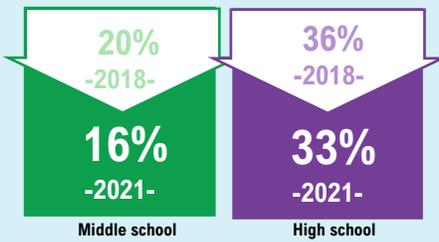


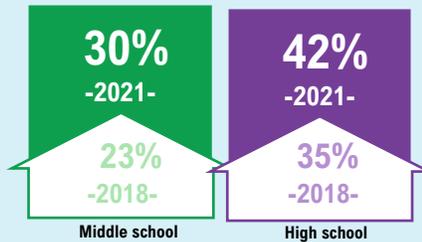
Adolescent Stress* and Anxiety Among Youth in the MetroWest Region

Highlights from the 2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (Grades 7-12)

16% of middle school youth and 33% of high school youth report life was “very” stressful in the past 30 days.



Reports of anxiety symptoms increased from 2018 to 2021 in middle school and high school.[§]



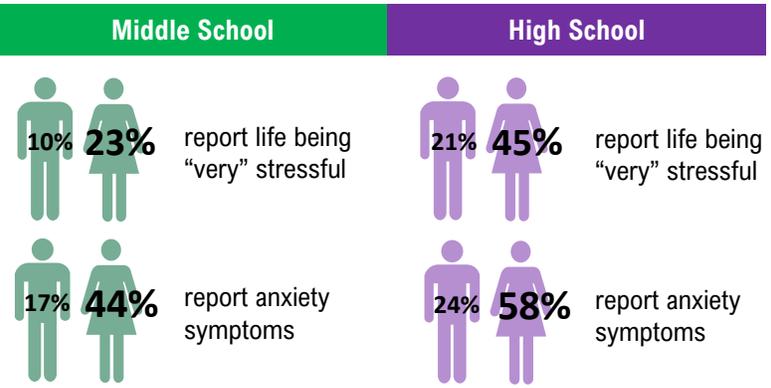
Middle school youth who report high levels of stress[‡] are:

- 1.7 times more likely to get less than 8 hours of sleep on a school night
- 4.6 times more likely to report depressive symptoms
- 2.5 times more likely to ever drink alcohol
- 4.9 times more likely to ever use marijuana

High school youth who report high levels of stress[‡] are:

- 1.3 times more likely to get less than 8 hours of sleep on a school night
- 3.1 times more likely to report depressive symptoms
- 1.7 times more likely to drink alcohol recently
- 1.7 times more likely to use marijuana recently

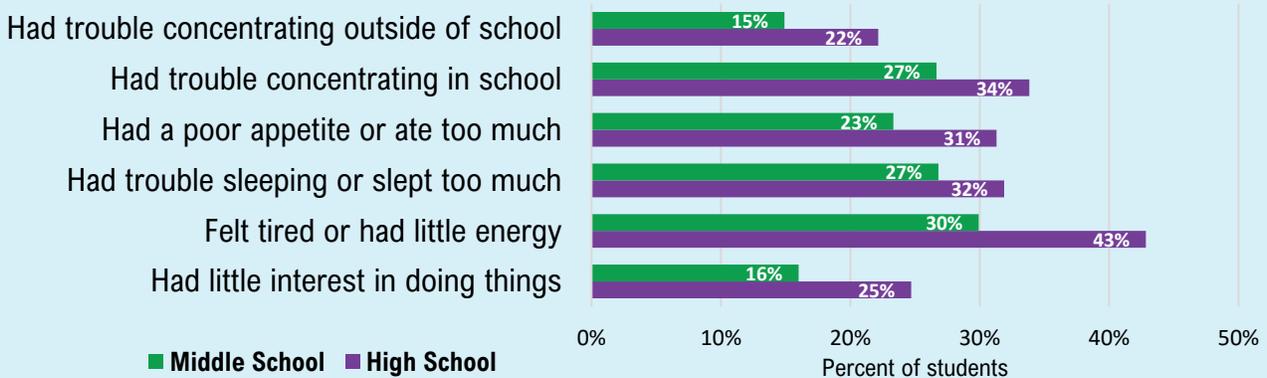
Reports of stress and anxiety[§] are higher among females than males.



Sources of stress:

	Middle School	High School
→ School issues	51%	67%
→ Social issues	31%	39%
→ Appearance issues	33%	39%
→ Physical/emotional health	28%	41%
→ Family issues	19%	26%
→ Safety issues	6%	5%

Many youth feel so stressed, anxious, or worried that it impacts their daily functioning.[†]



The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) is conducted by Education Development Center, with funding from the MetroWest Health Foundation. The MWAHS is an anonymous survey of youth in 25 communities. One of the largest student surveys in the nation, its goal is to inform local policies and programs. In 2021, 39,293 students in grades 6-12 completed surveys, representing 86% of students in the region.



* Reports of stress are based on life being “very” stressful during the past 30 days.
[§] Based on the brief Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-2) scale, adapted from: Spitzer, R. L., Kroenke, K., Williams, J. B., & Löwe, B. (2006). A brief measure for assessing generalized anxiety disorder: the GAD-7. Archives of internal medicine, 166(10), 1092–1097. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archinte.166.10.1092>. Percentages indicate the proportion of students that would benefit from further diagnostic evaluation due to: feelings of being nervous, anxious, or on edge; or unable to stop or control worrying in the past two weeks.
[‡] Youth reporting that life was “very” stressful (past 30 days) compared to youth reporting life was “not at all,” “a little,” or “somewhat” stressful. Depressive symptoms refer to the past 12 months; alcohol and marijuana use refer to lifetime use for middle school students and past 30-day use for high school students.
[†] Youth reported feeling so stressed, anxious, or worried that symptom occurred “often” or “very often” during the past two weeks