



THE FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE:

A look into students' challenges and triumphs during their first term at college

October 8, 2015





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Critical Findings

The transition from high school to college is a critical milestone for many young people, often representing the first time they leave the comfort and support of their childhood home to experience a more independent lifestyle. It is a time of excitement and opportunity, but it can also be a stressful period in life that takes a toll on students' emotional and mental health. This past spring, Harris Poll conducted an online survey of 1,502 U.S. college students to better understand their experiences during their first year at college. The study, commissioned by The JED Foundation, Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, and The Jordan Porco Foundation has significant implications for parents, educators and students alike.

Most importantly, in addition to conventional college preparation that emphasizes standardized testing and academic performance (87% of students said more emphasis was placed on being ready academically than being ready emotionally for college), the study uncovered that emotional preparedness – defined by the organizations as the ability to take care of oneself, adapt to new environments, control negative emotions or behavior and build positive relationships – is a major factor to students' success during their first year at college. Specifically, students who said they felt less emotionally prepared for college than their peers are more likely than those who felt more emotionally prepared than their peers to have a lower GPA (on average, 3.1 vs. 3.4) and rate their overall college experience as “terrible/poor” (22% vs 5%).

Further, a majority of all students (60%) wish they had gotten more help with emotional preparation for college; certain groups of students were more likely to agree with this statement than their counterparts: those with a lower GPA (66% vs 55% higher GPA), regularly consumed drugs or alcohol (65% vs 58% who did not), considered transferring or transferred to a different school (70% vs 56% who did not), taken a leave of absence after their first term* (77% vs 58% who did not), and rated their overall college experience as “terrible/poor” vs “fair” or “excellent/good” (85% vs 68% & 51%).

Despite the demonstrated impact of emotional preparedness on students' college experiences and success, it remains undervalued during the college selection process. 57% of students said they felt a great deal of pressure to go to a well-known college/university, while 52% said their high school placed greater emphasis on college prestige than college fit.

*Small base (n<100) – results should be interpreted as directional only.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Emotional and Mental Distress

Students reported that the first-year of college is full of emotional challenges that span far beyond academics. Among myriad challenges, pressures such as paying for college expenses (40%), making new friends (30%), keeping in touch with family and friends not at their college (28%) and being independent (16%) were reported as being extremely or very challenging, and nearly half (45%) of students felt that “it seems like everyone has college figured out but me.” Exacerbating these challenges is the often-rosy portrayal of college in popular culture – social media, television and movies. About three out of four students (77%) felt social media, television, and movies made college seem a lot more fun than it actually was, while nearly half (49%) said that college was not living up to their expectations.

Perhaps not surprisingly, stress is a common theme among first year college students. What is concerning, however, is that 50% of students reported feeling stressed most or all of the time and 36% did not feel as if they were in control of managing the stress of day-to-day college life. Students with lower GPAs were more likely than those with higher GPAs to say they did not feel in control of the day-to-day stresses of college (45% vs 31%).

While many students reported feelings of happiness (46%), optimism (37%) and confidence (33%) most or all of the time, there were also noteworthy feelings of loneliness, depression and anxiety. 38% of students said they felt anxious, one in four (25%) said they felt lonely, and one in five (22%) said they felt depressed all or most of the time during their first term of school.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenges to Getting Support

More than half of students (51%) found it difficult at times to get emotional support at college when they needed it, and more than 1 in 10 students (11%) say they did not turn to anyone for support when needed. Certain groups are more likely to turn to no one for support, including: male vs. female (16% vs 6%) and those who rate their first term experience as “terrible/poor” or “fair” vs. “excellent/good” (15% and 16% vs 7%).

When they do seek support, college students are much more likely to turn to friends (76%) or family members (64%) than university staff (24%). However, a majority of students (65%) said they tended to keep their feelings about the difficulty of college to themselves; African American students are more likely to say this than white students (75% vs 61%).

Similar to when they were in high school (92% positive and 64% negative in high school), students report engaging in a mix of positive (88%) as well as negative (61%) behaviors when stressed or overwhelmed during their first term in college. Of particular concern, more than 1 in 5 (22%) turned to drugs or alcohol when stressed or overwhelmed.

In addition to using substances when stressed or overwhelmed, many students (30%) reported regularly consuming drugs or alcohol during their first term; this can have serious ramifications in terms of students’ wellbeing. Specifically, those who regularly used substances were more likely than those who didn’t regularly use substances to rate their emotional health worse than their peers (39% vs. 32%) and experience negative feelings such as stress (56% vs. 47%), anxiety (43% vs. 36%) and being overwhelmed (47% vs. 40%). Regular substance use also appears to affect help-seeking, as these students were more likely to report difficulty getting emotional support when needed (61% vs 47%).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Call to Action and Resources

The results of this study provide critical information that can inform the discussion around college mental and emotional health. It reveals the true extent of the struggles faced by first-year college students, and shows that silence and isolation continue to pervade college life. It also highlights the pivotal role that external pressures like social media, school prestige and other non-academic challenges play in the emotional health of students.

Only by breaking open the dialogue around emotional health can schools support students so they can stop feeling alone and find the help they need to thrive.

Are high school students Set to Go?

Students, parents and school administrators are encouraged to visit a new online resource, SettoGo.org, to help prepare for the transition to college and beyond – from developing basic life skills, to building social and emotional competence, to educating themselves on the fundamentals of mental health and substance abuse, and navigating the transition itself – Set to Go helps teens and young adults flourish and lead emotionally healthy lives into adulthood.





OBJECTIVES & RESEARCH METHOD

Recognizing that not all young adults begin their college experience with smooth transitions and positive outcomes – emotional, social and academic – The JED Foundation, Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, and The Jordan Porco Foundation commissioned Harris Poll to conduct a survey to better understand students' experiences during the first year at college.

Specifically, the research was designed to:

- Determine students' level of preparedness, academically and emotionally, for college transition
- Identify challenges (anticipated and unforeseen) students faced during this transition period
- Pinpoint the main sources of support for students (or lack thereof)
- Uncover what information, skills, and education is needed to provide an easier adjustment to college life

The study was conducted online by Harris Poll between March 25 and April 27, 2015. Averaging at 20 minutes in length, a total of 1,502 interviews were conducted among students who met the following criteria:

- 17-20 years old
- Graduated from high school
- Currently attends a 2-year or 4-year college in the U.S.
- Currently a first-year student ("freshman") in their second term
- Currently attending at least some of their college classes in-person

Data are weighted where necessary by age within gender, race/ethnicity, and region to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.



REPORT NOTES

In tables and charts:

- A dash (-) denotes a value of zero.
- An asterisk (*) denotes a value less than one percent but greater than zero.
- Percentages may not add up to 100% due to weighting and/or computer rounding.
- Results based on small samples ($n < 100$) should be interpreted as directional only.

Throughout this report:

- Unless otherwise noted, results for the total sample size are displayed
- When applicable, statistically significant differences between subgroups are included.

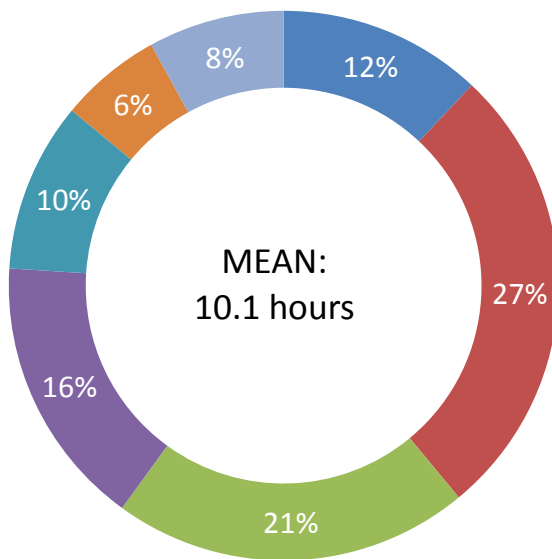
A photograph of a smiling female high school graduate wearing a black cap and gown, holding a white diploma. Another graduate is blurred in the background.

HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND EXPECTATIONS

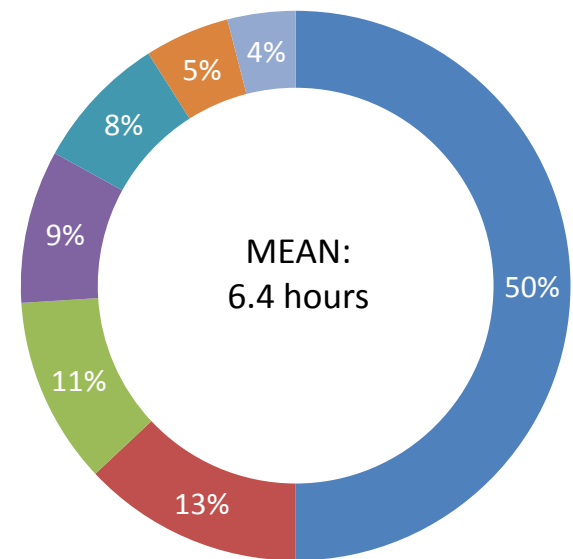
The average first-year college student juggled multiple responsibilities as high school seniors

- In addition to their schoolwork, students participated in extracurricular activities an average of 10 hours/week and worked at a job/internship 6 hours/week when they were in HS.

Extracurricular Activities



An internship or Job



Hours Spent Per Week On Each Activity in Final Year of HS

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q710 During your final year in high school how many hours per week did you spend on each of the following? If you participated in more than one, please consider the total amount of time you spent at each combined.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Many were treated or diagnosed with various conditions before the start of college

- Ranging from physical and learning disabilities to emotional and behavioral disorders, students report having to deal with various conditions before entering college.



**8% report
having a
physical
condition
or
limitation**

**7% report
having a
learning
disability**

% report being treated/diagnosed with a health condition or disorder before college

Nearly **1 in 5** (18%): **depression**

Nearly **1 in 5** (17%): **anxiety**

Nearly **1 in 10** (8%): **ADHD**

Nearly **1 in 10** (8%): **self-harm**

1 in 20 (5%): **disordered eating/eating disorder**

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

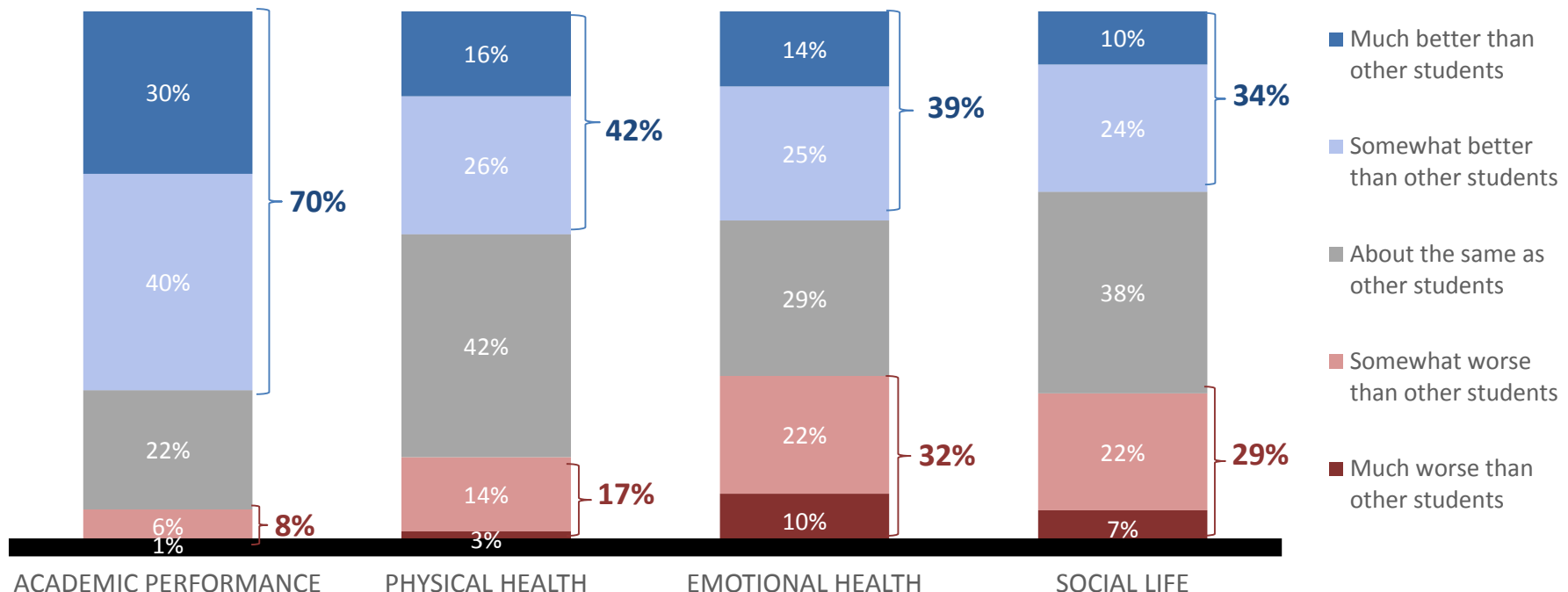
Q1105 Which of the following conditions, if any, have you ever been diagnosed with or treated for by a physician or other healthcare provider?

Q1040 Which of the following, if any, describes you?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

1 in 3 students believe their emotional health lagged behind that of their peers in HS

- Rated poorer than all other areas of their life, including social life, physical health, and academic performance, a third of students rate their emotional health in high school as “worse than other students”.



Ratings of Various Areas of Life During Final Year of HS

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q720 Compared to other students at your high school, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your final year in high school? Please think back to what you knew about other students or conversations you had with other students at your high school.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

External factors may have played a role in students' lack of emotional preparedness

- The overwhelming majority feel their high school focused less on emotional preparedness than being academically ready. Further, over half of students note pressure from their high school as well as their parents in their college selection.

**% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)**

87%

"In high school, there was more emphasis placed on being ready academically for college than being ready emotionally"

57%

"I felt a great deal of pressure to go to a well-known college/university"

52%

"My high school placed greater emphasis on college prestige than college fit"

51%

"My parent(s)/guardian(s) heavily influenced my college/university choice"

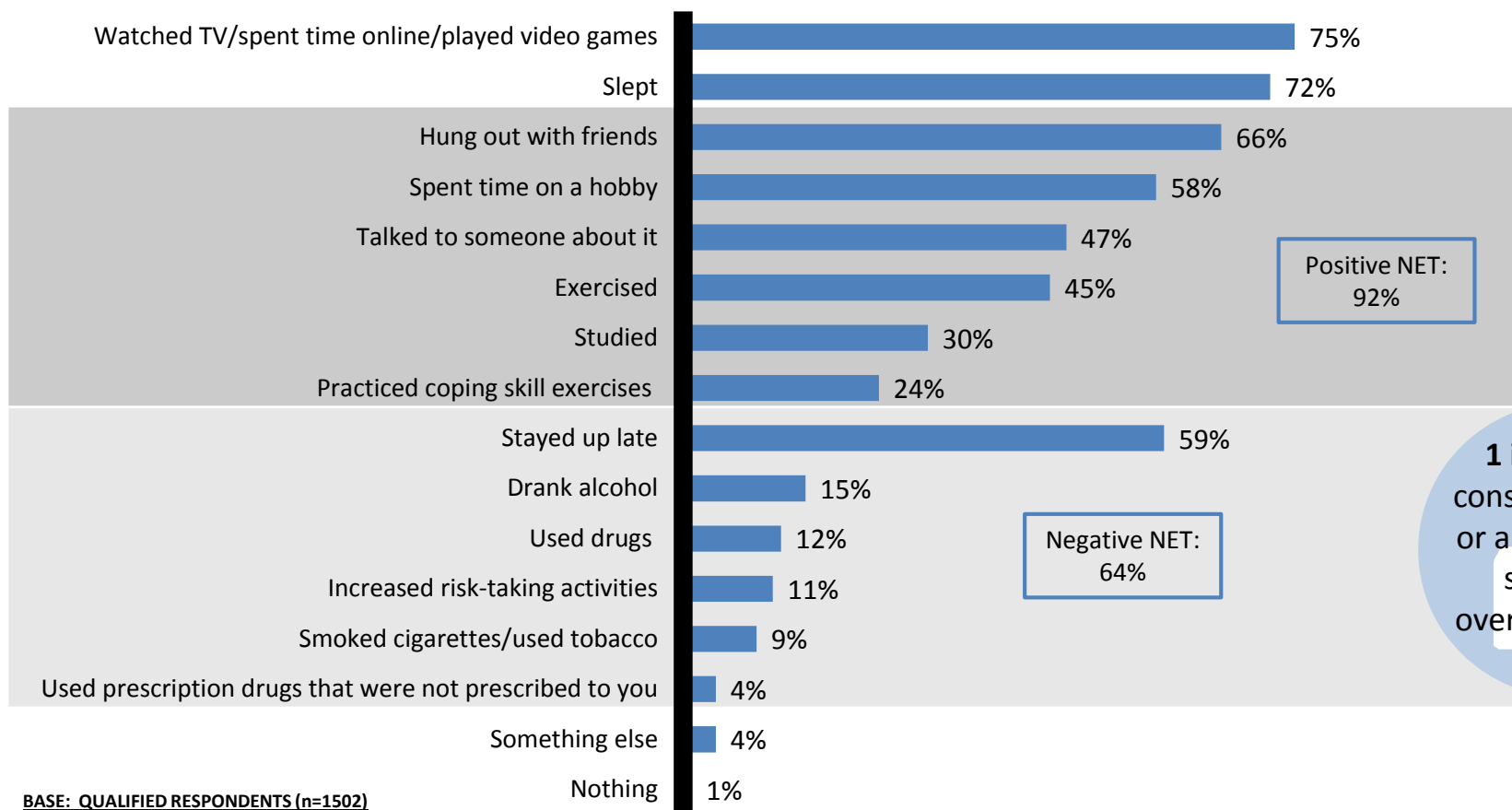
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q750 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Although most students handled stress positively in HS, nearly 2 in 3 dealt with it in a negative manner

- The majority of students watched TV/went online or slept when they were stressed/overwhelmed during their final year in high school. Notably, many also report engaging in negative behaviors, including alcohol or drug use, when stressed or overwhelmed.



1 in 5 (20%)
consumed drugs
or alcohol when
stressed/
overwhelmed in
HS

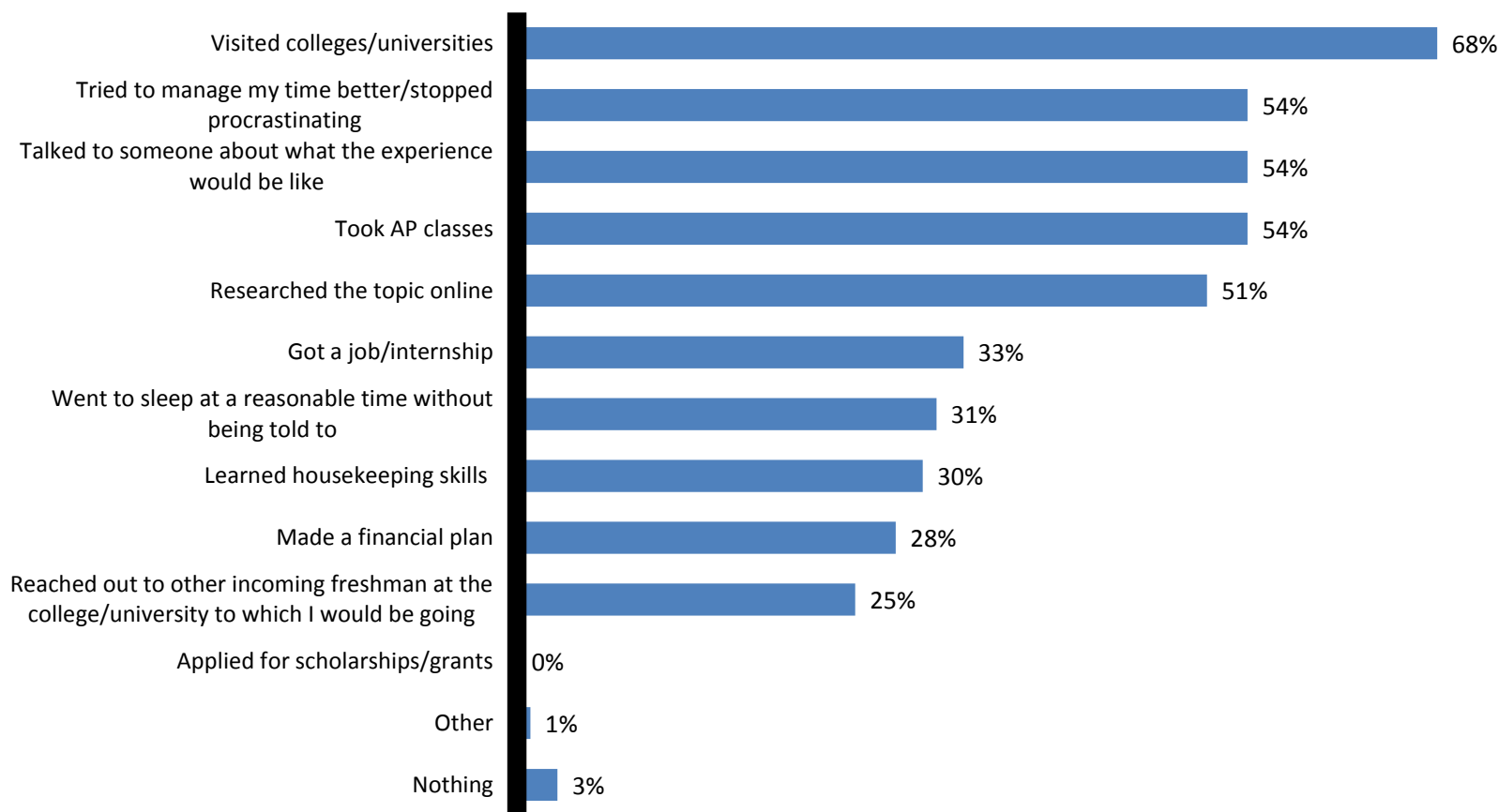
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q730 Which of the following activities, if any, did you typically do when you felt overwhelmed or stressed during your final year in high school? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Nearly all took at least one step to prepare themselves for the transition to college

- While the majority of students prepared themselves for college by visiting colleges/universities, many also made lifestyle changes, particularly working on their time management, housekeeping skills, and financial planning.



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q740 In which of the following ways, if any, did you prepare yourself for attending college/university during your final year in high school? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

However, most students desired more help getting ready for the emotional aspect of the college transition

- Although the degree to which this sentiment is felt varies across demographics, the majority of students express a need for assistance in getting emotionally ready for college.

% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)

60%

I wish I had more help getting emotionally ready for college

Specific groups are more likely to agree with this statement:

Female vs. Male
(66% vs. 52%)

Students at Large vs. Small College
(64% vs. 56%)

Rate College Experience as
Terrible/Poor vs. Fair or Excellent/Good
(85% vs. 68% and 51%)

African American vs.
Caucasian (69% vs. 59%)

Considered Transferring/
Transferred vs. Didn't (70% vs. 56%)

Diagnosed/Treated for a Health
Condition vs. Not (72% vs. 53%)

Students with Lower GPAs vs.
Higher GPAs (66% vs. 55%)

Took Leave of Absence After 1st
Term vs. Didn't (77% vs. 58%)

Regularly Consume Alcohol/Drugs
During 1st Term vs. Not (65% vs. 58%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Notably, many admit they considered not going to college at all

- Some students say they thought about not going to college. Though fewer, some took time off before starting college.

Over 1 in 4 students (28%) say:

"I considered not going to college."



1 in 10 students (11%) say:

"I took a year or more between high school and beginning college/university."



Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs
(36% vs. 21%)

Rate College Experience as Terrible/Poor vs.
Fair or Excellent/Good (52% vs. 33% and 20%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q1040 Which of the following, if any, describes you? Please select all that apply.

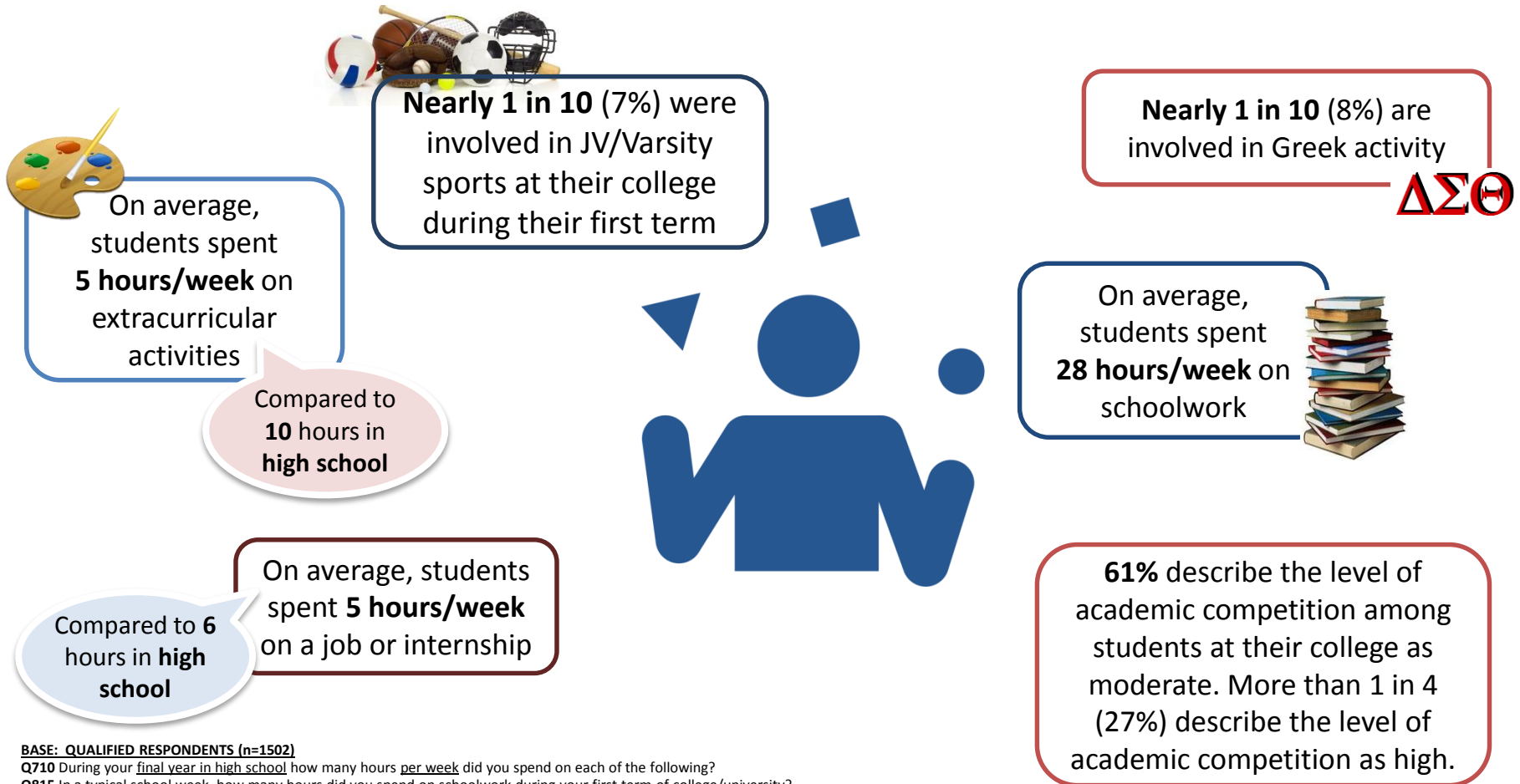
Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A photograph of a family of four walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a lush green forest. The father, on the left, wears a red button-down shirt and dark pants. The mother, next to him, wears a blue long-sleeved shirt and khaki pants, gesturing with her right hand. The son, next to her, wears a grey sweatshirt and jeans. The daughter, on the far right, wears a green polo shirt and khaki pants. They are all looking towards the path ahead. The scene is brightly lit with sunlight filtering through the trees.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Students continue the juggling act in their first term of college

- Similar to high school, college freshmen report involvement in various activities in addition to their schoolwork.



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q710 During your final year in high school how many hours per week did you spend on each of the following?

Q815 In a typical school week, how many hours did you spend on schoolwork during your first term of college/university?

Q825 During your first term of college/university, in a typical week, how many hours per week did you spend on each of the following?

Q1040 Which of the following, if any, describes you?

BASE: FOUR YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS (n=1072)

Q1005 In your opinion, which one of the following best describes the level of academic competition among students at the college/university that you currently attend?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Still, most first-year college students rate their first term experience highly, especially those who felt more emotionally prepared

- Nearly 6 in 10 students say their overall experience during their first term was “excellent” or “good.” Few considered it to “terrible” or “poor.”

Overall Experience During First Term of College



The more emotionally prepared students feel compared to their peers, the more likely they are to rate their overall experience during their first term as “excellent/good”

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q810 How would you rate your overall experience during the first term of college/university?

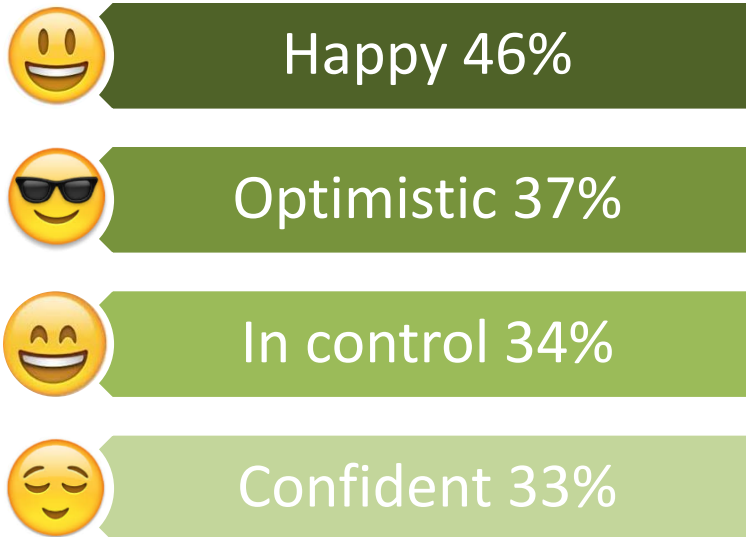
Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students exhibit mixed feelings during their first term

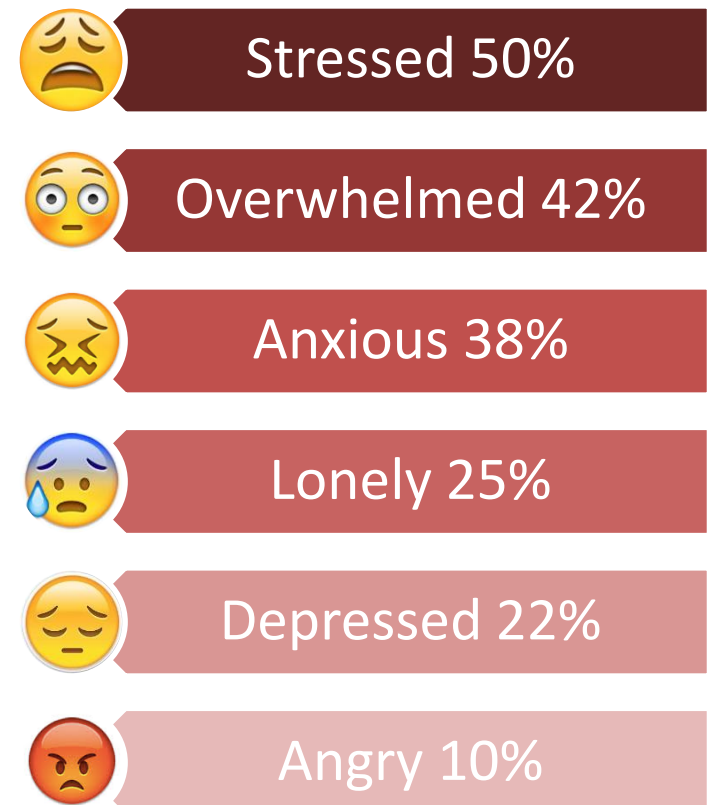
- While many students report feelings of happiness, optimism, and confidence during their first term, there were also feelings of stress, loneliness, depression, and even anger.

Experience Feelings Most/All of the Time:

Positive:



Negative:



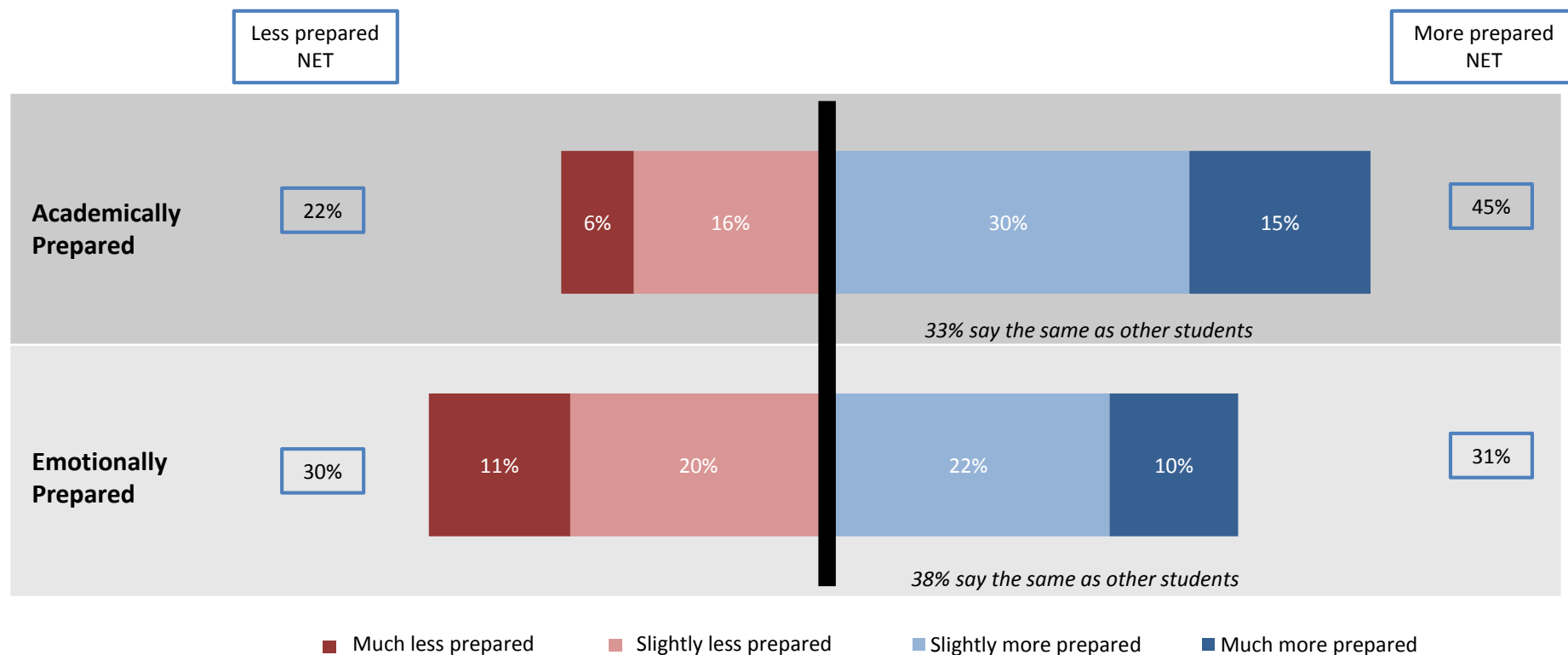
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q850 Thinking about your first term at college/university, how often did you feel...?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students report feeling more prepared academically than emotionally when they first started college

- While close to half of students report feeling more academically prepared compared to their peers, this falls considerably for those who say they were more emotionally prepared than other students.



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q855 Compared to other first year students at your college/university, how prepared did you feel in each of the following areas during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Less emotionally prepared students differ from their peers in notable ways

Less Emotionally Prepared Students Are More Likely To:

Demographics

- Be African American (15% vs. 9%)
- Be female (61% vs. 48%)
- Have parents who did not graduate from college (42% vs. 30%)

Conditions

- Have been treated or diagnosed with the following health conditions:
 - Depression (34% vs. 17%)
 - Anxiety (33% vs. 19%)
 - Self-harm (14% vs. 8%)
 - Insomnia (13% vs. 5%)
- Have a physical disability (12% vs. 5%)

College Experience

- Felt pressure to attend a well-known college (62% vs. 56%)
- Have a lower GPA (on average, 3.1 vs. 3.4)
- Rate their overall college experience as terrible or poor (22% vs. 5%)
- Turn to “no one” for support in college (14% vs. 8%)

BASE: FELT LESS EMOTIONALLY PREPARED THAN OTHER STUDENTS (n=456); FELT MORE EMOTIONALLY PREPARED THAN OTHER STUDENTS (N=473)

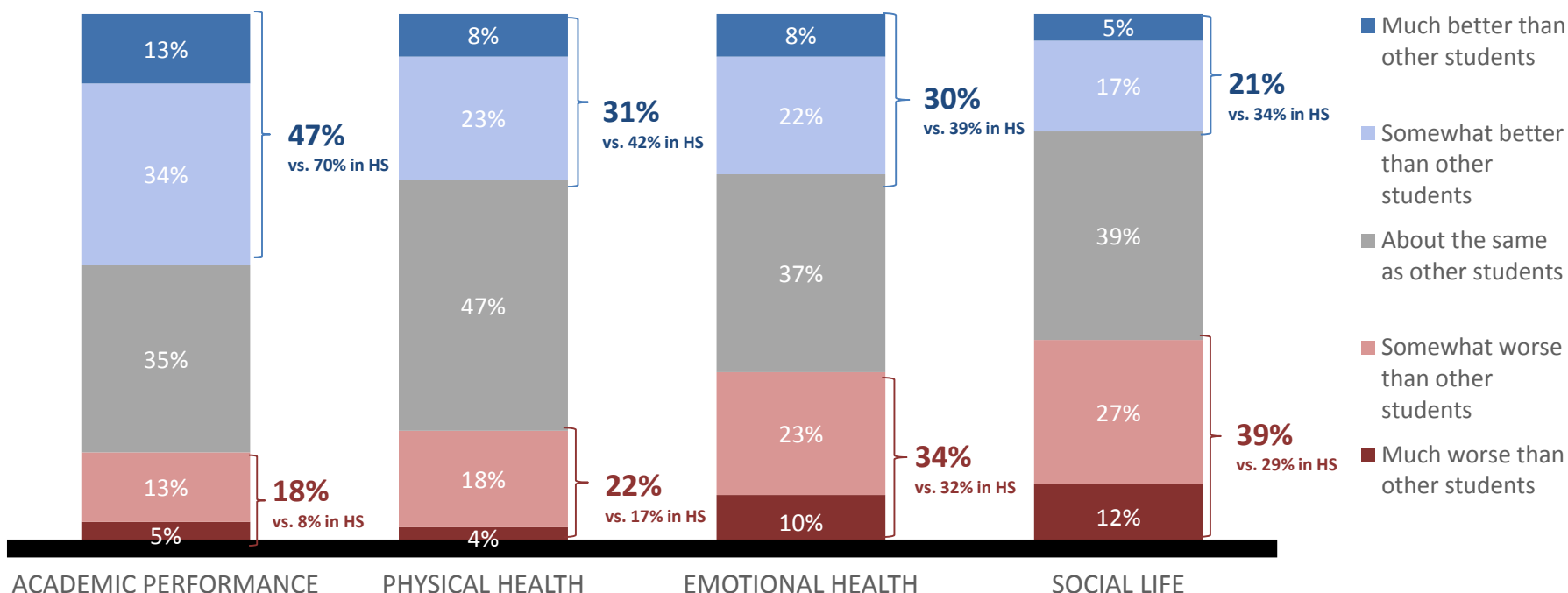
Q855 Compared to other first year students at your college/university, how prepared did you feel in each of the following areas during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Further, 1 in 3 students rate their emotional health as worse than their peers during their first term

- Although a larger percentage of students rate their social life as worse than others, rating for “worse emotional health” follows closely behind at 34%.

Ratings of Various Areas of Life During First Term of College



Students with a lower GPA are more likely than those with a higher GPA to rate all areas of their life as “worse than other students.”

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

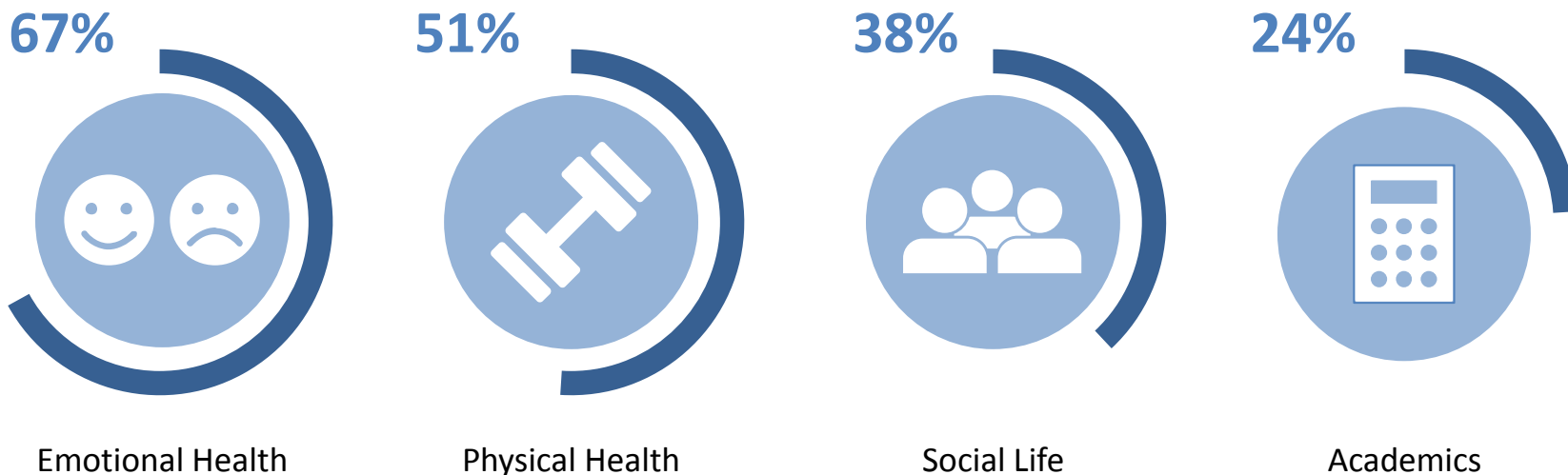
Q720 Compared to other students at your high school, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your final year in high school? Please think back to what you knew about other students or conversations you had with other students at your high school.

Q860 Compared to other students at your college/university, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Notably, the majority who felt their emotional health was worse than their college peers, also felt that way during their final year of HS

- More than 2 in 3 students rated their emotional health as much/somewhat worse than other students in both their final year in high school and their first term in college. However, this drops considerably when it comes to other areas of their life.



Students who rated themselves as “much/somewhat worse than other students” in high school AND college/university

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q720 Compared to other students at your high school, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your final year in high school? Please think back to what you knew about other students or conversations you had with other students at your high school.

Q860 Compared to other students at your college/university, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

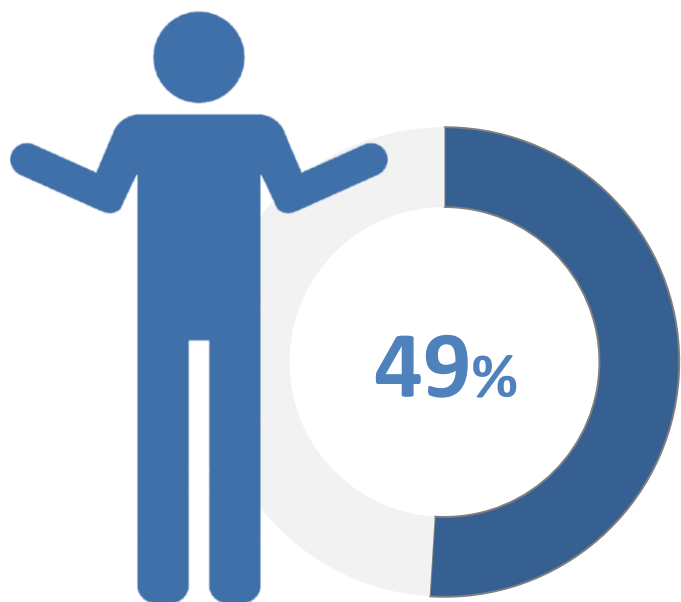
A blurred background image of a social gathering, possibly a party or bar. In the foreground, a hand holds a glass of beer. The background shows several people, some with their hands raised, suggesting a lively atmosphere. The lighting is warm and slightly dim, typical of an indoor social setting.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: THE SOCIAL ASPECT

Reality falls short of expectations for many students

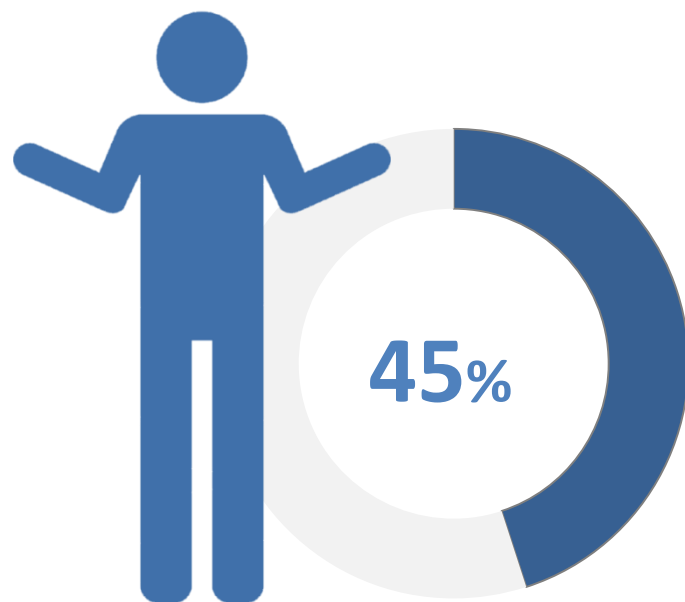
- Close to half of students report that college isn't living up to what they expected of it and feel like everyone else but them has it figured out.

**% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)**



College is not living up to my expectations

- Female vs. Male (54% vs. 43%)
- African American vs. Caucasian (57% vs. 46%)
- Rate experience as "terrible/poor" vs. "excellent/ good" (81% vs. 37%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (57% vs. 44%)



It seems like everyone has college figured out but me

- African American and Hispanic vs. Caucasian (52% and 49% vs. 41%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (58% vs. 37%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q885 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Most students report that media exaggerates the excitement of college

- For more than 3 in 4 students, college is a lot less “fun” than how it is portrayed in the media.

77%

Feel **social media, television, and movies** make college seem a lot more fun than it actually is

**% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)**



- Female vs. Male (80% vs. 73%)
- African American vs. Caucasian (82% vs. 74%)
- Rate experience as “terrible/poor” vs. “excellent/good” (88% vs. 72%)



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q865 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Many first-year college students report difficulty with the social adjustment to college

- Difficulty making friends, not feeling like they belong, and the inability to manage school priorities over friends has contributed to students' struggle adapting to college life.

**% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)**

63%

Their relationship with friends from home has not gotten better since they started college.

54%

Have a hard time making new friends and feeling like they belong.

43%

Often prioritize their friends and social life over their schoolwork.

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q865/885 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Still, students' relationship with their parents appears intact, with the majority keeping their parents up-to-date on their college life

- The majority of students say their relationship with their parents has improved since college. In addition, most report that they tell their parents how they are doing academically and how they are adjusting to college.

% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)

61%

My relationship with my parents has gotten much better since I started college.

70%

I tell my parents how I am doing academically.

63%

I tell my parents how I'm adjusting to college life.

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q865 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Though a strong minority of students away at college express deep concern about family back home

*% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)*



43%

During my first term of college, I was extremely concerned about my family back at home.

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS NOT LIVING AT HOME (n=972)

Q865 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students who are extremely concerned about family back home differ from their peers in notable ways

Students Who Are Extremely Concerned About Family Back Home Are More Likely To:

Challenges

- Wish they were better prepared to deal with the emotional challenges of college (68% vs. 59%)
- Have a hard time making friends (60% vs. 52%)
- Consider transferring or transferred after their first term (37% vs. 26%)

Relationship with Parent:

- Say the relationship with their parents has gotten better since they started college (73% vs. 57%)
- Tell their parents how they are doing academically (78% vs. 67%)
- Tell their parents how they are adjusting to college life (74% vs. 60%)

Emotional Support

- Turn to family members for support (73% vs. 61%)
- Wish they had more emotional help getting ready for college (66% vs. 58%)
- Find it difficult to get emotional support when they need it (56% vs. 49%)

Negative Choices

- Feel more pressure to drink alcohol in college (26% vs. 18%)
- Feel more pressure to use drugs in college (14% vs. 9%)
- Participate in negative activities when stressed or overwhelmed in college (66% vs. 60%)

BASE: FELT EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT FAMILY BACK HOME (n=388); DID NOT FEEL EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT FAMILY BACK HOME (N=510)

Q865 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? * Asked only if not living at home (n=972)

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, stands in the center of the frame. She is pointing her right index finger upwards and slightly to the left. She is holding a white folder or stack of papers in her left arm. In the foreground, the backs of several people's heads and shoulders are visible as they sit around a table, looking towards the woman. The setting appears to be a meeting room or a classroom with a whiteboard in the background.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: DEALING WITH THE CHALLENGES

Students recognize areas on which they need work

- Time management and independent living skills are both areas students acknowledge they need to improve.

Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)

73%

Say their **time management skills** need improvement



- Lived off campus vs. Lived in an on-campus dorm (80% vs. 71%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (78% vs. 70%)

50%

Say their **independent living skills** need improvement



- Male vs. Female (53% vs. 47%)
- African American or Hispanic vs. Caucasian (59% and 56% vs. 43%)
- Public college vs. Private college (53% vs. 39%)
- Rate experience as "terrible/poor" vs. "excellent/good" (58% vs. 46%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

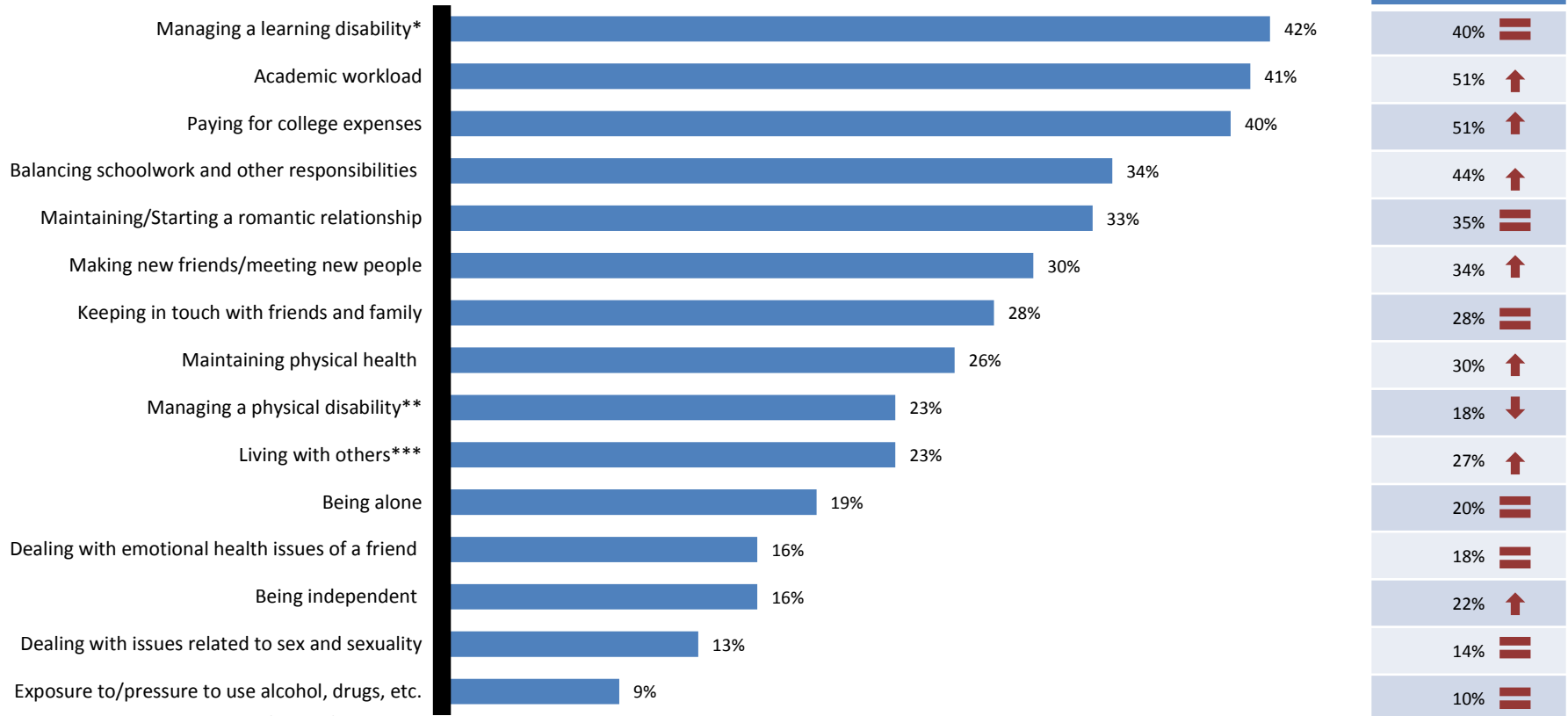
Q885 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students identify a number of areas they found to be challenging in college – though many expected it to be

- The top challenges include managing a learning disability, their academic workload, and paying for college expenses.

Actual Challenge (Extremely/Very Challenging):



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q870 Now, we would like you to turn your attention to your college experience. How challenging did you expect each of the following to be before you started college/university?

Q875 How challenging did you find each of the following to be during your first term of college/university?

* Asked only to those with a learning disability (n=118)

** Asked only to those with a physical disability (n=123)

*** Asked only to those living in group housing (n=952)

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Still, most wish they were better prepared to deal with challenges they've encountered

- Many students wish they were better prepared to deal with the challenges of making the transition to college and do not feel in control of managing the stress of college life.

% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)

61%

I wish I was better prepared to deal with the challenges of making the transition to college

- African American vs. Caucasian (69% vs. 58%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (72% vs. 53%)
- Live off-campus vs. Live in dorm or Live with parents (74% vs. 58% and 63%)
- Rate experience as "terrible/poor" vs. "excellent/good" (83% vs. 53%)

36%

I do not feel like I am in control of managing the stress of day-to-day college life

- Female vs. Male (41% vs. 30%)
- Lower GPA vs. Higher GPA (45% vs. 31%)
- Rate experience "terrible/poor" or "fair" vs. "excellent/good" (65% vs. 46% vs. 26%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q865 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Q885 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Many admit difficulty keeping up with their studies, with some even resorting to the use of unauthorized scripts to get ahead

Nearly half (49%)

Say they **struggle** to keep up with their schoolwork



- Lived off campus vs. Lived in an on-campus dorm (58% vs. 46%)
- Rate experience as "terrible/poor" vs. "excellent/good" (75% vs. 39%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (66% vs. 38%)

1 in 20 (5%)

Say they sometimes use **prescription stimulants** that were not prescribed to them to help improve their academic performance



- Considered transferring/transferred vs. Didn't (9% vs. 3%)
- Male vs. Female (7% vs. 3%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (8% vs. 4%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

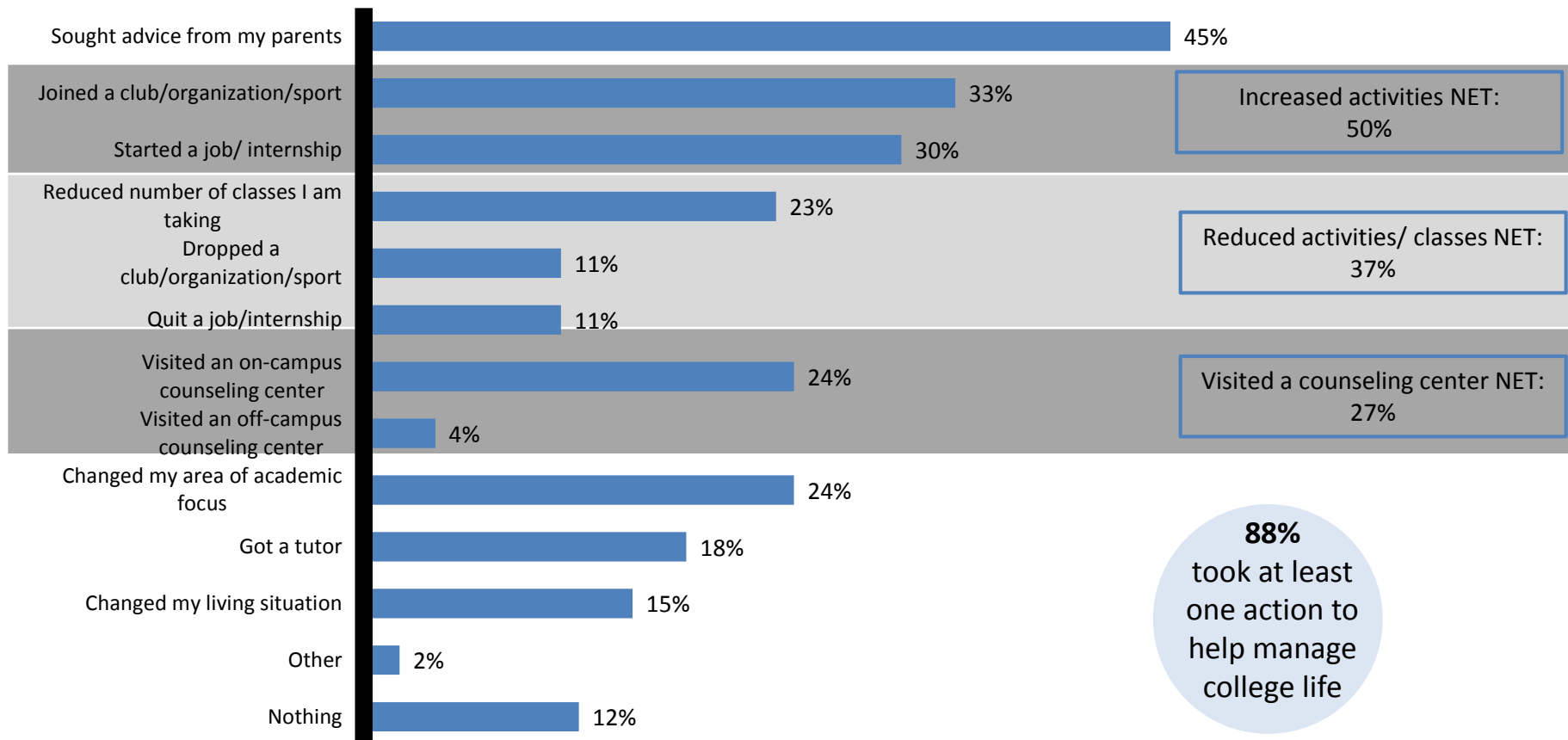
Q885 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Q896 Which of the following statements, if any, do you agree with? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A lot of students take steps to help manage their college life...

- While the main source to help manage college life is seeking advice from parents, this is followed by increasing involved in activities like joining a club and starting a job.



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q895 Which of the following actions, if any, have you taken to help manage your college life? Please select all that apply

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

...But some students decided to transfer schools or take a leave of absence

- One in four students seriously considered transferring schools, while others went through with the transfer or took a leave of absence.

25%

Seriously considered transferring during their first term.

4%

Transferred after their first term.

8%

Took a leave of absence after their first term of college.

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q1040 Which of the following, if any, describes you? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A close-up photograph of a person's mouth and hand. The person is holding a black, pen-like vaporizer in their mouth, and a large, billowing cloud of white vapor is being exhaled from the device. The person's hand is visible, holding the device. The background is blurred, showing indistinct shapes and colors.

SUBSTANCE USE & ABUSE

Alcohol consumption considered a typical college experience for some students

- For some college students drinking alcohol is considered a normal part of college, some even expressing a heightened pressure to drink now that they are in college.

% Agree

(Strongly/ Somewhat)

31%

Nearly 1 in 3 students say:

Drinking alcohol is a normal part of the college/university experience

- 4-year college vs. 2-year college (36% vs. 20%)
- Private college vs. Public college (37% vs. 30%)
- Students at a Large college vs. Small college (37% vs. 26%)
- Caucasian vs. Hispanic (35% vs. 27%)
- Lives in dorm or off-campus vs. Lives at home with parents (41% and 32% vs. 18%)

Nearly 1 in 5 students say:

20%

I feel more pressure to drink alcohol now that I'm in college/university

- 4-year college vs. 2-year college (23% vs. 14%)
- Students at a Large or Medium college vs. Small college (26% and 22% vs. 14%)
- Caucasian vs. African American (23% vs. 13%)
- Lives in dorm or off-campus vs. Lives at home with parents (25% and 26% vs. 13%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q896 Which of the following statements, if any, do you agree with? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Compared to alcohol, fewer consider drug use part of the standard college experience

- In comparison to alcohol, fewer college students believe using drugs is a normal part of college, with 1 in 10 expressing a heightened pressure to use now that they are in college.

% Agree
(Strongly/ Somewhat)

16%

Nearly 1 in 6 students say:

Using drugs is a normal part of the college/
university experience

- Lives in dorm or off-campus vs. Lives at home with parents (18% and 18% vs. 12%)

10%

Nearly 1 in 10 students say:

I feel more pressure to use drugs now that
I'm in college/university

- Lives in dorm or off-campus vs. Lives at home with parents (12% and 12% vs. 8%)

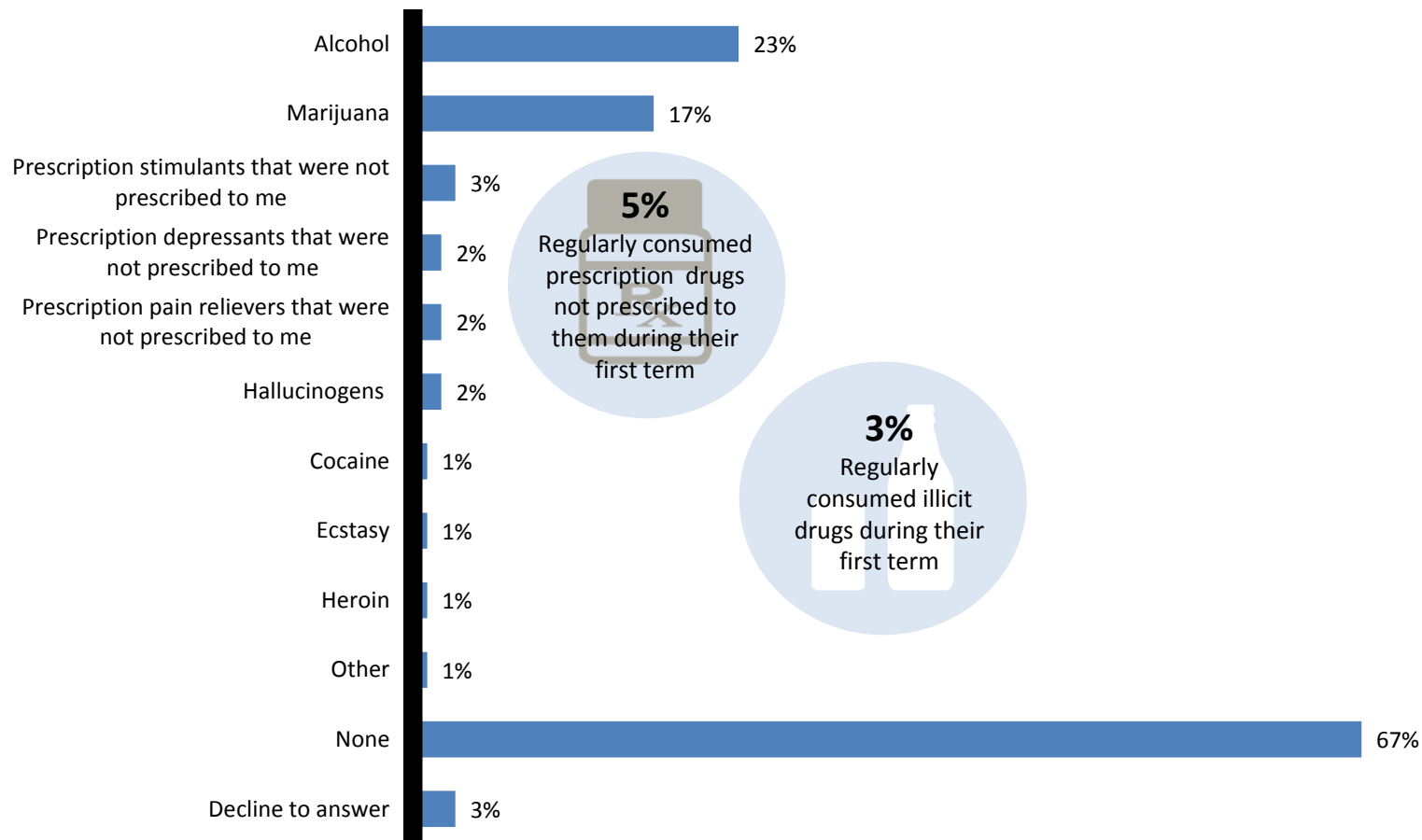
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q896 Which of the following statements, if any, do you agree with? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

About 1 in 5 regularly consumed alcohol or marijuana during their first term

- Considerably fewer students regularly used illicit drugs or prescription drugs not prescribed to them during their first term in college.



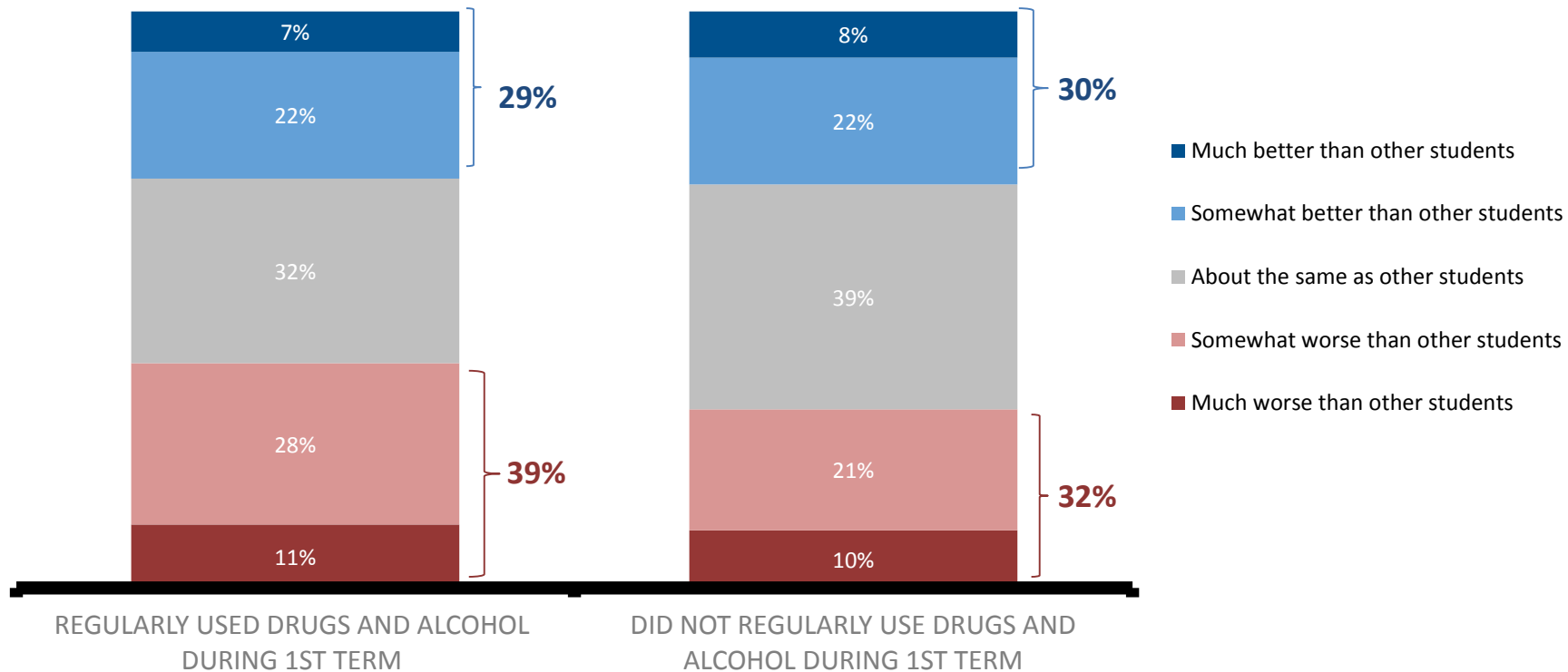
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q1106 Which of the following, if any, did you consume regularly during your first term of college/university? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Regular drug or alcohol users rate their emotional health worse than their peers

- Students who consumed alcohol or drugs are more likely than their counterparts to rate their first term emotional health as “worse than other students.”



Ratings of Emotional Health During First Term of College

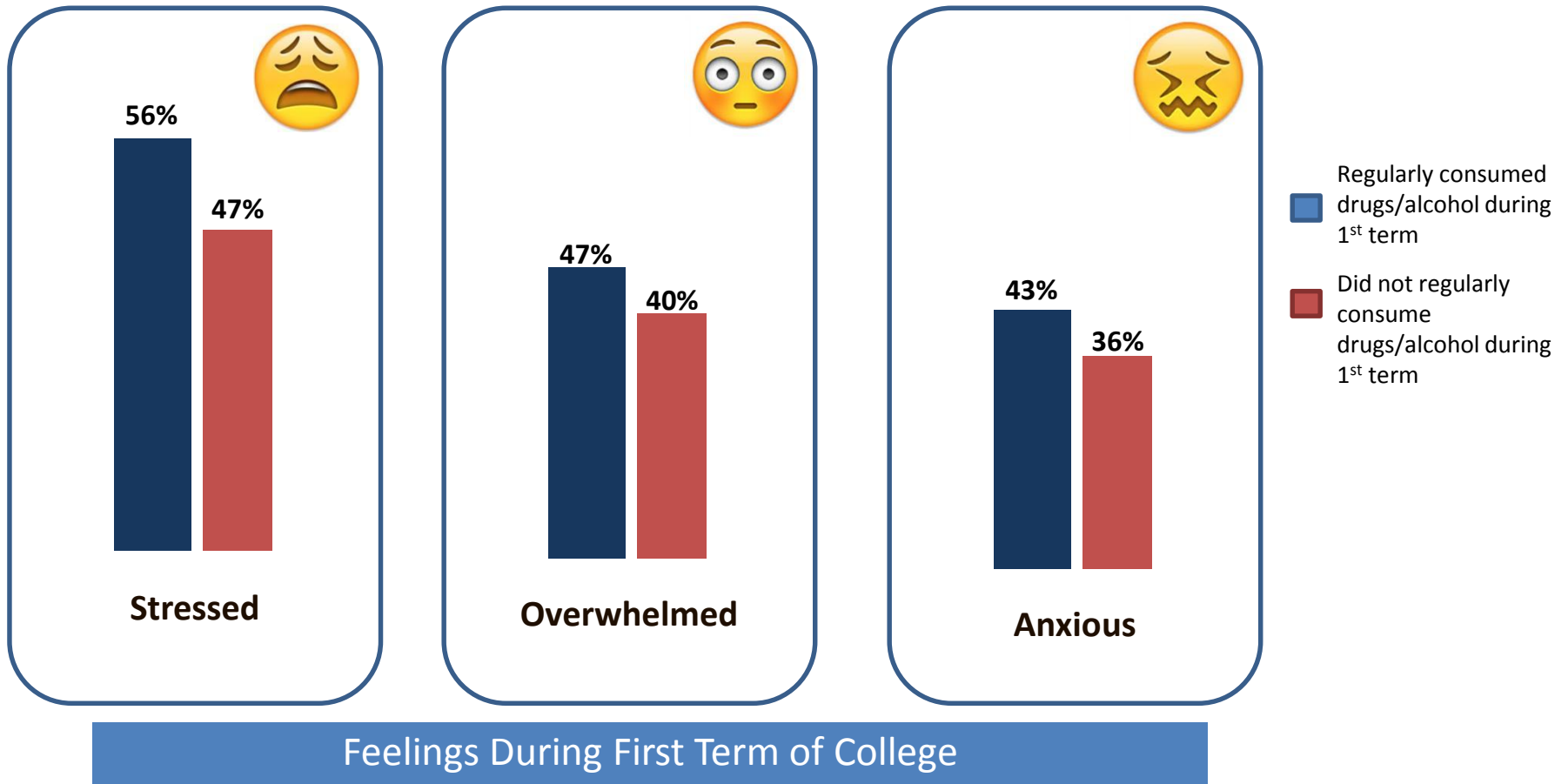
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

Q860 Compared to other students at your college/university, how would you rate each of the following areas of your life during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Regular drug or alcohol users also are more likely to experience negative feelings during their first term

Experience Feelings Most/All of the Time:



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

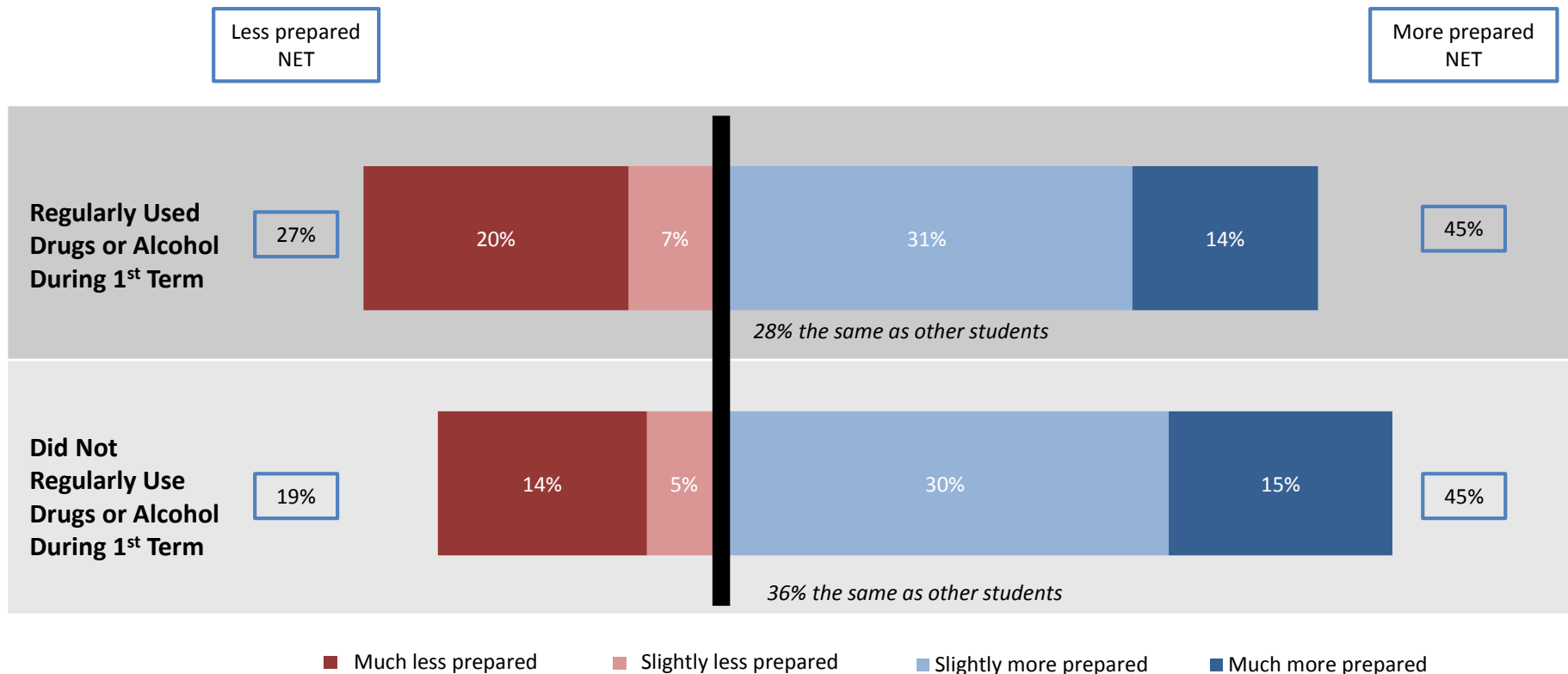
Q850 Thinking about your first term at college/university, how often did you feel...?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Regular drug or alcohol users tend to feel less academically prepared during their first term

- Nearly 3 in 10 regular drug or alcohol users say they felt less academically prepared than their peers during their first term, compared to only 19% of those who did not regularly use drugs or alcohol.

Academically prepared



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

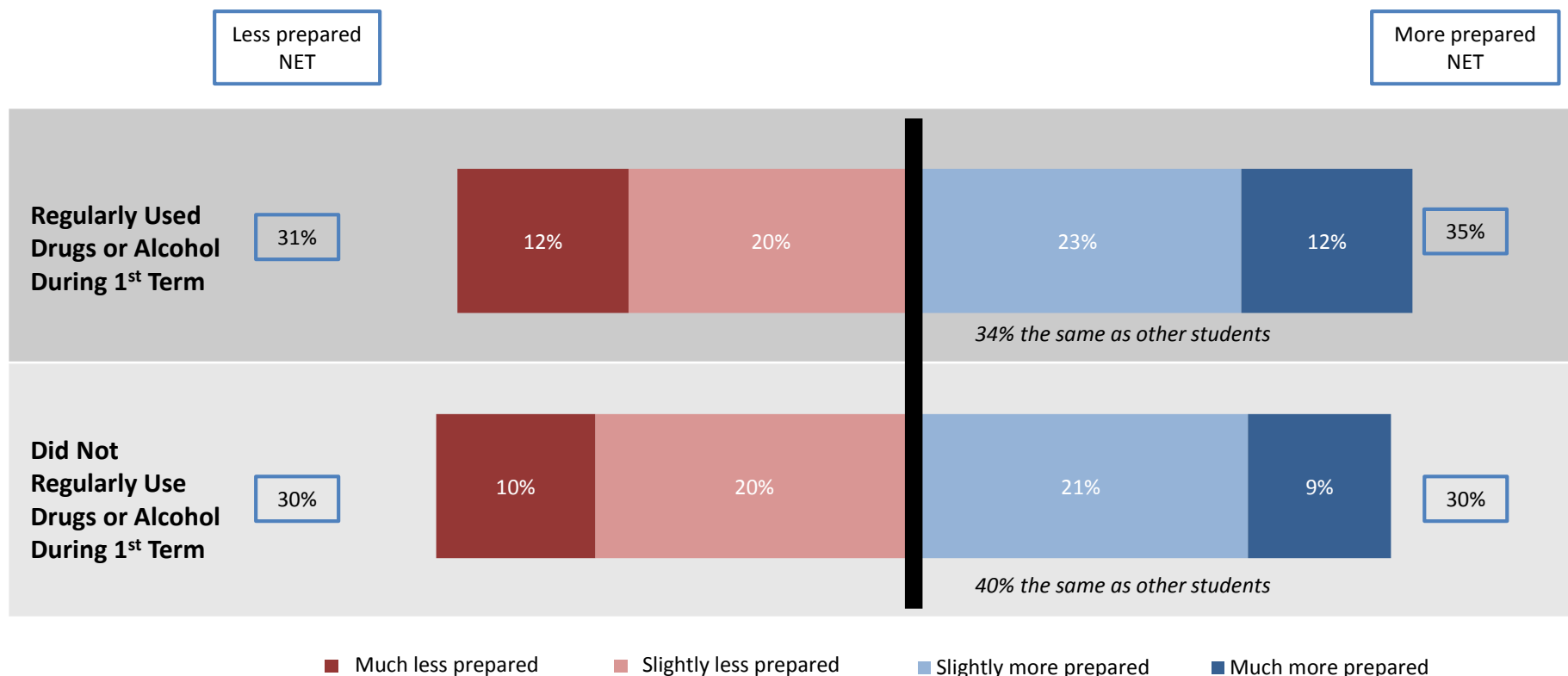
Q855 Compared to other first year students at your college/university, how prepared did you feel in each of the following areas during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

However, there are no statistically significant differences noted for “emotionally prepared”

- Compared to those who do not regularly use drugs or alcohol, similar proportions of students who regularly use drugs or alcohol felt less emotionally prepared than their peers during their first term.

Emotionally prepared



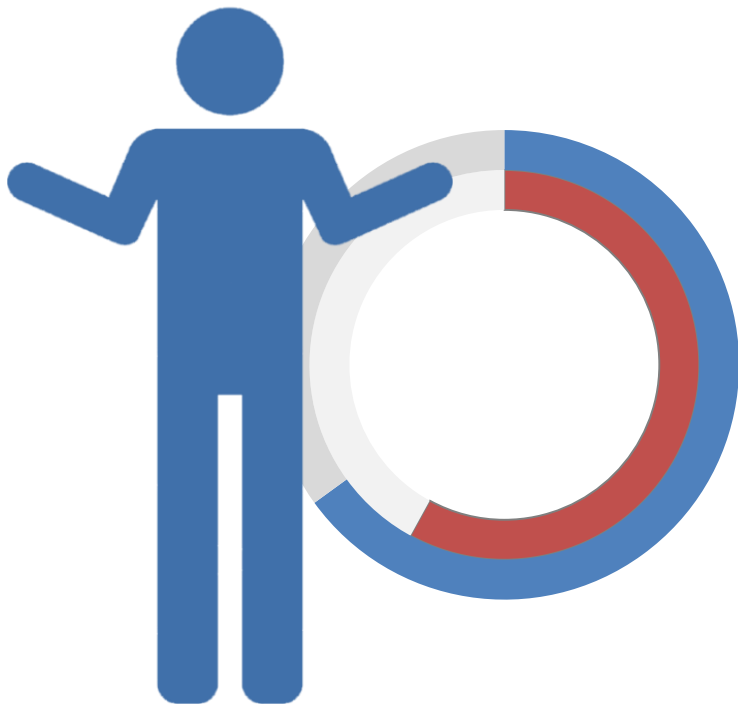
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

Q855 Compared to other first year students at your college/university, how prepared did you feel in each of the following areas during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Still, regular users of alcohol or drugs are more likely to report difficulty getting emotional support

- More than 3 in 5 students who regularly consumed drugs or alcohol their first term say they find it difficult to get emotional support when they need it, compared to only 47% of those who did not regularly consume.



61%

of those who regularly consumed drugs or alcohol

VS

47%

of those who did not regularly consume

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)

I find it difficult to get emotional support when I need it

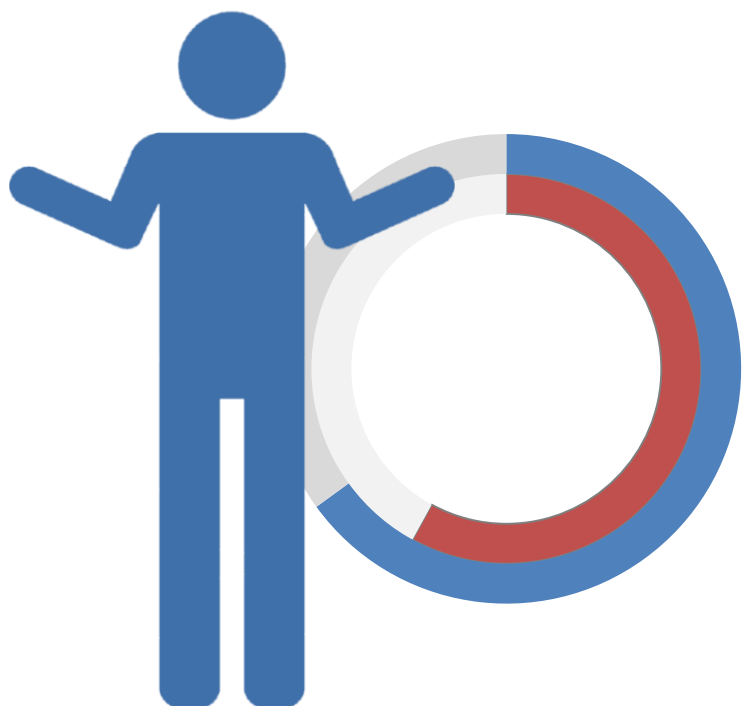
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Further, regular users of alcohol or drugs express greater desire for help getting emotionally prepared for college

- About 2 in 3 regular users say they wish they had more help getting emotionally ready for college.



65%

of those who regularly consumed drugs or alcohol

VS

58%

of those who did not regularly consume

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)

I wish I had more help getting emotionally ready for college

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Regularly use drugs or alcohol= 472, Do not =1030)

Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

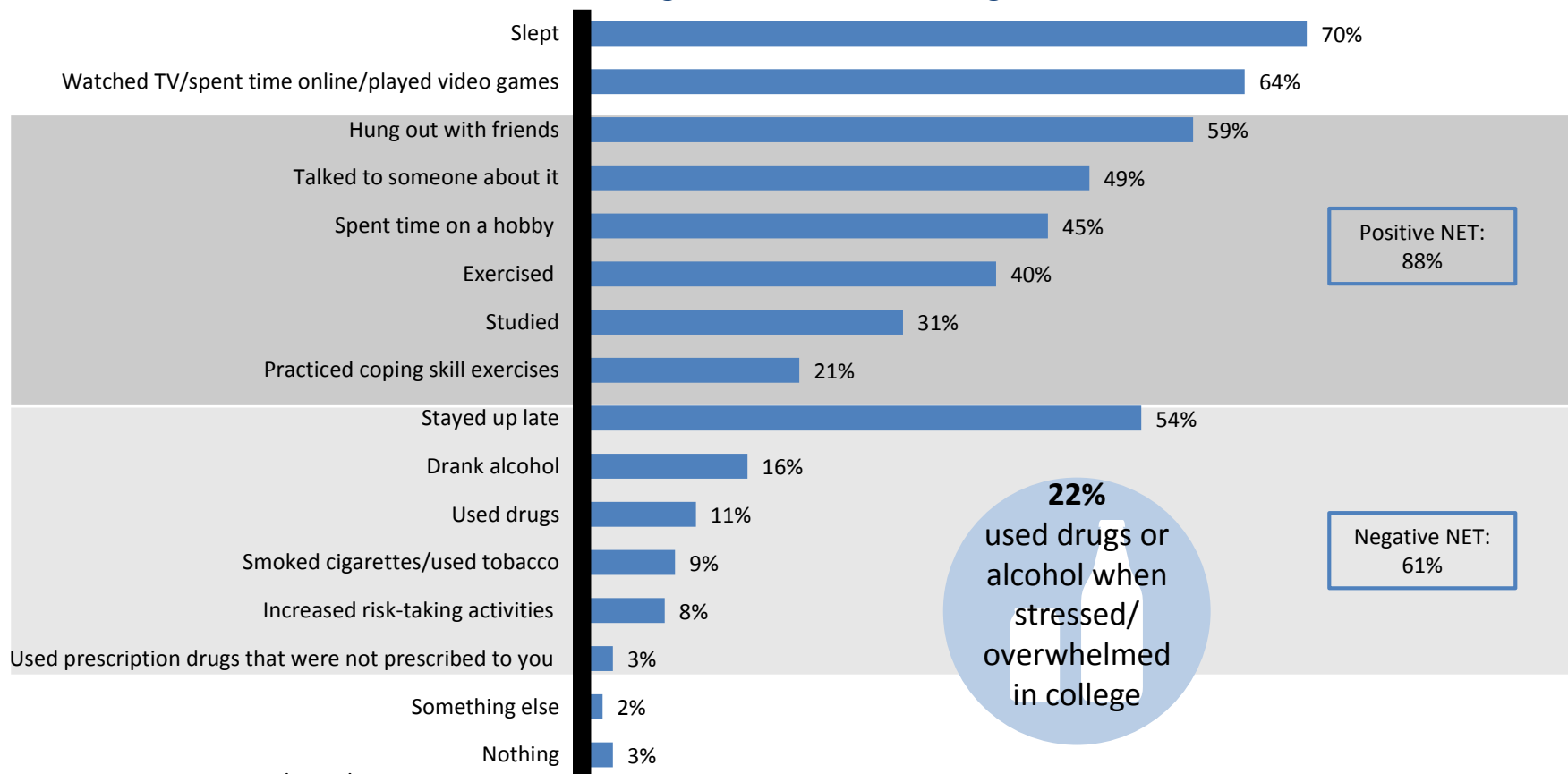
Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A high-angle, top-down photograph of a diverse group of young people, likely college students, standing in a circle on a light-colored floor. They are all holding their hands together in the center, creating a unified circle of hands. The individuals are wearing various casual clothing, including sweaters, jeans, and plaid shirts. The image conveys a sense of community, teamwork, and mutual support.

RESOURCES/SUPPORT WHILE IN COLLEGE

Similar to HS, students engaged in a number of positive and negative behaviors when experiencing stress their first term

- Like in high school, sleeping and watching TV/spending time online top the list of activities students engage in when overwhelmed or stressed during their first term in college.



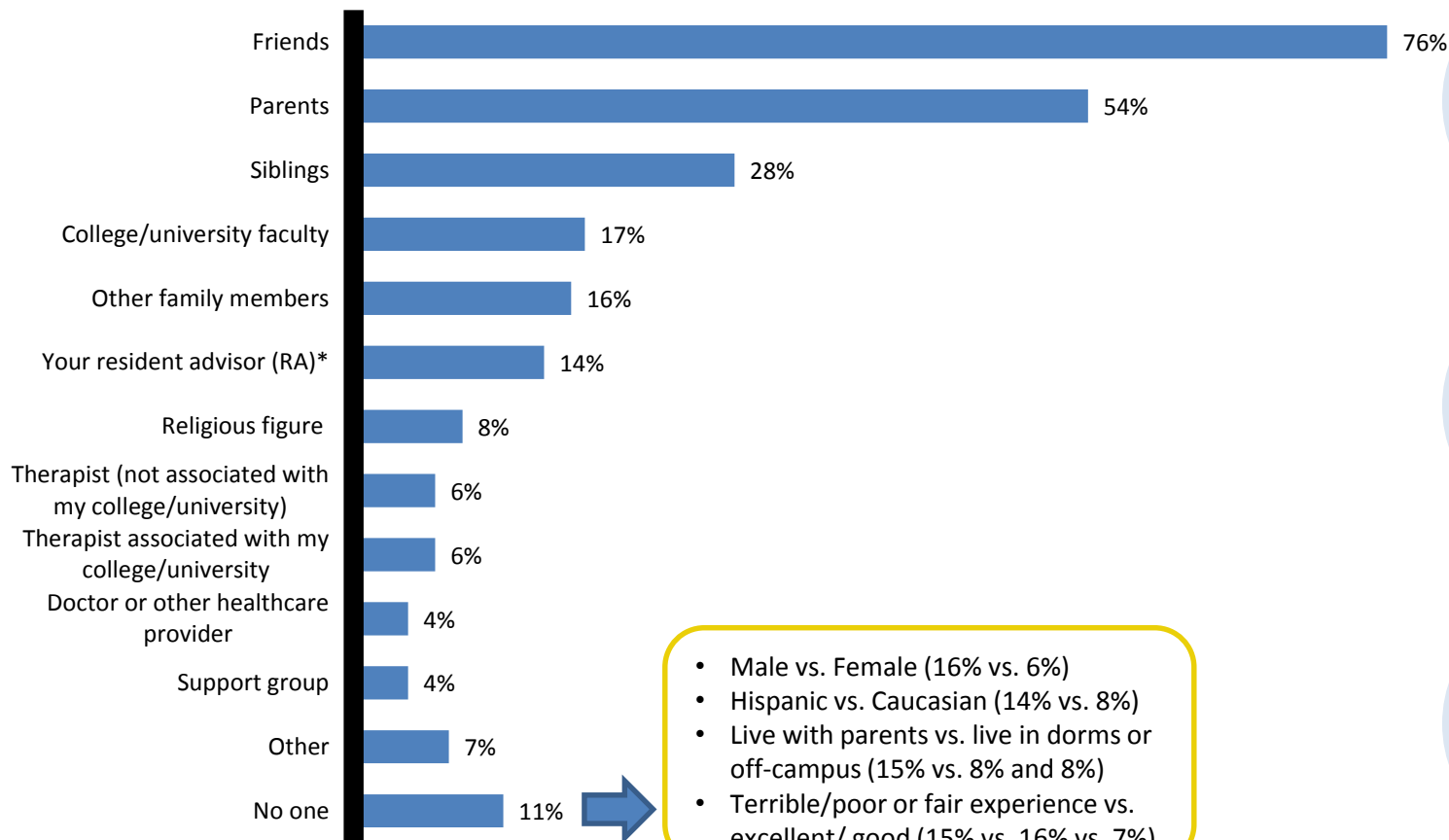
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q910 Which of the following activities, if any, did you typically do when you felt overwhelmed or stressed during your first term at college/university? Please select all that apply.

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

When in need of support, the majority of students turned to their friends or parents

- Notably, more than 1 in 10 students say they turned to no one for support when they needed it.



64%
Turned to
family

24%
Turned to
school
staff

11%
Turned to
a
therapist

- Male vs. Female (16% vs. 6%)
- Hispanic vs. Caucasian (14% vs. 8%)
- Live with parents vs. live in dorms or off-campus (15% vs. 8% and 8%)
- Terrible/poor or fair experience vs. excellent/ good (15% vs. 16% vs. 7%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q905 Who did you typically turn to for support when you needed it during your first term at your college/university? Please select all that apply.

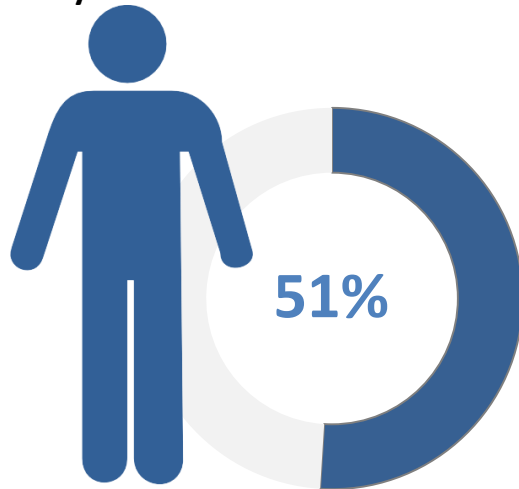
* Asked only if living on campus (n=732)

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

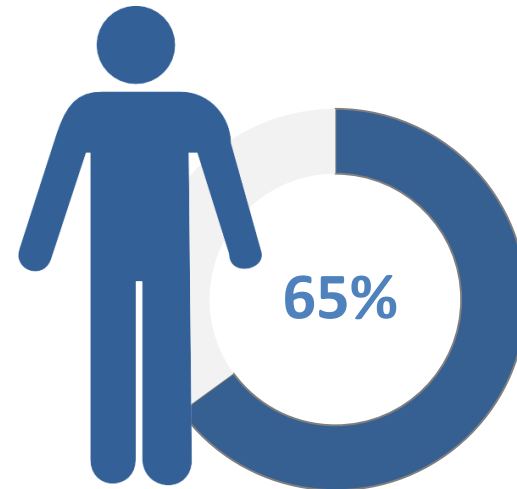
Still, many find it hard to get emotional support, and end up keeping their feelings to themselves

% Agree
(Strongly/Somewhat)

At times, I find it difficult to get emotional support at college/ university when I need it



I tend to keep my feelings about the difficulty of college to myself



- Female vs. Male (56% vs. 46%)
- 19-20 year olds vs. 17-18 (55% vs. 48%)
- Students with Lower GPAs vs. Higher GPAs (56% vs. 47%)
- Part time students vs. full time (60% vs. 50%)
- Considered transferring vs. did not (65% vs. 46%)
- Lived Off-Campus vs. in Dorms or with Parents (62% vs. 48% vs. 51%)
- Terrible/poor or fair experience vs. excellent/ good (76% vs. 59% vs. 43%)

- African American vs. Caucasian (75% vs. 61%)

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q865/Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students offer advice to the next generation of college students

"Be prepared mentally and academically."

"The loneliness can be kind of crushing. Remember to do things to take care of yourself. Stay in contact with friends from home, with your parents (if you like 'em), etc."

"Prepare yourself for a stressful experience, and do be afraid to ask for help. Often you wait to long to seek help, and if you wait too long it will be too late."

"It's absolutely okay to be terrified out of your mind. If you don't feel ready to move on to college right away, don't do it. Listen to your heart. This is about you, what you want, where you want to go, who you want to be..."

"Do what makes YOU happy."

"College is a lot harder than high school in every single way. Academically, socially, everything. Be ready."

"Remember the reason you are in college, which is to get a degree. It's natural to want to have fun but it's important to remember that you are at school."

"Surround yourself with good people who can help and influence you to do better."

"Learn to be self-motivated and time management!"

"Be open to trying new things!!"

"DON'T PROCRASTINATE"

"Make the best out of everything, even if you're not at the college you want. It's college, it's suppose to be the time of your life, just live"



What is the one piece of advice that you would give to a high school senior about to begin college?

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

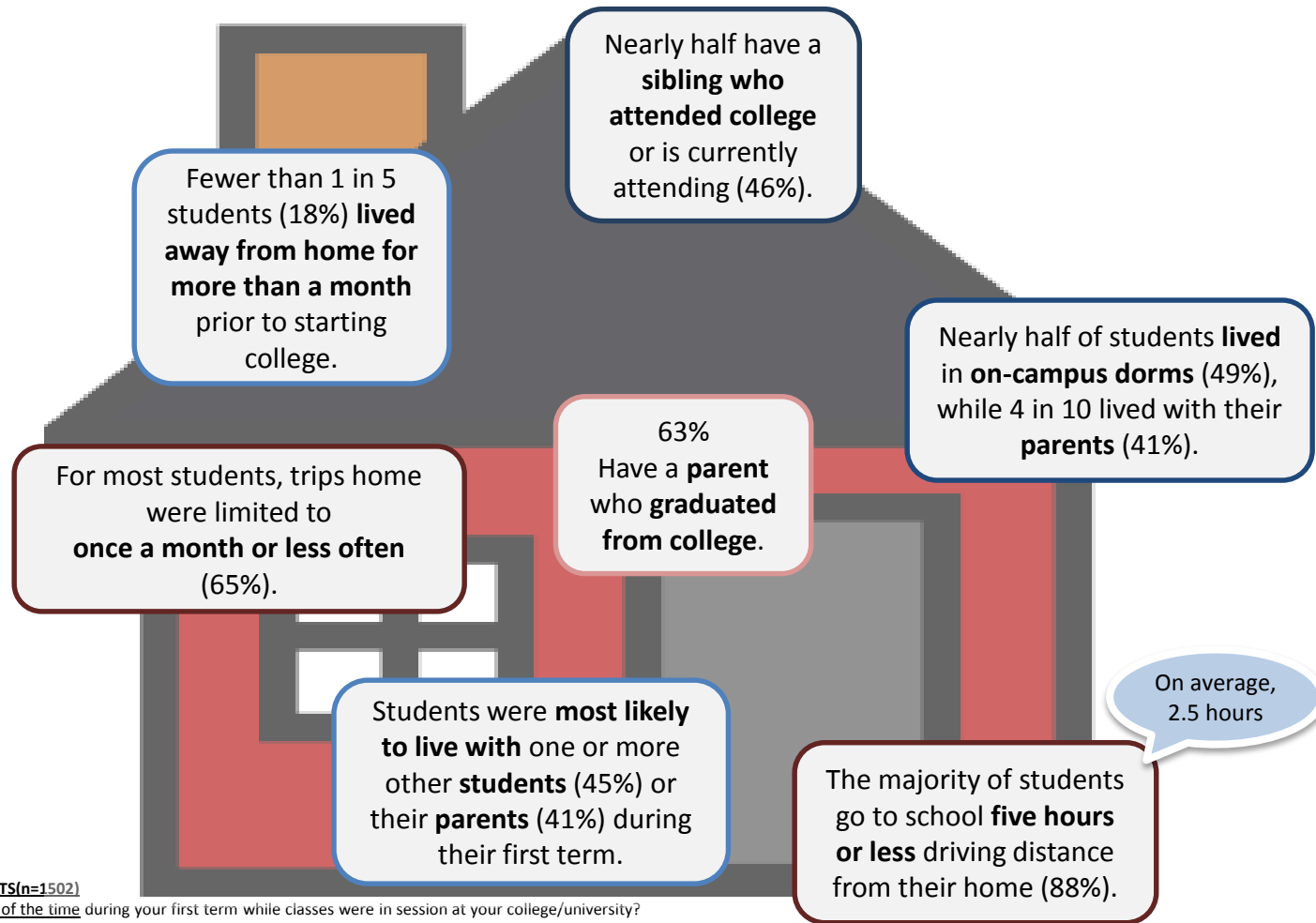
Q890 What is the one piece of advice that you would give to a high school senior about to begin college?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

A group of five diverse young adults are sitting in a circle in a bright, modern room with large windows in the background. They are all looking towards the center of the circle, appearing to be in a collaborative discussion or meeting. The group includes a man in a grey sweater, a woman in a green top, and several other individuals of various ethnicities and ages. The text "STUDENT BACKGROUND & CHARACTERISTICS" is overlaid in a semi-transparent white box across the middle of the image.

STUDENT BACKGROUND & CHARACTERISTICS

Student Background & Characteristics



BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS(n=1502)

Q635 Where did you live most of the time during your first term while classes were in session at your college/university?

Q1020 In terms of driving, how far is the college/university you are attending from home?

Q1030 With whom did you live during your first term of college/university? Please select all that apply

Q1045 Did either of your parents graduate from college?

Q1051 Do you have a sibling who attended college or is currently attending college?

BASE: IF NOT LIVING AT HOME (n=972)

Q1025 Approximately how often did you go home during your first term of college/university?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students' First Term GPA & Intended Major

Grade Point Average (GPA)	
3.6 – 4.0	34%
3.1 – 3.5	25%
2.6 – 3.0	18%
0 - 2.5	13%
Decline to answer	10%
MEAN	3.2



Students who report feeling less emotionally prepared are nearly twice as likely as those who feel more emotionally prepared to report having a low GPA (17% vs. 9%).

Intended Major	
STEM	32%
Social Sciences	15%
Business	14%
Humanities	10%
Education	6%
Other areas	15%
Undeclared	8%

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q820 What was your college grade point average (GPA) last term?

Q1035 Which of the following best describes the primary area of your studies or intended major?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Demographics

AGE	
17	5%
18	53%
19	28%
20	14%
MEAN	18.5
MEDIAN	18
SEX	
Male	47%
Female	53%
GENDER	
Male	47%
Female	53%
Transgender	1%
Another gender not listed	1%
REGION	
East	21%
Midwest	22%
South	31%
West	26%

RACE	
White	51%
Hispanic	25%
Black	12%
Asian or Pacific Islander	8%
Native American or Alaskan Native	*
Mixed Race	*
Some other race	2%
Decline to Answer	2%
SEXUALITY	
Heterosexual (Straight)	82%
Lesbian	2%
Gay	2%
Bisexual	8%
Transgender	-
Decline to answer	1%
Other	3%
Not sure	2%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
LESS THAN 50K (NET)	33%
Less than \$15,000	7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	7%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11%
\$50K OR HIGHER (NET)	50%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	15%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	9%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	2%
\$250,000 or more	3%
Not sure	17%
MEAN (In 000's)	78.5
MEDIAN (In 000's)	43
ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD DURING HS (MEAN)	
Parents	1.7
Siblings	1.3
Other relatives	0.3
Step-parents	0.2
Grandparents	0.2
Step-siblings	0.1

Demographics

HIGH SCHOOL TYPE

Public school	86%
Private religious/parochial school	7%
Private independent college-prep school	3%
Home school	3%
Boarding school	1%
I did not graduate high school but received a GED	*

HIGH SCHOOL LOCATION

East	21%
Midwest	22%
South	30%
West	26%
Outside of US	1%

CLASS STRUCTURE

Some of the classes that I attend are online and some are in-person.	26%
All of my classes are in-person with other students in a classroom or lecture hall.	74%

SCHOOL SIZE

Small: less than 5,000	35%
Medium: 5,000 - 19,999	41%
Large: more than 20,000	25%

SCHOOL TYPE

A public college or university	80%
A private college or university	18%
Not sure	2%

SCHOOL TYPE

2-year or junior college or community college	34%
4-year college or university	66%

SCHOOL LOCATION

East	22%
Midwest	22%
South	31%
West	25%

Financial Aid

ANY	78%
Student loans	42%
Merit-based grants or scholarships	37%
Pell grant	34%
Need based grants or scholarships	28%
Work-study	12%
Military grants	2%
Other	7%
Not sure	5%
I am not receiving any financial aid	16%

Parent financial support

Parents are helping to support them financially while in college (e.g.) for food, laundry, groceries, books etc.)	83%
Parents are helping pay for college tuition	67%

STUDENT TYPE

Full-time student	89%
Part-time student	11%

A woman with dark, curly hair is seated at a desk, focused on her work. She is wearing a dark blazer over a patterned top. Her hands are on a laptop keyboard, and a blue and silver mouse is visible on the desk. The background is a bright, out-of-focus window. A semi-transparent grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

APPENDIX

Students who attend college far from home differ from their counterparts who live closer to home in notable ways

Students Who Attend College More than Five Hours From Home Are More Likely To:

College Experience

- Rate their overall experience as excellent (25% vs. 12%)
- Spend more time on average on their schoolwork per week (36 hours vs. 27 hours)
- Be involved in Greek activity (12% vs. 7%)

Challenges

- Felt a great deal of pressure to go to a well-known college (64% vs. 56%)
- Have seriously considered transferring (33% vs. 24%)
- Say maintaining or starting a romantic relationship was extremely or very challenging (40% vs. 32%)
- Say living with others was extremely or very challenging (29% vs. 21%)
- Feel alcohol (44% vs. 29%) and drugs (22% vs. 15%) are a normal part of college

Emotional Support

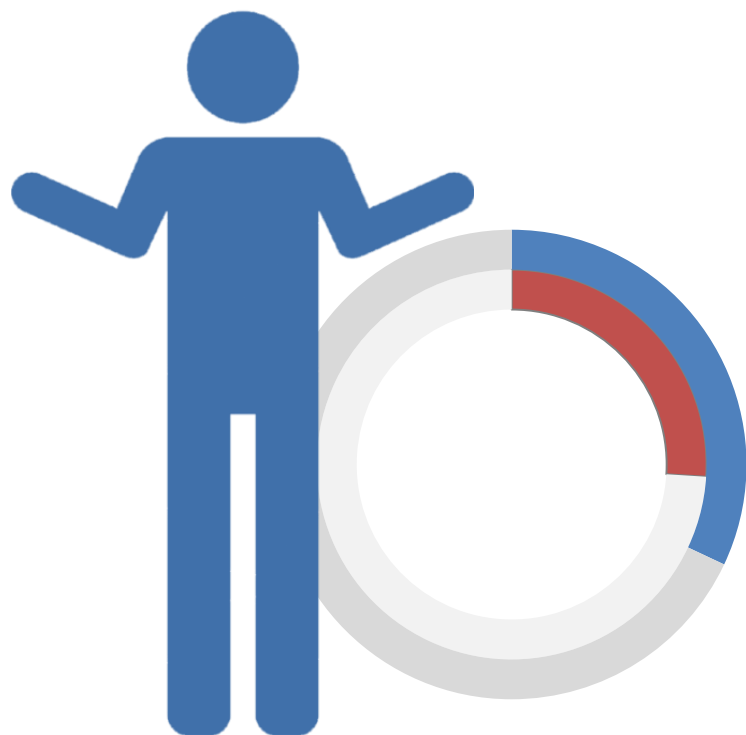
- Tell their parents how they are adjusting to college life (71% vs. 62%)
- Turn to school staff for support when they need it (31% vs. 23%)

BASE: WENT TO SCHOOL 5 HOURS OR MORE FROM HOME (n=205); WENT TO SCHOOL LESS THAN 5 HOURS FROM HOME (n=1297)

Q1020 In terms of driving, how far is the college/university you are attending from home?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students who desire more help getting emotionally ready are more likely to regularly consume drugs or alcohol in their first term



32% of those who wish they had more help getting emotionally ready for college

VS

26% of those who did not wish they had more help getting emotionally ready for college

% Agree
(Strongly/ Somewhat)

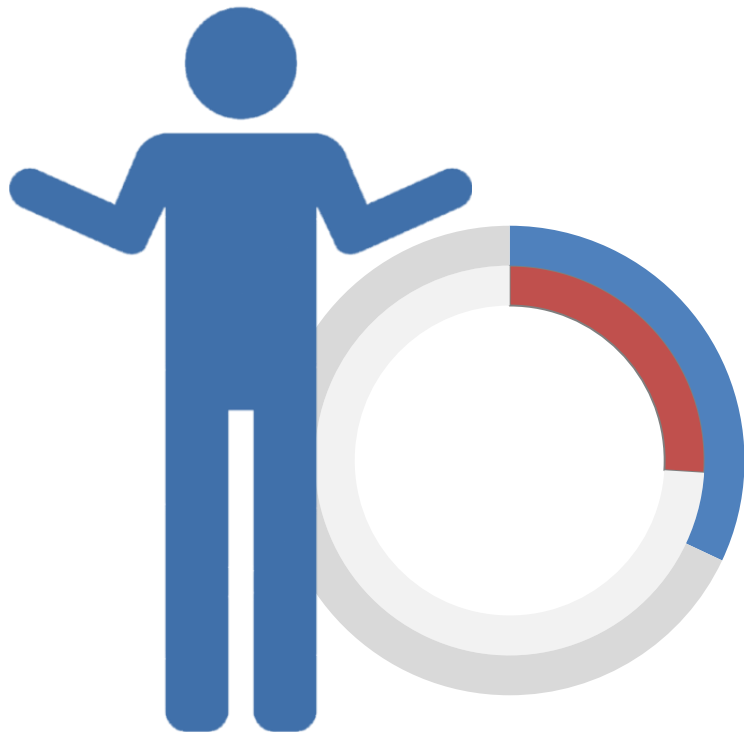
Regularly consumed drugs or alcohol during their first term

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Wish they had more help getting emotionally ready= 897, Does not wish they had more help getting emotionally ready =605)

Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Students who find it difficult to get emotional support are more likely to regularly consume drugs or alcohol in their first term



36% of those who find it difficult to get emotional support when they need it at college

VS

24% of those who did not find it difficult to get emotional support when they need it at college

% Agree
(Strongly/ Somewhat)

Regularly consumed drugs or alcohol during their first term

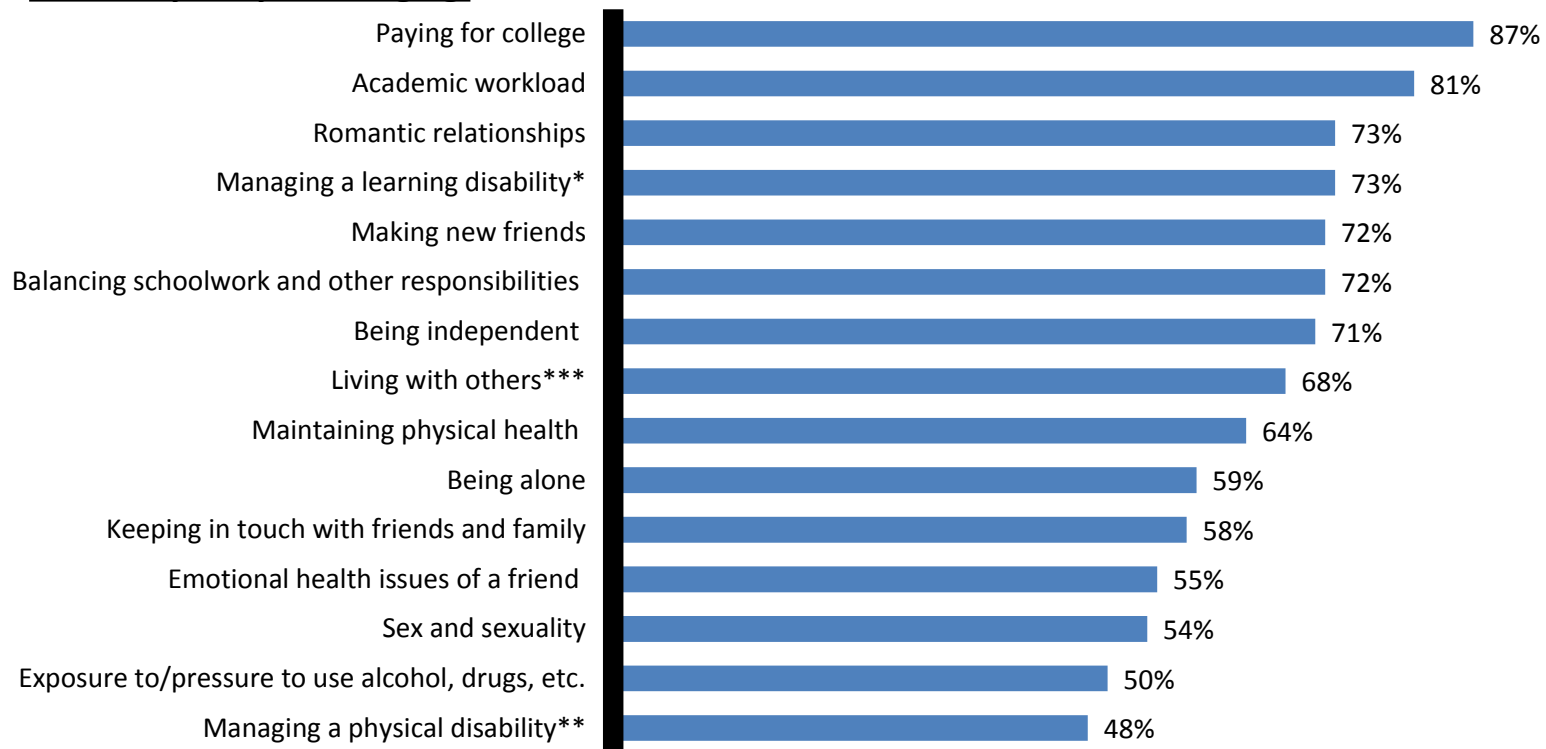
BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (Find it difficult to get emotional support= 766, Does not find it difficult to get emotional support =736)

Q915 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

For most students, the challenges experienced in college were anticipated

Extremely/Very Challenging:



BASE: Variable Base

Q870 Now, we would like you to turn your attention to your college experience. How challenging did you expect each of the following to be before you started college/university? “Extremely/Very”

Q875 How challenging did you find each of the following to be during your first term of college/university? “Extremely/Very”

* Asked only to those with a learning disability (n=118)

** Asked only to those with a physical disability (n=123)

*** Asked only to those living in group housing (n=952)

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids



Some students were treated or diagnosed with various health conditions after they began college

4% report being treated/diagnosed with **anxiety** during college

3% report being treated/diagnosed with **depression** during college

1% report being treated/diagnosed with **ADHD** during college

BASE: QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (n=1502)

Q1105 Which of the following conditions, if any, have you ever been diagnosed with or treated for by a physician or other healthcare provider?

BASE: IF DIAGNOSED WITH CONDITION (n varies)

Q1110 When were you first diagnosed with this condition by a physician or other healthcare provider?

Source: 2015 online survey of college students in their second term conducted by Harris Poll on behalf of The Jed Foundation, The Jordan Matthew Porco Foundation, and The Partnership for Drug Free Kids

Suggested citation:

The Jed Foundation (2015). The First-Year College Experience: A look into students' challenges and triumphs during their first term at college.

<http://www.settogo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/First-Year-College-Experience-Data-Report-for-Media-Release-FINAL.pdf>