

# Pelham Town Hall

*October 18, 2023*



**PELHAM TOGETHER**  
connect    inform    elevate



# Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
  - Youth Council
  - Mr. Huvane, Mrs. Connolly, Danielle Marrero
- Purpose & Goals
- Living in Pelham as a teenager today....
  - In numbers
  - In their own words
- Youth Council Agenda 2023 - 2024
- Small Group Discussion
- Next Steps: Collective Community Action



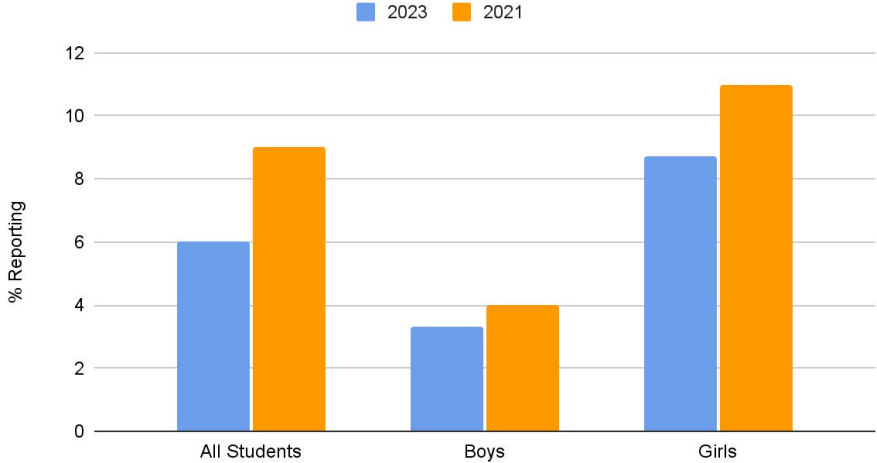
# Pelham's Youth Council



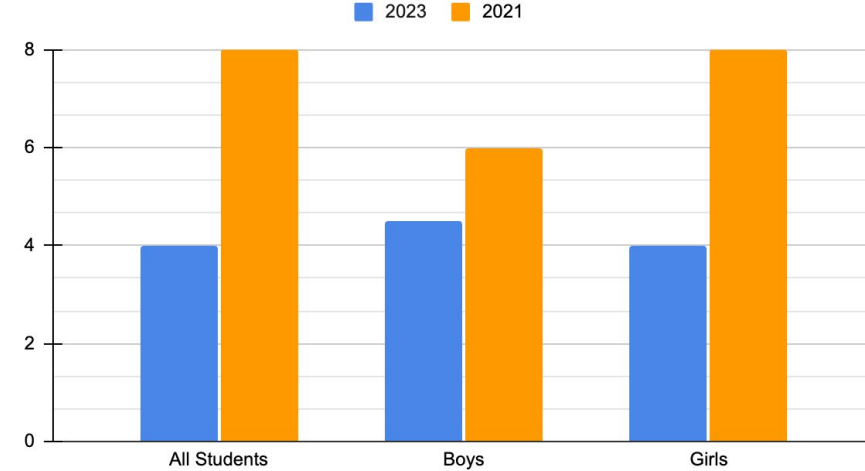
*Bringing teens and adults together to inform and improve the community for all of us.....*

# Pelham Youth: Mental Health

## Anxiety



## Depression



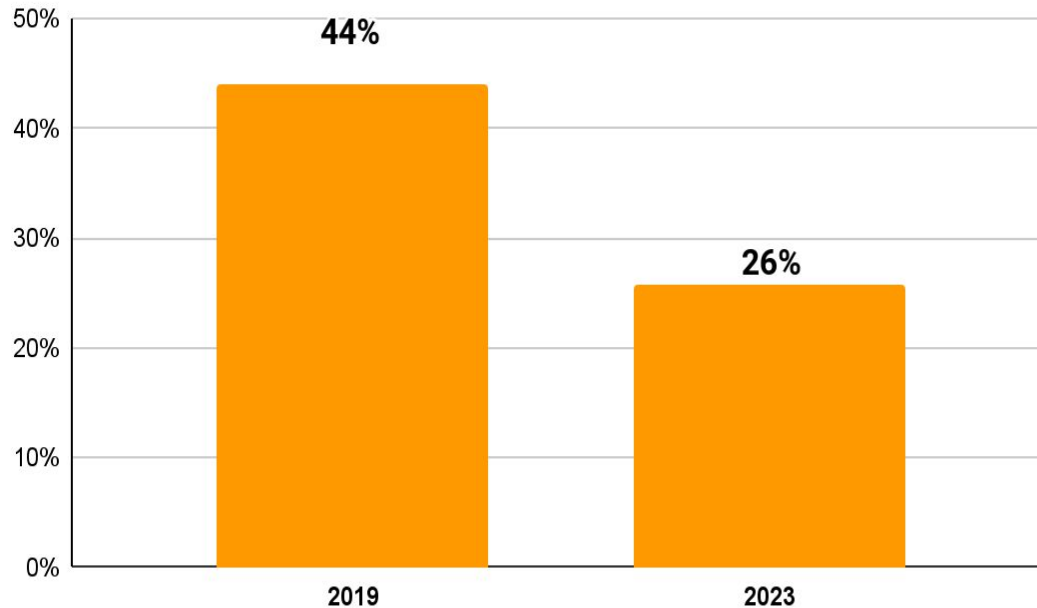
\* Data from 2021 & 2023 Survey of Pelham 8th, 10th & 12th grade students



## Pelham Youth: Alcohol

All Students, in the last 30 days: **19%** of all teens report using alcohol, **12%** of all teens report binge drinking

**12th grade Students Who Binge Drink**



\* Data from 2019 & 2023 Survey of Pelham 8th, 10th & 12th grade students.

# Adults' Questions

- *What do you wish adults knew or better understood about being a teenager?*
- *Who would you go to to talk about the risks of alcohol, drugs, and/or social media? How can adults support you when it comes to these topics?*
- *What do you wish the town had to offer your age group?*



# What do you wish adults knew or better understood about being a teenager?

- We're emotional, but not as unstable as adults might think; even if some of us drink, we're not all a mess.
- Let us fail...if you bubble wrap us, how are we going to do what we need to do when we leave home?
- Acknowledge that you are also trying to figure things out sometimes; say out loud that you are still learning.
- Please stop trying to keep us off our phones by saying things like, "you're on your phone too much; I never did that when I was young." You didn't have a phone.
- We see adults on their phones as much as we are, so it's hard to take you seriously.
- Social media is just one of the ways we communicate; we know there are risks, but it's also really helpful as a way to connect with other people our age.



# Who would you go to to talk about the risks of alcohol, drugs, and/or social media? How can adults support you when it comes to these topics?

- The people we most listen to are older youth....the people we turn to are each other.
- We know some of our older peers struggle after they leave; if they would come back and talk to us, we would listen.
- The school has really good resources, but we also trust our parents.
- If parents trusted us, we would open up more about the things that are hard to talk about. If we could have honest conversations with our parents and didn't feel like there would be consequences every time, we would share more.
- Parents are not asking the right "why" questions....instead of "why do you...(drink, smoke, etc.)?" Instead, they should be asking, "why do you feel you *need* to do this?"
- We aren't always looking for a big party, but we need somewhere big enough for all of us to be together at night.





# What do you wish the town had to offer your age group?

- We'd love more social interaction with our teachers, like friendly sports competitions, projects, etc; these could be big events or small, casual ones.
- Competitions with other adults in the community (i.e. police & fire departments) are great too.
- Open area with places to sit and hang out, tables, arcade games, board games, projector, air hockey, basketball.
- Not events planned by adults...if this space was just there, we would figure it out.
- Don't make it "just for teens" or call it a "teen center."
- FOOD - late night food! Diner! High schoolers could work there, and people could just hang out.



# Youth Council Agenda for 2023 - 2024

- Drive In movie
- Open Mic Nights/Karaoke
- “Sleep Unders” at school (middle school)
- Mental Health Advocacy (walk/run)
- Sports events as “community events”



# Small Group Discussion

- What's one thing that surprised or excited you over the last hour?
- Given that teens want to socialize in groups, how can we help make that happen?
- *Share key insights with large group*



# Next Steps

- Collective Community Action:
  - What could you do to learn more about being a teen in Pelham today?
  - Invite Youth Council advisors to be part of adult discussions.
  - Are you interested in being part of an action team that works on more ways for teens to socialize?
  - Spring Town Hall - April 2024



# THANK YOU!!

- Announcements / Upcoming Events
  - *Digital Ground Rules* with Sarah Trombley for 4th & 5th grade parents; Mon. 10/23 @7pm at DaniLee's
  - Halloween Safety-marijuana edibles
  - Nominate a teen for Heart of Pelham Award (due by 11/30)

