

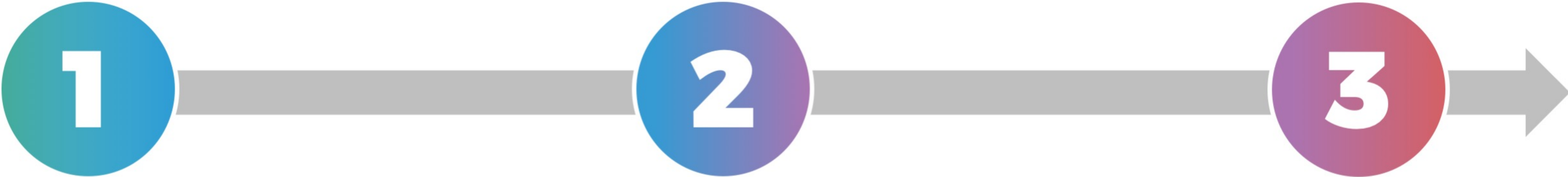


BORN THIS WAY FOUNDATION

EMPOWERING YOUTH ★ INSPIRING BRAVERY

Kind Communities – A Bridge to Youth Mental Wellness

Key Findings



kindness matters

young people in better mental health are in kind communities

peers are crucial

young people rely on friends to support their mental wellness

resources make a difference

resources that foster kindness in schools, colleges, + workplaces help improve mental wellness

Methodology



On behalf of Born This Way Foundation, Benenson Strategy Group conducted 4,019 online interviews, including n=3,015 interviews with young people ages 15-24 and n=1,004 parents of young people ages 15-24 from June 27th to July 10th, 2017.

June 2017							July 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3							1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

In order to understand the mental health state of young people in this survey, we employed the 5 question version of the Mental Health Inventory by RAND*. This short questionnaire is widely considered to be a well validated and reliable measurement of mental health state.

Questions in Mental Health Inventory

How much of the time, during the past month have you...?

- 1. Been a happy person
- 2. Felt calm and peaceful
- 3. Been a very nervous person
- 4. Felt downhearted and blue
- 5. Felt so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer you up



4019
Online Interviews

3015

Young People
Ages 15-24

Young people
margin of error = 1.64%

HS Students = 4.10%
College Students = 2.51%
Employed Young People = 2.68%

higher among subgroups

1004

Parents of Young
People Ages 15-24

Parent of young people
margin of error = 3.01%

higher among subgroups



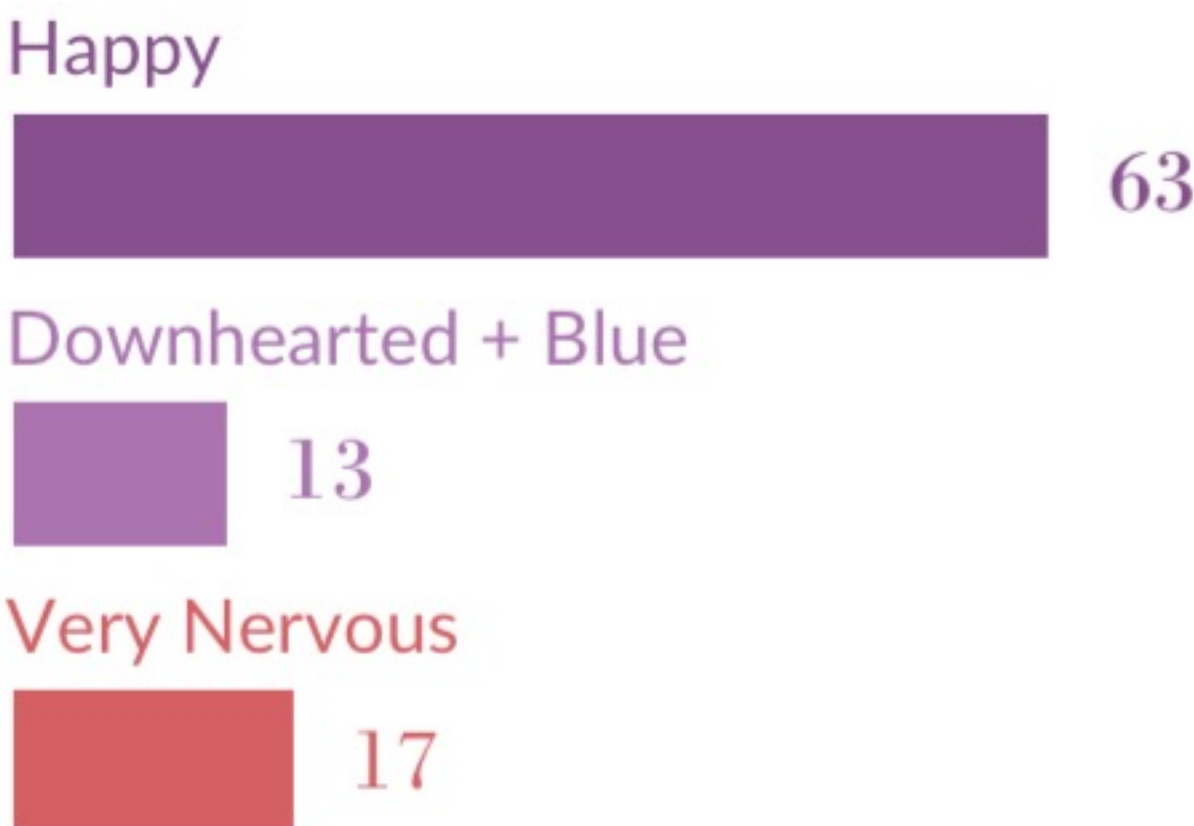
Kindness + Mental Wellness

Snapshot of Young People's Mental Wellness

High School Students

Mood

% been this type of person all/most of the past month

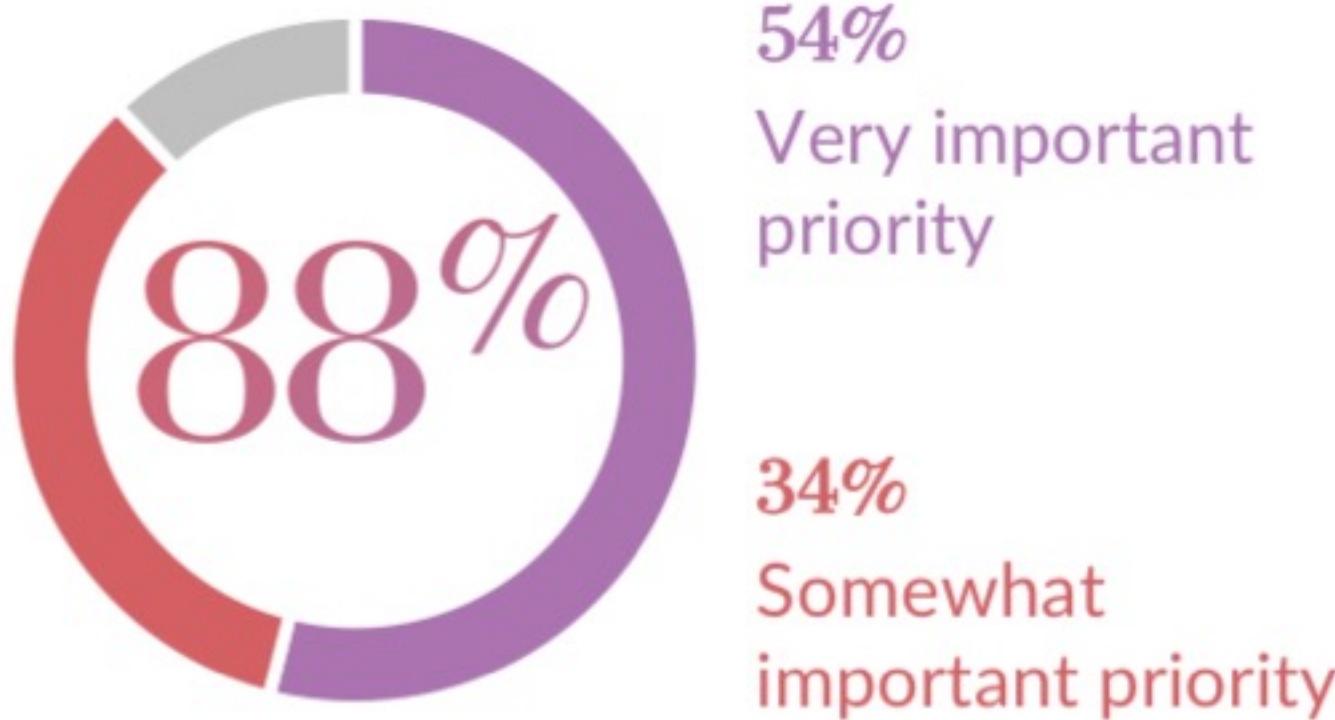


Stress

% say "stressed" describes them well

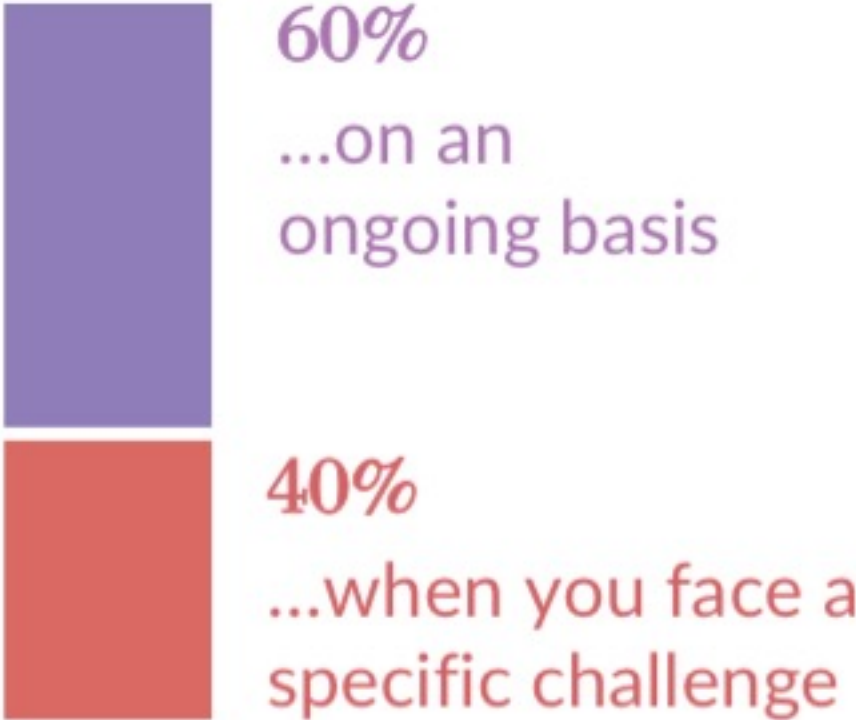


Prioritization of Mental Health



Best Way to Work on Mental Health

"More helpful..."

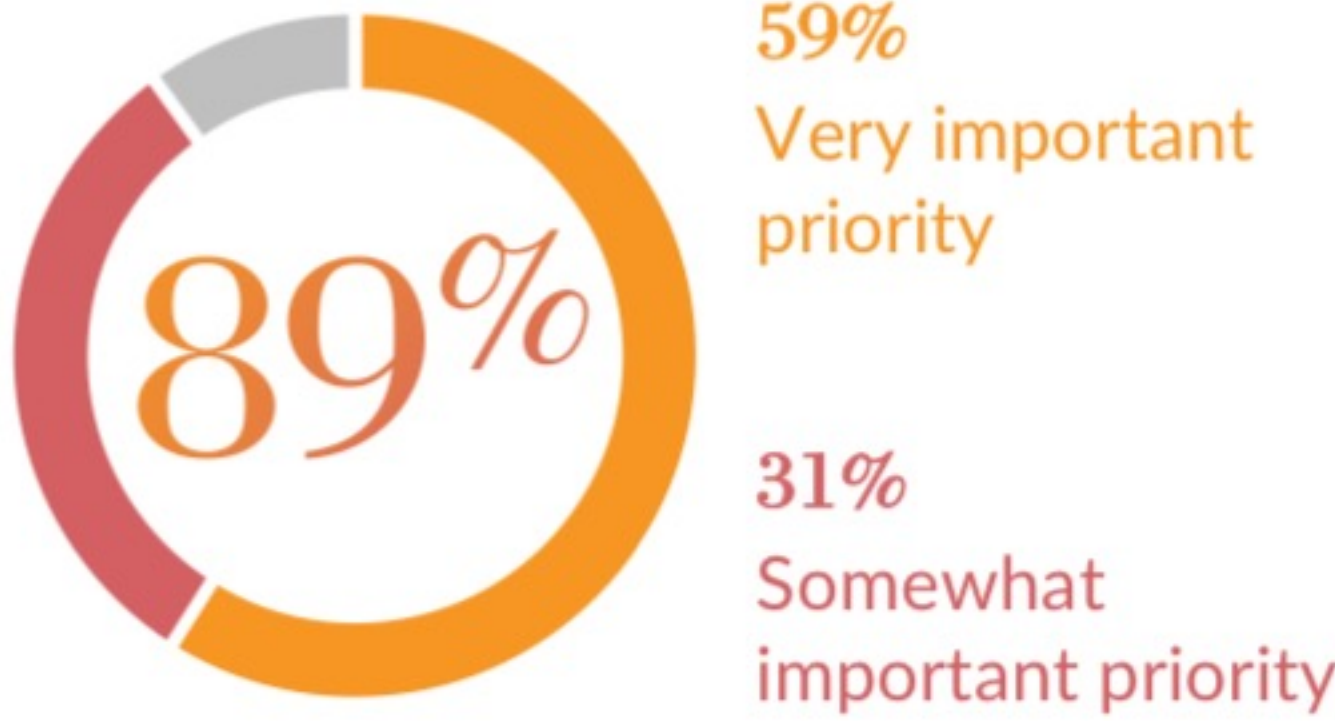
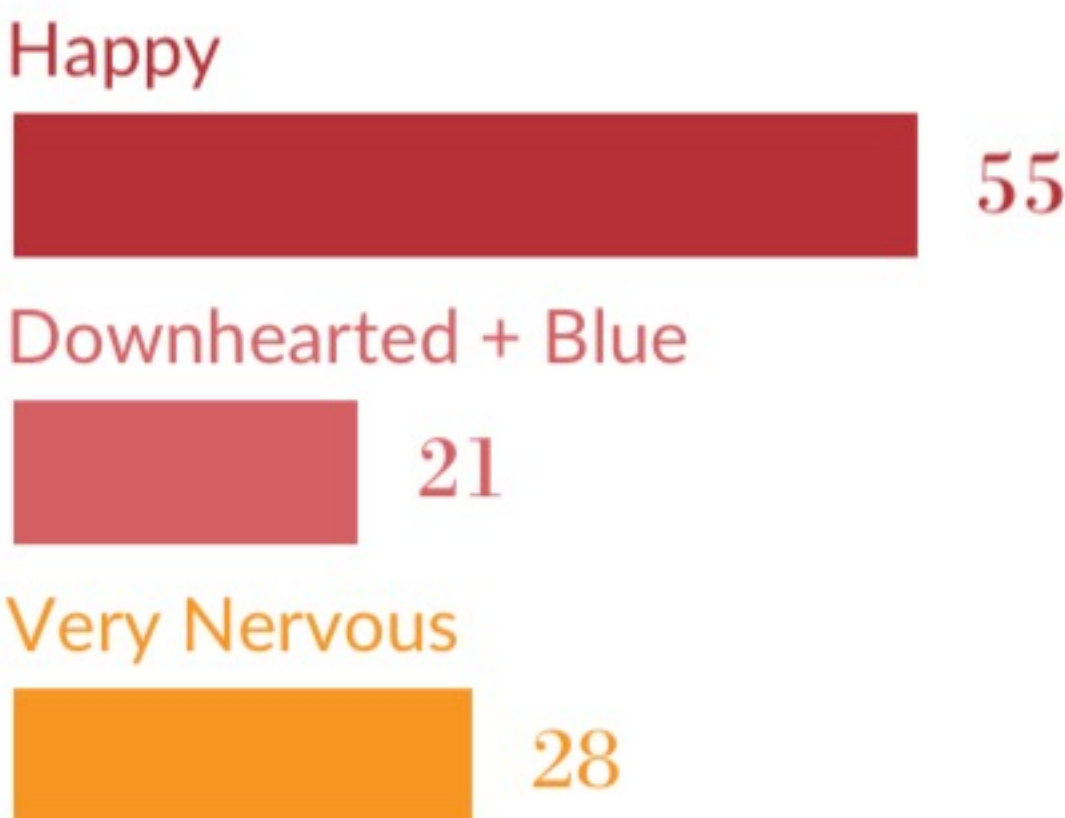


Frequency of Discussing Mental Health with Anyone

Often Sometimes Rarely/never



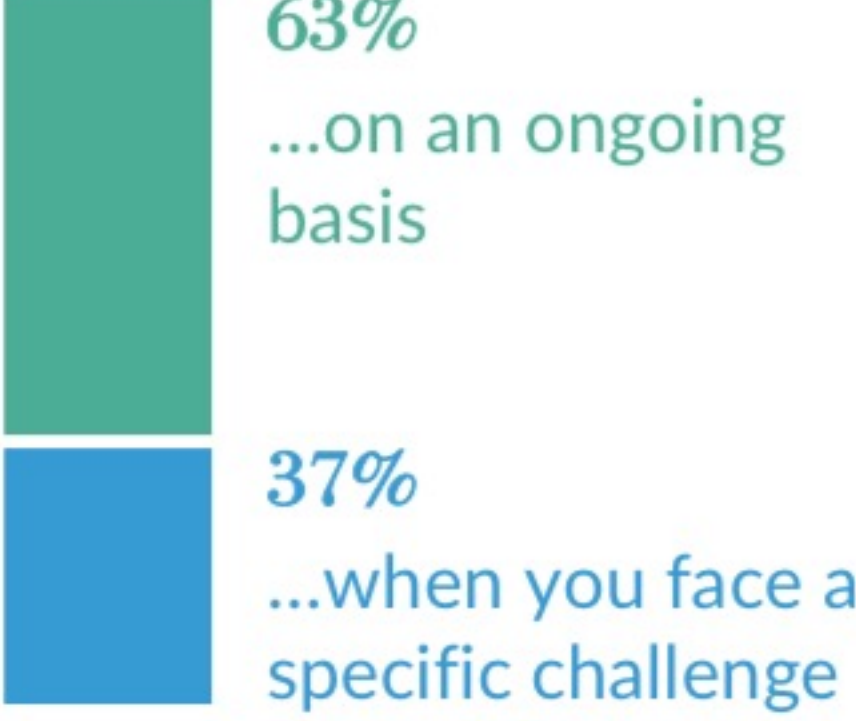
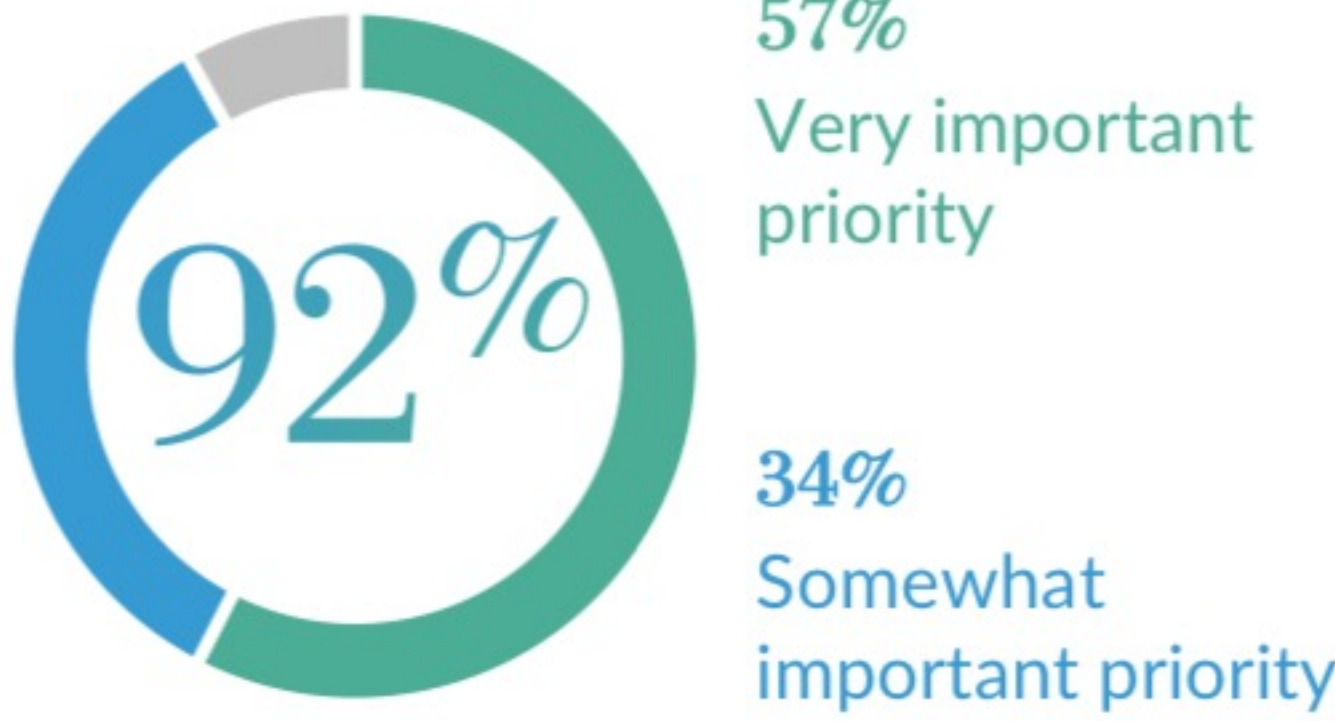
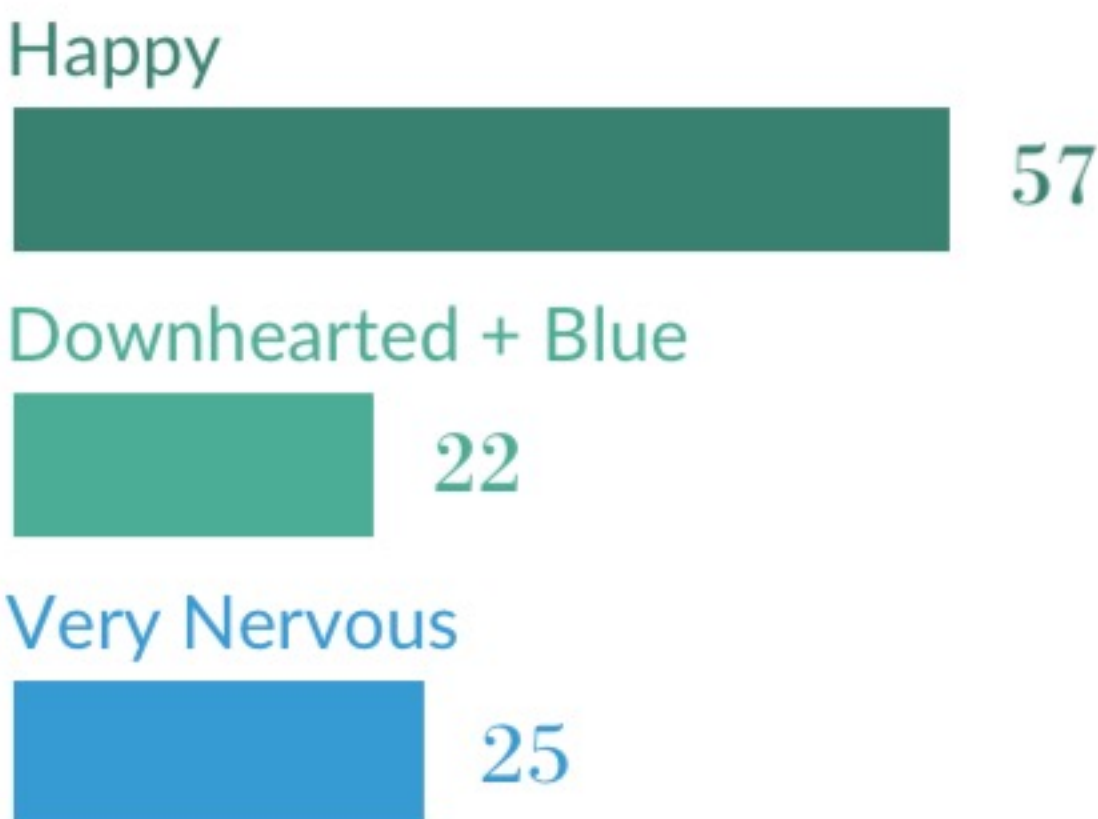
University Students



Often Sometimes Rarely/never



Employed Young People



Often Sometimes Rarely/never



Young People See Mental Health as an Even Bigger Priority than Physical Health, but Are Unaware of Resources

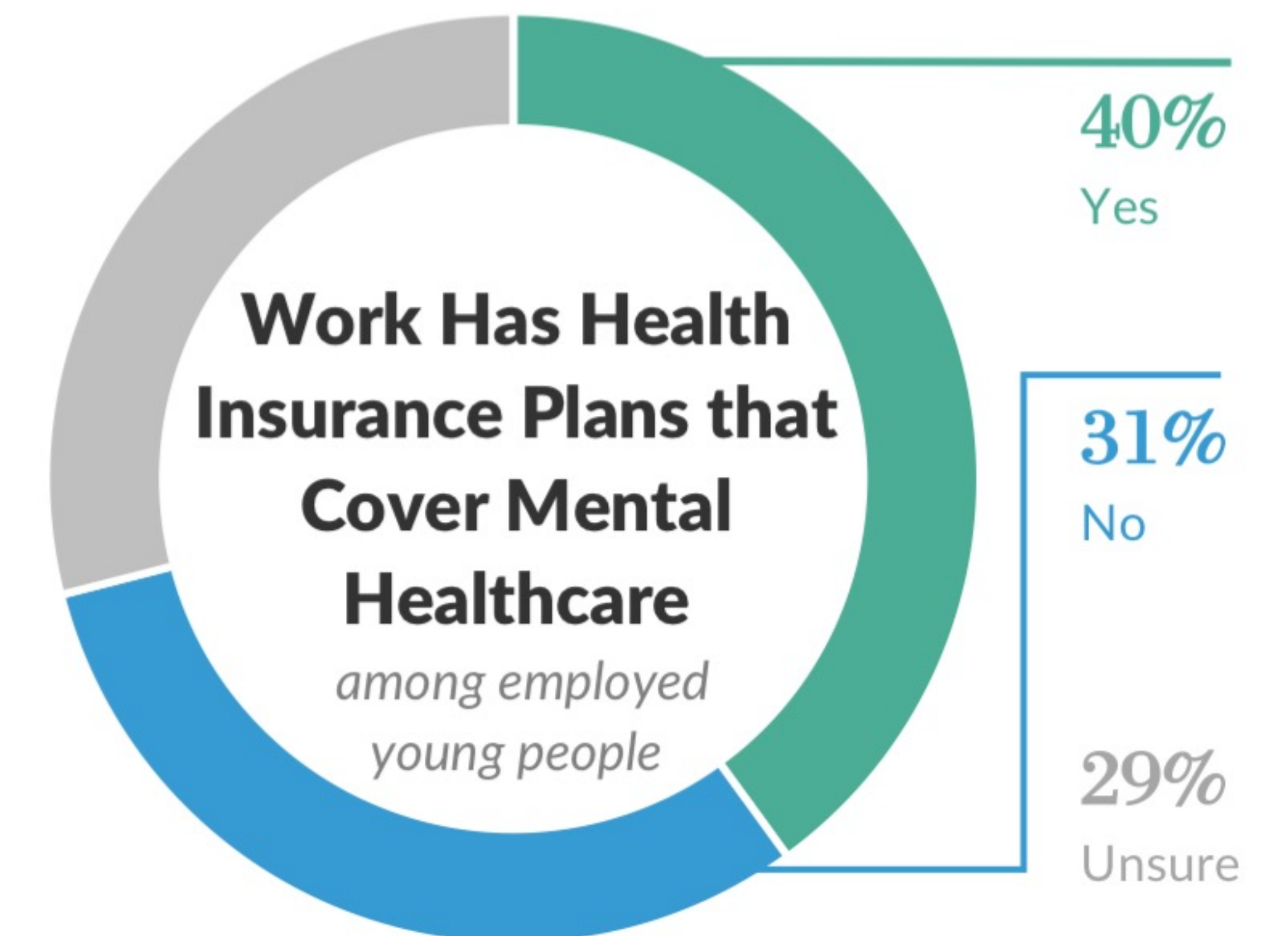
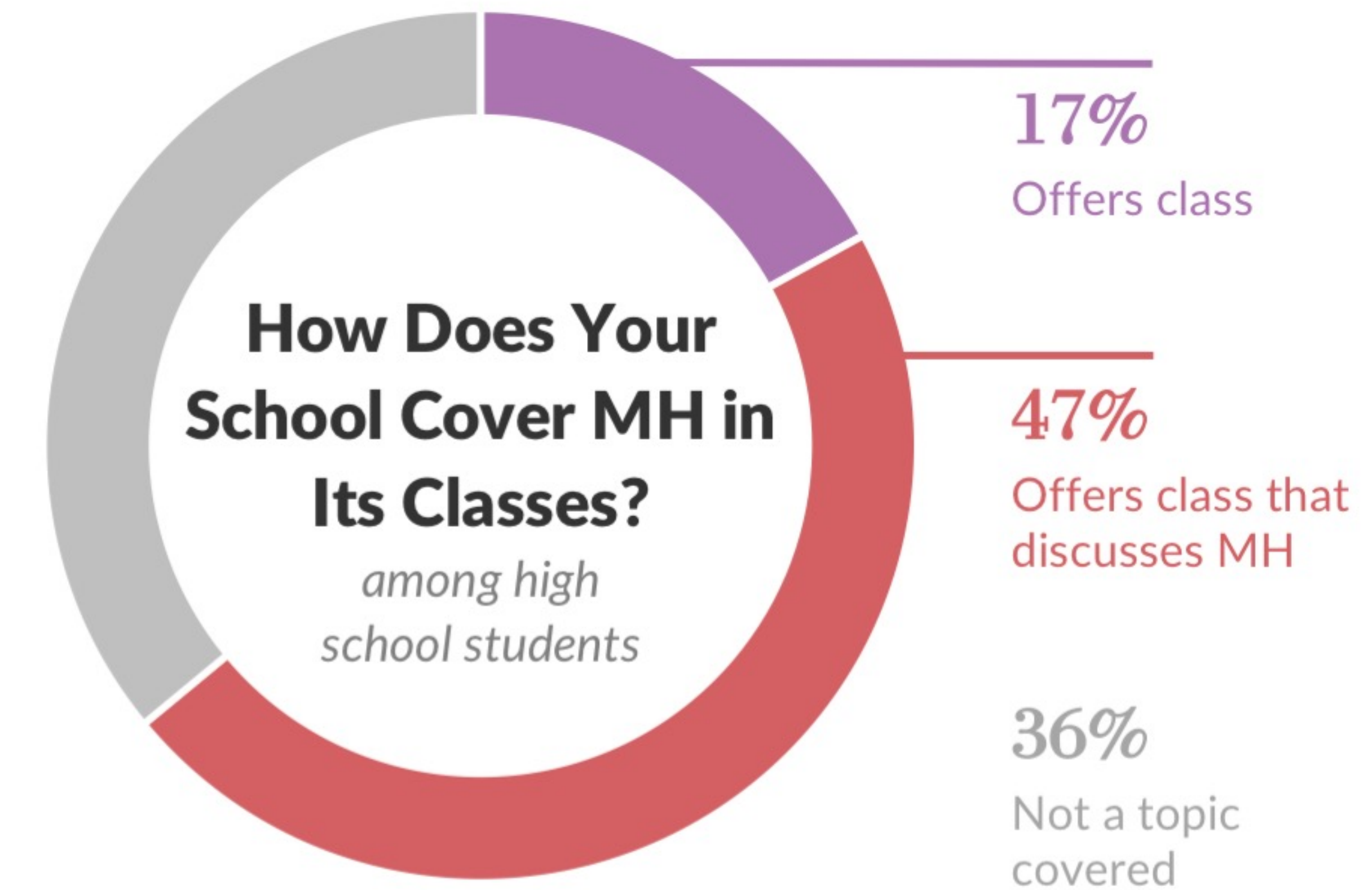
57% of young people say their mental health is a very important priority (89% say it is an important priority overall).

- To compare, 51% of young people say their physical health is a very important priority (88% say it is an important priority overall).

Despite prioritizing their mental health, young people are unaware whether they have access to many of the resources that would support their mental health or believe they do not have access to them.

- 36% of high school students report that their schools do not cover mental health in any class at school, including 44% of rural students and 40% of low-income students (household income of less than \$35,000) .
- Similarly, among young people who are working only 40% are certain their work offers health insurance that covers mental healthcare, with 31% saying it does not and 29% unsure.

% Say Mental Health or Physical Health Is a Very Important Priority
among all young people



Young People Draw from a Variety of Activities to Care for Their Mental Wellness, Going Beyond Traditional Sources

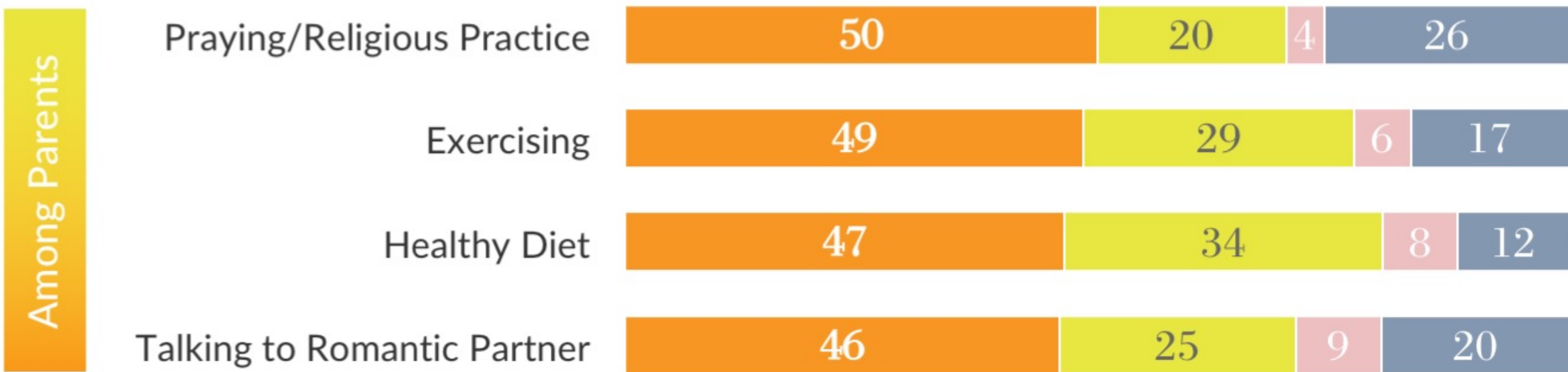
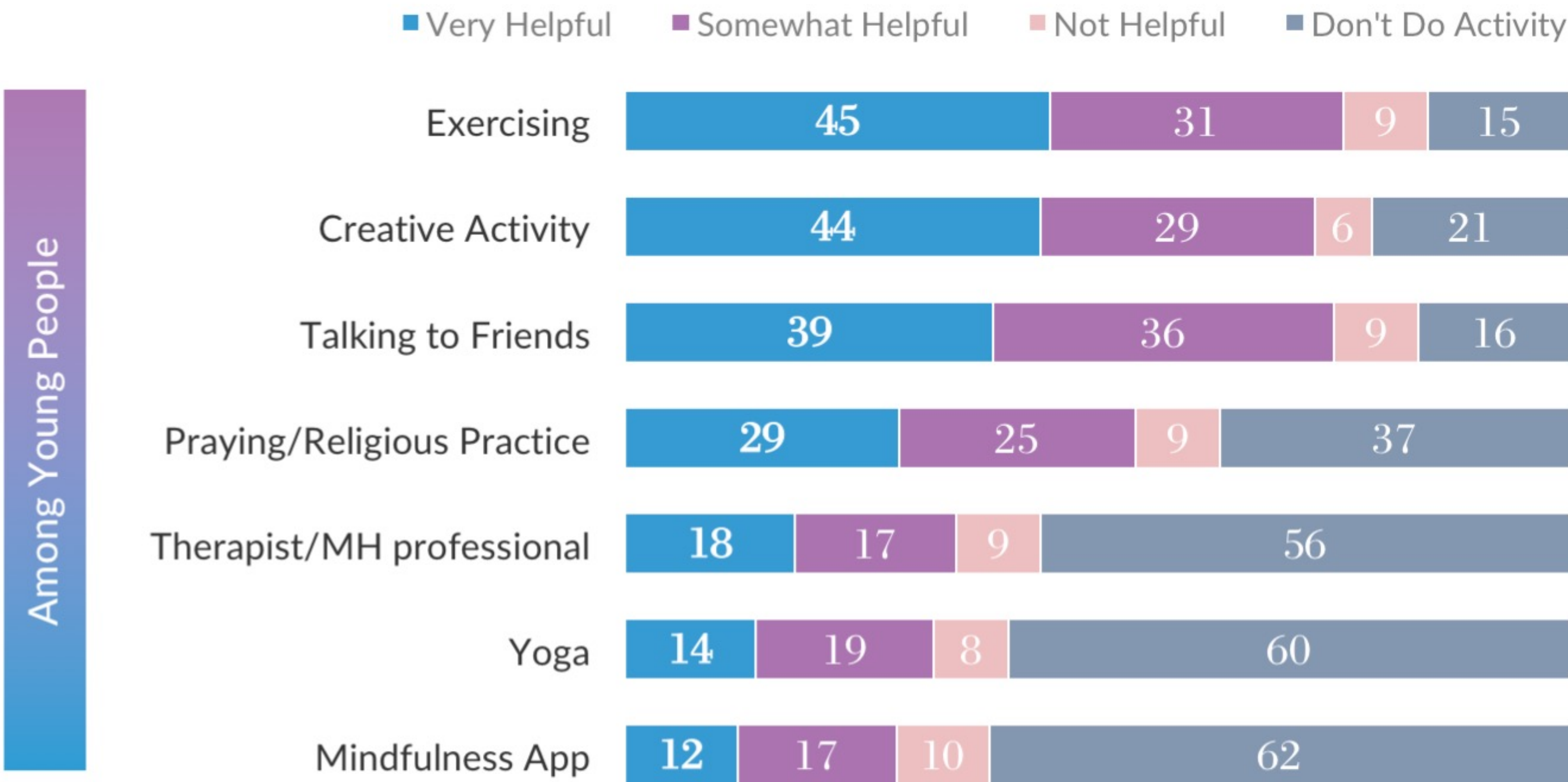
Almost all young people are doing some activity for their mental wellness, particularly taking care of their physical health, participating in creative activities or interacting with family and friends.

- High school students find creative activities most helpful, while university students and employed young people find exercise most beneficial for their mental wellness.

Comparatively fewer young people look to more conventional approaches to supporting wellness such as seeing a mental health professional.

In contrast, parents find religion, caring for their physical health and their romantic partner to be most helpful in supporting their mental wellness.

Activities That Are Helpful for Mental Wellness

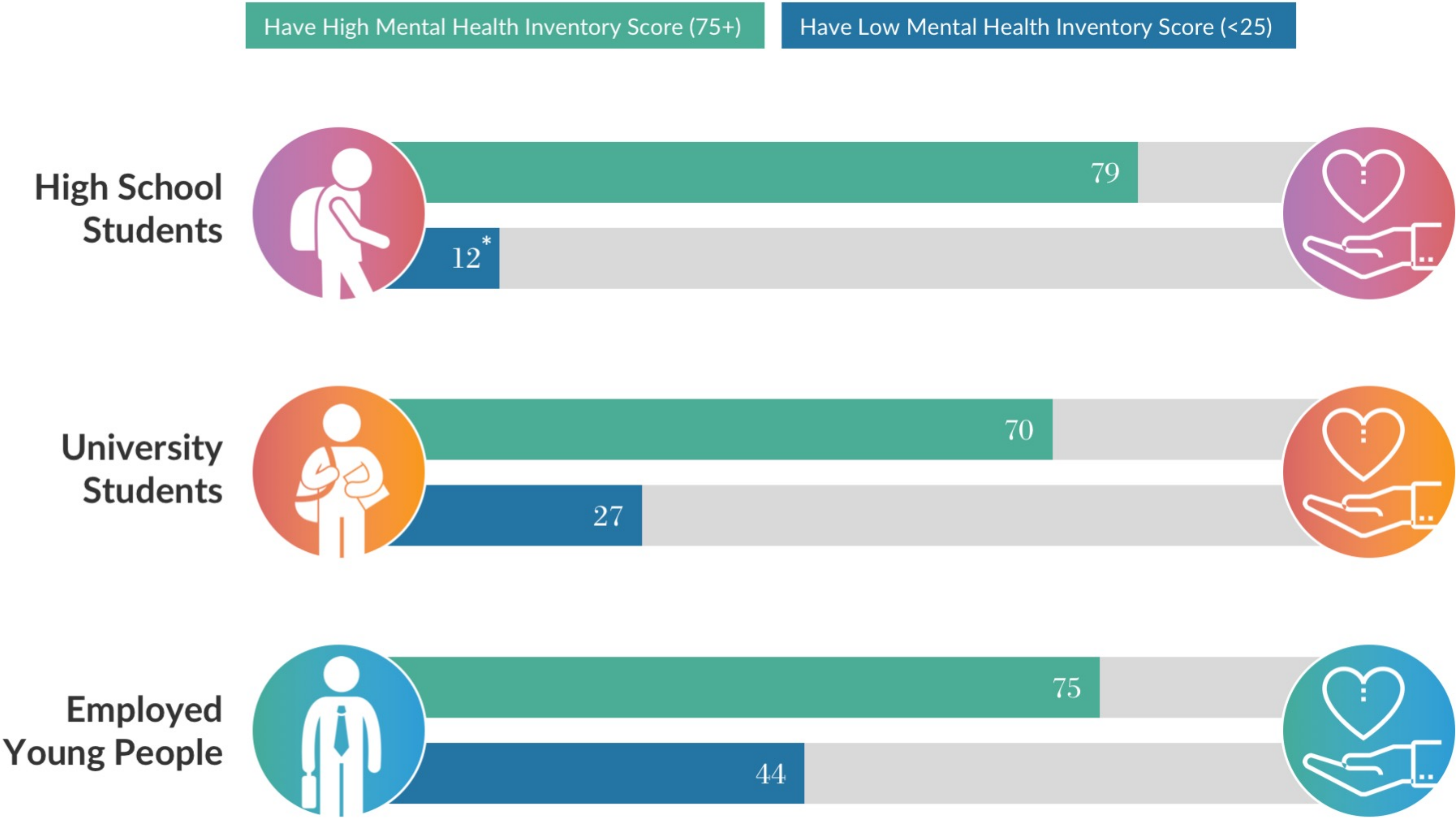


Kindness Fosters Mental Wellness

Young people with high Mental Health Inventory scores are substantially more likely to report being in kind communities than those with low Mental Health Inventory scores, demonstrating the importance of kindness to mental wellness.

Especially at earlier ages, young people’s mental wellness depends upon being a part of a kind community.

% Say Their School or Work Community Is Kind by Mental Health Inventory Score



**small base size; results should be viewed as directional*



Peers + Parents

Peer Support Networks Are Central to Young People's Mental Wellness

More young people would turn to a friend than their parent to address many serious issues such as:

- Feeling bad about their body
- Someone makes fun of them for how they look
- Being worried after having unprotected sex

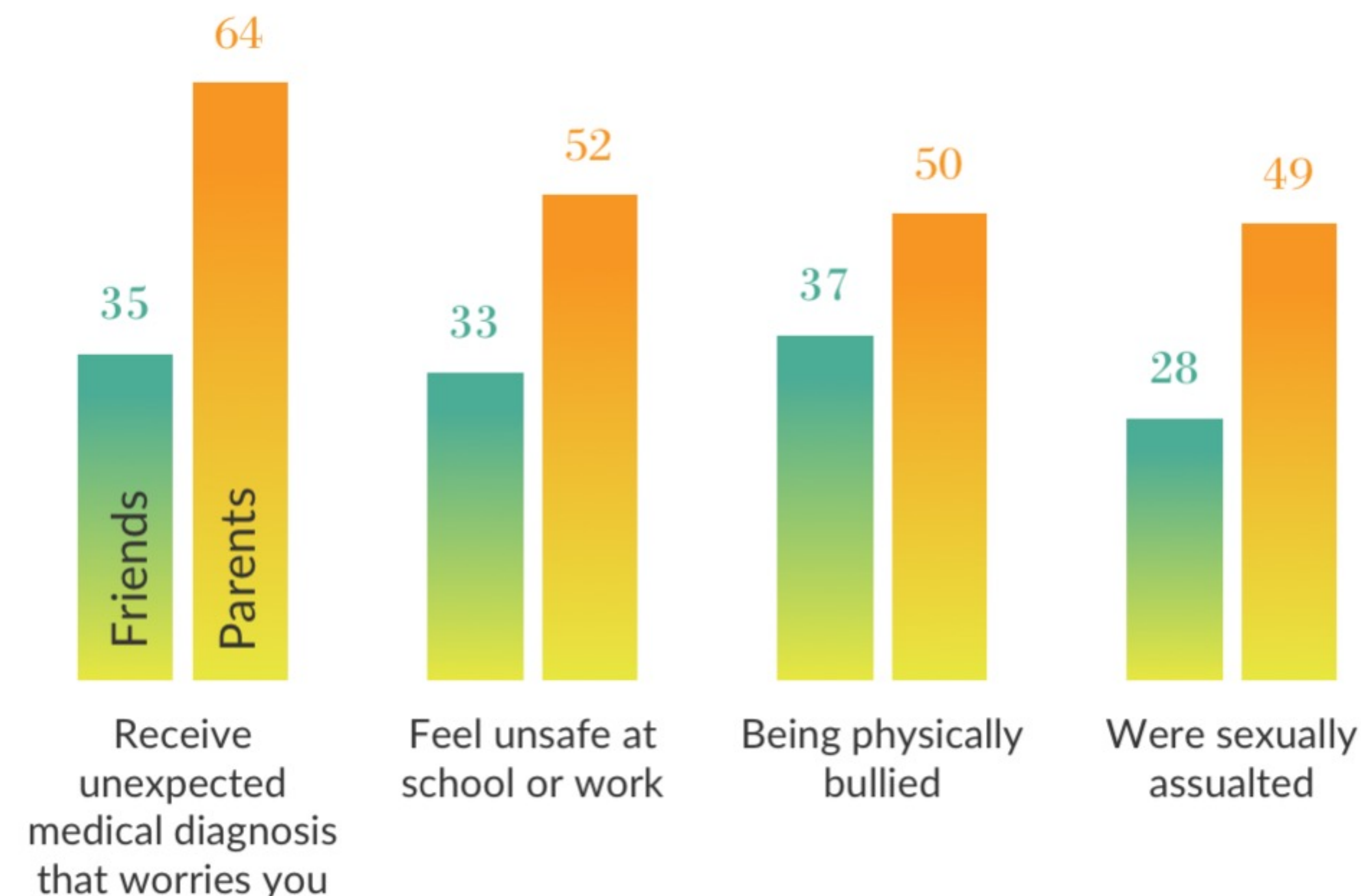
Despite large social networks online, most young people see themselves as having a small number of people they can rely on.

- Just under half of young people have 3 people or fewer they could go to with a difficult problem.
- Of this group, 5% of young people feel they have no one they could go to with a difficult problem.

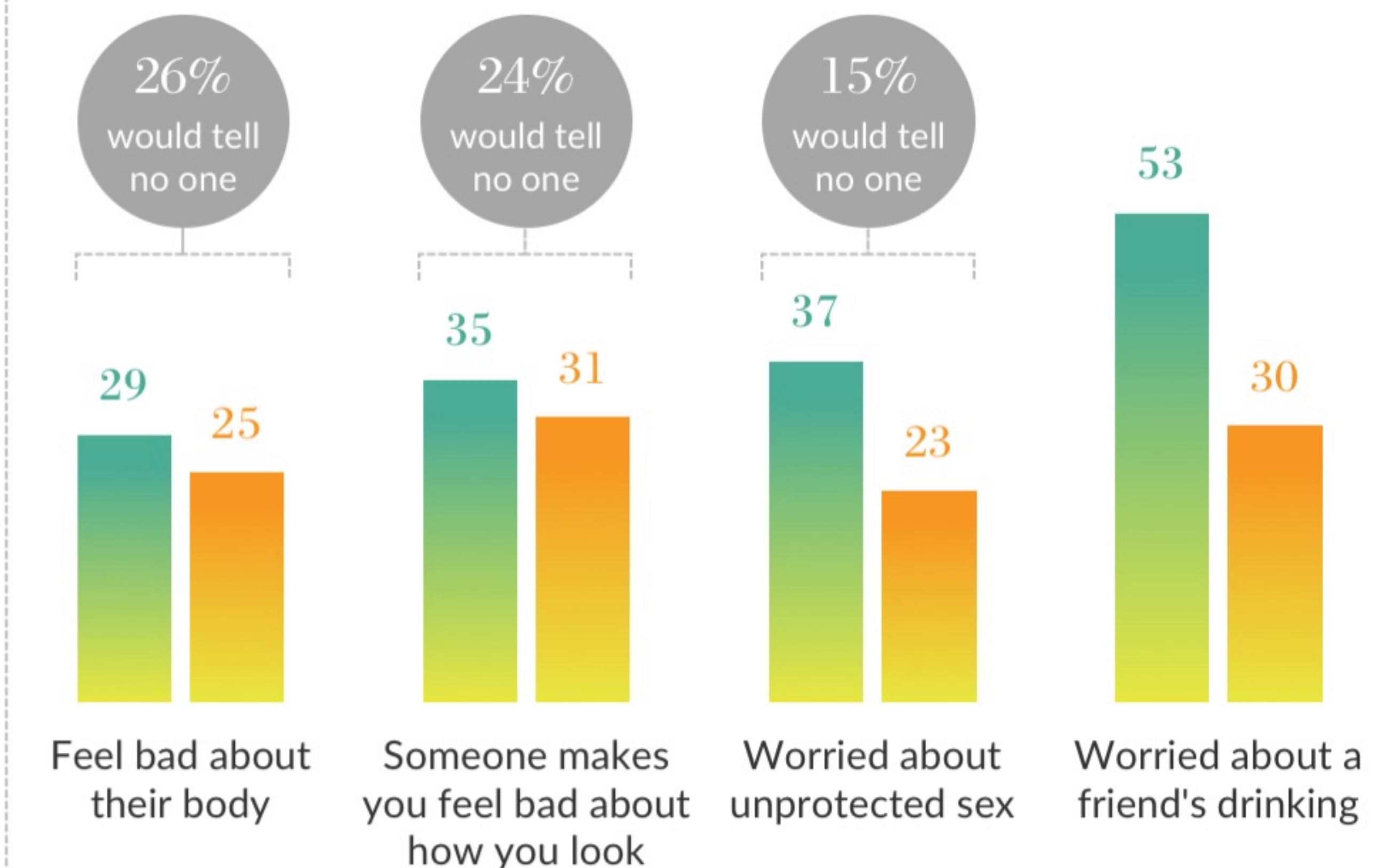
% Turn to Each to Talk about Situation



Young people turn to parents in situations about physical wellbeing and safety...

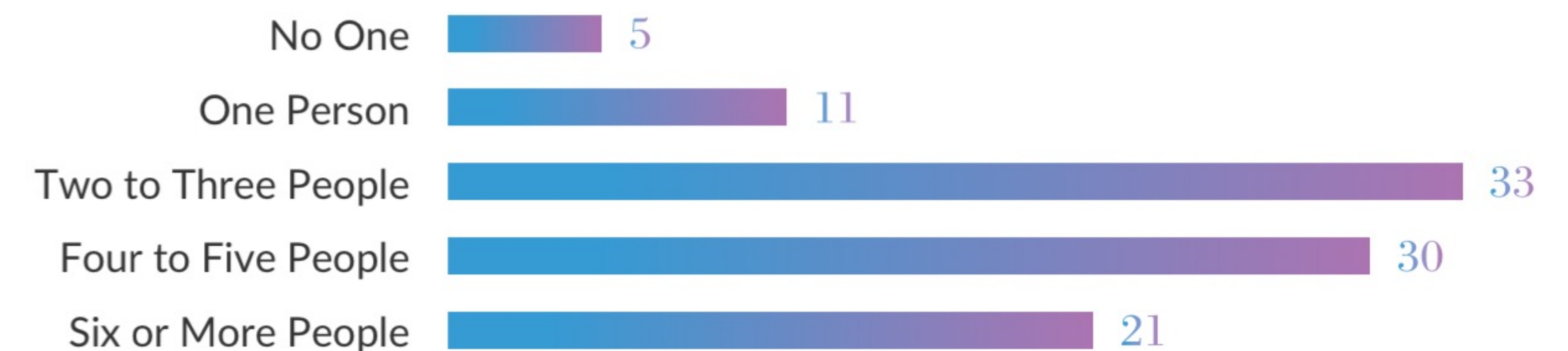


...But rely on friends for social challenges and body image issues they are less comfortable discussing with a parent.



How Many People Are There You Could Go to with a Difficult Problem?

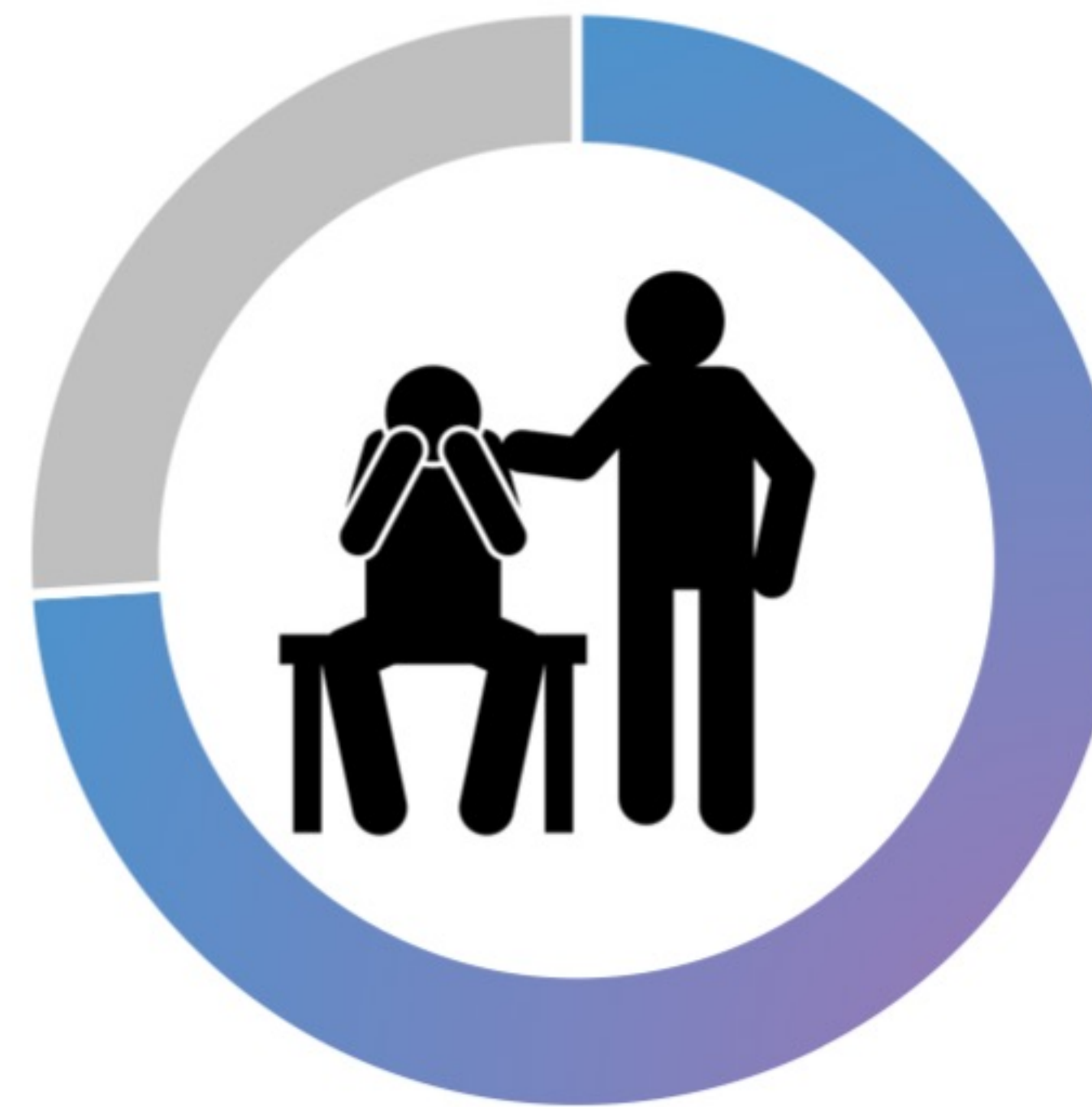
among young people



Young People Trust Themselves to Help a Friend Having a Mental Health Crisis, But Welcome More Support and Resources

I feel confident I could help a friend facing a mental health crisis if I needed to

76% Agree

A horizontal bar chart with a purple-to-blue gradient. The bar is filled with the blue portion, representing 76%, and the text '76% Agree' is written in white on the blue section. The remaining 24% of the bar is grey.

74%

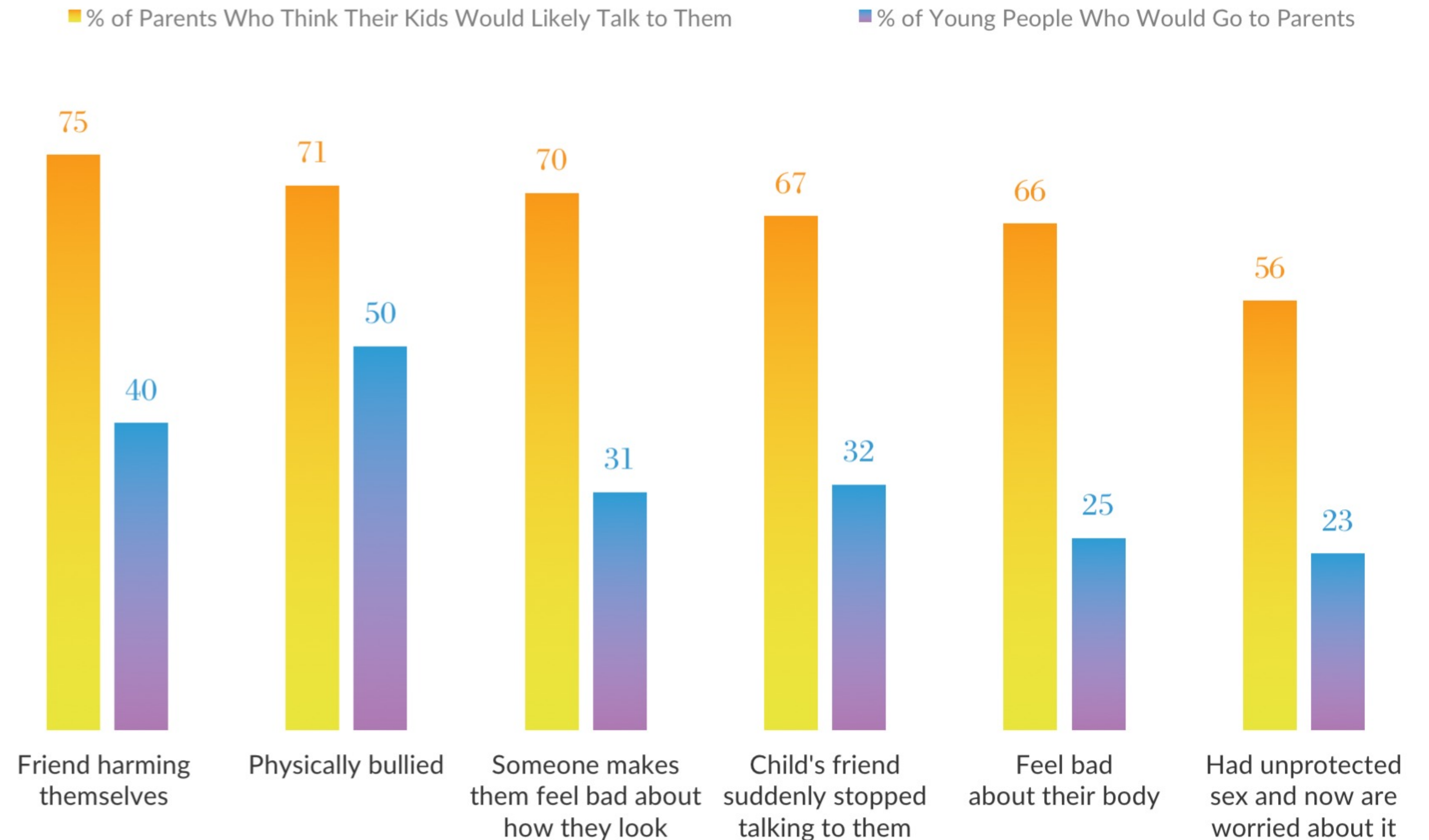
Interested in taking a class or training program
to prepare you to help a friend facing a MH crisis

Parents Significantly Overestimate Likelihood Kids Will Turn to Them

On a range of important topics, most parents incorrectly assume their child will come to them to talk when most young people say they would not talk to their parents.

- Two thirds of parents say their child would likely talk to them if they felt badly about their body, while only a 1 in 4 of young people say they would talk to their parents or guardians if they did.
- More than half of parents say their child would likely talk to them if they were worried about having had unprotected sex, but only 23% of young people say they would talk to their parents or guardians about it.
- Just half of young people would talk to their parents if they were being physically bullied even though 7 in 10 parents say their kids would turn to them in this situation.

Young People and Parents Discussing Difficult Situations



Stress Is a Major Mental Wellness Challenge for Young People but Parents Underestimate How Much Their Kids Struggle, Especially in College



About **1 in 4 young people** report being a nervous person all or most of the time in the past month

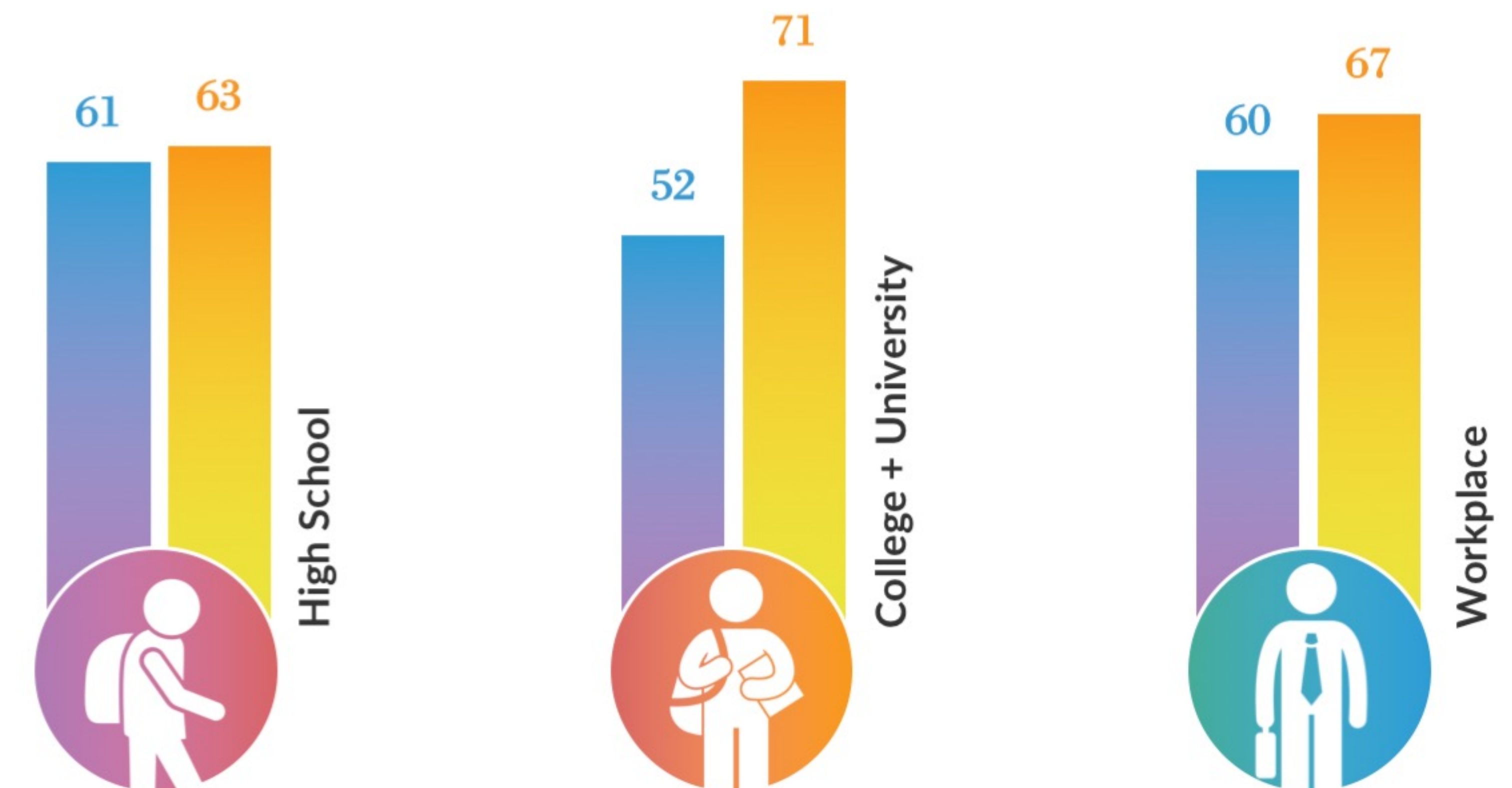


...while fewer than **1 in 10 parents** report their child being a nervous person during that time period

Parents are also more likely to believe their children are in a kind community compared to young people, particularly for employed young people and university students.

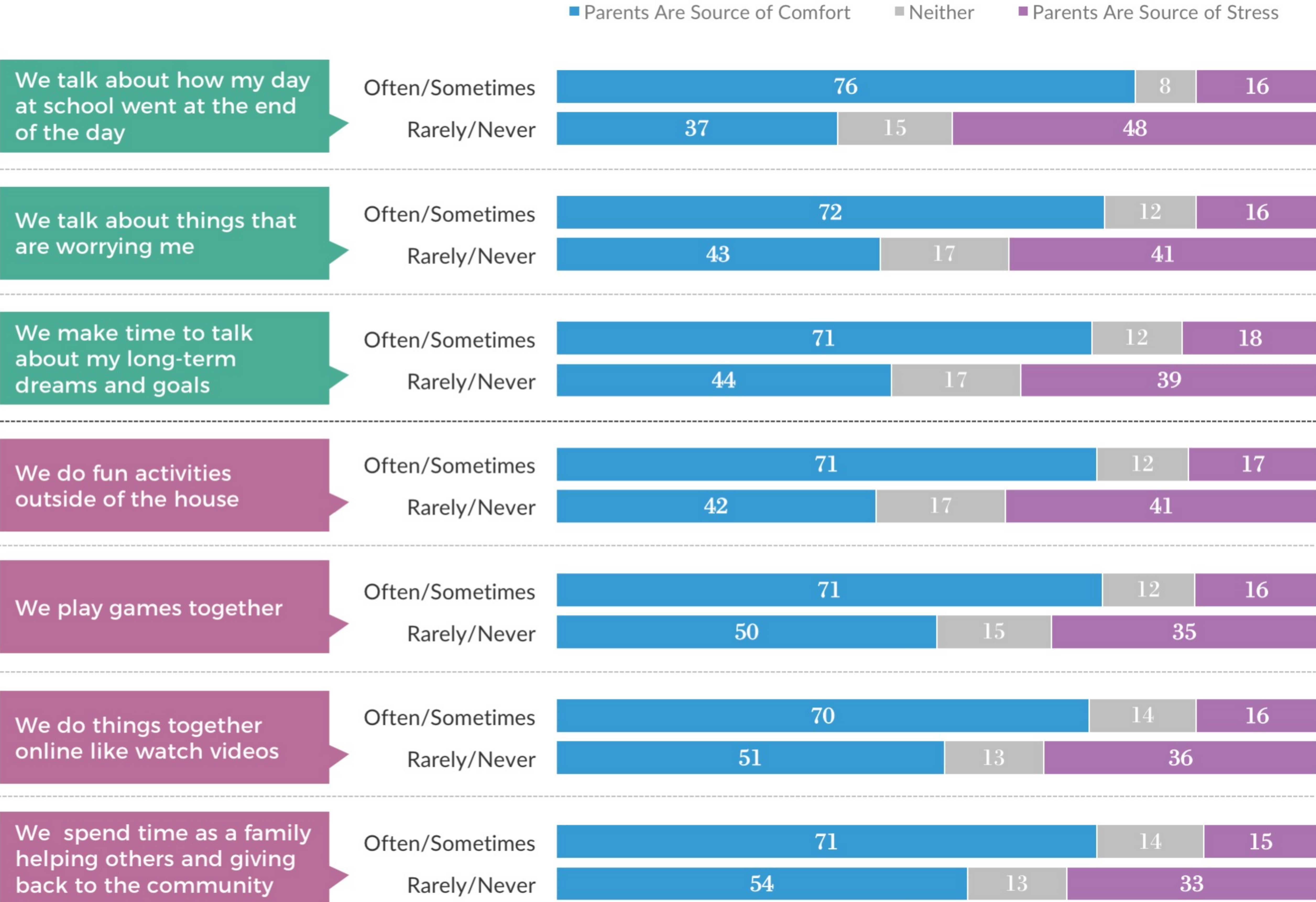
% Say In a Community Where People are Kind

Young People Parents



Both Serious Conversations and Fun Activities Help Drive Positive Relationships with Parents

% Young People Say Parent Is a Source of Stress/Comfort by Frequency of Activity





School + Work Resources

What Works for Kindness + Wellness



At Kind High Schools

- 1) Teachers say “hi” to students when students get to school
- 2) They offer classes about or that discuss mental health
- 3) Classmates make an effort to include people who are different



At Kind Colleges + Universities

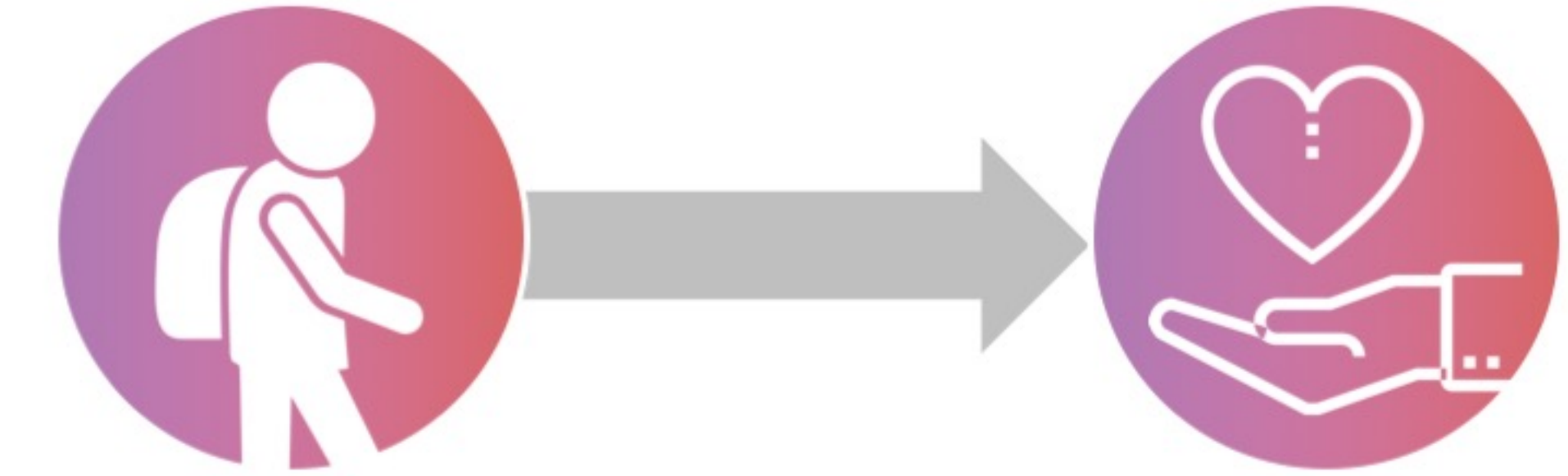
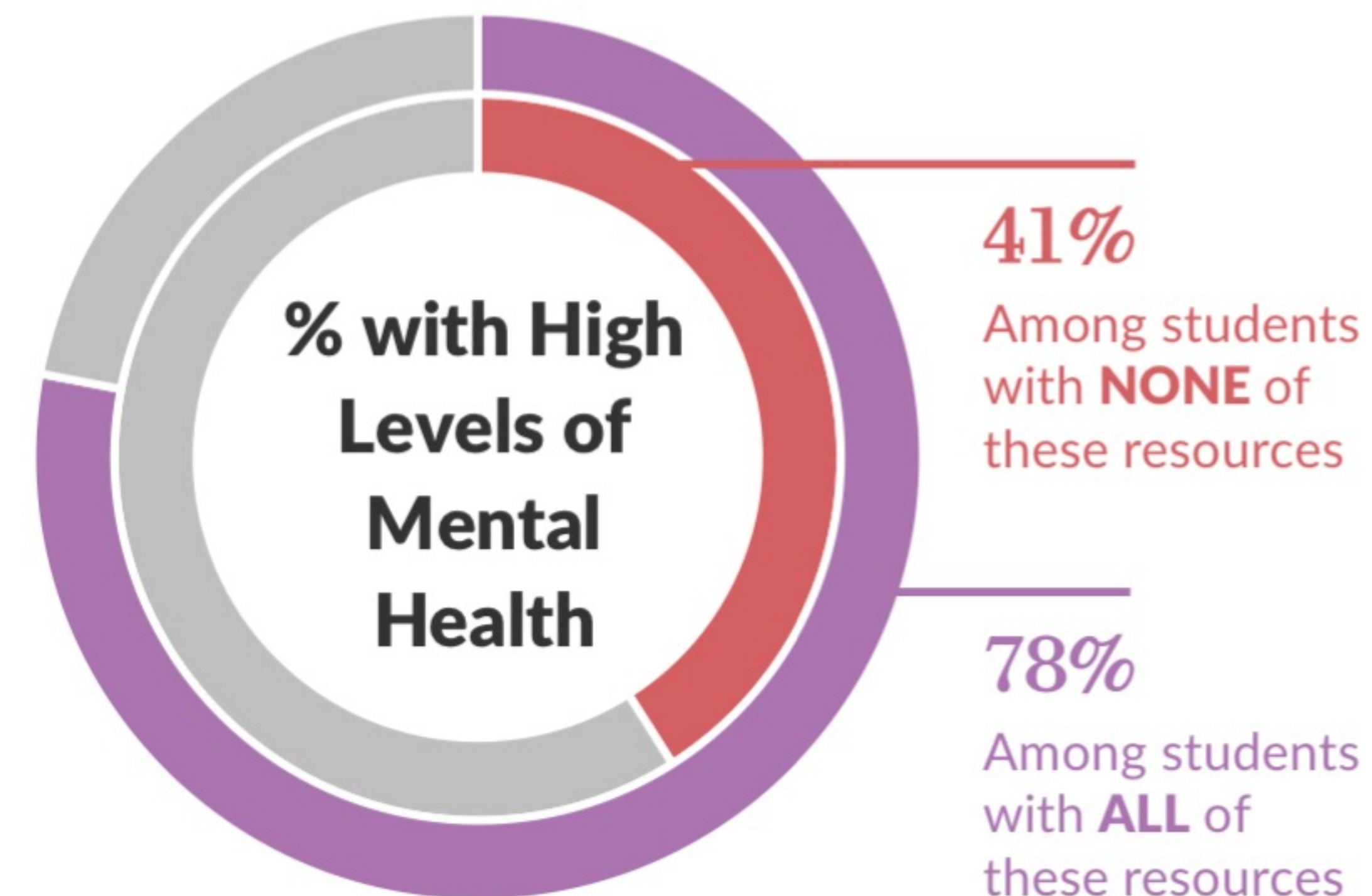
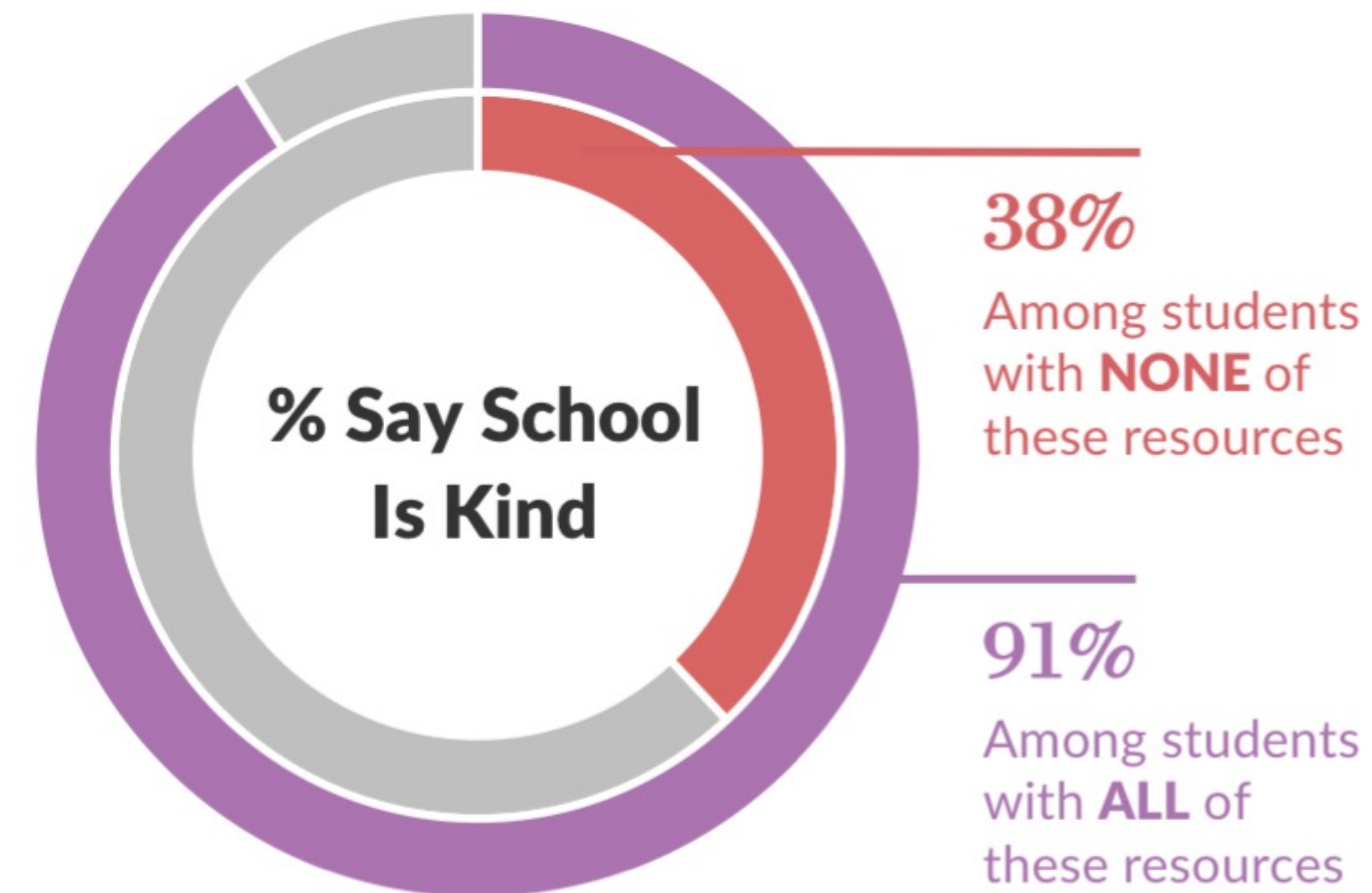
- 1) There are free mental health/counseling resources students can use when they need help
- 2) There are resources for students to reduce stress, such as yoga or meditation
- 3) They have an LGBTQIA Center and affinity groups for students



At Kind Workplaces

- 1) Bosses regularly check in with employees to discuss how they are doing
- 2) They offer resources tailored for women and minority employees
- 3) They offer a mentorship program for young employees

What Works for Kindness + Wellness in High Schools



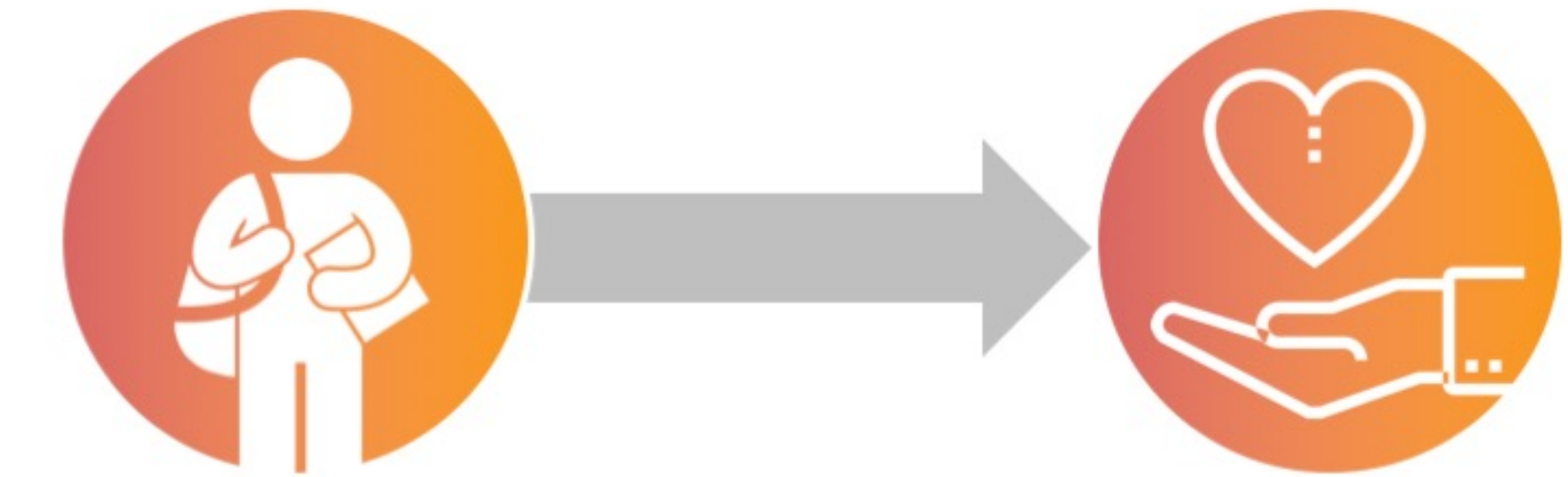
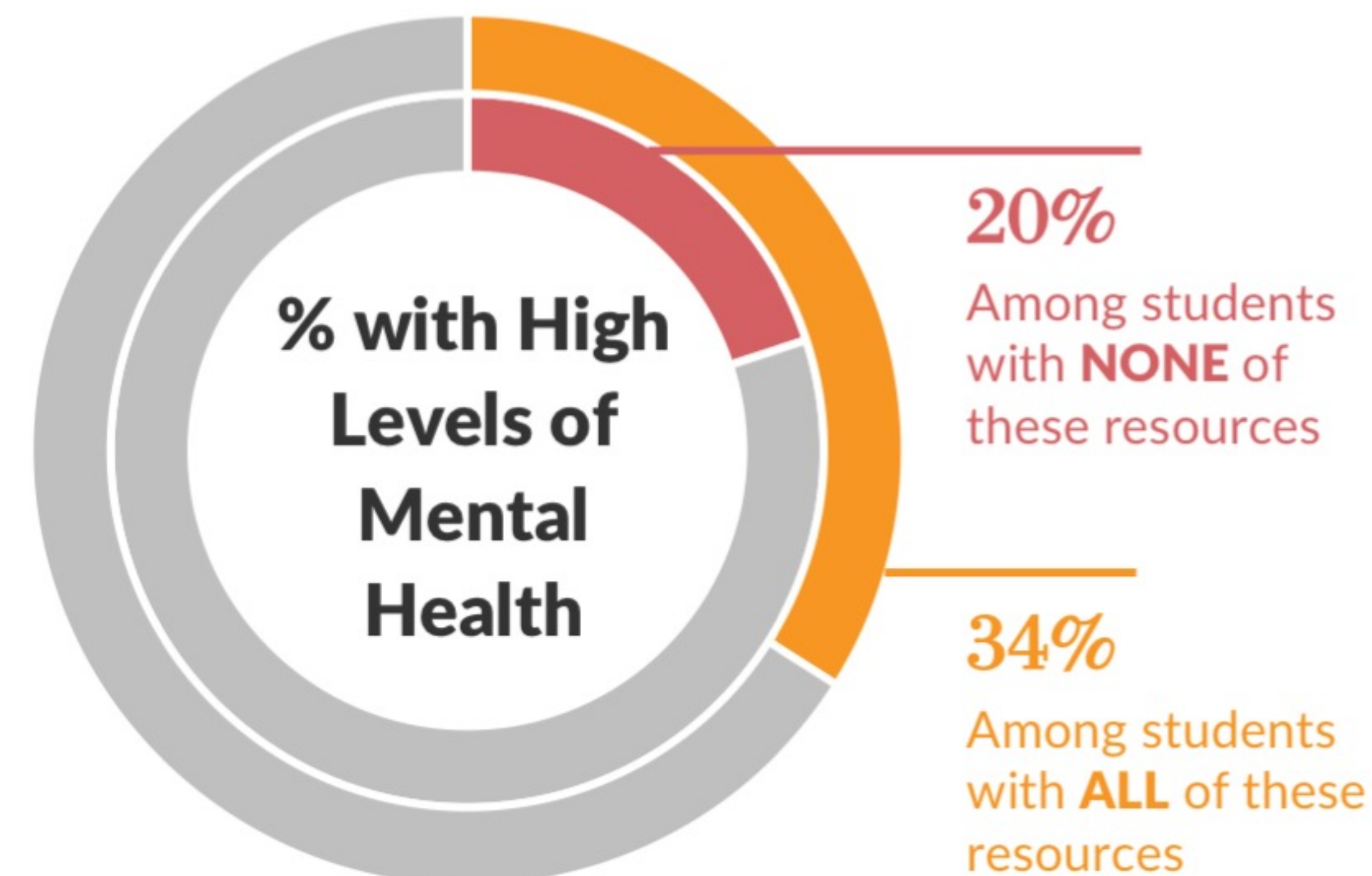
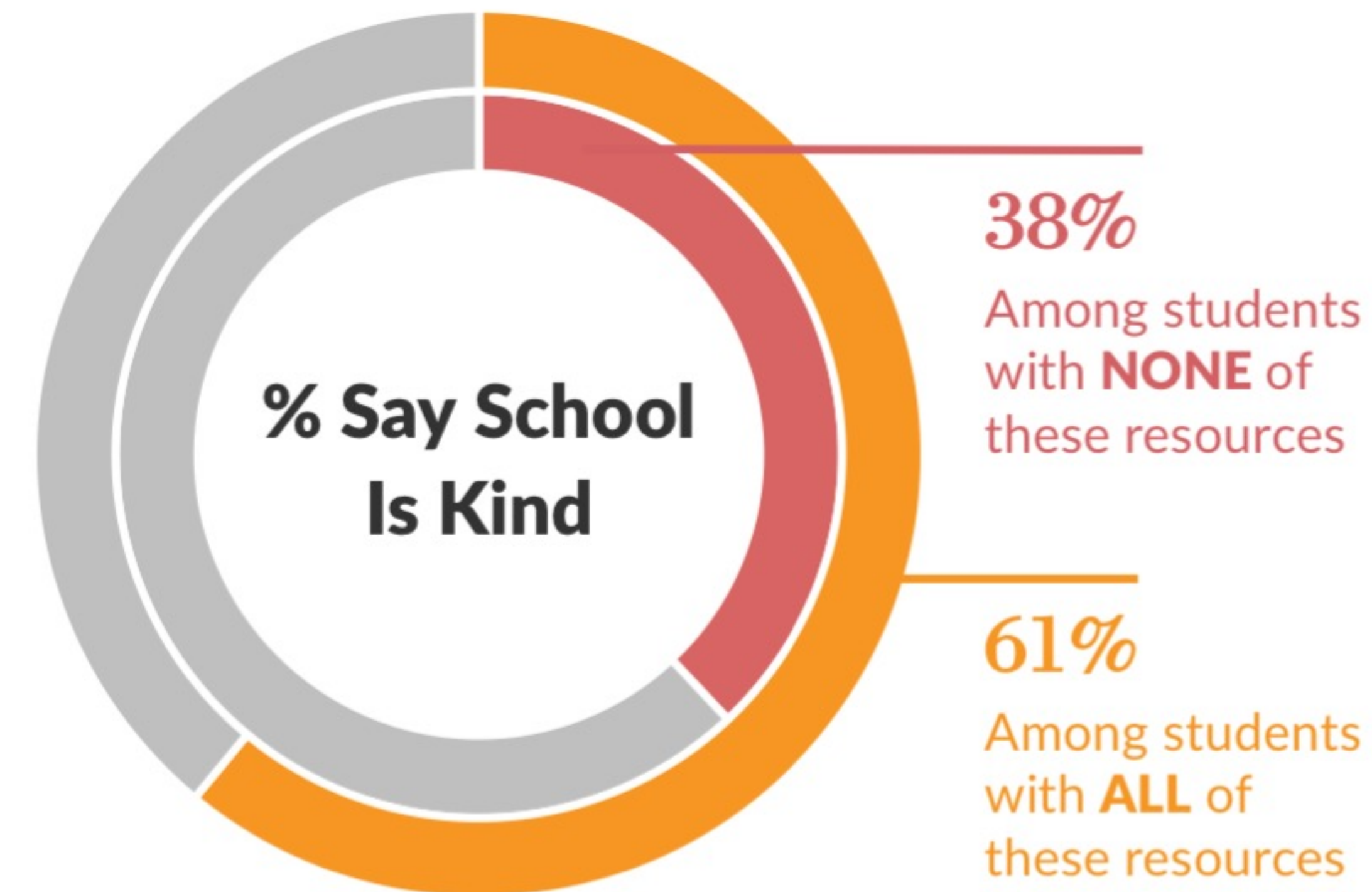
At Kind High Schools

- 1) Teachers say “hi” to students when students get to school
- 2) They offer classes about or that discuss mental health
- 3) Classmates make an effort to include people who are different

11% of high school students have **ALL** of these resources

20% of high school students have **NONE** of these resources

What Works for Kindness + Wellness in Colleges + Universities



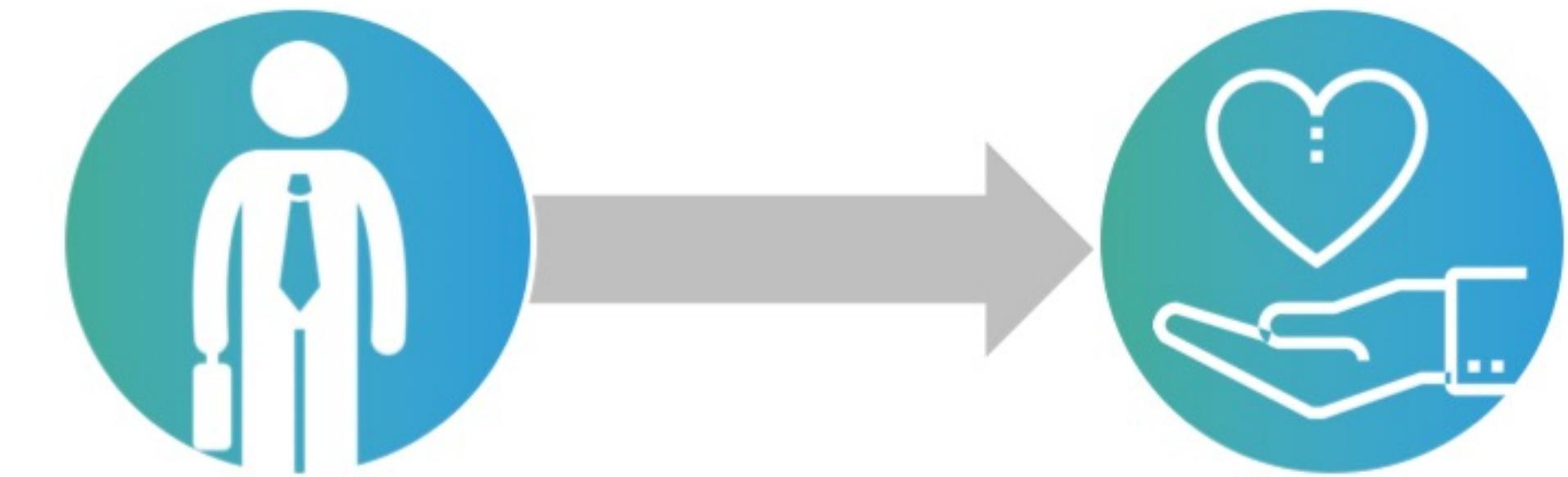
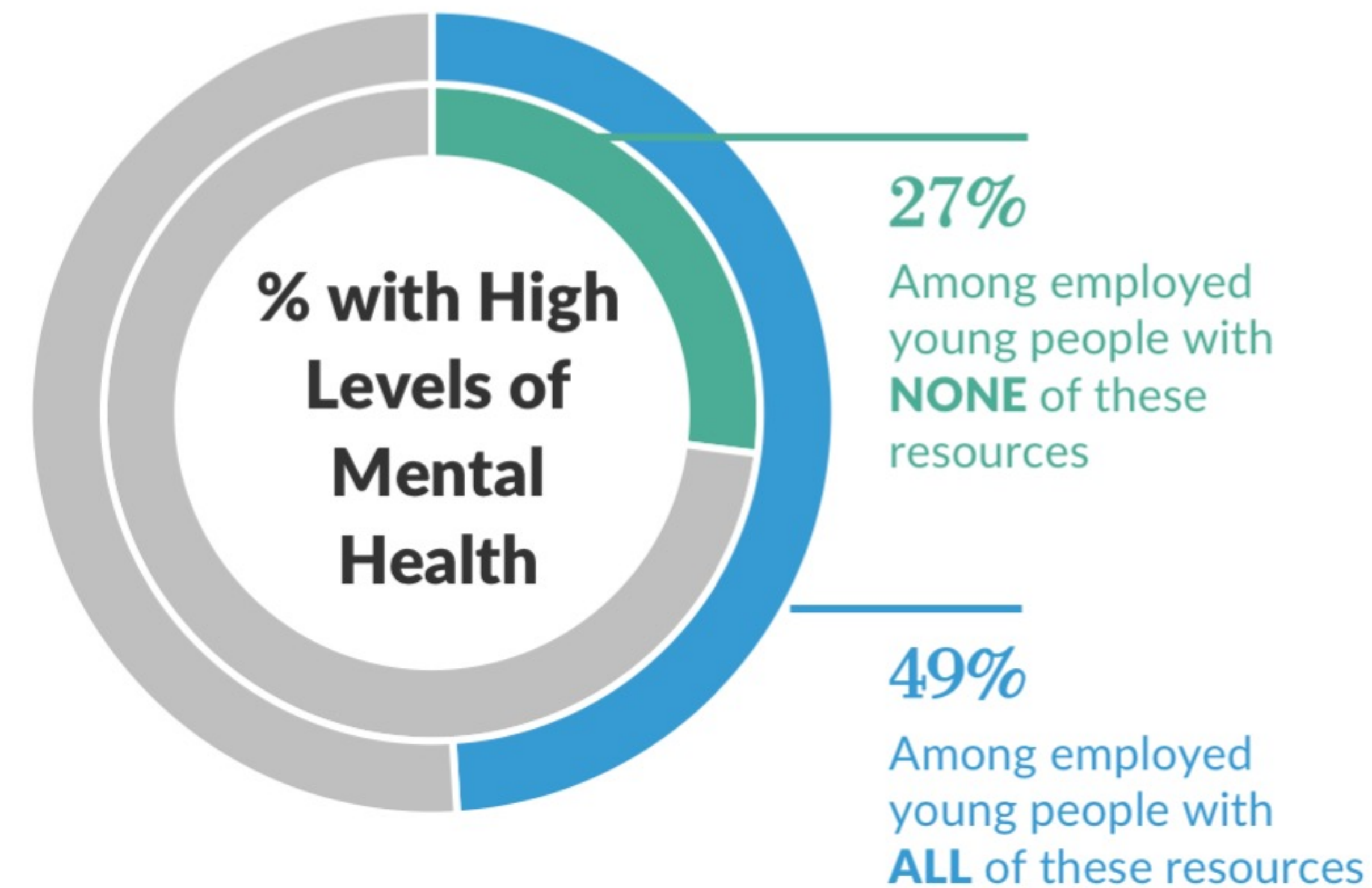
At Kind Colleges + Universities Schools

- 1) There are free mental health/counseling resources students can use when they need help
- 2) There are resources for students to reduce stress, such as yoga or meditation
- 3) They have an LGBTQIA Center and affinity groups for students

34% of university students have **ALL** of these resources

15% of university students have **NONE** of these resources

What Works for Kindness + Wellness in Workplaces



At Kind Workplaces

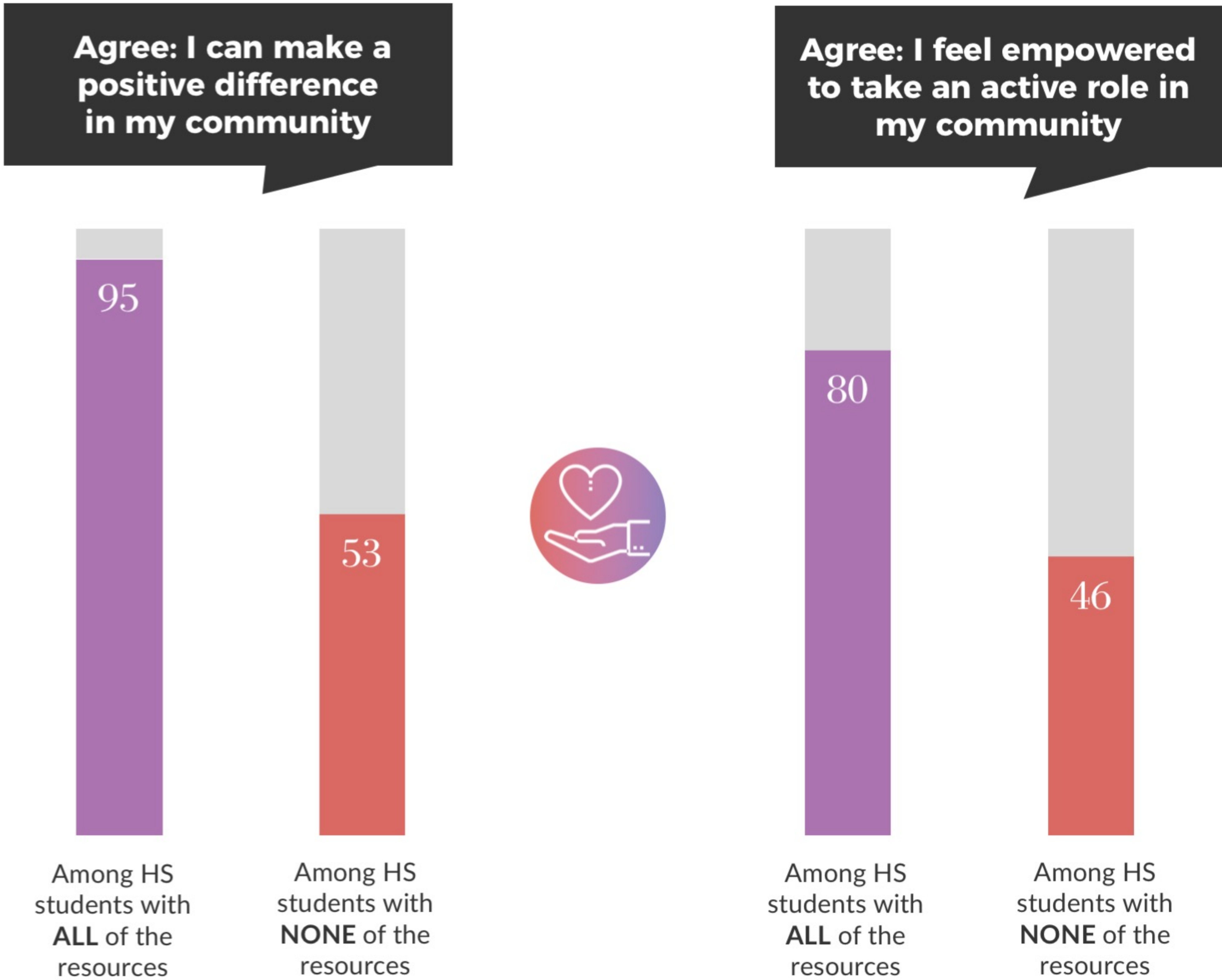
- 1) Bosses regularly check in with employees to discuss how they are doing
- 2) They offer resources tailored for women and minority employees
- 3) They offer a mentorship program for young employees

7% of employed young people have **ALL** of these resources

43% of employed young people have **NONE** of these resources

High School Students with These Resources Almost Uniformly Feel They Can Make a Positive Difference

% of High School Students who Agree with Each Statement



Young People Struggle with Determining Credibility and Negativity, But Online Life Can Be a Place they Find Authentic, Supportive Communities

Challenges with Online Health and Wellness Resources Among Young People



% Young People Say Each Is a Helpful Aspect of Online Wellness Resources

