likely to experience control or be emotionally hurt by someone they were dating.
- **Trends:** This was a new question in 2022, so there is no trend data.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



BULLIED IN SCHOOL, PAST 12 MONTHS

Overall, 7% of high school students were bullied in school in the past 12 months.

- **Grade:** Percentages were similar across grades.
- **Gender:** Gender non-conforming students were most likely to have been bullied in school (10%), followed by male and female students (7% and 6%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Multi-Racial students were more likely to report being bullied in school (10%), followed by White students, Asian students, students of an Other Race, and Black students (8%, 6%, 6%, and 3%, respectively). Six percent of Hispanic/Latino students were bullied in school.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who were bullied in school has continued to decrease since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were more than two times less likely to report being bullied in school than Massachusetts 2019 high school students (7% vs. 16%). **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were two times less likely to report being in a physical fight on school property as Massachusetts 2019 high school students (3% vs. 6%).

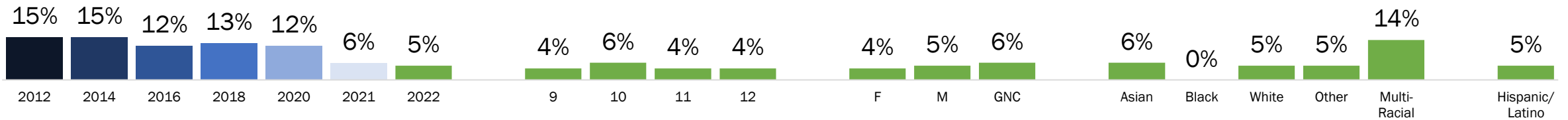


The 2022 Somerville YRBS defined bullying as when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way. Electronic bullying is things such as someone spreading a rumor or something untrue about you online; someone sending you a threatening or aggressive message; someone posting an embarrassing picture of you online without your permission; someone taking a private message you sent them and forwarding it to someone else or posting it where others could see it.

BULLIED ELECTRONICALLY, PAST 12 MONTHS

Overall, 5% of high school students reported being electronically bullied in the past 12 months.

- **Grade:** Percentages are similar across grades.
- **Gender:** Percentages are similar across genders.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Black students were least likely to report electronic bullying in the past 12 months (0%) and Multi-Racial students were most likely (14%). Five percent of Hispanic/Latino students reported being electronically bullied.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who were electronically bullied was relatively unchanged from 2012 to 2020. From 2020 to 2021, electronic bullying decreased by 50% and remained relatively unchanged from 2021 to 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



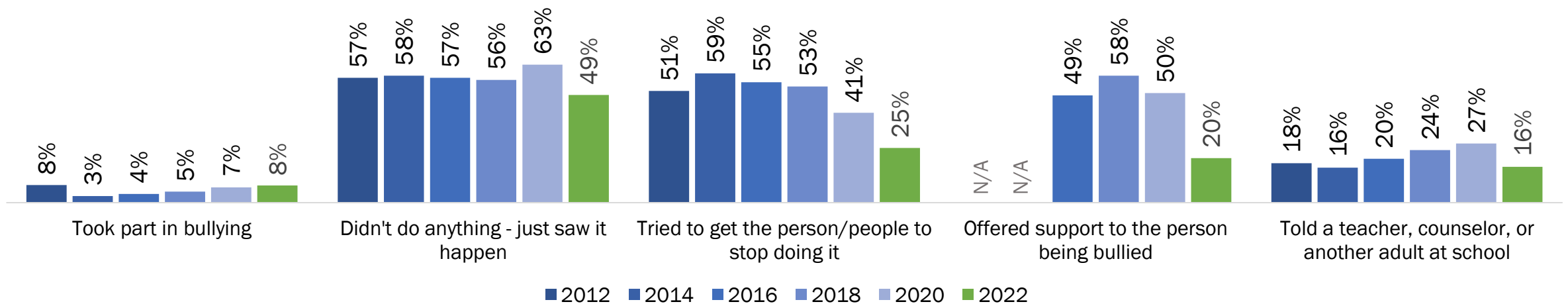
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STUDENT REACTIONS TO WITNESSING SOMEONE ELSE BEING BULLIED IN SCHOOL, LAST TIME

(Among Students Who Witnessed Someone Else Being Bullied in School in the Past 12 Months)

Overall, 30% of high school students have seen someone bullied in school in the past 12 months (data not shown). Those who had witnessed bullying, were asked about what they did the last time they saw it happen. Students were most likely to not do anything about it (49%) and least likely to take part in the bullying/harassing (8%). A quarter of students (25%) tried to intervene, 20% offered support to the person being bullied, and 16% told an adult in the school.

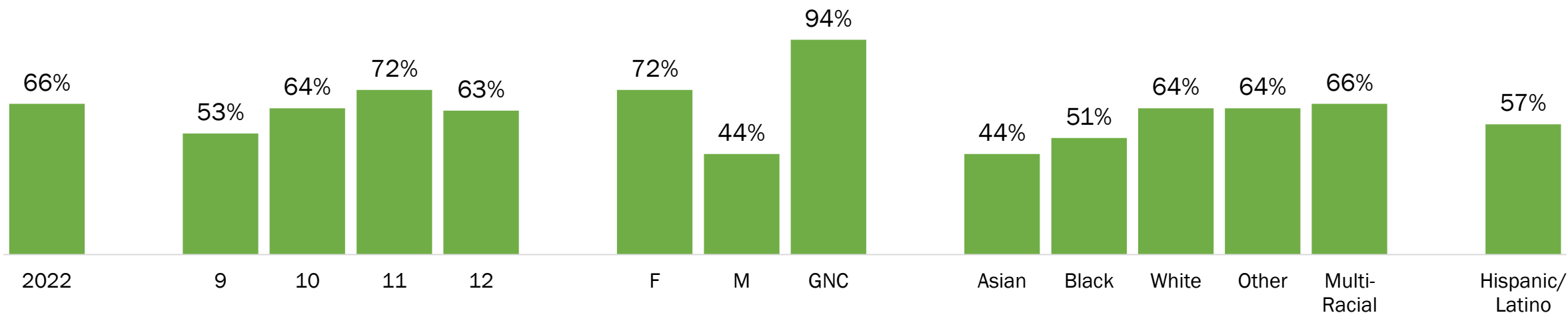
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville students who saw someone bullied in school and took part in the bullying increased slightly from 2020 to 2022 (7% vs. 8%), while the percentage of those who didn't do anything, tried to get the bullies/harassers to stop, offered support to the person being bullied, and/or told an adult at school decreased.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



MENTAL HEALTH NOT GOOD, PAST 30 DAYS (Sometimes, Most of the Time, Always)

Overall, 66% of high school students reported that their mental health was not good sometimes, most of the time, or always in the past 30 days.

- **Grade:** Students in 11th grade were more likely describe their mental health as not good (72%), followed by students in 10th, 12th, and 9th grade (64%, 63%, and 53%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Almost all of gender non-conforming students described their mental health as not good (94%), more than female and male students (72%, and 44%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Multi-Racial, White, and students of an Other Race were more likely to describe their mental health as not good (66%, 64%, and 64%, respectively), followed by Black and Asian students (51% and 44%, respectively). Over half of Hispanic/Latino students described their mental health as not good.
- **Trends:** This was a new question in 2022, so there is no trend data.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.

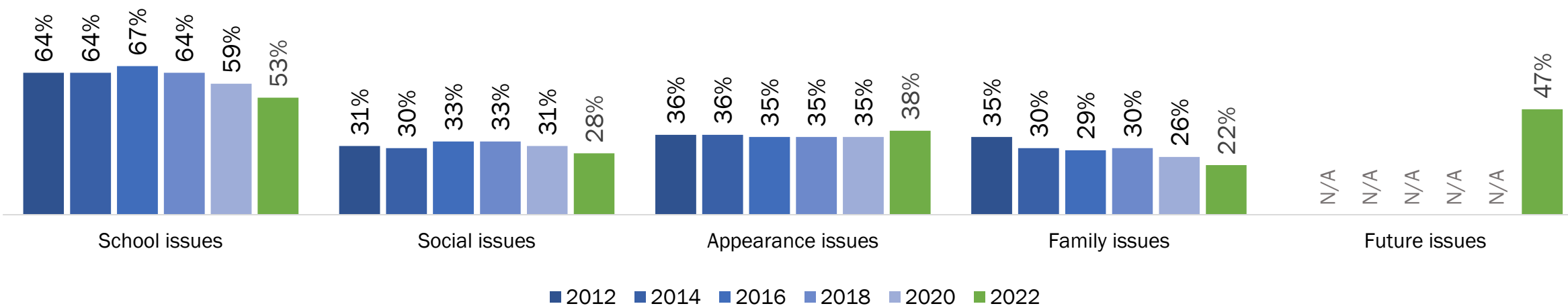


WORRY ABOUT ISSUES, PAST 30 DAYS (Fairly Often, Very Often)

Overall, high school students were most likely to worry often or every day about school issues (53%), followed by future issues (47%), appearance issues (38%), social issues (28%), and family issues (22%).

- **Trends:** School issues continue to be the issue most worried about by Somerville high school students, although it has steadily decreased since 2016. Social issues and appearance issues have remained relatively unchanged since 2012. Family issues have continued to decrease since 2012. Future issues was a new question in 2022, so there is no trend data.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.

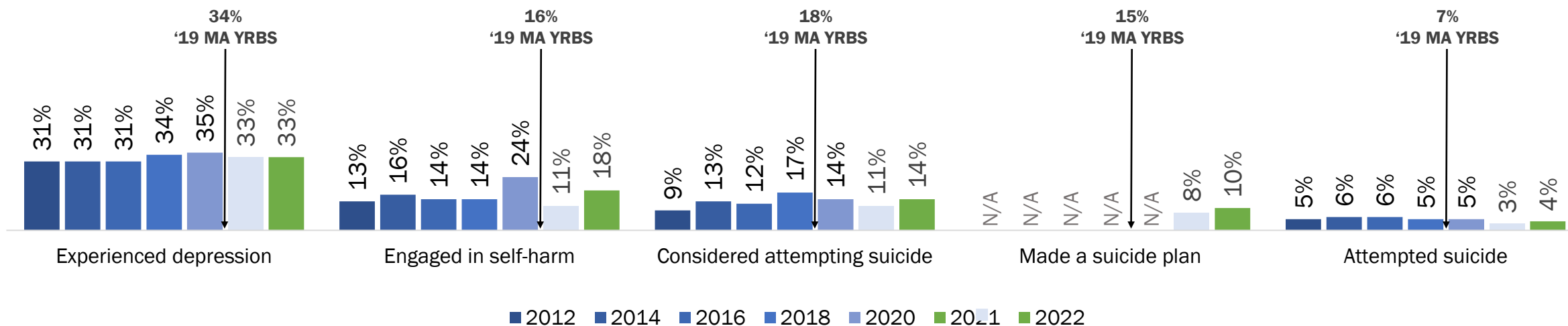
62% of high school students reported having a healthy activity or behavior (coping mechanism) to relieve stress.



DEPRESSION, SELF-HARM, AND SUICIDE, PAST 12 MONTHS

Overall, 33% of high school students experienced depression in the past 12 months, 18% engaged in self-harm, 14% considered attempting suicide, 10% made a suicide plan, and 4% attempted suicide.

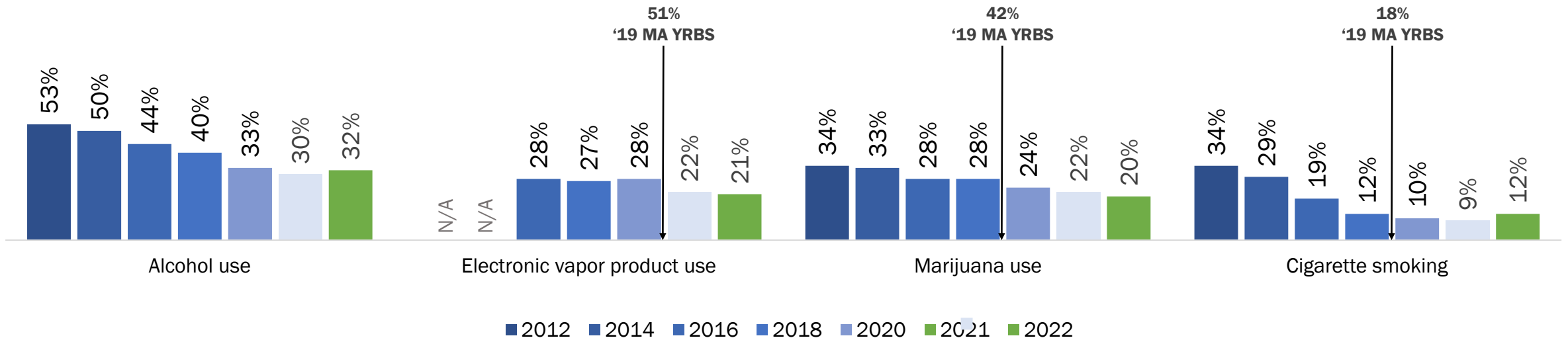
- **Trends:** Trends: The percentage of Somerville high school students who experienced depression, made a suicide plan, and attempted suicide remained relatively unchanged. The percentage of students who engaged in self-harm had remained relatively unchanged from 2012 to 2018, and peaked in 2020. Percentages dropped to pre-2020 levels in 2021, but rose again in 2022. The percentage of students who had seriously considered attempting suicide has increased since 2012, but remained relatively unchanged since 2020.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



LIFETIME SUBSTANCE USE

Somerville high school students were asked if they had ever used a variety of substances. Overall, 32% report ever drinking alcohol, 21% report using electronic vapor products, 20% report using marijuana, and 12% report smoking cigarettes.

- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who had ever used a substance has relatively decreased across all substances since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were less likely than Massachusetts 2019 high school students to report ever using electronic vapor products, using marijuana, or smoking cigarettes. Alcohol use data was not collected by Massachusetts in 2019.

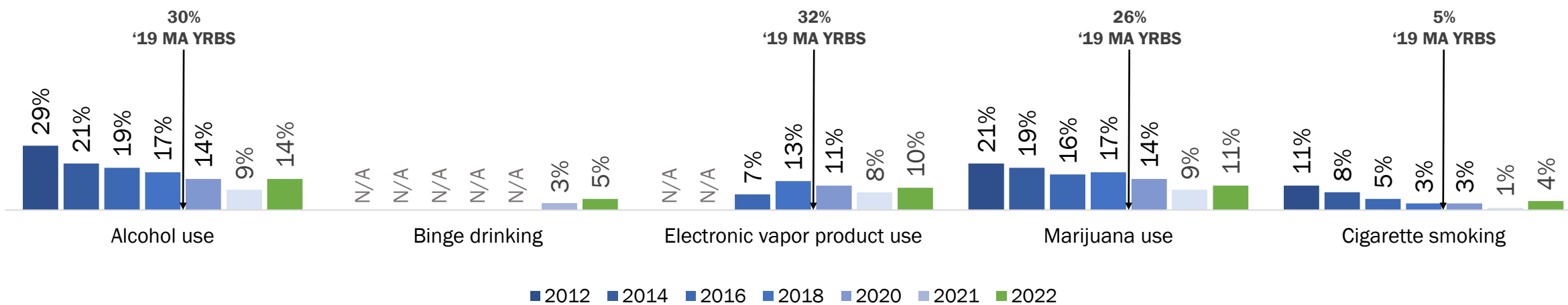


CURRENT SUBSTANCE USE, PAST 30 DAYS

Somerville high school students were asked if they had used a variety of substances in the past 30 days (currently). Fourteen percent of Somerville high school students report using alcohol, 5% report binge drinking (4 or more drinks in a row), 11% report marijuana use, and 4% report smoking cigarettes.

- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who reported currently drinking alcohol, using marijuana, and smoking cigarettes has relatively decreased in the past 10 years. The percentage of students who reported currently using electronic vapor products has varied since 2016. The percentage of students who reported currently binge drinking has increased since 2021. Current use of all substances increased from 2021 and 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were less likely than Massachusetts 2019 high school students to report currently drinking alcohol, using electronic vapor products, using marijuana, or smoking cigarettes.

The percentage of Somerville high school students who engaged in substance use in the past 30 days increases as students increase in grade.

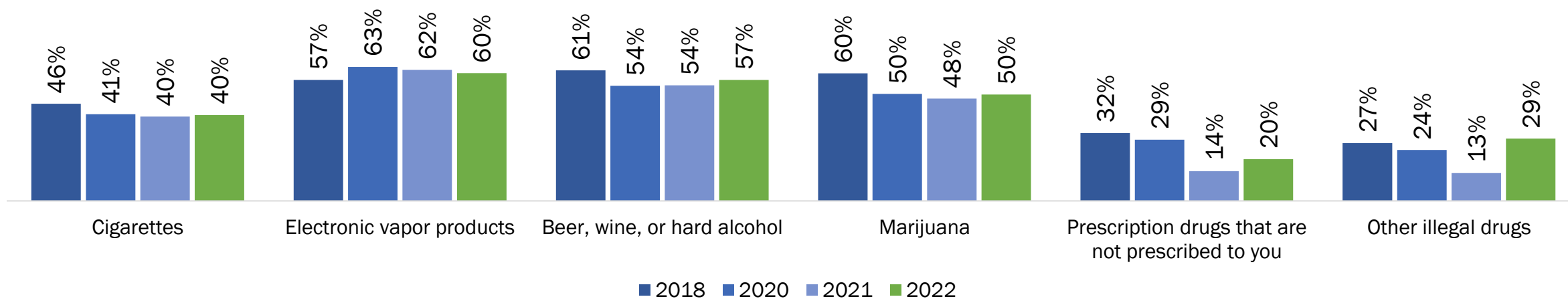


PERCEIVED EASE OF OBTAINING SUBSTANCES

(Parents Would Think it is Wrong, Very Wrong)

Overall, high school students perceive that it would be easiest for them to obtain electronic vapor products (60%), followed by alcohol (57%), marijuana (50%), cigarettes (40%), prescription drugs to get high (29%), and illegal drugs other than marijuana (20%).

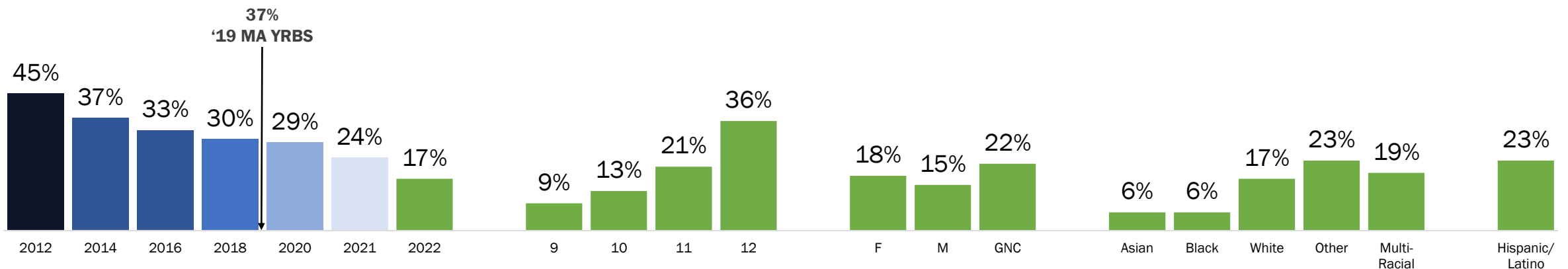
- **Trends:** This series of questions was first asked in 2018. The percentage of Somerville high school students' perceived ease of obtaining cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and prescription drugs not prescribed to them relatively decreased since 2018. Perceived ease of obtaining electronic vapor products and other illegal drugs decreased between 2018 and 2021, but increased between 2021 and 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



EVER HAD CONSENSUAL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Overall, 15% of high school students have ever had consensual sexual intercourse.

- **Grade:** High school students were more likely to have ever had consensual sexual intercourse as they advanced in grade. Thirty-six percent of students in 12th grade have ever had consensual sexual intercourse, followed by students in 11th, 10th, and 9th grade (21%, 13%, and 9%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Gender non-conforming students were most likely to have ever had consensual sexual intercourse (22%), followed by female and male students (18% and 15%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Students of an Other Race, Multi-Racial, and White students were more likely to have ever had consensual sexual intercourse (23%, 19%, and 17%, respectively) than Black and Asian students (6%, respectively). Twenty-three percent of Hispanic/Latino students have ever had consensual sexual intercourse.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who have ever had consensual sexual intercourse decreased from 2012 to 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were more than two times less likely to have ever had consensual sexual intercourse as Massachusetts 2019 high school students (17% vs. 37%).

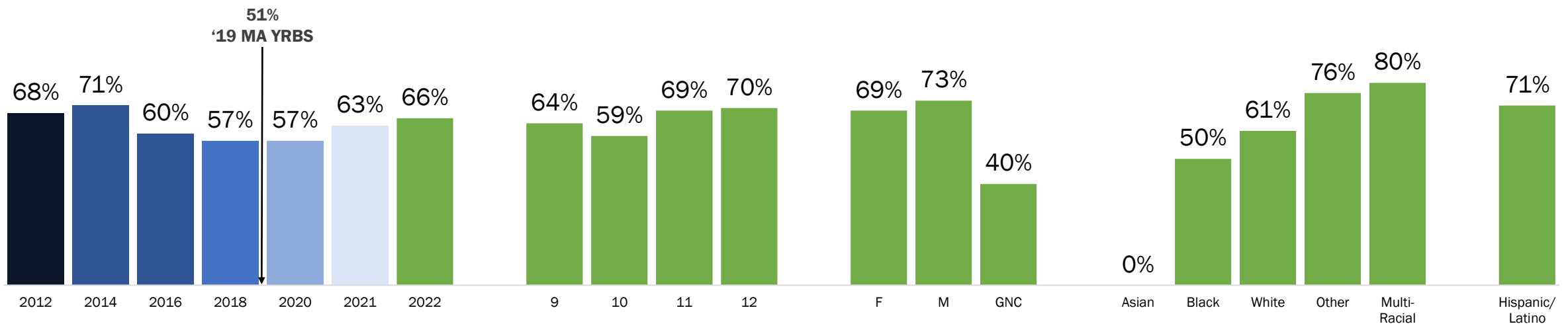


This question was changed in 2022 to include the word "consensual".

USED A CONDOM WHEN THEY HAD CONSENSUAL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, LAST TIME (Among Students Who Have Had Consensual Sexual Intercourse)

Among high school students who have had consensual sexual intercourse, 66% of students used a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse.

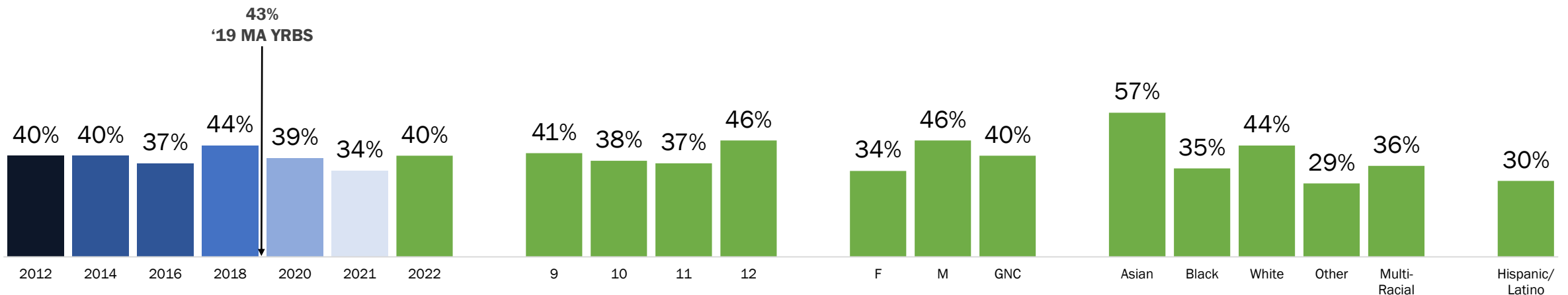
- **Grade:** Students in 12th grade were most likely to use a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse (70%), followed by students in 11th, 9th, and 10th grade (69%, 64%, and 59%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Male students were almost two times as likely to use a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse than gender non-conforming students (73% vs. 40%) and slightly more likely than female students (73% vs. 69%).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Multi-Racial students were most likely to use a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse (80%), followed by students of an Other Race, White students, Black students, and Asian students (76%, 61%, 50%, and 0%, respectively). Seventy-one percent of Hispanic/Latino students used a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who used a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse has varied since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were more likely to use a condom the last time they had consensual sexual intercourse than Massachusetts 2019 high school students (66% vs. 51%).



ENGAGED IN 60 MINUTES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON AT LEAST 5 OF THE PAST 7 DAYS

Overall, 40% of high school students engaged in 60 minutes of physical activity on at least 5 of the past 7 days.

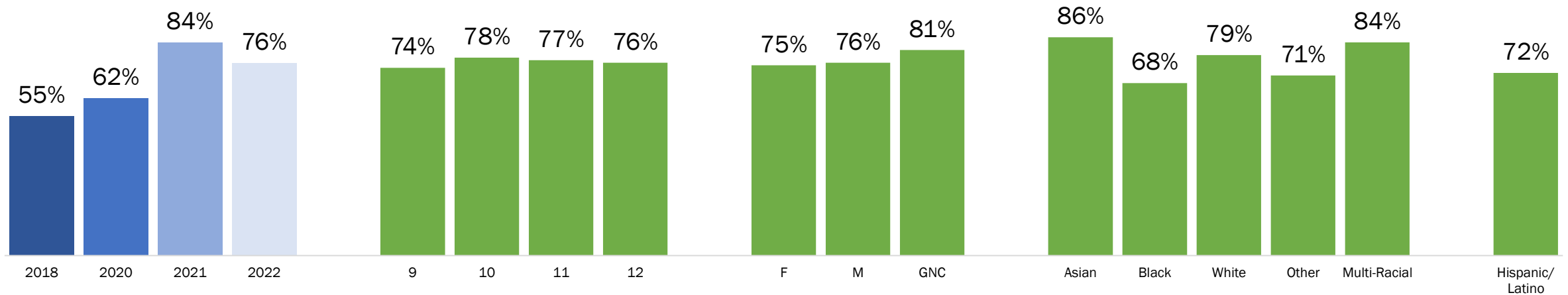
- **Grade:** Students in 12th grade were most likely to engage in physical activity (46%), followed by students in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade (41%, 38%, and 37%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Male students were most likely to engage in physical activity (46%), followed by gender non-conforming and female students (40% and 34%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian students were most likely to engage in physical activity (57%), followed by White students, Black students, Multi-Racial students, and students of an Other Race (44%, 36%, 35%, and 29%, respectively). Thirty percent of Hispanic/Latino students engaged in physical activity.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who engaged in physical activity on at least 5 of the last 7 days has varied overall since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were slightly less likely than Massachusetts 2019 high school students engaged in 60 minutes of physical activity on at least 5 of the past 7 days (40% vs. 43%).



ENGAGED IN 3 OR MORE HOURS OF SCREEN TIME, AVERAGE SCHOOL DAY

Overall, 76% of high school students engaged in 3 hours or more of screen time on an average school day.

- **Grade:** Percentages were similar across grades.
- **Gender:** Gender non-conforming students were most likely to engage in 3 hours or more of screen time on an average school day (81%), followed by male and female students (76% and 75%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian and Multi-Racial students were most likely to engage in 3 hours or more of screen time on an average school day (86% and 84%, respectively), followed by White students, Black students, and students of an Other Race (79%, 71%, and 68%, respectively). Seventy-two percent of Hispanic/Latino students engaged in 3 hours or more of screen time on an average school day.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who engage in 3 hours or more of screen time on an average school day has increased since 2018, but decreased from 2021 to 2022.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.

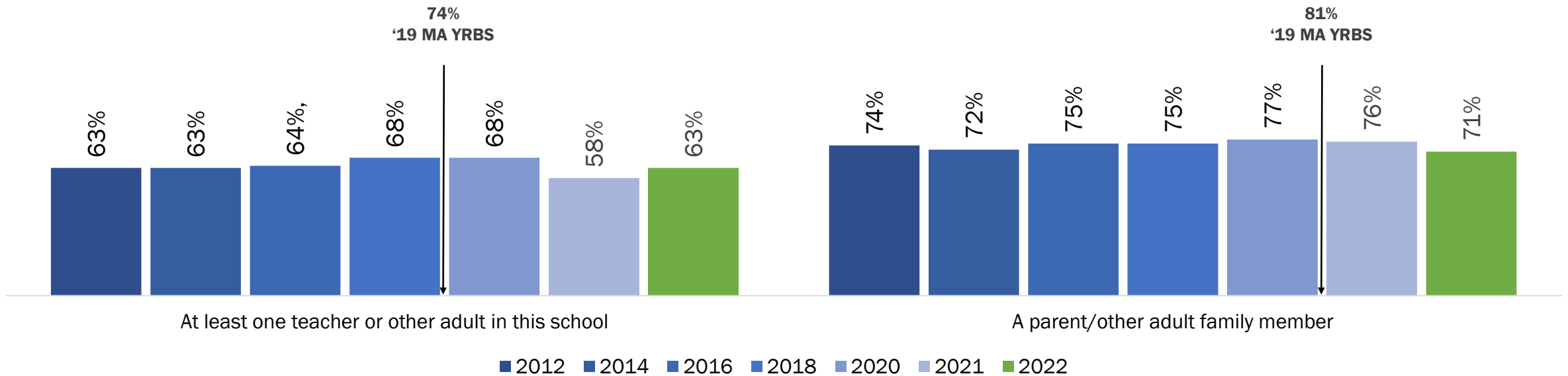


Screen time includes things such as time spent in front of a TV, computer, smartphone, or other electronic device to watch shows or videos, play games, access the Internet, or use social media.

HAS AN ADULT AVAILABLE TO TALK ABOUT A PROBLEM

Overall, when asked about adults whom they could talk to about a problem, 63% of high students reported having at least one teacher or other adult in this school and 71% reported having at least one family adult.

- **Trends:** Available adult support has remained relatively consistent since 2012.
- **Statewide comparison:** Somerville 2022 high school students were less likely to have at least one teacher or other adult in school to talk to than Massachusetts 2019 high school students (63% vs. 74%), and less likely to have at least one family adult to talk to (71% vs. 81%, respectively).

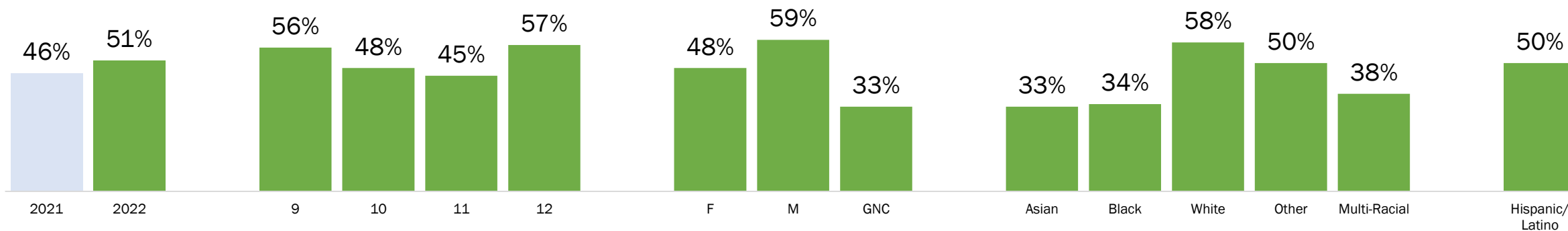


FEEL CLOSE TO PEOPLE AT THEIR SCHOOL

(Agree, Strongly Agree)

Overall, 51% of high school students agree or strongly agree that they feel close to people at their school.

- **Grade:** Students 12th and 9th grade were most likely to feel close to people at school (57% and 56%, respectively), followed by students in 10th and 11th grade (48% and 45%, respectively).
- **Gender:** Male students were mostly likely to feel close to people at their school (59%), followed by female and gender non-conforming students (48% and 33%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** White students were most likely to feel close to people at their school (58%), followed by students of an Other Race, Multi-Racial students, Black students, and Asian students (50%, 46%, 34%, and 33%, respectively). Half of Hispanic/Latino students feel close to people at their school.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who feel close to people at their school increased from 2021 to 2022 (46% vs. 51%, respectively).
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.



PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Overall, 61% of high school students reported participating in extracurricular activities during the week.

- **Grade:** Students in 12th grade were least likely to participate in extracurricular activities (51%).
- **Gender:** Gender non-conforming students were most likely to participate in extracurricular activities (71%), followed by male and female students (68% and 60%, respectively).
- **Race/Ethnicity:** Asian and White students were most likely to participate in extracurricular activities (73% and 72%, respectively), followed by Multi-Racial students, Black students, and students of an Other Race (56%, 55%, and 36%, respectively). Fifty-seven percent of Hispanic/Latino students participated in extracurricular activities during the week.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Somerville high school students who participated in extracurricular activities was relatively unchanged from 2012 to 2020. From 2020 to 2021 it decreased to its lowest percentage to-date. Participation rose from 2021 to 2022, but did not reach prior 2021 levels.
- **Statewide comparison:** There is no statewide comparison data.

The most common reported barriers to participation in extracurricular activities for high school students were too much homework (16%), some other reason (14%), or they were afraid to or felt feelings of anxiety around participating (11%).

