
PRATT INSTITUTE

COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN
SPRING 2021

SENIOR THESIS

COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN
BRANDING • ART DIRECTION
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Ally

EVERY 40 SECONDS, SOMEONE DIES BY SUICIDE.

LET'S NOT WAIT FOR CRISIS TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS.

RESEARCH

TERMS
STATISTICS
SURVEY
INTERVENTIONS
COVID-19

SUICIDE

IS DEFINED AS DEATH CAUSED BY SELF-DIRECTED INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR WITH INTENT TO DIE AS A RESULT OF THE BEHAVIOR.

SUICIDE ATTEMPT

IS A NON-FATAL, SELF-DIRECTED, POTENTIALLY INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR WITH INTENT TO DIE AS A RESULT OF THE BEHAVIOR.
A SUICIDE ATTEMPT MIGHT NOT RESULT IN INJURY.

SUICIDAL IDEATION

REFERS TO THINKING ABOUT, CONSIDERING, OR PLANNING SUICIDE.

MENTAL HEALTH

A PERSON'S CONDITION WITH REGARD TO THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING.

COMPROMISED MENTAL HEALTH

DIMINISHED COGNITIVE, SOCIAL OR EMOTIONAL ABILITIES BUT NOT TO THE EXTENT THAT THE CRITERIA FOR A MENTAL DISORDER ARE MET.

PREVENTION

A STRATEGY OR APPROACH THAT REDUCES THE LIKELIHOOD OF RISK OF ONSET, OR DELAYS THE ONSET OF ADVERSE HEALTH PROBLEMS OR REDUCES THE HARM RESULTING FROM CONDITIONS OR BEHAVIORS.

SUICIDE

THE 10TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH OVERALL IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE 2ND LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 10 AND 34.

THE 4TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 35 AND 54.

THERE WERE MORE THAN TWO AND A HALF TIMES AS MANY SUICIDES (48,344)
IN THE UNITED STATES AS THERE WERE HOMICIDES (18,830) In 2018.

WIDELY REPORTED STUDIES MODELLING THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
ON [SUICIDE RATES PREDICTED INCREASES RANGING FROM 1% TO 145%](#)

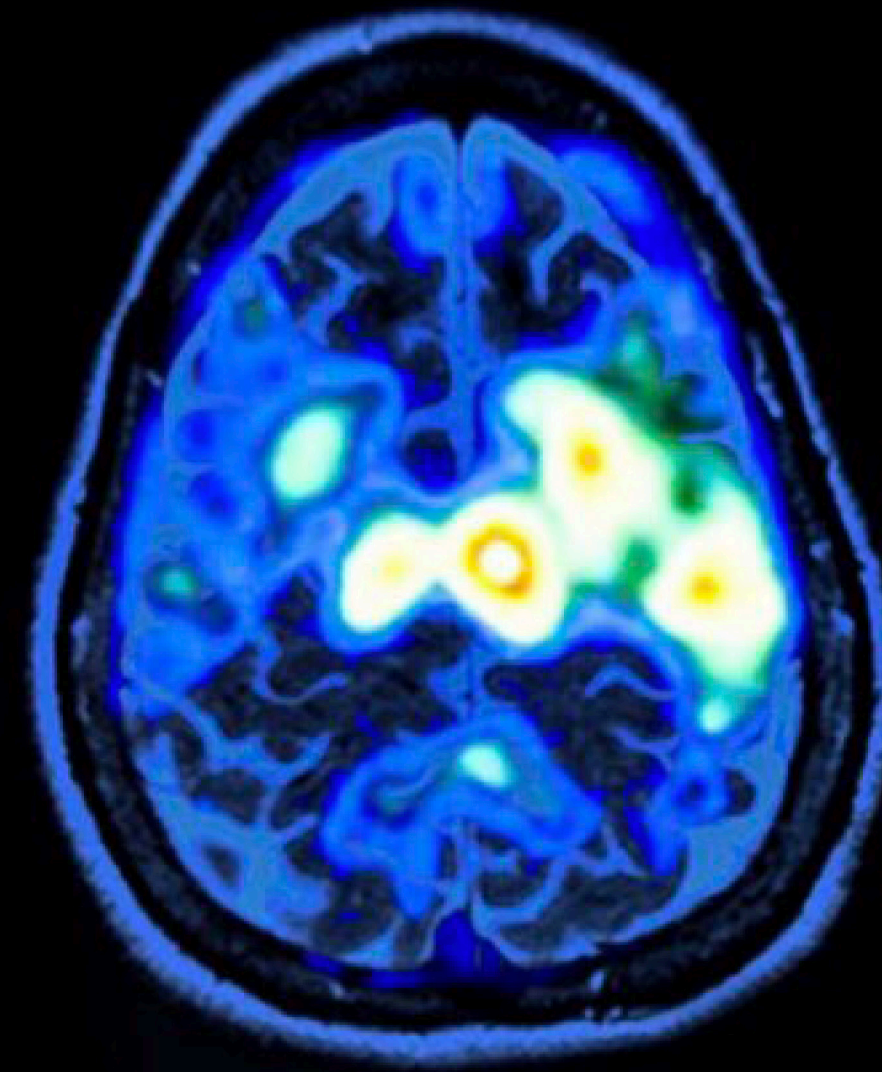
SINCE THE PANDEMIC BEGAN, \$175 BILLION IN EMERGENCY FUNDING HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO HOSPITALS AND OTHER MEDICAL FACILITIES, BUT [LESS THAN 1% OF THAT HAS GONE SPECIFICALLY TO MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.](#)

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION RECENTLY ASKED
YOUNG ADULTS IF THEY HAD THOUGHT ABOUT KILLING THEMSELVES
IN THE PAST 30 DAYS, 1 IN 4 SAID:

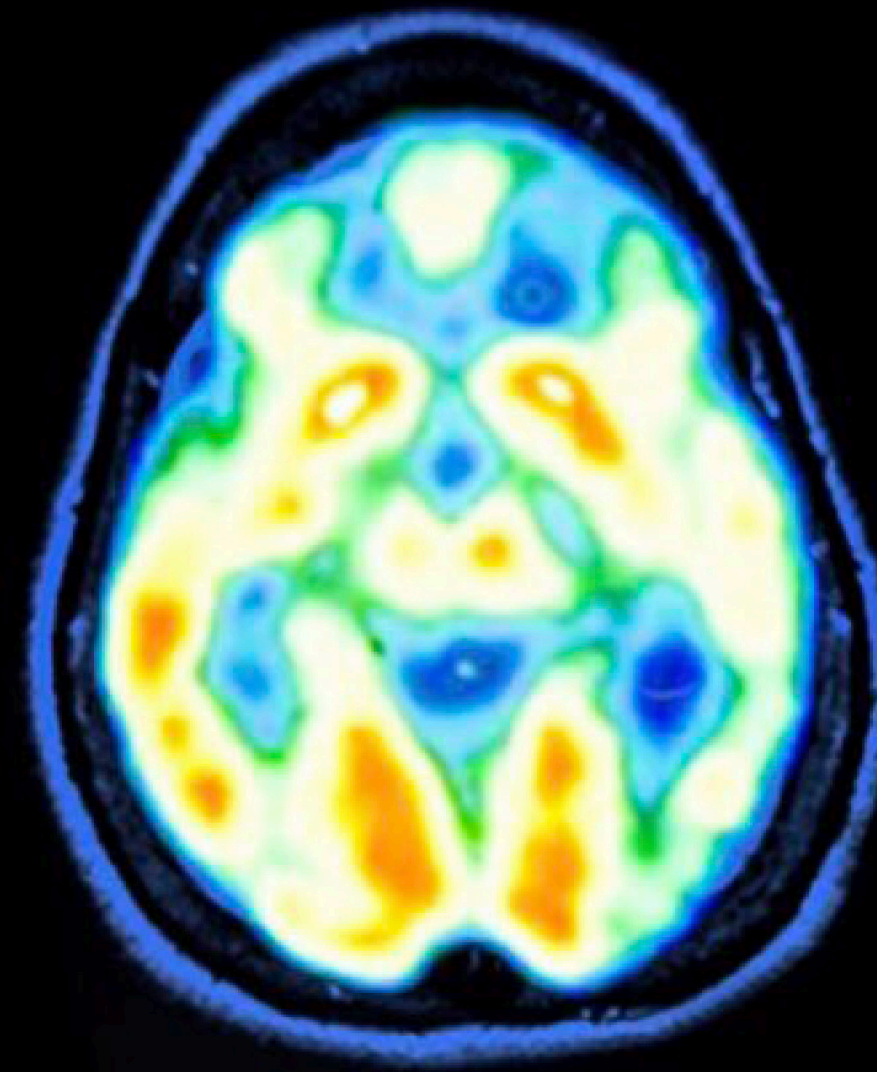
THEY HAD

FEDERAL SURVEYS SHOW THAT 40% OF AMERICANS ARE NOW GRAPPLING WITH AT LEAST ONE [MENTAL HEALTH](#) OR DRUG-RELATED PROBLEM. BUT YOUNG ADULTS HAVE BEEN HIT HARDER THAN ANY OTHER AGE GROUP, WITH 75% STRUGGLING.

BRAIN ACTIVITY



DEPRESSION



NO DEPRESSION

INTERVENTIONS

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EVEN MODEST [INTERVENTIONS](#) —
SUCH AS ASKING PEOPLE IF THEY'RE OKAY — CAN REDUCE SUICIDES.

LARGE-SCALE STUDIES FOUND THAT WHEN HOSPITALS ASKED EMERGENCY ROOM PATIENTS IF THEY HAD HAD SUICIDAL THOUGHTS AND THEN FOLLOWED UP, IT CUT THE RISK OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR BY HALF. ADDING SUCH SCREENING QUESTIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC — AT SCHOOLS, PRIMARY-CARE OFFICES AND HOSPITALS — COULD SAVE THOUSANDS, EXPERTS SAY.

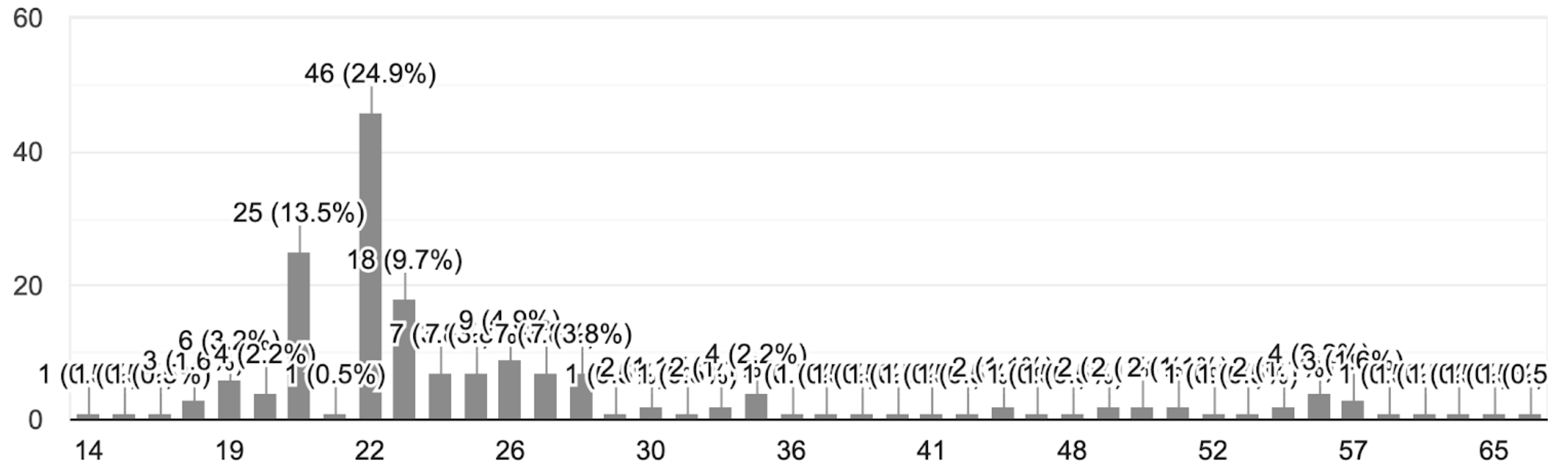
THIS IS ACTIONABLE; EVERYONE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SAVE LIVES.

SURVEY

1. HOW OLD ARE YOU?
2. WHERE ARE YOU FROM? WHERE ARE YOU LIVING NOW?
3. WHAT IS YOUR RACE/ETHNICITY?
4. WHAT GENDER DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH?
5. WHAT IS YOUR SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS?
6. WHAT IS YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION?
7. HAVE YOU PERSONALLY STRUGGLED WITH MENTAL HEALTH BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?
8. HAVE YOU STRUGGLED WITH MENTAL HEALTH MORE OR LESS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?
9. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT SUICIDE BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?
10. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT SUICIDE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?
11. DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS A STIGMA AROUND ASKING FOR HELP WHEN STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH?
12. WHEN STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH, WHAT ARE YOUR MODES OF REACHING OUT FOR HELP? DO YOU TEXT A FRIEND/FAMILY MEMBER/ETC?
13. HAVE YOU LOST SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU TO SUICIDE? SINCE OR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?
14. WHAT BARRIERS DO YOU THINK WOULD PREVENT YOU/OTHERS FROM REACHING OUT FOR HELP IF STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH?
15. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH?
16. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONTEMPLATING SUICIDE TO HELP THEM?
17. WHAT HAS HELPED YOU DURING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES?
18. WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY?

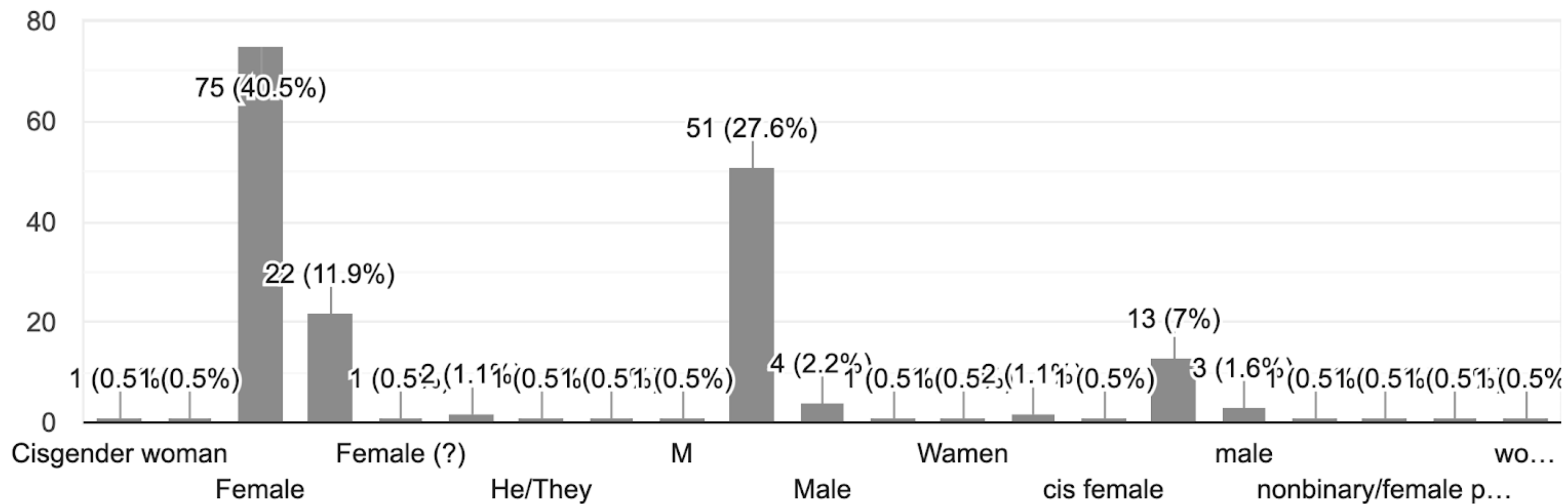
How old are you?

185 responses



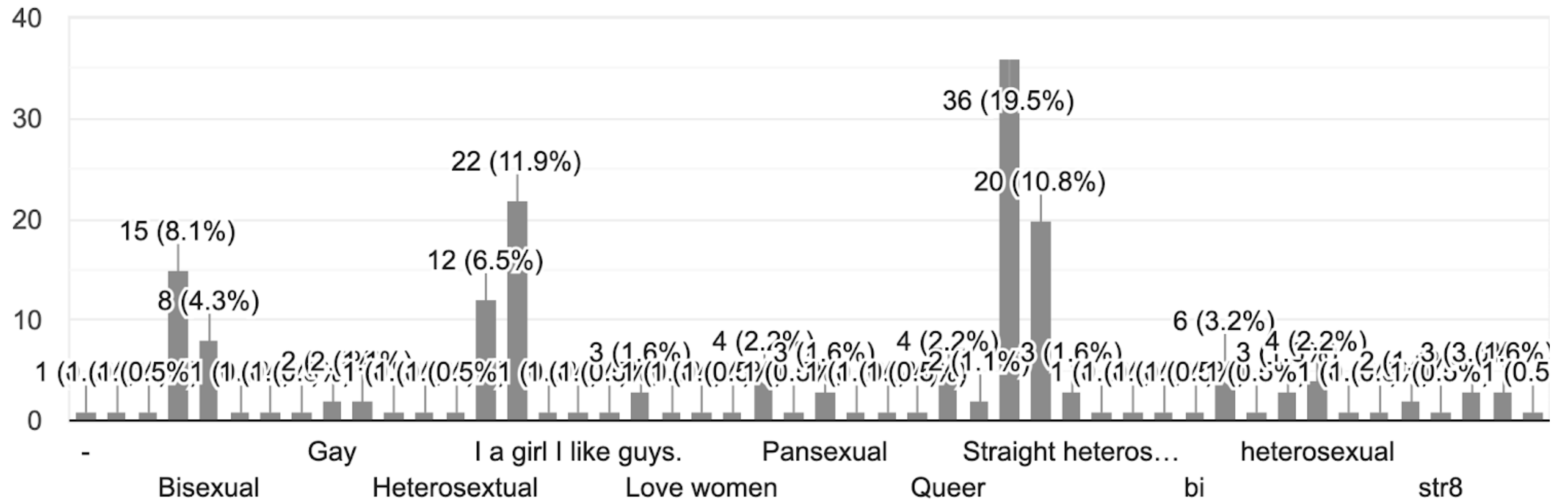
Which gender do you identify with?

185 responses



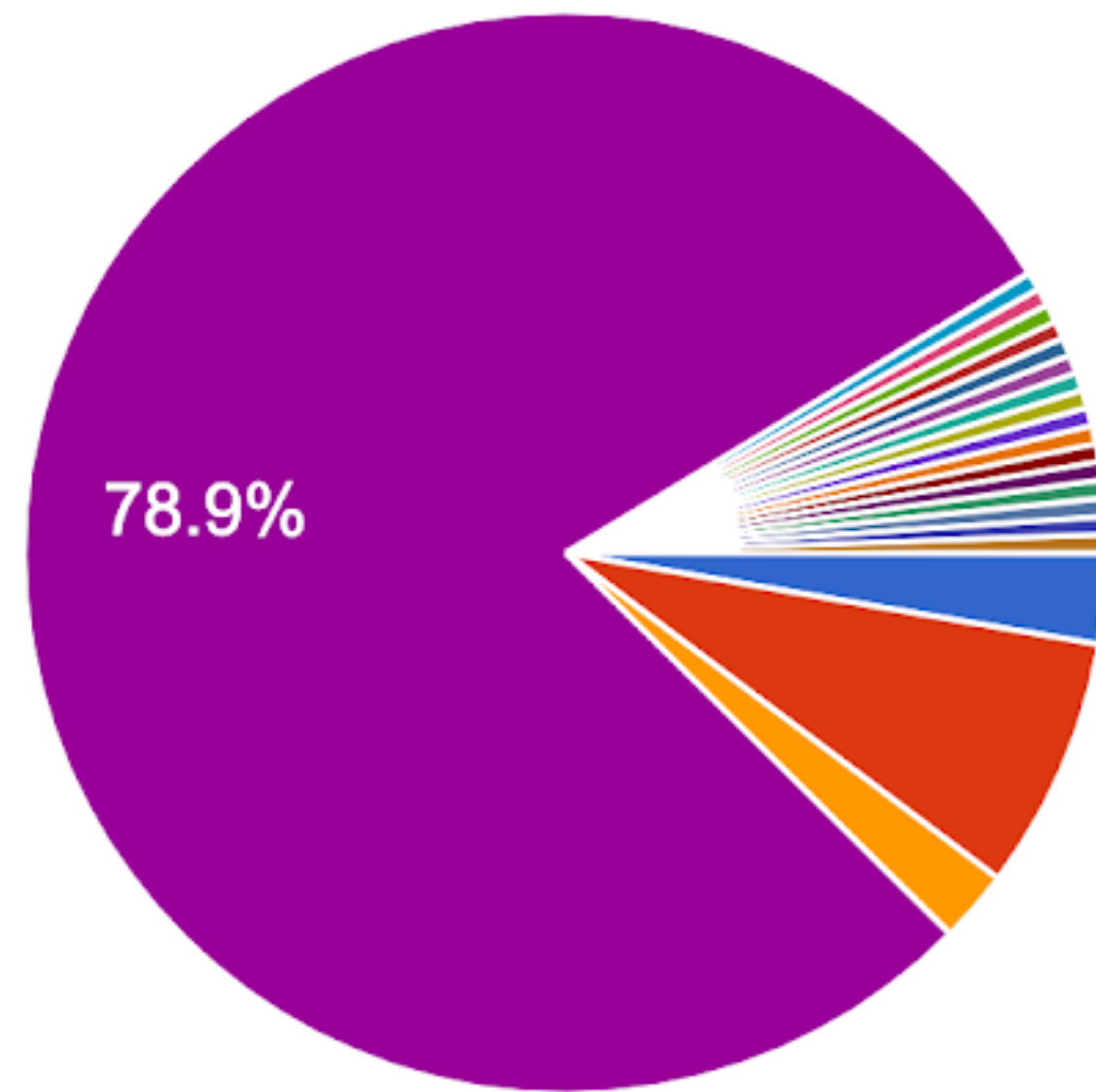
What is your sexual orientation?

185 responses



What is your race/ethnicity?

185 responses

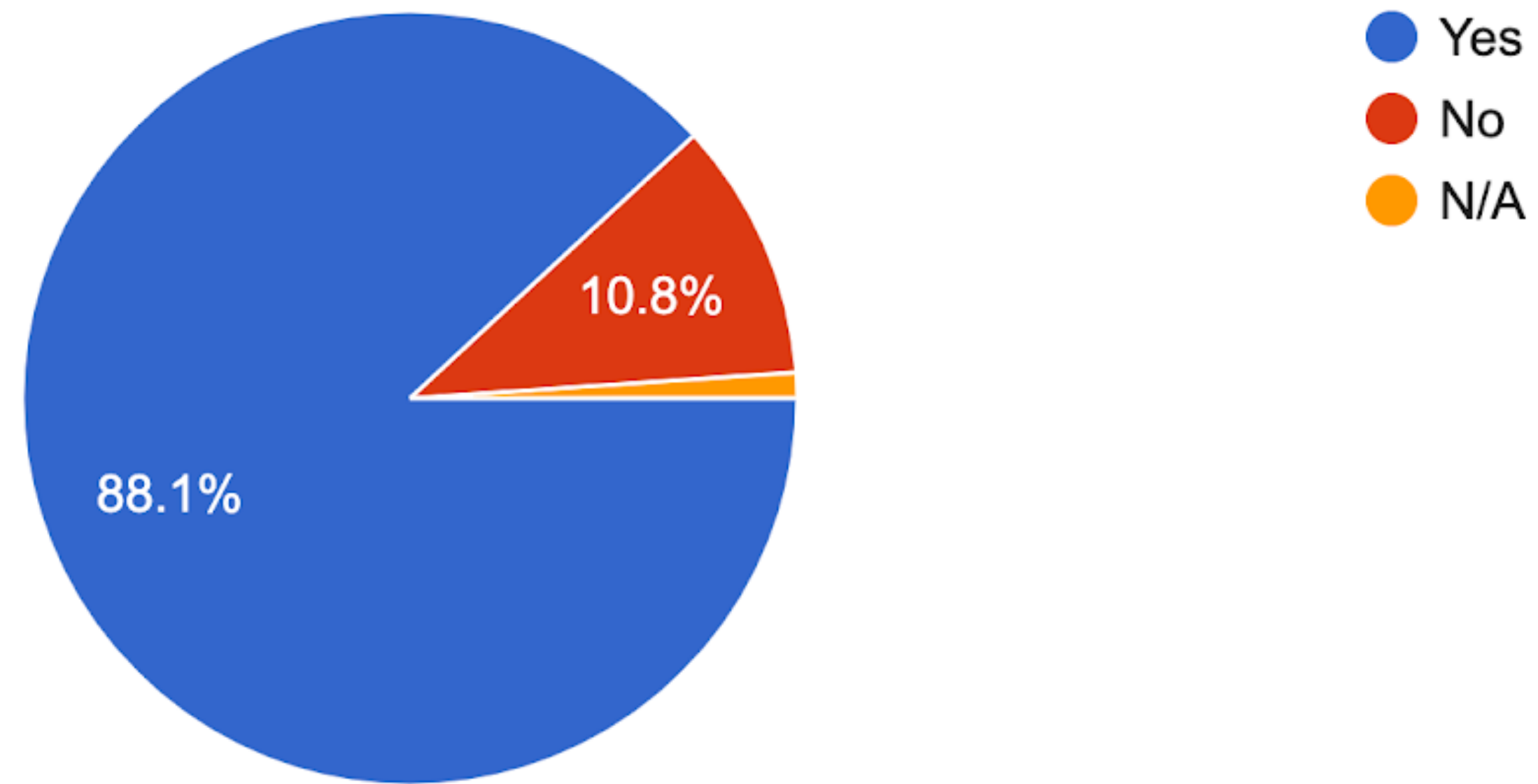


- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Caucasian
- latino
- Puerto Rican
- Mixed Black and White

▲ 1/3 ▼

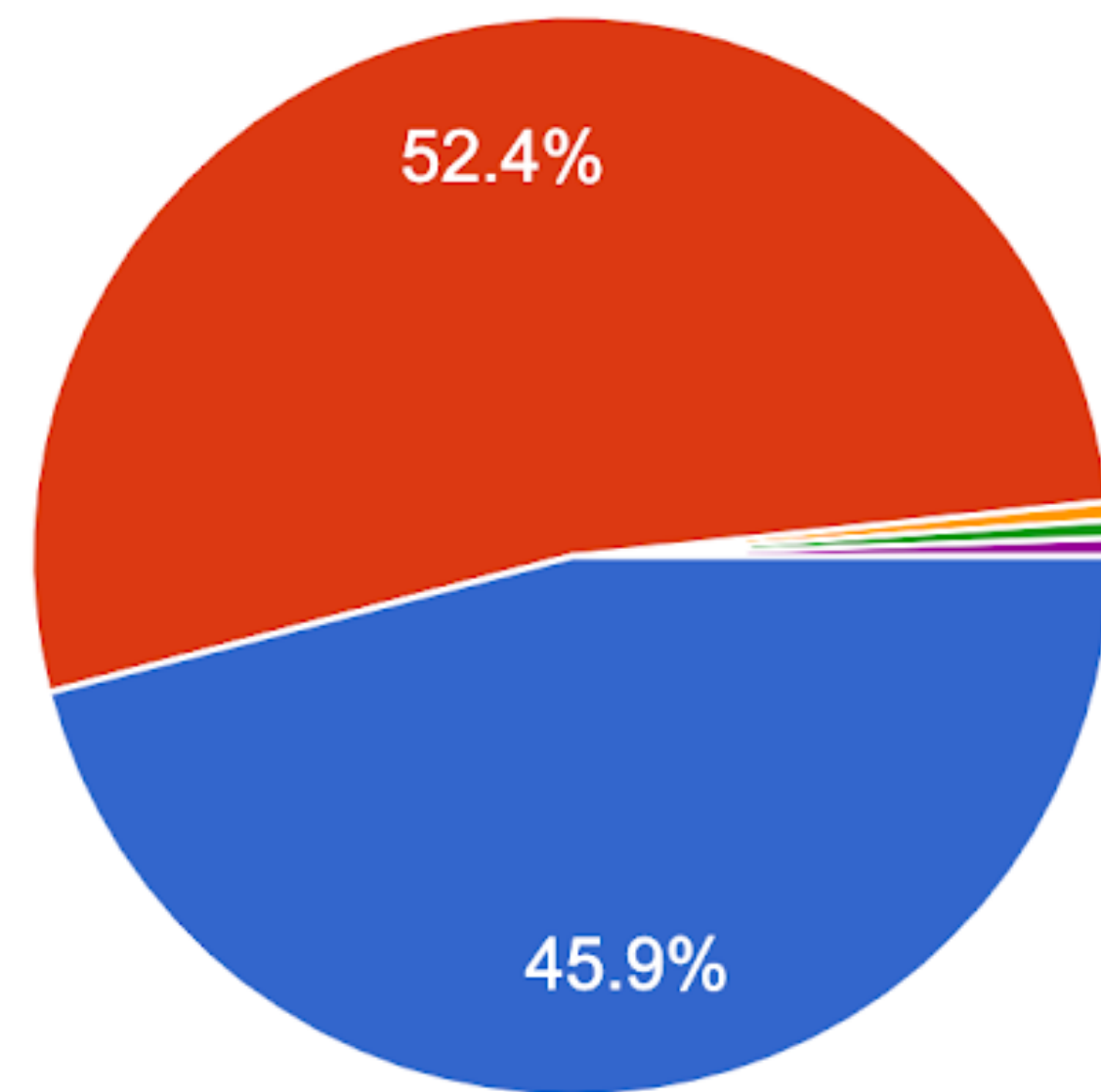
Do you believe there is a stigma around asking for help when struggling with mental health?

185 responses



Have you thought about suicide before the COVID-19 Pandemic?

185 responses



● Yes

● No

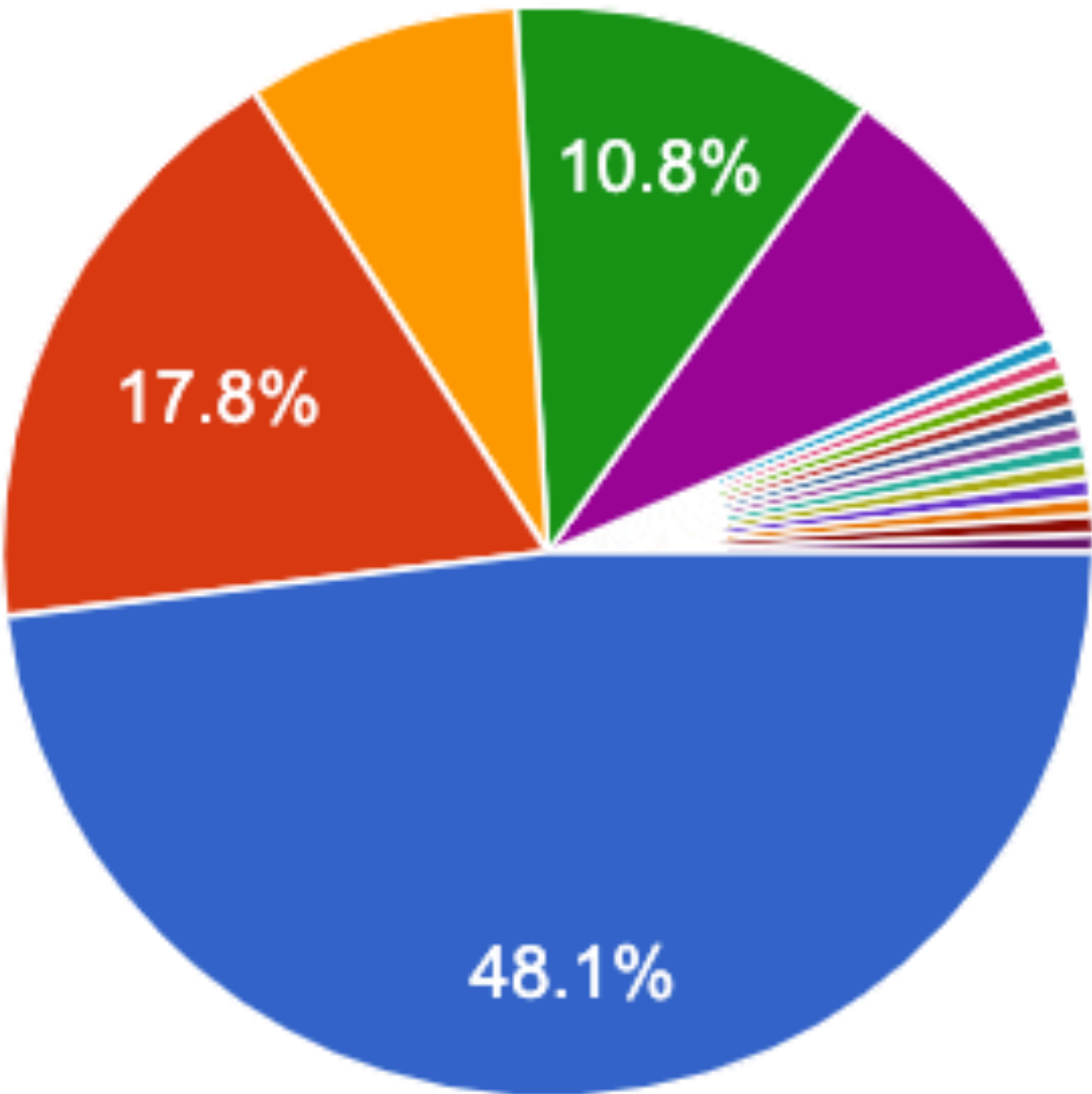
● While I have certainly thought of the consequences of suicide, I have never seriously considered going through with the act.

● I would have thoughts but always knew I was strong enough to move forward

● Yes because of the wrong medication

Have you struggled with mental health more or less since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic?

185 responses

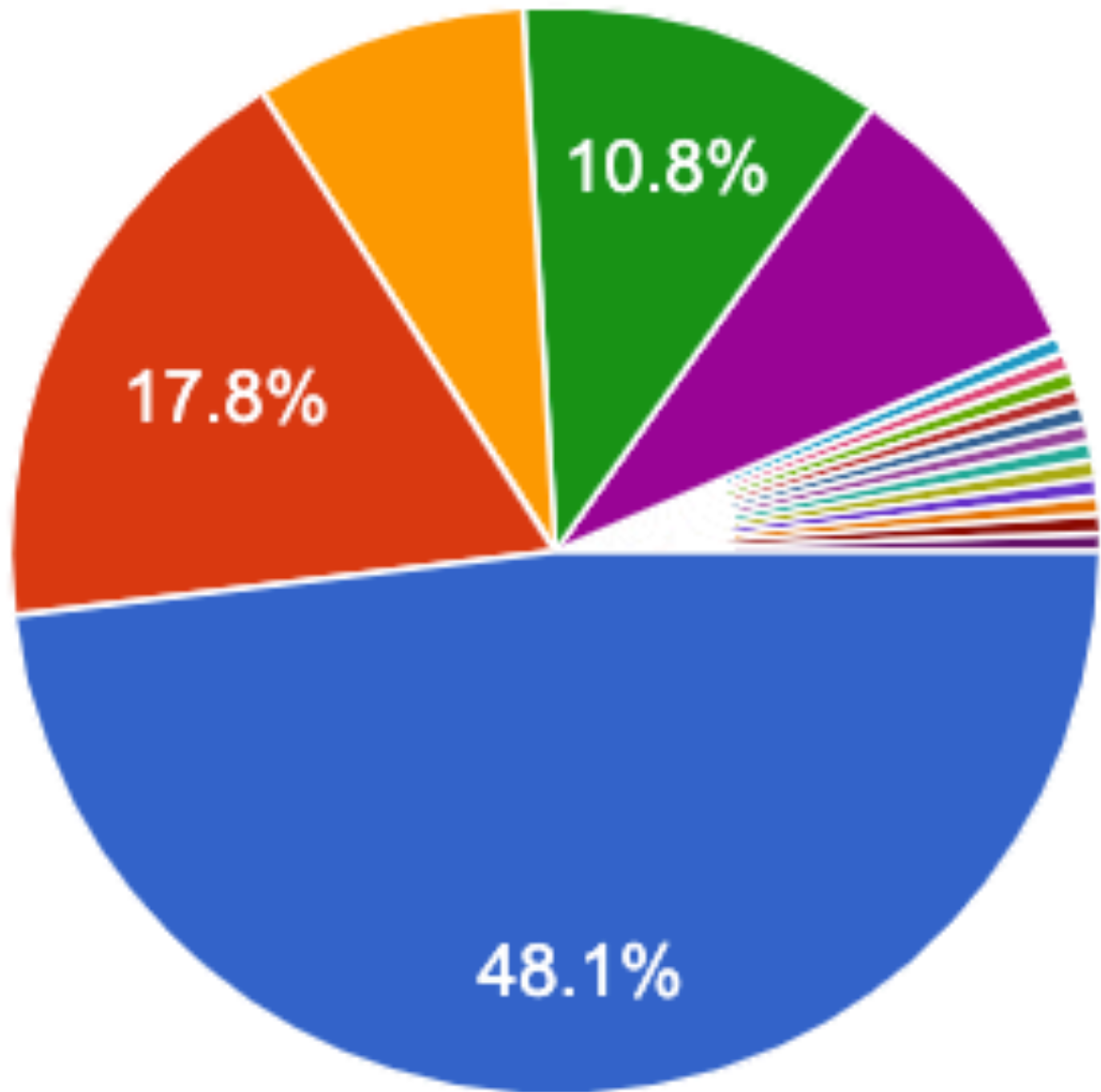


- More
 - Less
 - N/A
 - Yes
 - No
 - same
 - Definitely more
 - Up and down. Been on medication do...
- ▲ 1/3 ▼

Have you struggled with mental health more or less since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic?



185 responses

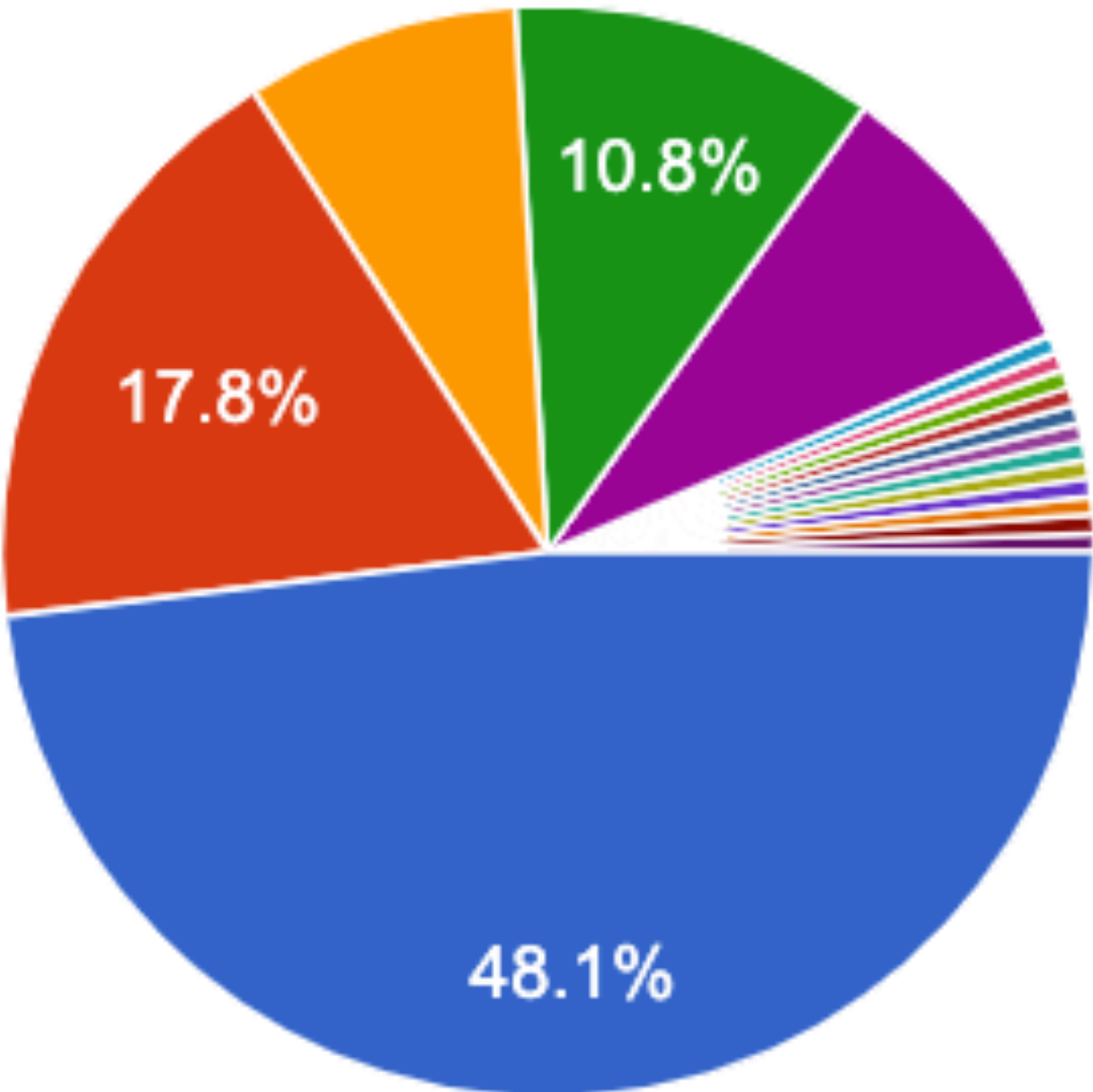


- Worry more other family member
- More initially from cabin fever - i work...
- less at first but extremely during the wi...
- More but only slightly
- About the same
- Ssme
- The same
- Less but because of medication

▲ 2/3 ▼

Have you struggled with mental health more or less since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic?

185 responses

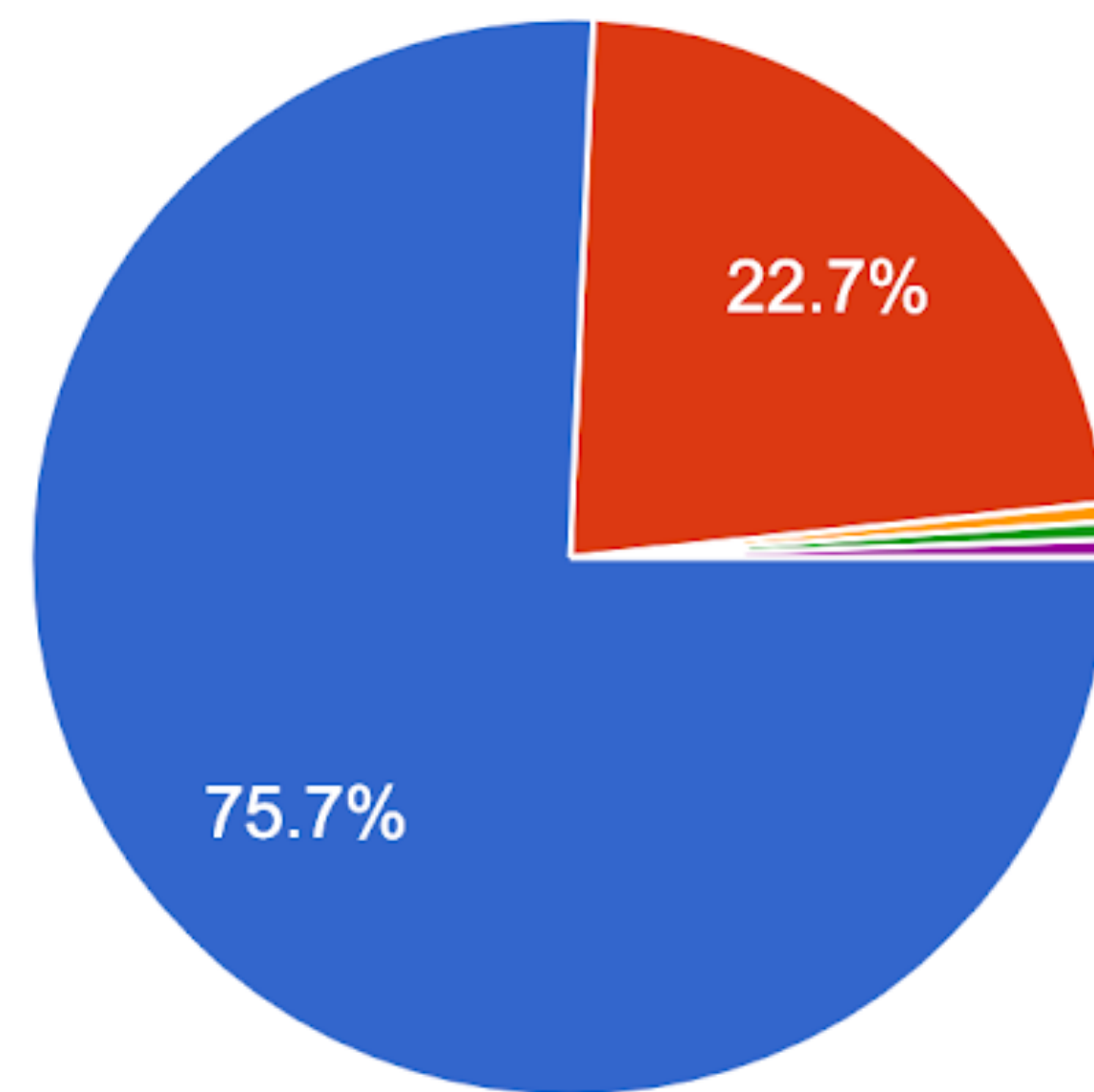


● Less but only b/c I have a really good support system now

▲ 3/3 ▼

Have you personally struggled with mental health before the COVID-19 Pandemic?

185 responses



- Yes
- No
- A little bit but, easily handled
- Moved parents in. Addition took more time because of Covid. Getting materials and inspection was a long waiting game. So I think more stressful then anything else.
- Maybe / Not Diagnosed

ANSWERS

What barriers do you think would prevent you/others from reaching out for help if struggling with mental health?

Insecurity of others knowing who I "really am" (constantly thinking very negatively about myself); Don't want to cause other people trouble

What barriers do you think would prevent you/others from reaching out for help if struggling with mental health?

The normalization that everyone is "good" and "well" in school, workplace, etc. It is considered unprofessional to be honest when asked "How are you?" casually in person or in a meeting. I think people should stop asking these questions if they do not truly want an honest response, and I have more or less started ignoring people who ask such stupid questions with no intention of wanting an honest response.

What would you say to someone struggling with mental health to help them?

There's nothing "wrong with you". Its like being physically sick. You don't beat yourself up whenever you get a cold right? And just like being physically sick, theres healing and an end to this too.