Child and Youth Mental Health Advisory Group

February 19, 2025

VISION

Ohio is a model of health, well-being and economic vitality

MISSION

To advance evidence-informed policies that improve health, achieve equity, and lead to sustainable healthcare spending in Ohio.

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health policy institute of ohio

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Participating in Zoom

Chat
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Raise hand
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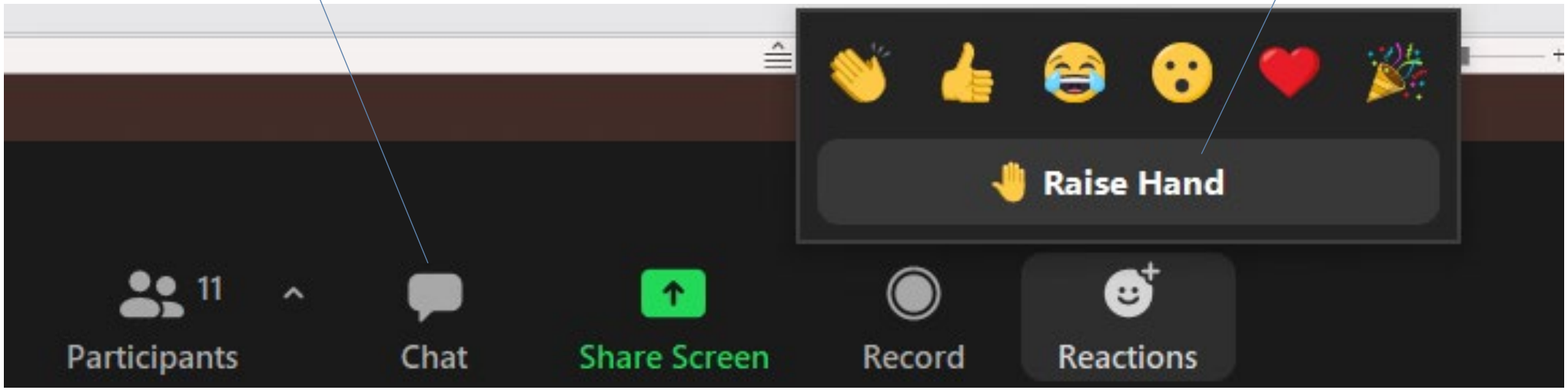


Introductions

Please introduce yourself in the chat

Objectives

As a result of this meeting, the **advisory group** will be aware of:

- The scope and structure of HPIO's child and youth mental health policy brief series
- Their role in this project
- The approach for addressing contributing factors in brief #2, including how factors will be prioritized and policy recommendations will be generated

Objectives

After this meeting, **HPIO** will have guidance on:

- The most important factors contributing to child and youth mental health challenges to prioritize in the brief
- Policy recommendations to consider

Agenda

1. Intended scope and structure of HPIO's policy brief series
2. Mental health data from brief #1
3. Presentation of potential contributing factors to highlight in brief #2
4. **Small group discussion:** Contributing factors to prioritize
5. **Large group discussion**: Small group report-outs and policy recommendations
6. Next steps

Role of the advisory group

Input on policy brief content

- *HPIO will convene a meeting for each brief*
- *Possible post-meeting follow-up requests*

Feedback on draft policy briefs

Help with sharing and dissemination

HPIO child and youth mental health policy brief series

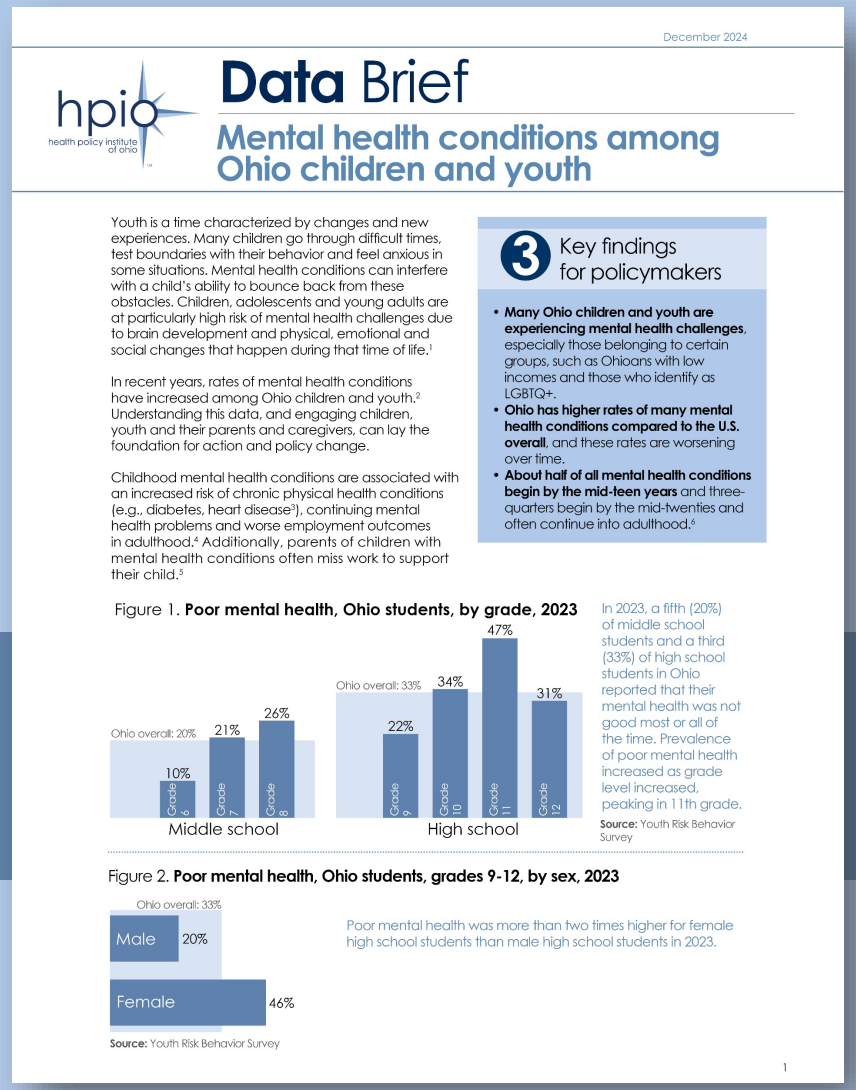
- **Brief #1** presents prevalence data for mental health conditions among Ohio children and you *(Released Dec. 2024)*
- **Brief #2** will explore contributing factors to child and youth mental health challenges (including data, when available, on the extent to which these factors are present in Ohio)
- **Brief #3** will focus on access to child and youth mental health services across the continuum
- **Brief #4** will examine health insurance coverage and cost/affordability of care and how they influence access to mental health services

HPIO plans for 2025

More in-depth analysis
and
Detailed, actionable policy recommendations on fewer, key topics

Plan to select

3 contributing factors
and
Include policy options related to those



December 2024

hpio health policy institute of ohio

Data Brief

Mental health conditions among Ohio children and youth

Youth is a time characterized by changes and new experiences. Many children go through difficult times, test boundaries with their behavior and feel anxious in some situations. Mental health conditions can interfere with a child's ability to bounce back from these obstacles. Children, adolescents and young adults are at particularly high risk of mental health challenges due to brain development and physical, emotional and social changes that happen during that time of life.[1]

In recent years, rates of mental health conditions have increased among Ohio children and youth.[2] Understanding this data, and engaging children, youth and their parents and caregivers, can lay the foundation for action and policy change.

Childhood mental health conditions are associated with an increased risk of chronic physical health conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart disease[3]), continuing mental health problems and worse employment outcomes in adulthood.[4] Additionally, parents of children with mental health conditions often miss work to support their child.[5]

3 Key findings for policymakers

- **Many Ohio children and youth are experiencing mental health challenges**, especially those belonging to certain groups, such as Ohioans with low incomes and those who identify as LGBTQ+.
- **Ohio has higher rates of many mental health conditions compared to the U.S. overall**, and these rates are worsening over time.
- **About half of all mental health conditions begin by the mid-teen years** and three-quarters begin by the mid-twenties and often continue into adulthood.[6]

Figure 1. **Poor mental health, Ohio students, by grade, 2023**

In 2023, a fifth (20%) of middle school students and a third (33%) of high school students in Ohio reported that their mental health was not good most or all of the time. Prevalence of poor mental health increased as grade level increased, peaking in 11th grade.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Figure 2. **Poor mental health, Ohio students, grades 9-12, by sex, 2023**

Poor mental health was more than two times higher for female high school students than male high school students in 2023.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

1

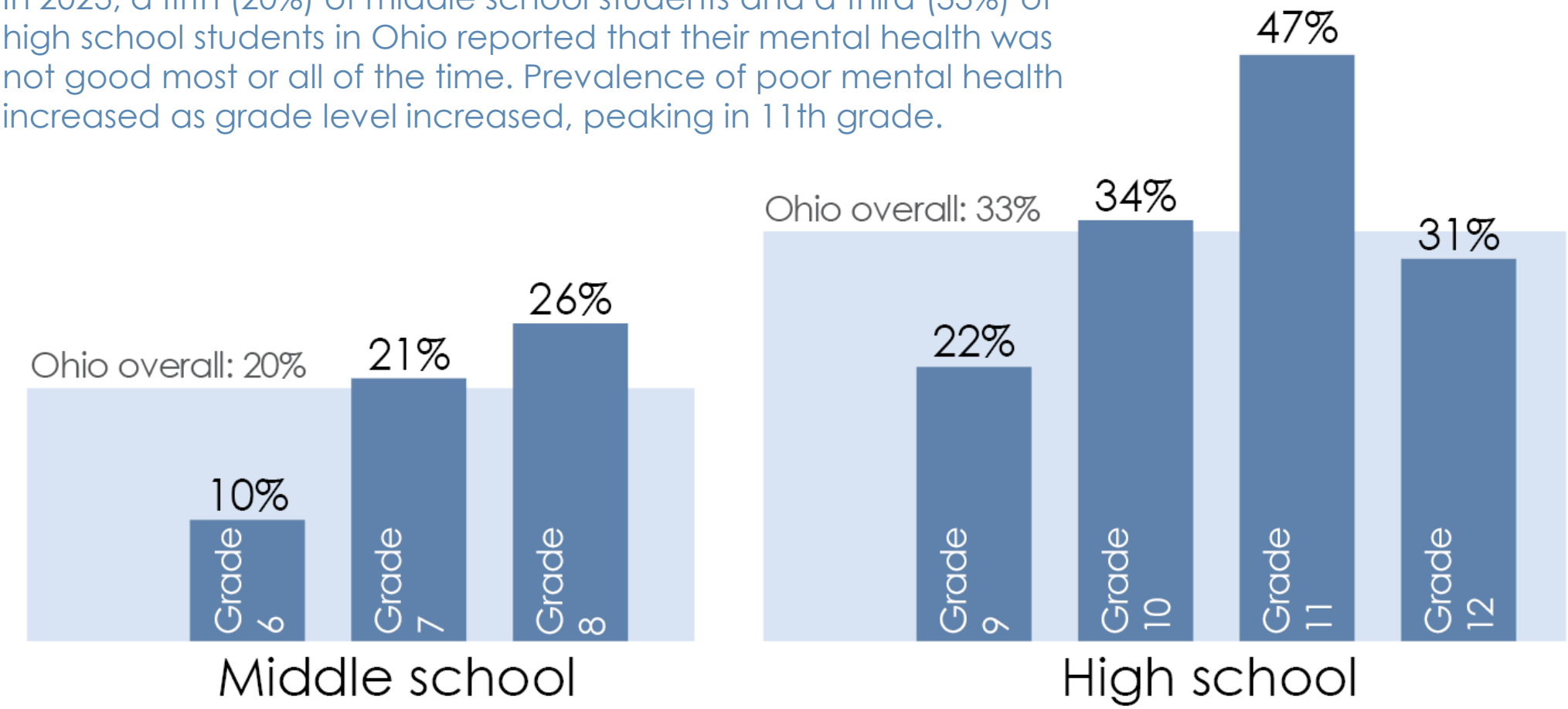
Mental health conditions among Ohio children and youth

First brief in the series

Poor mental health

Ohio students, by grade, 2023

In 2023, a fifth (20%) of middle school students and a third (33%) of high school students in Ohio reported that their mental health was not good most or all of the time. Prevalence of poor mental health increased as grade level increased, peaking in 11th grade.

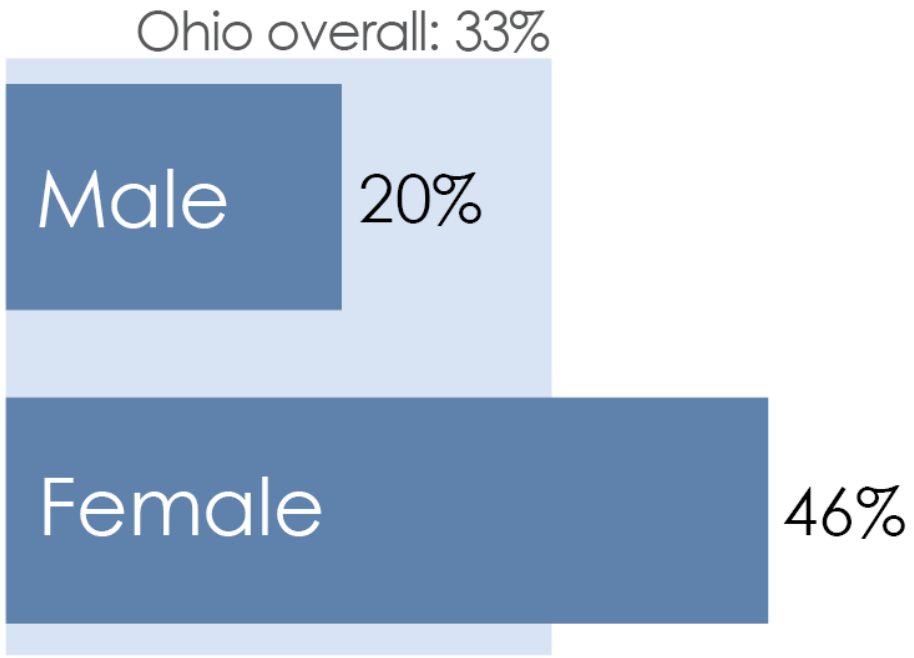


Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Poor mental health

Ohio students, grades 9-12, by sex, 2023

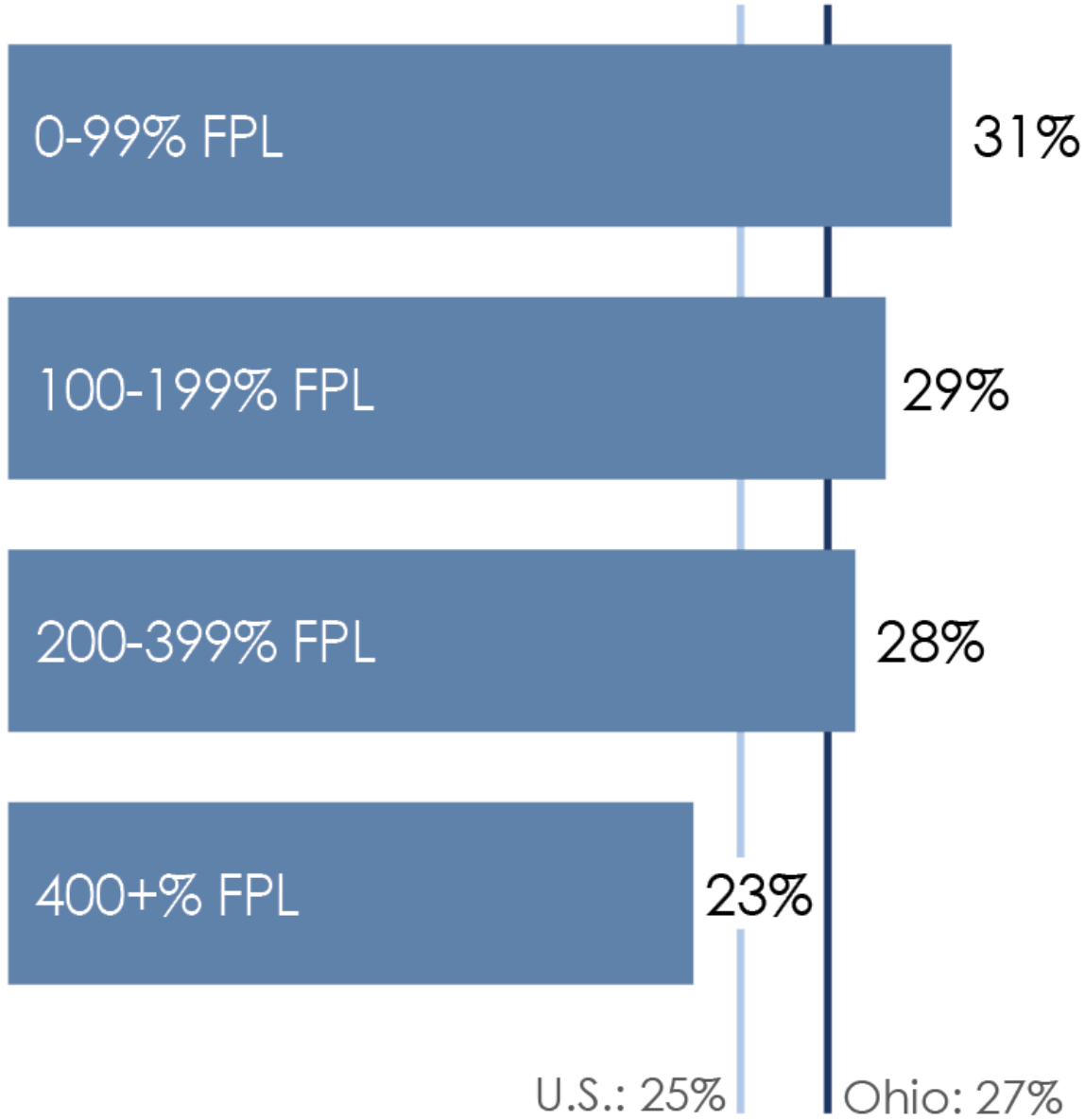
Poor mental health was more than two times higher for female high school students than male high school students in 2023.



Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Mental, emotional, developmental or behavioral challenges

Ohio children, ages 3-17, by income, 2021-2022

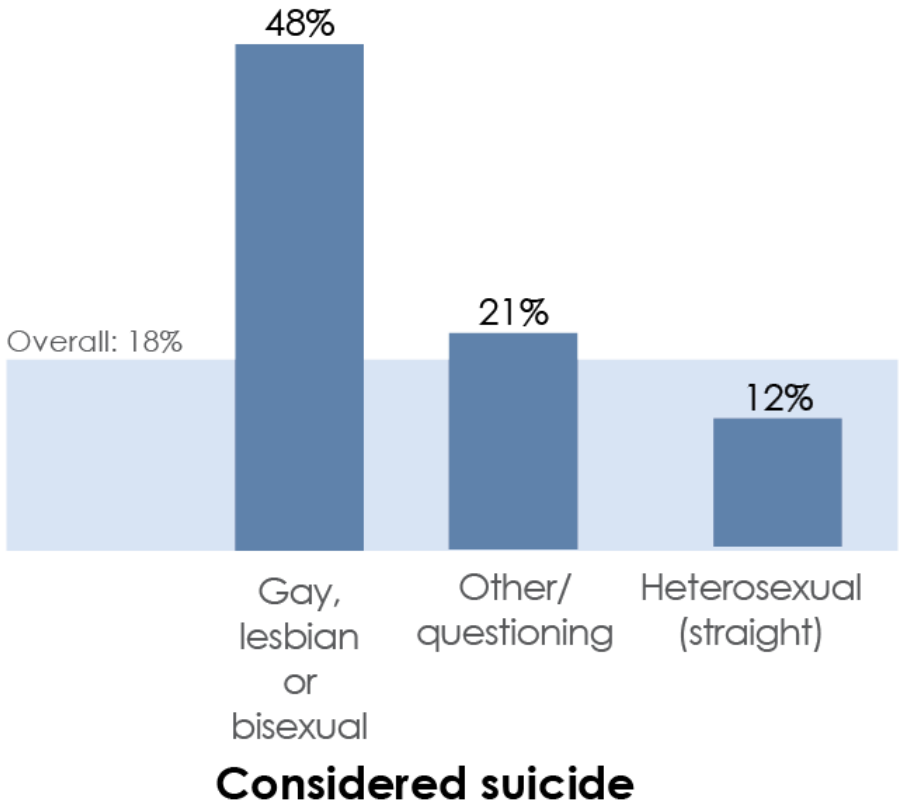


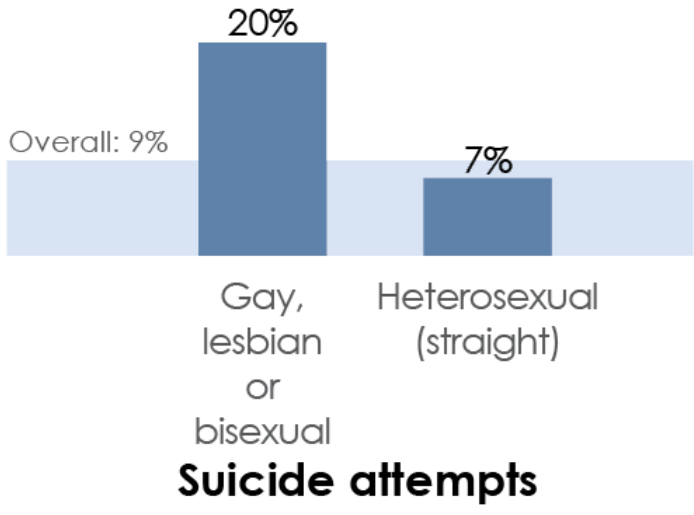
Source: National Survey of Children's Health

Considered suicide and suicide attempts

Ohio students, grades 9-12, by sexual identity, 2023

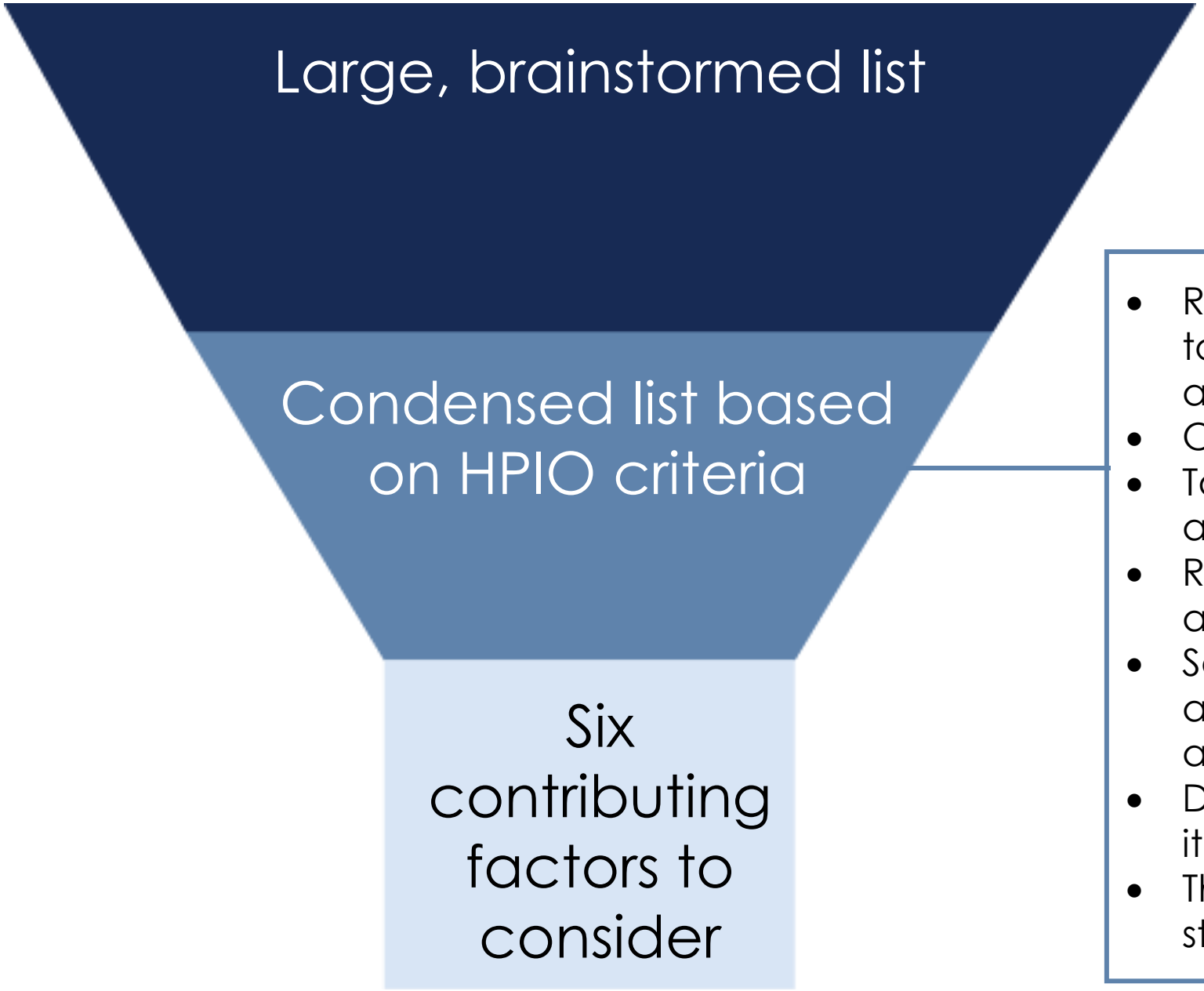
Students who are gay, lesbian or bisexual reported considering suicide at almost 4 times the rate as students who are heterosexual. Additionally, 20% of gay, lesbian or bisexual students reported that they attempted suicide one or more times in the last year.





Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Contributing factors



- Research evidence of connection to higher mental health risks among children and youth
- One specific topic
- Topic on which HPIO has not already done considerable work
- Reasonable topic for which policy action could be taken to address
- Something to which advocates/policymakers will pay attention
- Data exists on the extent to which it is present in Ohio
- There are evidence-informed strategies to address the topic

Topics screened out by HPIO

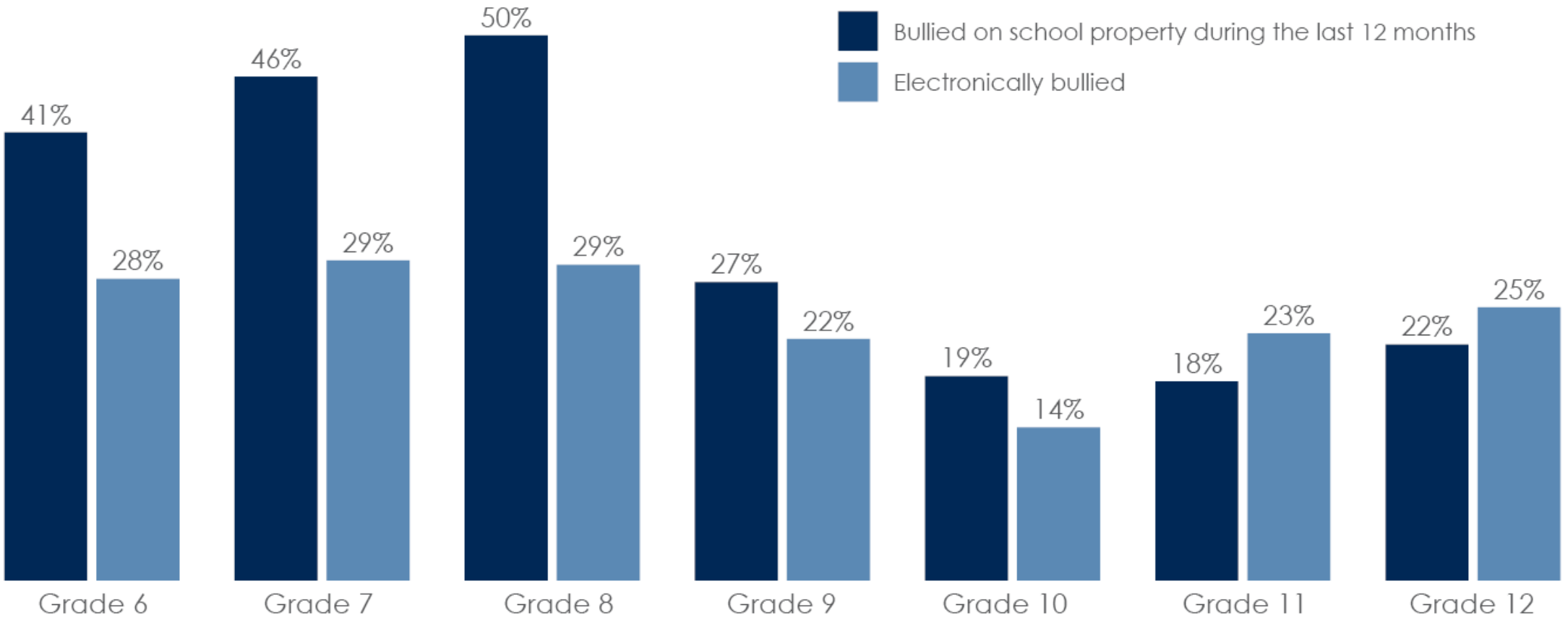
- Poverty
- ACEs/trauma
  - Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
  - Parental substance abuse
  - Parental mental illness
  - Parental incarceration
  - Parent death
  - Violence in the household
  - Physical or emotional neglect
- Oversaturation of information (from smart phone use) and resulting fear regarding the state of the world (e.g., climate change, mass violence, natural disasters, wars in other countries, political polarization)
- Stigma
- Fear of school shootings (including drills and preparation)
- COVID-19 pandemic
- Chronic stress
- Other health concerns, including developmental delays
- Sleep
- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of access to healthy foods
- Demonstration of ownership and competence

Six contributing factors for consideration

1. Neighborhood safety
2. Housing: Homelessness, housing instability and housing quality (including lead exposure)
3. Involvement in the child protective services system
4. Bullying and cyberbullying (including interpersonal discrimination)
5. Screen time, smartphones and social media
6. Academic and other pressures/pressure to succeed

Bullying and electronic bullying

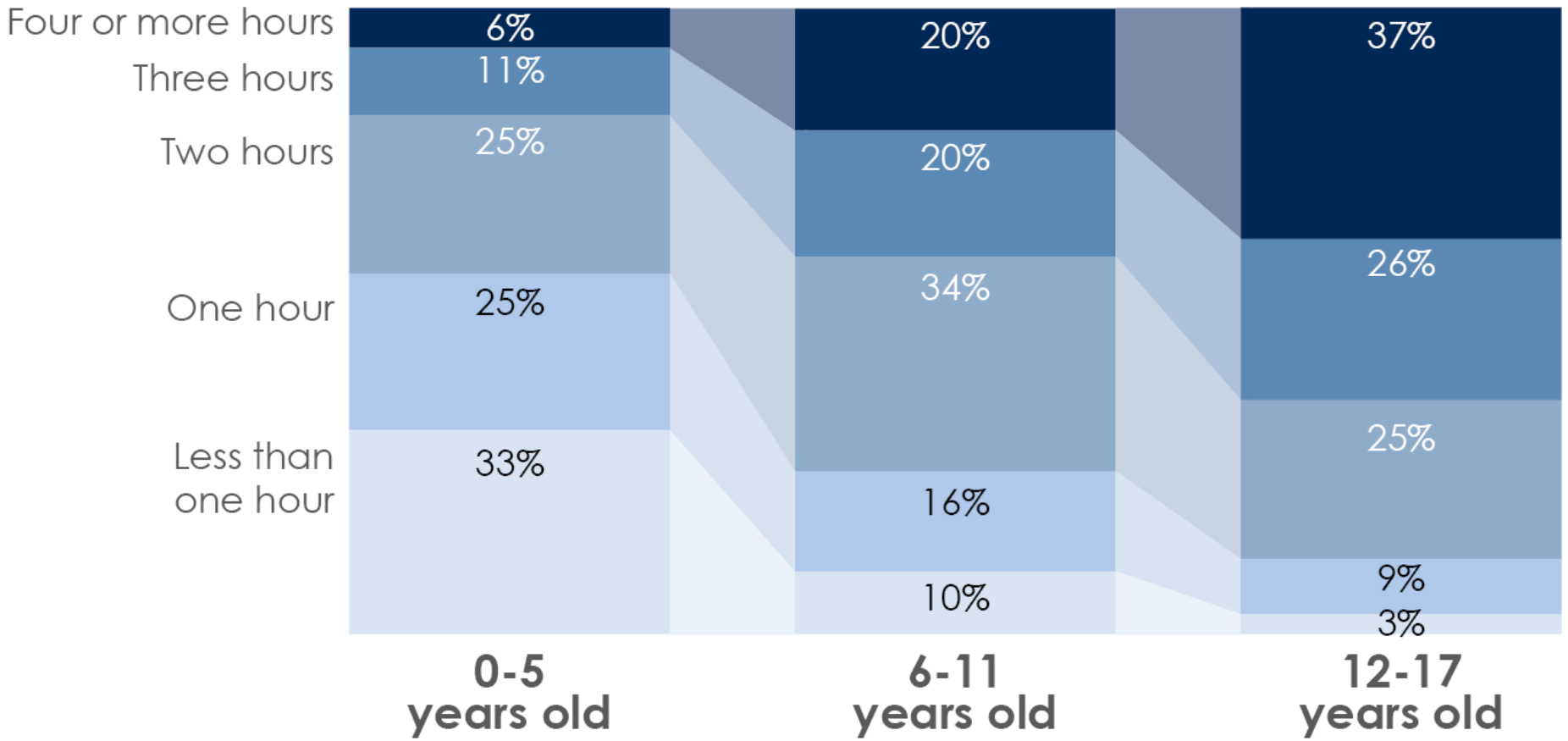
Percent of Ohio students bullied on school property and electronically bullied, by grade, 2023



Note: Electronically bullied includes being bullied through texting, Instagram, Facebook or other social media
Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Screen time, smartphones and social media

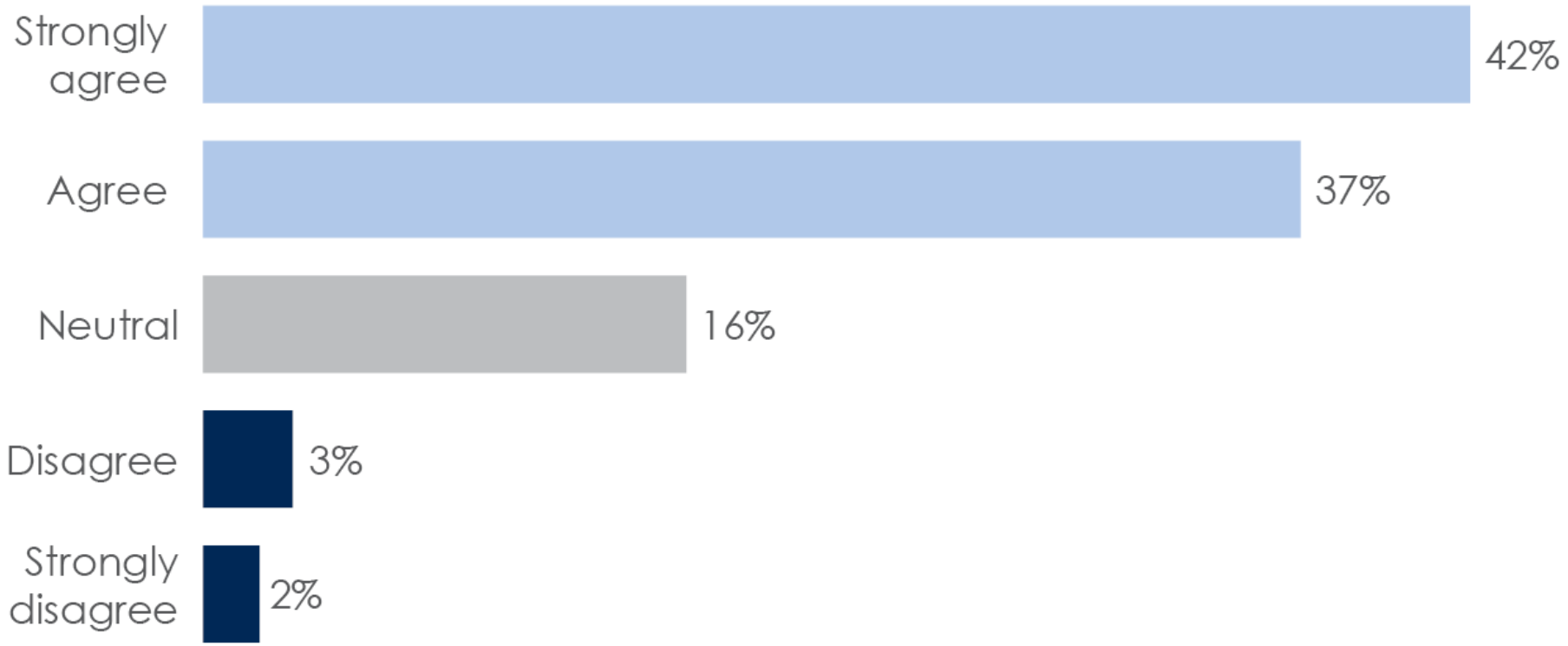
Number of hours of screen time among Ohio children, not including schoolwork, by age, 2022-2023



Note: Parents were asked how much time, on most weekdays, the child usually spends in front of a tv, computer, cellphone or other electronic device, watching programs, playing games, accessing the Internet or using social media, not including schoolwork
Source: National Survey of Children's Health

Academic and other pressures/ Pressure to succeed

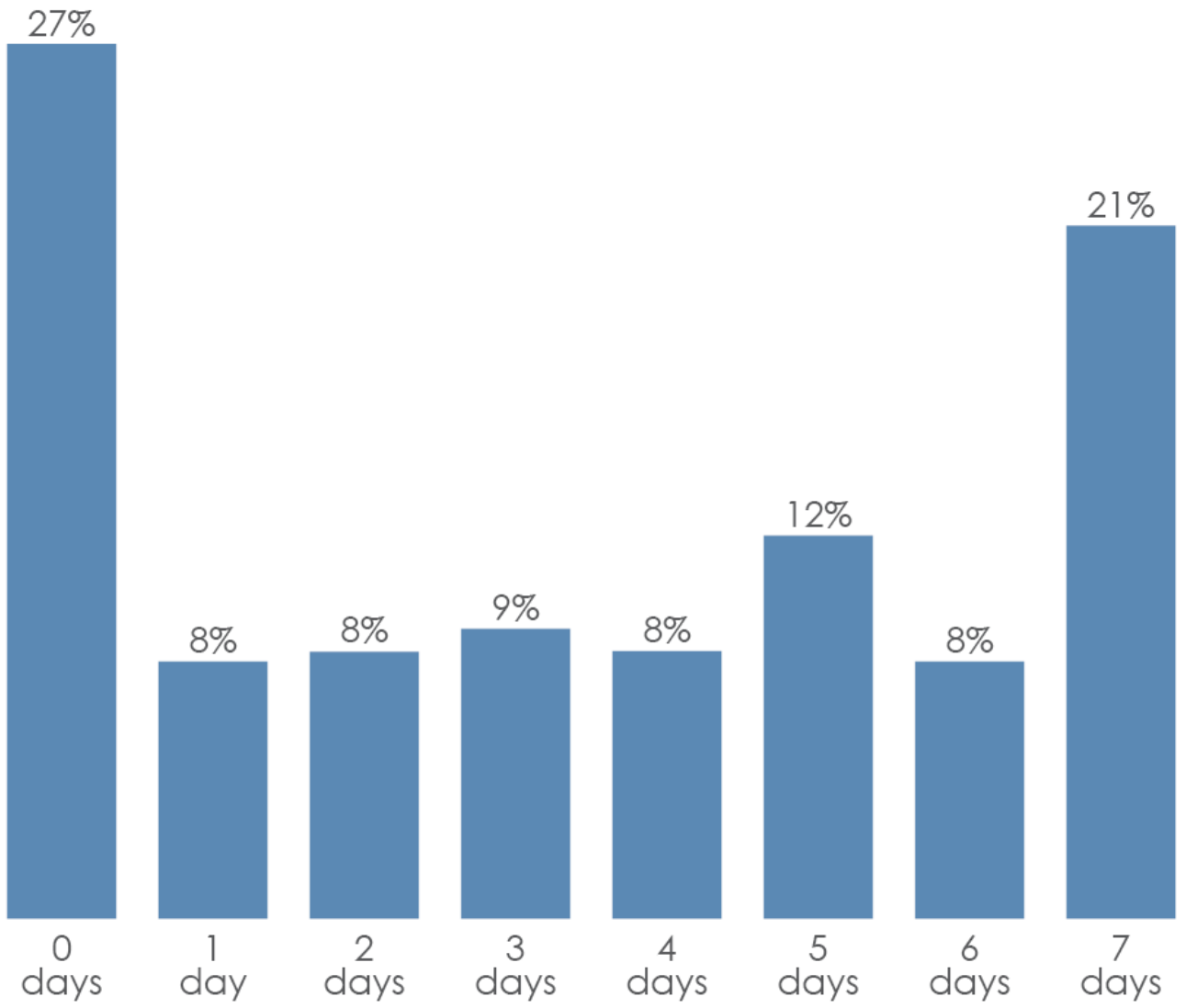
Level of agreement among Ohio high school students that parents push them to work hard at school, 2023-2024



Source: OHYES! Survey (not all counties participate)

Academic and other pressures/ Pressure to succeed

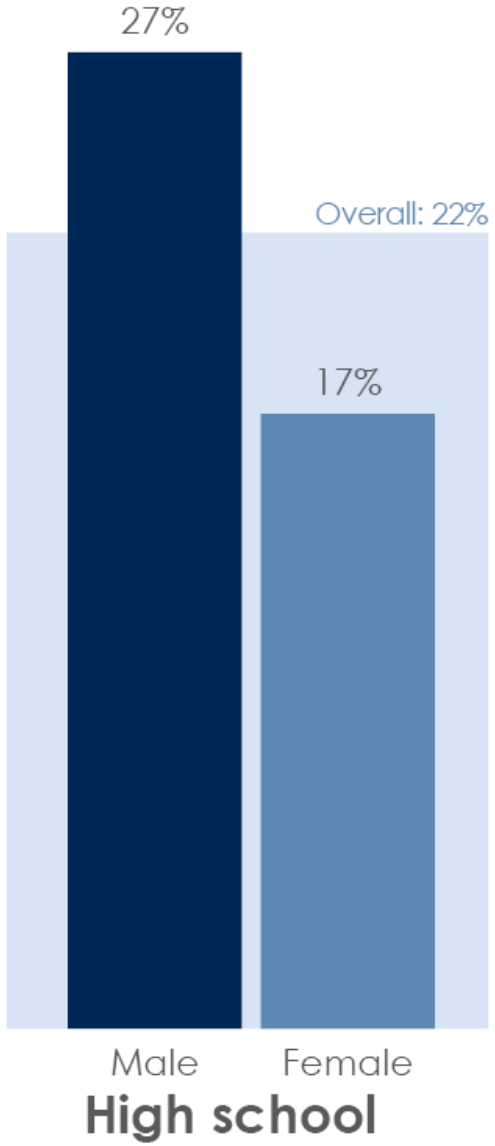
Number of the past 7 days on which Ohio high school students participated in organized activities, 2023-2024

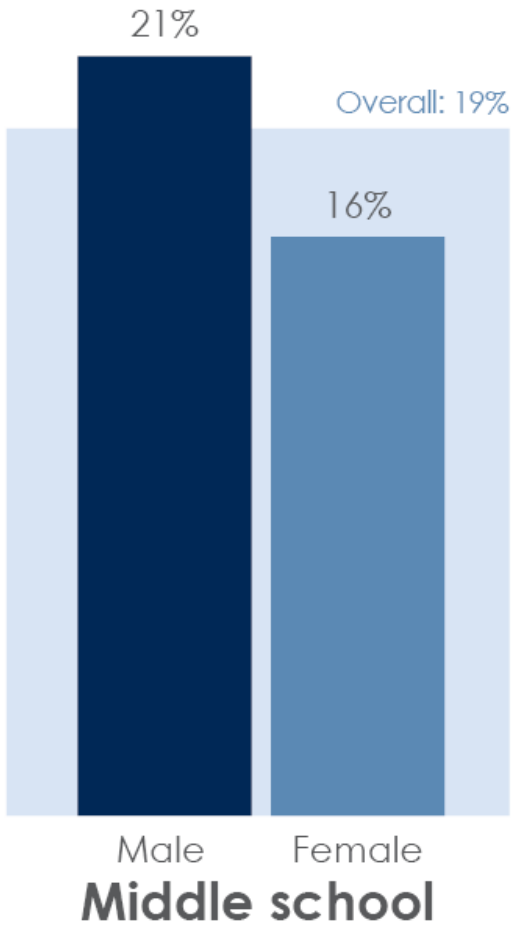


Source: OHYES! Survey (not all counties participate)

Neighborhood safety

Percentage of Ohio students who ever saw someone get physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood, 2023

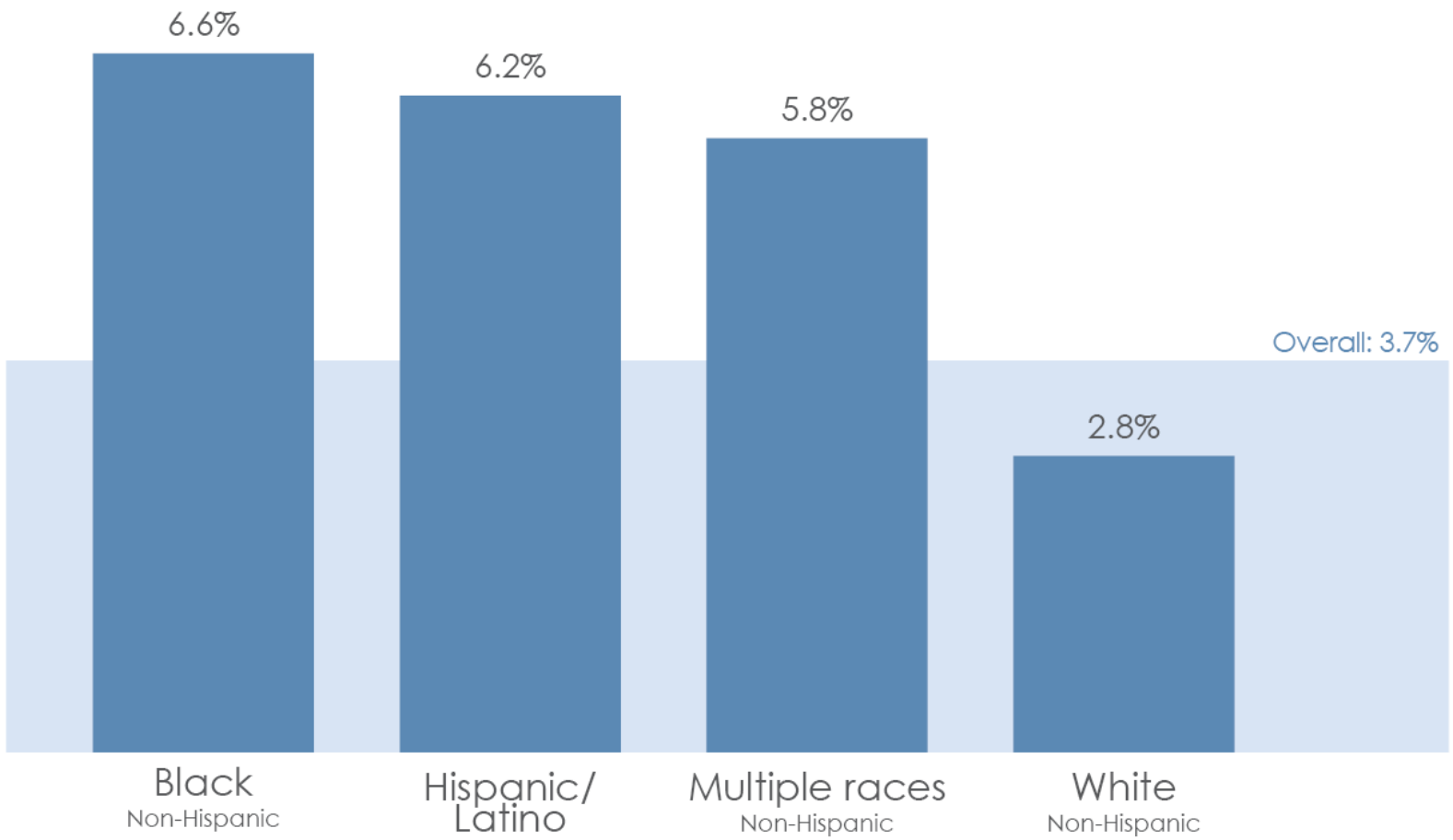




Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Housing: Homelessness, housing instability and housing quality

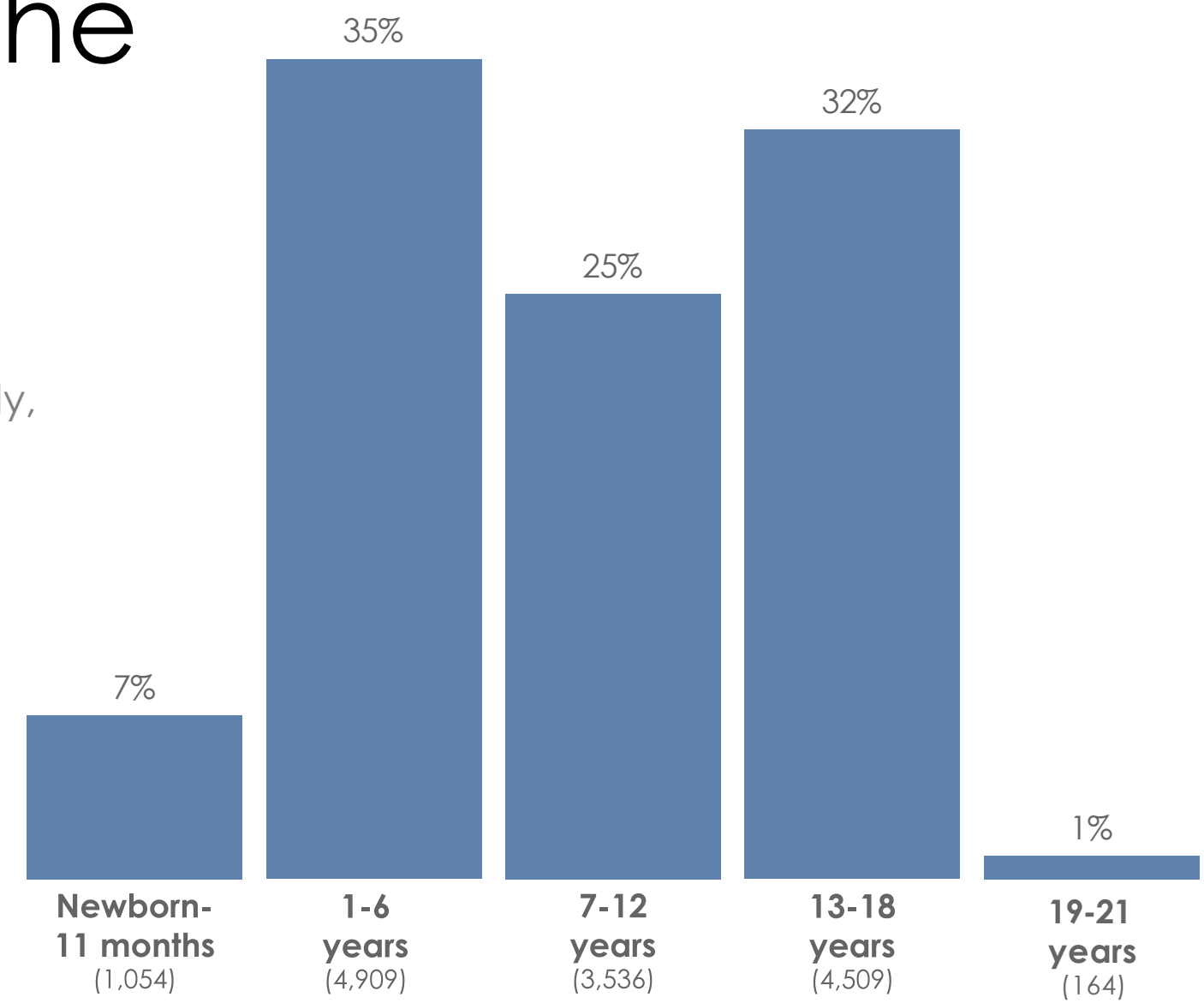
Percentage of Ohio high school students who experienced unstable housing, by race, 2023



Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2023)

Involvement in the child protective services system

Ohio children in protective services custody, by age, 2024



Note: Children in custody can include children who are in placements such as family foster care, kinship care, independent living, congregate care (congregate care includes placements such as residential centers, shelter care facilities, group homes, hospitals, nursing homes, and detention facilities), and other settings.
Source: Ohio Department of Jobs & Family Services Point in Time Count of Children in Care Dashboard, data as of October 2024

Discussion

What are your reactions to this list?

Is there anything important missing?

Six contributing factors for consideration

1. Neighborhood safety
2. Housing: Homelessness, housing instability and housing quality
3. Involvement in the child protective services system
4. Bullying and cyberbullying (including interpersonal discrimination)
5. Screen time, smartphones and social media
6. Academic and other pressures/pressure to succeed

Topics removed by HPIO

- Poverty
- Traditional ACEs (abuse, neglect, household challenges)
- Oversaturation of information (from smart phone use) and resulting fear regarding the state of the world (e.g., climate change, mass violence, natural disasters, wars in other countries, political polarization)
- Stigma
- Fear of school shootings (including drills and preparation)
- COVID-19 pandemic
- Other health concerns including developmental delays
- Chronic stress
- Sleep
- Lack of physical activity
- Lack of access to healthy foods
- Demonstration of ownership and competence

Selection criteria to consider

1. **Potential magnitude of impact**: Which of these contributing factors have the biggest impact? Which are the most common in Ohio?
2. **Potential effect on disparities**: Which factors contribute most to mental health disparities among Ohio children and youth?
3. **Political feasibility**: To which of these factors are Ohio policymakers the most likely to pay attention? What topics are most likely to gain traction in the current policymaking environment? (Including budgetary/cost considerations)
4. **Potential for change:** For which factors are there evidence-informed policy or programmatic recommendations to address? Which topics are most feasible to address at the state and local level?
5. **Alignment with other state of Ohio initiatives**

Small-group discussion

1. Considering the selection criteria, which contributing factors would you suggest that we feature in the brief? Why?
2. Which contributing factors might gain traction in the current policymaking environment and why?
3. What policy solutions exist for the contributing factors you prioritized? Is there current policy or program work that Ohio can build on?

Six contributing factors for consideration

1. Neighborhood safety
2. Housing: Homelessness, housing instability and housing quality
3. Involvement in the child protective services system
4. Bullying and cyberbullying (including interpersonal discrimination)
5. Screen time, smartphones and social media
6. Academic and other pressures/pressure to succeed

Selection criteria to consider

1. Potential magnitude of impact
2. Potential effect on disparities
3. Political feasibility
4. Potential for change
5. Alignment with other state of Ohio initiatives

Small group report outs

Discussion

Thinking about the factors that rose to the top in your group:

What needs to happen to make improvements to these contributing factors?

NEXT STEPS

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