

Suicide is a leading cause of death for people of all ages, both nationally and in Vermont.^{1,2} For every suicide death, there are many other people who think about or attempt suicide. While its causes vary and are complex, suicide is preventable. Suicide prevention strategies share two goals: to reduce factors that increase risk and to increase factors that promote resilience or coping.

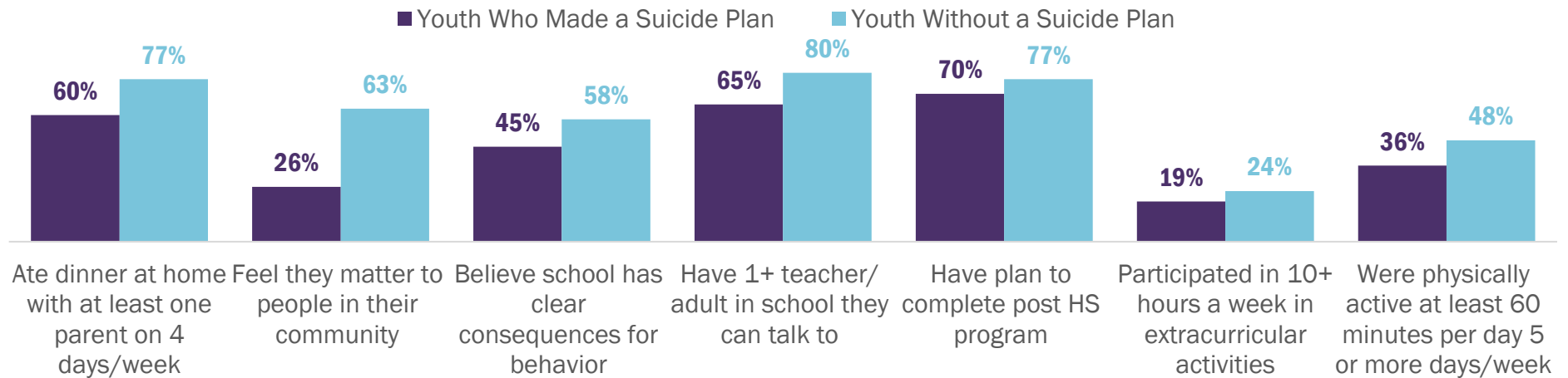
Protective Factors

Increasing protective factors and coping skills can help build resilience and improve well-being.³ Data below show how the presence of protective factors correlates with fewer students making a suicide plan compared to those who made a suicide plan in the past year.

KEY POINTS

- More than one in ten (13%) of high school students have made a suicide plan in the past year.
- Compared to youth who have not made a suicide plan, youth that have made a suicide plan are significantly less likely to experience protective factors and more likely to experience risk factors.
- Suicide-related thoughts and behaviors can be reduced through promoting protective factors and reducing risk factors.

Youth who have made a suicide plan are less likely to experience protective factors.



Source: Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019

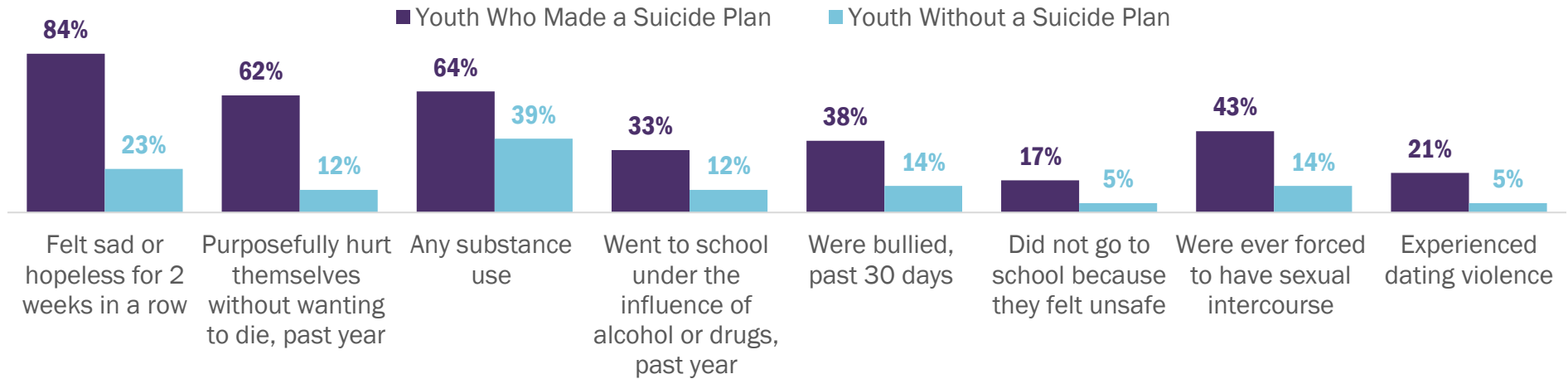
All protective factors are statistically different for youth who have made a suicide plan compared to those who have not.

Risk and Protective Factors for Youth with a Suicide Plan

Risk factors

The **presence of warning signs and other risk factors**, such as bullying, correlates with students more likely to make a suicide plan. Many of these observations are not sure signs that someone is suicidal but could mean that they are struggling with issues in their lives and could use help. If these issues are not addressed or treated, they can lead to students experiencing suicidal thoughts or attempts.

Youth who have made a suicide plan are more likely to experience other risk factors.



Source: Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019

All risk factors are statistically different for youth who have made a suicide plan compared to those who have not.

Any substance use includes alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco use.

Key Takeaways

Suicide-related thoughts and behaviors can be addressed through promoting protective factors and reducing risk factors. In addition, educating youths on depression and suicidal behavior has been shown to prevent suicidal behavior.⁴ For more information on suicide risk factors and signs someone may be struggling, visit the Vermont Department of Health's prevent teen suicide webpage [here](#).

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References

1. [CDC Fatal Injury and Violence Data](#), 2020
2. [Vermont Vital Statistics 2019 Report](#)
3. [CDC Suicide Webpage](#)
4. [Mann, J., Michel, C., Auerbach, R. \(2021\) Improving Suicide Prevention Through Evidence-Based Strategies: A Systematic Review](#)