



HENNEPIN COUNTY CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Dashboard Community engagement

Community engagement addresses the extent to which youth are positively connected to school, positive activities, and supportive adults. Positive engagement provides significant benefits for youth development. Being connected and engaged to the community also promotes youth resilience, helping to mitigate the impacts of stress and other challenges and strengthen youth mental health.



84%

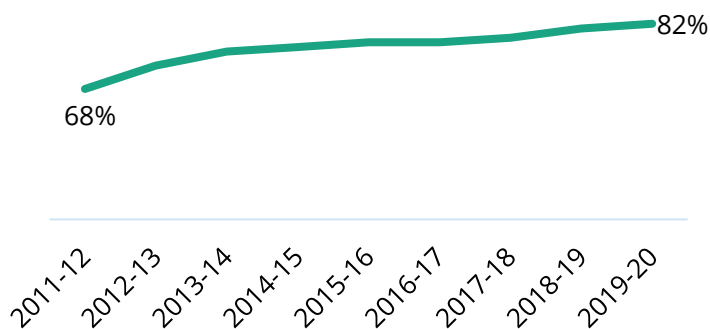
of all County youth graduate from high school within 4 years (2019-20)¹

Current context

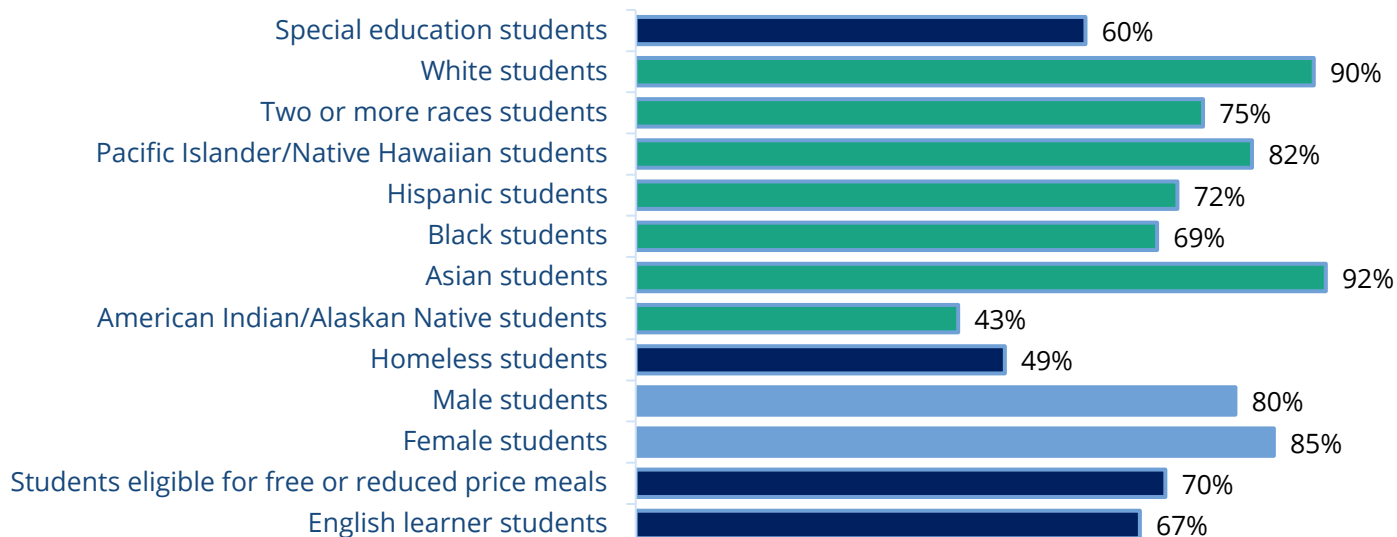
The COVID 19 pandemic likely had a significant impact on youth social connections and engagement with school and activities. Stay-at-home orders and program closures reduced access to school and community activities. For many, the pandemic brought isolation and reduced social connections. The data shared in this brief were collected prior to the pandemic, and it is likely that some ratings may have shifted towards increased isolation and reduced engagement, especially for those youth who were already least connected.^{4, 5}



The high school graduation rate has been gradually increasing¹

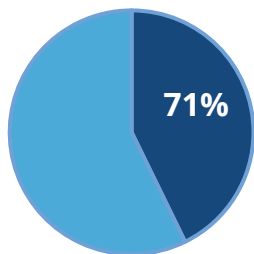


The high school graduation rate varies by race/ethnicity, gender, and other factors (2020)¹

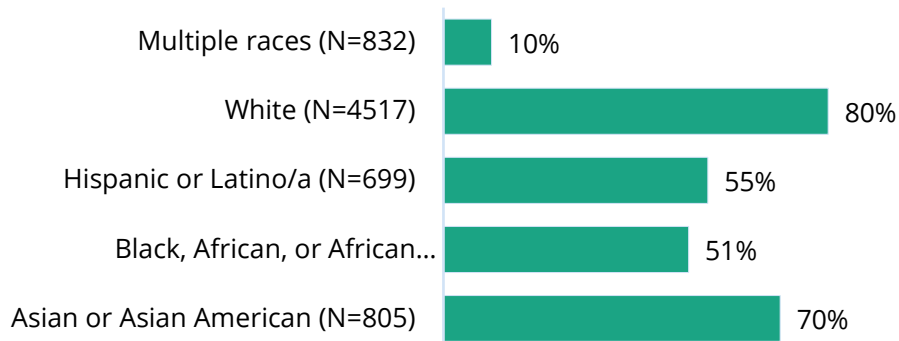


Availability of community programs

Percentage of 9th grade students who report that their school or community offers a variety of programs for people their age to participate in outside of the regular school day (2019)²



White and Asian students are more likely to agree that community programs are available (2019)³



¹ Minnesota Department of Education data, accessed through [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) (2021).

² 2019 Minnesota Student Survey (obtained from the [MN Department of Education](#)); N=8,206.

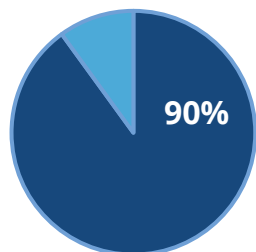
⁴ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/11/covid-children-friendships-learning-suffered-lockdown/>

⁵ <https://www.facetsjournal.com/doi/10.1139/facets-2021-0080>

Other core indicators

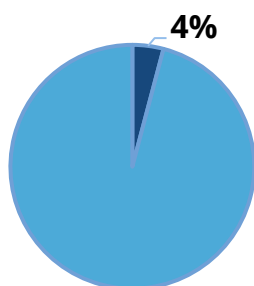
School engagement

Percentage of 9th grade students who care about doing well in school at least “most of the time” (2019)⁵



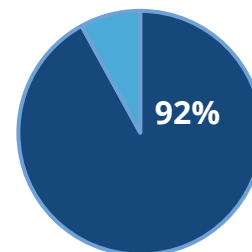
Disconnected youth

Percentage of teens and young adults ages 16-19 who are neither working nor in school (“disconnected youth”)⁶

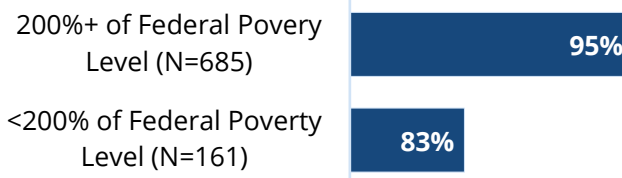


Out-of-school activity

Percentage of parents who report that their child (ages 6-17 years) engages in at least one out-of-school activity at least once per week⁷



Children in low-income families are less likely to participate in activities⁸



Reflection questions

What strategies can help us identify and engage youth who may be feeling isolated and disconnected from community supports?

What should schools, youth programs, and support services do to strengthen youth engagement, especially when services are increasingly being offered virtually or in socially distant ways?

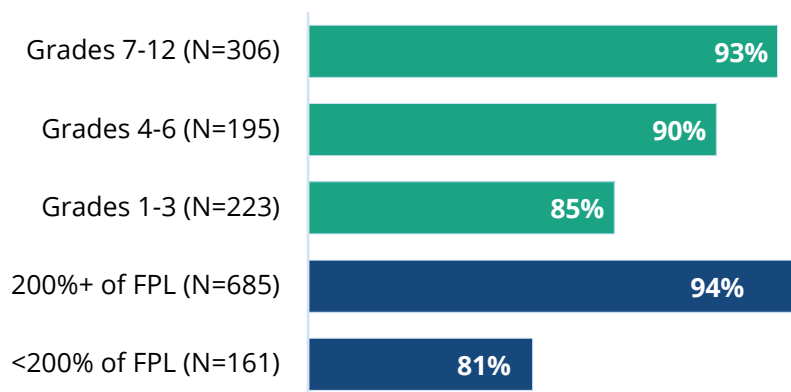
Given that staff in many schools and workplaces are struggling with their own stress and isolation, in addition to workforce shortages and other challenges, how can we create opportunities and capacity to strengthen relationships between youth and adults?

⁵ 2019 Minnesota Student Survey (obtained from the [MN Department of Education](#)); N=8,206.)

⁶ 2016-20 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (obtained from 2022 [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#))

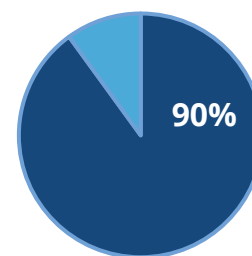
⁷ 2015 Hennepin County [Child SHAPE survey](#); N=1,356-1,418

The presence of adult support figures increases with child age and family income⁸



Supportive community adults

Percentage of parents who agree that at least one school, neighborhood, or community adult knows their child well and can be relied on for advice or guidance⁹



Learn more

Search Institute's Resource Hub <https://searchinstitute.org/resources-hub>.

The resource hub provides links to a variety of resources to support youth development and strengthening developmental relationships. Sample resources include a “Relational Culture Check-Up” for organizational leaders and staff and a series of briefs on creating “relationship-rich spaces for all youth.”

Shenbanjo, T. & Mack, M. (2021). Supporting disconnected youth during the COVID-19 pandemic: Experiences from the field. Mathematica. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/OASP/evaluation/pdf/P3%20COVID19%20Special%20Topic%20Paper.pdf>

This document summarizes a research study that examined strategies providers used to modify services to adapt to the COVID 19 pandemic, with a focus on maintaining connections with youth likely to disconnect from services.

Betz, J. (2020). Community-Care Strategies for Schools During the Coronavirus Crisis: Practical tips for school staff and administrators. West Ed/Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety.

This brief offers practical guidance for school staff related to promoting healthy and caring school environments, while concurrently addressing the challenges of social isolation, school closures, and changes to how services are provided.

For more information on Children’s Mental Health contact, the [Hennepin County Children’s Mental Health Collaborative](#)

⁸ 2015 Hennepin County [Child SHAPE survey](#); N=1,356-1,418