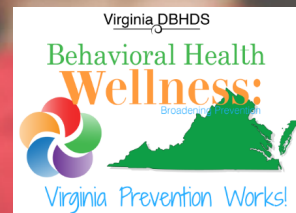


# Virginia Young Adult Survey (YAS) 2022

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023





# Agenda

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1

Overview/Background

2

Alcohol

3

Cannabis

4

Tobacco

5

Vaping

# About OMNI

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OMNI Institute is a nonprofit social science consultancy that provides integrated research, evaluation, and capacity building services to foster understanding, guide collaboration, and inform action to accelerate positive social change. We believe in the power of data to inspire and support individuals and organizations in changing their world by finding solutions to complex social questions. Our clients are leaders and change-makers in governments, nonprofits, foundations, and social enterprises who are making a positive difference in their communities.





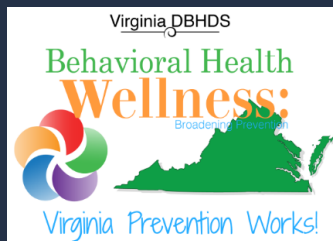


# Introduction & Background

# About the Young Adult Survey (YAS)

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- The YAS is a statewide survey of young adults ages 18-25 funded by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), Office of Behavioral Health and Wellness (OBHW). OMNI and OBHW partnered on the development.
- The purpose of the YAS is to better understand young adults' experiences with substance use, mental health, and other related topics to provide targeted prevention services across Virginia.
- The YAS was developed at the request of Virginia prevention communities to address gaps in the continuum of prevention and epidemiological data to uniquely focus on young adults and strengthen their data-driven prevention planning.
- The survey asks about young adults' opinions and experiences regarding the use of alcohol, marijuana/ cannabis, cigarettes/e-cigarettes, stimulants, opioids, and other illicit drug use. It also asks about mental health topics and gaming & gambling behavior.





# Issues of Concern Among Young Adults

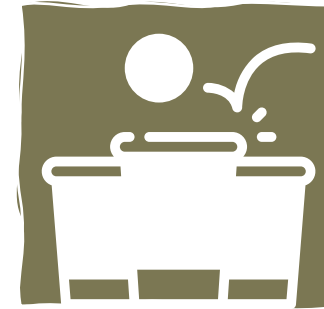
Vaping/E-Cigarette Use was the number one issue identified by most young adults, followed by mental health and underage alcohol use.



Vaping



Mental  
Health



Underage  
Alcohol Use

## Subgroup Focus:

Young Adults who are Middle Eastern or North African and those who are Black, African, or African American also noted Cannabis/Marijuana as an issue of concern to them. Trans and Gender Diverse respondents noted mental health as the number one issue in their community.

A photograph showing a person's hand pouring beer from a bottle into several clear plastic cups on a green table. The scene is outdoors, and the image has a cinematic, slightly desaturated feel. A white semi-transparent banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word "Alcohol".

# Alcohol

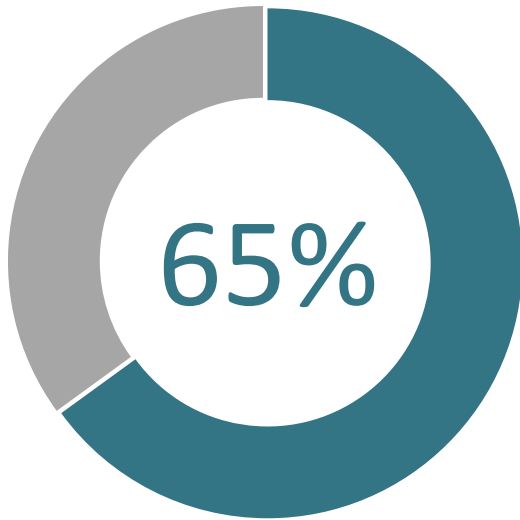




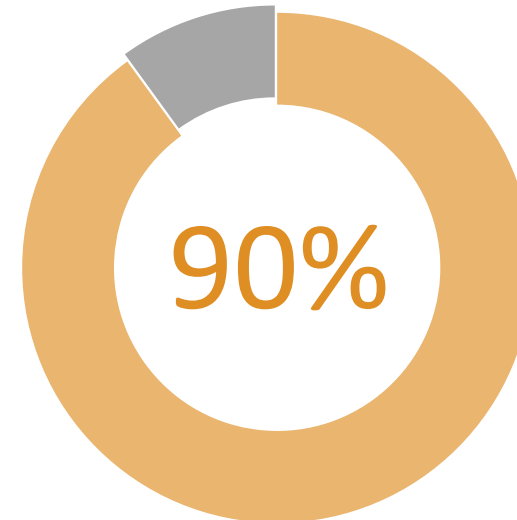
## Lifetime Use Trends

Underage alcohol use prevention activities are making an impact – young adults under 21 report lower lifetime use rates than those over the age of 21. However, **nearly 2 in 3 young adults under the legal drinking age report having consumed at least one drink in their life.**

18-20 Year Olds



21-25 Year Olds



**Non-students** reported substantially higher rates (84%) of lifetime use than their **student** peers (74%).

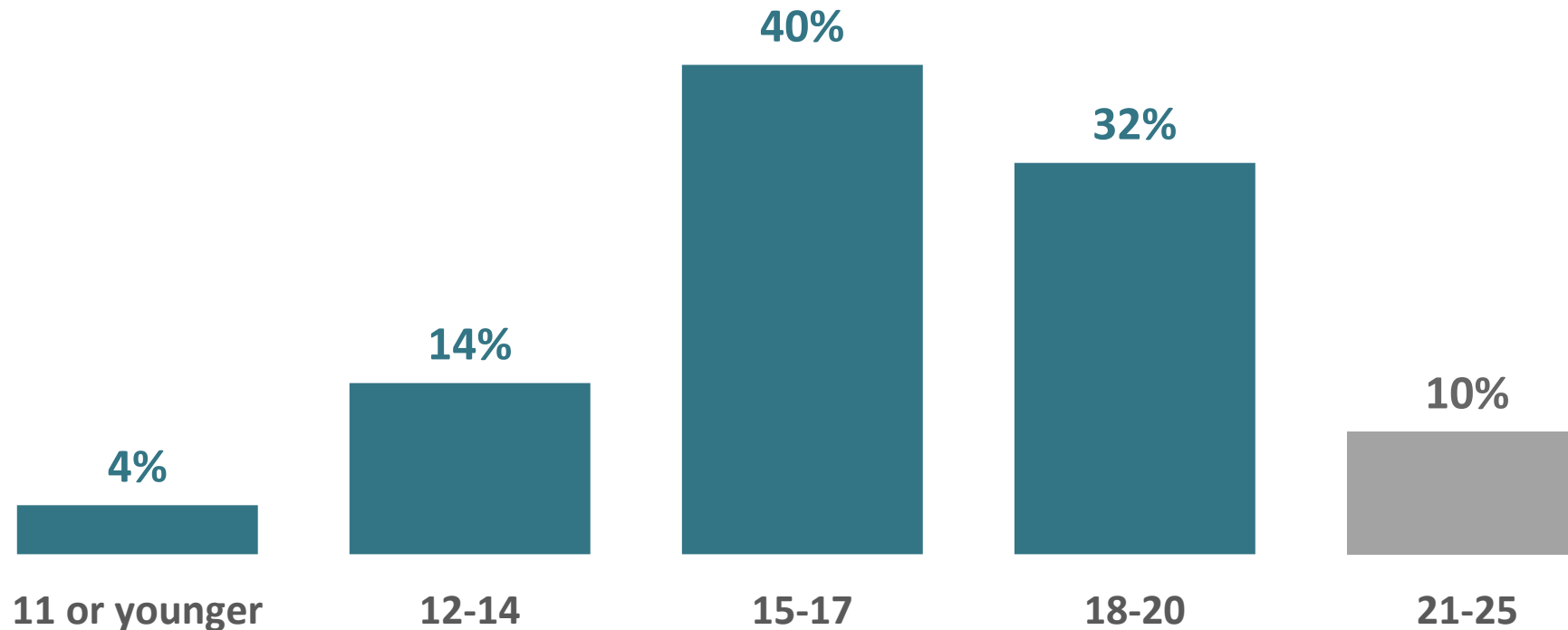
**LGBQ+ individuals** reported higher rates (84%) than their **Straight/Heterosexual** peers (77%).





# Age at First Use Among Lifetime Users

90% of young adults who have consumed alcohol began **before the age of 21**.

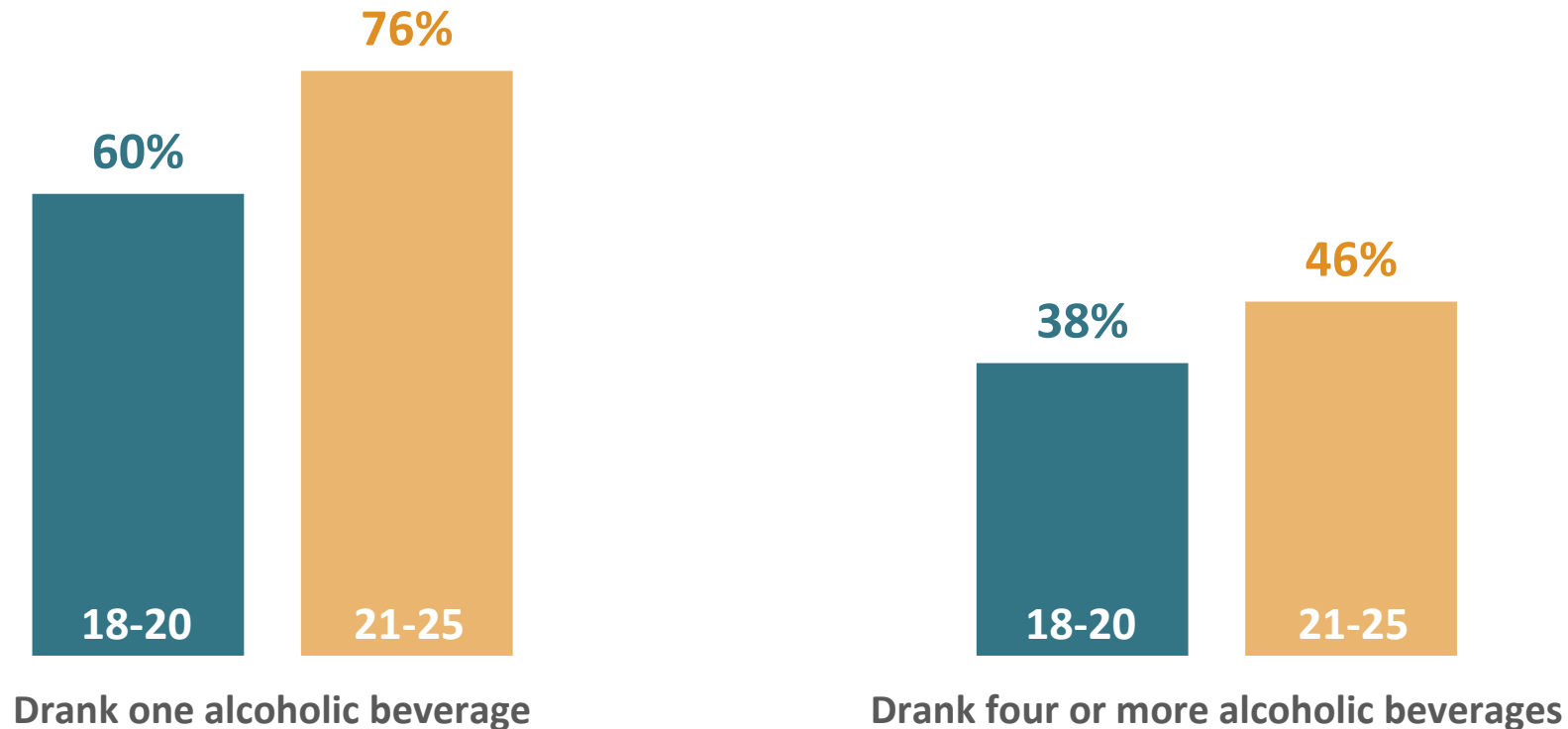


**Trans and gender diverse** young adults were more likely to report that they started drinking before the age of 15 compared to their peers (29% vs. 17%).



## Past 30-Day Use Among Lifetime Users

**3 in 5 underage young adults** who reported having ever consumed alcohol in their lifetime reported having consumed alcohol during the past 30 days. Underage young adults who reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days were likely to also have engaged in binge drinking behaviors.



**Non-students** are more likely to have consumed alcohol in the past 30 days than their student peers.

**Men** are more likely to have consumed alcohol in the past 30 days than non-binary people and women.



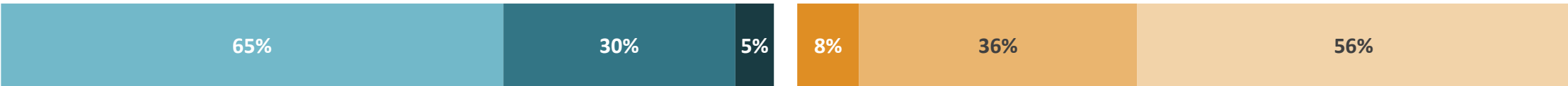
# Past 30-Day Frequency of Use Among Current Users

Underage young adults generally engage in less frequent alcohol use than those over the age of 21, though daily or weekly binge drinking rates between the groups are similar.

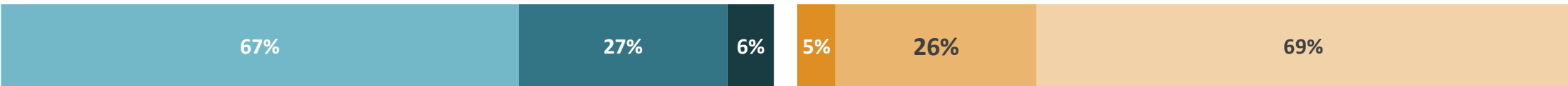
## Respondents Ages 18-20

## Respondents Ages 21-25

### Drank one alcoholic beverage



### Drank four or more alcoholic beverages



■ Monthly ■ Weekly ■ Daily or almost daily ■ Daily or almost daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly



**Non-students** reported higher rates of daily or almost daily alcohol use compared to students.

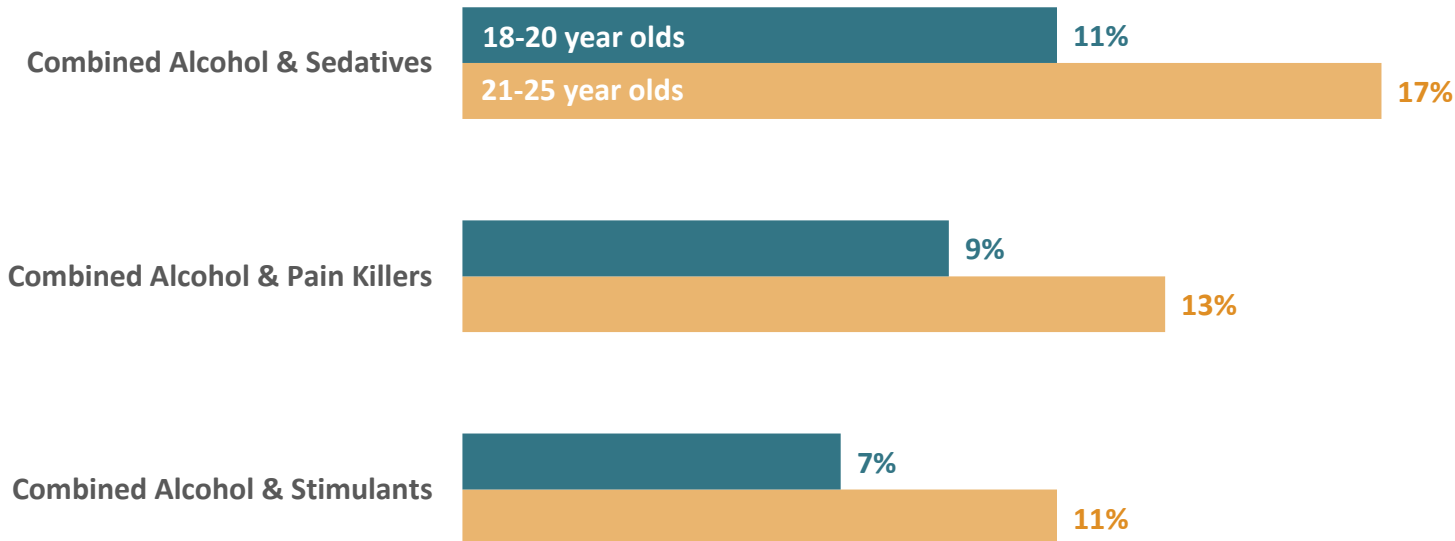
**Men** reported more frequent alcohol use compared to women and non-binary young adults.



# Alcohol-Involved Polysubstance Use

Young adults under 21 were less likely than their peers ages 21 and older to combine alcohol with other substances.

**Sedatives** are the most common substance to be combined with alcohol across age groups.



Polysubstance use rates were highest among young adults who are **American Indian and Alaskan Native** – with at least 1 in 5 having combined alcohol with sedatives, pain killers, and/or stimulants.

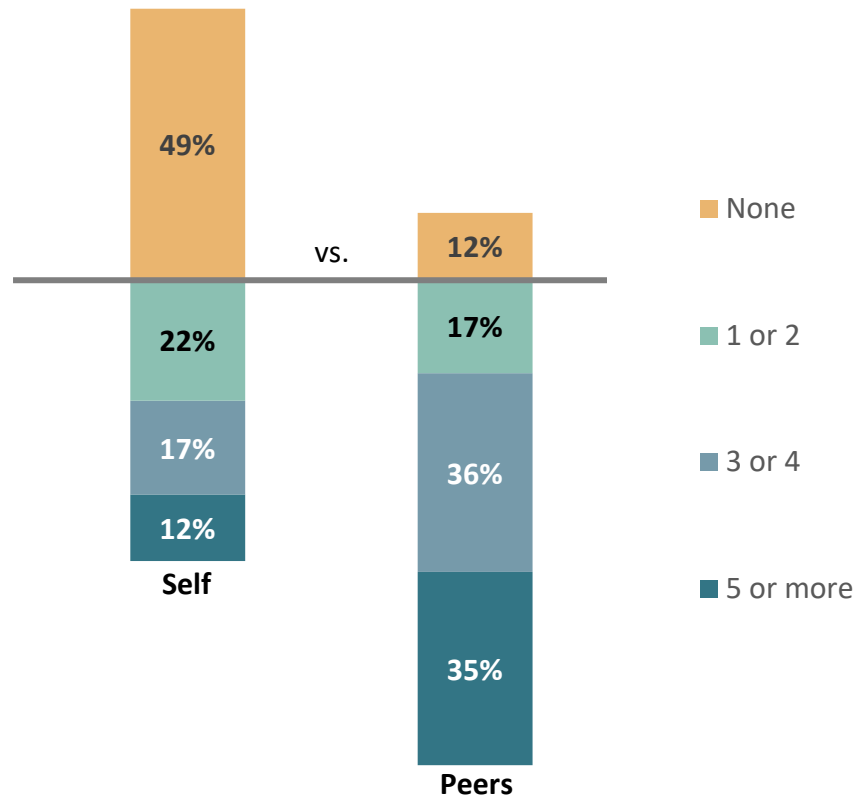




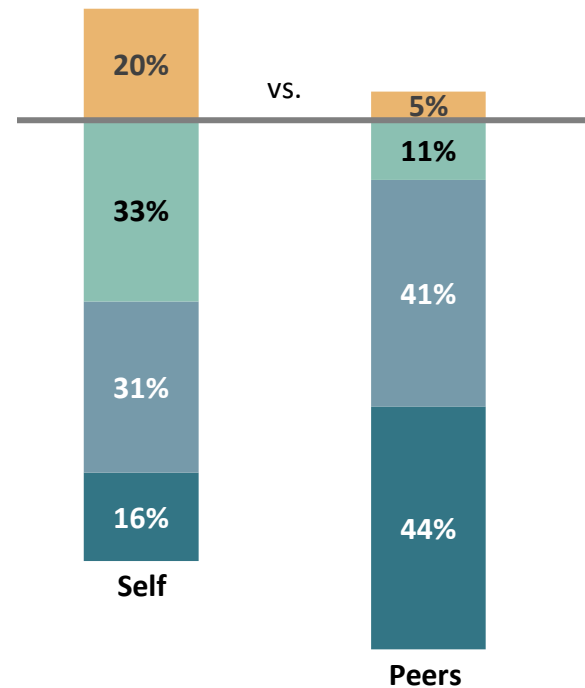
# Perceptions of Peer Use & Social Norms

Young adults **perceive their peers to drink more** than they themselves report drinking on a night out - those who are underage perceive significantly greater peer alcohol use than is self-reported.

18-20 Year Olds



21-25 Year Olds

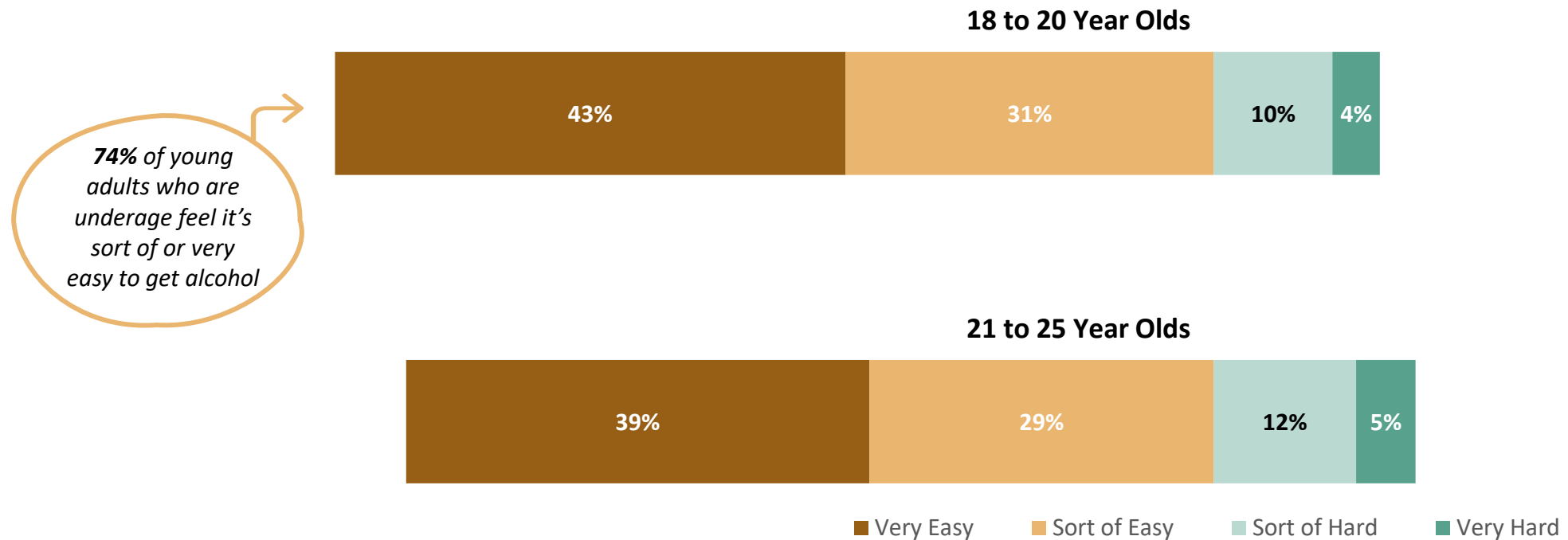


Perceiving peer use as higher than one's own use may encourage young adults to drink more to fit into the perceived social norm.



# Ease of Access

Young adults feel it is easy to get alcohol when under the age of 21, indicating work is needed to restrict access for those under the legal drinking age.





# Risk Perceptions of Drinking & Driving

Young adults perceive high risk in riding with someone who has been drinking - while 1 in 4 don't see a lot of risk in driving themselves after having a drink.

*1 in 4 young adults feel there is little to no risk in driving after having one drink*

**Ride with a Driver Who Has Been Drinking Alcohol**



**Drive After Having One Drink**



**Drive After Having Four or More Drinks**

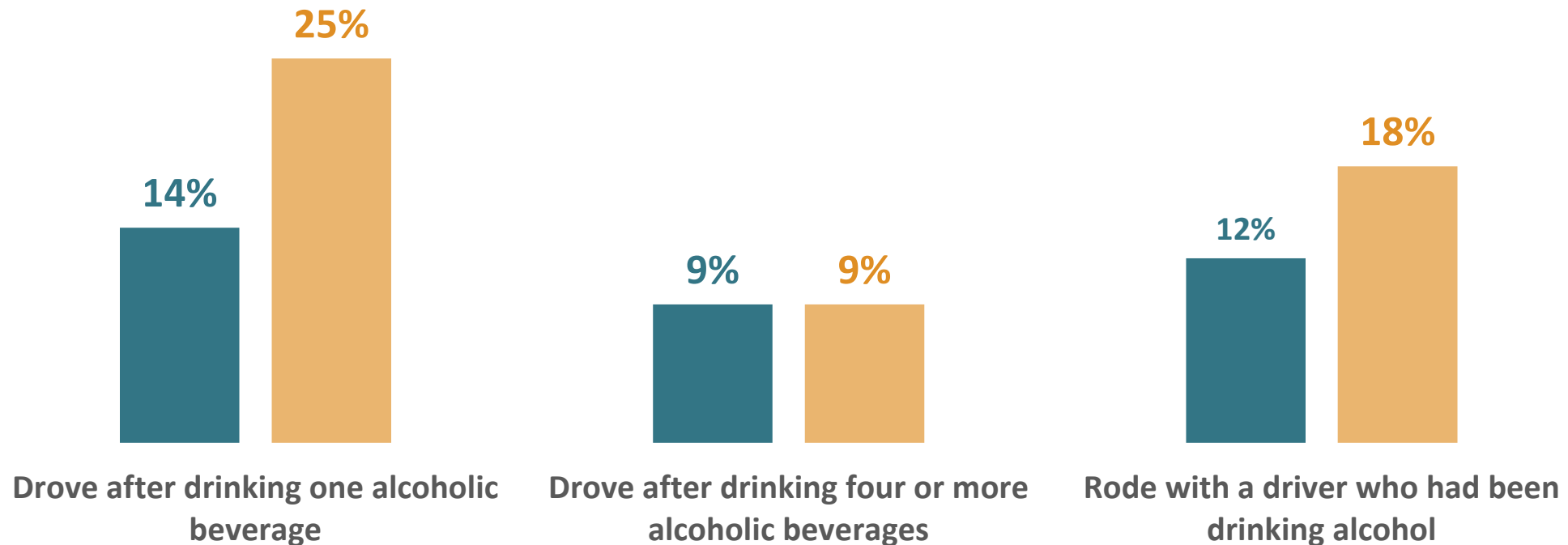


■ No Risk ■ Slight Risk ■ Moderate Risk ■ Great Risk



# Drinking & Driving Among Lifetime Users

Nearly 1 in 10 underage young adults who reported lifetime alcohol use reported having driven a car during the past 30 days after they drank four or more alcoholic beverages.



Rates of driving after drinking four or more alcohol beverages were highest among **men** (15%), **BIPOC** young adults (14%), and **non-students** (12%)



The background of the image is a collage. The top half features several pieces of white, textured paper with torn edges, each holding a small, dried cannabis leaf secured by a piece of yellow string. The bottom half shows a live cannabis plant with green, serrated leaves growing from a thin stem. The plant is positioned in front of a light blue ceramic plate with a white and blue pattern. The overall lighting is soft and natural.

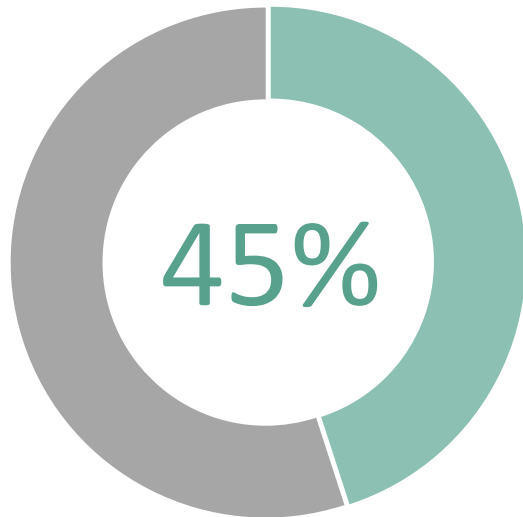
# Cannabis



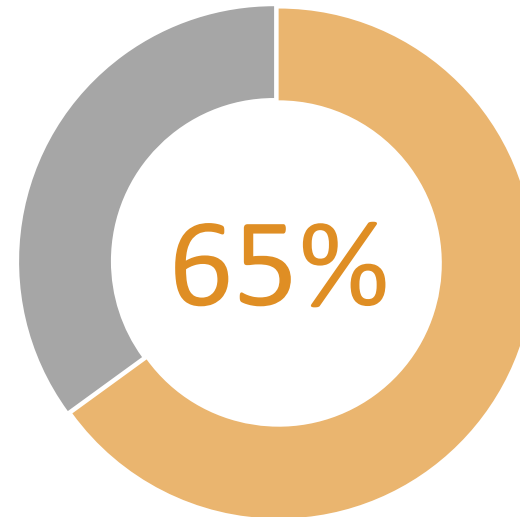
# Lifetime Use Trends

Lifetime use rates of cannabis were much **higher among 21-25 year olds** compared to those under the age of 21 – overall, **over half of young adults reported having used cannabis** products at some point in their life.

18-20 Year Olds



21-25 Year Olds

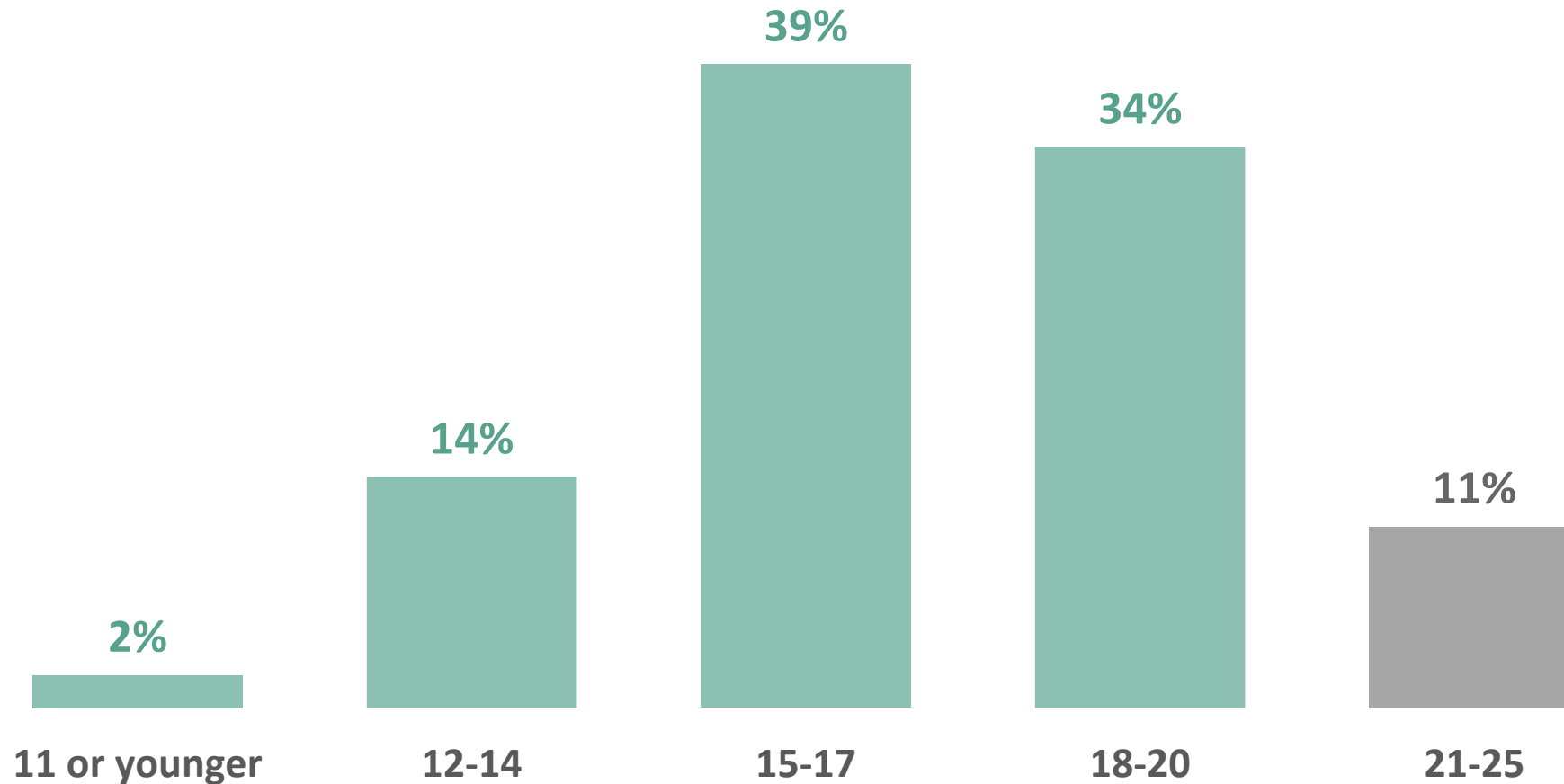


Lifetime use rates were highest among **LGBQ+** young adults (68%), those who are **trans and gender diverse** (67%), and those who identify as **multiracial** (64%).



# Age at First Use Among Lifetime Users

Most young adults began using cannabis **between the ages of 15 and 20.**



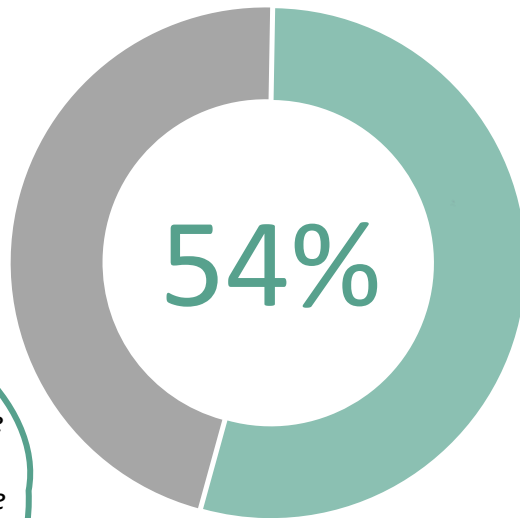
**Trans and gender diverse** young adults and **young adults not in school** were more likely to report that they started using cannabis products before the age of 15 compared to their peers.



# Past 30-Day Use Among Lifetime Users

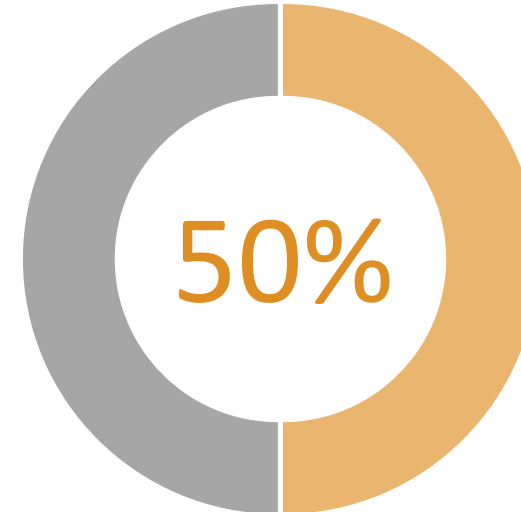
Cannabis use during the past 30 days was higher among young adults who were under the age of 21. Overall, half of young adults who reported lifetime marijuana use reported having used in the past 30 days.

## 18-20 Year Olds




*17% of underage young adults with lifetime cannabis use had used daily or almost daily in the past 30 days. 30% had used at least once or twice a week.*

## 21-25 Year Olds



*20% of young adults with lifetime cannabis use reported daily or almost daily use in the past 30 days.*



Past 30-day use rates were highest among **Trans and Gender Diverse** young adults (67%), as well as those who are **Black, African, or African American** (64%) and those who are **American Indian or Alaskan Native** (62%).





# Risk Perceptions of Cannabis Use

Overall, young adults perceive very little risk associated with both occasional and regular cannabis use.

## Occasional Cannabis Use



## Regular Cannabis Use



*Risk perceptions for cannabis use were lower than for alcohol, tobacco, and vaping*

■ No Risk ■ Slight Risk ■ Moderate Risk ■ Great Risk

Perceptions of risk for both occasional and regular cannabis use were lowest among **Trans and Gender Diverse young adults** – who also reported the highest use rates.



# Risk Perceptions of Cannabis Use & Driving

Perceptions of risk associated with driving after using cannabis or riding with a driver who has been using cannabis are low - **cannabis impaired driving is seen as less risky than alcohol impaired driving.**

**Drive After Using Cannabis**



**Ride with a Driver Who Has Been Using Cannabis**



■ No Risk   ■ Slight Risk   ■ Moderate Risk   ■ Great Risk



# Ease of Access

**Cannabis products are accessible to young adults** – approximately 3 in 4 feel it is sort of or very easy to get cannabis from people around them. Despite restrictions in cannabis sales through retailers and dispensaries, many young adults feel it is relatively easy to get cannabis from retailers.

**Respondents Ages 18-20**      **Respondents Ages 21-25**

**Accessing cannabis products from an acquaintance, friend, or family member**



**Accessing cannabis from a retailer or dispensary**

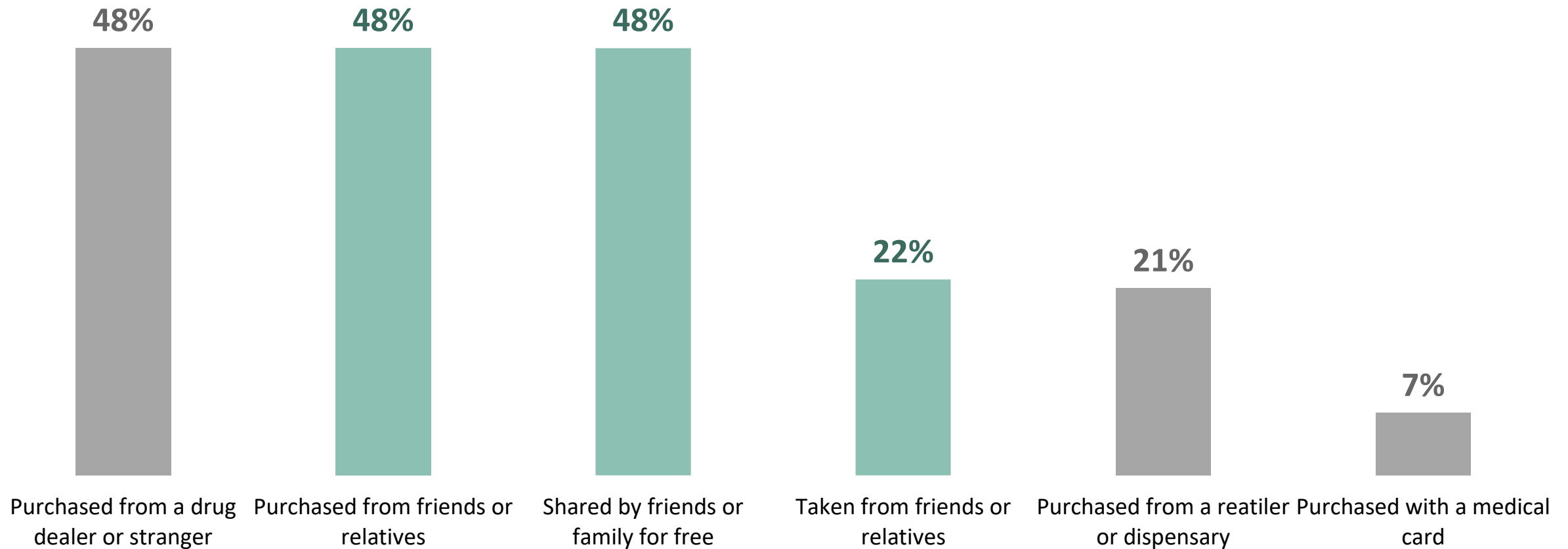


Sort of Easy      Very Easy      Very Easy      Sort of Easy



# Peer Access of Cannabis Products

Young adults believe that many of their peers are accessing cannabis products through **friends or family**.

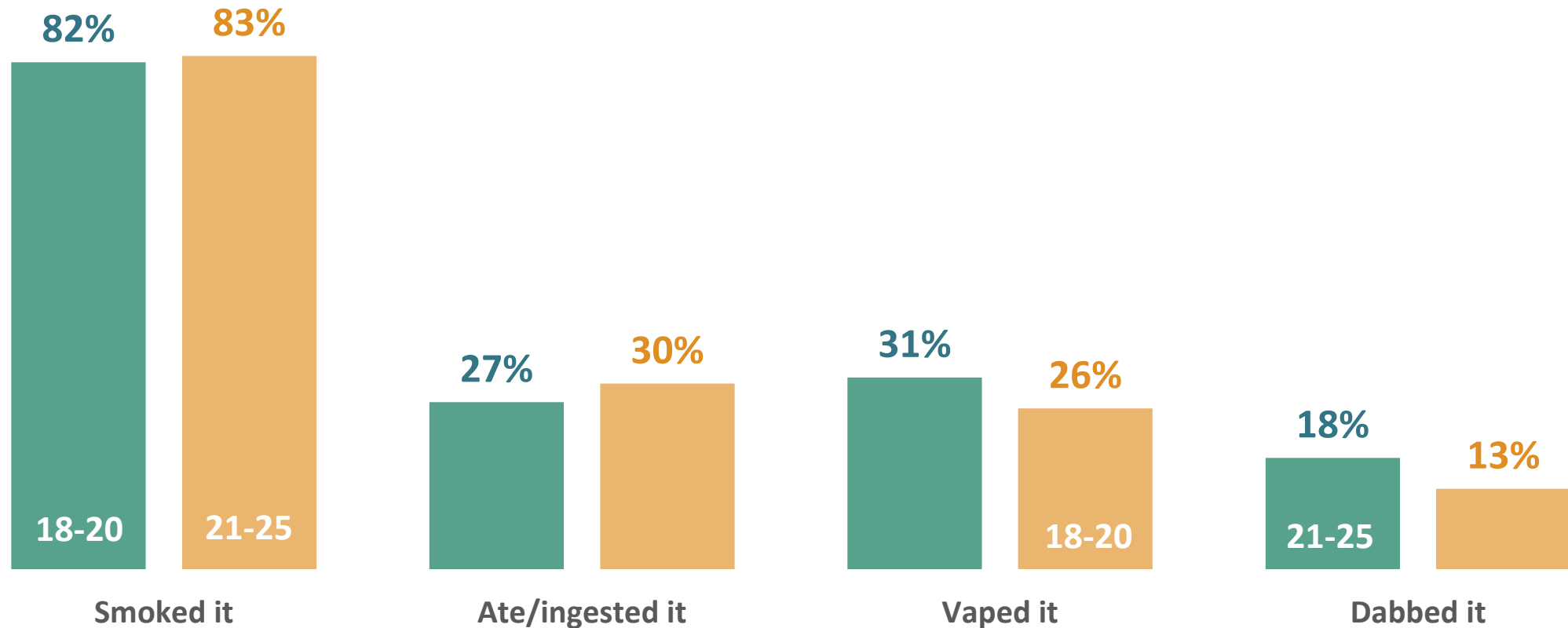






# Methods of Cannabis Use

Most young adults who had used cannabis products did so by smoking them. Vaping and dabbing of cannabis products was slightly more popular among those between the ages of 18 and 20.





# Reasons for Use

Over half of young adults used cannabis products to **manage their anxiety, depression, or other mental health symptoms.**

63%

For fun or recreational use

63%

To help relieve stress or relax

53%

To help manage anxiety, depression, or other mental health symptoms



Managing anxiety, depression, or other mental health systems was the primary reason for use among **Trans and Gender Diverse young adults**, who reported the highest use rates.

A black and white photograph of a hand holding a lit cigarette. Thick smoke is rising from the cigarette, filling the upper half of the frame. A semi-transparent white horizontal banner is positioned across the middle of the image, featuring the word "Tobacco" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background is dark and out of focus.

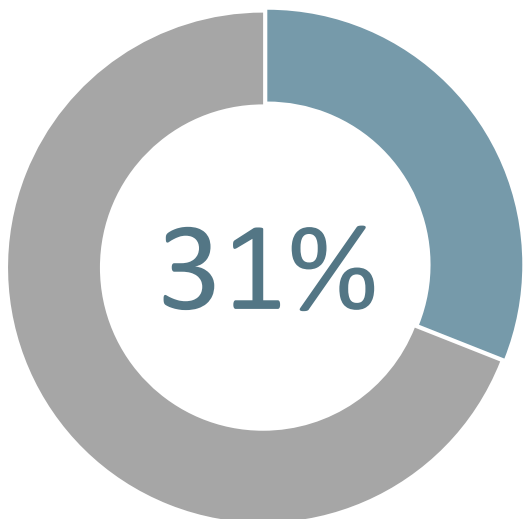
# Tobacco



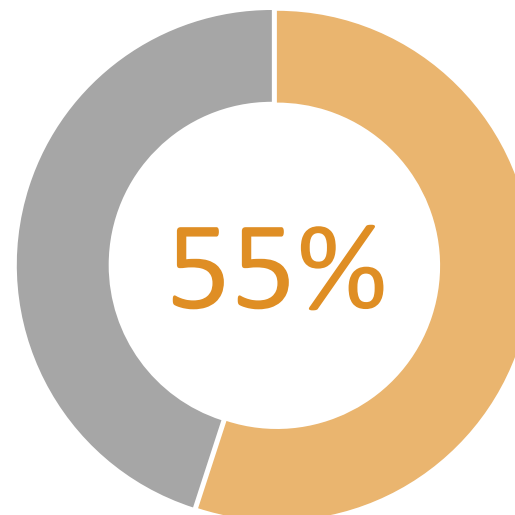
# Lifetime Use Trends

Tobacco use rates were significantly lower among young adults under the age of 21 – the legal purchasing age of tobacco products.

18-20 Year Olds



21-25 Year Olds

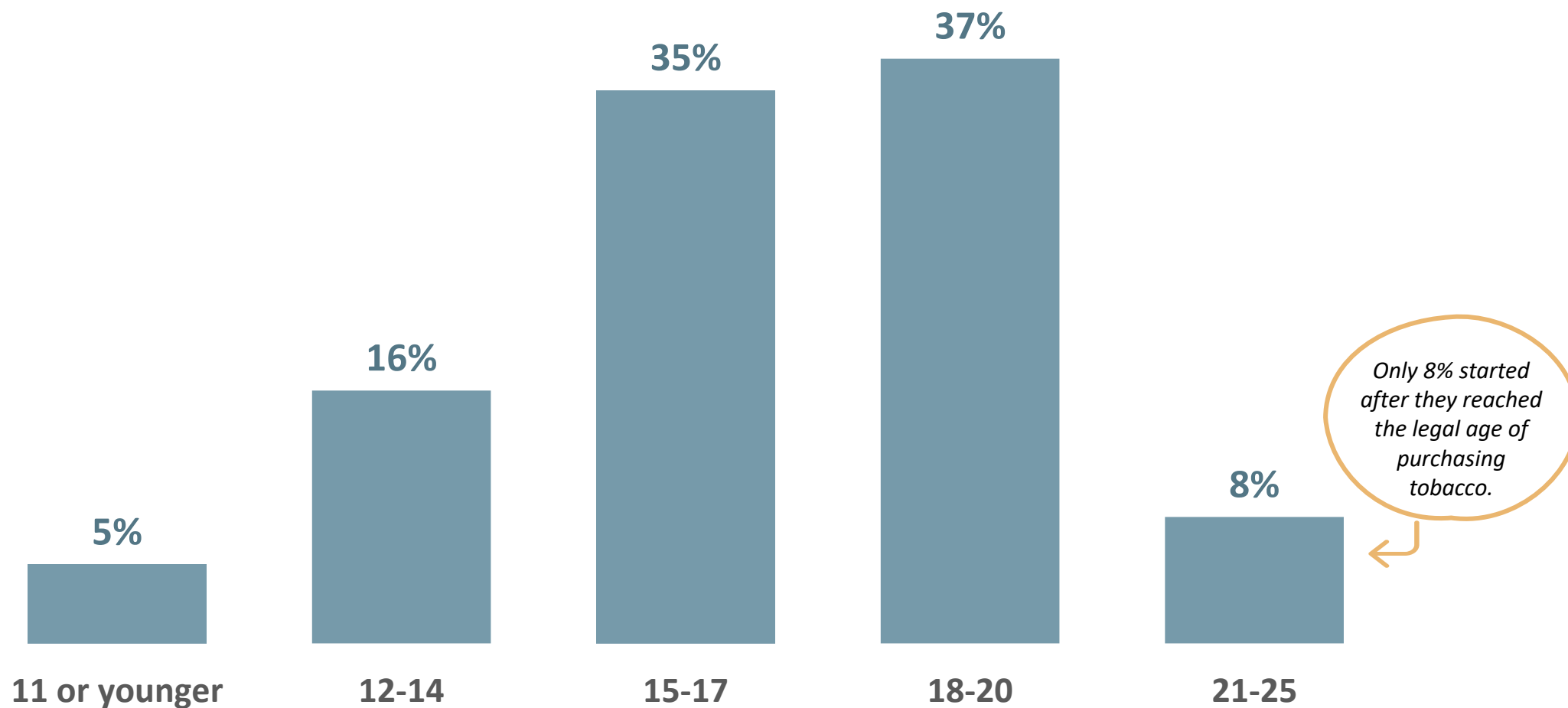


Lifetime use rates were highest among **Non-Students** young adults (55%), those who are **American Indian or Alaskan Native** (54%), and **men** (51%).



# Age at First Use Among Lifetime Users

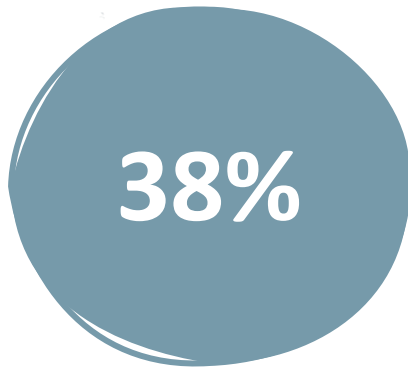
1 in 5 young adults who have smoked in their lifetime first did so before the age of 15.



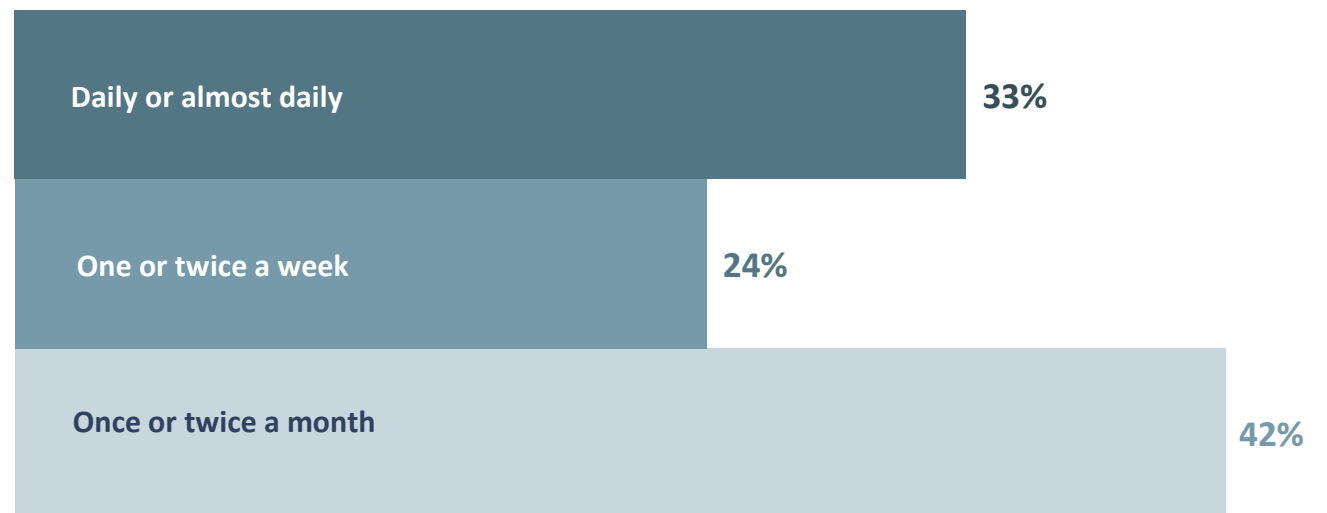


# Past 30-Day Use Among Lifetime Users & Past 30-Day Frequency of Use Among Current Users

Tobacco use in the past 30 days among those who reported having used a tobacco product at some point in their life was **relatively low compared to substances like alcohol, cannabis, and vaping**. 1 in 3 young adults who used in the past 30 days reported daily or almost daily use.



of young adults who have used tobacco products before reported having used them in the past 30 days.

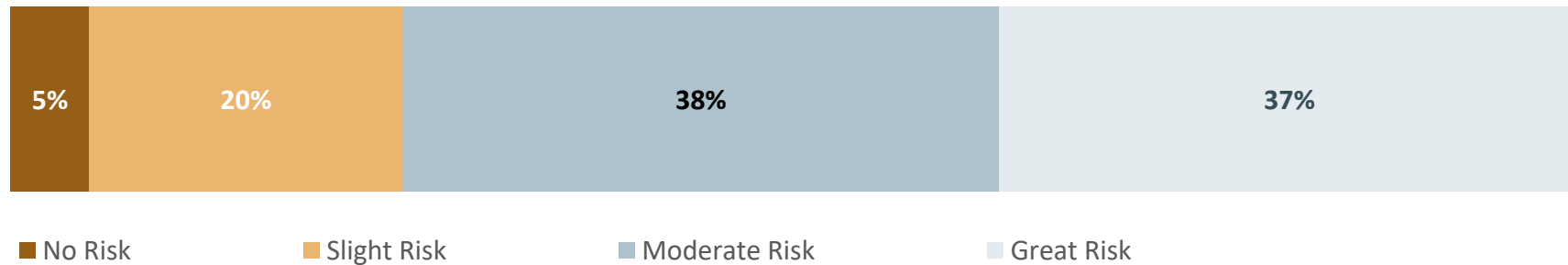


Past 30-day use rates were highest among young adults who are **American Indian or Alaskan Native (54%)**, as and those who are **Black, Africa, or African American (54%)**.



# Risk Perceptions of Tobacco Use

1 in 4 young adults feel that there is **little** or **no risk** associated with tobacco use.

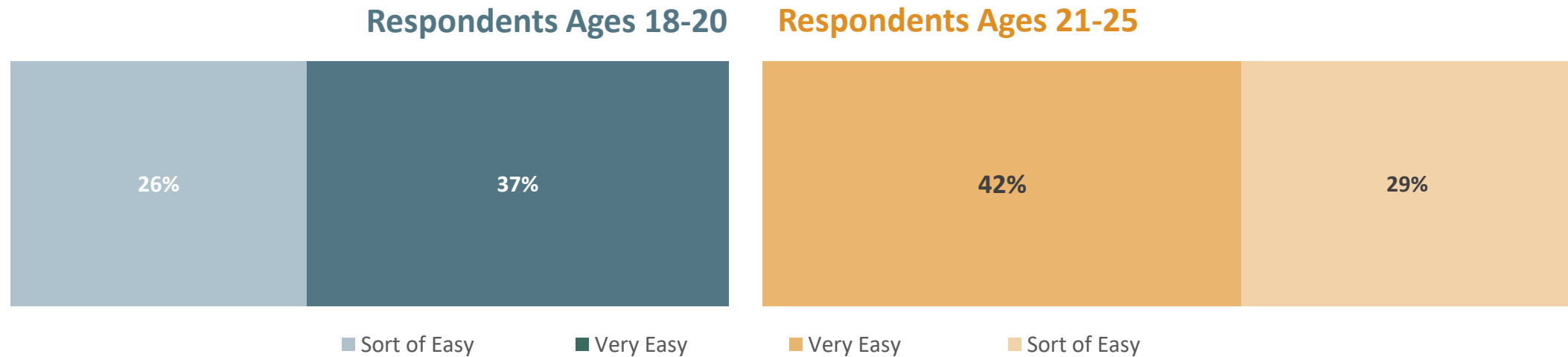






# Ease of Access

**Young adults perceive tobacco products to be easily accessible.** Overall, 2 in 3 young adults feel that tobacco products are very easy or sort of easy to get.



A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's face in profile, exhaling a thick, white cloud of vapor. The person is holding a small, clear vape device in their mouth. The background is dark and out of focus. The overall tone is moody and artistic.

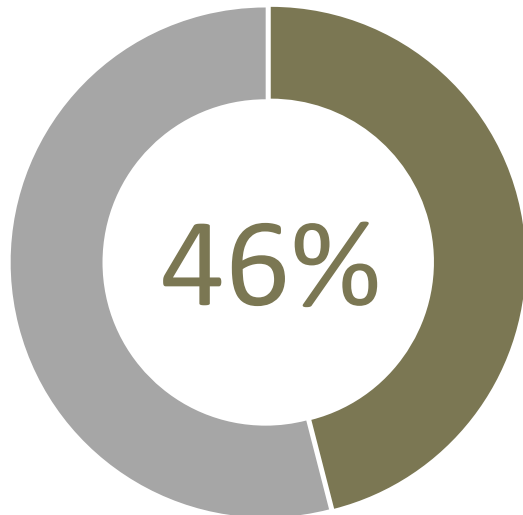
# Vaping



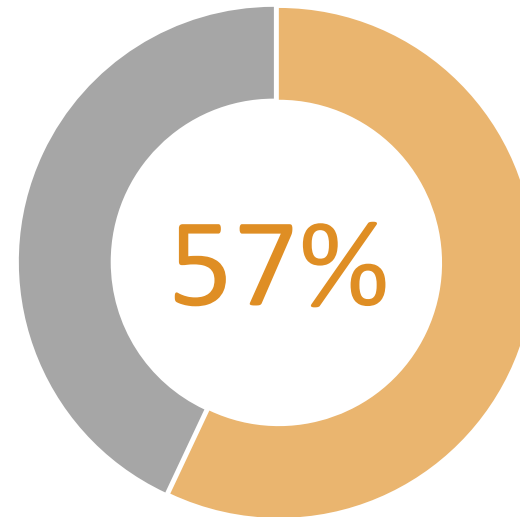
# Lifetime Use Trends

**Half of young adults reported having vaped at some point in their life**, making it the third most common substance used among young adults. Lifetime use rates for vaping were significantly lower among those under the age of 21.

18-20 Year Olds



21-25 Year Olds

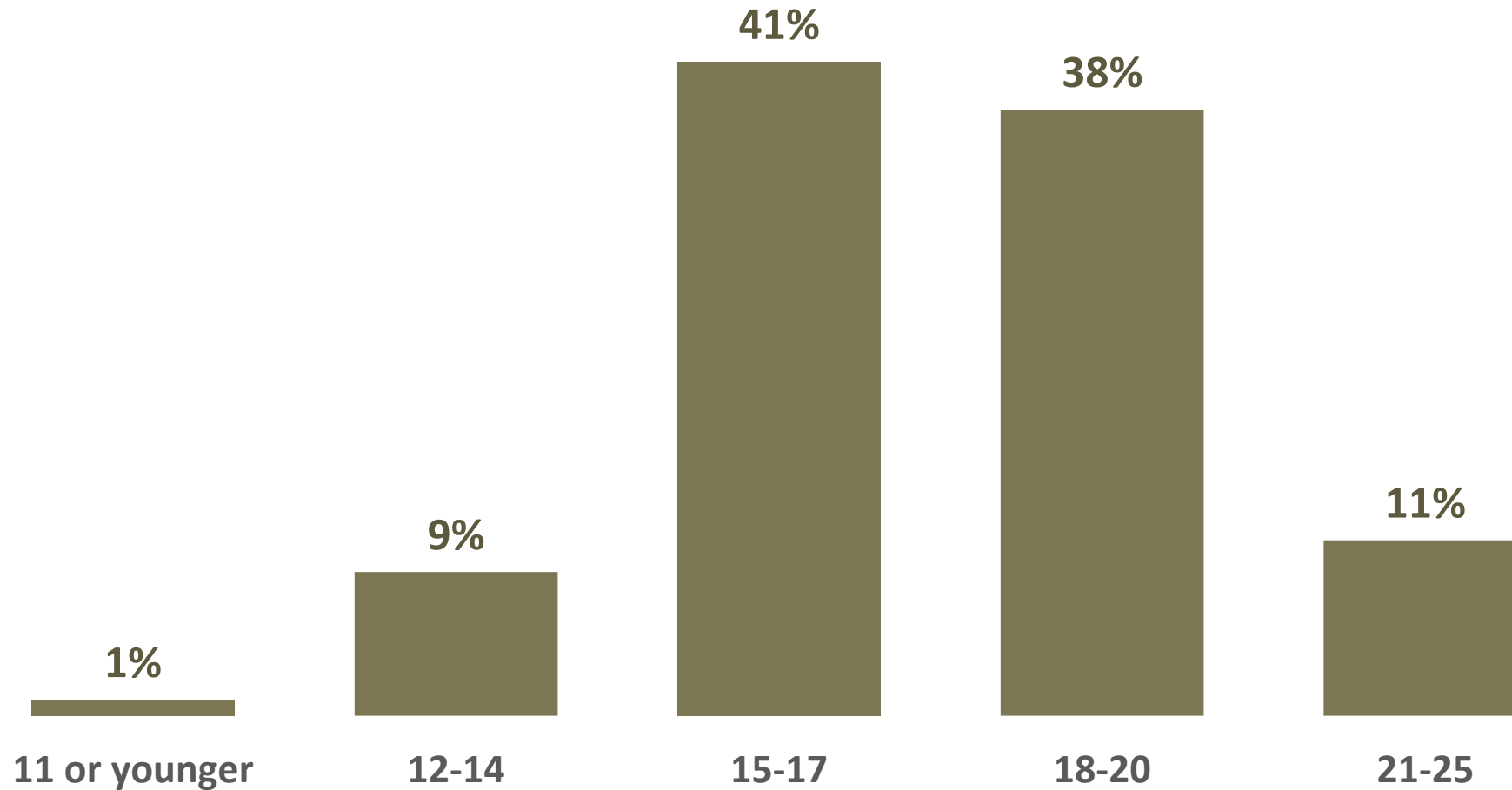


Significant differences in lifetime use rates were found between **LGBQ+** and non-LGBQ+ young adults (59% vs 48%), as well as between Students (47%) and **non-Students** (56%).



# Age at First Use Among Lifetime Users

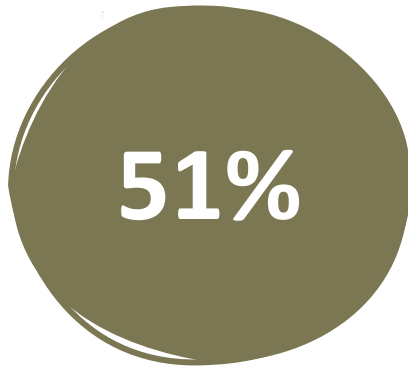
Half of young adults who have vaped first did so **between the ages of 12 and 17**.



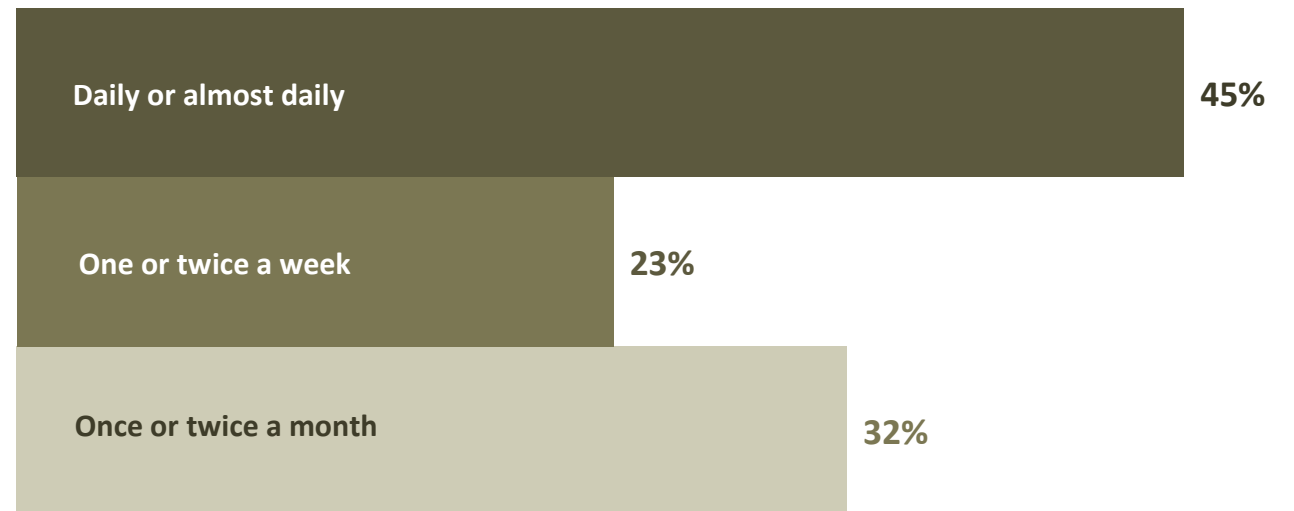


# Past 30-Day Use Among Lifetime Users & Past 30-Day Frequency of Use Among Current Users

Past 30-day vaping and e-cigarette use was much higher than tobacco use. Over half of young adults who reported lifetime use reported having used in the past 30 days.



of young adults who have  
use vapes or e-cigarettes  
before reported having  
used them in the past 30  
days.

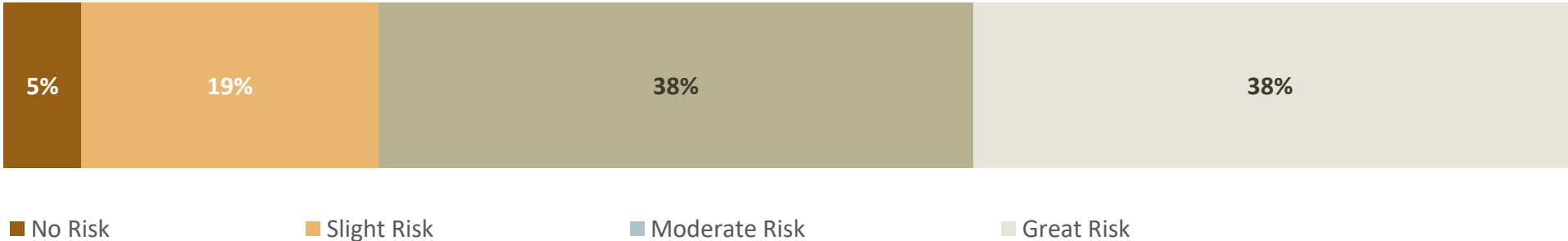


Past 30-day use rates were highest among young adults who are **American Indian or Alaskan Native (66%)**, **Men (57%)**, **Black, Africa, or African American (55%)**, and **Hispanic/Latinx (54%)**.



# Risk Perceptions of Vaping

Risk perceptions associated with vaping were similar to those of tobacco use. Nearly 1 in 4 do not associated significant risk with vaping or e-cigarette use.



Perceptions of risk for vaping and e-cigarette use were lowest among young adults who are **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native**, those **not in school**, and **men**.



## Ease of Access

Access to vaping products is significant among young adults. **Nearly 3 in 4 young adults believe that it is very easy or sort of easy to get vapes or e-cigarettes.**

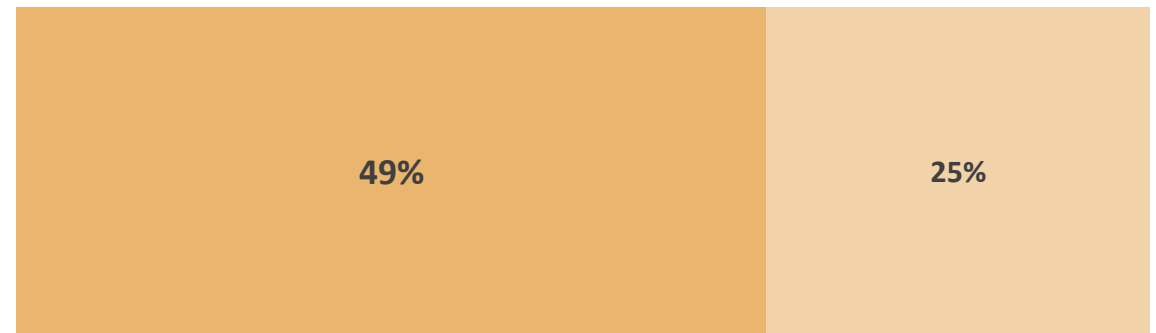
**Respondents Ages 18-20**



■ Sort of Easy

■ Very Easy

**Respondents Ages 21-25**



■ Very Easy

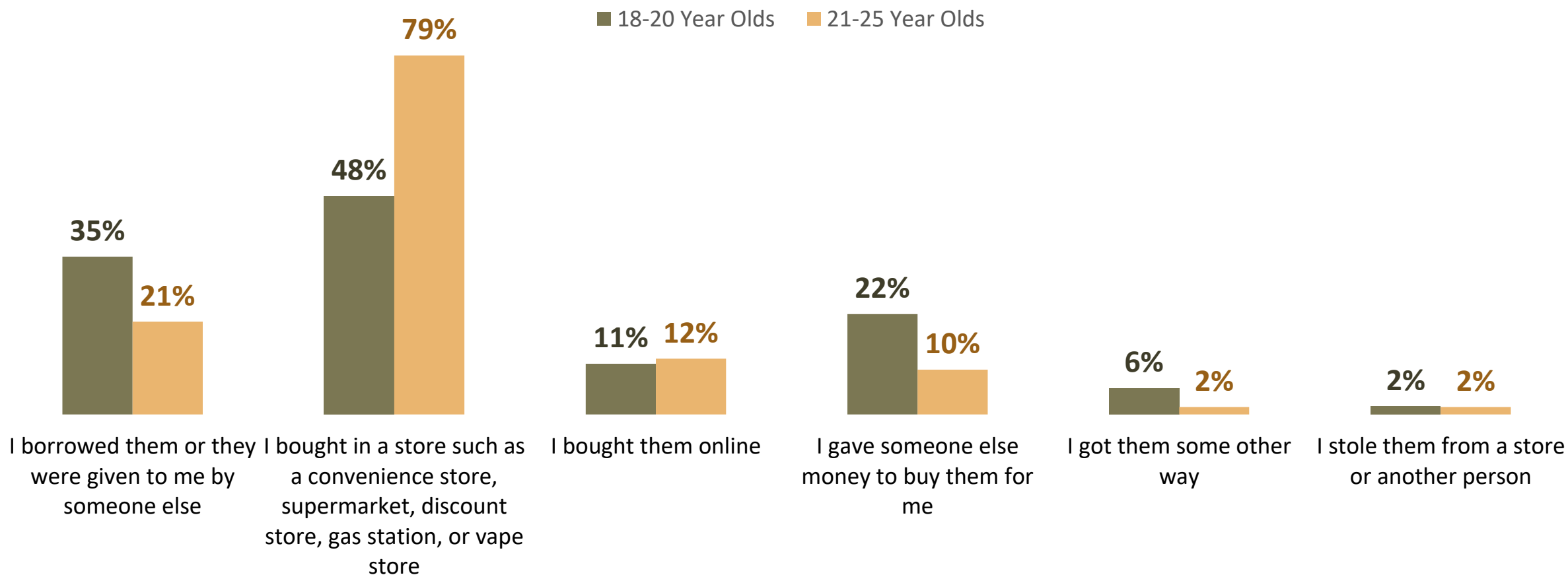
■ Sort of Easy





# Peer Access of Vaping Products

Exchange between individuals or peers is a common source of vape/e-cigarettes access. 1 in 3 young adults report that their peers access them by borrowing them from someone or receiving them from someone else. 1 in 5 report that their peers give money to others to buy vapes/e-cigarettes.



## Appendix: Demographic Breakdown

| Sub-Group           | Sub-Population                            | Sub-Pop N | Sub-Group N | Sub-Population % |
|---------------------|---|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| Age                 | 21 or Older                               | 2766      | 5327        | 51.9             |
| Age                 | Under 21                                  | 2561      | 5327        | 48.1             |
| BIPOC vs. Non-BIPOC | BIPOC                                     | 1775      | 5327        | 33.3             |
| BIPOC vs. Non-BIPOC | Non-BIPOC                                 | 3552      | 5327        | 66.7             |
| Employment Status   | Employed (paid work)                      | 3224      | 4953        | 65.1             |
| Employment Status   | Not Employed (no paid work)               | 1729      | 4953        | 34.9             |
| Ethnicity           | Hispanic/Latinx                           | 483       | 4897        | 9.9              |
| Ethnicity           | Non-Hispanic/Latinx                       | 4414      | 4897        | 90.1             |
| Gender              | Man                                       | 1777      | 4912        | 36.2             |
| Gender              | Non-Binary                                | 203       | 4912        | 4.1              |
| Gender              | Woman                                     | 2999      | 4912        | 61.1             |
| Overall             | Overall                                   | 5327      | 5327        | 100              |
| Race                | American Indian or Alaska Native          | 130       | 4970        | 2.6              |
| Race                | Asian or Asian American                   | 283       | 4970        | 5.7              |
| Race                | Black, African, or African American       | 1172      | 4970        | 23.6             |
| Race                | Middle Eastern or North African           | 66        | 4970        | 1.3              |
| Race                | More than one race                        | 228       | 4970        | 4.6              |
| Race                | Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 40        | 4970        | 0.8              |
| Race                | Other                                     | 112       | 4970        | 2.3              |
| Race                | White or Caucasian                        | 3328      | 4970        | 67               |
| Sexual Orientation  | LGBQ+                                     | 1339      | 4950        | 27.1             |
| Sexual Orientation  | Straight/Heterosexual                     | 3611      | 4950        | 72.9             |
| Student Status      | Non-Student                               | 2326      | 4953        | 47               |
| Student Status      | Student                                   | 2627      | 4953        | 53               |
| Trans vs. Non-Trans | Not Transgender or Questioning            | 4731      | 5008        | 94.5             |
| Trans vs. Non-Trans | Trans, Gender Diverse, or Questioning     | 277       | 5008        | 5.5              |