



To: The Honorable Chair, Senator Paul G. Pinsky, and the members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
From: Melissa S. Rock, Birth to Three Strategic Initiative Director
Re.: **SB 548: Public Schools - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Surveys - Revisions**
Date: February 25, 2021
Position: **SUPPORT with Amendments**

Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, are a category of early life traumas which negatively impact long-term health, prosperity, and social mobility outcomes.ⁱ ACEs encompass traumatic experiences at all levels of severity and include: emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, emotional and physical neglect, domestic and intimate partner violence, illicit substance use in the home, untreated mental illness in the home, the incarceration of a household member, and the separation and/or divorce of adult caregivers.ⁱⁱ ACEs have the potential to hinder an individual's neurological, socio-behavioral, and emotional development, all of which have repercussions for students' well-being and their ultimate academic success.

ACEs don't target individuals based on race, gender, ability status, sexuality, nationality, socio-economic status, or any of the identity markers we typically use when disaggregating data. The groundbreaking 1998 study found that ACEs are relatively common—**about 67% of survey participants had at least one ACE.**ⁱⁱⁱ Unfortunately, the study also demonstrated that when an individual had more ACEs, the odds of them experiencing negative outcomes like alcohol and substance abuse, depression, adolescent parenthood, and many other issues also increased. Having 3 or more ACEs is typically the threshold for these negative outcomes. More than 40% of Maryland children have at least one ACE—**15.4% have had two or more.**^{iv}

In the 2018-2019 school year, Maryland's administration of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey (YRBS) of students attending public middle schools and high schools yielded 41,091 surveys across Maryland.^v The YRBS allows counties to see the correlation between students with exposure to specific ACEs and their involvement in dangerous activities including smoking and drug use, carrying weapons to school and behavioral health conditions including feeling depressed and/or suicidal. The surveys also illustrate the dose relationship between exposure to more ACEs and greater likelihood to be engaged in dangerous activities. Please find the attached county-level ACEs data from the 2018-2019 Maryland Youth Risk Behavioral Survey.^{vi} **Having this local data allows counties to target interventions towards the ACEs with the highest prevalence in their counties and ensure these children are receiving the supports they need to succeed.** Currently, Maryland's YRBS is not required to include questions about all ACEs, which could hinder the state's ability to effectively combat these ACEs. **SB 548 ensures that Maryland's YRBS includes all the CDC's ACEs questions so that we have a complete picture of Maryland's children's exposure to adversity.**

SB 548 also requires that Maryland's Department of Health publish data on these surveys. ACY's friendly amendment is that the county-level data trends report include data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to ensure that counties can focus on decreasing racial disparities in positive



outcomes for Maryland's Black and Latinx children and youth. **ACY urges this committee to adopt ACY's amendment and issue a favorable report on SB 548.**

AMENDMENT

On p. 3, line 3 after "ON THE DATA" and before the period "." insert "including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity."

ⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/cestudy/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Facestudy%2Findex.html

ⁱⁱ Id.

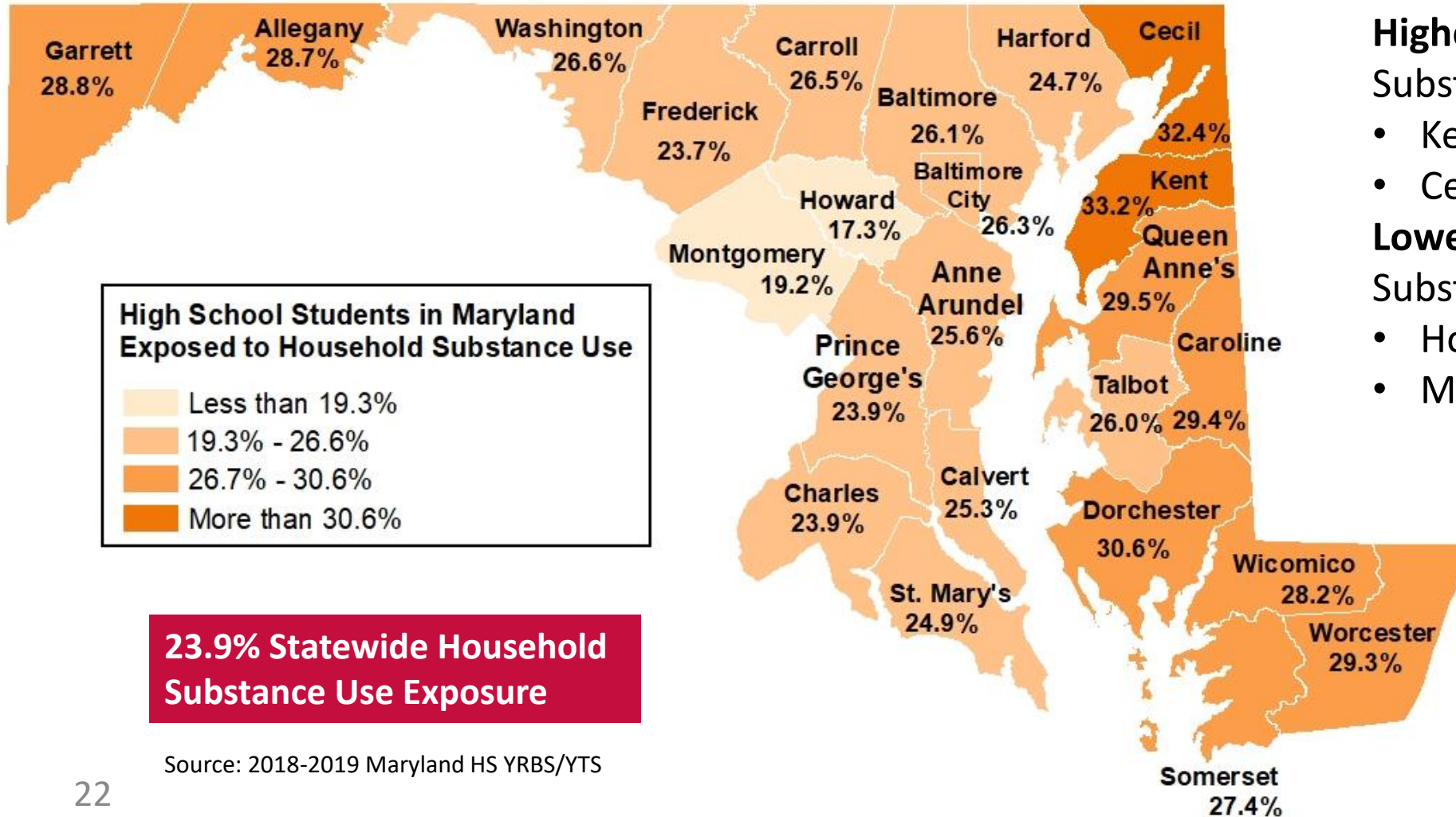
ⁱⁱⁱ Id.

^{iv} Baltimore Sun. *More than 40 percent of Maryland children experience traumatic events.* October 19, 2017.

^v Jallah, Nikardi, MPH, "Adverse Childhood Experiences on the Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey/Youth Tobacco Survey (YRBS/YTS) (Frederick & Baltimore City Examples)" presentation to Maryland's State Council on Child Abuse and Neglect, December 3, 2020.

^{vi} Id.

MAP: High School Students Who Have Ever Lived with Anyone Who Was an Alcoholic or Problem Drinker, Used Illegal Street Drugs, Took Prescription Drugs to Get High, or Was a Problem Gambler



Highest Exposure to Household Substance Use

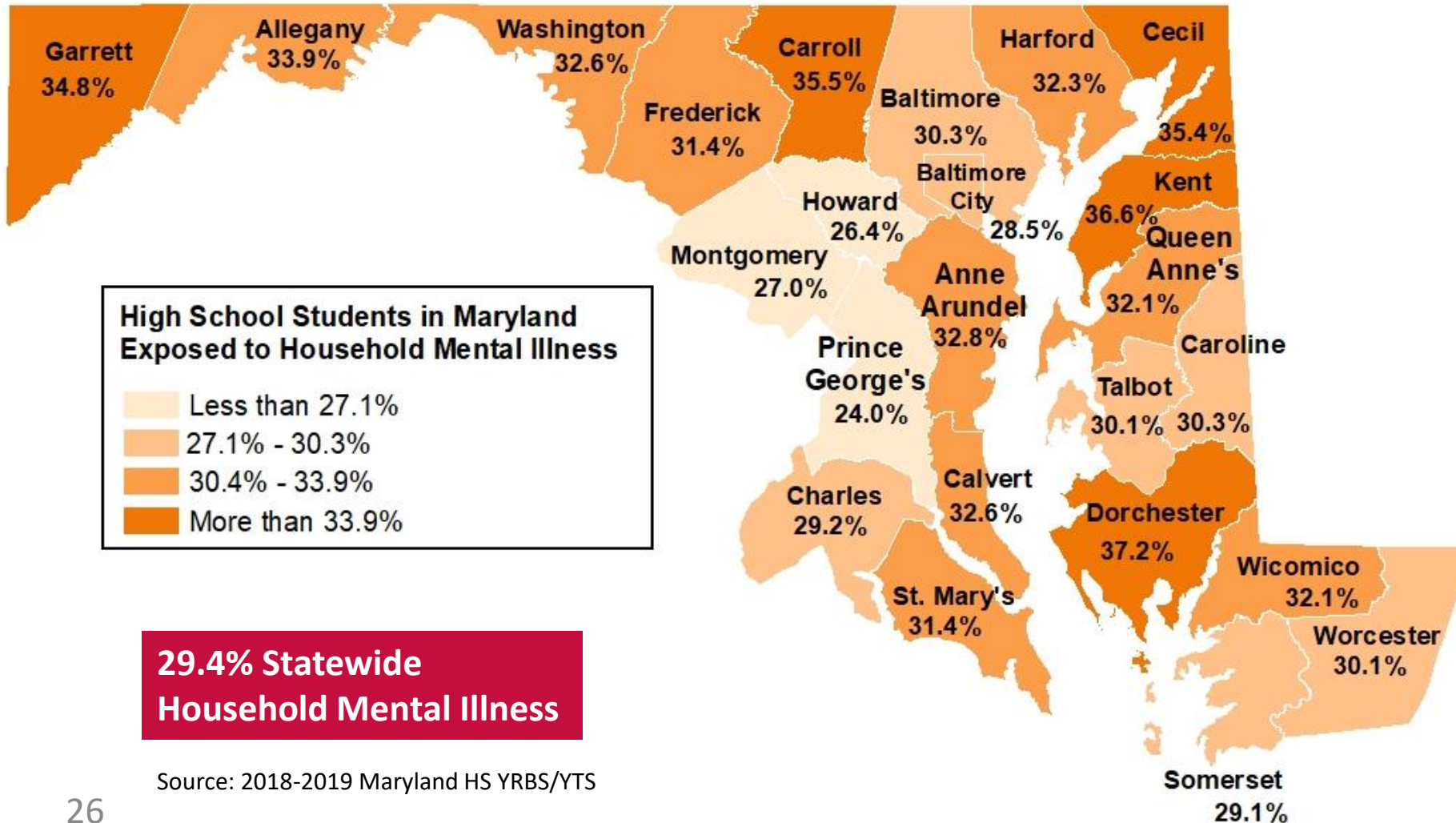
- Kent
- Cecil

Lowest Exposure to Household Substance Use

- Howard
- Montgomery

Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

MAP: High School Students Who Ever Lived with Anyone Who Was Depressed, Mentally Ill, or Suicidal



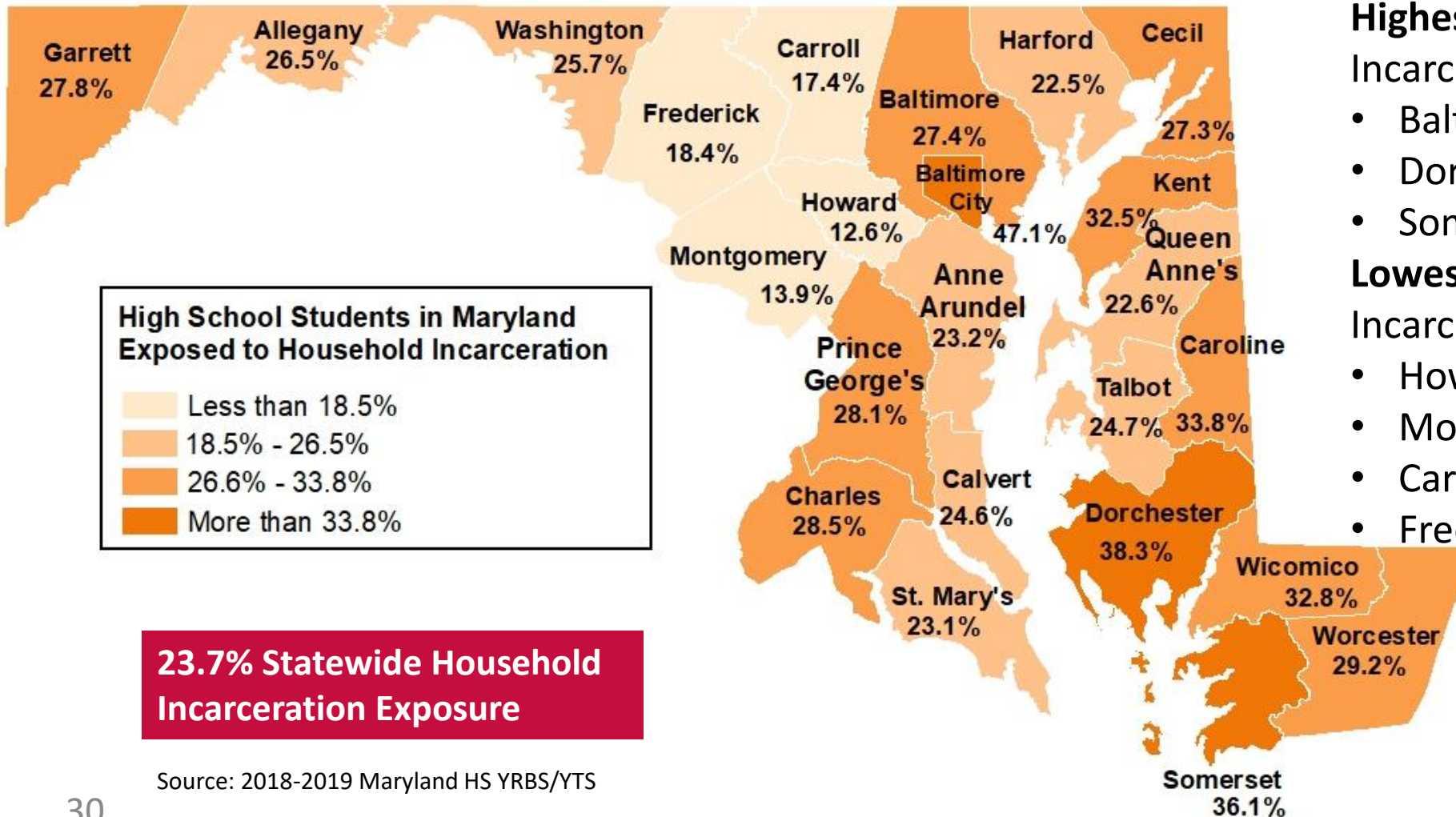
Highest Exposure to Household Mental Illness

- Dorchester
- Kent
- Carroll
- Cecil
- Garrett

Lowest Exposure to Household Mental Illness

- Prince George's
- Howard
- Montgomery

MAP: High School Students Who Reported Someone in Their Household Has Ever Gone to Jail or Prison



Highest Exposure to Household Incarceration

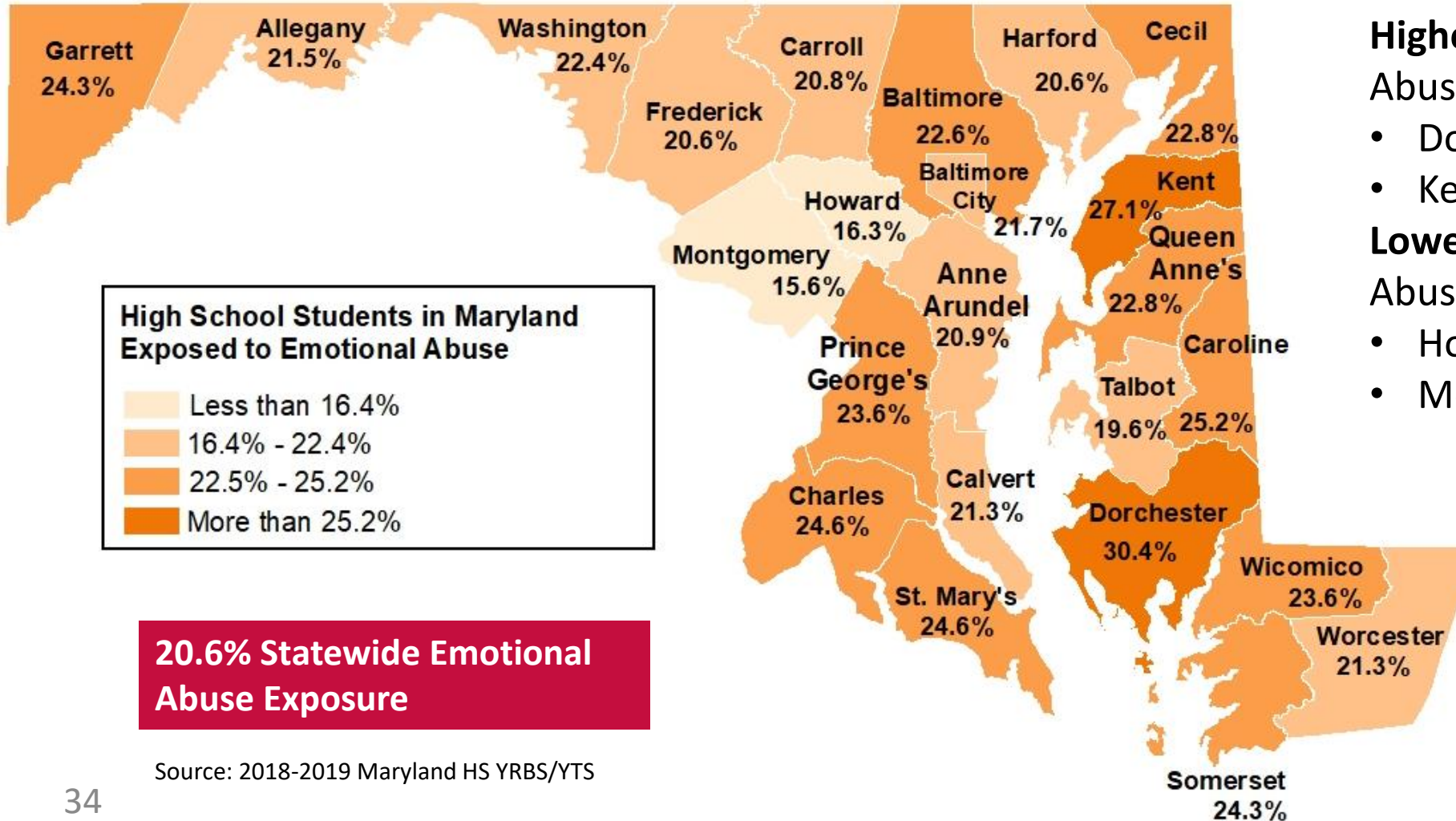
- Baltimore City
- Dorchester
- Somerset

Lowest Exposure to Household Incarceration

- Howard
- Montgomery
- Carroll
- Frederick

Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

MAP: High School Students Who Reported a Parent or Other Adult in Their Home Regularly Swears at Them, Insults Them, or Puts Them Down



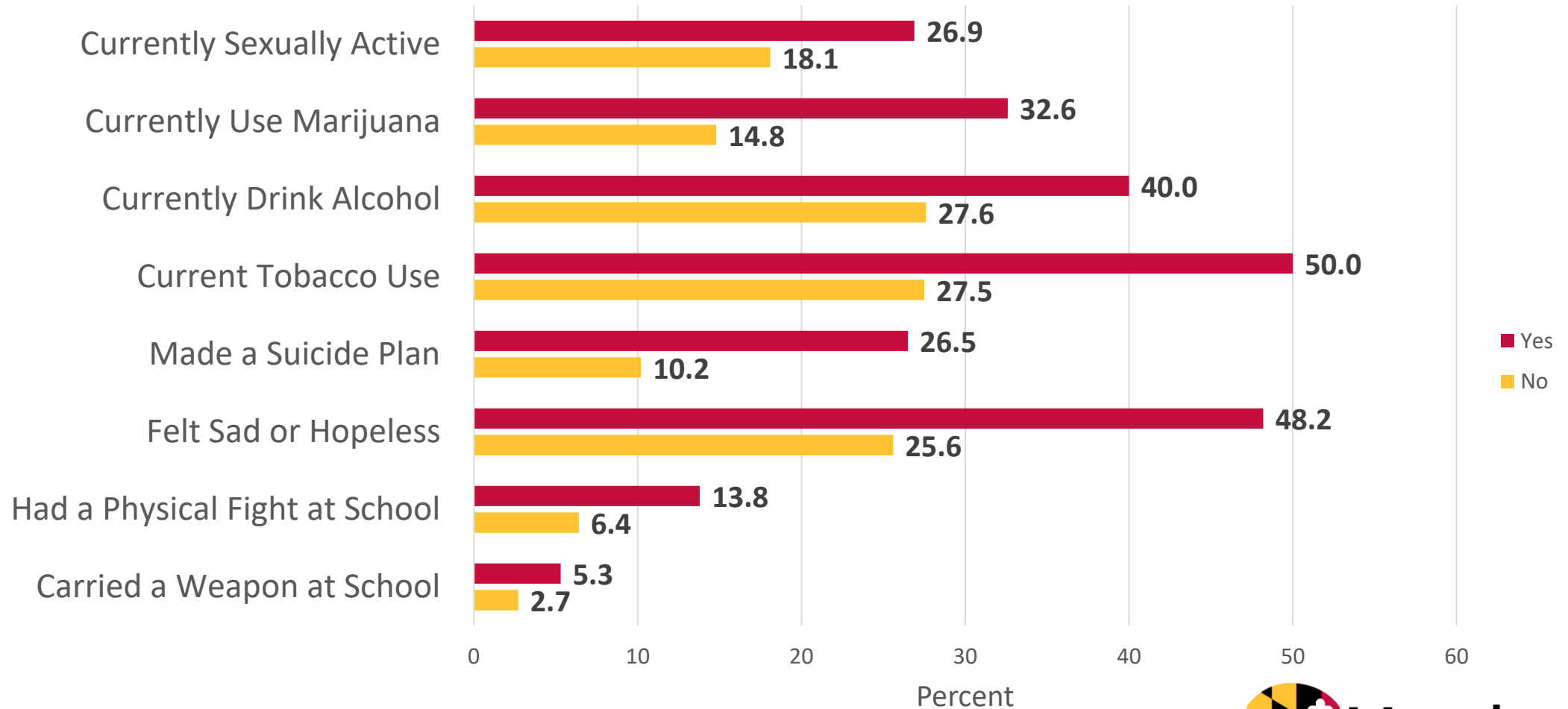
Highest Exposure to Emotional Abuse

- Dorchester
- Kent

Lowest Exposure to Emotional Abuse

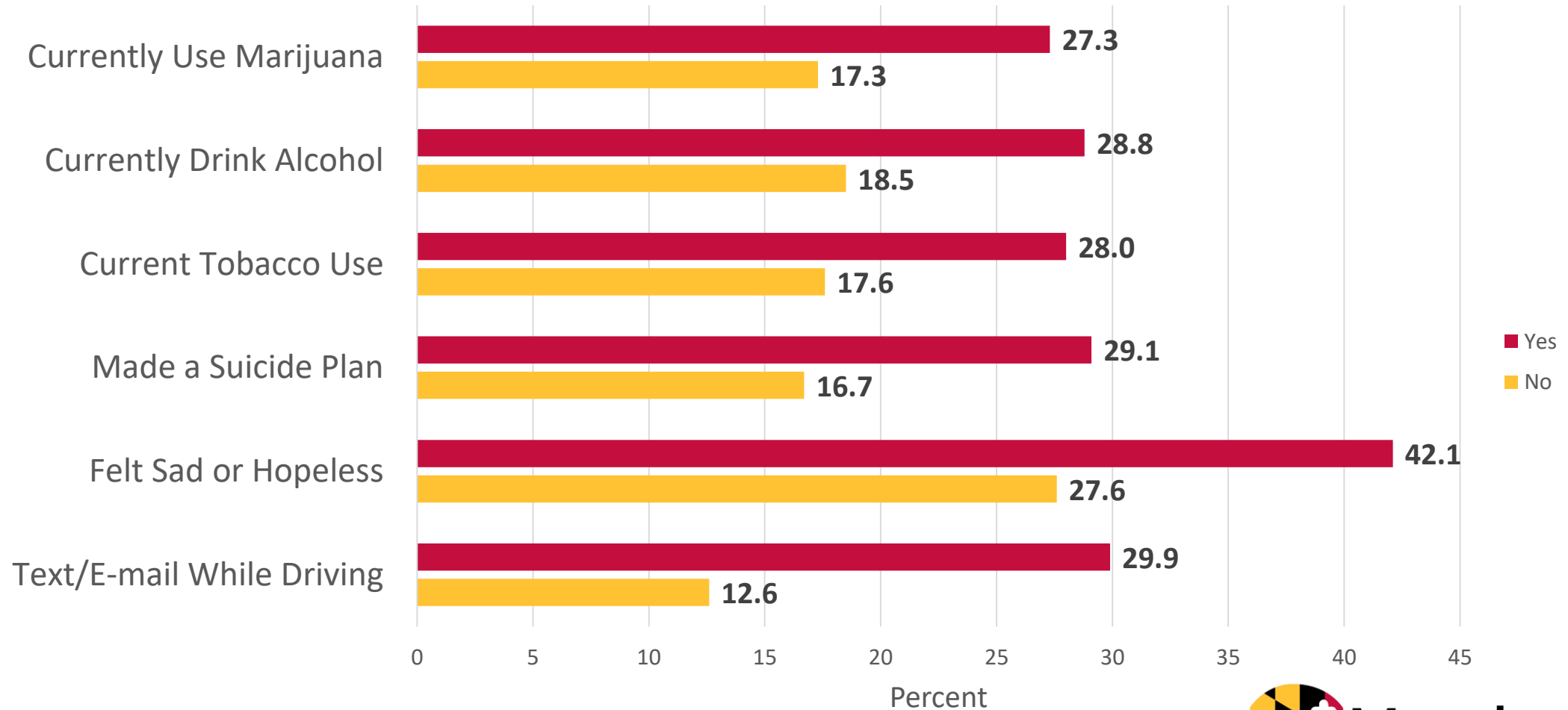
- Howard
- Montgomery

Frederick County HS Students Exposed to Household Substance Abuse



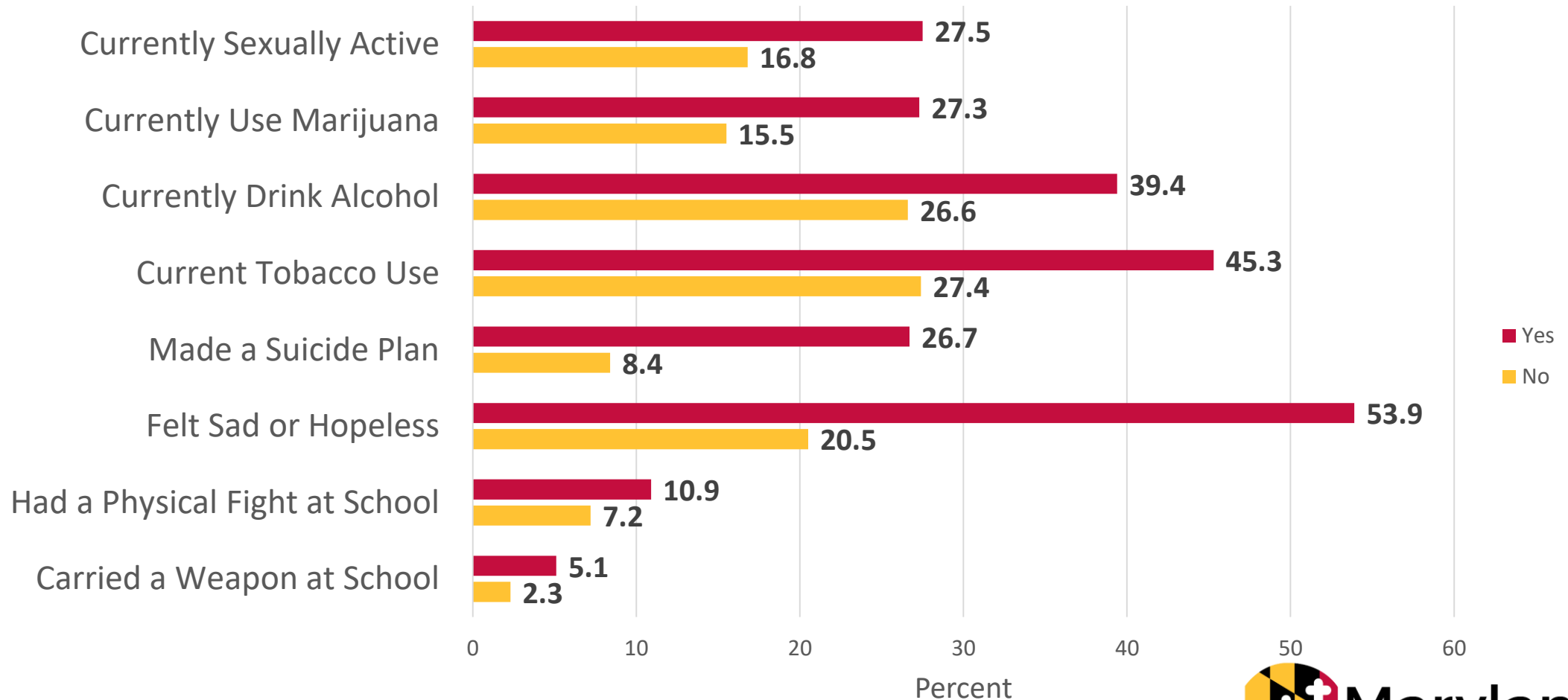
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Baltimore City HS Students Exposed to Household Substance Abuse



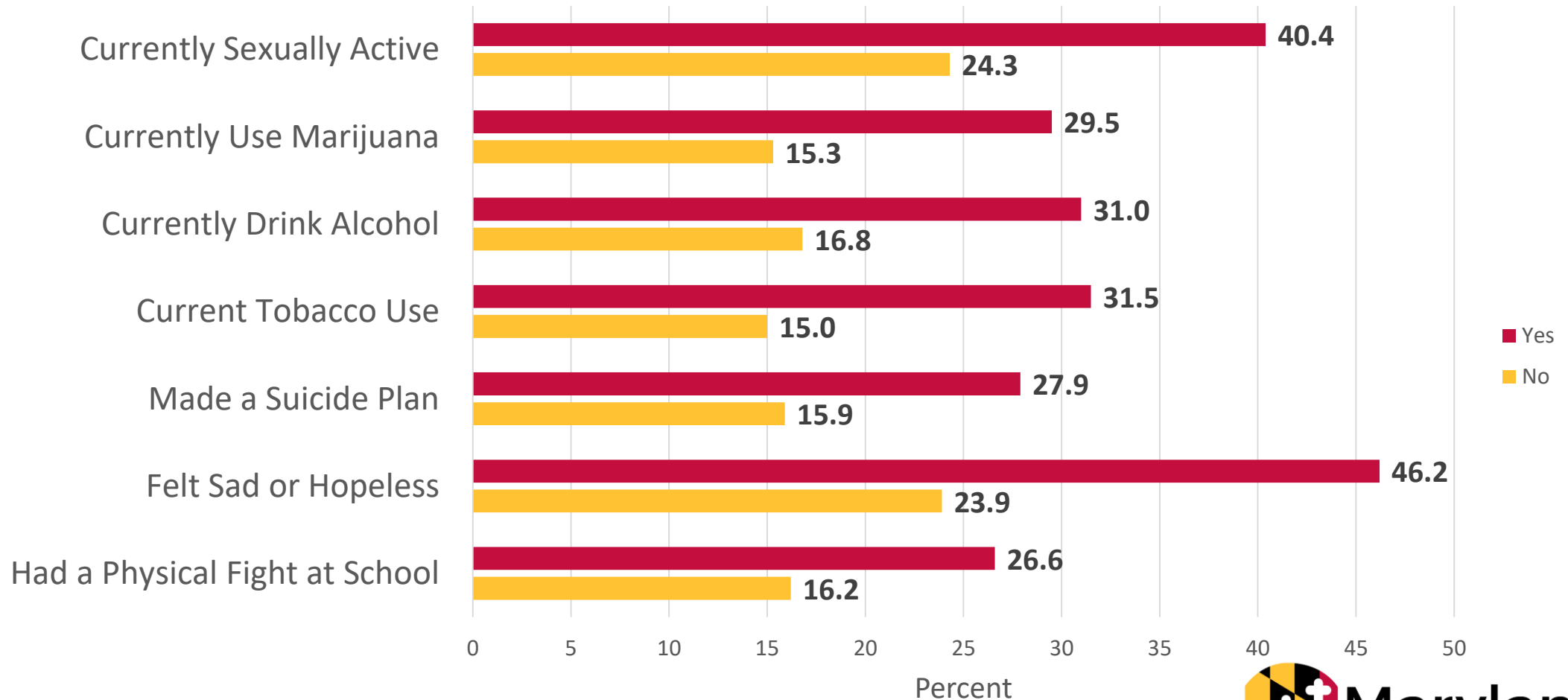
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Frederick County HS Students Exposed to Household Mental Illness



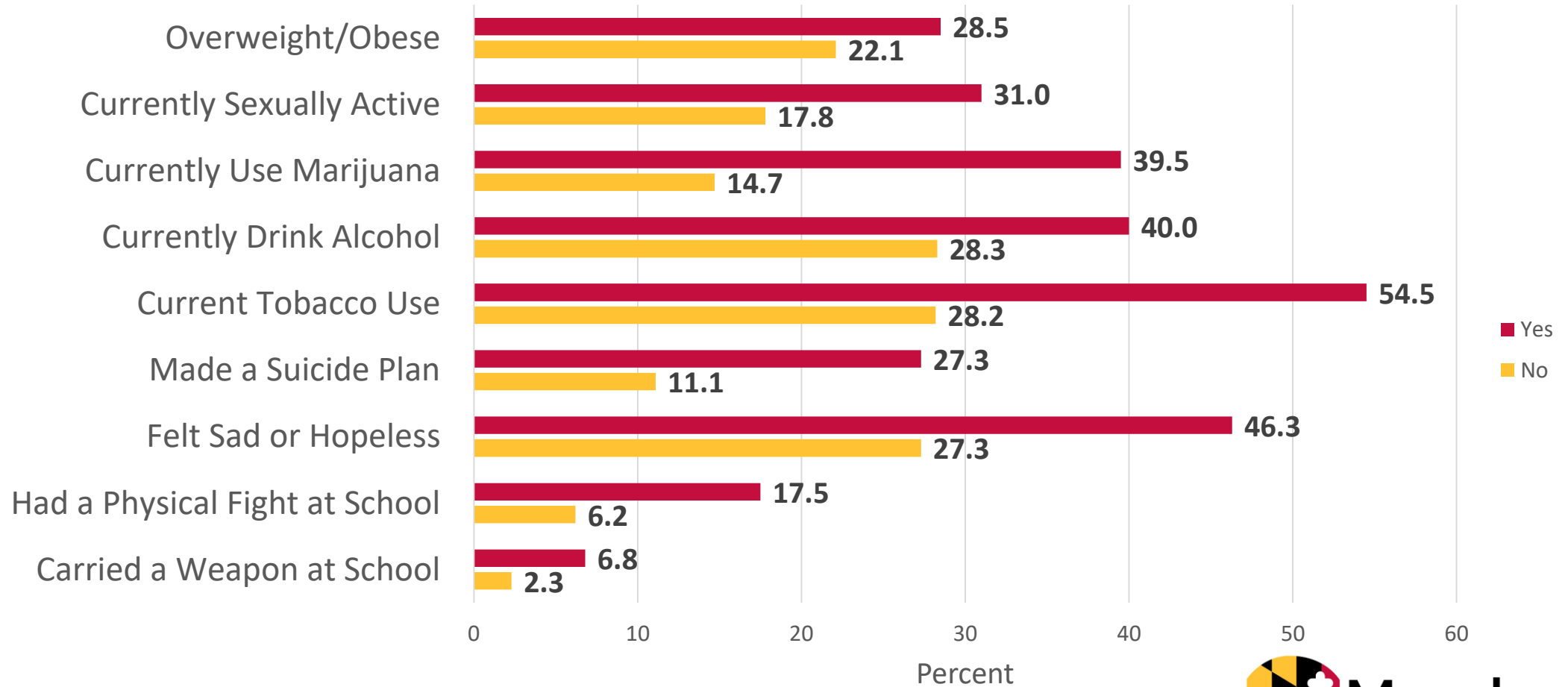
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Baltimore City HS Students Exposed to Household Mental Illness



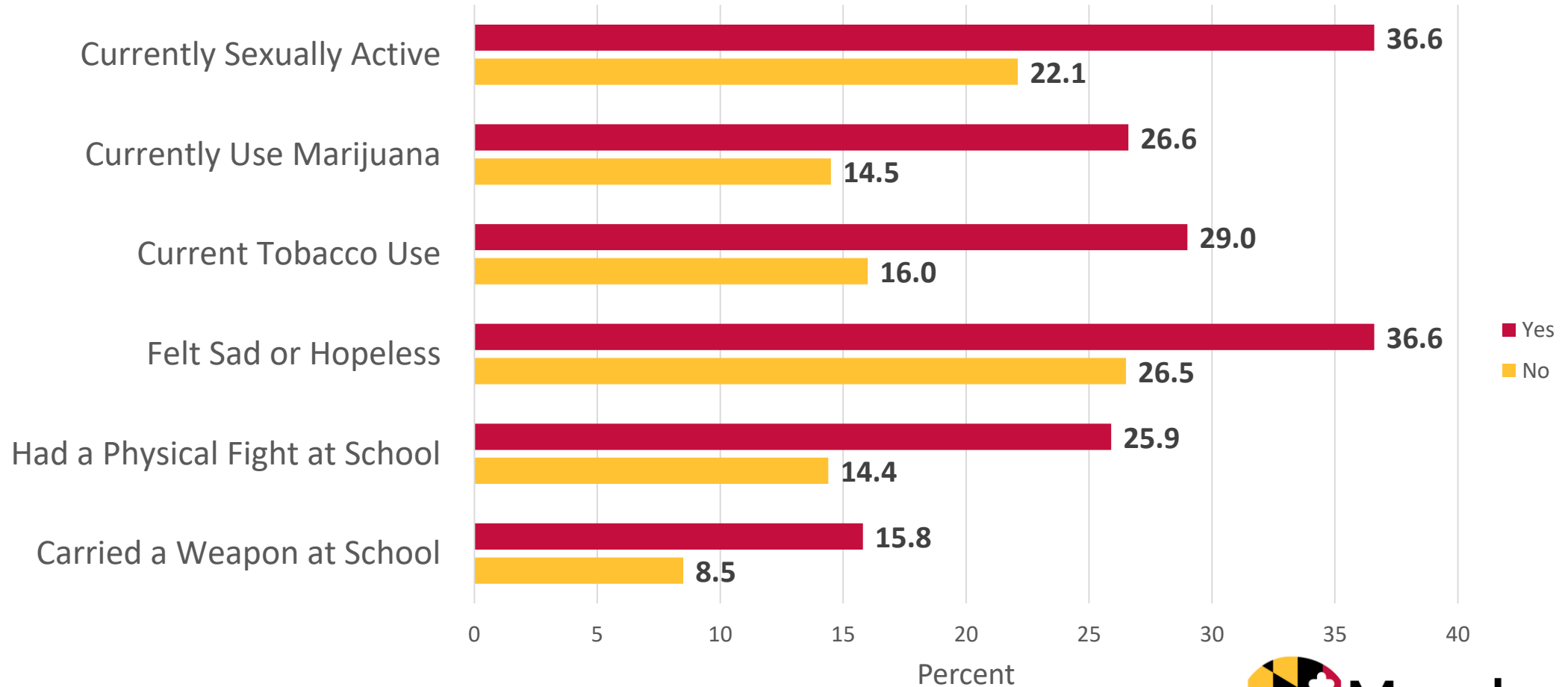
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Frederick County HS Students Exposed to Household Incarceration



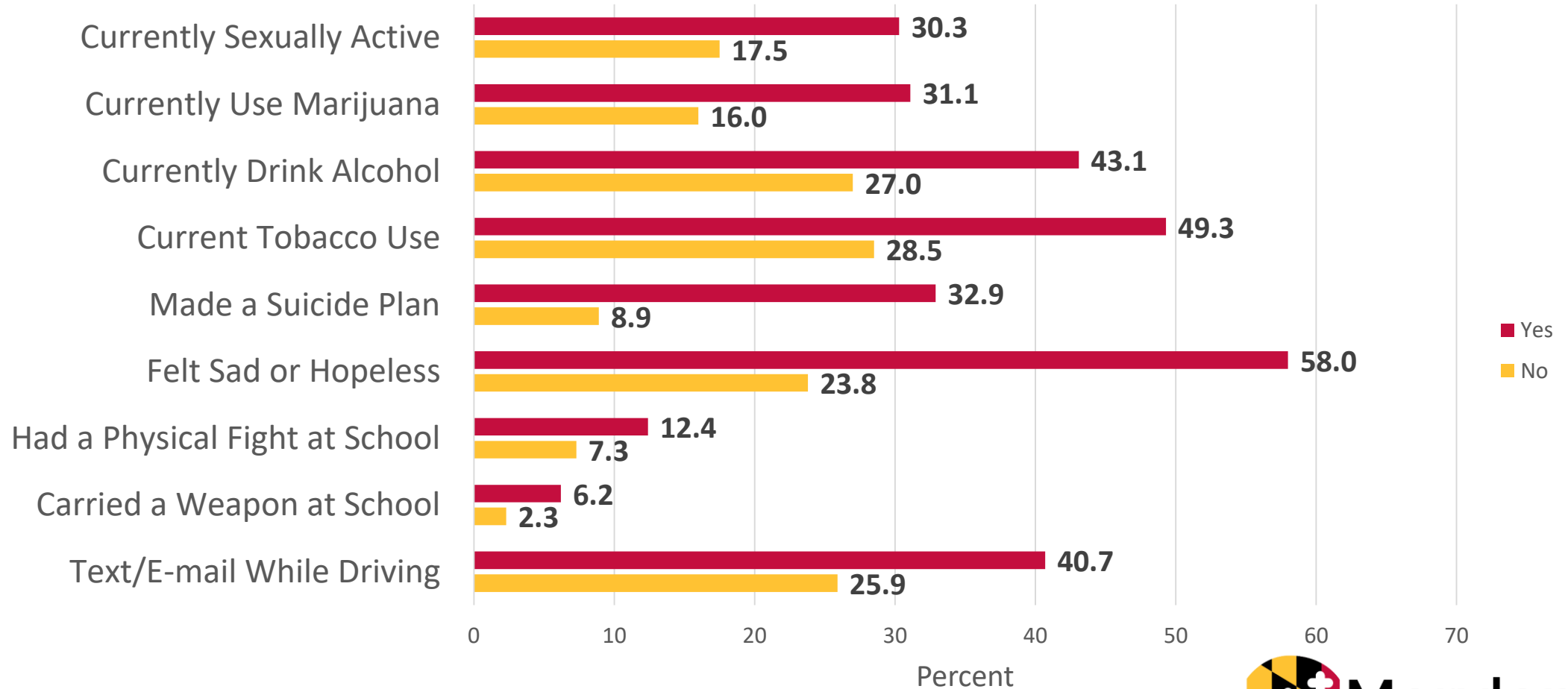
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Baltimore City HS Students Exposed to Household Incarceration



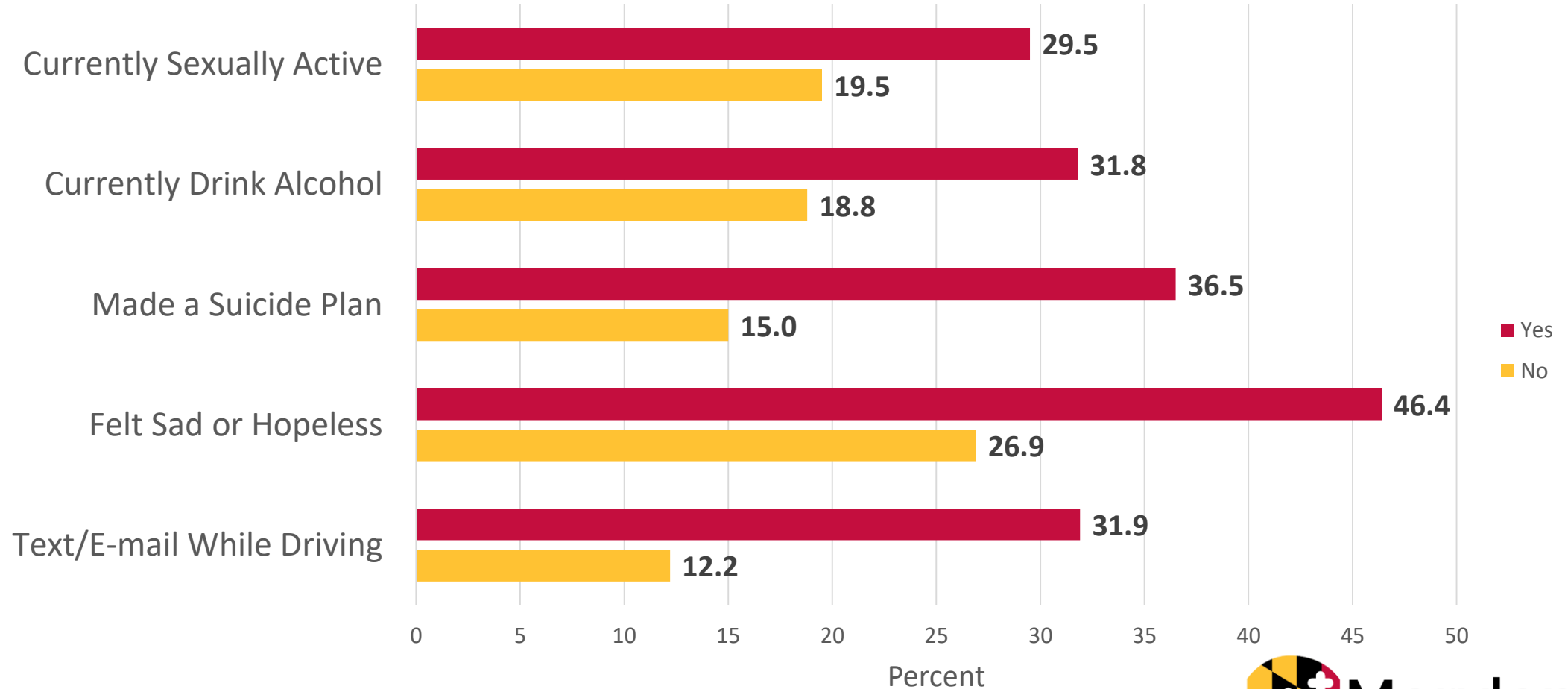
Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Frederick County HS Students Exposed to Emotional Abuse



Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

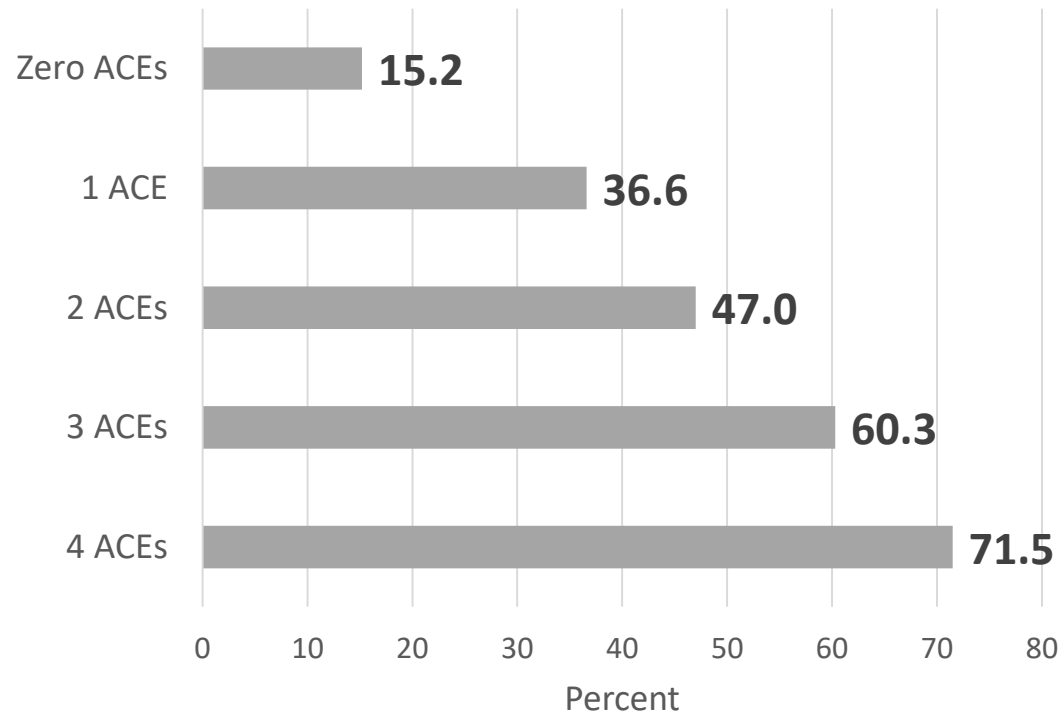
Baltimore City HS Students Exposed to Emotional Abuse



Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Dose-Response Relationship- Frederick County (3)

Felt Sad or Hopeless



Odds of Feeling Sad or Hopeless By ACE Score

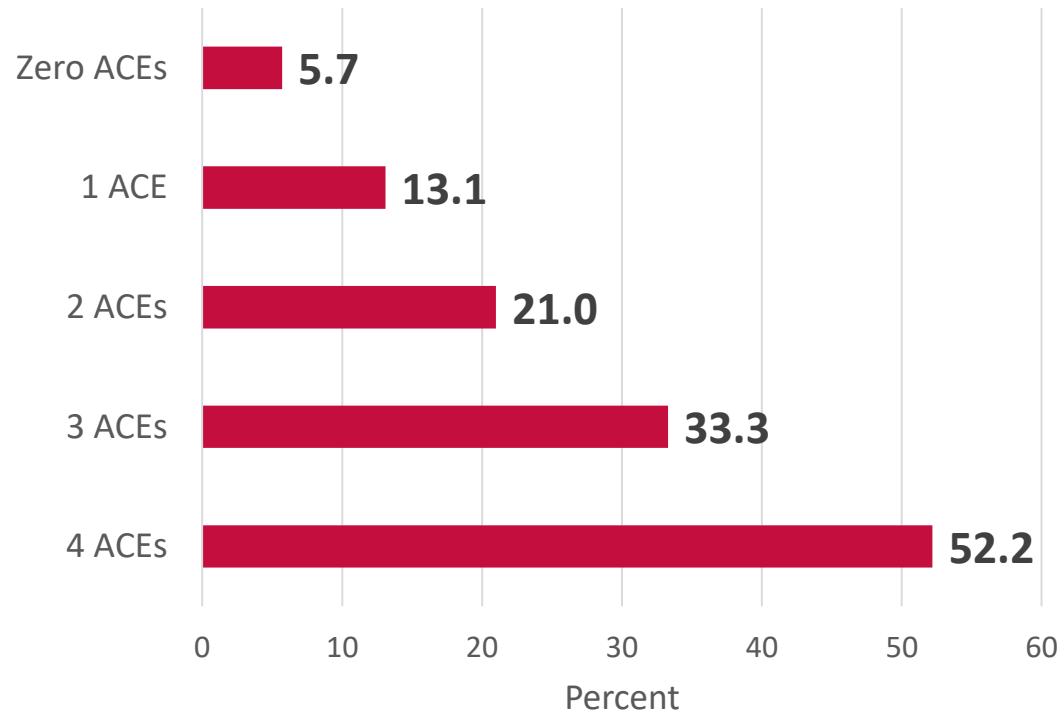
ACE Number	Odds Ratio (ORa)
Zero ACEs	1.0
1 ACE	3.1
2 ACEs	5.0
3 ACEs	8.2
4 ACEs	13.9

*Adjusted OR: race, age, and sex

Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Dose-Response Relationship- Frederick County (4)

Made a Suicide Plan



Odds of Making a Suicide Plan By ACE Score

ACE Number	Odds Ratio (ORa)
Zero ACEs	1.0
1 ACE	2.4
2 ACEs	4.5
3 ACEs	7.8
4 ACEs	17.4

*Adjusted OR: race, age, and sex

Source: 2018-2019 Maryland HS YRBS/YTS

Dose-Response Relationship - Baltimore City (8)

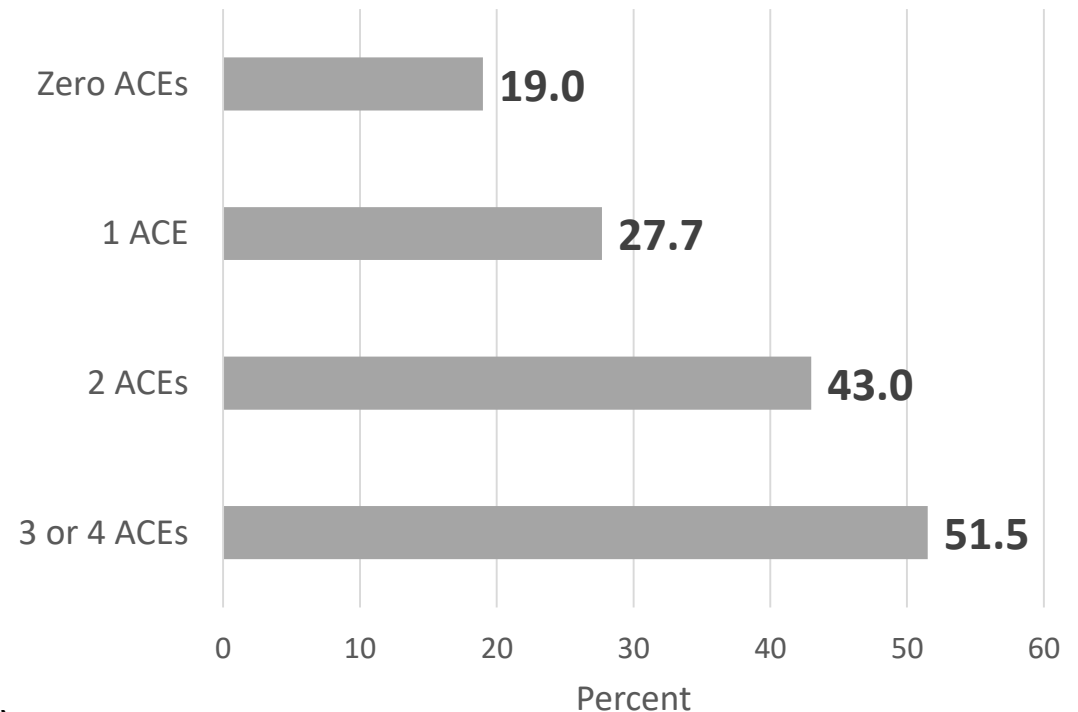
Odds of Feeling Sad or Hopeless By ACE Score

ACE Number	Odds Ratio (ORa)
Zero ACEs	1.0
1 ACE	1.7*
2 ACEs	3.6*
3 or 4 ACEs	5.0*

Adjusted OR: race, age, and sex

*Significant difference from reference group (zero ACEs)

Felt Sad or Hopeless



Dose-Response Relationship - Baltimore City (9)

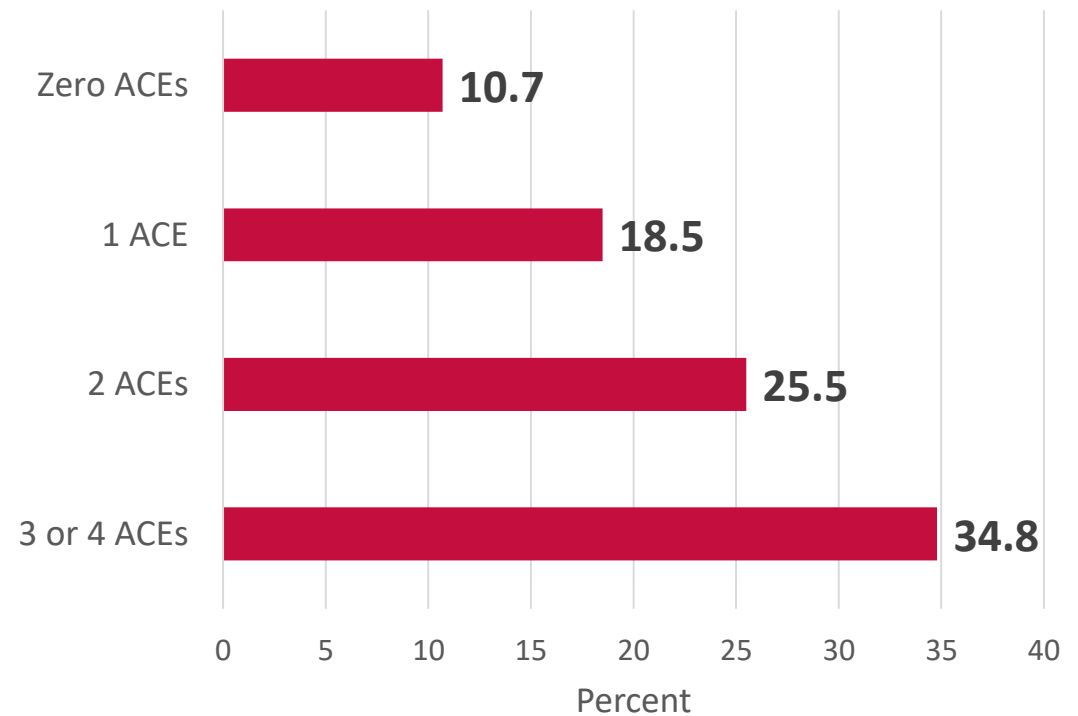
Odds of Making a Suicide Plan By ACE Score

ACE Number	Odds Ratio (ORa)
Zero ACEs	1.0
1 ACE	2.0*
2 ACEs	3.2*
3 or 4 ACEs	4.1*

Adjusted OR: race, age, and sex

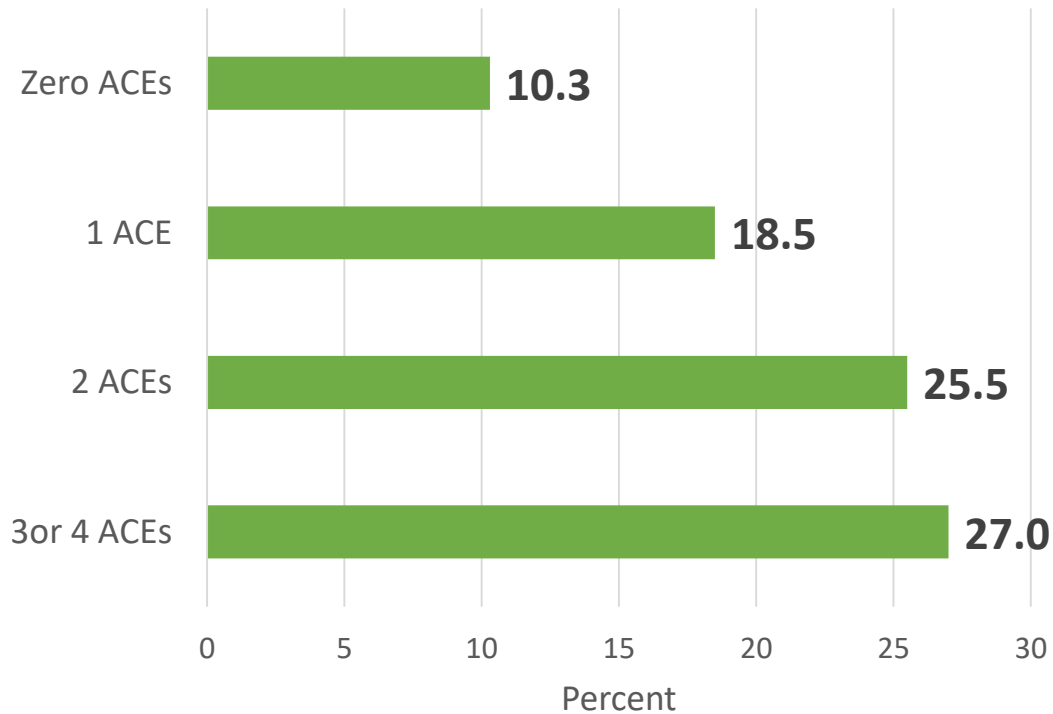
*Significant difference from reference group (zero ACEs)

Made a Suicide Plan



Dose-Response Relationship - Baltimore City (11)

Physical Fight on School Property



Physical Fight on School Property By ACE Score

ACE Number	Odds Ratio (ORa)
Zero ACEs	1.0
1 ACE	1.9*
2 ACEs	2.9*
3 or 4 ACEs	3.2*

Adjusted OR: race, age, and sex

*Significant difference from reference group (zero ACEs)