State of Connecticut College Gambling Study

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UConn Jump$tart Panel Presentation

September 23, 2026

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Overview

- DMHAS Problem Gambling Services (PGS) funded
- Data collected March to November 2023
- 1580 started survey; final respondents = 1303

30 Colleges and Universities, total:

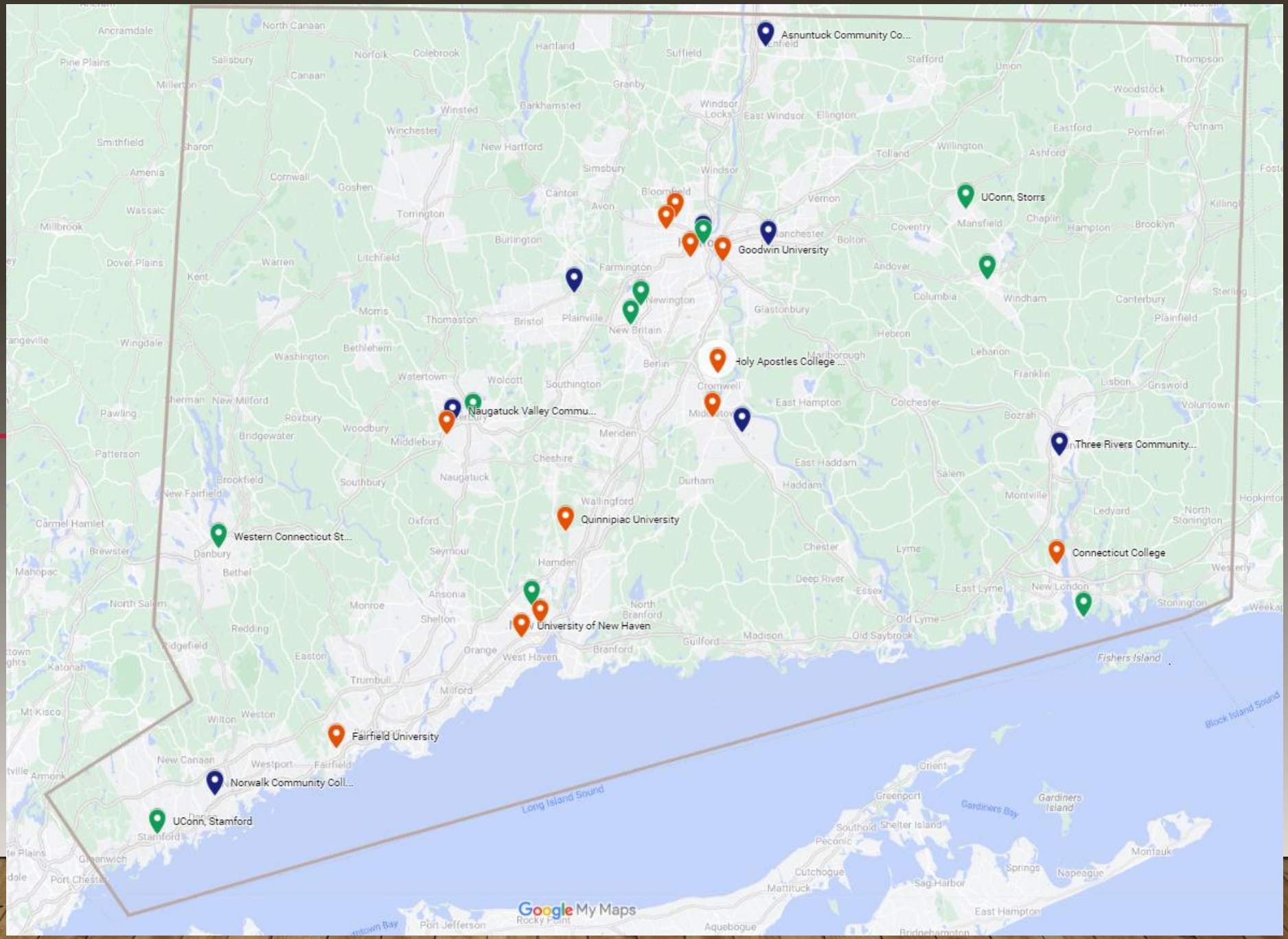
- 10 Public Colleges
- 8 Community Colleges
- 12 Private Colleges

- *For institutions with multiple campuses (UConn excluded), they are counted once.

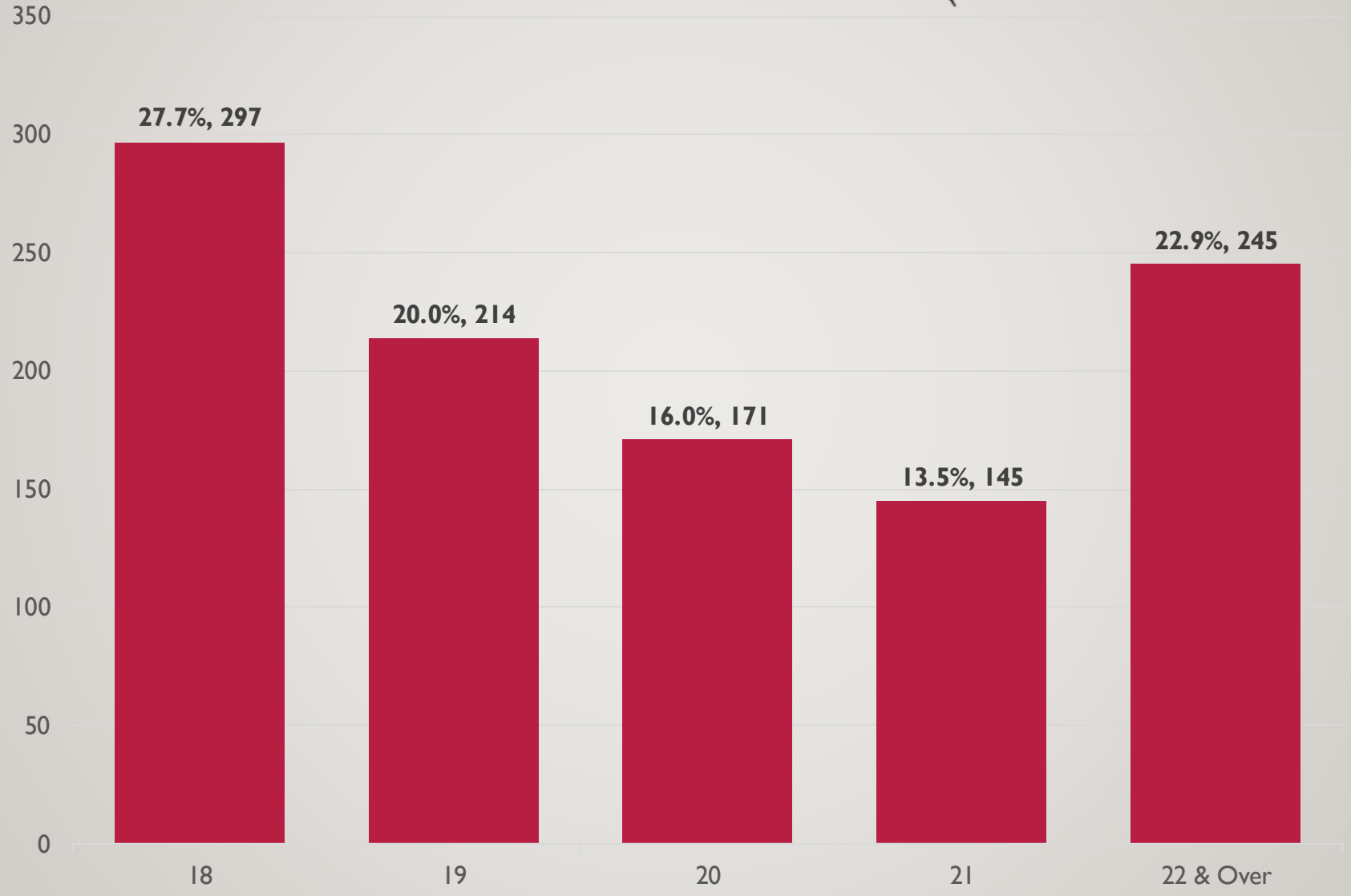
Survey of 54 Questions

- Problem Gambling Severity Index
- Types of gambling
- Co-occurring issues
- Motivation, barriers, facilitators to limit gambling
- Demographics

- **Private** (12)
  - Connecticut College
  - Fairfield University
  - Goodwin University
  - Post University
  - Quinnipiac University
  - Trinity College
  - University of Hartford
  - University of New Haven
  - University of Saint Joseph
  - Wesleyan University
  - Yale University
  - Holy Apostles College and S...
- **Public** (10)
  - Central Connecticut State U...
  - Charter Oak State College
  - Eastern Connecticut State U...
  - Southern Connecticut State ...
  - UConn, Storrs
  - UConn, Avery Point
  - UConn, Hartford
  - UConn, Waterbury
  - UConn, Stamford
  - Western Connecticut State U...
- **CC** (8)
  - Asnuntuck Community Colle...
  - Capital Community College
  - Manchester Community Coll...
  - Middlesex Community College
  - Naugatuck Valley Communit...
  - Norwalk Community College
  - Three Rivers Community Coll...
  - Tunxis Community College



OVERALL, DEMOGRAPHICALLY REPRESENTATIVE OF UNDERGRAD POPULATION.
HERE IS AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTION (ALL STUDENTS)



EDUCATION

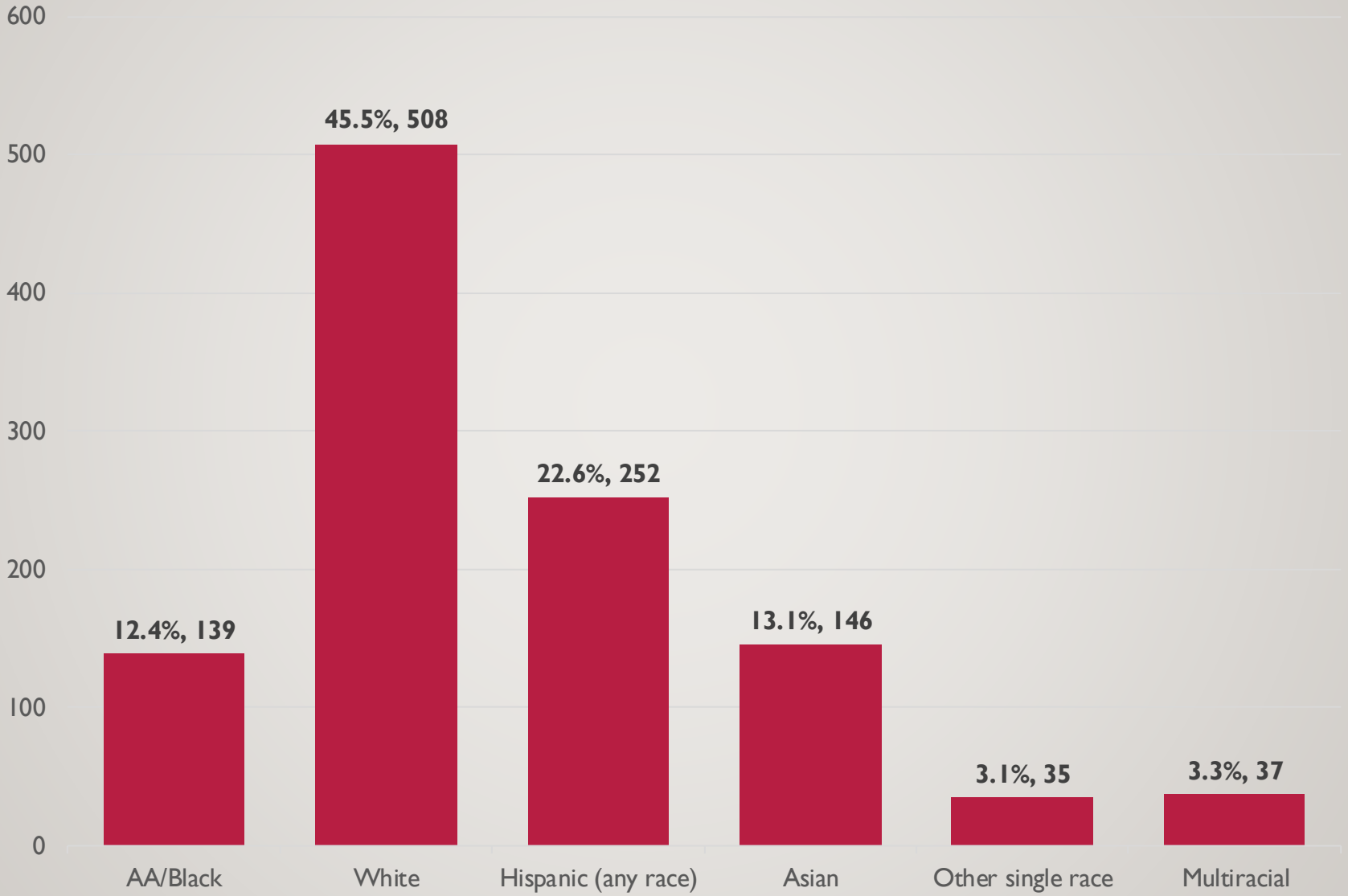
45%

Responded as a first semester student on their campus

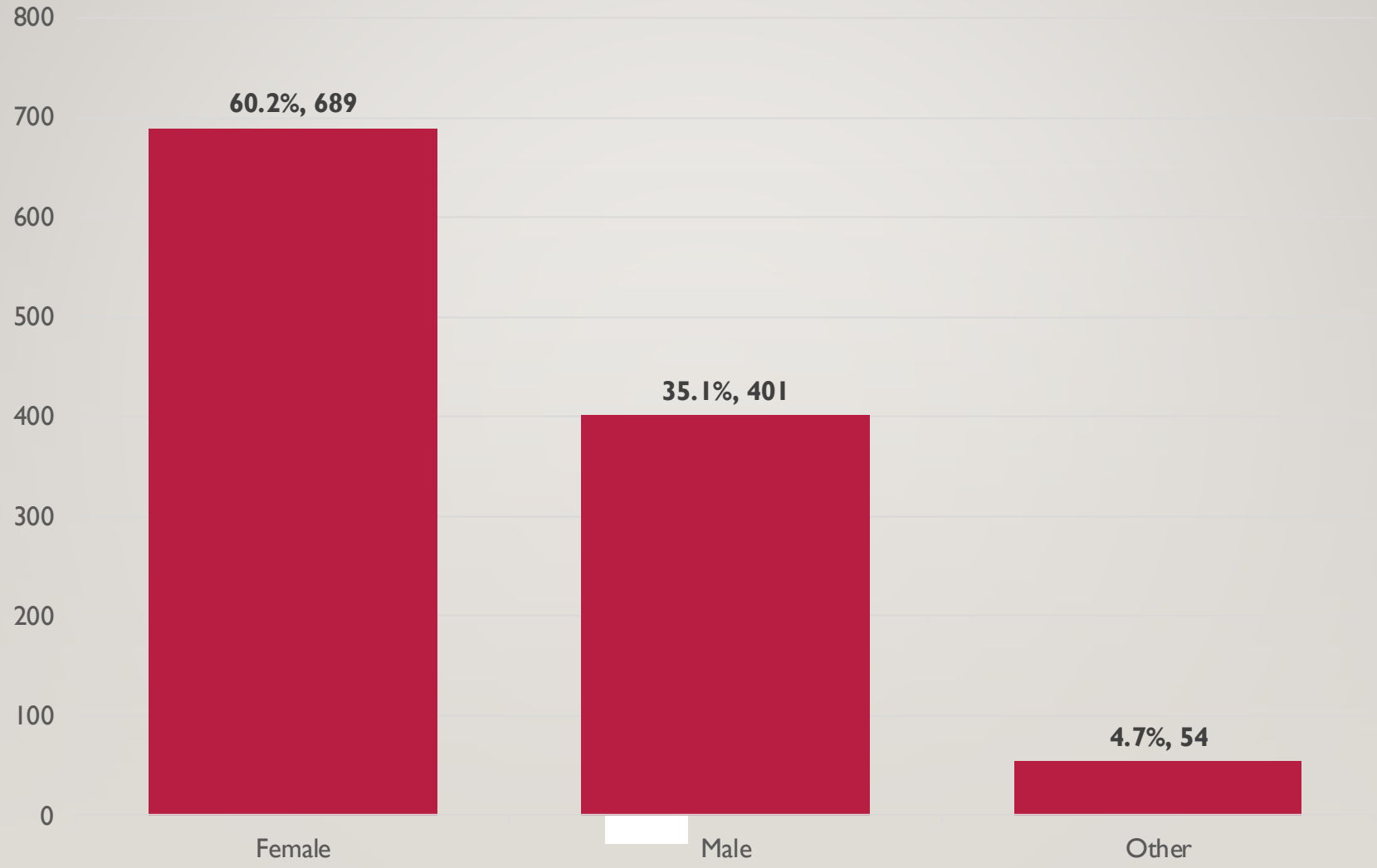
85%

Responded as a Full-Time Student

RACE GROUPS (ALL STUDENTS)



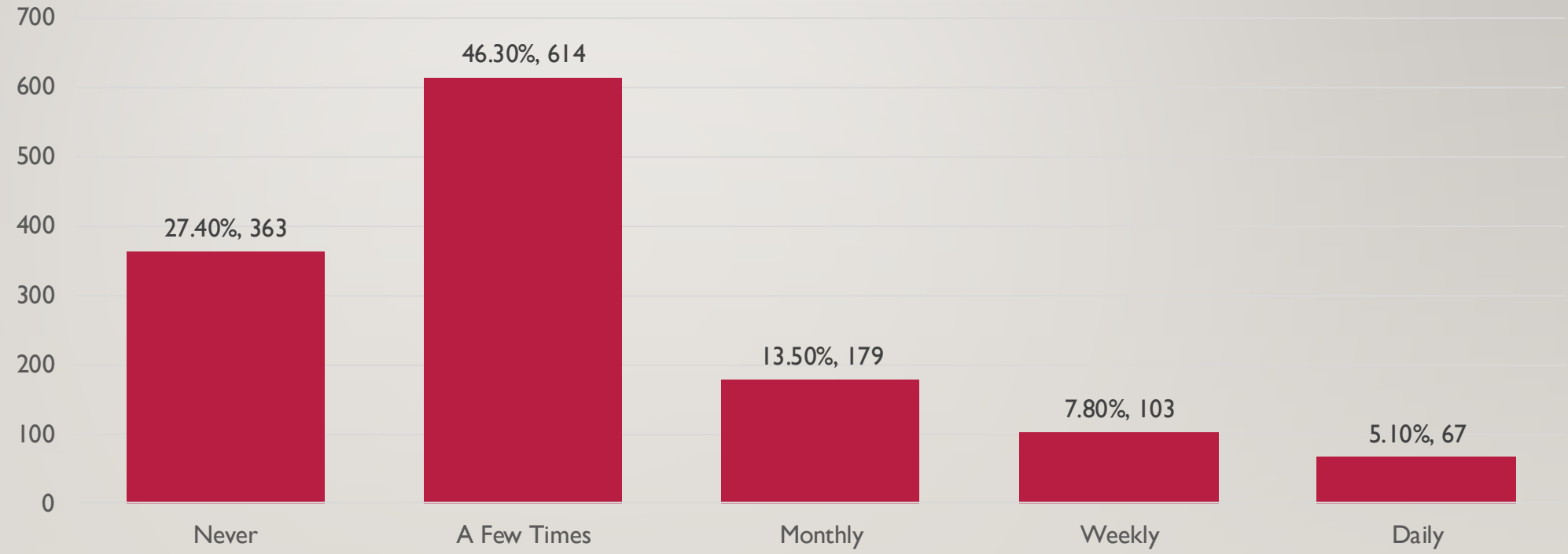
GENDER (ALL STUDENTS)



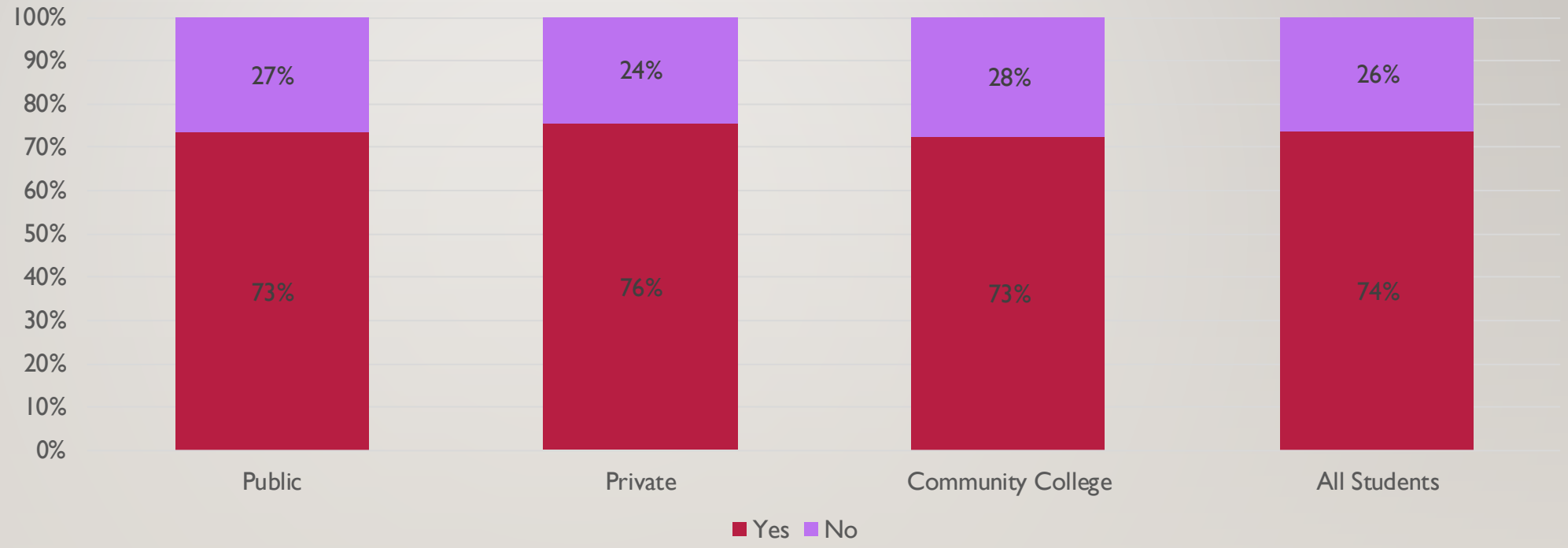
STUDENT-REPORTED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- 75% answered the behavioral health questions:
  - Of these, 56% reported one or more behavioral health conditions
- **Across all school types,**
  - Anxiety reported most frequently (52.3%, 500 cases);
  - Depression 2nd most frequently reported (42%; 386 cases);
  - Bipolar disorder and substance use disorder - around 6% each
  - Schizophrenia and Gambling Disorder was least frequently reported (less than 1%).

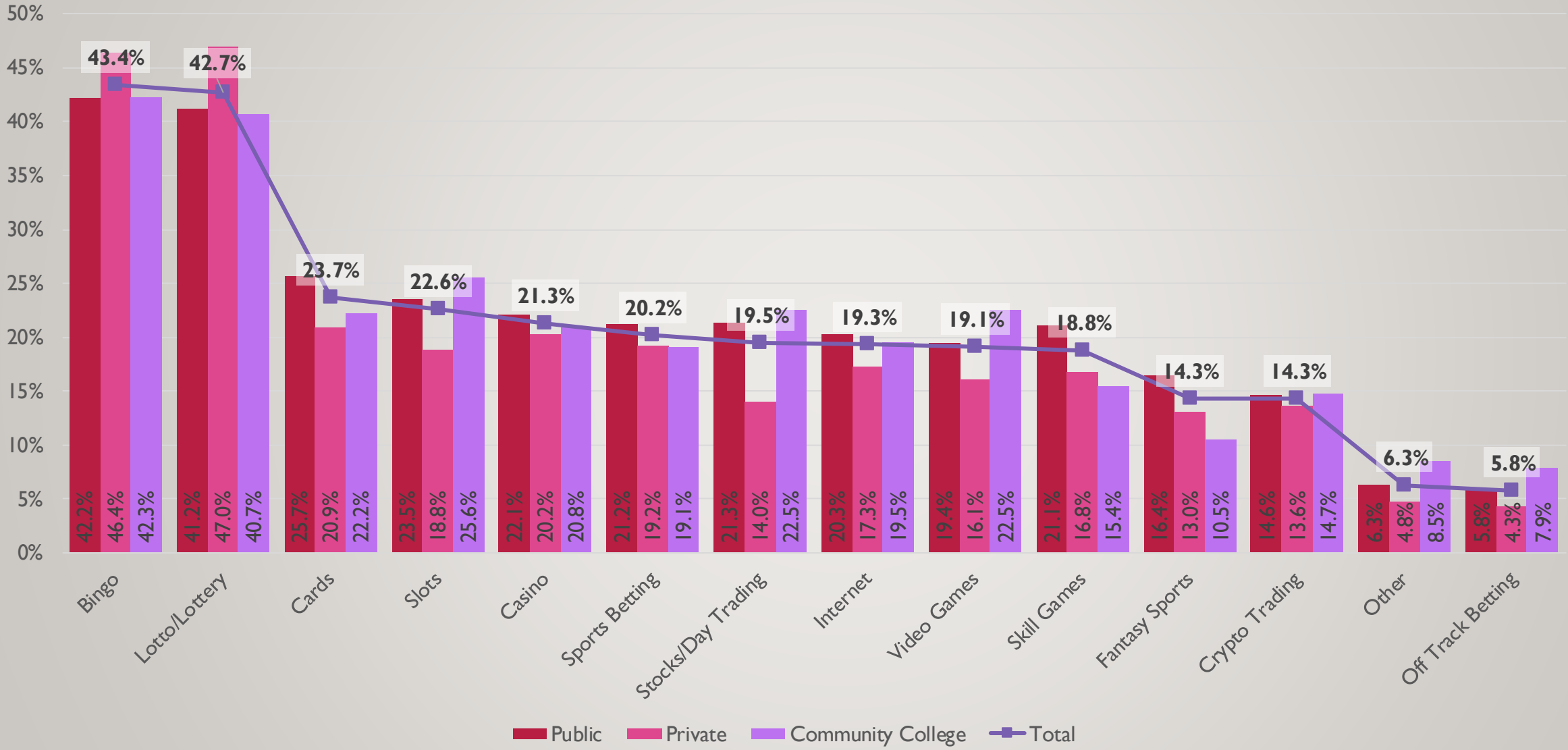
FREQUENCY OF GAMBLING IN PAST YEAR, REPORTED BY ALL STUDENT RESPONDENTS:



THERE WERE SIMILAR RESPONSES TO "ANY GAMBLING?" IN PAST YEAR ACROSS SCHOOL TYPES



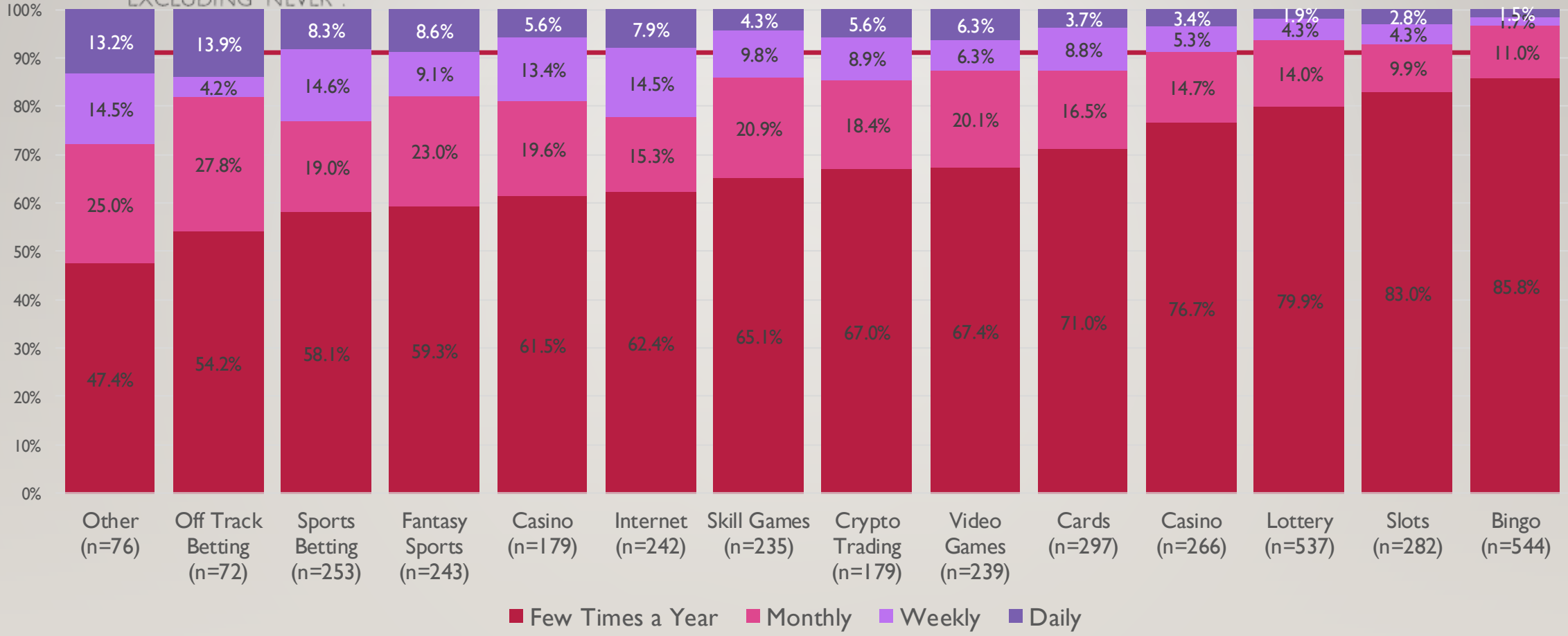
THERE WERE SIMILAR TYPES OF GAMBLING ACROSS COLLEGE TYPES



There were no significant differences between types of gambling by school type. **In other words, students from community colleges, private colleges, and public schools all reported participating in similar forms of gambling.**

GAMBLING FREQUENCY BY GAMBLING TYPE – OFF TRACK BETTING, SPORTS BETTING AND FANTASY SPORTS MORE POPULAR, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE WHO GAMBLE MORE FREQUENTLY

EXCLUDING "NEVER".

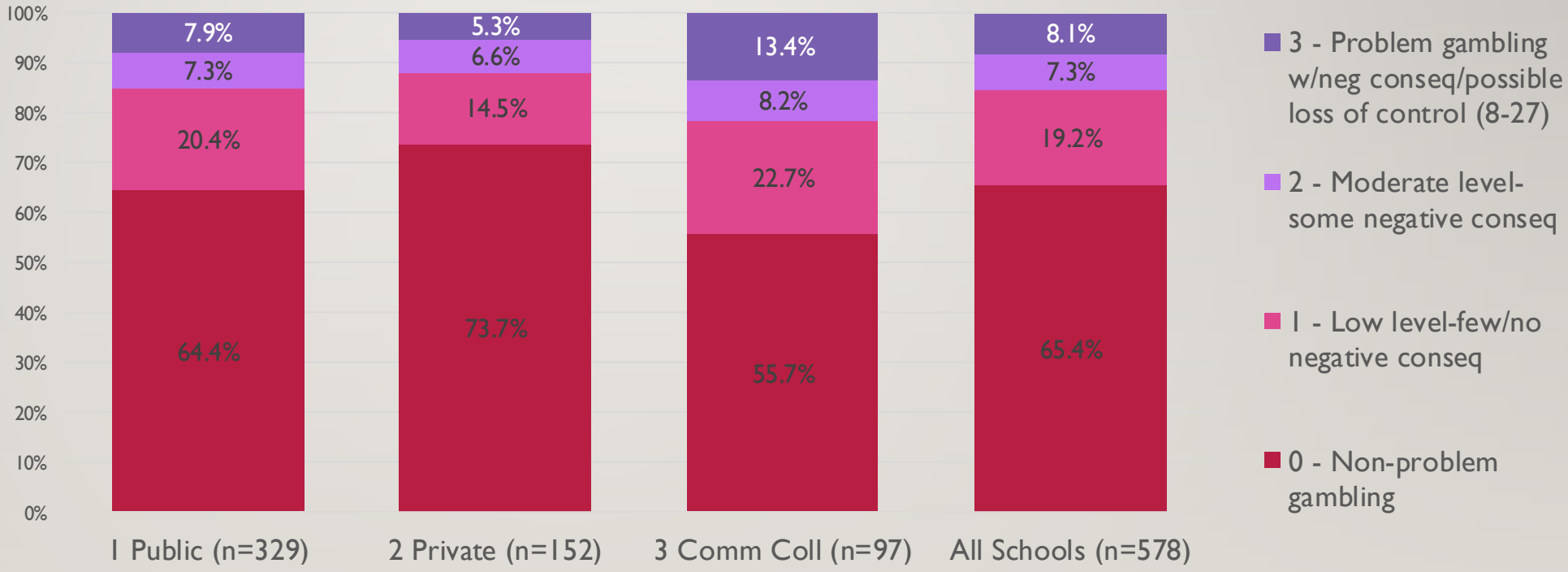


PROBLEM GAMBLING SEVERITY INDEX (PGS QUESTIONS TO ASK)

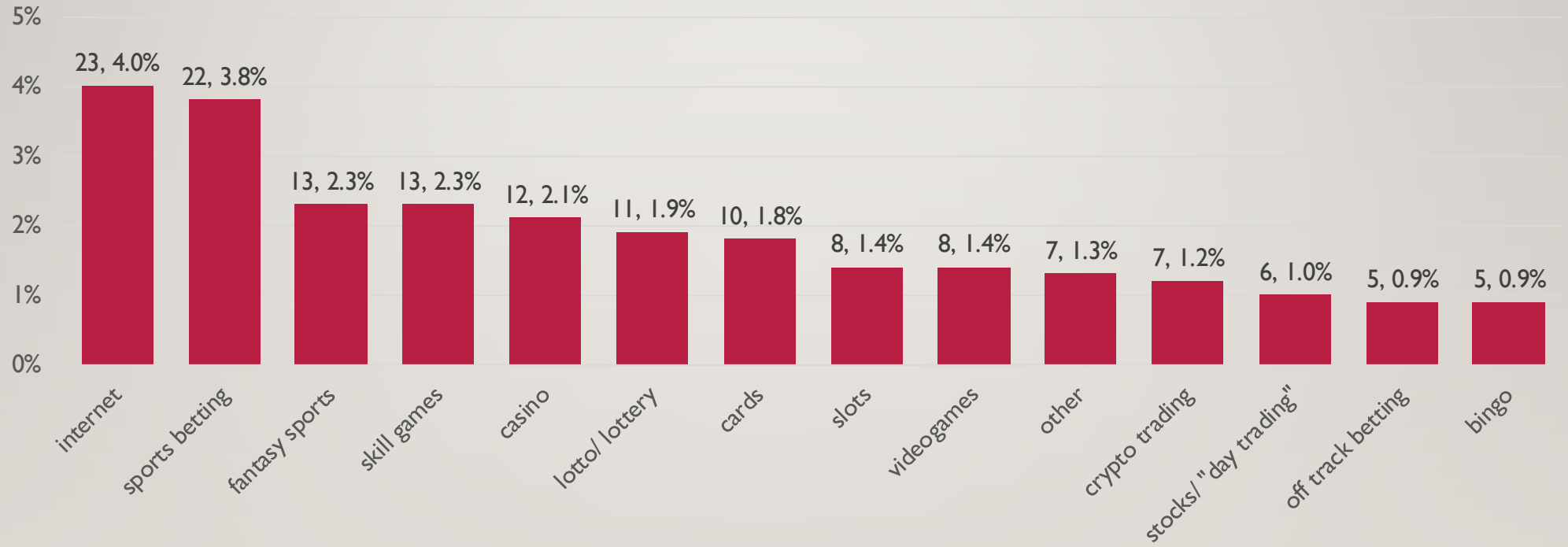
Thinking about the last 12 months…	Never	Sometimes	Most of the time	Almost always
a. Have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?				
b. Still thinking about the last 12 months, have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?				
c. When you gambled, did you go back another day to try to win back the money you lost?				
d. Have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?				
e. Have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling?				
f. Has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety?				
g. Have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true?				
h. Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?				
i. Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?				

PGS

PGSI CATEGORIES BY SCHOOL TYPE, SIMILAR

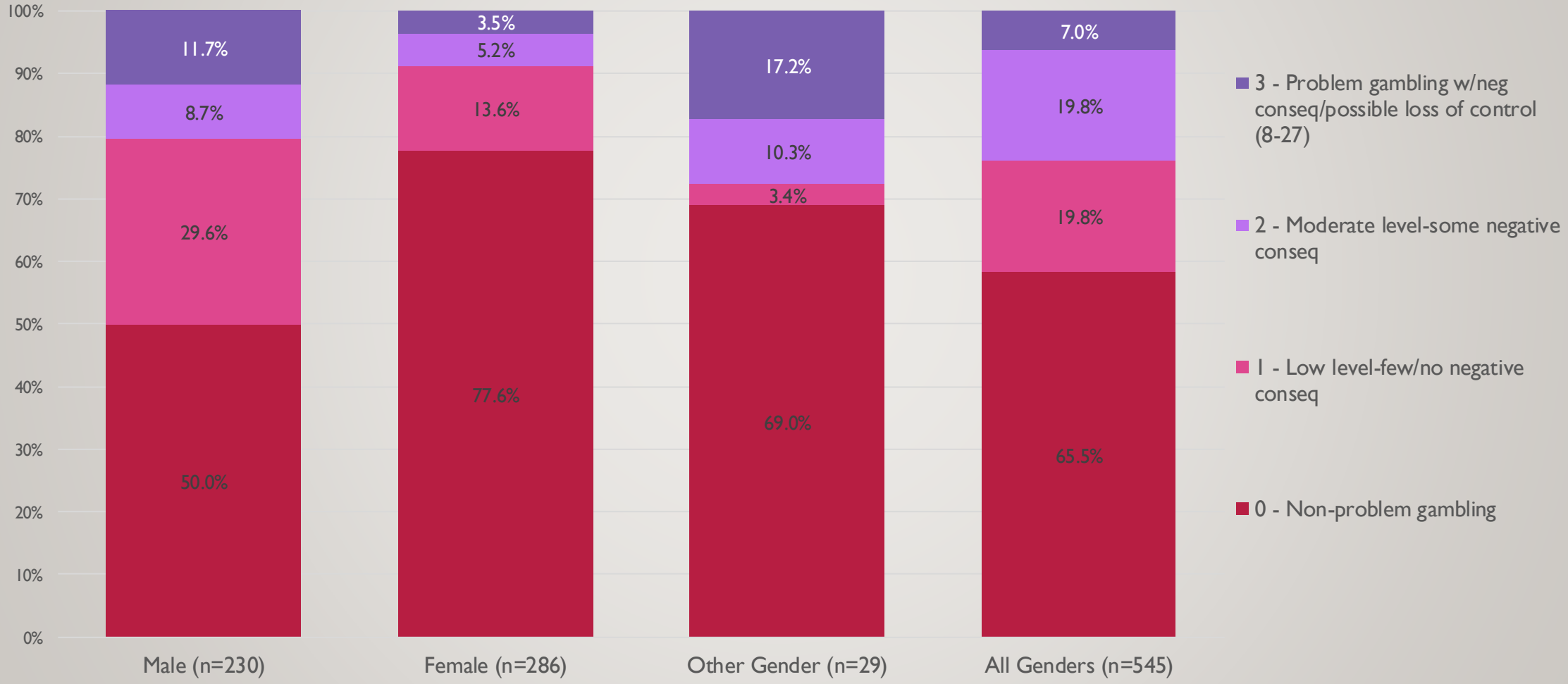


PERCENTAGE OF WEEKLY AND DAILY GAMBLERS WITH A PGSI SCORE OF 2 OR 3: INTERNET AND SPORTS BETTING HIGHEST REPORTED ACTIVITIES

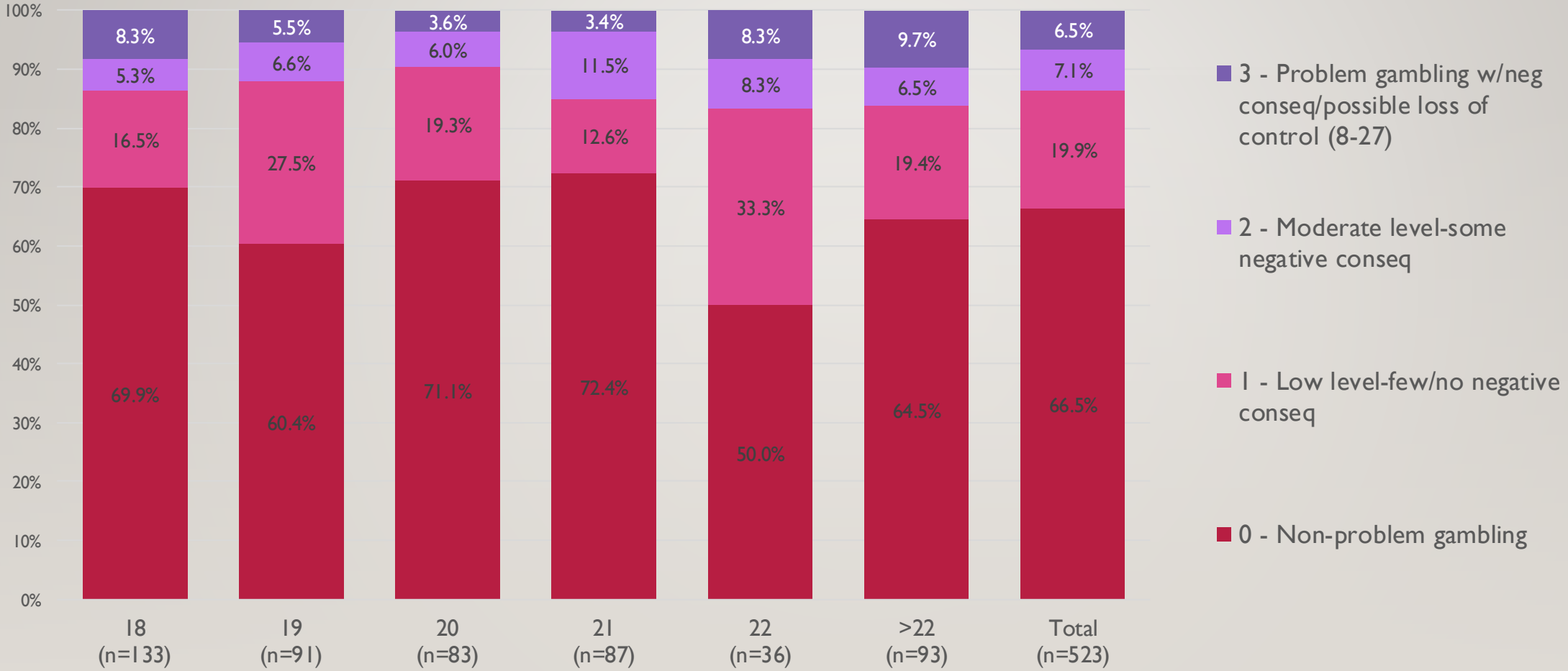


* PGSI = 2 or 3: Negative Consequences or Negative Consequences with Impact

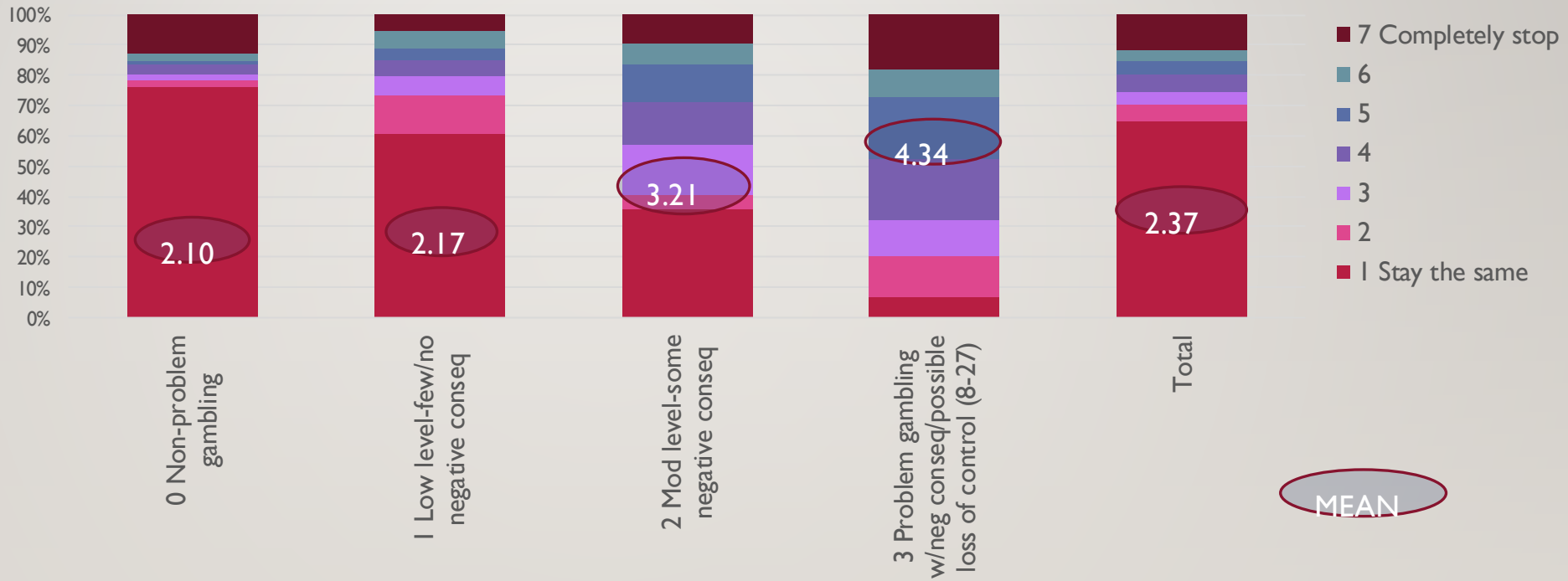
PGSI BY GENDER: MALES REPORTED HIGHER PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVALENCE



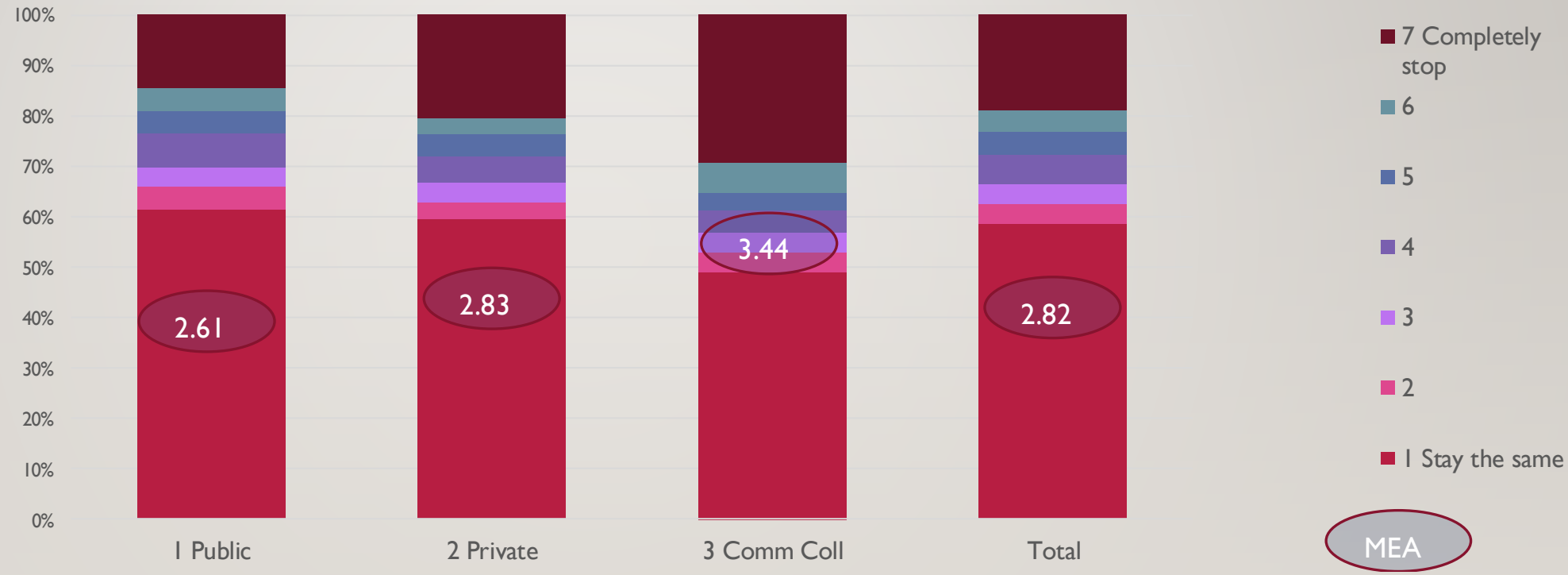
PGSI SCORES NOT SIGNIFICANT BY AGE



GOOD NEWS: SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER DESIRE TO REDUCE GAMBLING FOR THOSE WITH HIGHER PGSI SCORES



DESIRE TO REDUCE GAMBLING BY SCHOOL TYPE



REASONS WHY STUDENTS GAMBLE

Top 5

- I enjoy gambling
- I do it on special occasions
- I enjoy thinking about jackpot winnings
- Friends gamble when we get together
- Winning would change my lifestyle/need to win

REASONS & FACILITATORS TO LIMIT GAMBLING

What would help/reasons to limit gambling	N	%
I would save money	277	77.2%
A new hobby/interest	125	34.8%
Exercise/sports	78	21.7%
Having a job	77	21.4%
Be in control of life	63	17.5%
Education	63	17.5%
Support from friends/family	57	15.9%
Free quitting support - phone/website	25	7.0%
Seeing anti-gambling TV ads	23	6.4%
A doctor or counselor help	22	6.1%
Other	11	3.1%

AWARENESS OF GAMBLING PREVENTION PROGRAMS AT SCHOOL

Yes

22.9%

(176)

No

77.1%

(592)

AWARENESS OF GAMBLING PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN THE COMMUNITY

Yes	No
28.1%	71.9%
(210)	(538)

QUALITATIVE DATA –FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

- 9 campuses representing community, public, and private schools, across 6 of the 8 state counties
- Student data: 7 focus groups + 2 individual undergrad interviews; 2 conducted from each type of school
- Staff data: 2 focus groups + 7 individual interviews; 2 conducted from each type of school
  - Staff included campus counseling, recovery, residential staff, mental health and wellness programs, etc.

STUDENT INPUT: REASONS FOR GAMBLING

- Entertainment value, "fun and exciting"
- Independence and autonomy
- Social activity
- Way to make money

COMMON THEMES FOR BOTH STUDENTS & STAFF

- Ease, accessibility, pervasiveness, and marketing to young people
- Secrecy and lack of transparency surrounds gambling
- Minimization, lack of awareness, and general reluctance to seek help
- Comorbidity of substance use and gambling
- Changes since legalization (primarily more advertising, covid impact cited, etc.)
- Reported low knowledge of resources / offerings specific to gambling
- Particular groups with perceived higher prevalence (see next slide)

PERCEPTIONS REGARDING: HIGHER GAMBLING PREVALENCE GROUPS

- Caucasian males
- Students from families with higher socioeconomic status
- Fraternities
- Athletes
- Business majors (day trading and bitcoin)
- Computer Science majors (cryptocurrency)
- Economics majors (stock market)

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STUDENTS

- Create more awareness and offer resources through social media, flyers, in-person tabling, and emails (though latter was noted both as a good method of communication and an ineffective one, as many student participants reported feeling inundated with emails)
- Include gambling information in Freshman welcome packets
- Include gambling resources when “marketing” support for other addictions
- Educational programming with incentives to participate
- On-campus and/or virtual support groups
- Peer services through fraternities
- Educate kids, starting in middle school
- Update the focus in gambling prevention messaging

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTION/INTERVENTION FROM STAFF

- Need for better assessment, include problem gambling specific questions
- Financial Literacy
- Parent Awareness and Education
- Dissemination of information and resources

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Please Scan QR Code for the full report.

- Important to have strong partnerships with mental health organizations in the community who have established connections with schools (e.g., CCPG, PGS, Jordan Porco Foundation).
- We met amazing champions across the campuses who were willing to invest time and energy to help get needed input from undergraduate population.

Thank you!