



The Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) is the state's most comprehensive survey on the health and well-being of young people. The HKCS results help state and local organizations better understand the youth they serve and support youth in making healthy choices. In 2021, we surveyed over 106,000 youth at 340 middle and high schools across the state. The data below, from our representative statewide sample, include youth who attend public high schools in Colorado.

MENTAL HEALTH

Among CO Public High School Youth

KEY TAKEAWAYS

2021 HKCS results

26% of youth felt their stress was unmanageable

40% of youth experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness

69% of youth had poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic



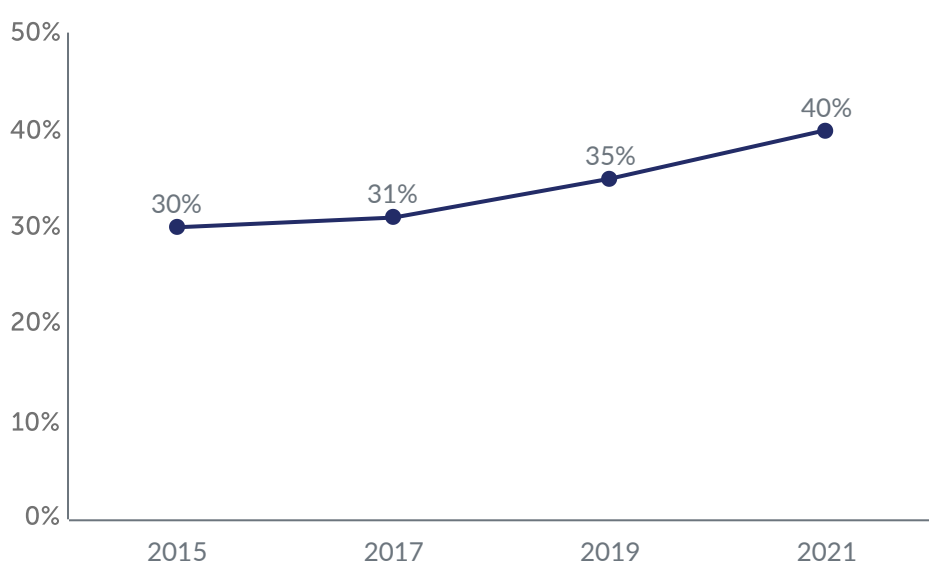
Despite these challenges, youth showed resilience.

3 out of 4 youth felt fully recovered from a stressful situation in 2 days or fewer

TRENDS

2021 HKCS results

Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness* are increasing among youth



*This indicator is defined as feeling so sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing usual activities in the past year

This is not translating to more suicidal ideation, as suicide is a complex issue without one root cause.

17%

of youth seriously considered suicide in the past year, which has not changed since 2015.

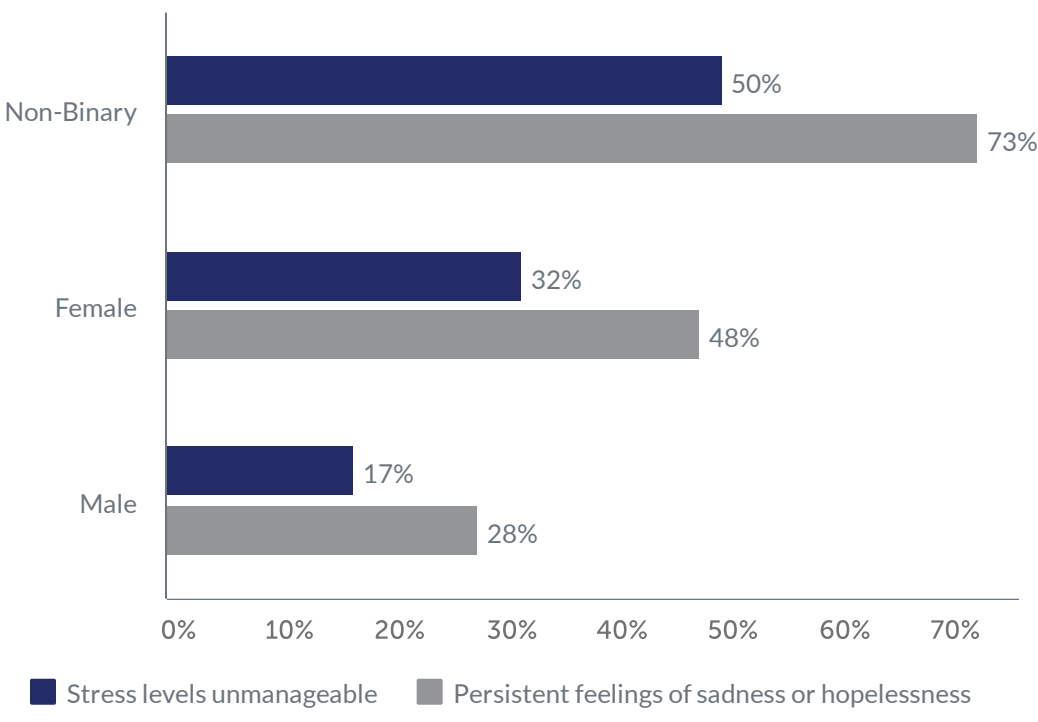
HEALTH DISPARITIES

2021 HKCS results

Disparities are differences in health outcomes between people, related to social demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or geographic region. Inequities are created when those disparities are perpetuated by avoidable, systemic, and unjust dynamics that prevent people from reaching their highest level of health. Measuring disparities helps us identify discriminatory policies and systems in order to dismantle them. For more information, visit [CDPHE's Office of Health Equity](https://www.cdphe.org/office-of-health-equity).



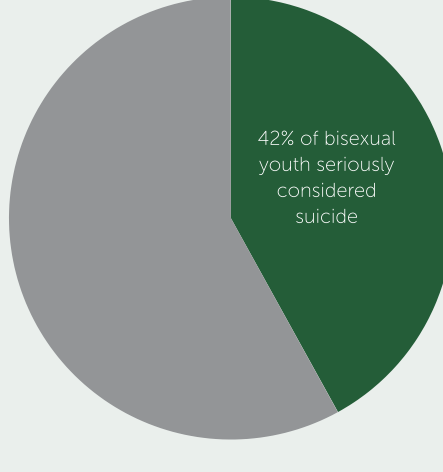
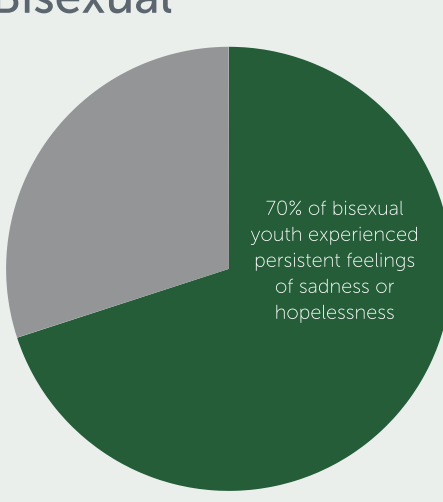
Stress and feelings of sadness or hopelessness differ by gender



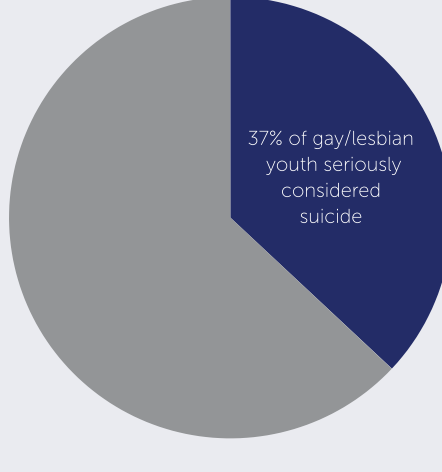
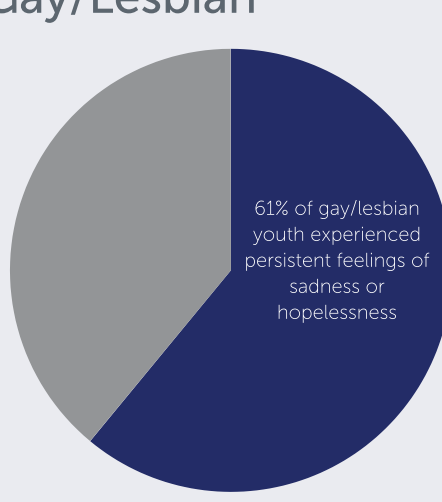
Transgender youth report unmanageable stress at 2x the rate and attempting suicide at 4x the rate of cisgender youth

Feelings of sadness or hopelessness and seriously considering suicide differ by sexual orientation

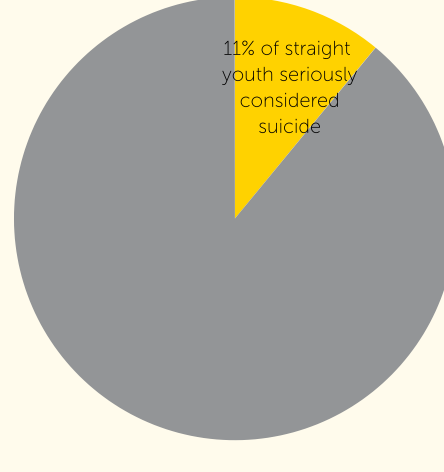
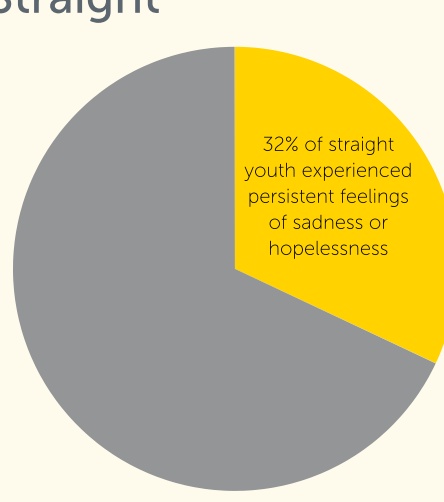
Bisexual



Gay/Lesbian

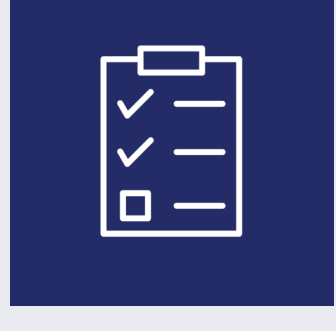


Straight



PROTECTIVE FACTORS

2021 HKCS results



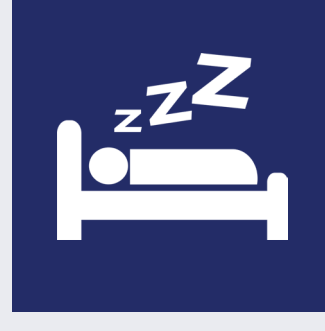
Youth with clear family rules were **63% less likely** to seriously consider suicide



Youth who feel safe at school were **60% less likely** to seriously consider suicide



Youth who have an adult they can go to for help with a serious problem were **56% less likely** to seriously consider suicide



Youth who got **8 or more** hours of sleep on average school nights were **55% less likely** to seriously consider suicide

Ensuring that all youth have access to protective factors can help them thrive.