# Michigan Gateway

## community foundation ℠

## Youth Advisory Council
## Needs Assessment 2019

# What's a YAC?

✘ Youth Advisory Council
✘ Representatives from area high schools
✘ Assess local needs for youth
✘ Work to address those needs through:
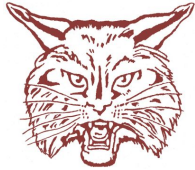   ✘ Grant allocation (approx. $17K annually)
   ✘ Service work



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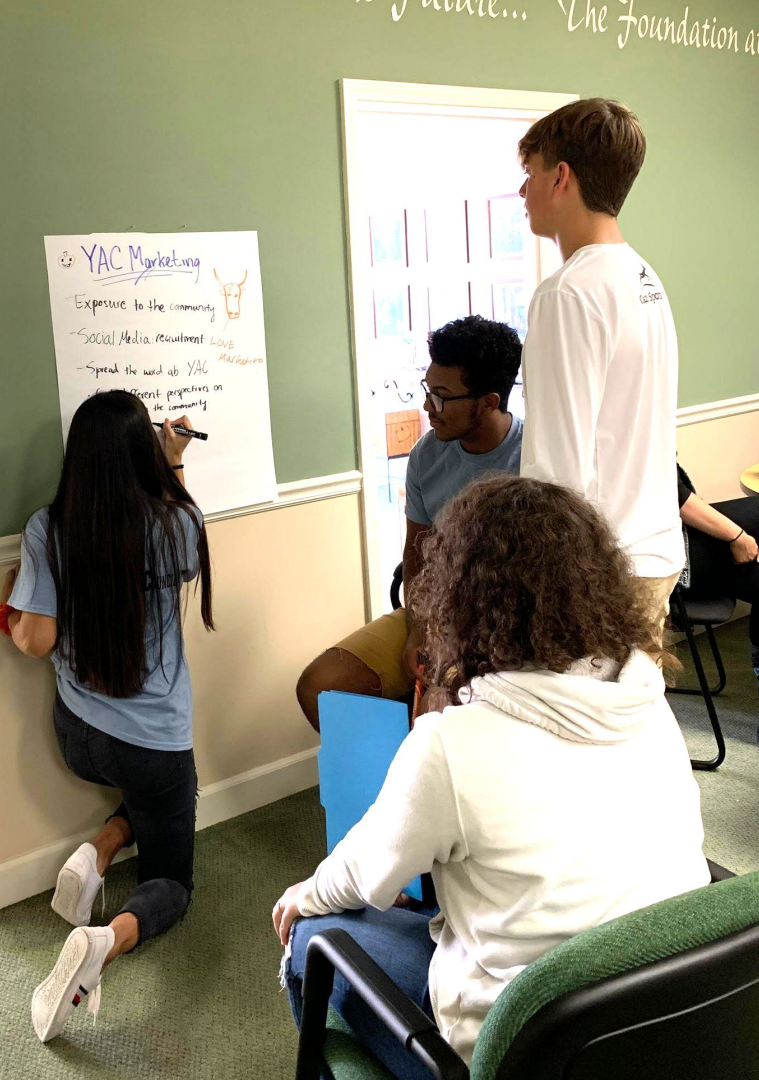
# Needs Assessment

✘ Online survey sent to area schools

✘ 7th, 9th, and 11th graders requested, any could participate

✘ Closed- and open-ended questions about perceived needs and interests

# Participating Schools

Brandywine Community Schools

Buchanan Community Schools

Cassopolis Public Schools

Dowagiac Union Schools

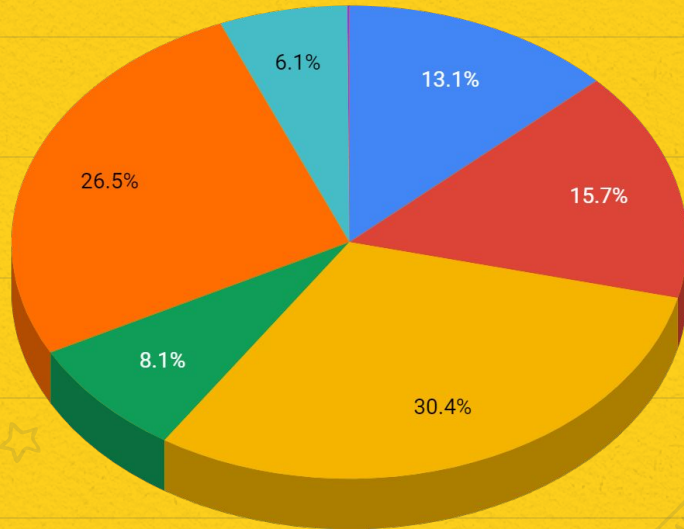Edwardsburg Community Schools

Niles Community Schools

# School Representation



Legend:
- Dowagiac Schools — 13.1%
- Buchanan Schools — 15.7%
- Edwardsburg Schools — 30.4%
- Brandywine Schools — 8.1%
- Niles Schools — 26.5%
- Cassopolis Schools — 6.1%
- Marcellus Schools

# Options Presented

- bullying/violence
- alcohol & drug use
- smoking/vaping
- career/college pressure
- lack of opportunities/ activities outside school
- lack of community volunteerism/ participation

- distracted driving
- academic stress
- body Image/eating disorders
- dropping out of school
- driving under the influence
- unhealthy intimate relationships
- peer pressure
- self esteem

- teen pregnancy
- financial needs
- discrimination
- sexual identity
- family expectations
- social image
- mental health (depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, etc.)
- school dress code
- misuse of social media

# 20% or more of participants voted for...

- ✘ bullying/violence
- ✘ alcohol & drug use
- ✘ smoking/vaping
- ✘ career/college pressure
- ✘ academic stress
- ✘ lack of activities/ opportunities outside school
- ✘ lack of community volunteerism/ participation

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- ✘ financial needs
- ✘ discrimination
- ✘ sexual identity
- ✘ family expectations
- ✘ social image
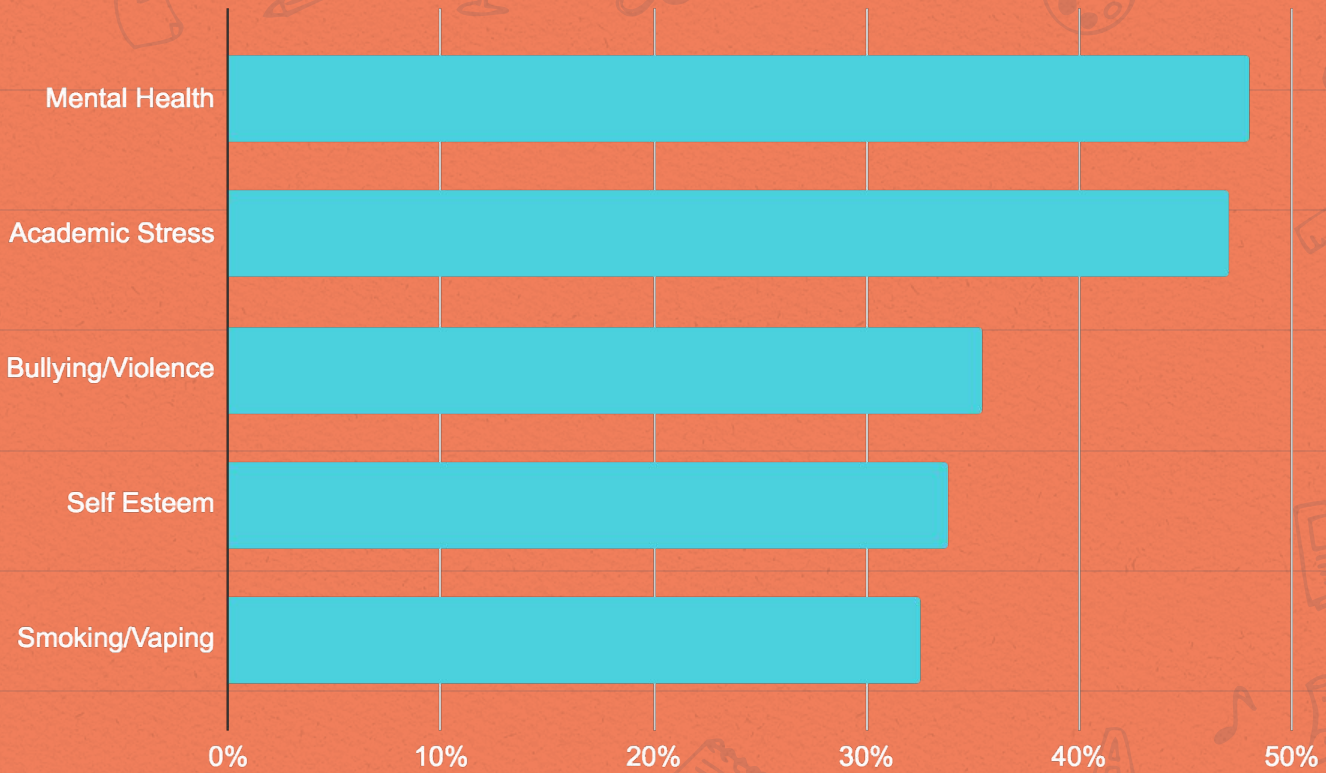- ✘ mental health (depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, etc.)
- ✘ school dress code
- ✘ misuse of social media

Next, participants were asked which of the issues they identified were most important and why.

*__Anxiety and suicidal thoughts__ because of the stress that's put on us as young minds and what is expected of us is way overwhelming.. Suicidal because of how we are expected to look and how were expected to act etc. It's hard on us especially with all the stress of attempting to maintain good grades all at the same time.*

*__Academic stress__ because coming into junior year with both high school and college classes can make work pile up with very little time to finish it unless you stay up late causing you to be tired during the school day. Figuring out how to manage your academic work can cause you stress.*

*I think the most important issue I identified is **bullying** and violence because whenever a child my age gives a response it normally isn't kind and in fact the opposite. Since this is such a habit children do so often, we end up bullying someone. Also I see kids walking down the hall, I can tell something must have made them have a bad day. Whether it was school or a person, they don't deserve to be treated like that.*

**_Self-Esteem._** _It is the most important because a lot of kids put me down and hurt me, which leads to me feeling more insecure about myself which leads to also the other stuff I checked._

*I have seen many people **smoking/vaping**, on the occasion even during class. There are also a couple girls this past couple years who have had babies already, three to my knowledge. There have also been kids who have gotten drunk (at home) and also many students have done something in their cars in the parking lots. A couple kids thought someone had weed, and others were vaping. (At different times)...However, I think the smoking/vaping is the largest problem.*

Question 2:

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) of Michigan Gateway Community Foundation provides money to support youth programs and activities. If you had money to provide grants, which programs or activities would you fund?

# Options Presented

- leadership activities
- skill building workshops/classes
- homework assistance or tutoring programs
- community service opportunities
- clubs/groups with a specific focus
- food assistance programs

- motivational speakers/presenters
- professional counseling programs
- outdoor experiences (camps or challenge courses)
- "real life" learning experiences (drunk goggles etc.)
- self defense/martial arts

- entrepreneurship education
- career readiness
- after school activities
- programs to help quit smoking or using drugs and alcohol
- Programs that teach "adulting" skills (taxes, cooking, financial literacy)

# 25% OR MORE OF PARTICIPANTS VOTED FOR...

- leadership activities
- skill building workshops/classes
- homework assistance or tutoring programs
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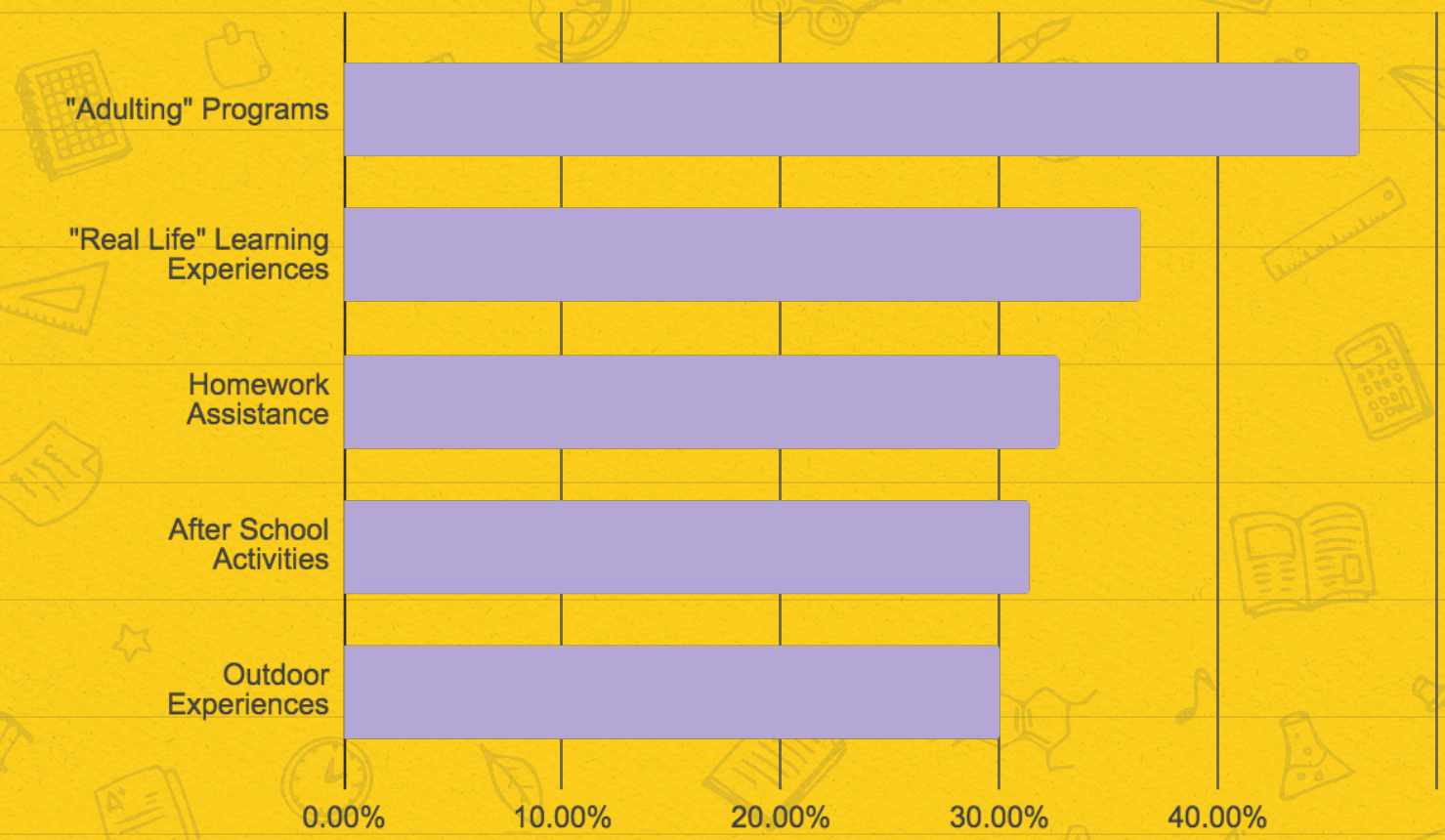
Next, participants were asked which of the programs they identified were most important and why.

I believe that **"adulting" skill programs** are the most important because school prepares us for college and/or trade school but doesn't prepare us for the real world.  I don't know how to do taxes, change a tire, and lots of other adult skills.  Our school is getting better about teaching us everyday skills, like how to write a check/deposit slip, etc.

**"Real life" learning experiences** [drunk goggles, drug simulations, etc.] because kids don't see or understand the harm they are doing to themselves when they smoke and drink and maybe it will make them see how much it is hurting them and others that love them.

"Kids need more things to do **[after school]**...That's because all they do is just stay inside and play video games or stay on their phone and text people do inappropriate things. or play games on their. Argue on social media. cause drama. It's just bad. We need things to pull us away from our phones you guys always say. Phones are bad they keep you from doing things. But my question is what are you guys doing to pull us away from that. We are so bored to do anything. And if there is events it cost money. Which pulls us to just be on our phones. Hold a random circus. Hold a halloween festival. Hold Tours. Do something. Not just for kids either. For teens. For adults, Because everyone needs to have fun..."
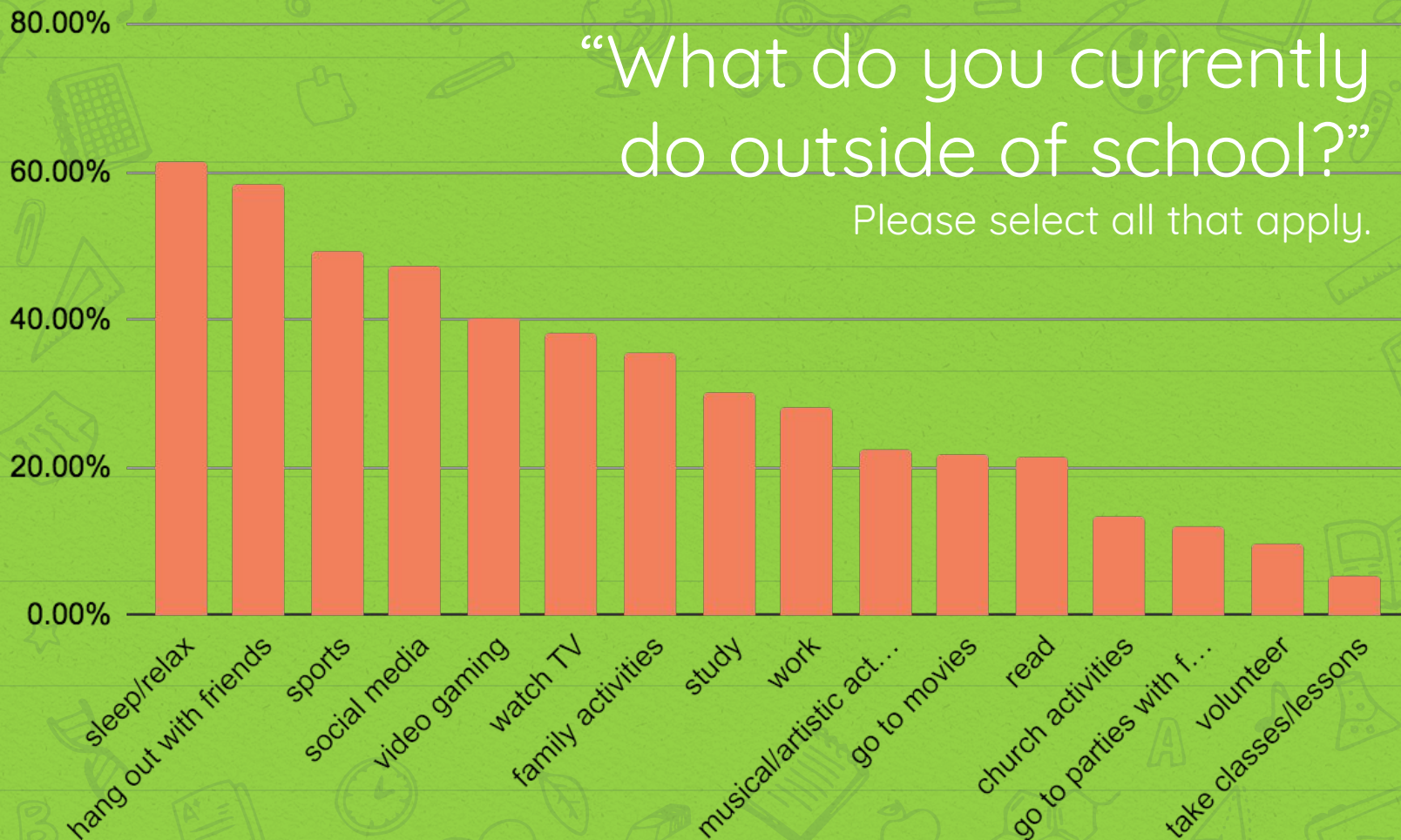
" I feel **outdoor experiences** are important, because to many kids are glued to their phones and TVs. Kids need to go outside and get dirty. "

# Other Questions

"What do you currently do outside of school?"
Please select all that apply.

"How do you find out about what's going on?"
Please select all that apply.

# Contact Us!

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