



How are Wisconsin Kids Doing?

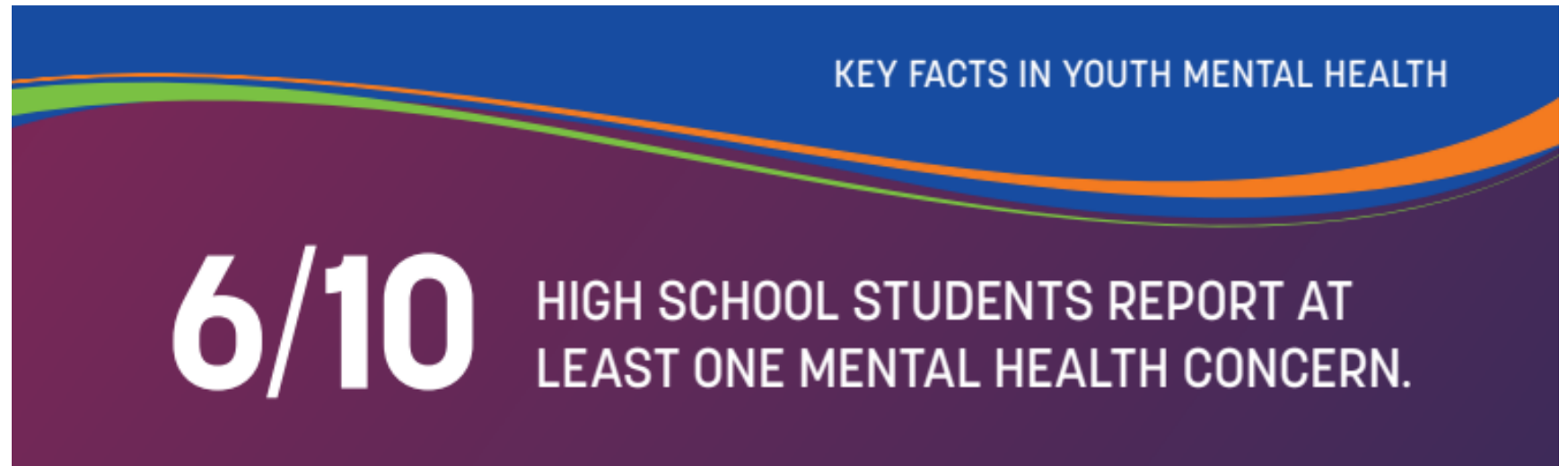
Trends in Youth Mental Health

Prepared for Mental Health Month - May 2025

www.children.wi.gov



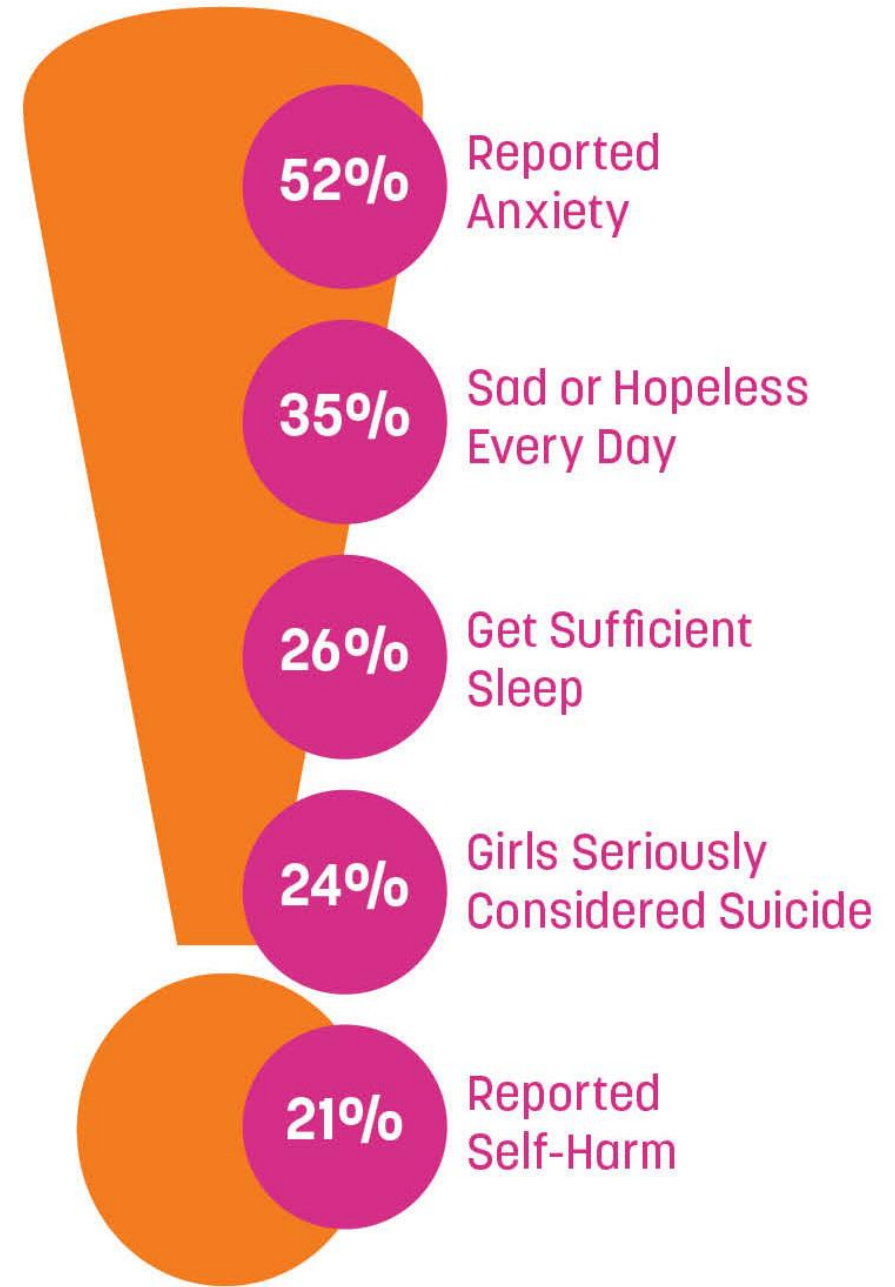
Key Facts in Youth Mental Health



Key Facts in Youth Mental Health

Among Wisconsin high school students:

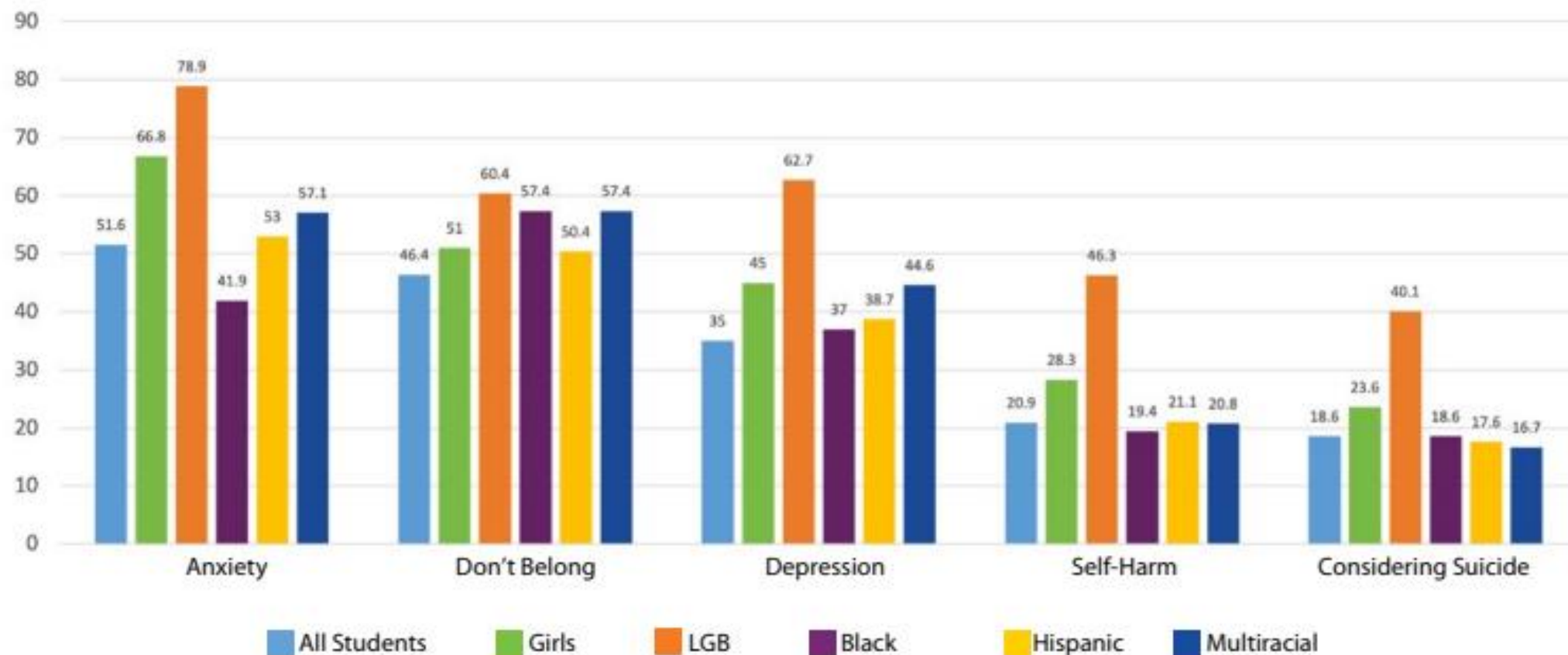
- 1 in 2 report **anxiety**
- 1 in 3 report **depression**
- 1 in 4 get sufficient **sleep**
- 1 in 4 girls seriously **considered suicide**
- 1 in 5 report **self-harming**





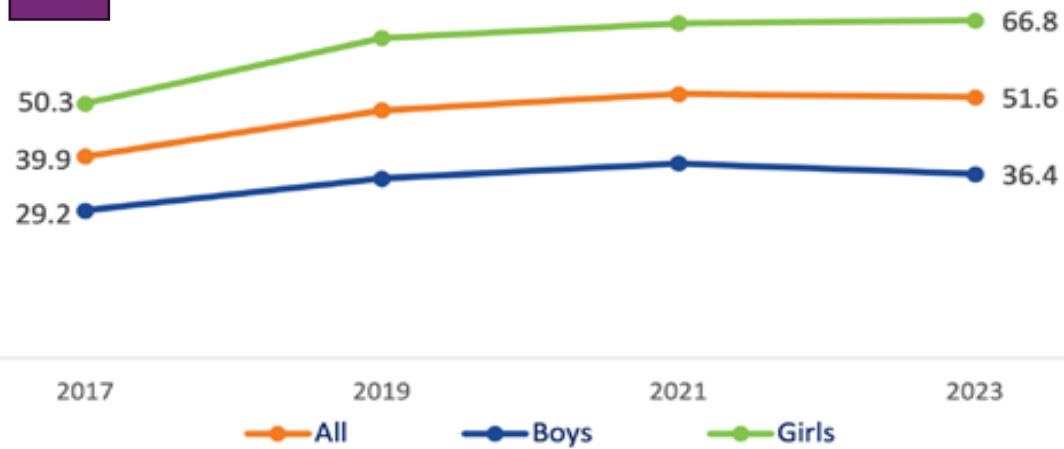
PRIORITY POPULATIONS

Percent of Wisconsin High School Students With Wellness Concerns



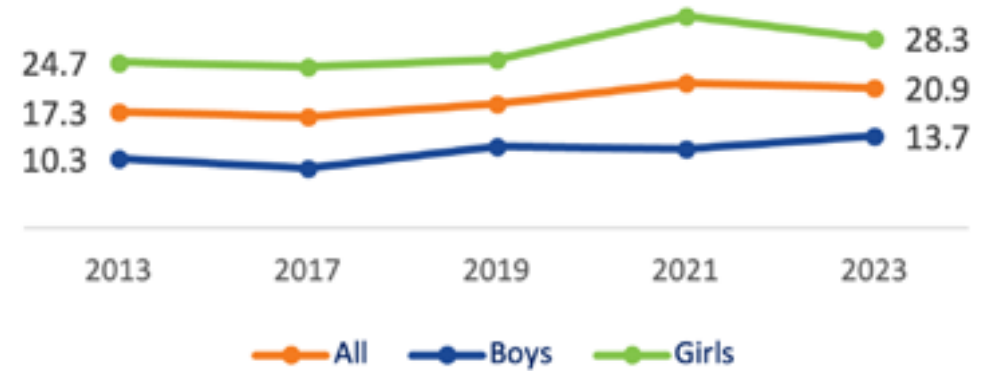
29%

Anxiety
Among Wisconsin High School Students



21%

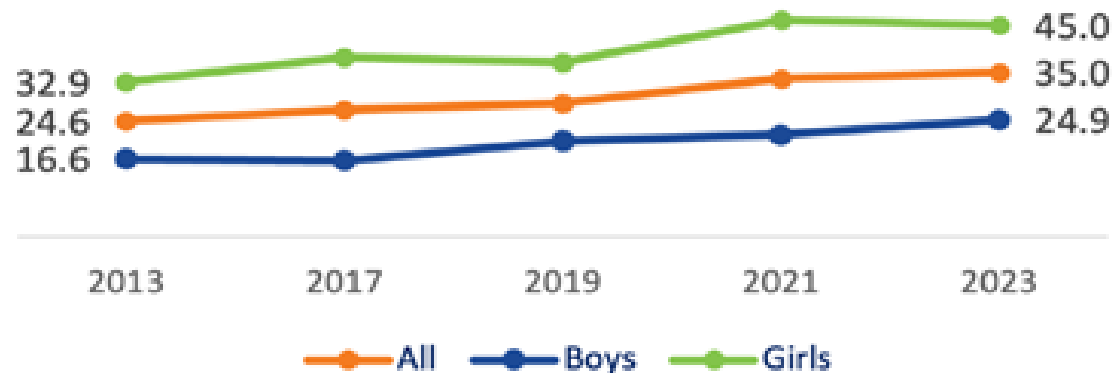
Self-Harm 10-Year Trend
Among Wisconsin High School Students



Wisconsin Trends

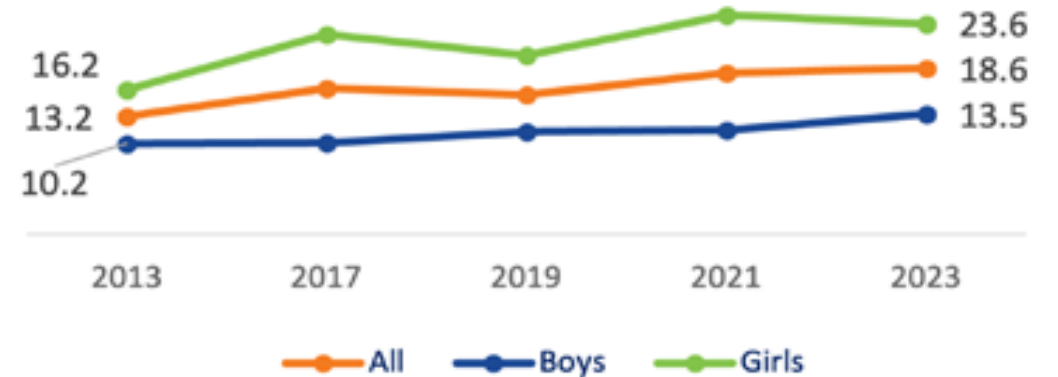
42%

Sad and Hopeless 10-Year Trend
Among Wisconsin High School Students



41%

Seriously Considered Suicide 10-Year Trend
Among Wisconsin High School Students





Wisconsin Trends

Rates increasing over time



- Anxiety
- Depression
- Self-Harm
- Suicidality
- Vaping

Rates decreasing over time



- Sufficient Sleep
- School Belonging
- Extracurricular Activities
- Teen Birth Rate
- Drinking, Smoking, Drugs
- Community Service



What's Happening

- Children's mental health has been **in decline for years**. The patterns began at least 7-10 years ago.
- Wisconsin is not unique; these **declines exist in every state** and are present internationally
- Mental health concerns are affecting **girls, kids of color, and LGBTQ youth** more than their counterparts.



What's Hopeful

- Youth today are **more open to discussing mental health** and less likely to feel stigmatized than prior generations.
- Youth today are **more likely to be taught life skills** including conflict resolution, interpersonal communication, resiliency and coping skills throughout their K-12 education.
- Mental health literacy is **taught in schools** and mental health topics are **discussed in youth culture** (e.g. movies, music, podcasts and books).



What's Helpful: Listening to Youth

- Listening to youth – **not solving a problem, just listening** – can help kids feel better.
- To truly listen and show they care, kids say **adults should really pay attention when together.**
- When listening to kids, strive to be supportive, curious, and mindful (put your own phone away) without passing judgement: **listen to support the child not solve the problem.**



What's Helpful: Youth Voice

- By listening to youth, adults can help them find their voice.
- Kids who feel they have a sense of control over their life, and have a say in matters affecting their lives, have better mental health – and do better in school.



Youth Voice

When youth have the opportunity and ability to influence the world around them, their mental health and well-being can improve.

Youth Voice fosters mental well-being because it activates:



**SOCIAL
SKILLS**



**DECISION-
MAKING
SKILLS**



**BELONGING &
CONNECTION**

About These Data

- The information presented here include data from the 2023 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey ([YRBS](#)), as well as listening sessions and other national surveys conducted with youth.
- If you have questions about the data, please contact Amy Marsman, OCMH Senior Research Analyst, via email (amy.marsman@wisconsin.gov).

- Additional data on children's mental health in Wisconsin can be found in the following OCMH resources:

- [Key Facts in Youth Mental Health](#)
- [Data Bites: Insights on Child Well-Being](#)
- [OCMH Annual Report](#)
- [OCMH Fact Sheets](#)





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