

WA COVID-19 STUDENT SURVEY 2022

Health and Behavioral Health Topic Summary

Washington State Middle School Students

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Brief Overview of the COVID-19 Student Survey:

In February 2022, nearly 8,000 middle school students grades 6–8 completed an online survey to assess behaviors and attitudes across a number of health domains relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information about the survey or to view other reports, please visit:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey>

The purpose of this document is to describe physical and behavioral health within subpopulations of the middle school sample to assess whether certain students have been affected differently than others. Specifically, this report examines indices of physical health, COVID-19 specific preventative behaviors, and attitudes towards mental health services by self identified ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, migratory working family status, and financial distress.

Background on Students’ Health and Behavioral Health

- Regular physical exercise during the pandemic was associated with reduced depression and anxiety (Chen et al., 2020).
- Sleep is essential for adolescents, however, disruption to routines, isolation and increased stress during the COVID-19 pandemic can lead to sleep disturbances, negatively affecting students (Imran et al., 2020).
- CDC recommendations include masking, washing hands and staying home when sick as effective means to slow the spread of the virus among students (CDC, 2022).
- Adolescents are at increased risk of behavioral problems during and after a pandemic, increasing importance of access to developmentally appropriate mental health services (Meherali et al., 2021).

What Does the Middle School Sample Look Like?

Survey participation was voluntary at both the school and student level. Therefore, **this is a convenience sample and is not intended to be generalized to the state population**. It is important to be thoughtful in how you interpret and use these results. When framing the findings, you might consider using language such as “Among participating students...” or “Of students who took the 2022 COVID-19 Student Survey...”.

The proportion of participating students within each demographic category are described in the table below.

Note: Students who reported “I do not know what this question is asking” or “I prefer not to answer” were not included in the analyses described in this document.

Sample Size and Proportion of Middle School Participants by Demographic Group

Race							Hispanic		Disability Status		Migratory Status	
<u>AIAN</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>NHOPI</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Multiple</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
521	408	319	138	3,643	1,533	800	1,969	5,647	475	5,533	776	5,993
(7.1%)	(5.4%)	(4.3%)	(1.9%)	(49.5%)	(20.8%)	(10.9%)	(25.9%)	(74.1%)	(7.9%)	(92.1%)	(11.5%)	(88.5%)

Gender Identity					Sexual Orientation					Financial Distress	
<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Transgender</u>	<u>Questioning</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Heterosexual</u>	<u>Gay/Lesbian</u>	<u>Bisexual</u>	<u>Questioning</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
2,375	2,048	103	200	189	3,240	227	524	263	318	487	6,768
(48.3%)	(41.7%)	(2.1%)	(4.1%)	(3.9%)	(70.9%)	(5.0%)	(11.5%)	(5.8%)	(7.0%)	(6.7%)	(93.3%)

Key: AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native, NHOPI = Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. For Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation, “Other” refers to students who indicated that “Something else fits better”.

Survey Items to Identify Student Subgroups

Ethnicity:

Students were asked, “Are you Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx?” Students who indicated “Yes” were coded as Hispanic. Students indicating “No” were not. Ethnicity was treated separately from race. That is, a student’s response to this question was independent to their response for a question about race.

Race:

Students were asked, “What is your race?” They were shown a list of racial groups and were instructed to select all that applied to them. Students who selected more than one racial category were included in the Multiple Race category.

Gender Identity:

For gender identity, students were asked, “How do you currently identify yourself?” Students were shown a list of responses that included “I do not know what this question is asking” and “I prefer not to answer.” Students who did not know what the question was asking or who preferred not to answer were not included in the analyses for these respective subgroup comparisons. **Note that this question was not asked of 6th grade students, so all comparisons by gender identity have excluded 6th grade students.**

Sexual Orientation:

Sexual orientation was assessed with the question, “Which of the following best describes you?” This question was followed by a list of choices that included “I do not know what this question is asking” and “I prefer not to answer.” Students who did not know what the question was asking or who preferred not to answer were not included in the analyses for these respective subgroup comparisons. For the purpose of this summary, students that indicated that they identified as “Gay” or “Lesbian” were combined into one category. **Note that this question was not asked of 6th grade students, so all comparisons by sexual orientation have excluded 6th grade students.**

- LGBTQ+: In this document, we use LGBTQ+ to describe a diverse and encompassing range of minority sexualities and gender identities that include (L)esbian, (G)ay, (B)isexual, (T)ransgender, (Q)uestioning and (+) additional gender identities and sexual orientations.

Students Identifying as Having a Disability or Long-term Health Condition:

Disability status was defined by whether a student responded “Yes” to the item, “Are you limited in any activities because of a disability or long-term health problem including physical health, emotional, or learning problems expected to last 6 months or longer?” Students were given the opportunity to select “I am not sure or I prefer not to answer” and these were excluded from analyses of these subgroup comparisons.

Students From a Migratory Working Family:

Migratory working family status was defined by whether a student endorsed the item, “Have you or your family moved in the past 3 years to another school district or city for **temporary or seasonal** work in agriculture, dairy or fishing?”

Financial Distress:

Financial distress was assessed by a student’s response to a single item, “How often during the current school year did you or your family have to cut meal size or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?” Students that indicated that their family had to cut meal size or skip meals due to insufficient funds at any time during the past year were categorized as financially distressed.

Key Takeaways from Middle School Students Who Took the Survey

Health Behaviors

- Over half (52.5%) of all middle school students responding to this survey reported that someone in their household has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. Further, nearly one third of all respondents (30.9%) reported that they themselves have tested positive.
- More than half (59.6%) of all middle school students indicated that they engaged in more exercise compared to last year.
- Nearly half (47.0%) of all middle school students reported that they got 8 or more hours of sleep per night. Students identifying as LGBTQ+ and students identified as being financially distressed were less likely to report getting 8+ hours of sleep.

Majority of middle school students report regularly engaging in behaviors to slow spread of COVID-19.

- Two thirds (68.1%) of middle school students reported that they frequently washed their hands.
- 70.8% of middle school students reported frequently masking.
- 79.5% of middle school students reported staying home when they felt sick.

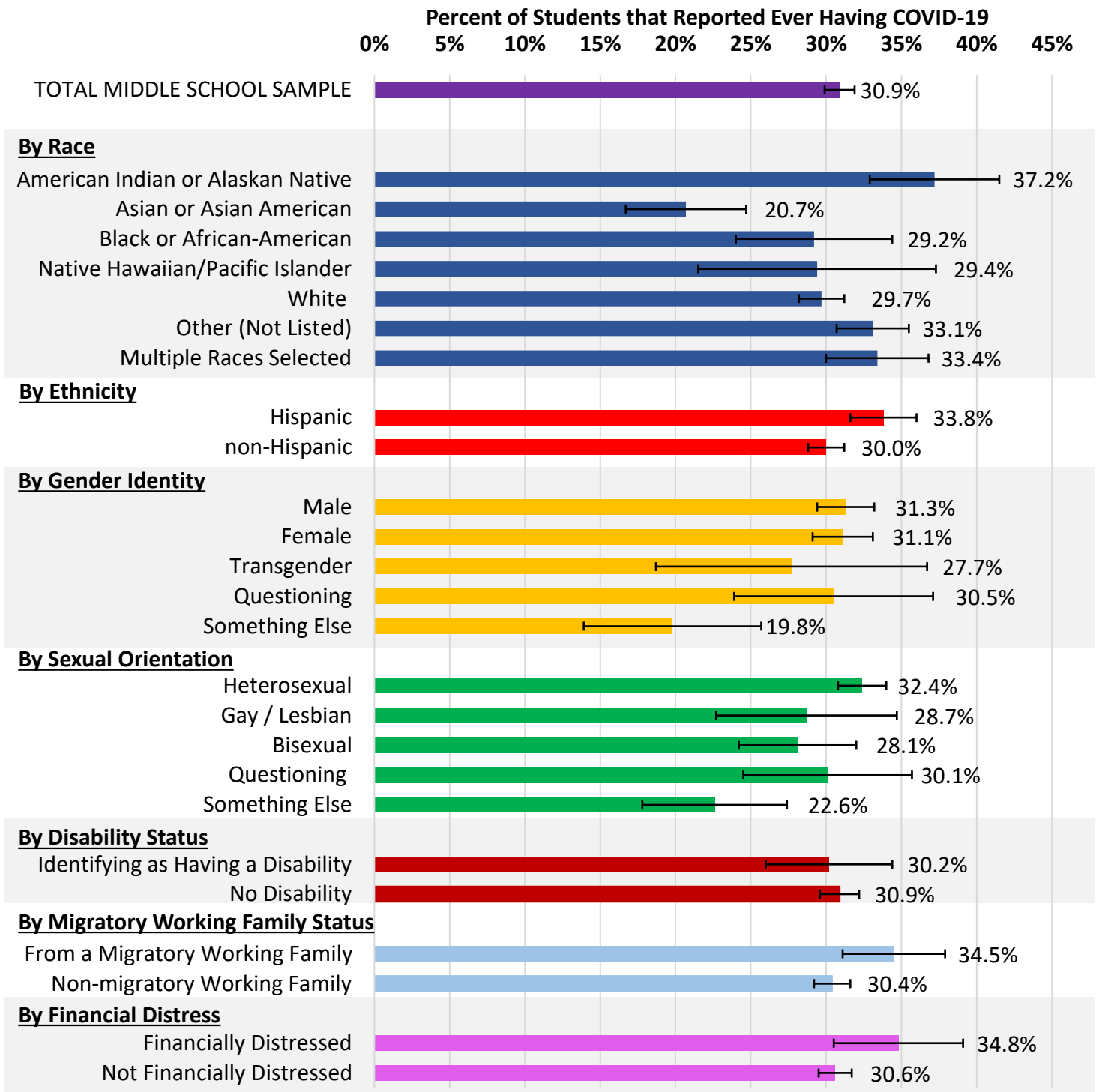
Mental Health Services

- One out of five middle school students (20.0%) participating in this study reported that they needed mental health services during the past year. Rates were higher among LGBTQ+ students, students identifying as having a disability, and students identified as financially distressed .
- Among those middle school students who participated in this study, most (79.7%) indicated that it was acceptable to receive mental health services if a person had been feeling sad, hopeless, or suicidal.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

COVID-19 Diagnosis

Question: Have you ever tested positive for COVID-19?



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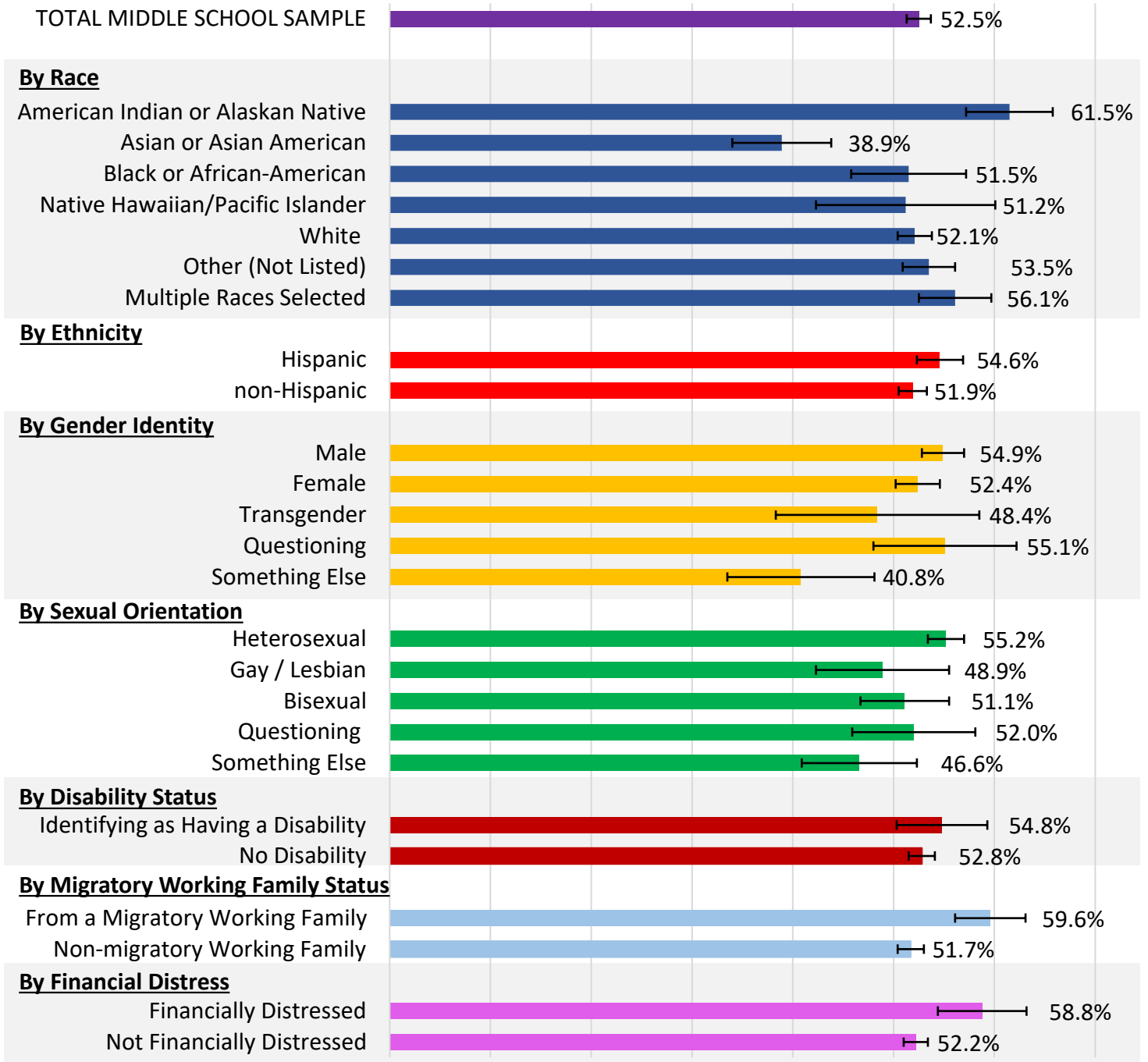
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported ever having COVID-19.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item included “No”, “Yes”, and “Unsure or prefer not to answer.” Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Yes.”
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

COVID-19 Diagnosis (Someone they live with)

Question: Has anyone you live with ever tested positive for COVID-19?

Percent of Students that Reported Living with Someone who has had COVID-19



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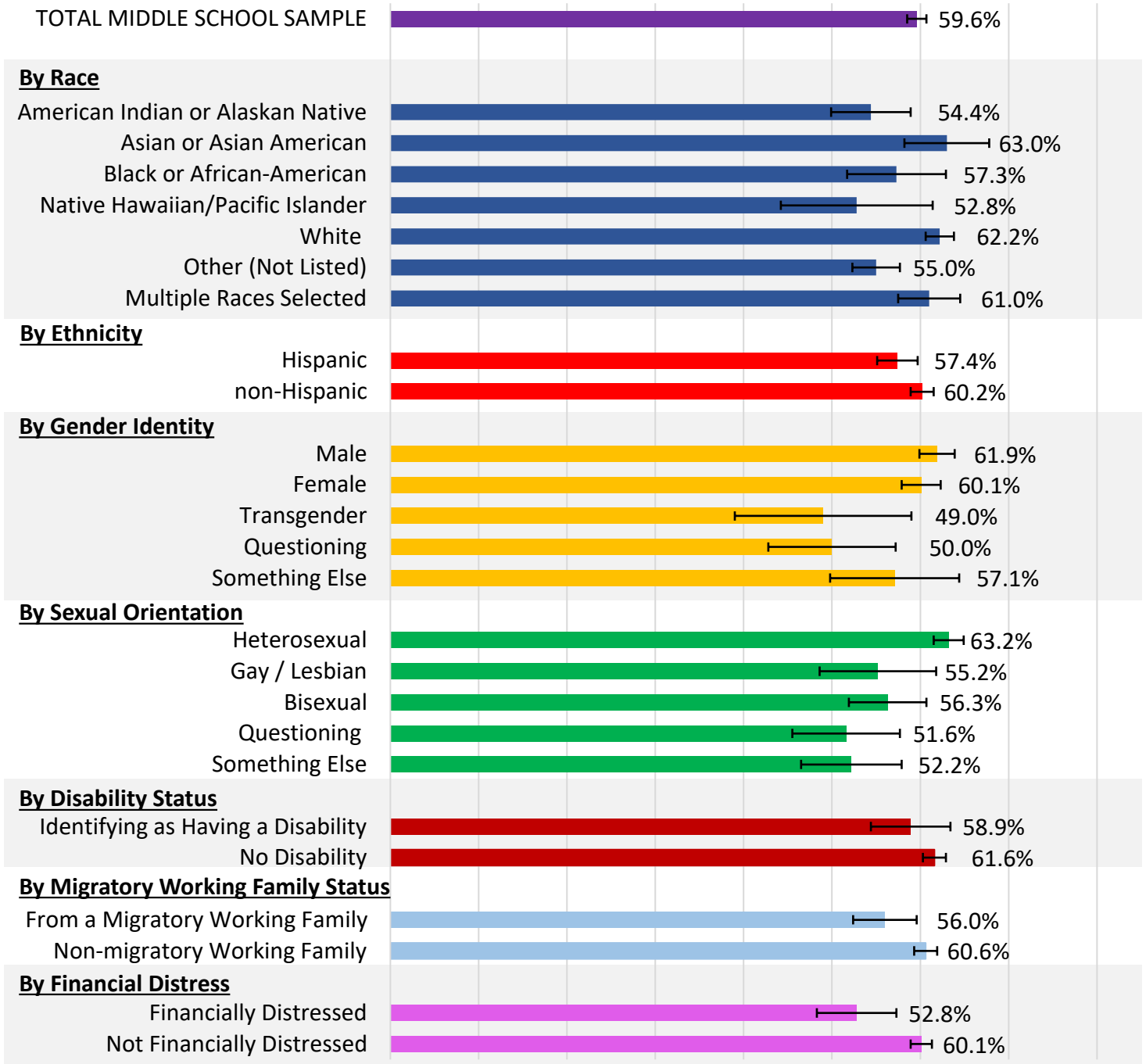
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported living with someone who has had COVID-19.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item included “No”, “Yes”, and “Unsure or prefer not to answer.” Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Yes.”
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Physical Activity

Question: Compared to LAST school year, how much physical activity/exercise do you do THIS school year?

Percent of Students that Reported More Physical Activity than Last Year
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%



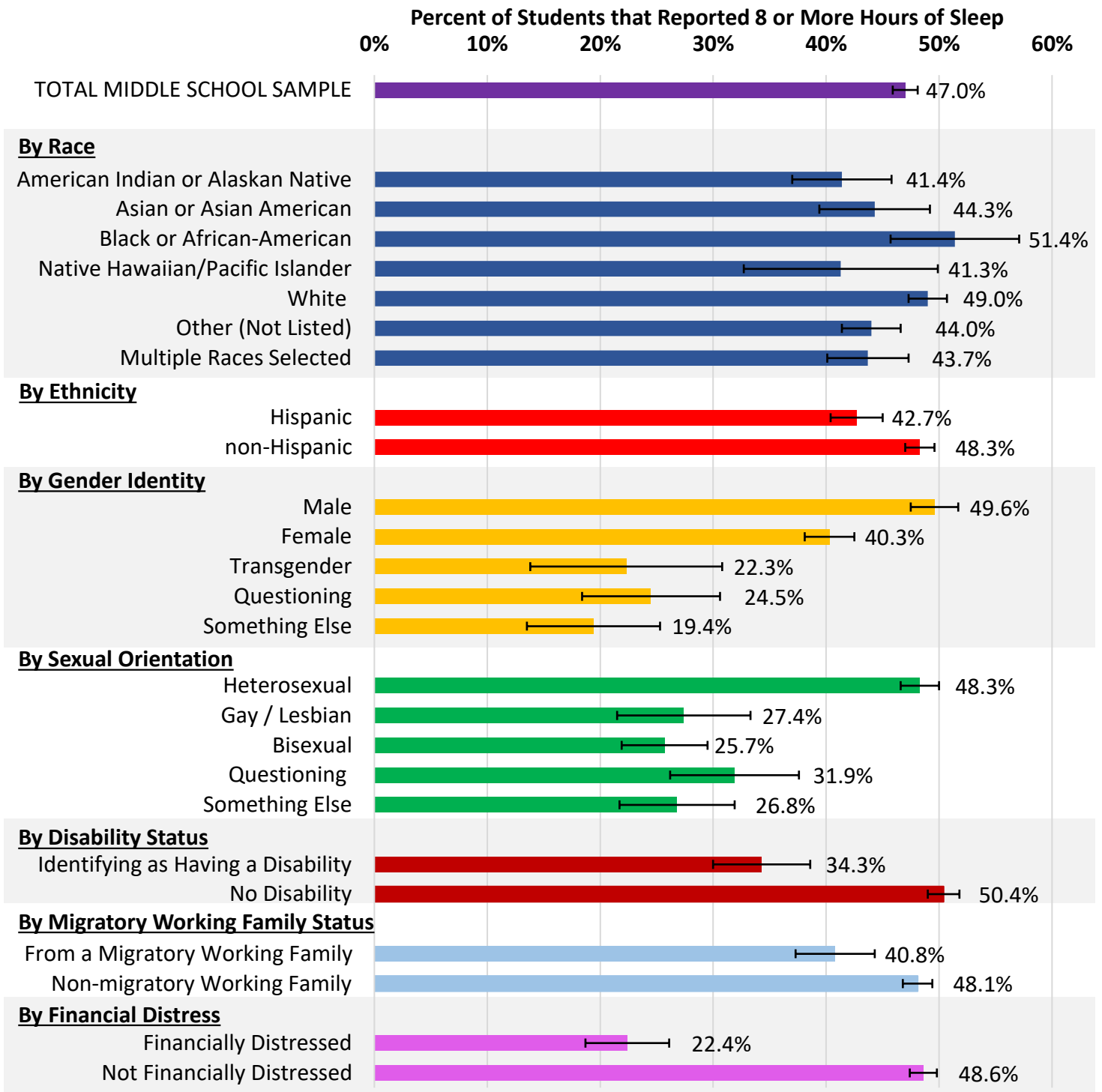
NOTES:

- Higher percentages indicate more students reported increased physical activity relative to last year.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item ranged from “A lot less” to “A lot more”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “A little bit more” or “A lot more”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Sleep Duration

Question: On an average school night during the current school year, about how many hours do you sleep?



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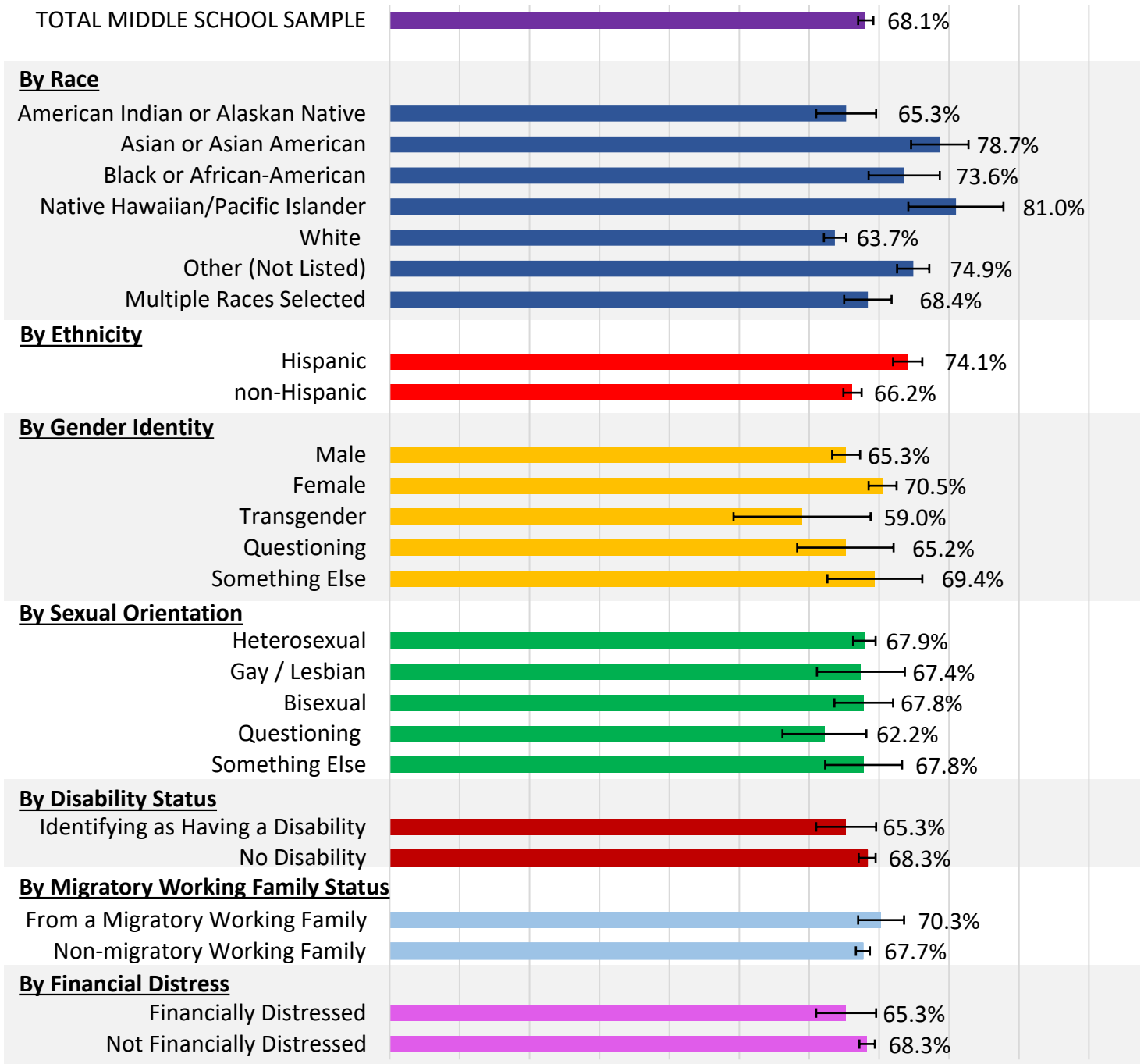
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported 8+ hours of sleep on school nights.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item ranged from “5 hours or less” to “9 hours or more”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “8 hours” or “9 hours or more”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Prevention Adherence: Hand Washing

Item: These questions ask about how well you have followed the guidelines for reducing the spread of COVID-19: **Washing your hands or using hand sanitizer between activities.**

Percent of Students that Reported Frequent Hand Washing
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



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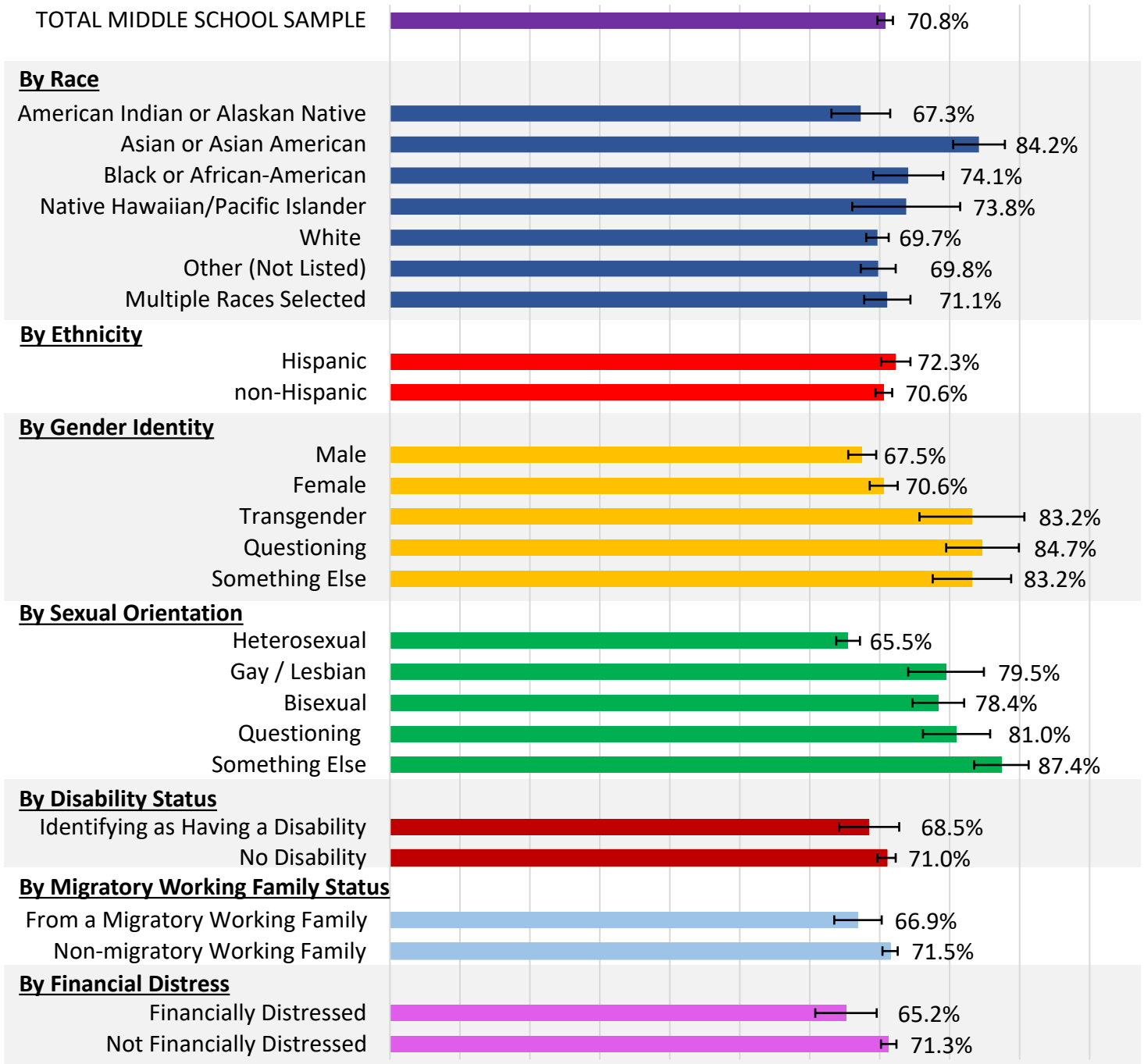
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported frequent hand washing.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item ranged from “Never” to “All the time”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Most of the time” or “All the time”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Prevention Adherence: Wearing a Mask

Item: These questions ask about how well you have followed the guidelines for reducing the spread of COVID-19: **Wearing a mask when you are near people you don't live with.**

Percent of Students that Reported Frequent Masking
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



NOTES:

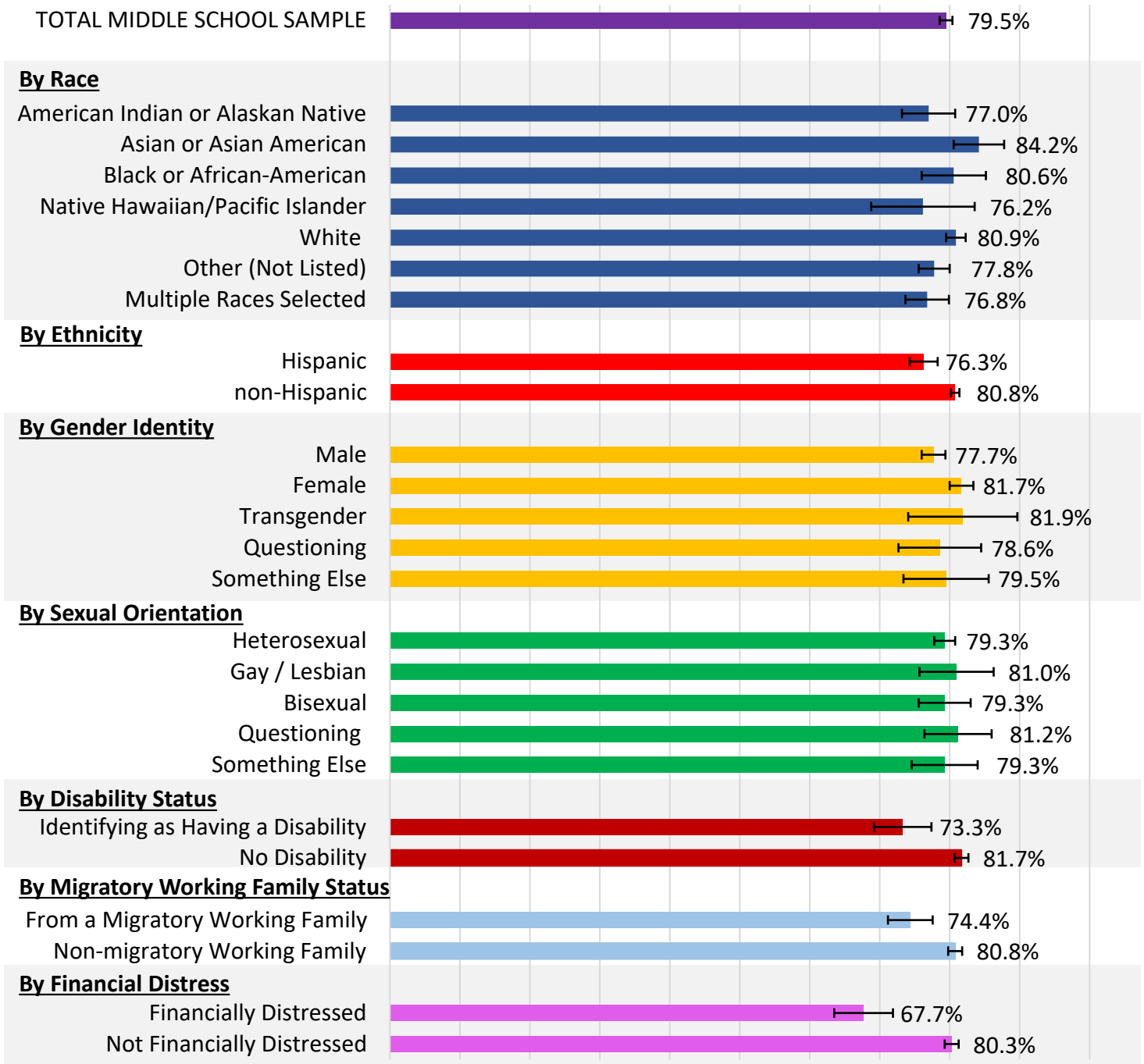
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported frequently wearing a mask.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item ranged from “Never” to “All the time”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Most of the time” or “All the time”.
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Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Prevention Adherence: Staying Home when Sick

Item: These questions ask about how well you have followed the guidelines for reducing the spread of COVID-19: **Staying home when you feel sick.**

Percent of Students that Reported Staying Home when they Feel Sick
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



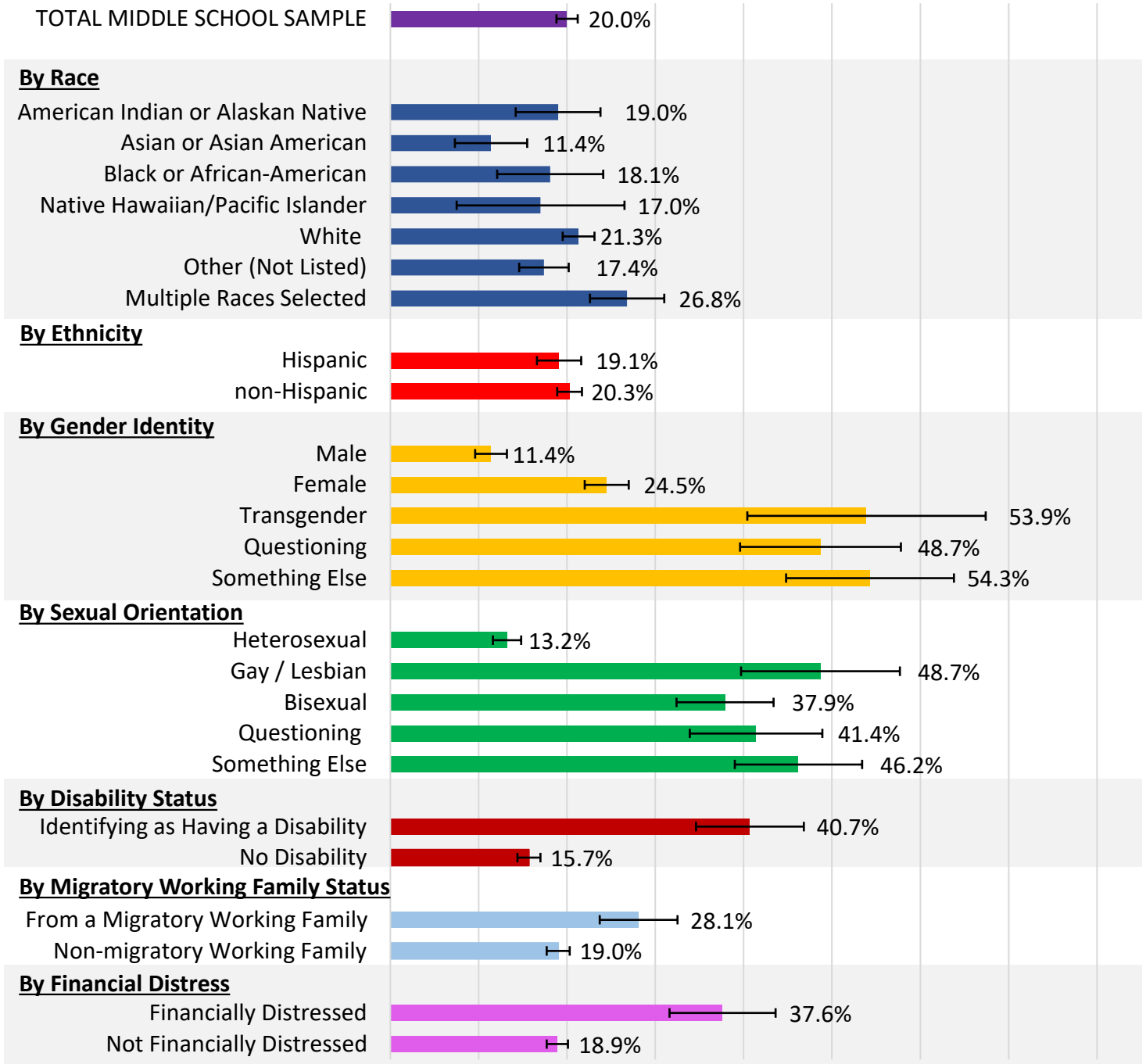
NOTES:

- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported staying home when they feel sick.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item ranged from “Never” to “All the time”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Most of the time” or “All the time”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students Needing Mental Health Services

Question: During the past 12 months, did you need mental health services from a counselor, therapist, emergency room, or other health care provider?

Percent of Students that Reported they Needed Mental Health Services
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%



NOTES:

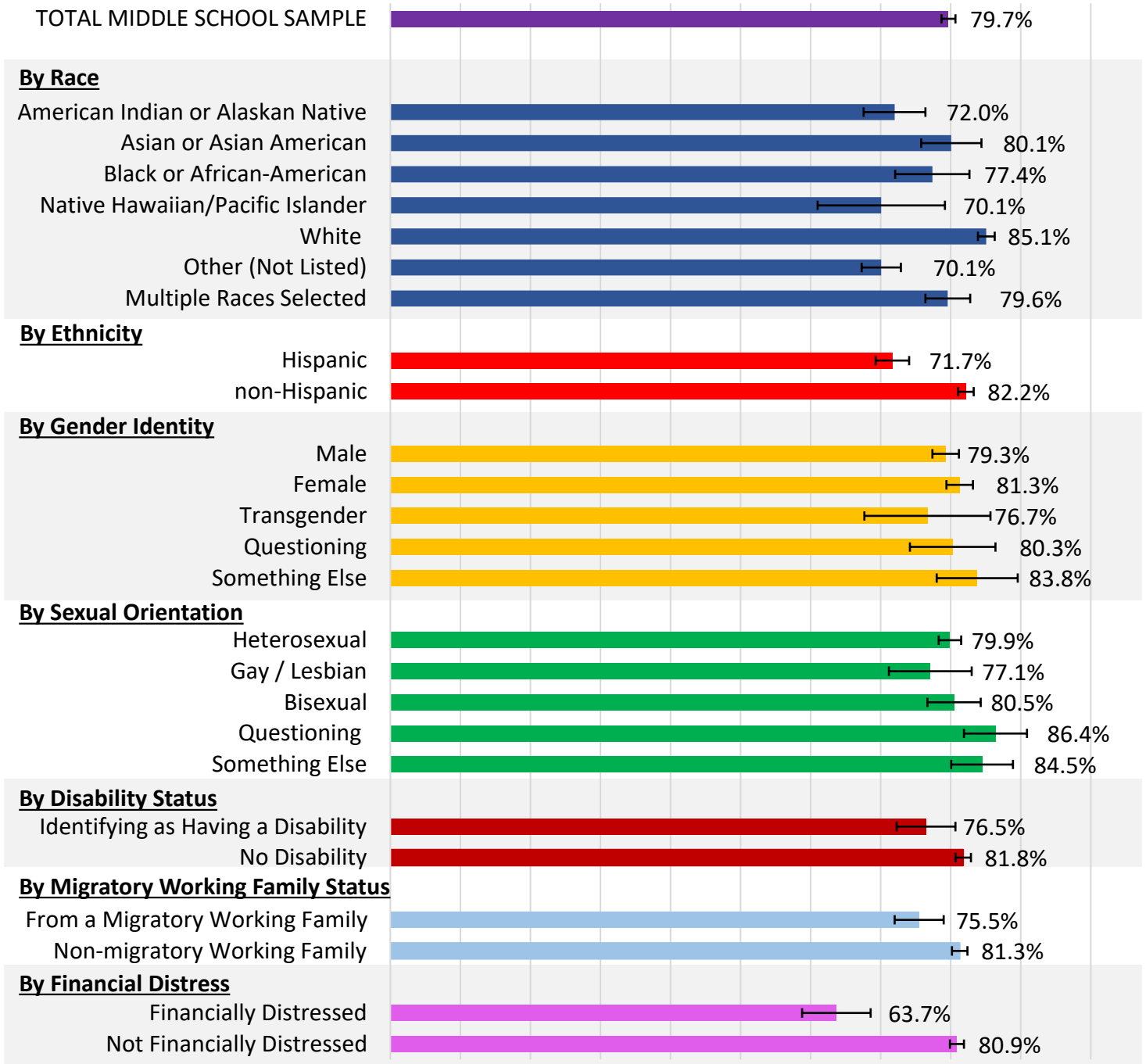
- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported they needed mental health services.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item included “No” and “Yes”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Yes”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health: Middle School Students

Approval of Mental Health Services

Question: Do you think it's ok to seek help and talk to a professional counselor, therapist, or doctor if you've been feeling very sad, hopeless, or suicidal?

Percent of Students that Reported Approval of Mental Health Services
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



NOTES:

- Higher percentages indicate more students within a group reported they were approving of mental health services.
- Prevalence estimates are displayed with 95% confidence intervals, shown with black error bars.
- Response options to this item included “No” and “Yes”. Percentages shown above indicate those who selected “Yes”.
- Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/covid-19-student-survey> for more information about the survey or to view other reports.

Health and Behavioral Health Topic Summary Washington State Middle School Students

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