

Illinois Youth Survey

Nutrition and
Physical Activity



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01.

What is the Illinois Youth Survey?

Overview

The Illinois Youth Survey is a biennial survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. The IYS is a self-report survey administered in school settings and is designed to gather information about a variety of health and social indicators including substance use patterns and attitudes of Illinois youth. The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) has funded the administration of the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) biennially since 1990.

The administration of the IYS has two major goals:

- To supply local data to schools and school districts throughout Illinois.
- To provide a scientific estimate of health and social indicators for the state of Illinois.

2018 Data

In 2018, the Illinois Youth Survey included over 230,000 youth across more than 914 Illinois schools who were surveyed between January and June of 2018. The data in this paper is based on a statewide randomly drawn, scientifically weighted sample of 11,259 students, selected to represent the state population of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Illinois' public schools, distributed across the grades as shown below. The sampling design assures that youth in the state sample are representative of the state's diverse community types.

	Weighted Count
8th	3,800
10th	3,885
12th	3,574
Total	11,259

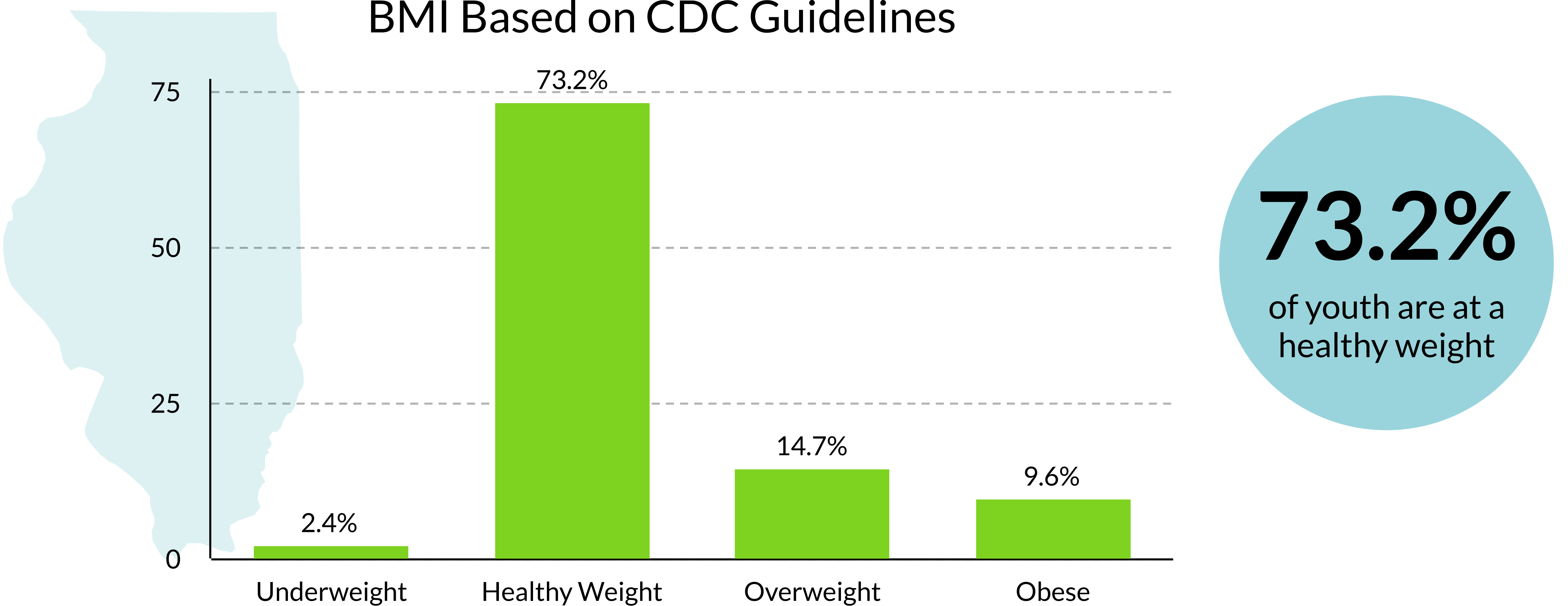


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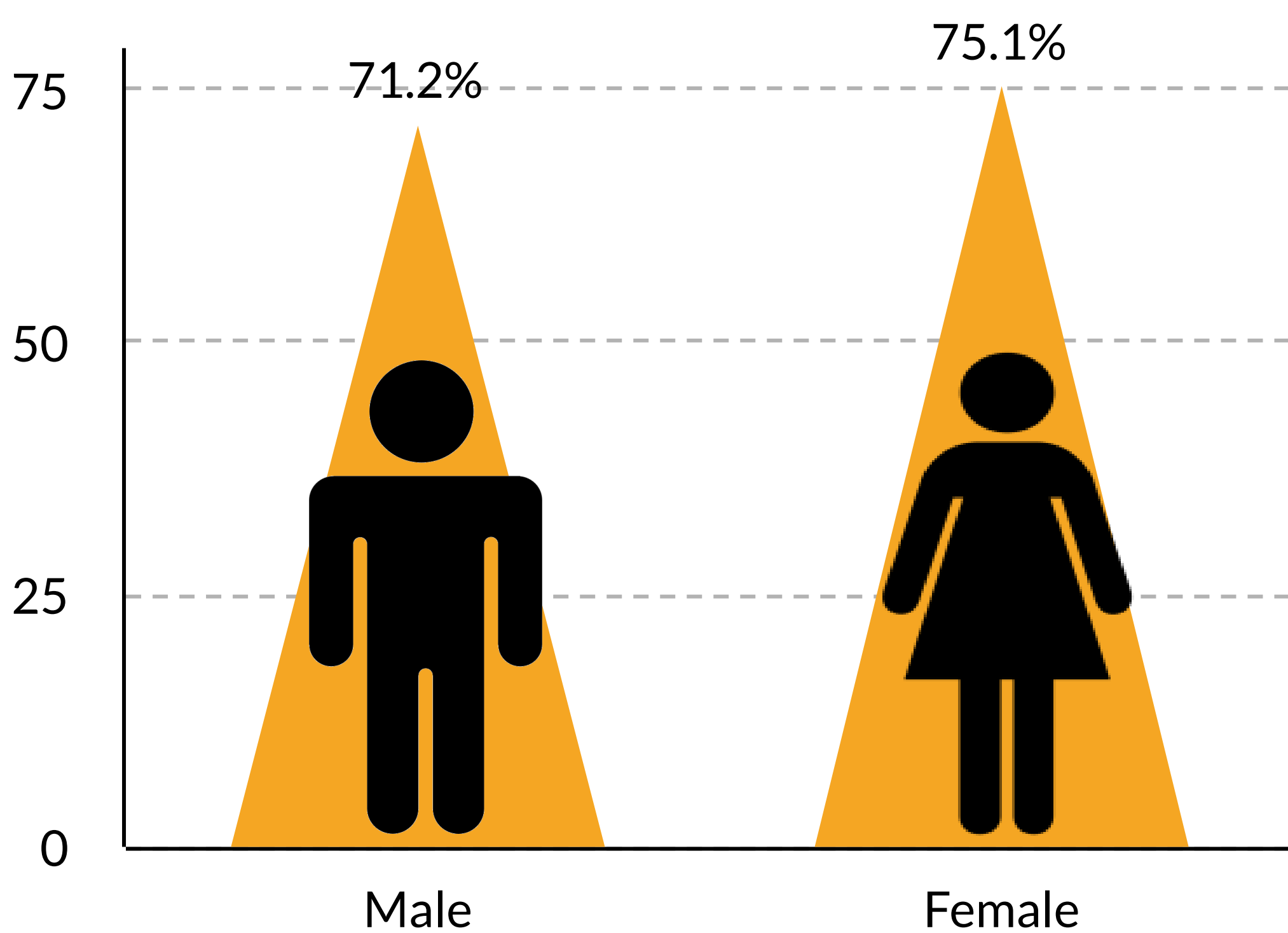
Healthy Weight In Youth

What is BMI? BMI stands for body mass index. BMI is based on weight and height, which are two important measures that can be taken to determine whether a person has an unhealthy amount of body fat. BMI is calculated by dividing one's weight by their height squared. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) classifies BMI in four categories: underweight, healthy weight, overweight, and obese. On the IYS, students were asked to estimate their height and weight and were categorized based on the CDC guidelines. While BMI assesses healthy weight, it is not a direct indicator of overall health. A majority of youth who participated in the IYS fell in the healthy weight category.

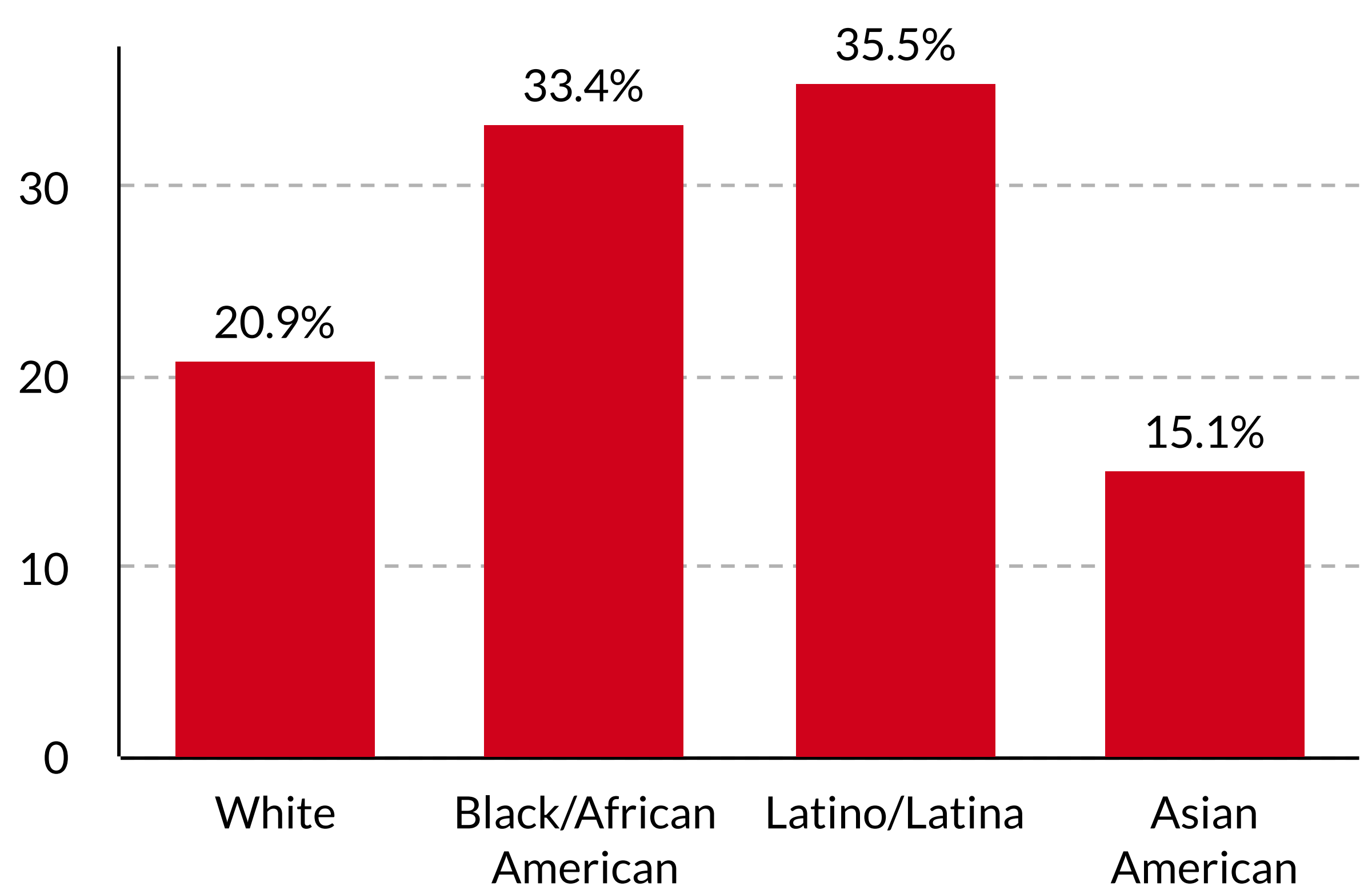
BMI Based on CDC Guidelines



Healthy Weight by Gender



Overweight or Obese by Race

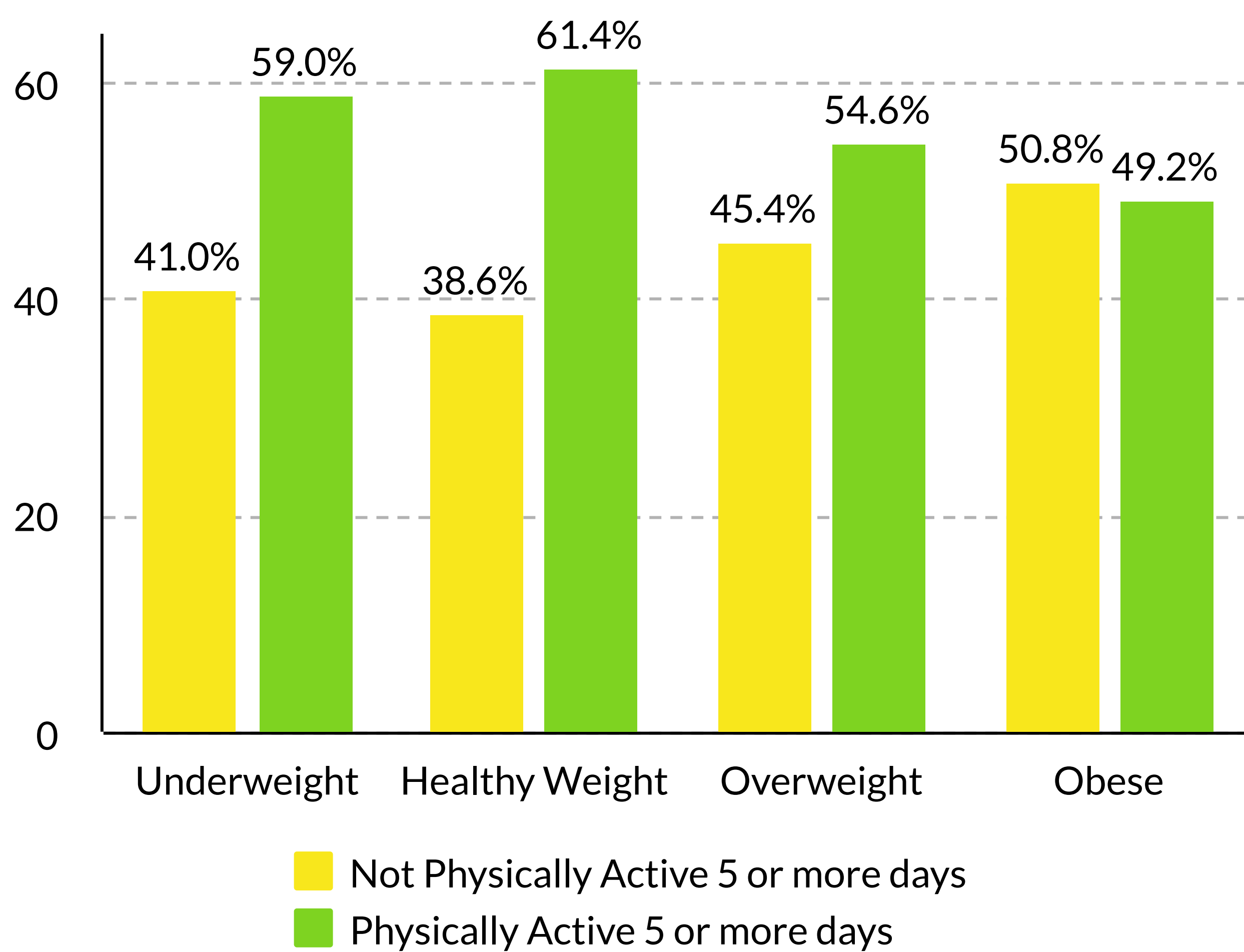


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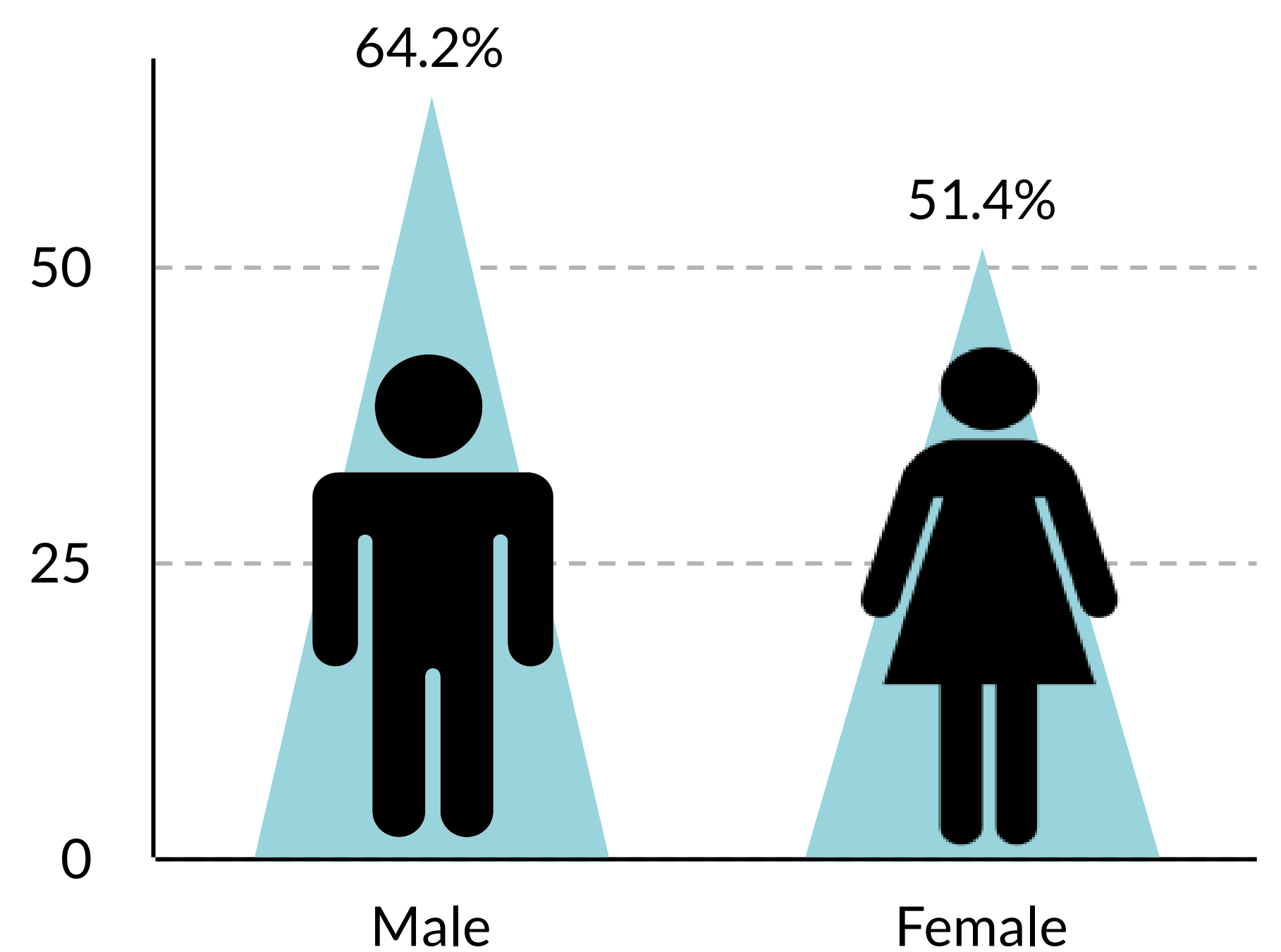
Physical Activity

Being physically active helps students to stay healthy, happy, and fit. Youth who had a healthy weight were much more likely to report being active 5 days or more per week. Interestingly, males were more likely to report being active 5 or more days per week than females.

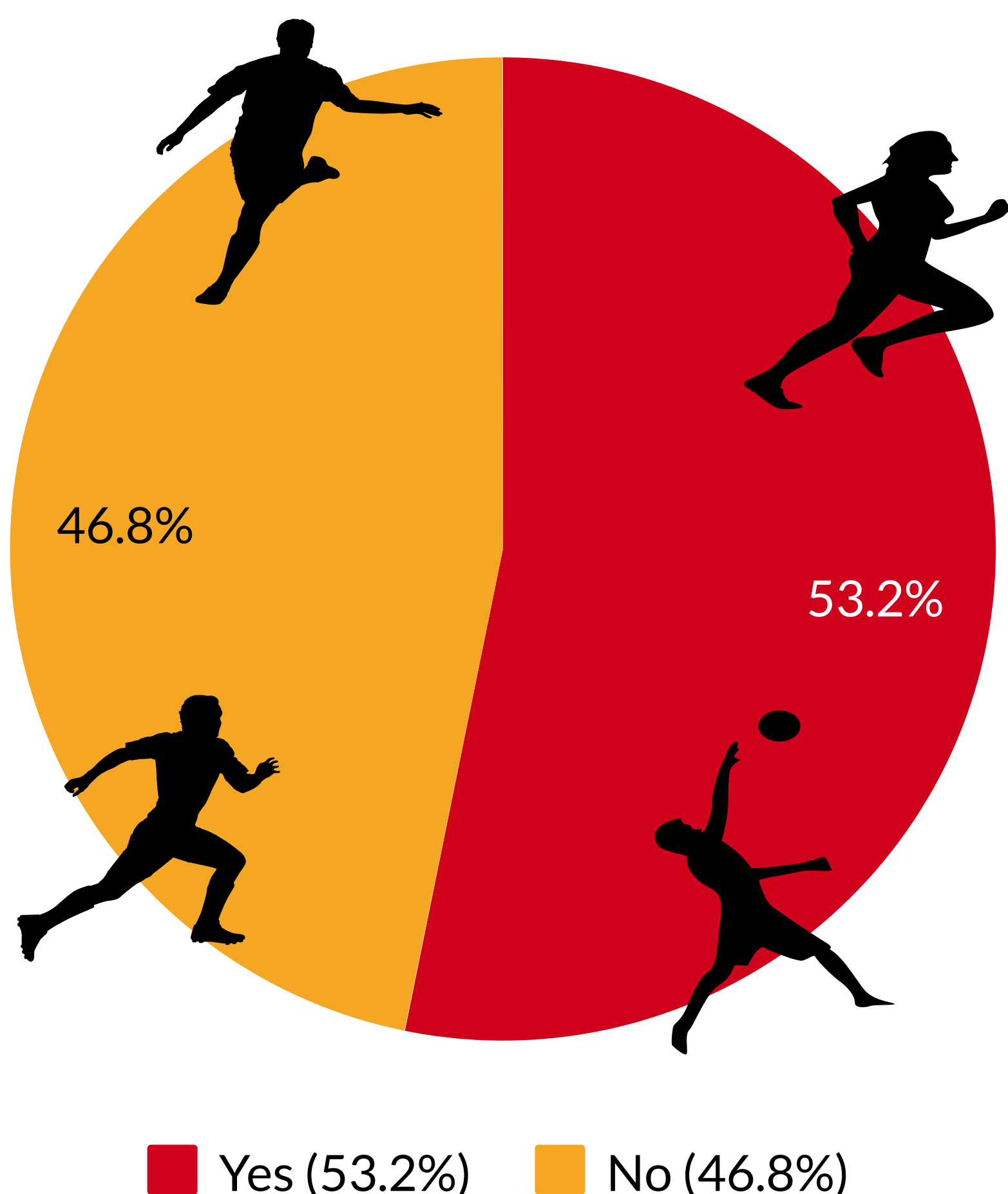
Physically Active by BMI



Physically Active 5 or More Days Per Week



Participation in School Sports



Participation in youth sports and other physical activities contribute to a healthier lifestyle. According to the IYS, more than half (53.2%) of students reported participating in school sports. Additionally, studies show that students who participate in school sports are better at setting goals and managing their time.



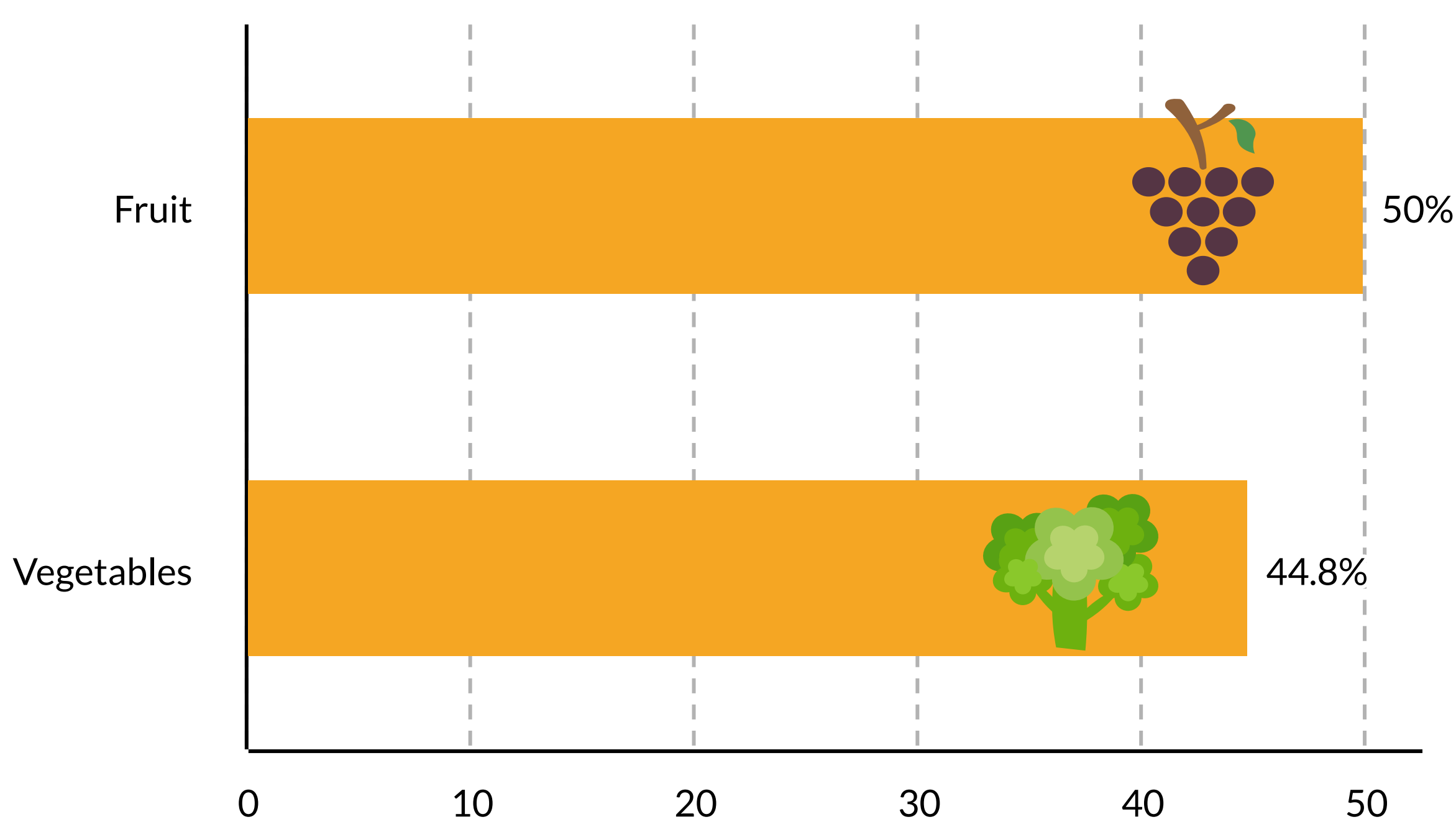
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Nutrition and Eating Habits

Nutrition is an important factor in adolescent growth and development. As shown below, about half of students ate fruit and just under half ate vegetables daily. Students were also asked how often they went hungry because there was not enough food at home. Over the past 30 days, 66% of students reported never going hungry, while 1 in 3 youth were food insecure.

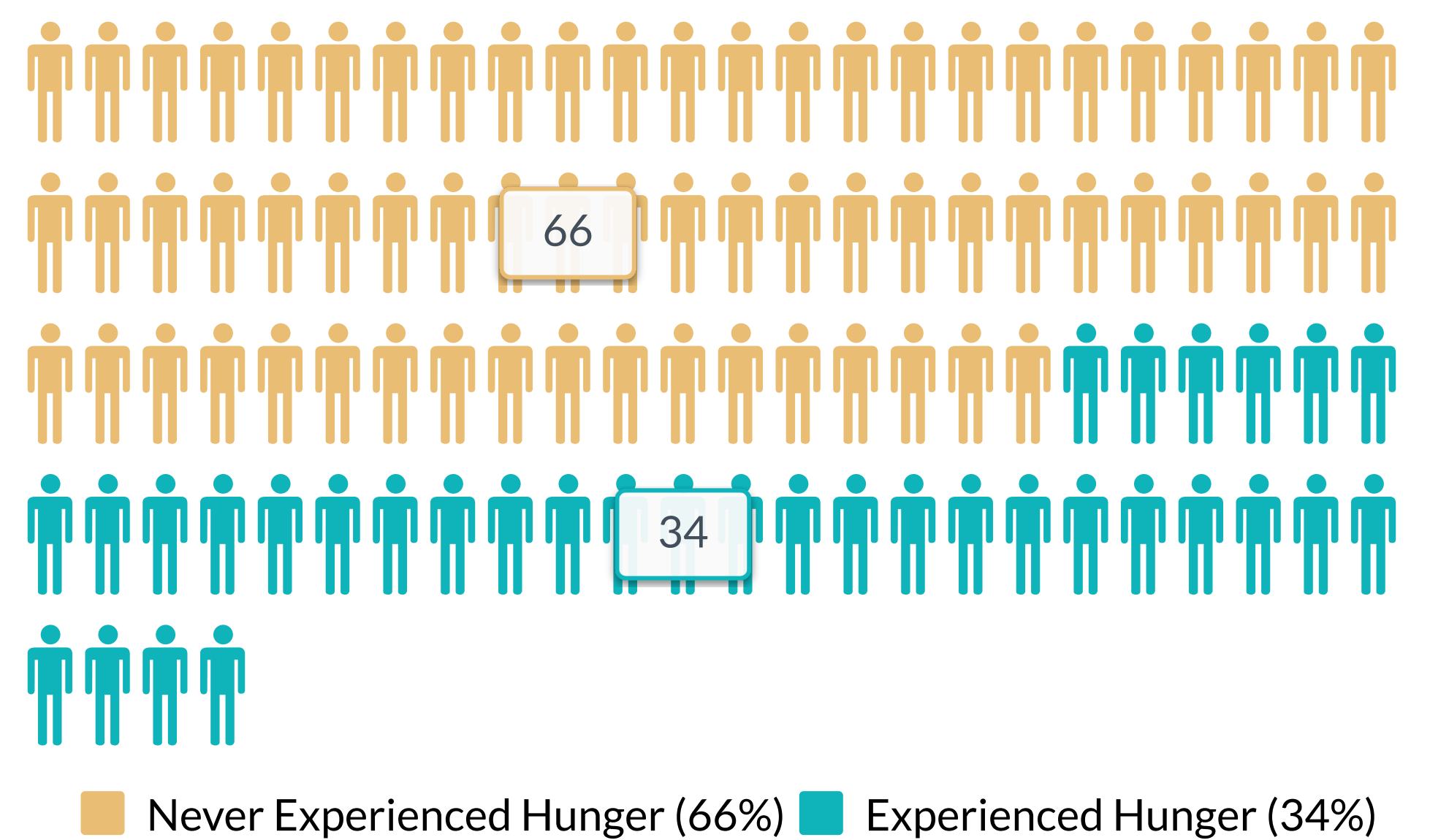
Fruits & Vegetables

Ate 1 or more times during the past 7 days



Hunger

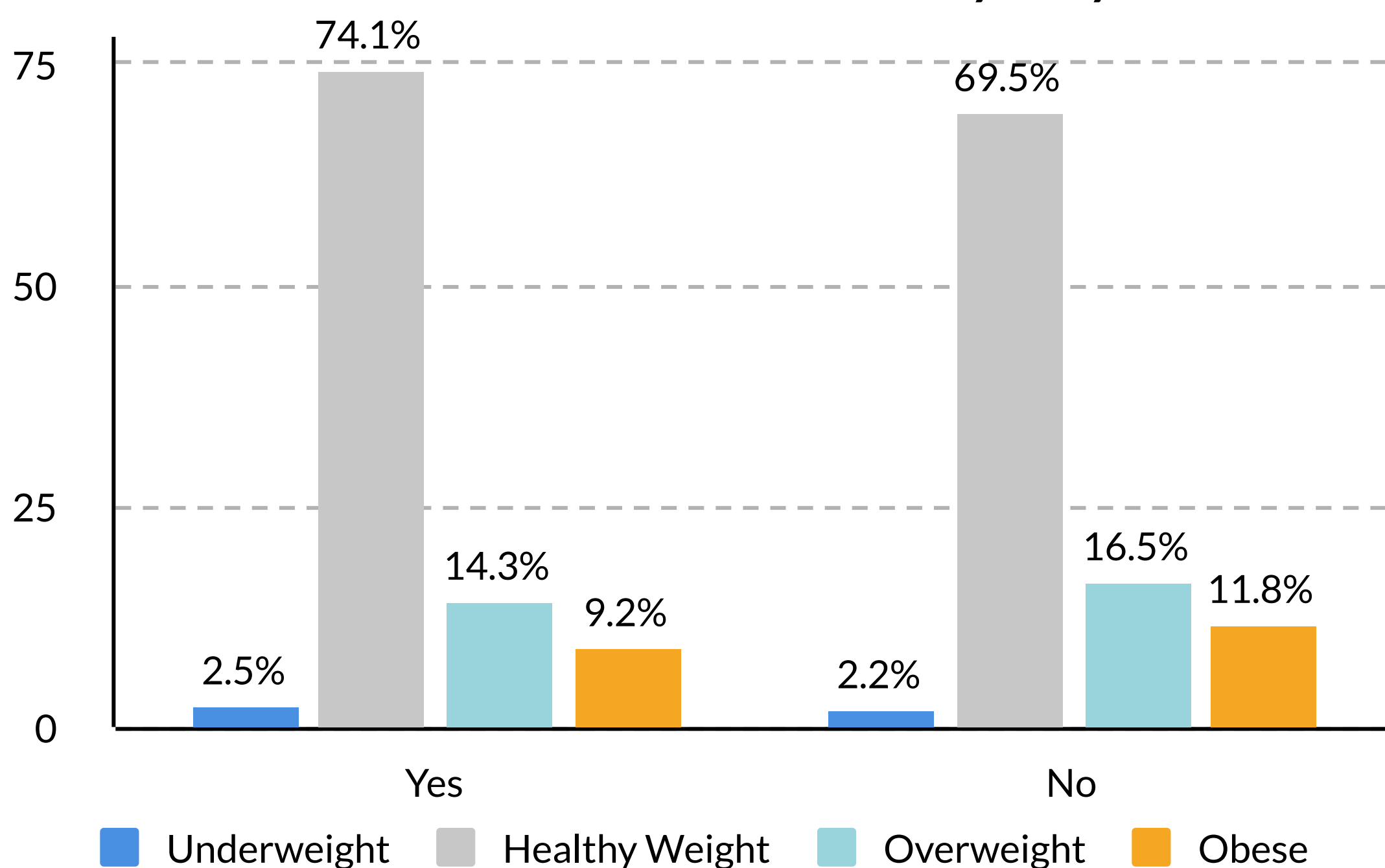
Hunger during past 30 days, due to insufficient food at home



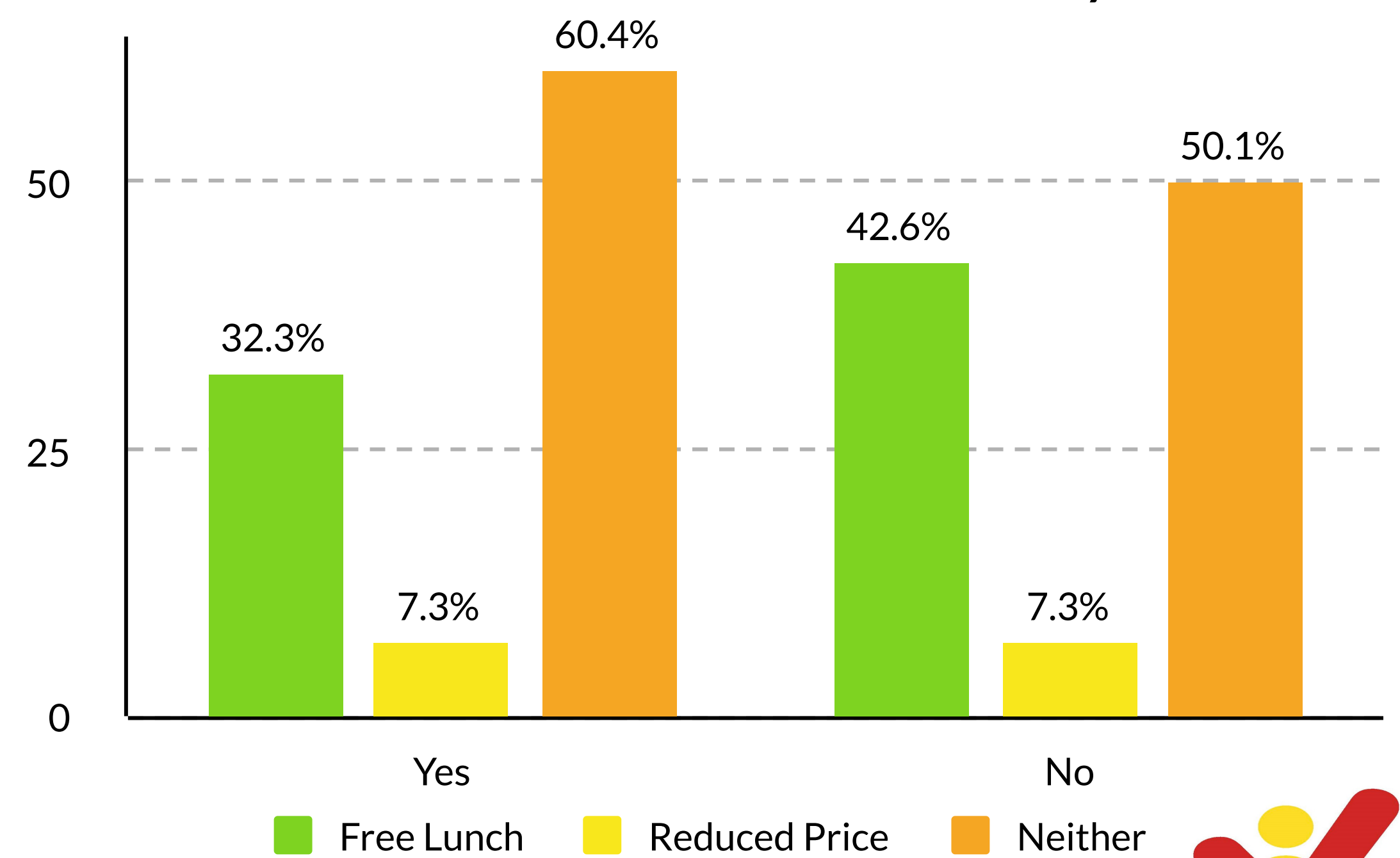
Ate Dinner at Home

Students were asked how often in the past week they ate dinner at home with at least one of their parents/guardians and 81% said between 3-7 days. Students who ate dinner at home between 3-7 days were slightly more likely to be underweight or at a healthy weight. In addition, students who reported eating dinner at home between 3-7 days during the past week were less likely to receive free lunch at school, suggesting that wealthier kids were more likely to be eating dinner at home.

Ate Dinner at Home 3-7 Days by BMI



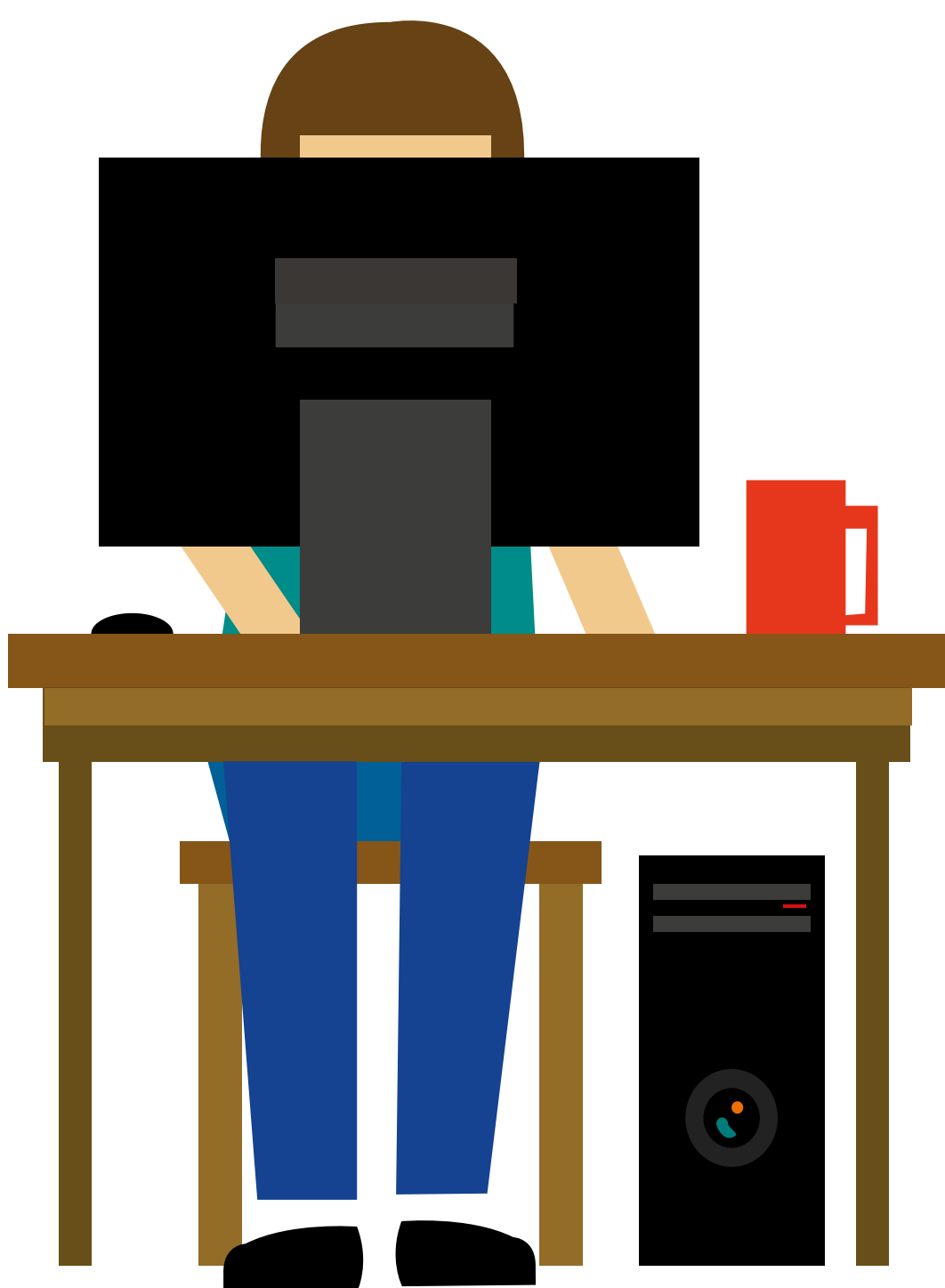
Ate Dinner at Home 3-7 Days



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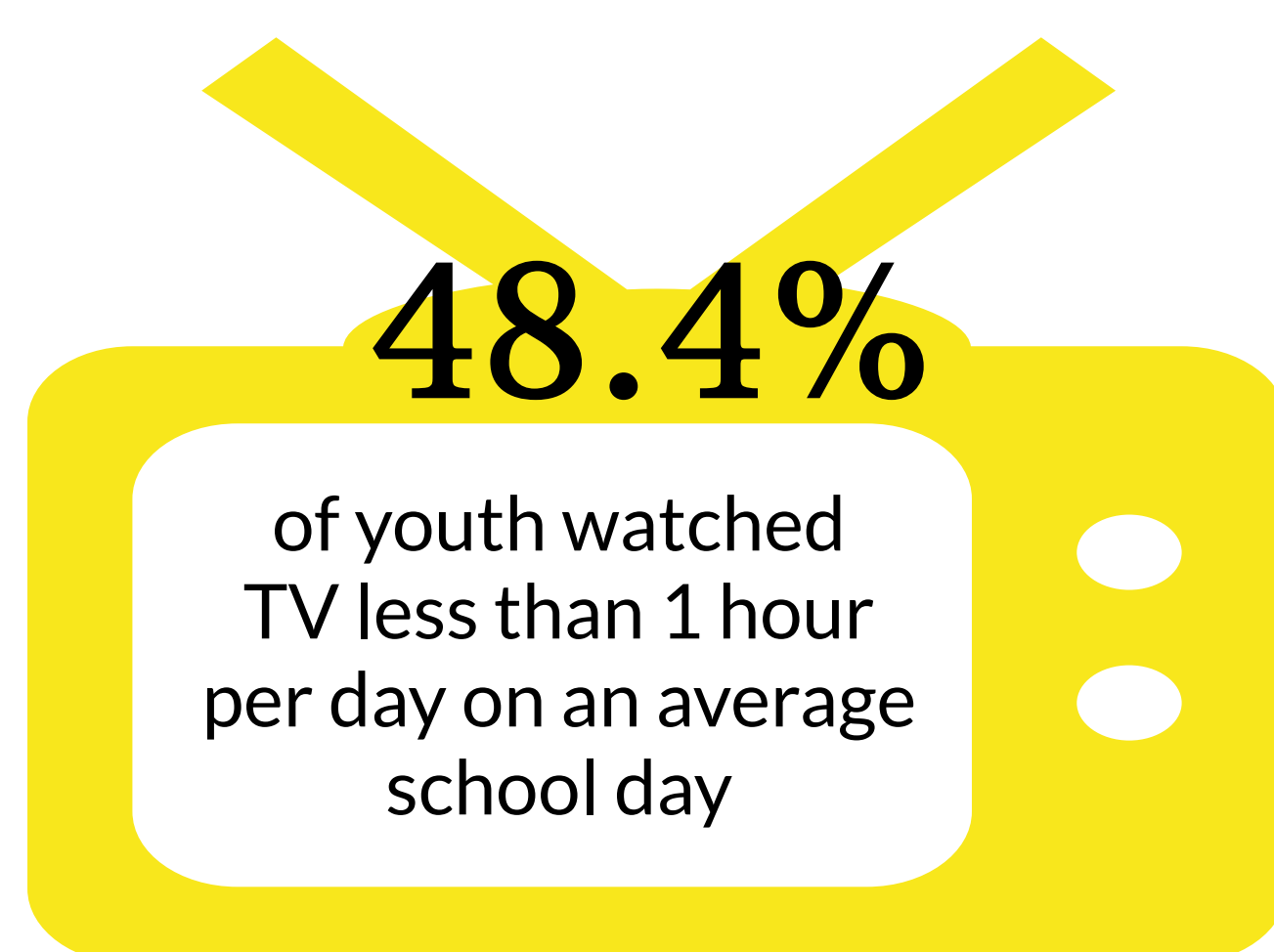
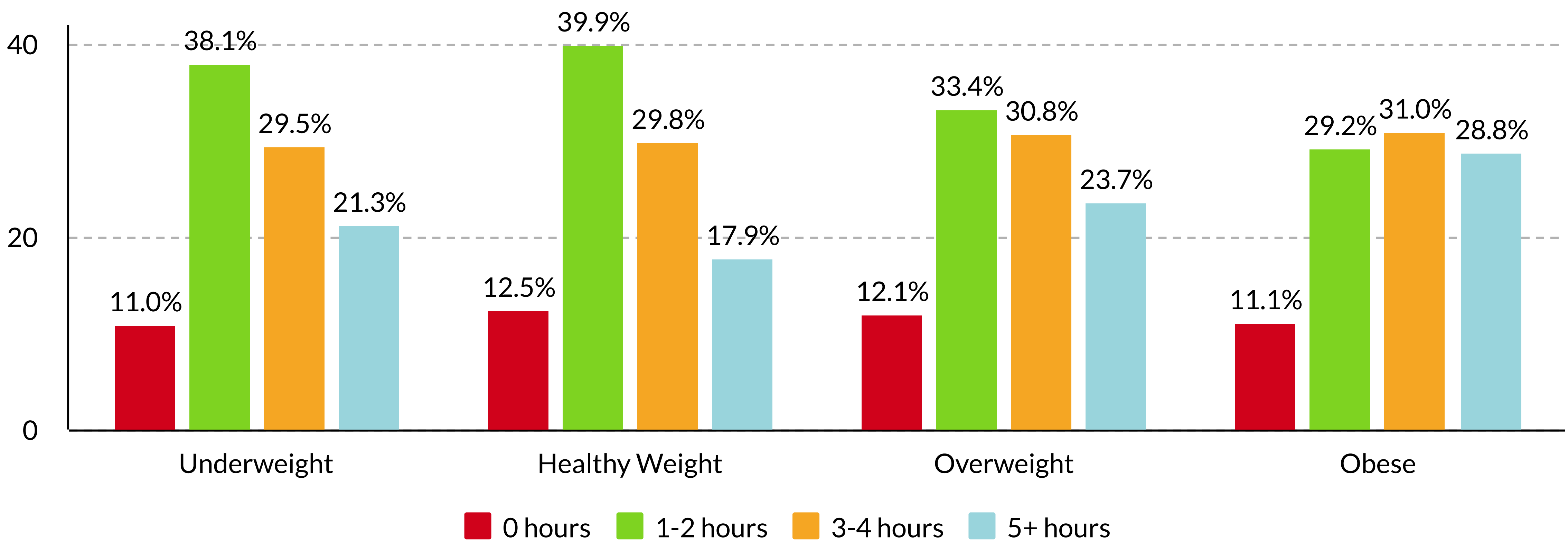
Screen Time

Students spend a lot of time watching screens including computers, smartphones, gaming consoles, TVs, and tablets. Over one-fifth (21.1%) of students reported being on the computer for something that was not schoolwork for 5 or more hours per day on school days. Students who were on the computer more often were less likely to participate in school sports and more likely to have a higher BMI. TV watching did not seem to contribute much to screen time, however, as nearly half (48.4%) of students reported watching 1 hour or less on school days.



Activities	5 hours or more a day	No hours a day
Hours spent playing video or computer games or computer use other than school work	21.1%	12.5%
Participated in school sports and hours spent on the computer	42.1%	55.7%

Screen Time on a School Day



06.

Implications & Recommendations



To Sum Up: Takeaways for Nutrition and Physical Activity

- The majority of students are in the healthy weight category.
- Weight varies by gender and race, with male students, White and Asian American students being the most likely to fall in the healthy weight category. Male students were more likely to be physically active as well.
- About 40-50% of students ate fruits and vegetables daily and 66% did not have food insecurity. Those who ate dinner at home were less likely to be overweight or obese and more likely to have a higher SES.
- Screen time is a major concern. Higher amounts of screen time were reported for students with higher BMIs.

Now What?

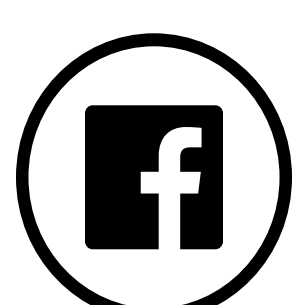
- The USDA provides great information for parents about weight management for youth: <https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/healthy-living-and-weight/weight-management-youth>
- The CDC includes links for measuring BMI in teens, nutrition and physical activity, and tips for parents: <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/resources/child-teen-resources.html>

Center for Prevention Research and Development

As part of the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, CPRD concentrates its efforts in the areas of prevention science, school reform and after-school evaluation, and health and human service reform. Visit the CPRD website: <https://cprd.illinois.edu>

Illinois Youth Survey

To find out more about the Illinois Youth Survey, to see if your school participated, or to access geographic (state, county, Chicago Community Area) and other topical reports, visit the IYS website: <https://www.iys.cprd.illinois.edu>



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