



# INJURY AND VIOLENCE DISPARITIES

## between LGBTQ+ and Heterosexual Youth

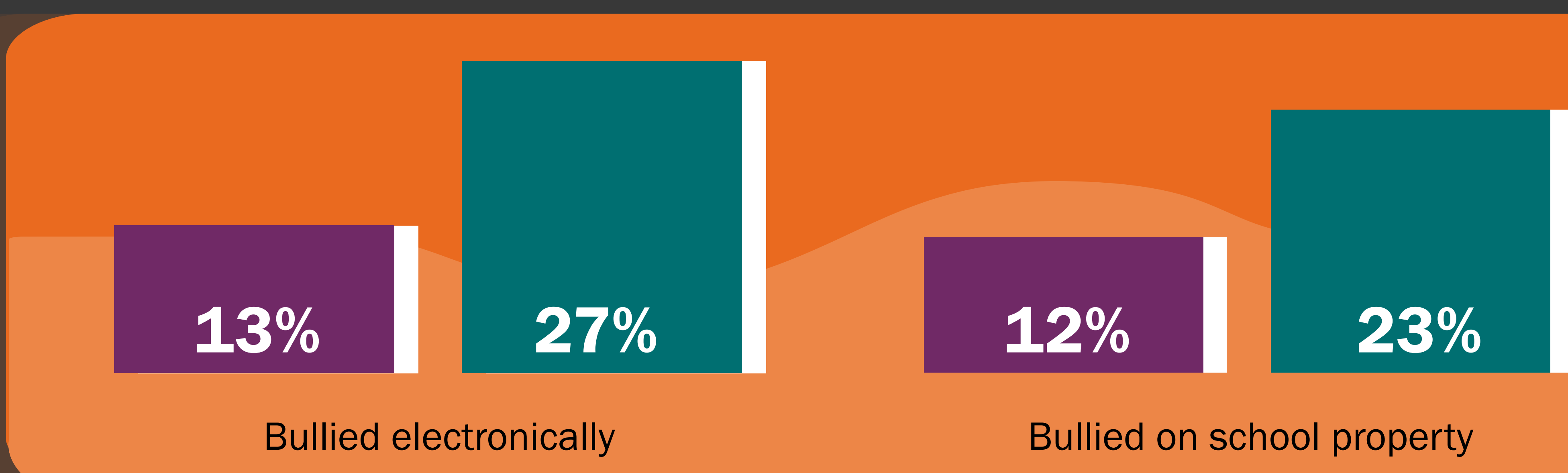
● Heterosexual youth
 ● LGBTQ+ youth

### INTRODUCTION

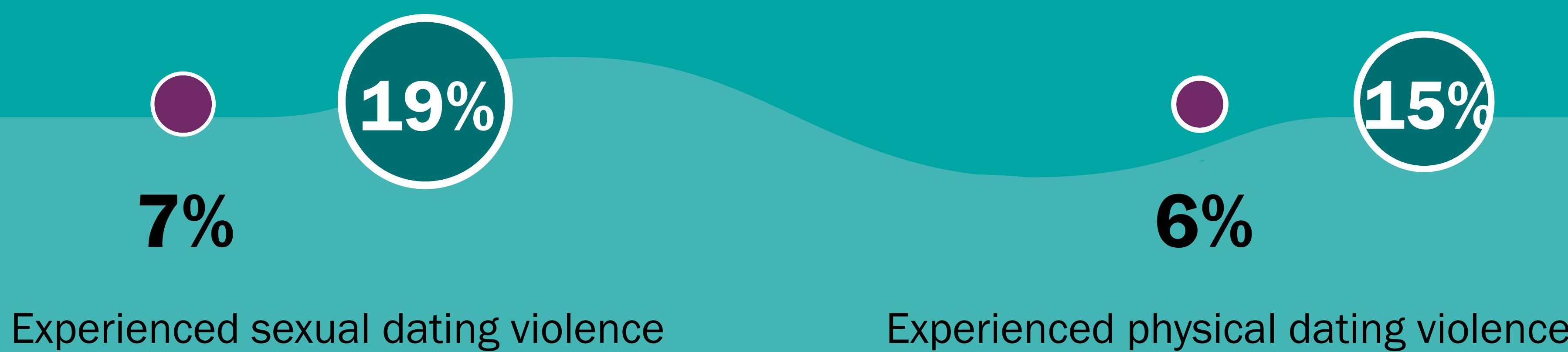
Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, or other non-heterosexual identity (LGBTQ+) are resilient<sup>1</sup> and diverse, representing every racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic group and are present in every community across the U.S.<sup>2</sup> They make up 24% of the high-school aged population.<sup>3</sup>

While acceptance, affirmation, and inclusion of youth with these identities has increased, significant yet preventable disparities persist. Data from the 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS; a survey that is representative of 45 states)<sup>3</sup> show that sexual minority youth have disproportionately higher rates of experiencing bullying and dating violence, risk for suicide, and substance use, compared to their heterosexual peers.

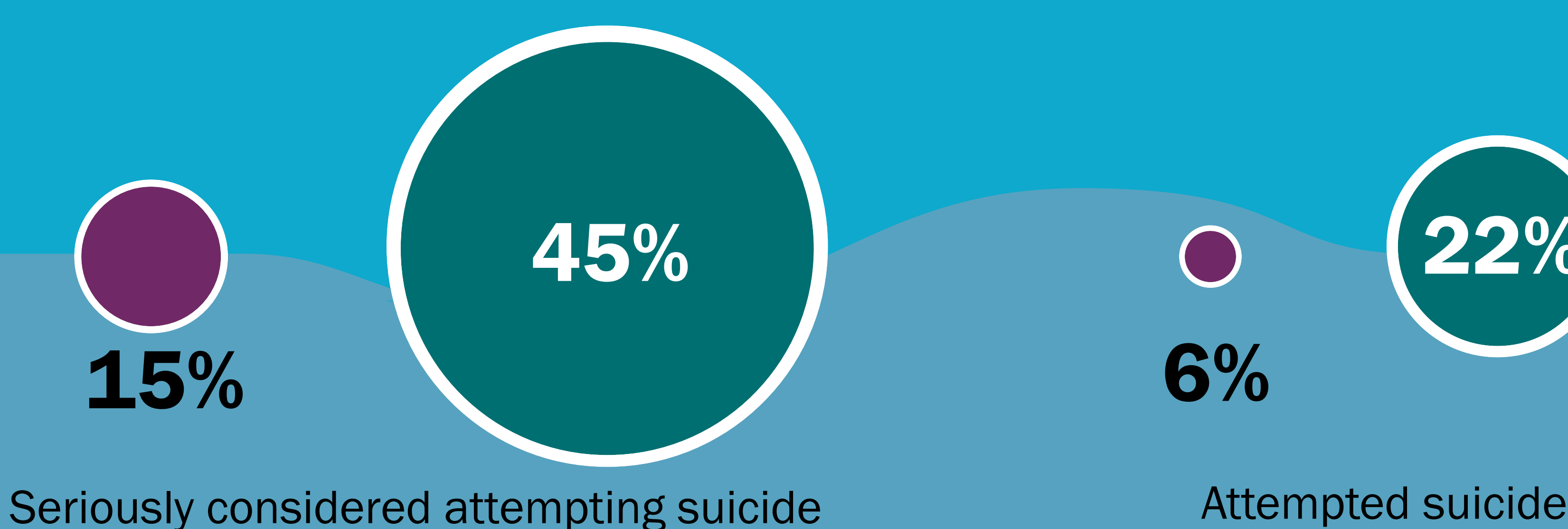
### BULLYING



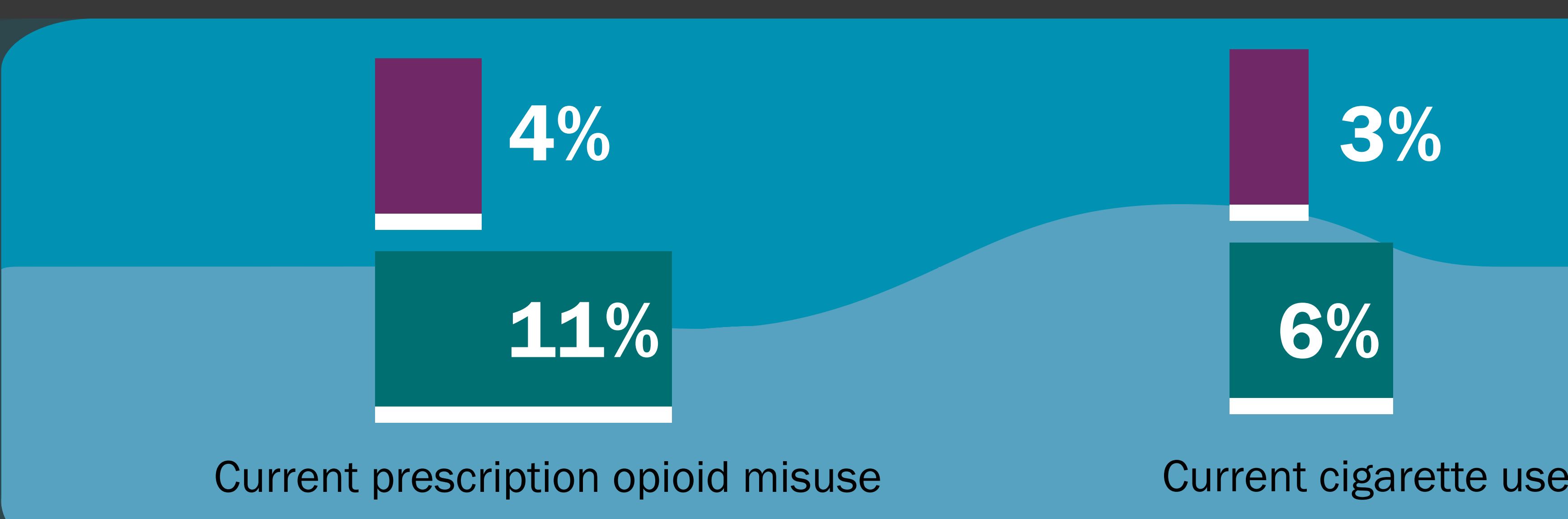
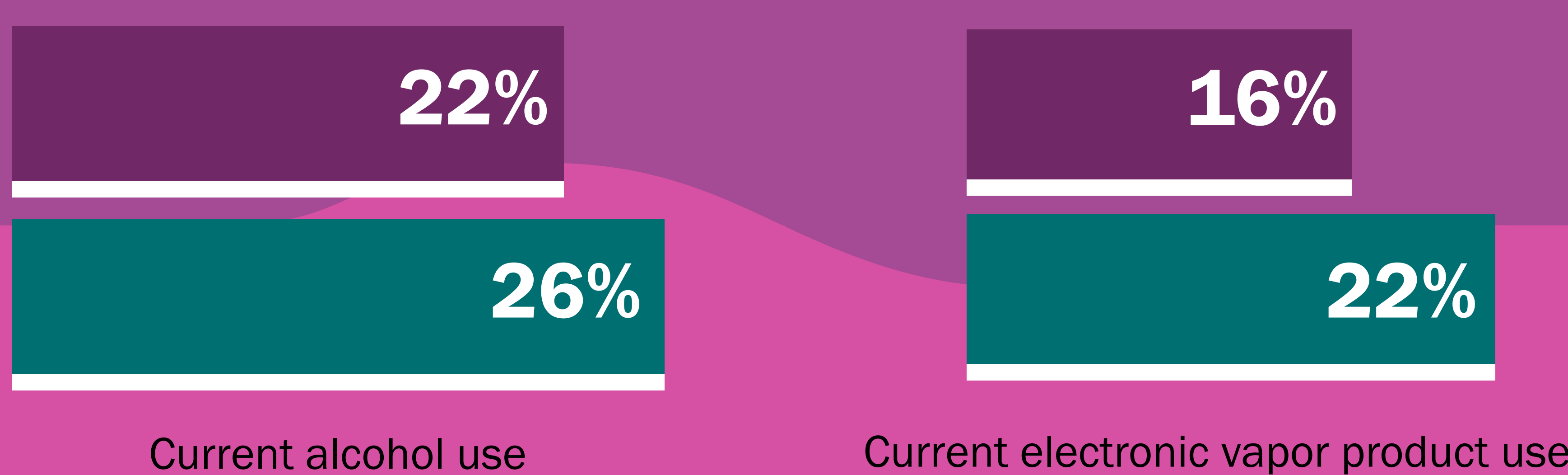
### DATING VIOLENCE



### SUICIDE RISK



### SUBSTANCE USE



### RISK FACTORS

There are several risk factors that help us understand these disparities experienced by sexual minority youth, including:

- Stigma coming from peers, family, society, and even the self (internalized stigma).
- Discriminatory policies against sexual minority individuals.
- Disproportionate access to quality mental and physical health care.

### PROTECTIVE FACTORS

It is important to focus on protective factors to prevent disparities. Recommendations include:

- Build resilience.
- Form affirming, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive communities.
- Adapt school programs to include sexual minority youth, for example anti-bullying programs and teen dating violence interventions.
- Make use of evidence-based, culturally responsive, programs that inform and train healthcare providers.

### SOURCES

<sup>1</sup> Lira, A. N., & Morais, N. A. (2018). Resilience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) populations: An integrative literature review. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy: A Journal of the NSRC*, 15(3), 272-282. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-017-0285-x>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Health considerations for LGBTQ youth. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/health-considerations-lgbtq-youth.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at: [www.cdc.gov/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/yrbs). Accessed on January 23, 2024.