

Health and Safety Disparities by Race, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Seattle Public Schools led the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in the fall of 2018. The survey was grant funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This anonymous, random survey is used to identify and monitor factors that affect the health and safety of our students. The survey focuses on the major risk behaviors related to the leading causes of mortality and morbidity among both youth and adults including personal safety and violence, mental health, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behavior, physical activity and nutrition.

There is mounting evidence supporting the concept that reducing students' health-risk behaviors can have a positive impact on their academic performance. Seattle Public Schools uses this data to develop, assess, and improve programs that advance the health of our students.

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SPS Black students are 3 x more likely to not go to school due to safety concerns

LGBTQ+ students that attend SPS are 2.3 x as likely to be bullied at school

SPS LGBTQ+ students of color are 8 x more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year

Racial Disparities in the Health and Safety of SPS Students

Compared to white SPS students

Black students were:

27% less likely to feel close to people at school

2.6 x more likely to have not eaten breakfast in the past week

2.7 x more likely to be teased because of their race

3 x more likely not to go to school due to safety concerns

7 x more likely to have sleeping arrangements other than parent/guardian's most nights in the past month

Multiple race students were:

1.6 x more likely not to go to school due to safety concerns

18% less likely to feel close to people at school

20% less likely to feel safe at school

Hispanic students were:

2.4 x more likely to be teased because of their race

4 x more likely to have not had breakfast in the past week

5 x more likely to have sleeping arrangements other than parent/guardian's most nights in the past month

Asian students were:

2 x more likely to have sleeping arrangements other than parent/guardian's most nights in the past month

2.4 x more likely to have not had breakfast in the past week

3.3 x more likely to be teased based on race

Given all this data, black students were still:

37% LESS LIKELY to have used marijuana in past month

41% LESS LIKELY to have vaped in past month

79% LESS LIKELY to have engaged in binge drinking

Across ALL students, there were common concerns:

1 in 3 did not have an adult or teacher in school they could talk to about problems

1 in 4 had experienced depressive feelings for at least two weeks in a row over the past year

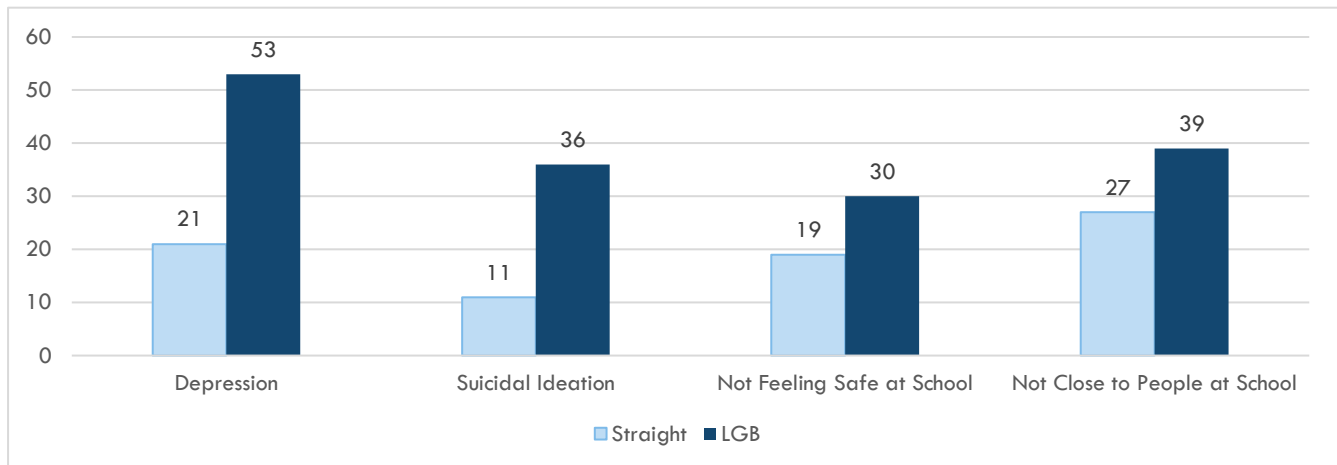
1 in 7 had seriously considered attempting suicide

The number of SPS American Indian or Alaska Native students in the subgroup drawn into the sample is not large enough to produce stable estimates. However [national American Indian or Alaska Native student data](#) reports: American Indian/Alaska Native students are at a disproportionately higher risk of not going to school to school due to safety concerns and being threatened with a weapon at school when compared to their white counterparts.

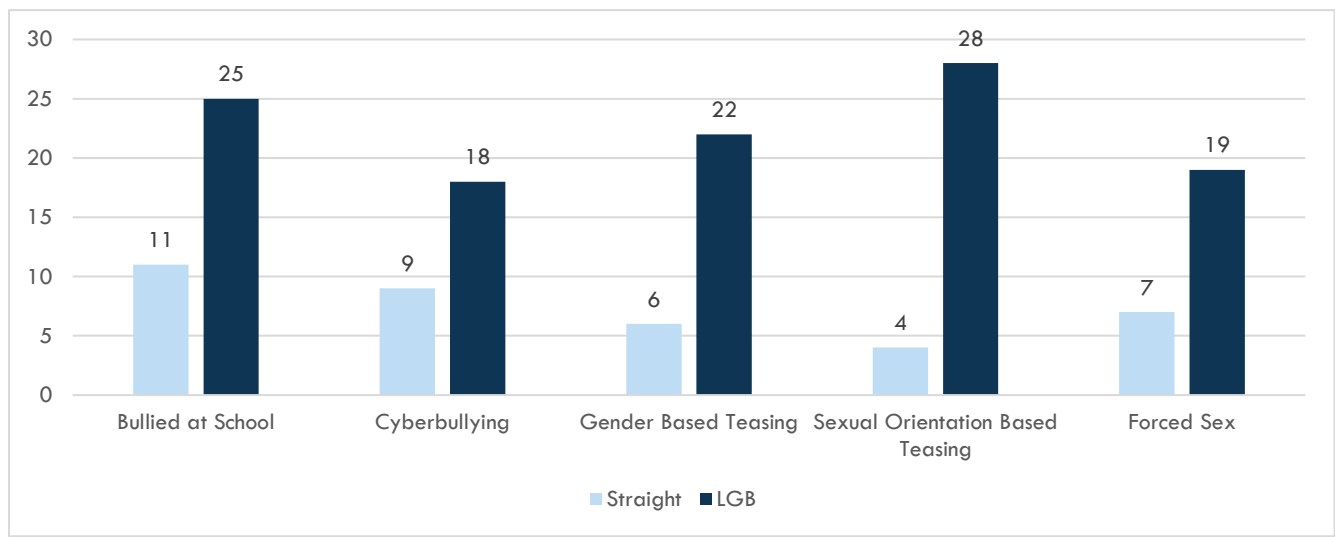
Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2018

Health & Safety Disparities by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Mental health and school environment among SPS high school students by sexual orientation



Victimization among SPS high school students by sexual orientation



Compared to straight white students, LGBT students of color were:

- **3.2 times more likely to have experienced symptoms of depression**
- **4.7 times more likely to have seriously thought about suicide**
- **8 times more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year**

The number of SPS Transgender students in the subgroup drawn into the sample is not large enough to produce stable estimates. However, [national Transgender student data](#) reports Transgender students are at disproportionately higher risk for violence victimization, substance use, and suicide risk when compared to their cisgender counterparts.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2018