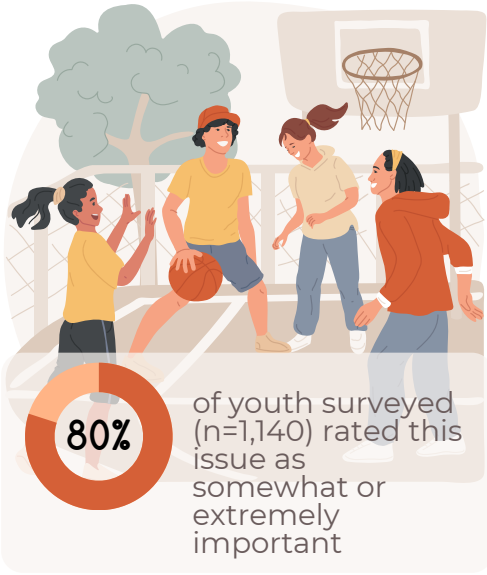


of youth surveyed (n=1,140) rated this issue as somewhat or extremely important

Youth Perspectives on:

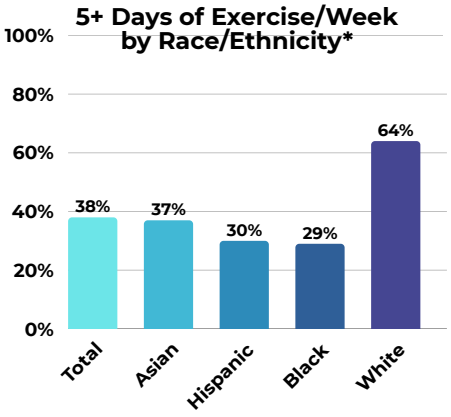
Mental, Physical, & Behavioral Health

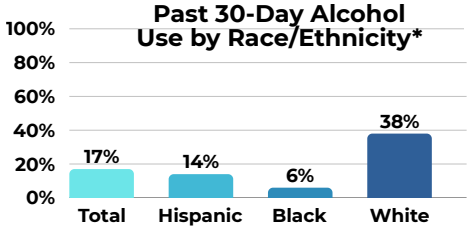
Overview

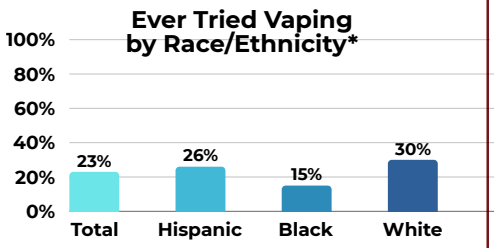
This theme explores how youth experience and envision their physical, emotional, and behavioral health. Students shared their perspectives on access to mental health care, opportunities for physical activity, prevention and intervention around substance use, and support for healthy relationships during 94 listening sessions. Their 325+ responses reflect a desire for holistic care that prioritize emotional well-being alongside academic success. While youth appreciate existing supports, they emphasize the need for more equitable access, reduced stigma, and expanded community investment in their overall health.

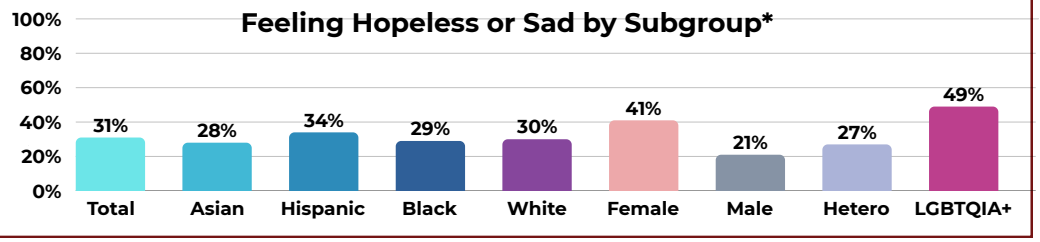
WHAT THE DATA SAY

*Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023









WHAT YOUTH WANT

30+ mentions — **Mental Health Access & Supports**

"Normalize mental health help/therapy"

Free and confidential access to mental health professionals, both in and out of school

20+ mentions — **Physical Activity & Recreation**

"Free and inclusive youth sports"

Recreational spaces and sports programs that are inclusive, clean, and well-funded

20+ mentions — **Substance Use Prevention**

"100K for free rehab centers"

"No drugs and vape pens"

A drug- and alcohol-free environment supported by prevention, education, and treatment services

130+ mentions — **Relationships, Sexual Health, and Risk Behaviors**

"A support group for troubled teens"

Comprehensive, mandatory sex education and greater support in navigating healthy relationships

WHAT YOUTH EXPERIENCE

40+ mentions — **Mental Health Access & Supports**

"Not enough therapy"

Limited availability of mental health services, with ongoing stigma around seeking help

50+ mentions — **Physical Activity & Recreation**

"Expensive sports"

Recreational facilities that are outdated, inaccessible, or cost-prohibitive

45+ mentions — **Substance Use**

"Kids vaping in the bathrooms."

High rates of vaping and marijuana use in schools

95+ mentions — **Relationships, Sexual Health, & Risk Behaviors**

"Mandatory sex ed."

Inconsistent or insufficient sexual health education