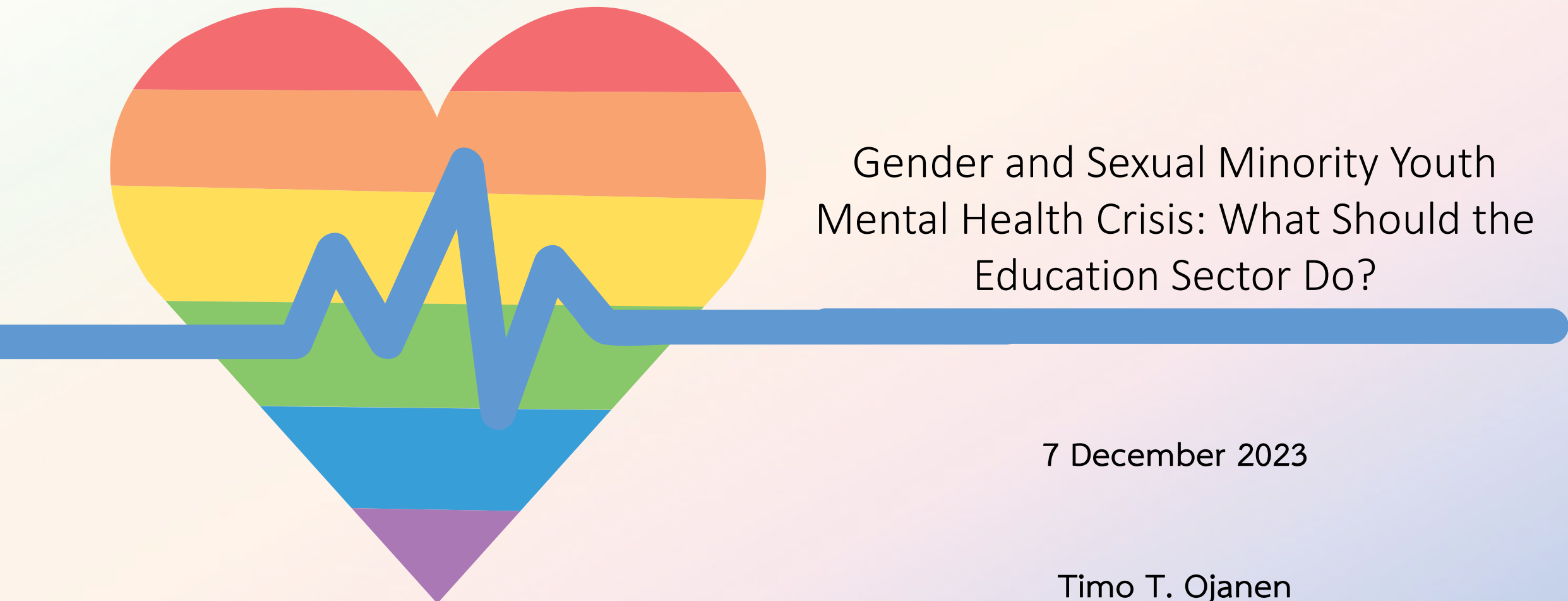




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Gender and Sexual Minority Youth Mental Health Crisis: What Should the Education Sector Do?

7 December 2023

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Background

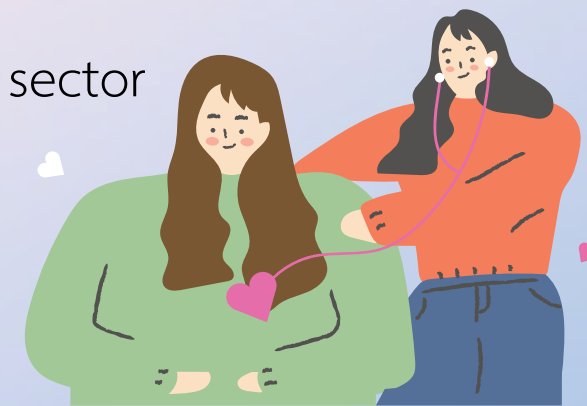


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- Research worldwide suggests gender and sexual minority youth have poorer mental health than their cisgender/heterosexual peers
- The minority stress model explains that this disparity results from:
 - Additional negative incidents (discrimination, violence)
 - Fear of further rejection, leading to nondisclosure and self-loathing
 - Access to social support may also be limited, exacerbating the situation
- Save the Children Thailand, Thammasat University, and Srinakharinwirot University conducted a study in 2022 on gender and sexual minority youth (age 15-24 years) mental health in Thailand
- The findings are used as the basis of recommendations for the educational sector



Data sources



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Online survey with 3,094 participants



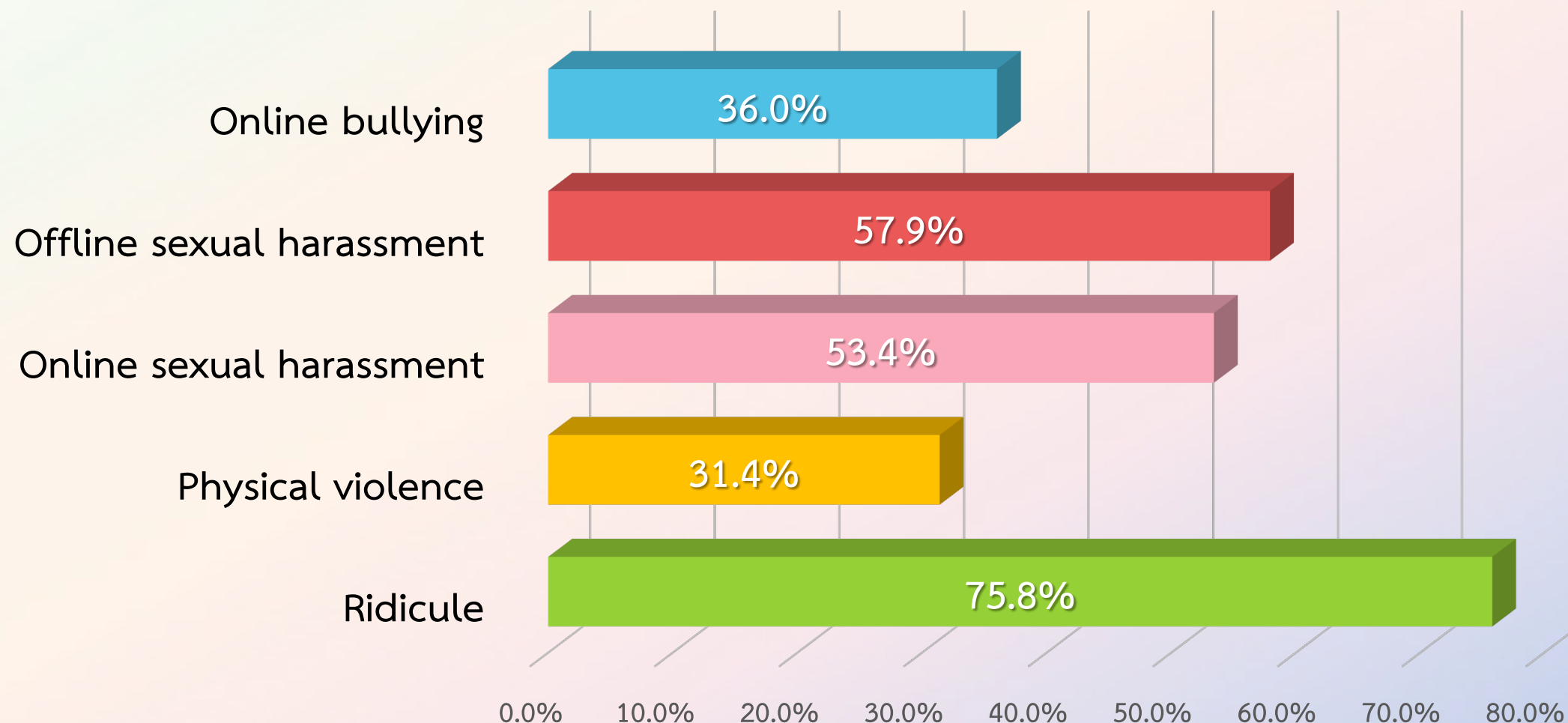
38 online interviews

Victimization, past 1 year



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Forced SOGI change efforts

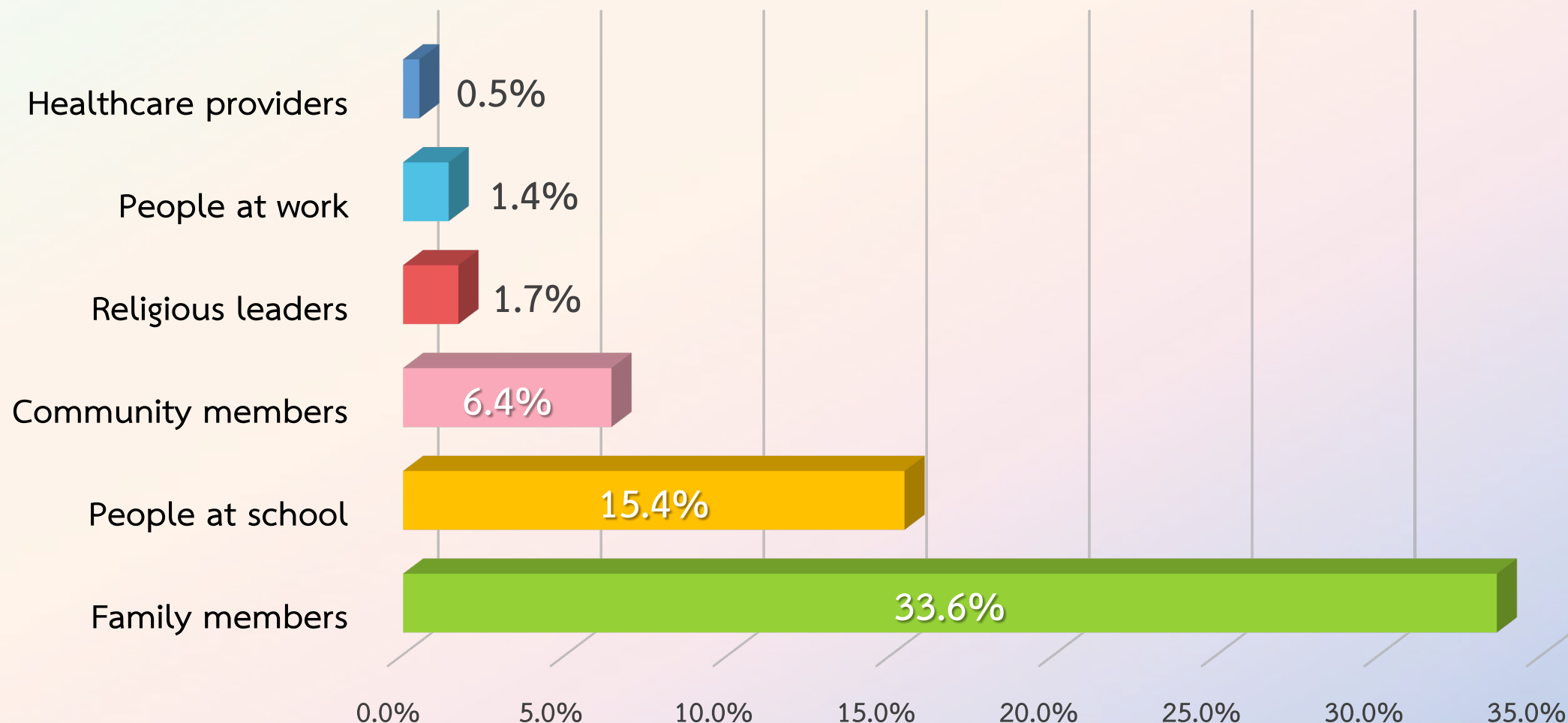


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Overall: 42.4%



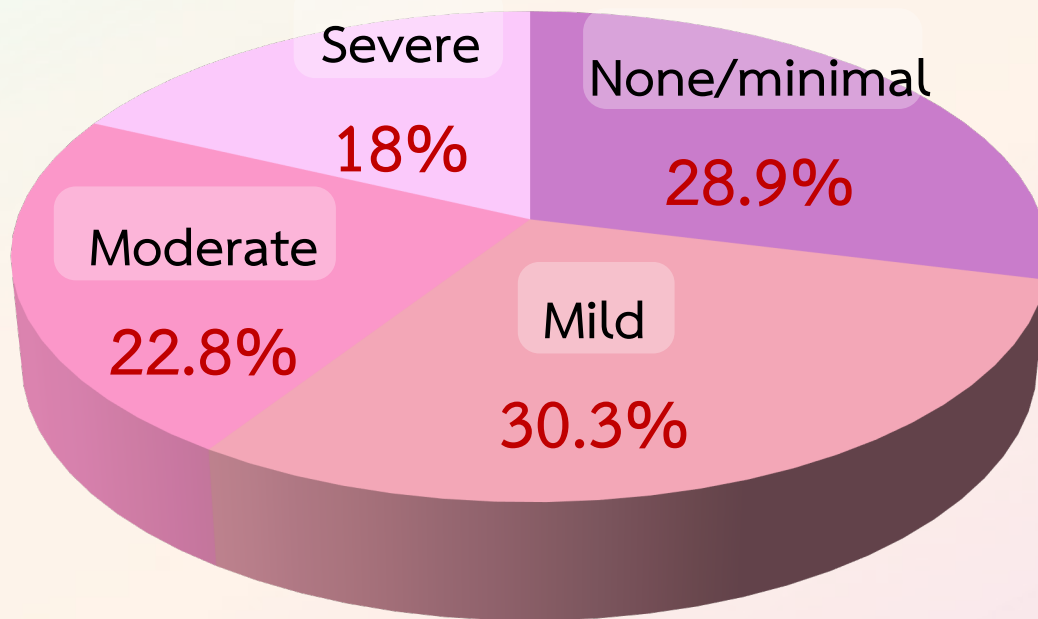
Depression & anxiety symptoms



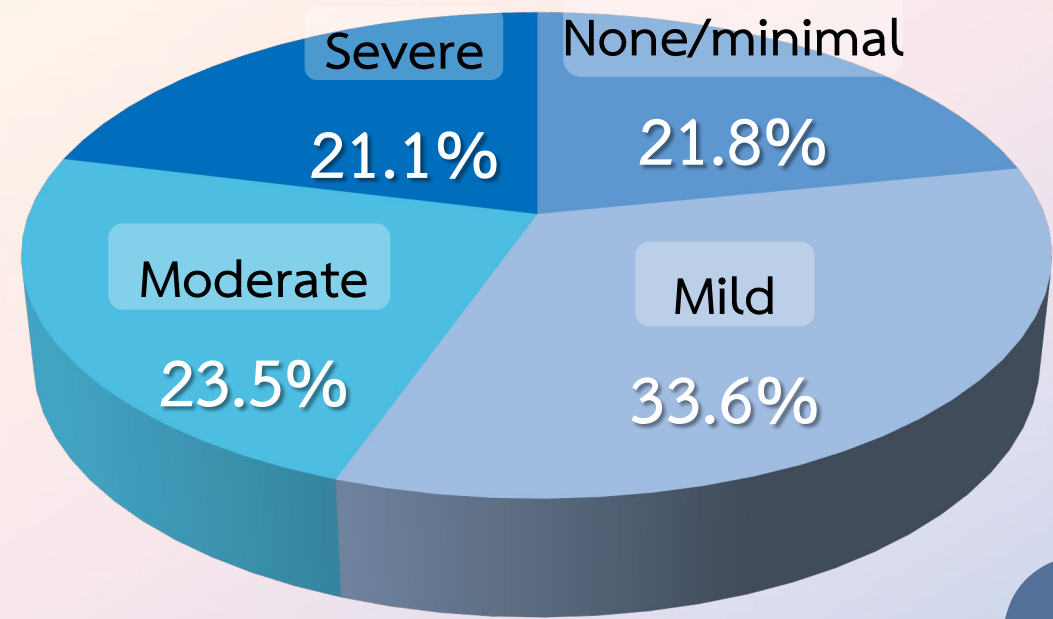
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Depression (9Q)



Anxiety (GAD-7)



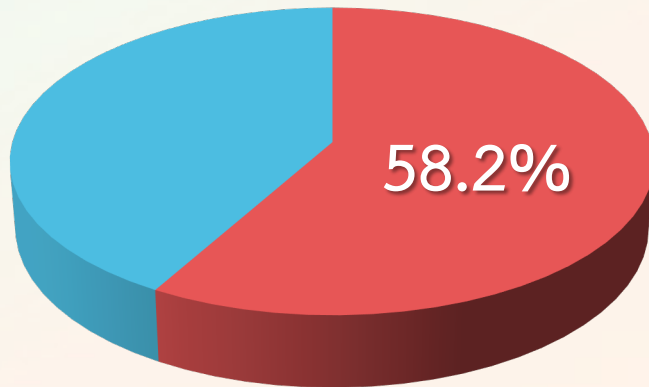
Suicidality and self-harm (past 12 months)



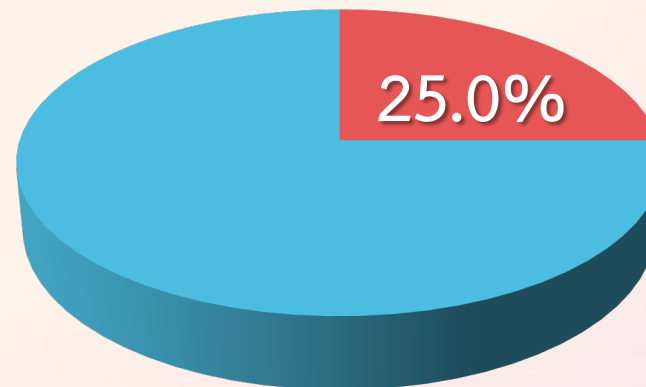
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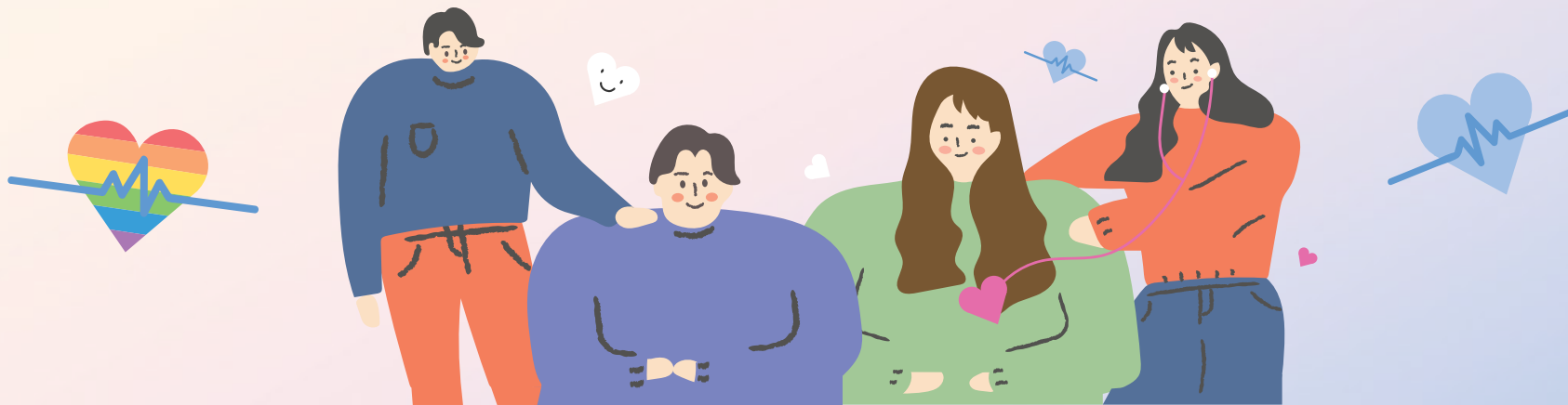
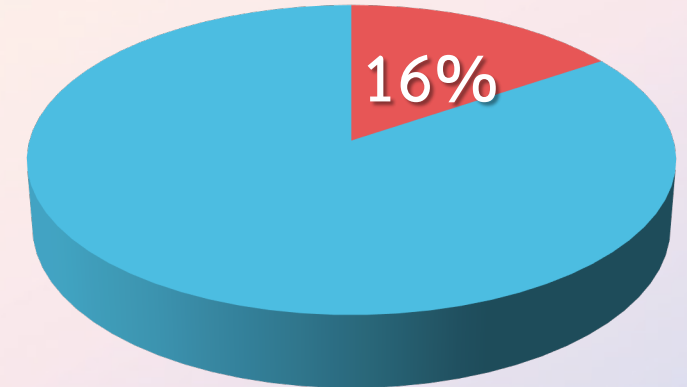
Thought of suicide



Non-suicidal
self-harm



Attempted suicide





Risk & protective factors of anxiety and depression



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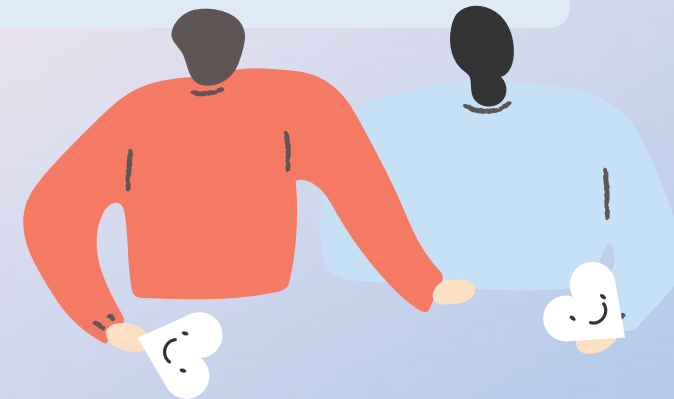
Risk factors

- Number of types of violence in past year
- Forced SOGI change efforts
- Lifetime discrimination contexts
- Female sex assigned at birth



Protective factors

- Resilience
- Sufficient income for daily needs
- Higher age (only affected anxiety)





Risk & protective factors of suicidality & self-harm



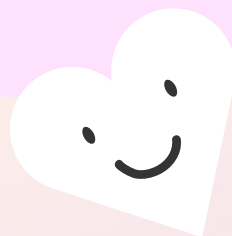
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Risk factors

- Number of types of violence in past year
- Lifetime discrimination contexts (only affected self-harm)
- Female sex assigned at birth



Protective factors

- Resilience
- Higher age (only affected thoughts of suicide and self-harm)





Factors influencing resilience



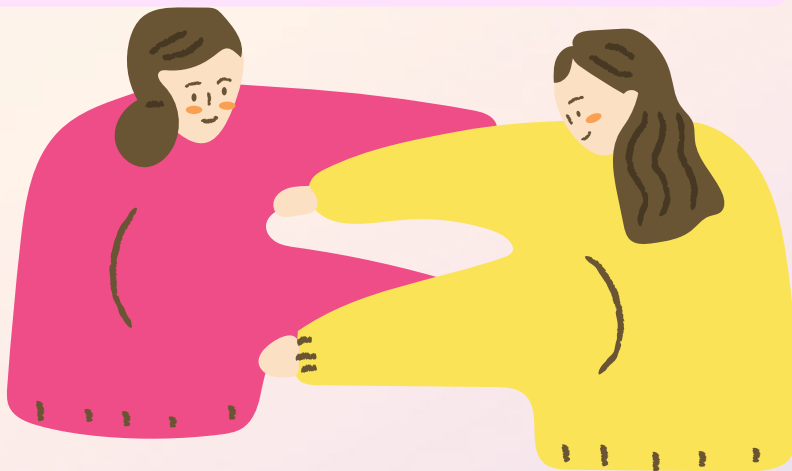
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Reduce resilience

- Number of types of violence in past year
- Lifetime discrimination contexts



Increase resilience

- **Social support**
- Outness (ability to disclose identity)
- Sufficient income for daily needs





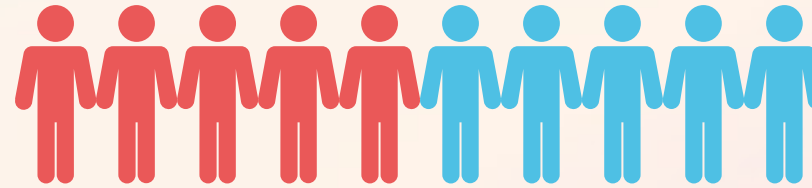
Use and outcomes of mental health services



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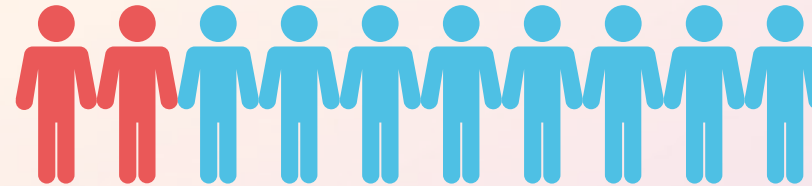
Felt they needed mental health services in past 1 year



53.7%



Used mental health services



21.4%

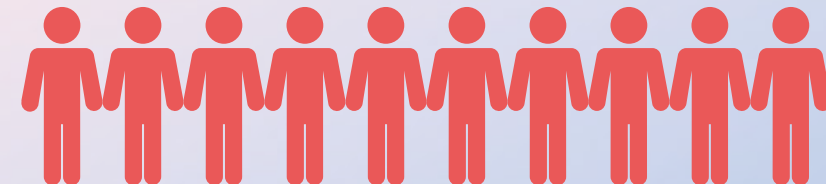


Felt better as a result



68.4%

Felt that provider understood and respected their SOGI



94.8%

Key findings



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1. Gender and sexual minority youth in Thailand have very high rates of anxiety, depression, suicidality, and self-harm
2. Being a victim of violence, being discriminated against, forced SOGI change efforts, and insufficient income negatively impact mental health
3. Social support leads to higher resilience, which then protects mental health
4. Over a half felt they needed mental health services, but only 20% used them
5. The majority of those who did use MH services felt better as a result.





What should the education sector do?



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Reduce risk factors

- Introduce whole-school anti-bullying measures
- Eliminate discrimination
- Gender-neutral approach
- Increase SOGIESC contents in curriculum/teaching
- Train staff on these issues

Increase social support, enhance resilience

- Build informal support mechanisms
- Teach students about sources of support
- Build understanding about resilience and social support among students

Increase access to mental health services

- Establish school-based mental health services
- Build connections with outside service providers
- Teach students and inform parents on how to access mental health services



Link to the study report



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<https://rb.gy/ogiz6h>



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