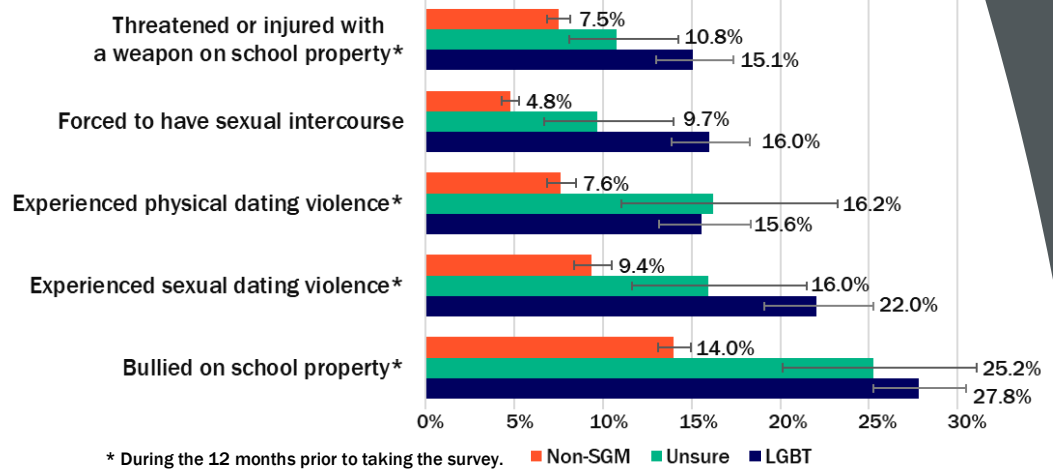


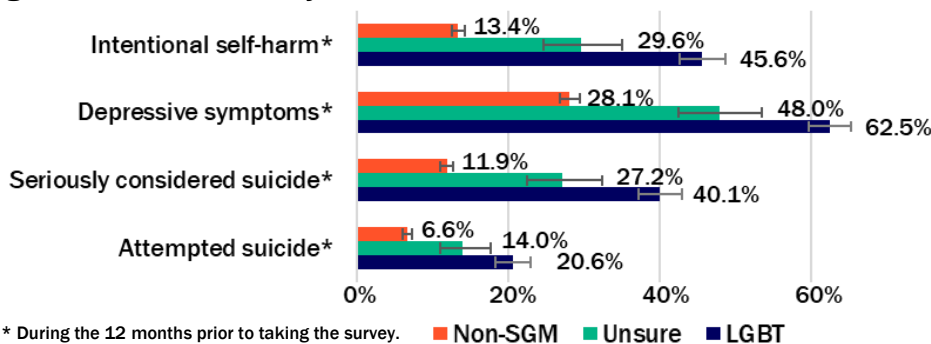
This data brief describes the health-promoting and risk behavior trends of high school students in Cuyahoga County who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (LGBT), as well as those who are still exploring their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Together, these groups will be referred to throughout this brief as sexual and gender minority (SGM) youth. Nationally, SGM youth are more likely than non-SGM youth to experience violence and mental health conditions, engage in substance use, and to report lower rates of health-promoting behaviors such as meeting recommended levels of sleep and physical activity.¹ Among Cuyahoga County high school students, 13.8%, or approximately 5,300 students, identified as LGBT and 4.3%, or approximately 1,670 students, were unsure how they identified. Locally, SGM youth represent a large population of students whose experiences and needs may differ from their non-SGM peers.

Figure 1. Experiences of violence by SGM-status



Sexual and gender minority high school students in Cuyahoga County are more likely to experience violence than their non-SGM peers. For example, 16.0% of LGBT students and 9.7% of unsure students report being forced to have sexual intercourse compared to 4.8% of non-SGM students.

Figure 2. Mental health by SGM-status



Sexual and gender minority youth are more likely to report mental health experiences such as depressive symptoms. For example, over 40% of LGBT students and over 27% of unsure students report seriously considering suicide in the 12 months prior to taking the survey, compared to almost 12% of non-SGM students.

Figure 3. Current substance use by SGM-status

LGBT youth are more likely to report current tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use than their non-SGM peers. The current substance use of youth unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity does not vary significantly from non-SGM students.

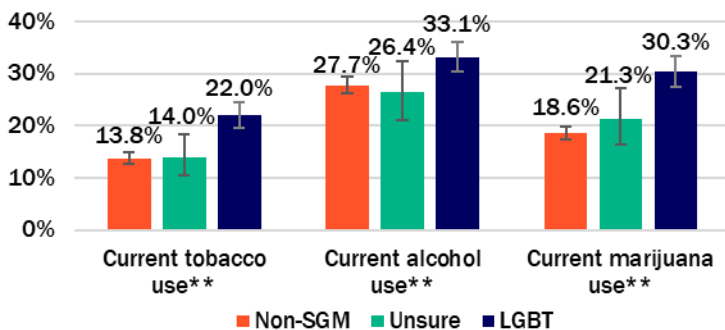


Figure 4. Resource vulnerability by SGM-status

Sexual and gender minority youth are more likely to have gone hungry at home sometimes, most of the time, or always, because there was not enough food and to have unstable housing than non-SGM students.

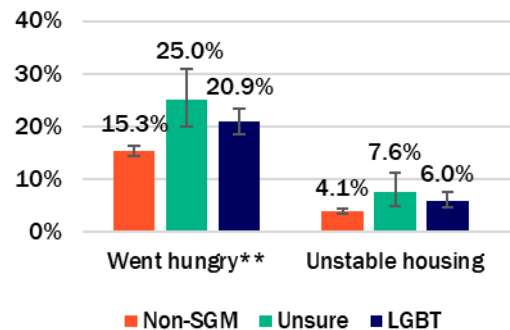
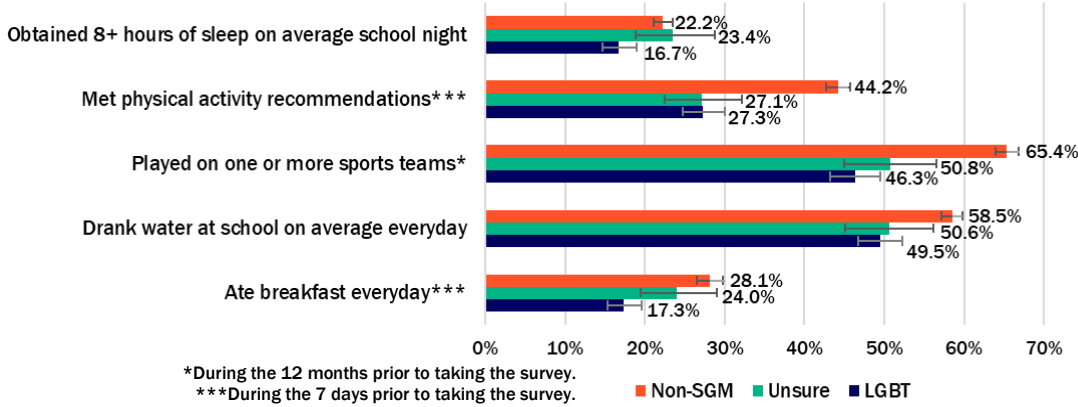


Figure 5. Health-promoting behaviors by SGM-status

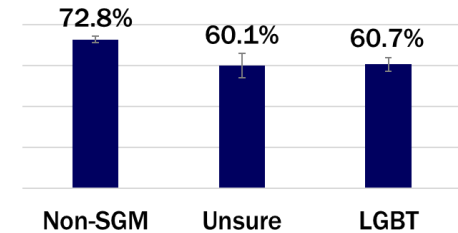


LGBT students in Cuyahoga County are less likely to engage in health-promoting behaviors such as getting enough sleep, physical activity, playing on sports teams, drinking water at school, and eating breakfast than their non-SGM peers. Students who are unsure of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation are less likely to meet physical activity recommendations, play on a sports team, or drink water at school than non-SGM students.

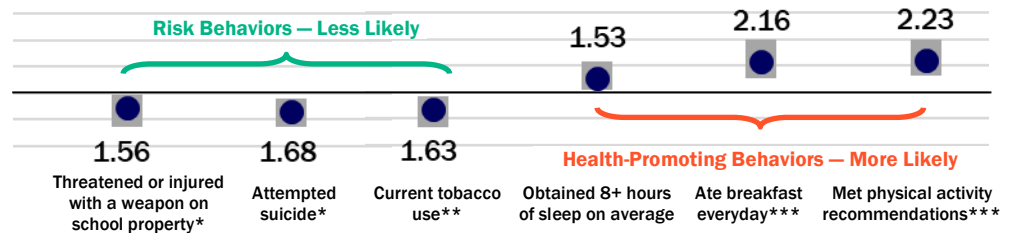
Figure 6. Protective factors by SGM-status

Sexual and gender-minority students are less likely than non-SGM students to have three or more of seven assessed protective factors (listed below) associated with decreased engagement in risk behaviors and increased engagement in health-promoting behaviors (Fig. 6a). For example, LGBT students with 3+ protective factors are 2.23 times **more** likely to meet physical activity recommendations and 1.68 times **less** likely to have attempted suicide than LGBT students with fewer than three of the seven protective factors (Fig. 6b).

6a. Students with 3+ Protective Factors



6b. Likelihood^o of Behavior Engagement among LGBT students with 3+ Protective Factors



^oBased on logistic regression analysis controlling for gender, race/ethnicity, and grade level comparing LGBT students with 3+ protective factors to those with fewer. This analysis was not performed for unsure students as the population size did not allow for adjusted odds ratios with meaningful confidence intervals.
 * During the past 12 months. ** During the past 30 days. ***During the past 7 days.

Protective Factors

- ◆ Having a parent who talks to them about school
- ◆ Feeling like they matter to their community
- ◆ Engaging in after school activities
- ◆ Helping decide what goes on in their school
- ◆ Academic achievement
- ◆ Having a trusted adult other than a parent
- ◆ Going for a well-visit physical in the past year

Methods: The Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods (PRCHN) uses a two-stage cluster sample design that mimics the sampling method of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). In 2019, 51 of 67 high schools (76.1%) and 15,350 of 19,637 students (78.2%) participated in the survey, with an overall response rate of 60% (76.1 x 78.2). The data was weighted to the entire population. Analyses were conducted using SPSS statistical software procedures to account for sampling design. Unless noted, all differences in behavior are significant at the $p < .05$ level.

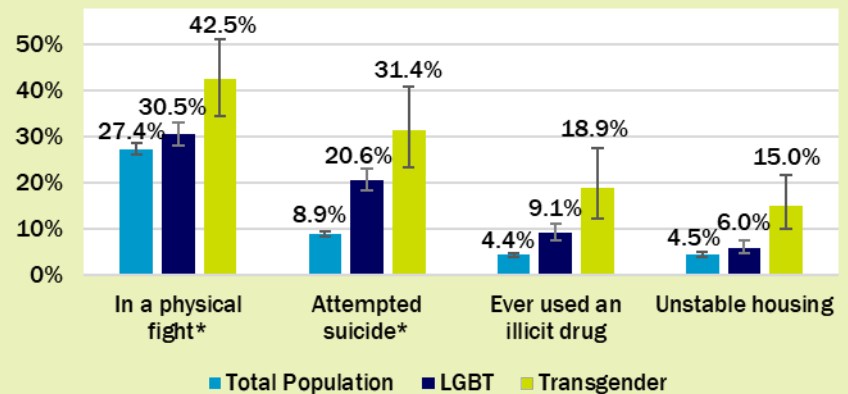
Contributors: The information in this report was obtained from the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey project. This survey was modeled after the CDC state-based system of health surveys administered at the high school level every other year by each state department of health. This data brief was prepared by the PRCHN and authored by Catherine Osborn, MA; Audrey Kinsella, MPH; Jean Frank, MPH, Gulnar Feerasta, MSSA, MNO; and Erika Trapl, PHD. For more information, contact Jean Frank (jean.frank@case.edu).

Suggested Citation: Osborn C, Kinsella A, Frank JL, Feerasta G, Trapl ES, (November 2020). Youth Data Brief: Sexual and Gender Minority Youth Risk and Health-Promoting Behaviors. Cleveland, OH: Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods at Case Western Reserve University.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2019. Health Considerations for LGBTQ Youth. Available at: [cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/health-considerations-lgbtq-youth.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/health-considerations-lgbtq-youth.htm)

Spotlight on Transgender Students

Transgender students represent 1.4% of the total population and 10.0% of the LGBT population of high school students in Cuyahoga County. The unique patterns of experiences of violence, mental health behaviors, substance use, and resource vulnerability among transgender students highlight the diversity of experiences among LGBT students.



*During the 12 months prior to taking the survey.

Full data modules from the YRBS are available online at: www.prchn.org/YRBSResults.aspx

This work is a product of the Prevention Research Center for Health Neighborhoods, a Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research Center supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 1U48DP005030 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and funded either in whole or in part by Cooperative Agreement #PS18-1807 from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent School Health (CDC-DASH), and by TP1AH000093-01-00 from The Office of Population Affairs. This work is also supported by the Cleveland Foundation and the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio. The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CWRU IRB Protocol #2012-274