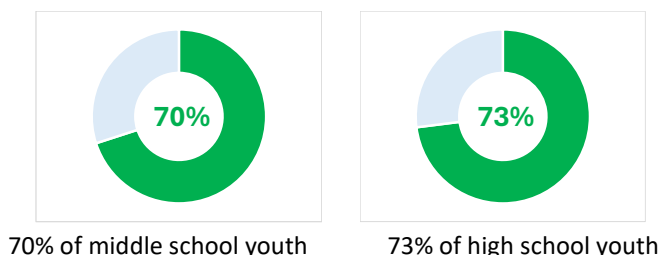


# Adult Support and Peer Support in the MetroWest Region

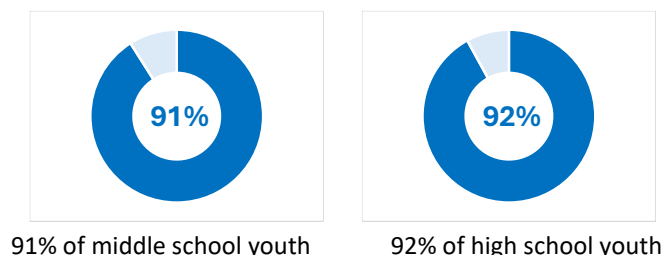
Highlights from the 2023 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (Grades 6-12)

**94% of middle school students and 94% of high school students have a supportive adult in their lives.\***

## Adult support at school is reported by:



## Adult support outside of school is reported by:



**61% of middle school students and 63% of high school students have a friend they can talk to about a personal problem.†**



**17% of middle school students and 24% of high school students feel lonely often or very often.**



**Youth find help for emotional challenges and problems from many people and places:‡**

Middle school      High School

School counselor	21%	19%
School nurse	6%	5%
Another school adult, like a teacher	11%	12%
Mental health provider outside of school	16%	21%
Parent, relative, or other adult outside of school	42%	42%
Friend (around the same age)	42%	47%
Person or group on social media	8%	8%

**Youth without any adult support report higher risk behaviors than youth with adult support.**

For example, in high school, they have:

- ➔ **2.1x** higher depressive symptoms (past 12 mos.)
- ➔ **1.6x** higher nicotine vaping (past 30 days)
- ➔ **1.4x** higher risk of being bullied at school (past 12 mos.)

**Youth without frequent peer support† report more risk behaviors than youth with peer support.**

For example, in middle school, they have:

- ➔ **1.7x** higher depressive symptoms (past 12 mos.)
- ➔ **1.7x** higher reports of considering suicide (lifetime)
- ➔ **1.4x** higher risk of being bullied at school (past 12 mos.)

The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) has been conducted by Education Development Center (EDC) since 2006, with funding from the MetroWest Health Foundation. The MWAHS is a voluntary and anonymous survey of youth in 25 communities that provides data to inform local adolescent health priorities and programs. In 2023, 38,074 students in grades 6-12 participated, representing 89% of middle school youth and 79% of high school youth in the region.

\* Having a supportive adult at school or a parent/other adult outside of school. Adult support at school is defined as having at least one teacher or other school adult to talk to if you have a problem. Adult support outside of school is defined as having at least one parent/adult outside of school to talk to about things that are important to you.

† Have a friend to talk to "often" or "very often"

‡ Talked about emotional challenges or problems in the past 12 mos.; includes things that make you feel sad, angry, stressed, or anxious, or may make you have thoughts of hurting yourself.

\*\* Depressive symptoms are defined as feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities (in the past 12 months)