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CHICAGO

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

DEFINING PROBLEMS. SHAPING SOLUTIONS.

CaYOUTH: Perspectives of Youth and Child Welfare Workers on Extended Foster Care

Mark E. Courtney

ChapinHall at the University of Chicago

Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

My Purpose Today

- Share selected findings of the CalYOUTH Study
 - Wave 2 Youth Survey
 - Second Child Welfare Worker Survey
- Engage in discussion about the implications of findings for practice and policy

Overview of the CaYOUTH Study

Evaluation of the impact of California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB 12) on outcomes for foster youth

CaYOUTH Study includes:

- Longitudinal study of young people in CA foster care making the transition to adulthood
- Periodic surveys of caseworkers serving young people in CA foster care
- Analysis of government program administrative data

Purpose of the Longitudinal Youth Study

Obtain information about a broad range of life experiences & young adult outcomes

- Foster care placement
- Service utilization & preparation
- Perceptions of extended care
- Education and employment
- Health and development
- Social support
- Delinquency
- Pregnancy and children

CALifornia
YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY

CalYOUTH
Child Welfare Youth Survey
April 2016

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- A. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FAMILY BACKGROUND
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- D. PERSPECTIVES ON FOSTER CARE IN CALIFORNIA
- E. EDUCATION
- F. EMPLOYMENT, INCOME AND ASSETS
- G. ECONOMIC HARDSHIP, FOOD INSECURITY, AND PUBLIC PROGRAM PARTICIPATION
- H. PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH
- I. LIFE SKILLS: YOUTH'S PREPAREDNESS AND RECEIPT OF SERVICES
- J. COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT
- K. SEXUALITY, STDs, AND PREGNANCY
- L. CHILDREN AND PARENTING
- M. MARRIAGE AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS
- N. PAST MALTREATMENT
- O. CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

Youth Surveys: Data Collection and Response Rate

- **Wave 1 Survey Period (age 17)**
 - April 2013 to October 2013
 - 51 counties included in final sample
 - Youth eligible for study $n = 763$
 - Completed interviews $n = 727$ (response rate = 95.3%)

- **Wave 2 Survey Period (age 19)**
 - March 2015 to December 2015
 - Youth eligible for study $n = 724$
 - Completed interviews $n = 611$ (response rate = 84.1%)

Purpose of Child Welfare Worker Study

Obtain perceptions of service delivery context

- County level availability of and need for services

- Coordination of services with other service systems

- Attitudes of caseworker, county court personnel, and youth toward extended care

California
YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY
CalYOUTH
Child Welfare Worker Survey
April 2016

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- A. Caseworker Characteristics
- B. Youth's Demographic Characteristics
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- F. Youth's Health, Mental Health, and Pregnancy/Parental Status
- G. Youth's Preparedness and Need for Services in Various Life Areas
- H. Youth's Motivation to Remain in Care Past Age 18
- I. Availability and Helpfulness of Trainings and Services
- J. Satisfaction with Collaboration with Other Systems
- K. Supportiveness of Court Personnel
- L. Attitudes toward Extended Foster Care
- M. Views of Challenges to Effective Implementation of Extended Foster Care
- N. Views of Non-Minor Dependents

Caseworker Surveys: Data Collection and Response Rate

- **First Caseworker Survey**
 - Sample of caseworkers across the state serving older foster care youth

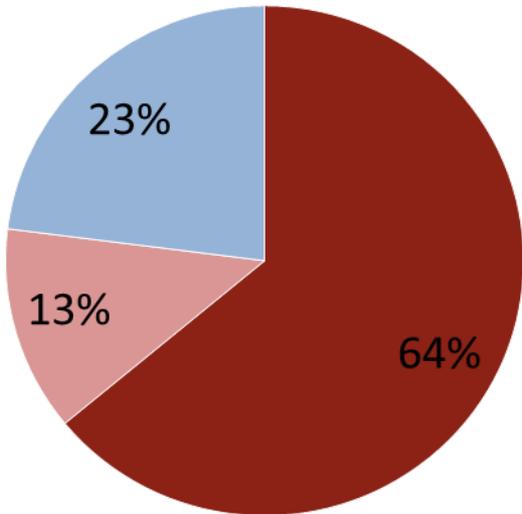
- **Second Caseworker Survey**
 - Caseworkers serving young people in the longitudinal Youth Survey who were still in care as of June 1, 2015
 - Survey Period: July 2015 to October 2015
 - **Part A:** questions about service context in their county
 - 295/306 of eligible caseworkers completed surveys (96.4%)
 - **Part B:** questions about specific youth on their caseload
 - 493/516 surveys completed about youth on their caseloads (95.5%)

Demographic Characteristics ($n=611$)

	n	%
Gender		
Female	367	60.0
Age		
19 years old	599	97.9
20 years old	12	2.1
Hispanic	272	47.4
Race		
White	193	27.8
African American	108	24.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	20	3.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	23	4.1
Mixed race	240	41.1
Language spoken at home		
English	567	91.1
Spanish	41	8.6
Other	2	0.2

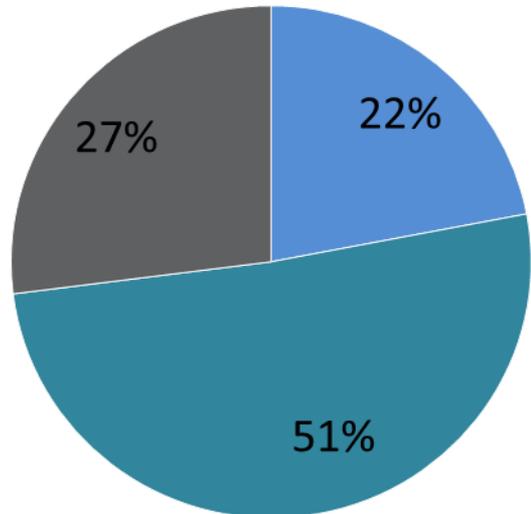
Current Foster Care Status

Care Status at Wave 2
(*n*=611)



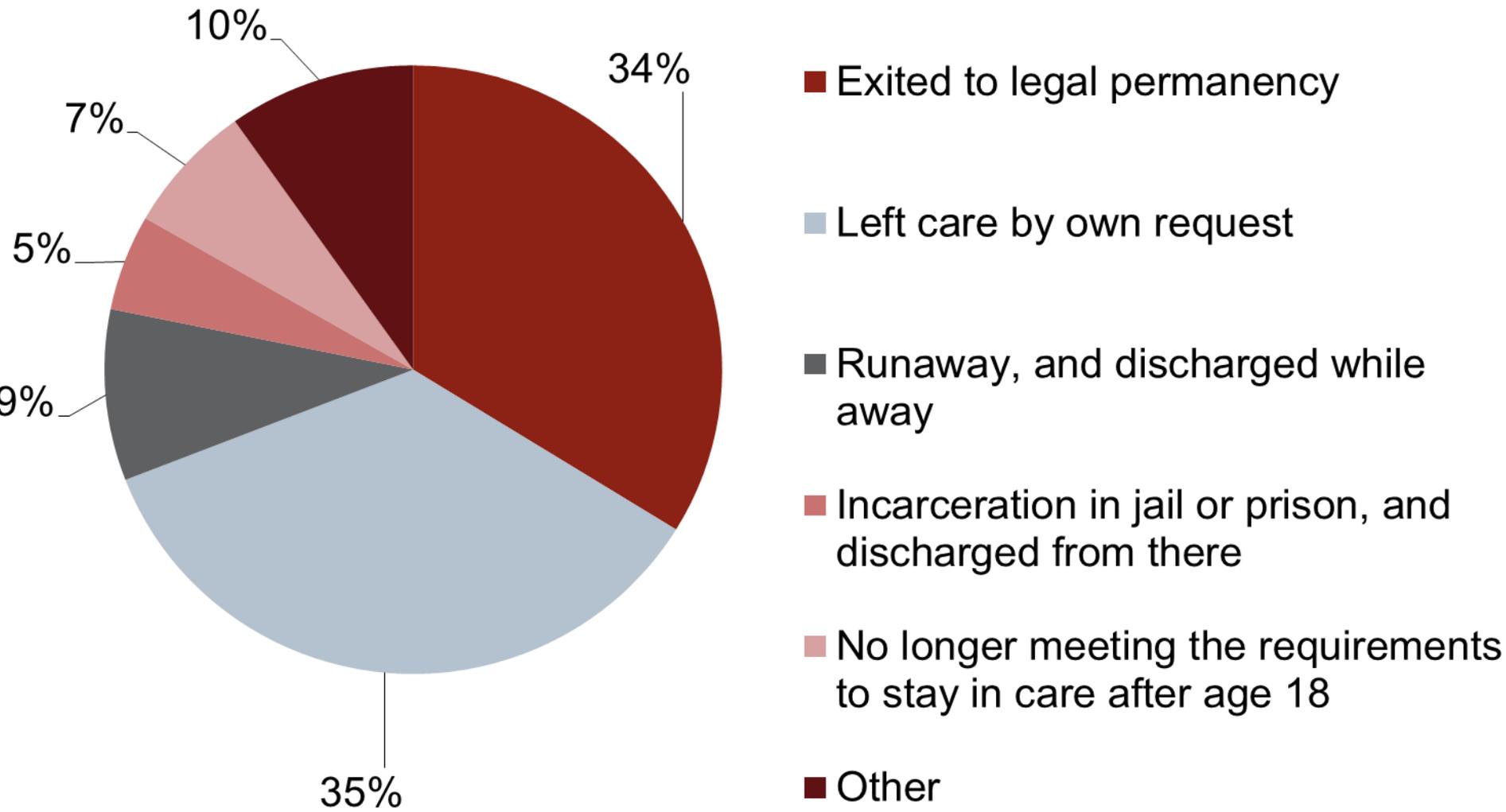
- In care (never left since Wave 1)
- In care (exited and reentered after Wave 1)
- Not in care

Age at Discharge
(*n*=134)



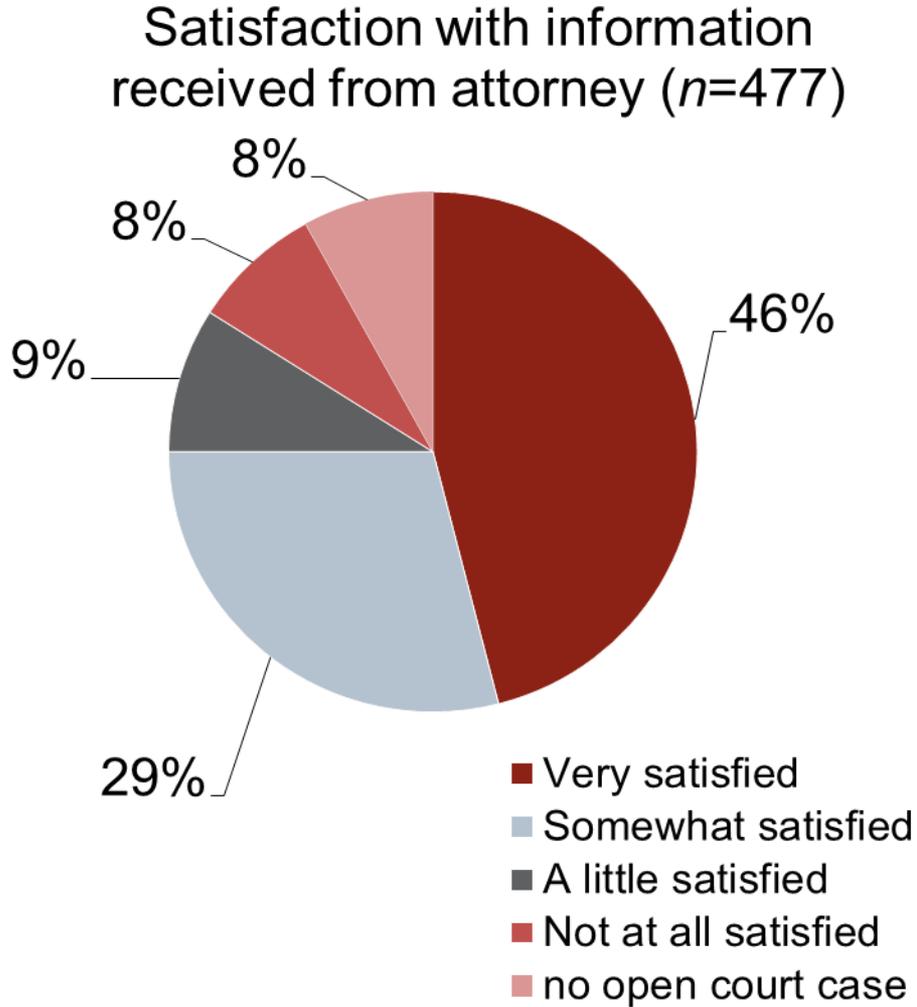
- 17 or younger
- 18
- 19

How Youth Left Care (*n*=134)



Experience with Foster Care Professionals

- About two-thirds of youth met with social worker at least once a month.
- On average, youth had 14 phone calls with social worker per year.
- On average, youth had 2 face-to-face visits or phone calls with attorney per year.
- About 58% ever attended court proceedings about extended foster care





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How is it Going at Home? Housing, Homelessness, and Housing Supports

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Where Are Youth Living?

Youth In-Care ($n = 477$)

	<i>n</i>	%
SILP	142	31.4
THP-Plus or THP+FC	114	19.2
Home of a relative	93	22.6
Foster home with an unrelated foster parent	61	13.2
Home of a nonrelated family member	41	8.7
Other	16	2.6
Hospital, treatment or rehab facility	2	0.6
Group care	8	1.6

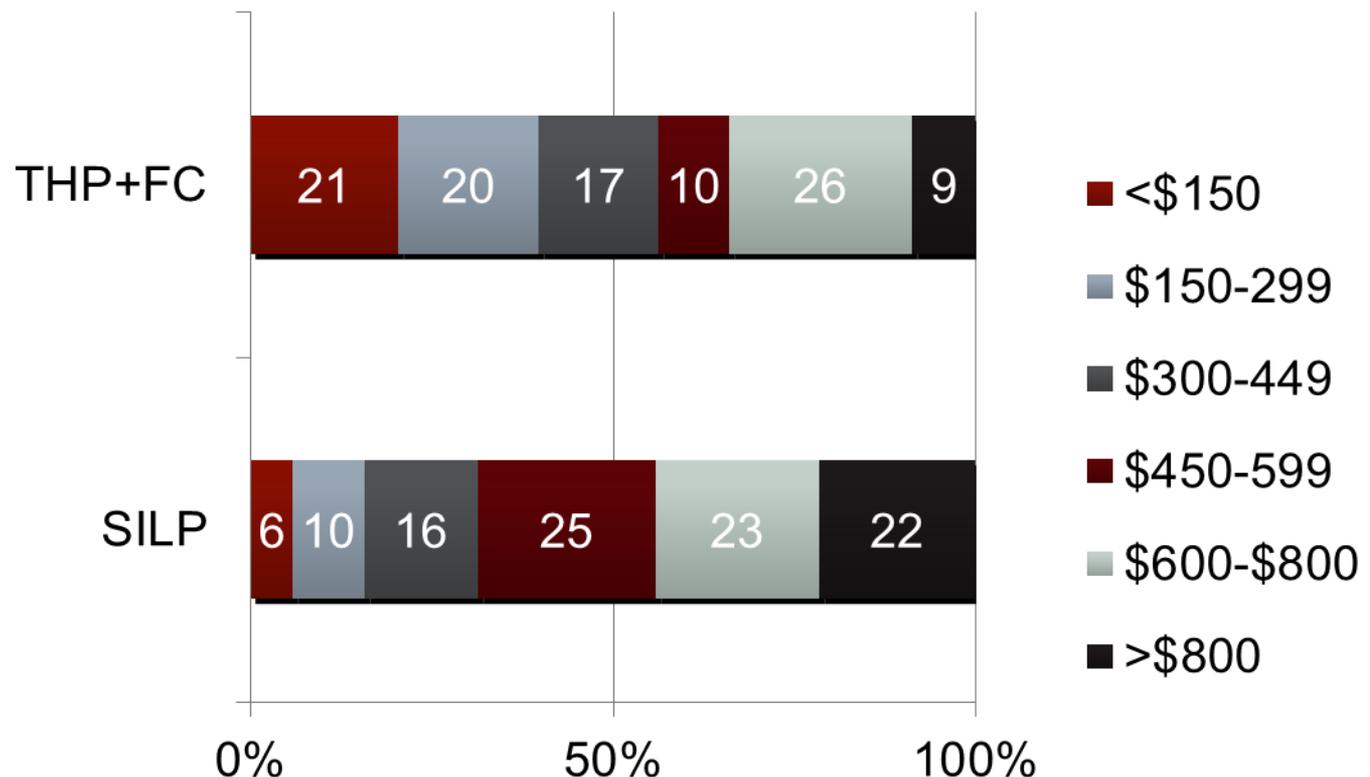
Where Are Youth Living?

Youth Out-of-Care ($n = 134$)

	n	%
In home of another relative(s)	24	22.8
Own place (apartment, house, etc.)	27	19.5
In home of birth parent(s)	22	15.7
In home of spouse/partner	19	12.5
In home of friend(s)	7	4.5
Homeless	6	4.3
Own room in a motel, hotel or SRO	3	2.6
Jail or other correctional facility	4	1.9
In home of former foster parent(s)	3	1.2
Group home or treatment center	1	0.5
Dormitory	1	0.5
Hospital, treatment or rehab facility	1	0.3
Other	16	13.9

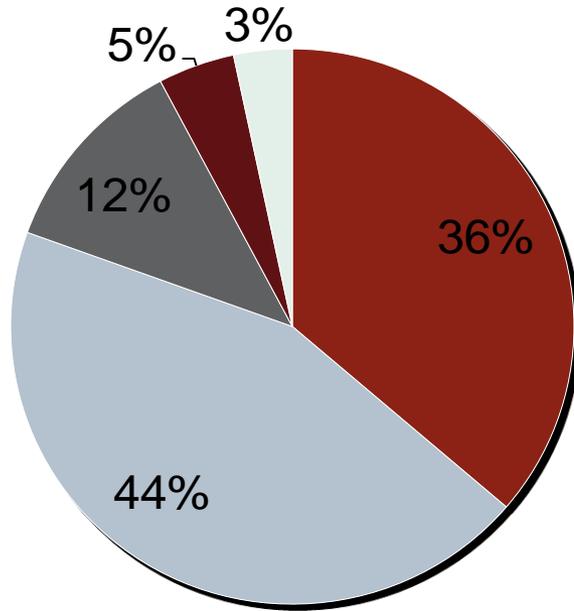
How Are Youth in SILP's, THP-Plus and THP+FC Faring Financially?

- Most youth reported paying less than \$600 a month in rent however, differences between youth in THP+FC and SILP were present



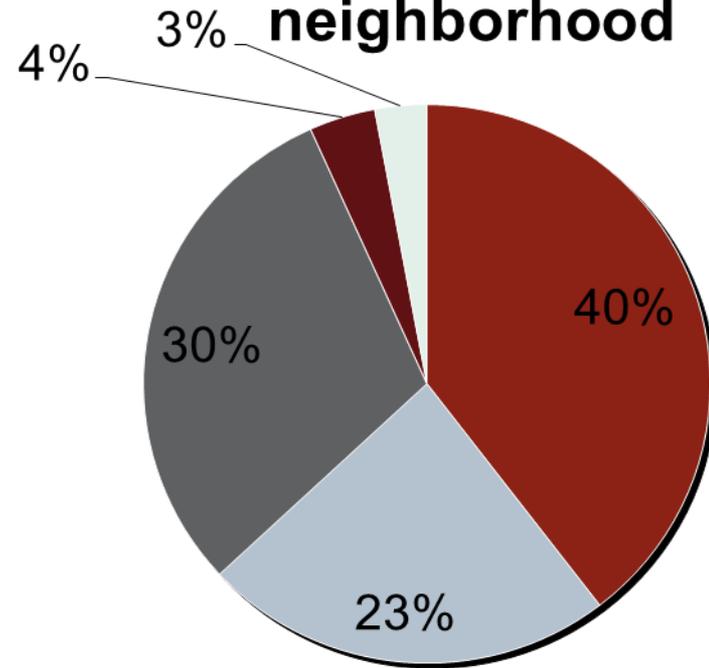
How Satisfied Are Youth In Their Living Situations?

Satisfaction with living situation (In-care)



- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Happiness with neighborhood

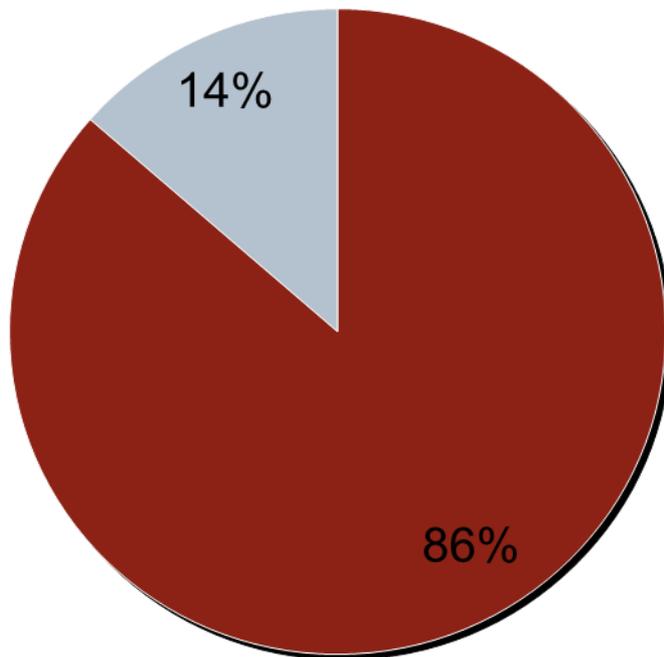


- Very Happy
- Somewhat happy
- Neutral
- Somewhat unhappy
- Not at all happy

- Nearly nine-in-ten youth indicated that they felt safe in their neighborhood

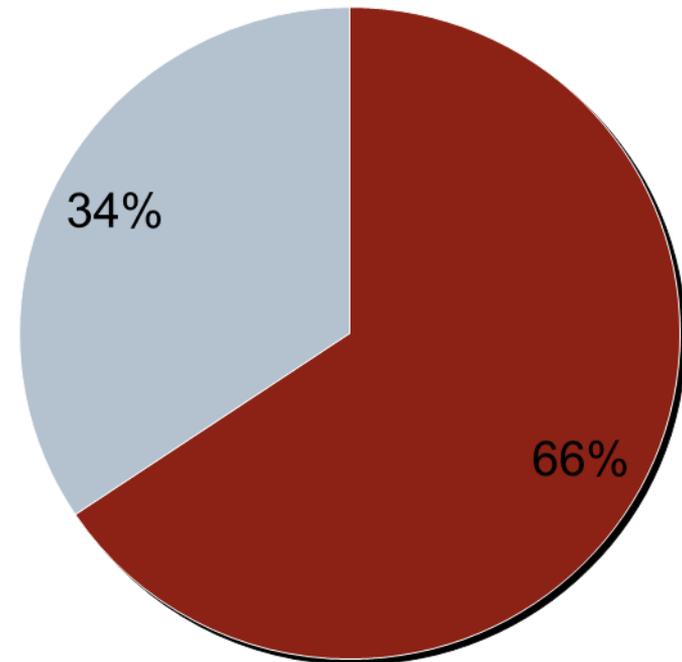
How Many Youth Have Experienced Homelessness?

**Homelessness since last interview
(In-Care)**



■ Never Homeless
■ Ever Homeless

**Homelessness since last interview
(Out-of-Care)**



■ Never Homeless
■ Ever Homeless

Summary

- Youth in-care and out-of-care are living in different settings
 - The majority of youth in-care are living in SILPS, the home of a relative, or a THP-Plus or THP+FC
 - The majority of youth out-of-care are living in the home of a birth parent, in the home of another relative, or in their own place
- The vast majority of youth are living with others
- Youth were more likely to feel “not prepared” in the area of housing than in any other area (not shown)
- Youth out-of-care are more likely than youth in-care to experience an episode of homelessness or couch-surfing



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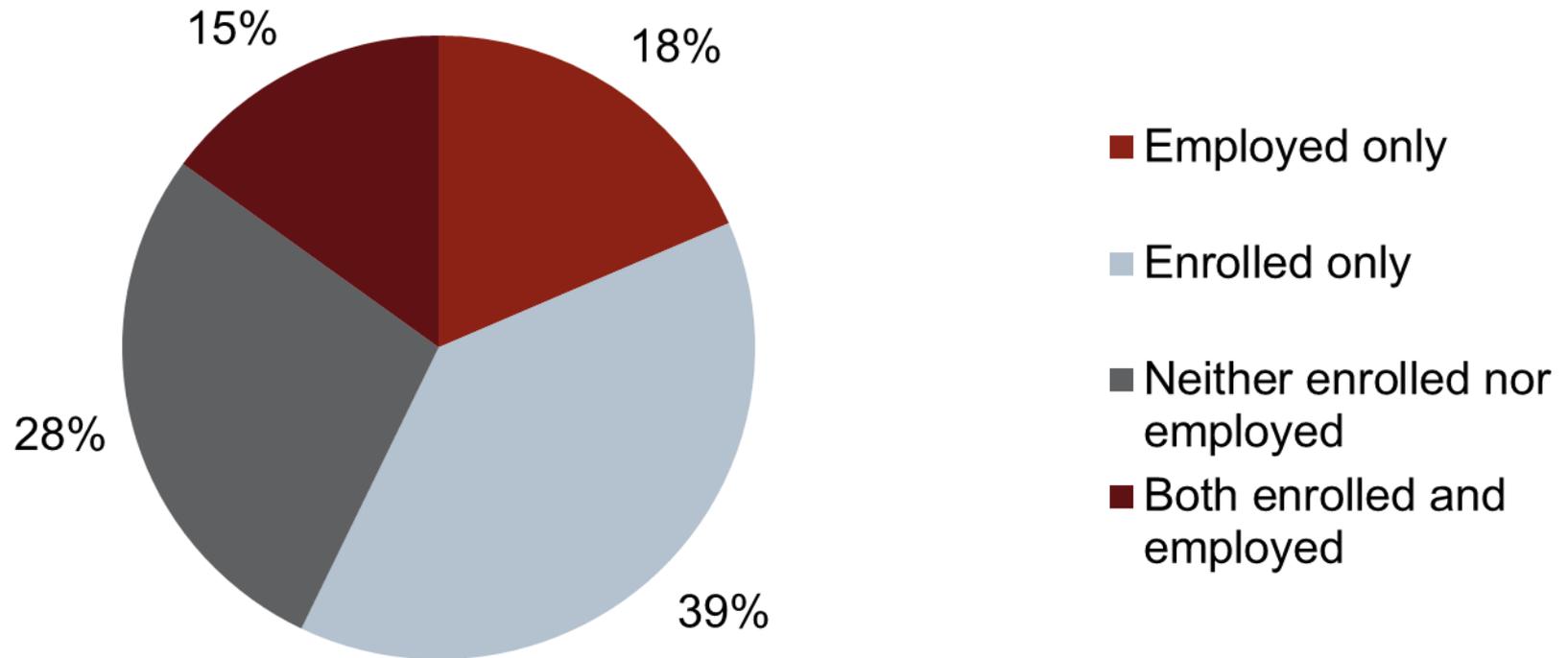
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Connected or Not? Youth's Connections to Education and Employment

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Connected to School or Work (n=606)¹



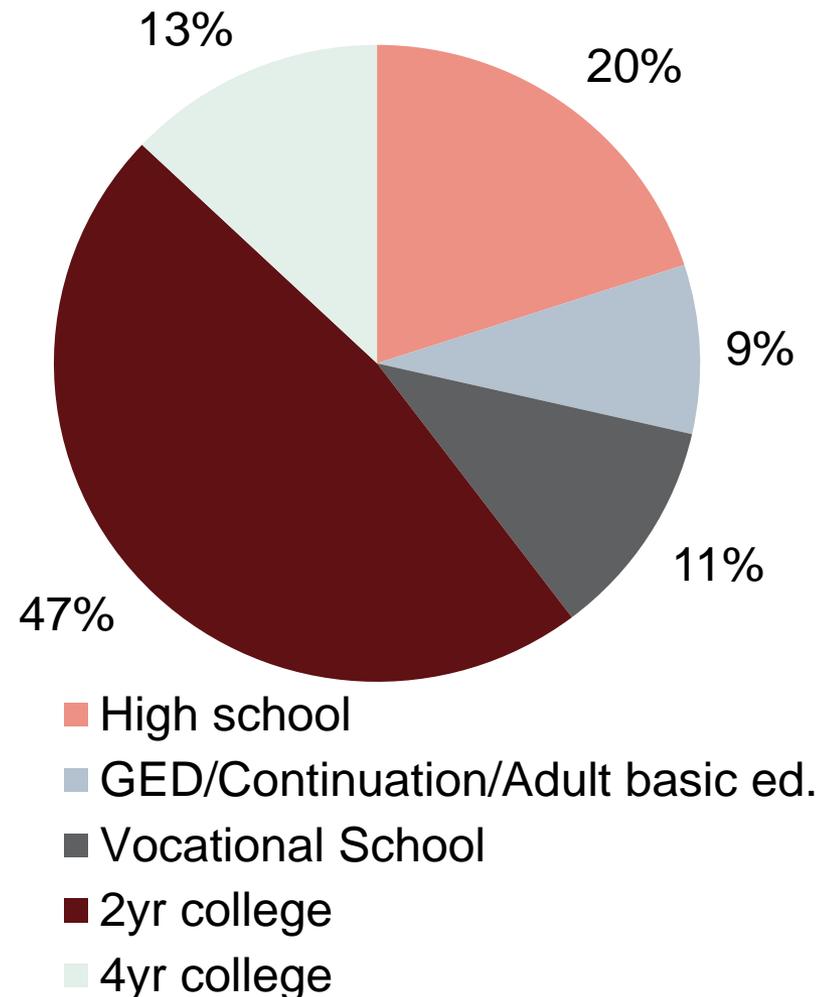
- Nearly three-quarters of youth reported being enrolled and/or employed (72%)

¹ Excludes 5 incarcerated youth

Education Status and Enrollment

- 71% of youth had a high school diploma or equivalency certificate
- 54% of youth were currently enrolled
- Among those enrolled, 60% were in college

Type of School Enrolled in (n=317)



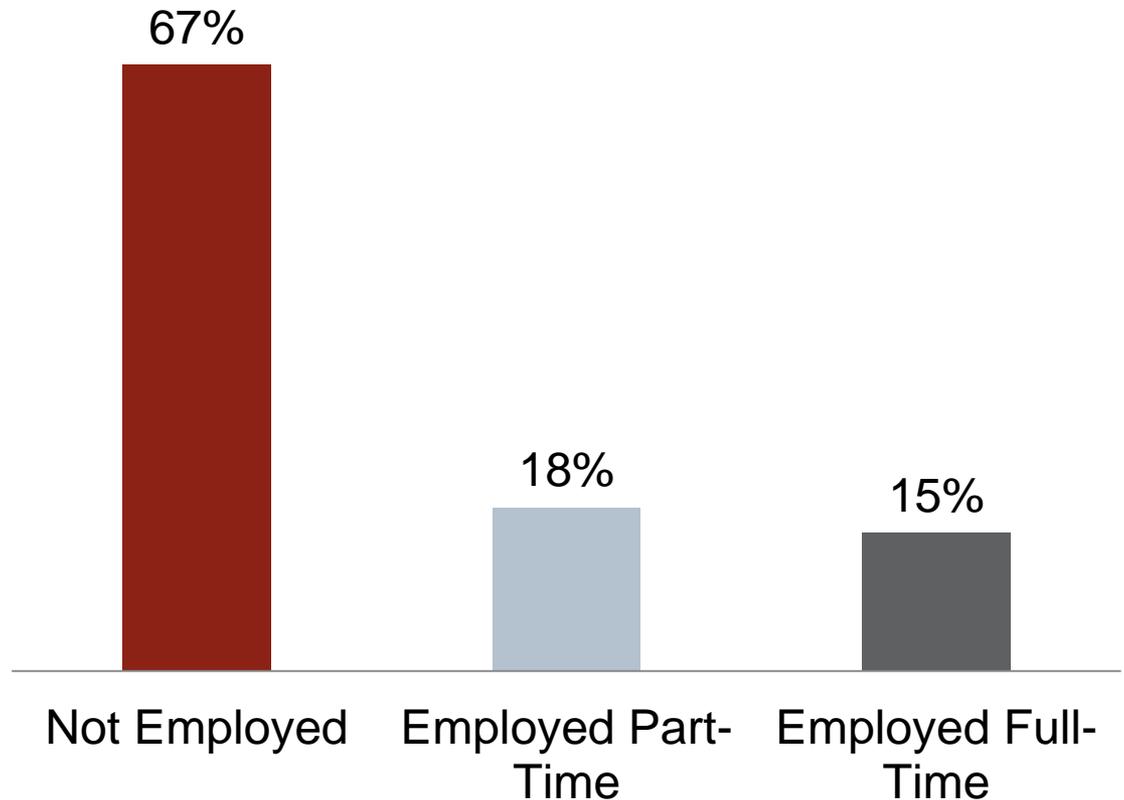
College Enrollment (current or since Wave 1 ($n=268$))

	n	%
Paying for College (can choose more than one)		
ETV grant	148	54.3
Other scholarships, fellowships, or grants	199	71.0
Student loans	31	9.2
Own earnings from employment or savings	92	31.9
Money from a relative, friend, other	22	8.4
Money from another source	30	11.0
Involvement in campus support for F.Y.	134	50.3
Involvement in other college activities		
Tutoring	87	35.2
TRIO/EOP student support services	53	19.3
Academic advising	136	51.6
Meeting with professors outside class	147	54.8

Employment

- 76% of youth reported ever having a job
- 33% were currently employed
- Among youth not in school, 40% were currently employed
- Average hourly wage: \$10.21
- Among all unemployed youth, most want a job (89%)

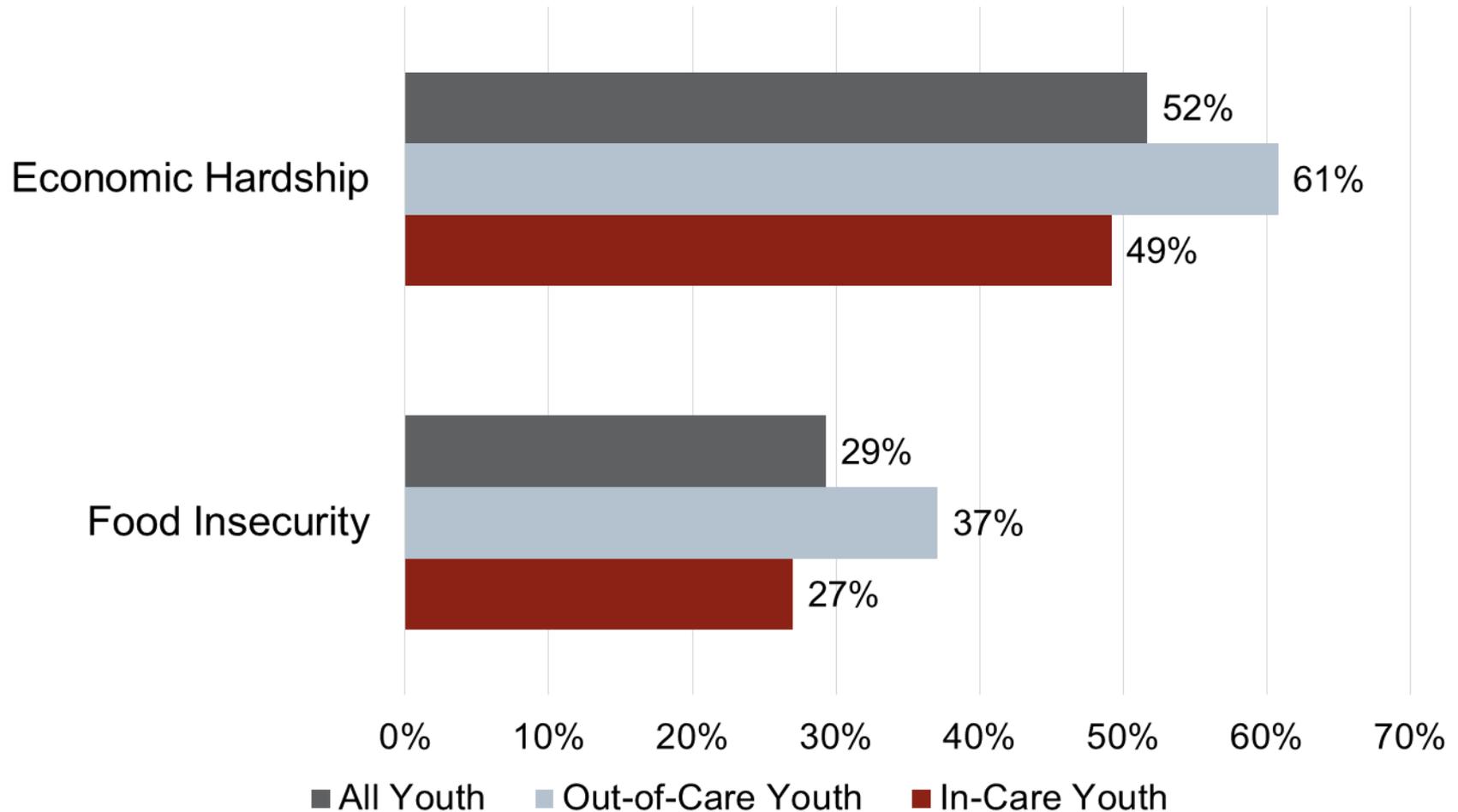
Current Employment



Assets

- About 60% of youth ($n=373$) reported that they had a checking, savings, or a money market account
- Of those with an account, average balance in all accounts is \$1,526 (median= \$600)
- 30% of youth said they own a vehicle

Economic Hardship and Food Insecurity in Past 12 Months



Receipt of Public Benefits

	All Youth	
	n	%
Currently receiving food stamps/CalFresh	119	19.7
Currently receiving WIC (<i>n</i> =98)*	75	77.4
Currently receiving any public housing assistance	21	3.4
Currently receiving TANF/CalWorks	8	1.7

*Includes only mothers.

Summary

- Almost three-quarters of youth are enrolled in school or are currently working
- Some youth experienced economic hardships or food insecurity
- Receipt of need-based public benefits was generally low, although many mothers were receiving WIC benefits
- Out-of-care youth were less likely than in-care youth to have finished a secondary credential and to be enrolled in school, but more likely to experience economic hardship/food insecurity



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It's More than Just Survival: Youth's Health and Well-Being

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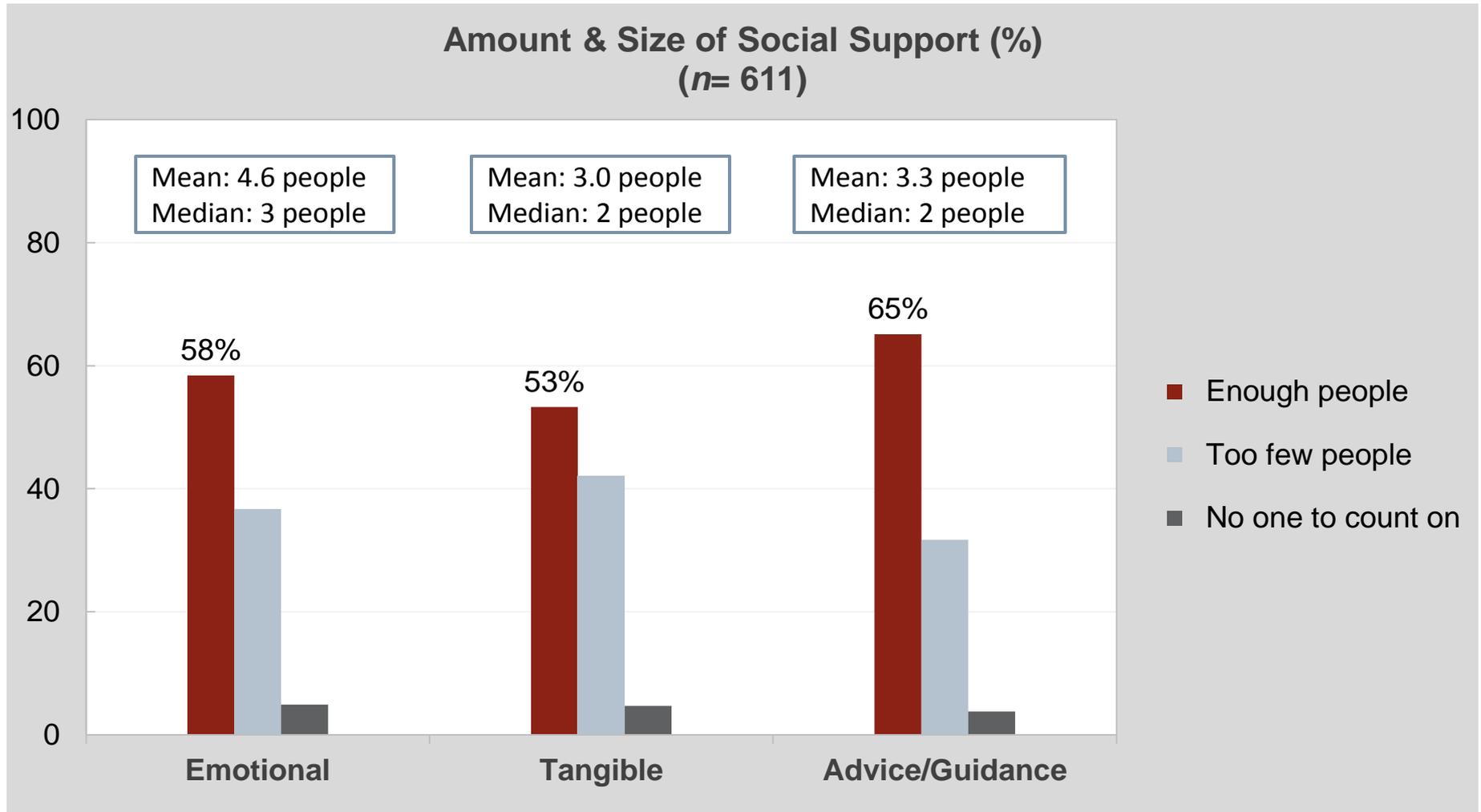
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Youth's Health and Well-Being

- Social Support
- Crime & Criminal Justice
- Health

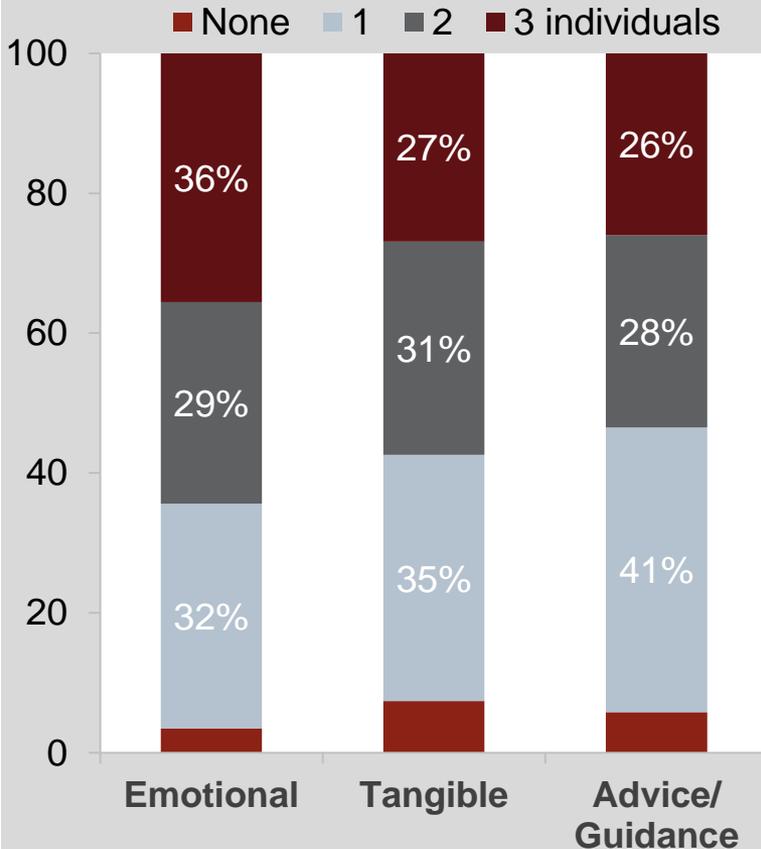
Social Support

Overall Relationships

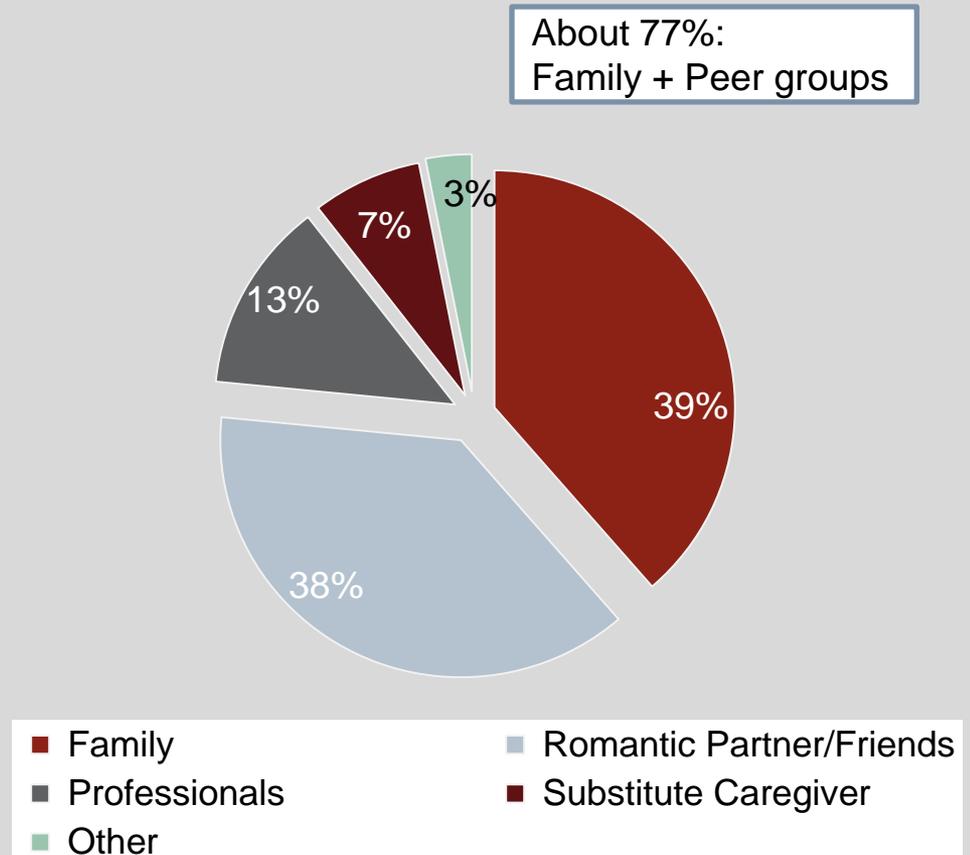


Individuals Nominated as Social Supports

Number of Nominated Support (%)
(n= 1,999)



Relationship to Nominated Support (%)
(n= 1,999)



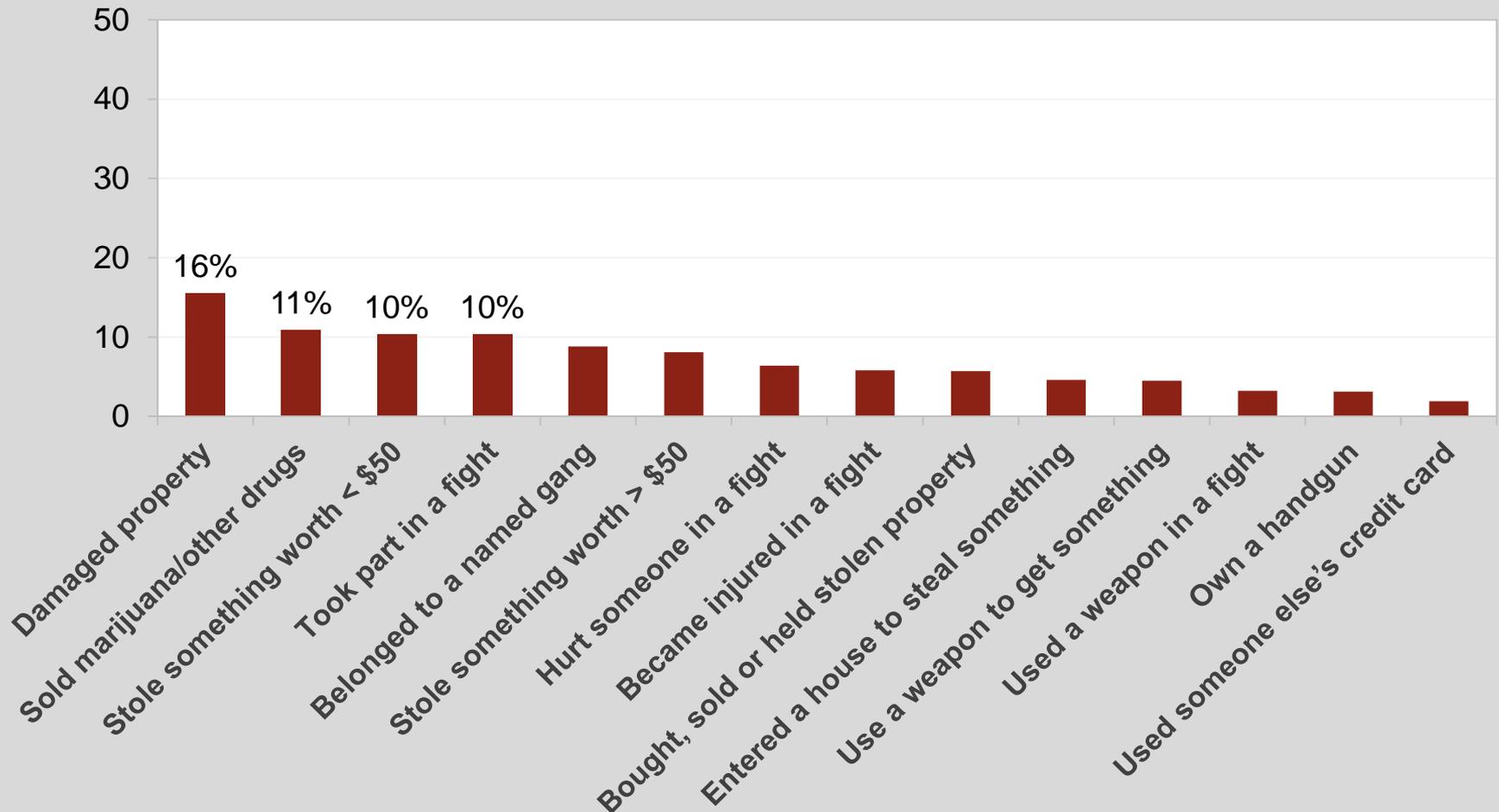
Summary: Social Support

- Majority of youth had someone they could turn to, and youth were in **regular contact** with their supports.
- **Families** and **peers** consisted of most supports. Youth still in care were more likely to nominate caseworkers, and youth who left care were more likely to nominate grandparents.
- Strain was generally **uncommon** in relationships with individuals youth identified as supports (not shown)

Crime & Criminal Justice Involvement

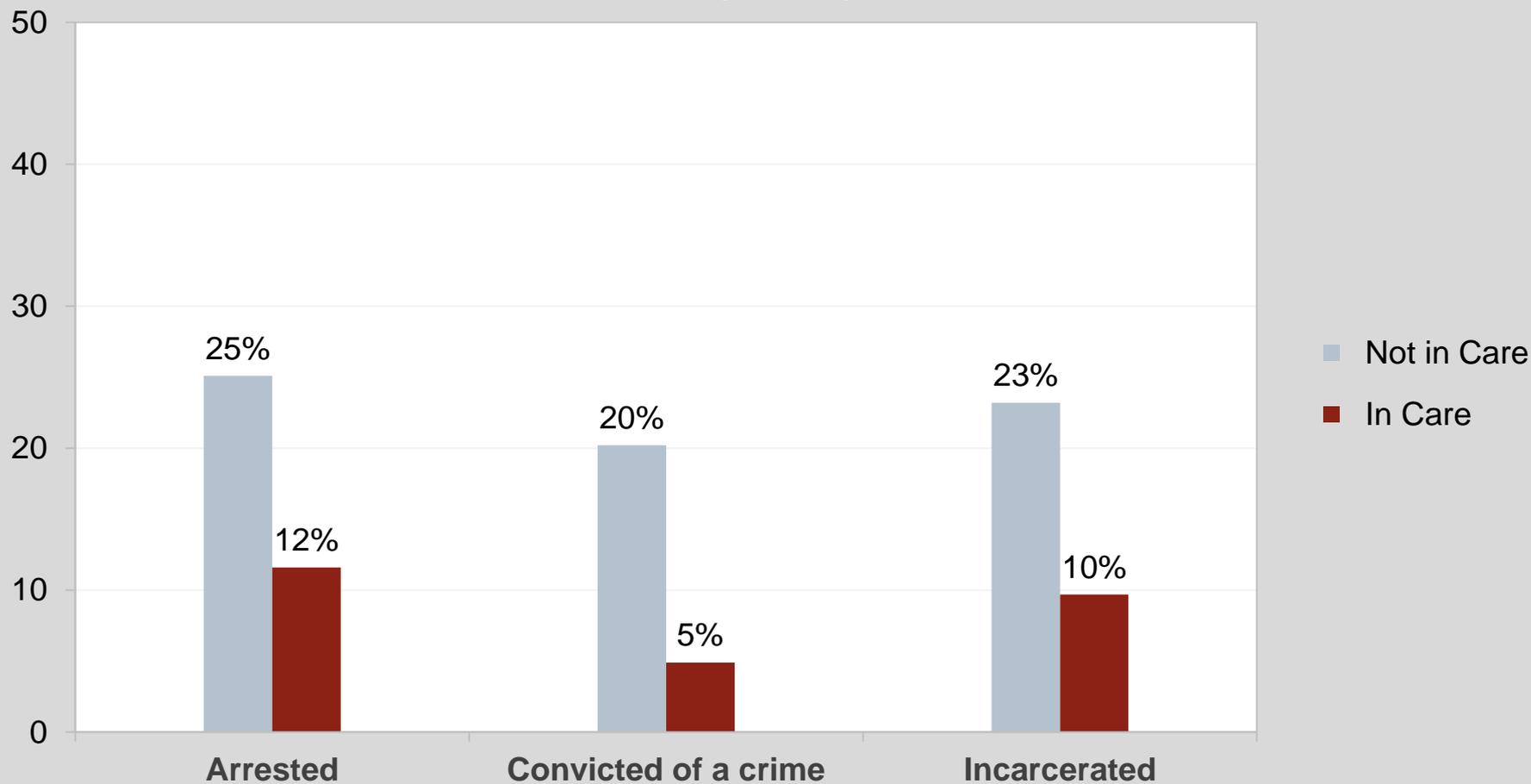
Criminal Behavior

Criminal Behavior (%) (since last interview) (n= 607)



Criminal Justice Involvement

Criminal Justice Involvement (%) (since last interview)
(*n*= 607)



Victimization & Perpetration

During the past 12 months	Not In Care (%)	In Care (%)
Victimization		
Saw someone being shot or stabbed	10.2	4.9
Someone pulled a gun on respondent *	13.1	6.1
Someone pulled a knife on respondent	8.7	6.1
Someone beat youth and stole something from them *	6.3	2.1
Perpetration		
Respondent pulled a knife/gun on someone	2.7	1.8
Respondent shot or stabbed someone *	3.7	0.1

* Significant difference between youth in care and youth not in care

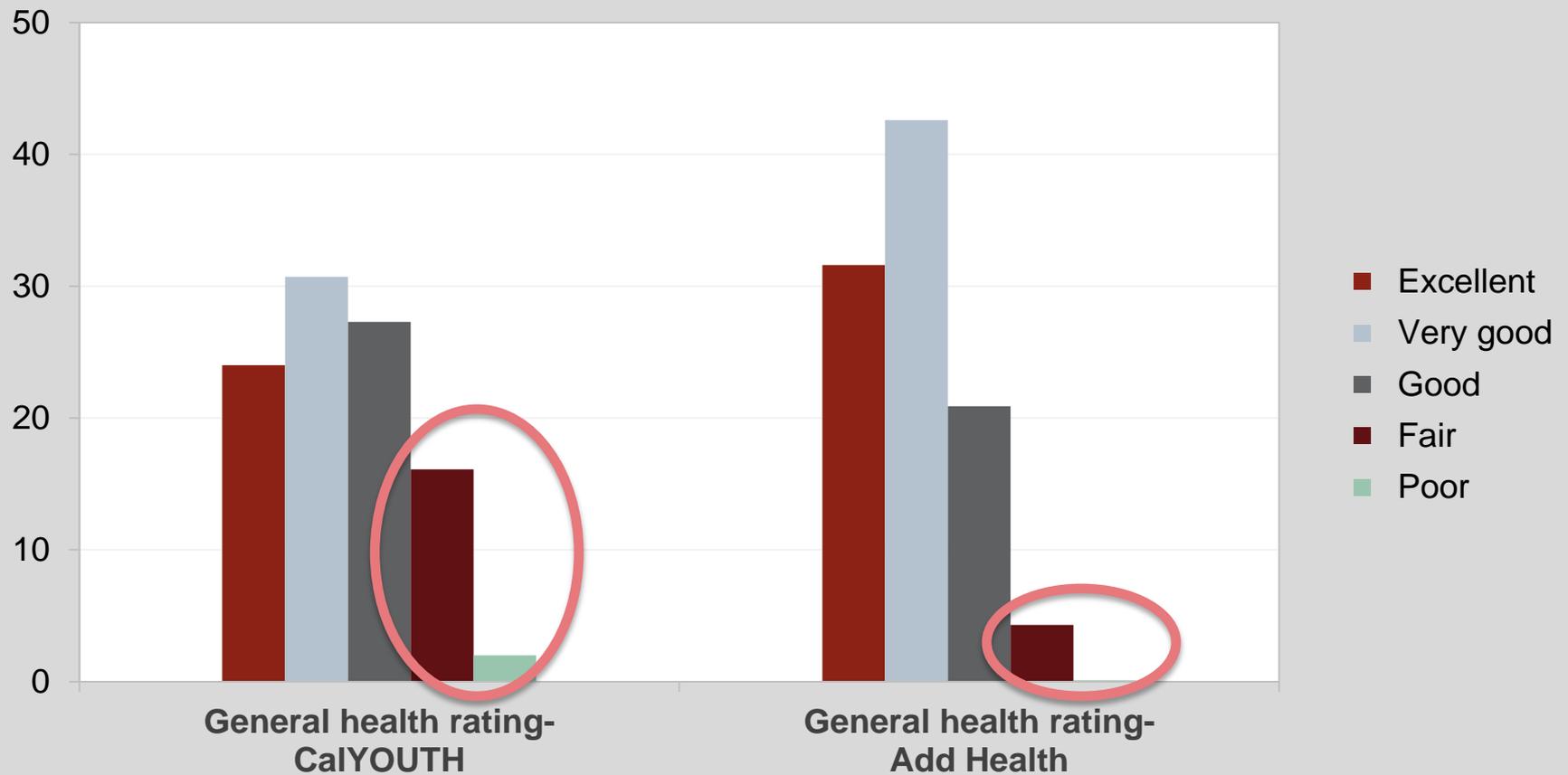
Summary: Crime & Criminal Justice Involvement

- Most youth reported “**never**” engaging in criminal behaviors.
- Criminal justice system involvement was **lower for youth still in care** than those who left care.
- Overall victimization and perpetration of violence were **rare**. Youth **in care were less likely** than those who left care to report some experiences (someone pulled a gun on youth, someone beat youth and stole something from them, youth shot or stabbed someone).

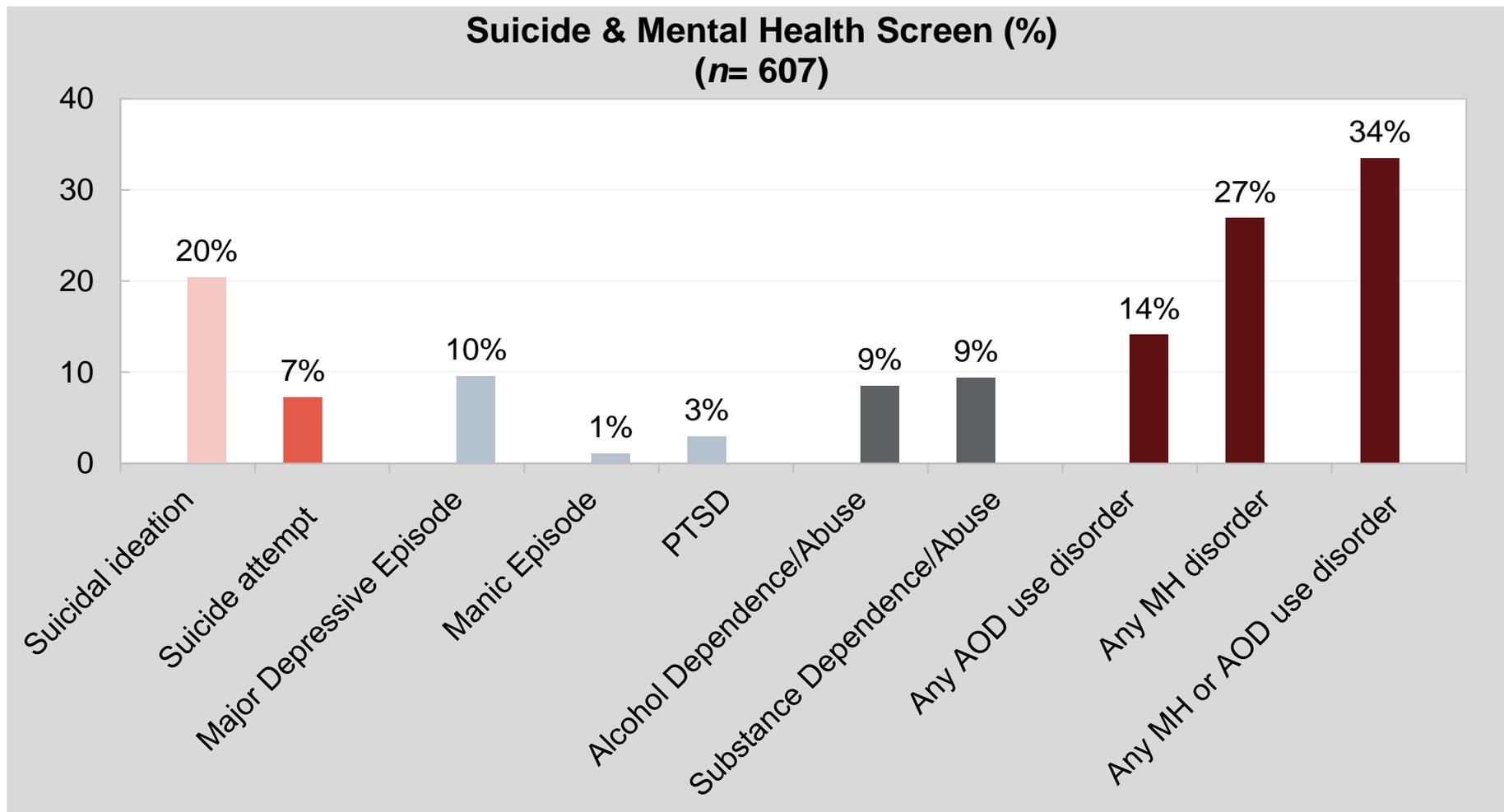
Health

Health Status

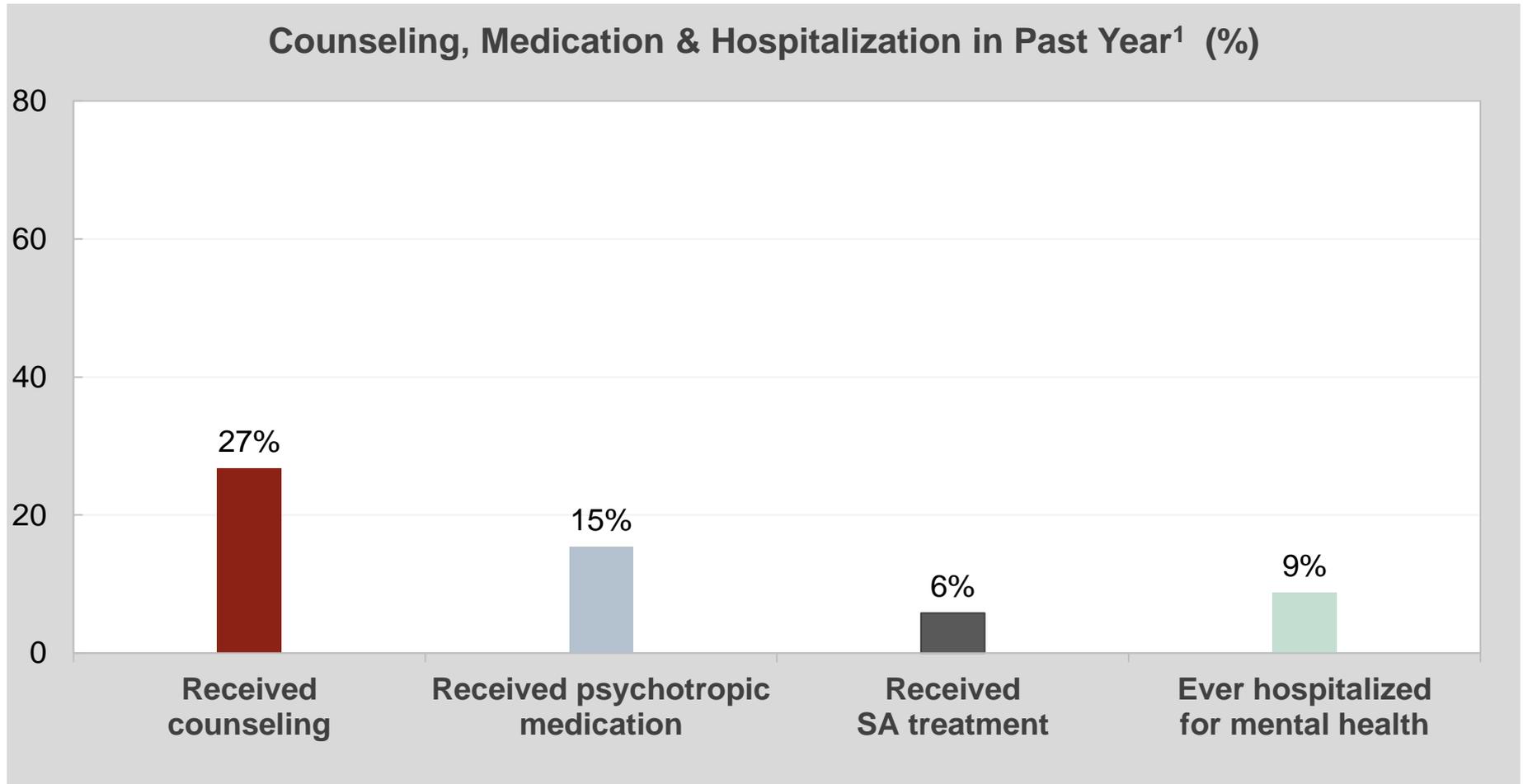
General Health Rating



Behavioral Health



Medication & Hospitalization



- **Hospitalized for any reason since last interview: 31%**

¹ Mental health hospitalization was “since last interview”

Summary: Health

- The majority of youth rated their health as being “good,” “very good,” or “excellent.”
- About 1/3 screened positive for a mental health *or* substance use disorder.
- Most youth reported having a medical exam *within the past year*, and about one-quarter reported using behavioral health services.



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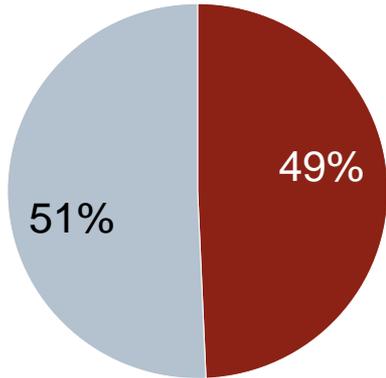
Pregnancy, Parenting, and Romantic Relationships

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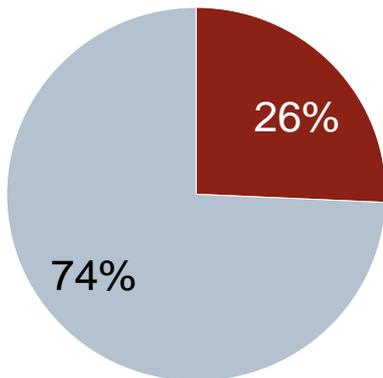
Pregnancy History (Females)

Ever been pregnant



■ Yes ■ No

Ever given birth

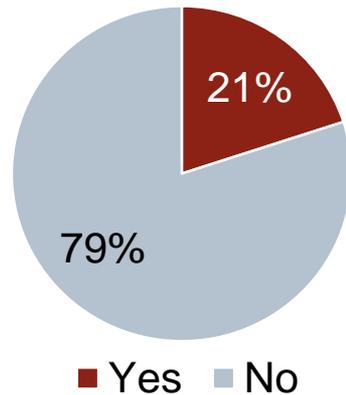


■ Yes ■ No

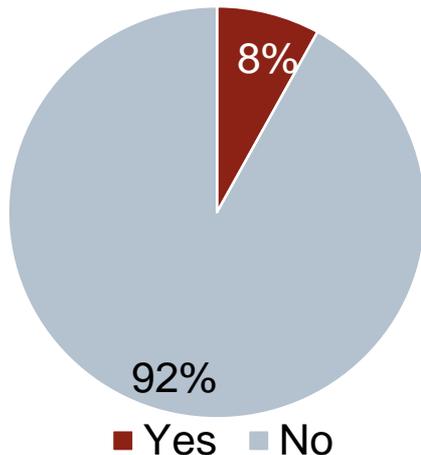
- Since the last interview...
 - 33% of females had become pregnant
 - 21% of females gave birth
- Among females who got pregnant since last interview...
 - 33% wanted to get pregnant
 - 37% did not want to get pregnant
 - 24% were not seen by a doctor or nurse during their first trimester

History of Impregnating Females (Males)

Ever gotten a female pregnant



Ever fathered a child



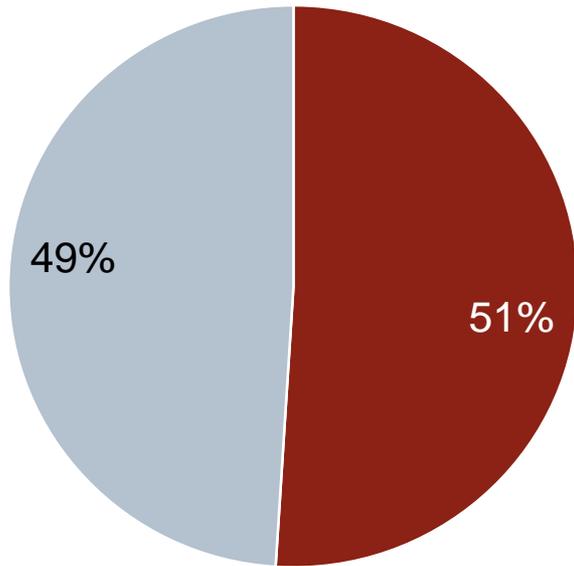
- Since the last interview...
 - 13% of males had gotten a female pregnant
 - 7% of males fathered a child that was born
- Among males who impregnated females since last interview...
 - 29% did want to father a child
 - 37% did not want to father a child

Children and Parenting

Parents (<i>n</i> =121)	Males (<i>n</i> =22; 9.5%)		Females (<i>n</i> =99; 27.2%)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Number of living children				
1 child	22	100	87	90.8
2 children	0	0.0	12	9.2
Respondent lives with all children ***	10	42.7	86	88.2
At least one child is a dependent of the court	3	14.6	13	15.5

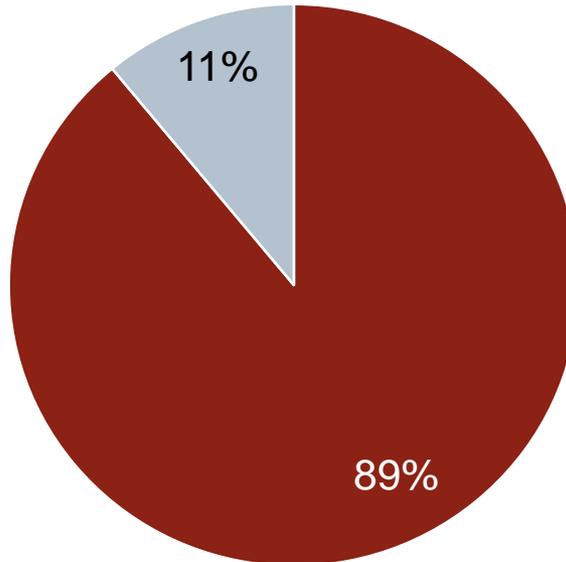
Romantic Relationships

Currently in a romantic relationship



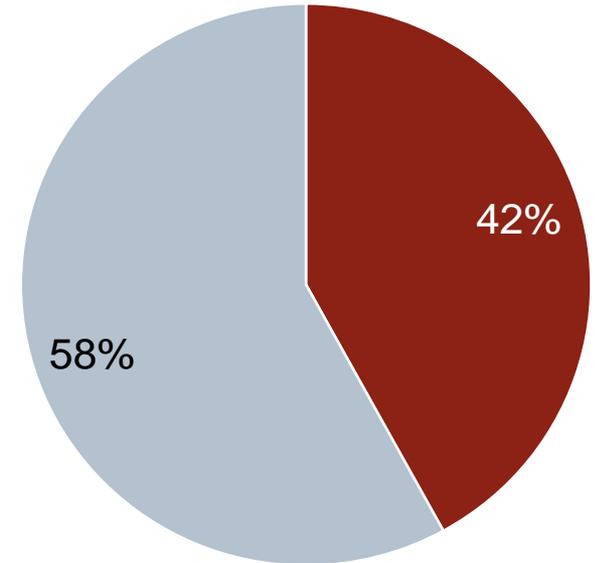
■ Yes ■ No

Relationship with current partner



■ Steady basis
■ Not on a steady basis

Lives with partner



■ Yes
■ No

Relationship Quality

- About 9 in 10 youth in a romantic relationship “agree” or “strongly agree” that...
 - Their partner listens
 - Their partner expresses love and affection
 - Their partner is encouraging
 - They trust their partner to be faithful
 - They are satisfied with their sex life
- Most youth did not report experiencing criticism or manipulation in their relationship

Summary

- Females were more likely to have gotten pregnant than males were to have gotten a partner pregnant
- Females were more likely than males to be a parent, and if they were a parent, to be living with their children
- Few children were involved with the child welfare system
- Over half of youth were in romantic relationships, and most of these relationships had a high level of commitment and satisfaction



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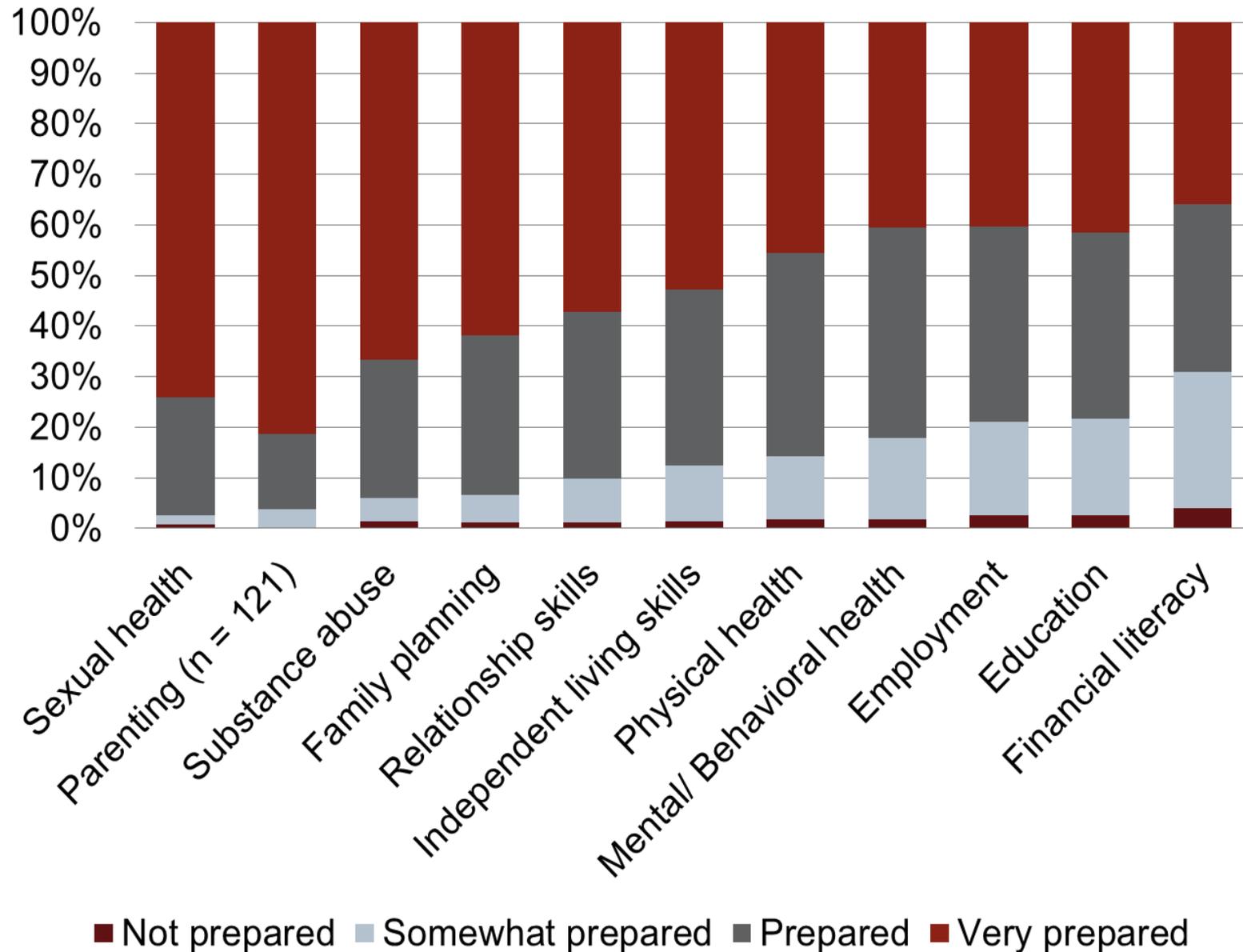
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Youths' Preparedness for Adulthood: Connecting Child Welfare Services for Young Adults to Other Systems

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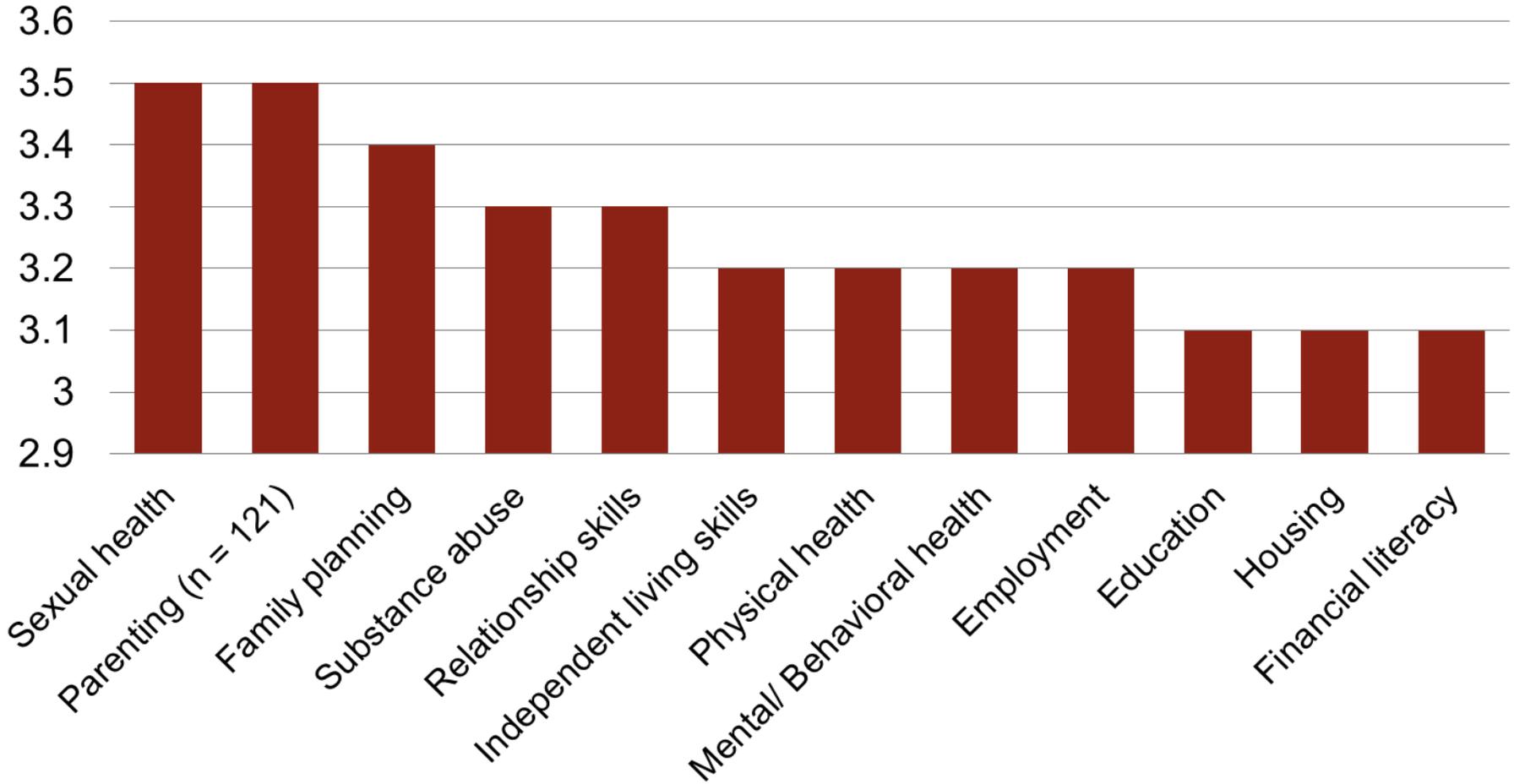
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Youth's Perception of Preparedness to Achieve Goals



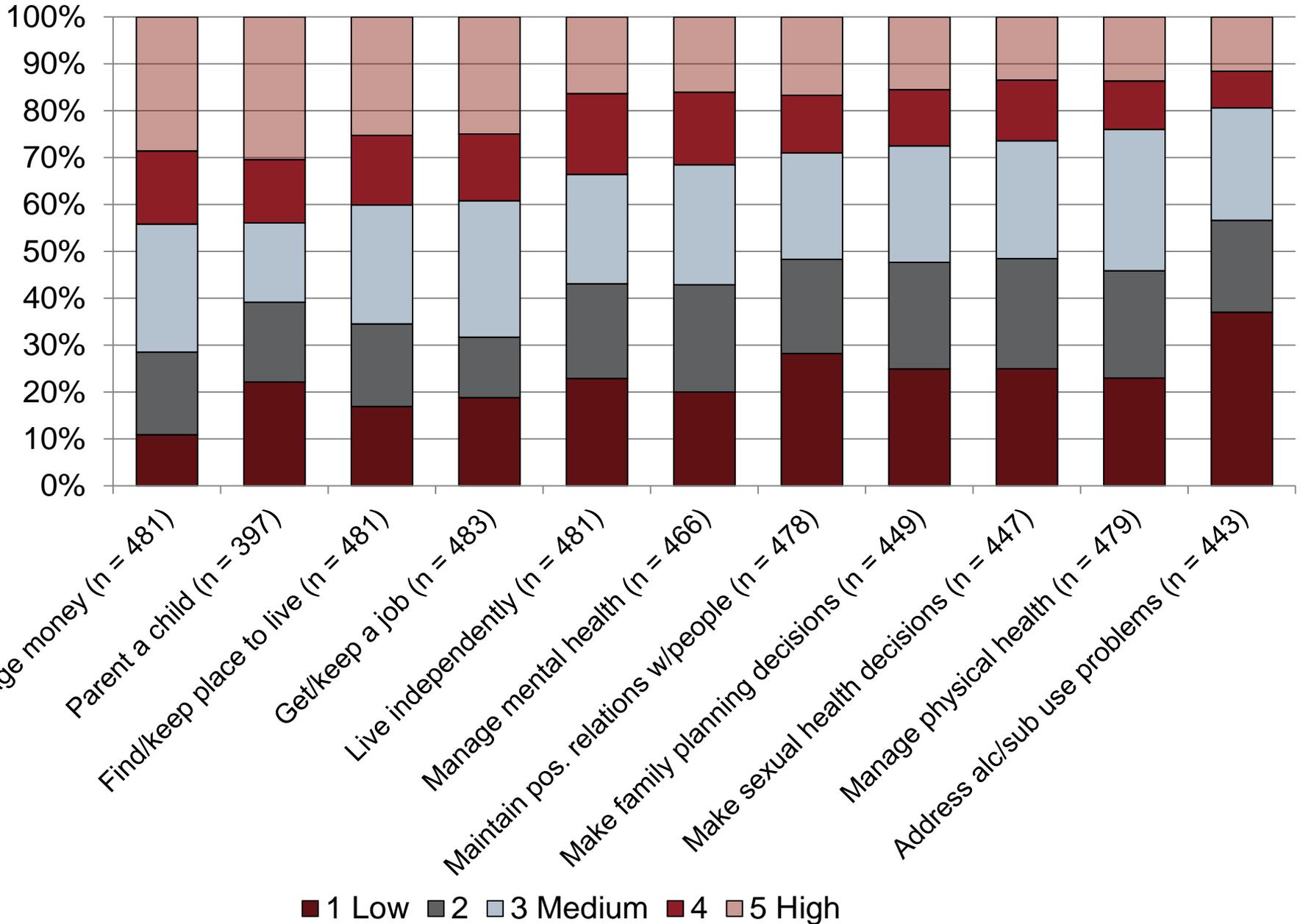
Youth's Satisfaction with Life Skills Preparation, Support Services, or Training

Average Satisfaction

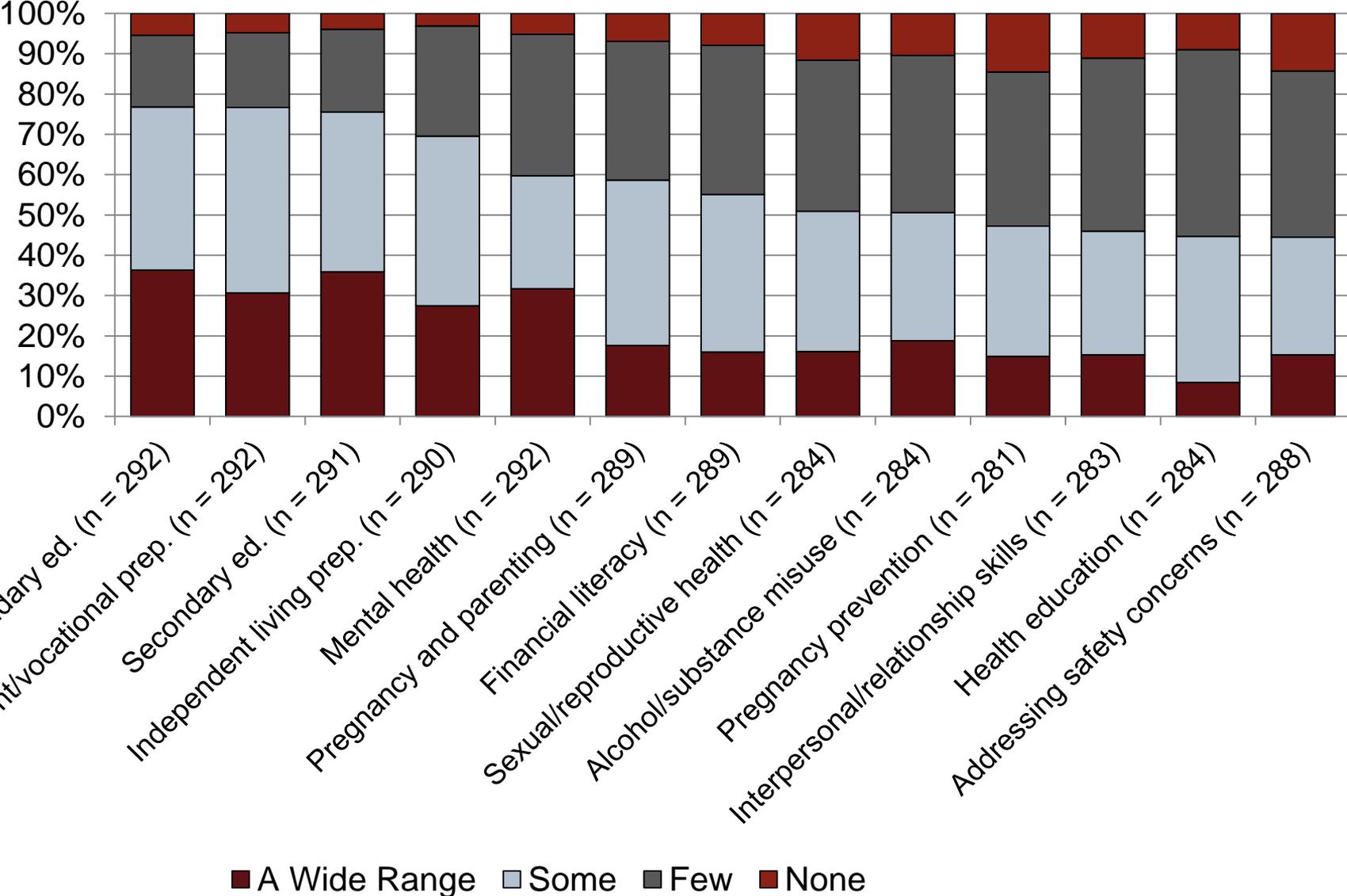


1=Very dissatisfied 2=Dissatisfied 3=Satisfied 4=Very Satisfied

Caseworker's Perception of Youth's Need for Services

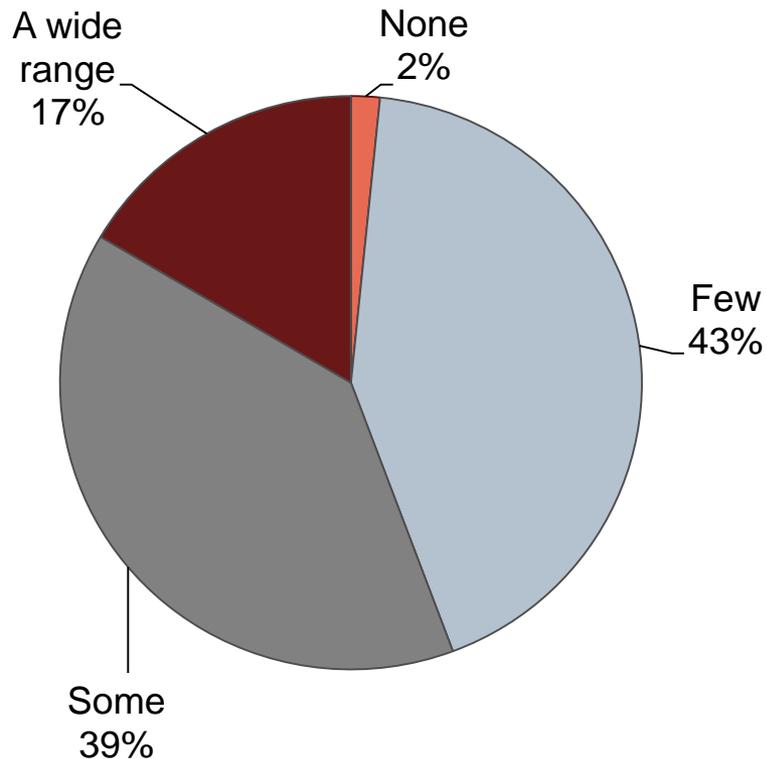


Caseworkers' Perceptions of Availability of Trainings and Services for Older Youth

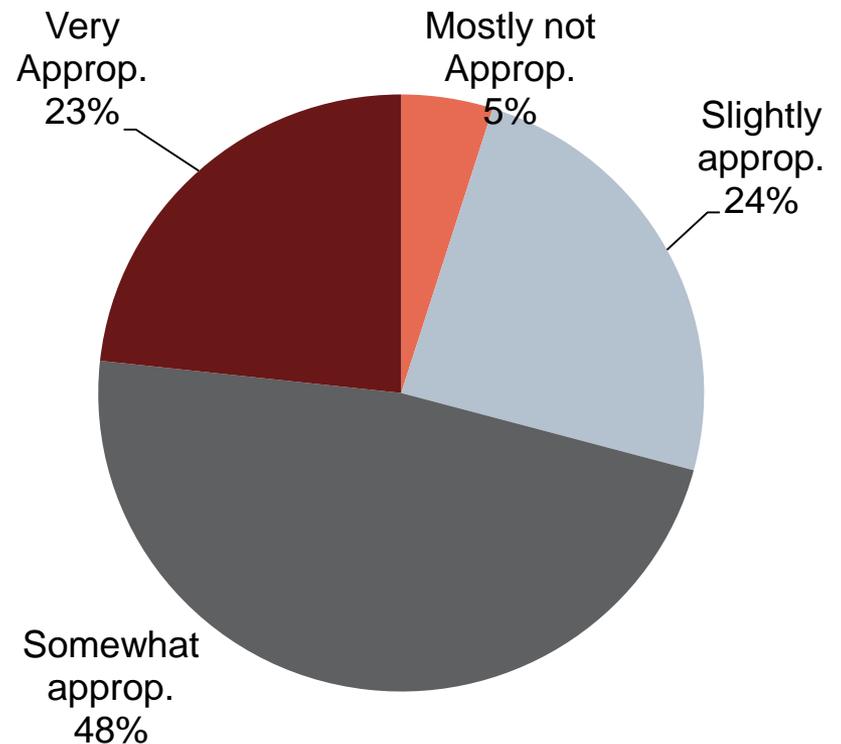


Housing Options

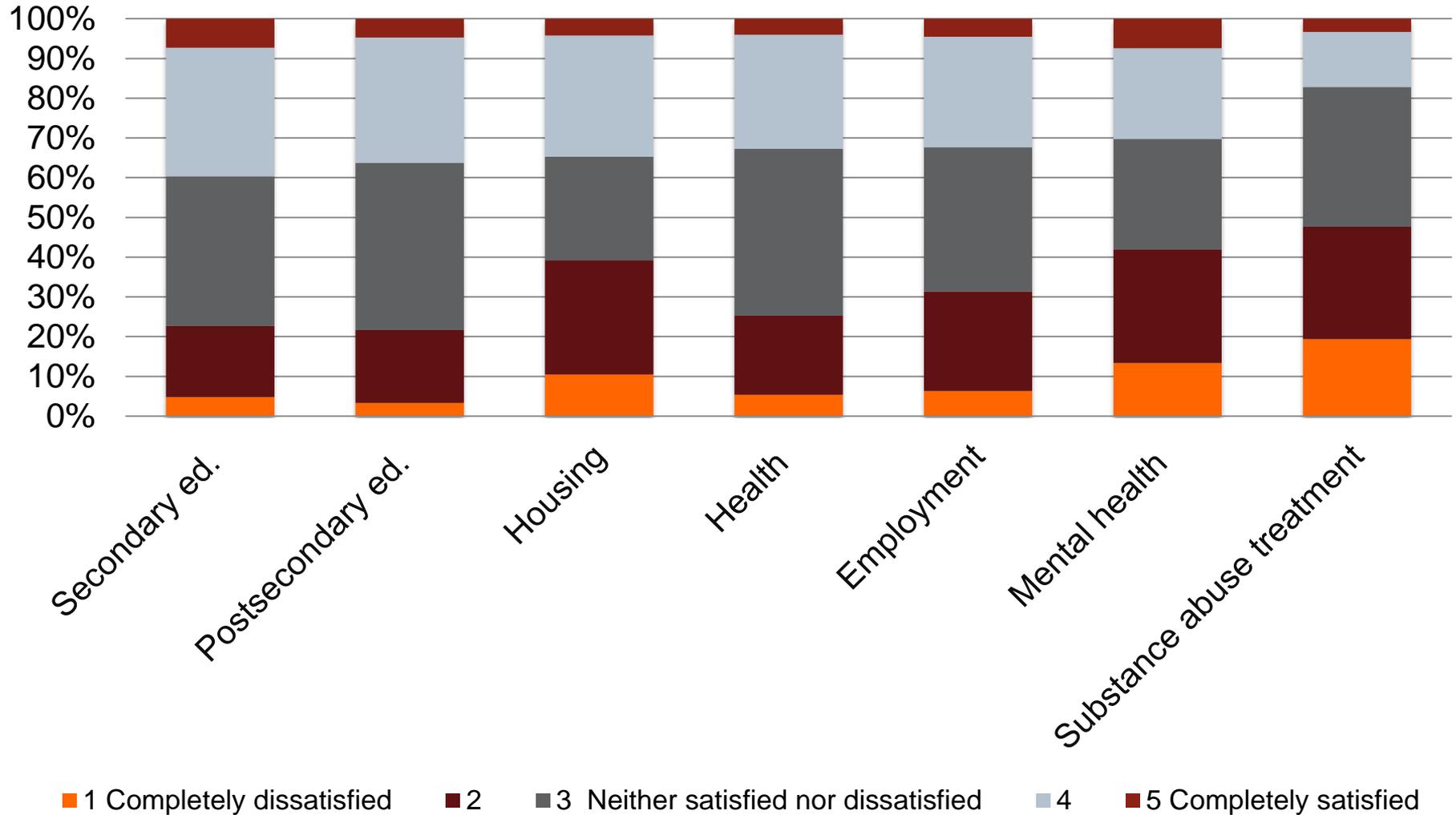
Caseworkers' Perceptions of Availability of Housing Options
(N = 292)



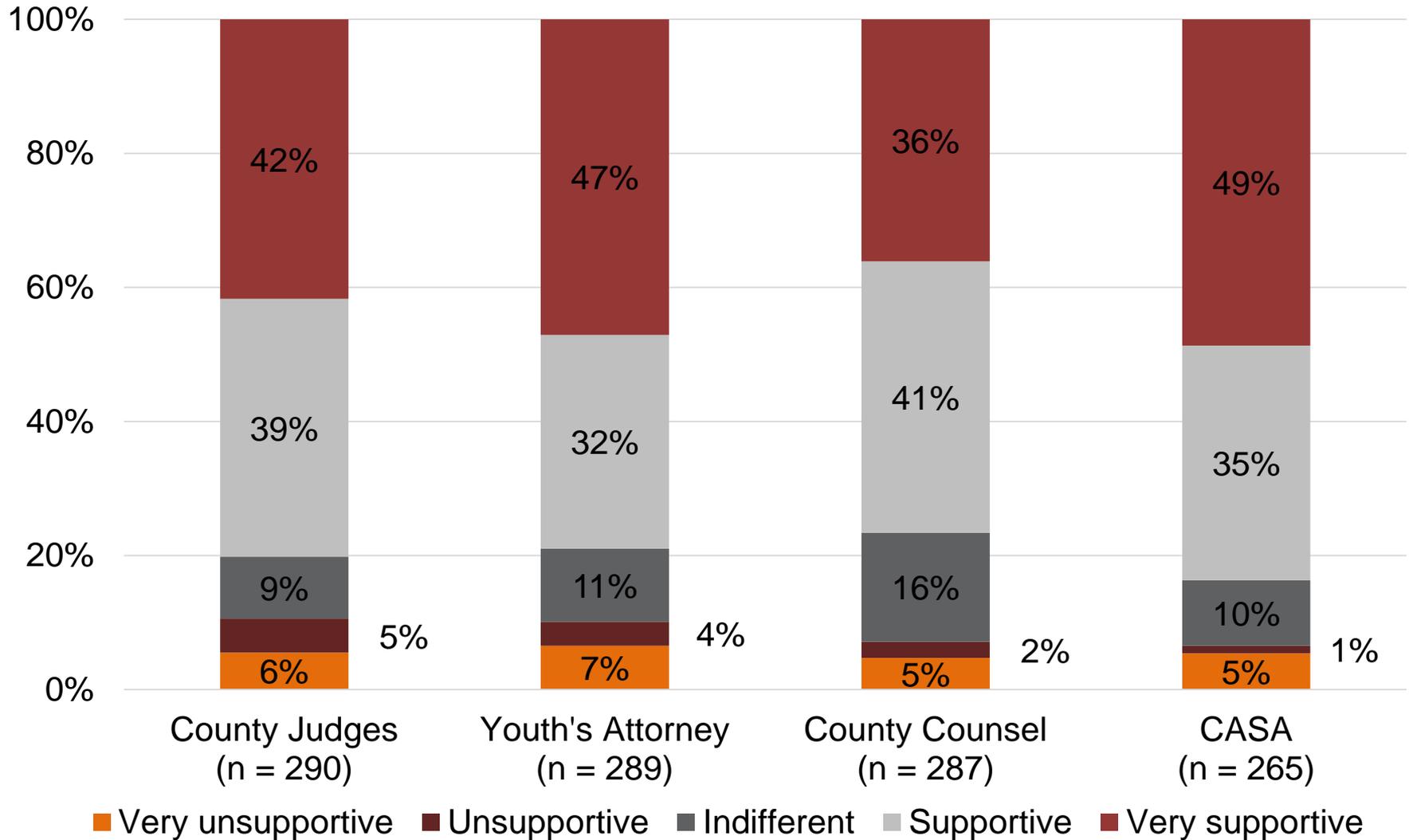
Caseworkers' Perceptions of Appropriateness of Housing Options
(N = 292)



Caseworkers' Satisfaction with Collaboration with Other Systems



Supportiveness of Court Personnel



Summary

- Youths' perceptions of preparedness differs from caseworkers' perceptions
- Youth are least prepared in education and employment, while these two areas are the service types that are the most widely provided
- Youth reported being the least satisfied with the preparation they received in the areas of education, housing, and financial literacy
- Caseworkers are mostly dissatisfied with collaboration with other systems around substance abuse, mental health, and employment

Next Steps

- Analysis of the relationship between extended care and the young adults' outcomes using youth and worker survey data
 - Through what mechanisms (e.g., living arrangements; services; relationships with adults) does extended care influence outcomes?
- Analysis of other risk and protective factors associated with the young adults' outcomes using youth and worker survey data
- Analysis of selective outcomes (employment, postsecondary education, need-based government assistance) and predictors of outcomes using administrative data on the population of transition-age youth in care pre- and post-AB12