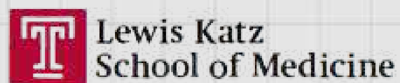
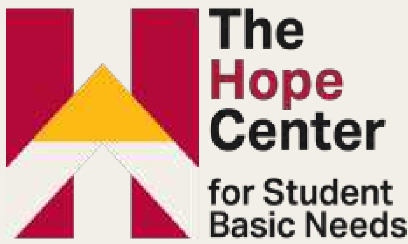
Student Basic Needs Survey Report

The Hope Center 2023-2024
Student Basic Needs Survey Report



The Hope Center
for Students' Basic Needs Security



About The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs

The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University is an action-oriented research, policy, and capacity-building center, removing barriers to college student success and well-being through:

- **Research**: investigating students' lived experiences with basic needs insecurity and evaluating interventions;
- **Policy**: informing and advocating for systemic policy change to make college more affordable and secure college students' basic needs; and
- **Practice**: collaborative coaching with colleges, universities, and states on meeting students' basic needs through systems transformation.

If you are interested in partnering with The Hope Center to conduct a basic needs survey or to use data from the Student Basic Needs Survey in your own research, please contact us through this Survey Interest Form.

Learn more about The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs by visiting our website here.

For additional inquiries about this report, contact hcpress@temple.edu.

Suggested Citation

The Hope Center 2023-2024 Student Basic Needs Survey Report. (February 26, 2025). The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs at Temple University.

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Executive Summary

This report shares findings from 91 colleges and universities across 16 states that participated in Hope Impact Partnerships (HIP) and fielded The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey between Spring 2023 and Summer 2024.[1]

Among 74,350 survey participants we found that:

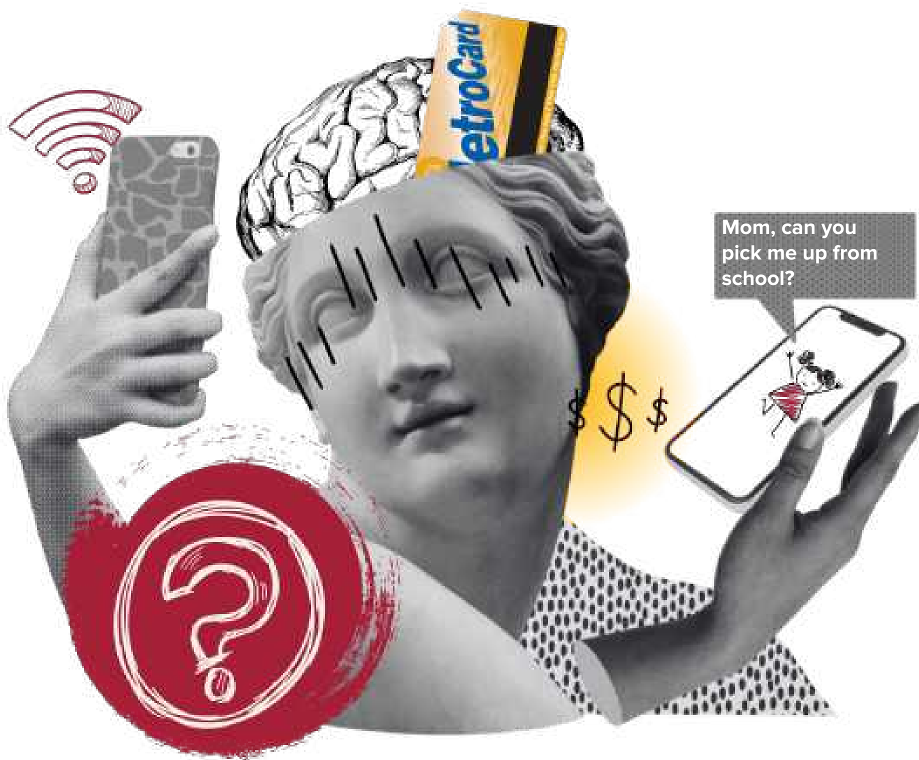
59% of students experience **at least one form of basic needs insecurity**.

41% experience **food insecurity**.

48% experience **housing insecurity**.

14% experience **homelessness**.

Consistent with prior Hope Center surveys, we find that basic needs insecurity is particularly prevalent among students with structurally marginalized identities and those who have the greatest trouble accessing and affording higher education, including: part-time students, Pell Grant recipients, Black and Indigenous students, students with disabilities, former foster youth, and those who have been involved in the carceral system. **For example, nearly 75% of Black and Indigenous students who completed our survey report facing at least one form of basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing[2], compared to 55% of White students—a 20 percentage point gap.**



73%

of respondents face basic needs insecurity when we consider other basic needs **(mental health, child care, transportation, and internet/ technology access)** in addition to food and housing.

44%

of students experience **clinically significant symptoms of anxiety and/or depression**.

57%

of respondents who had **previously stopped out** (stopped attending college without completing a credential and subsequently re-enrolled) reported **they did so because of mental health issues**.

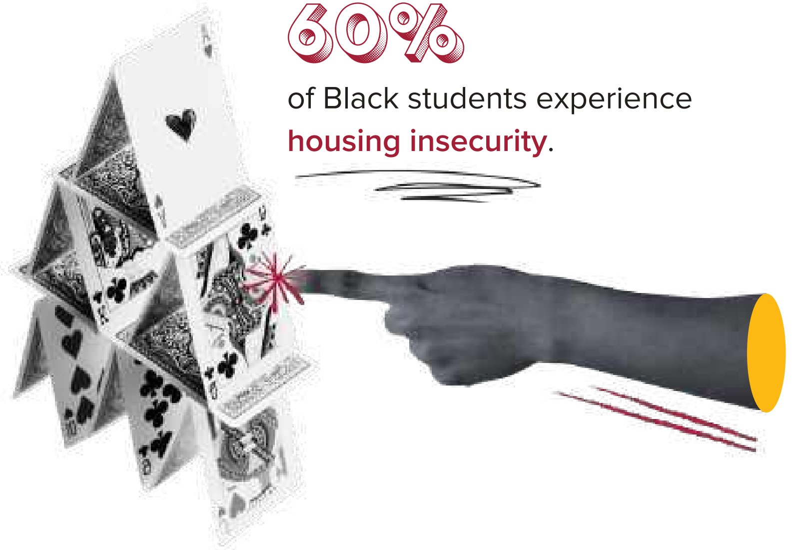
"It's expensive, and I believe education is a human right that is denied to those less fortunate and less represented. College should not be expensive, and I shouldn't have to struggle just to give myself an education to stay healthy and put myself in a beneficial position in society."

Student from Minnesota

Below are other key findings we explore throughout this report:

3 in 5

of students experience **basic needs insecurity** related to food and/or housing.



60%

of Black students experience **housing insecurity**.

67%

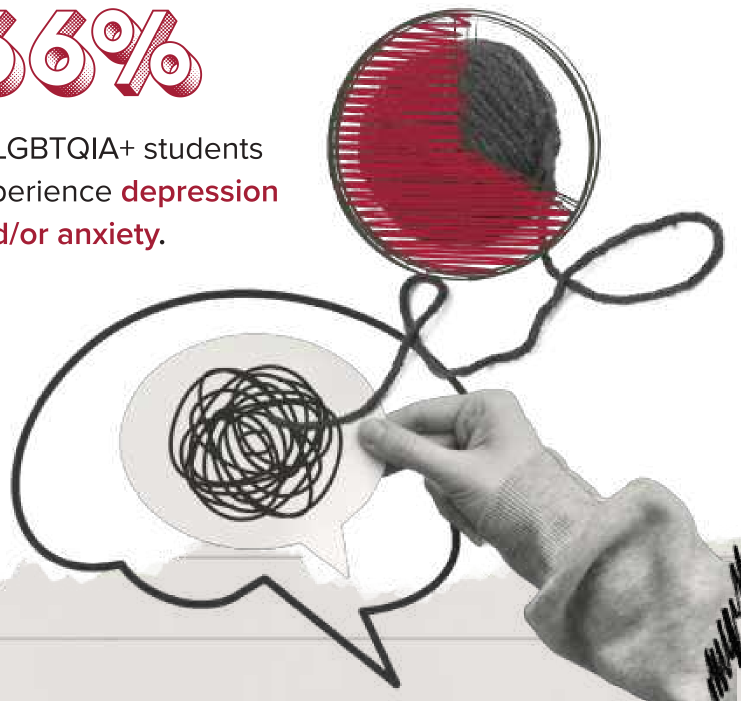
of parenting students experience **housing insecurity**.

1 in 4

Indigenous students experience **homelessness**, which is twice as high as the rate for White students.

66%

of LGBTQIA+ students experience **depression and/or anxiety**.



36%

of **students involved with the carceral system** experience **homelessness**.

72%

of **former foster youth** experience **housing insecurity**.

62%

of **students with disabilities** experience **basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing**—13 percentage points higher than students without disabilities (56%).

52%

of **Pell Grant recipients** experience **food insecurity**—17 percentage points higher than non-Pell Grant recipients (35%).

The link between student basic needs security and persistence is unequivocal:

79%

of student respondents to our survey who had **previously stopped out of college (and subsequently re-enrolled), or were considering stopping out of college**, told us it was due to **basic needs insecurity** (emotional stress/mental health, lacking money for living expenses, childcare/caregiver responsibilities, lack of transportation, lack of access to internet/technology) or **financial reasons** (cost of attendance/insufficient financial aid, cost of textbooks or course materials, unexpected financial expense/emergency).

Unfortunately, almost 2 in 3 students (65%) reported that they were not aware of relevant resources.

51%

of students who **experienced at least one type of basic needs insecurity did not receive any public benefits**.

88%

of students **facing housing insecurity or homelessness did not utilize public housing or utility assistance.**

92%

of students who missed classes due to transportation issues **did not access public transportation assistance.**

Among students who experienced at least one type of basic needs insecurity, we found that 48% were not aware of the relevant campus supports we asked about.

Federal and state policymakers, as well as leaders of higher education institutions, have a tremendous opportunity to increase the number of Americans attending and completing college by supporting their basic needs.

Throughout this report, we include policy recommendations that respond to our findings. We call for reforms to higher education and safety net policies—including financial aid and public benefits programs—that reflect and address the needs of students, as well as greater investment in institutions to create and maintain ecosystems of support. In addition, we call for policymakers to improve outreach and reduce administrative burdens so eligible students can enroll in benefits and other programs that reduce basic needs insecurity and the cost of attendance.

We also feature institutional recommendations throughout the report, drawing from the work of hundreds of colleges and universities with whom we are proud to collaborate through our Hope Impact Partnerships (HIP) program. From expanding supports to dismantling barriers, we are inspired by their commitment to strengthening ecosystems of support for students and see their dedication as a model for institutions across the country.

We also include student quotes throughout the report; after all, students are the ones with lived expertise about basic needs insecurity. These quotes are responses to a qualitative item on our survey: "What does the world need to know about being a college student?" Their responses serve as much-needed reminders that the status quo isn't working—that we must rebuild a system in which students are humans first.

Meeting students' basic needs assures their long-term health, improves their educational outcomes, and in turn, contributes to a more robust workforce and society. By prioritizing basic needs security, we take a meaningful step toward a more equitable, compassionate world where every student has the resources and opportunities to thrive.

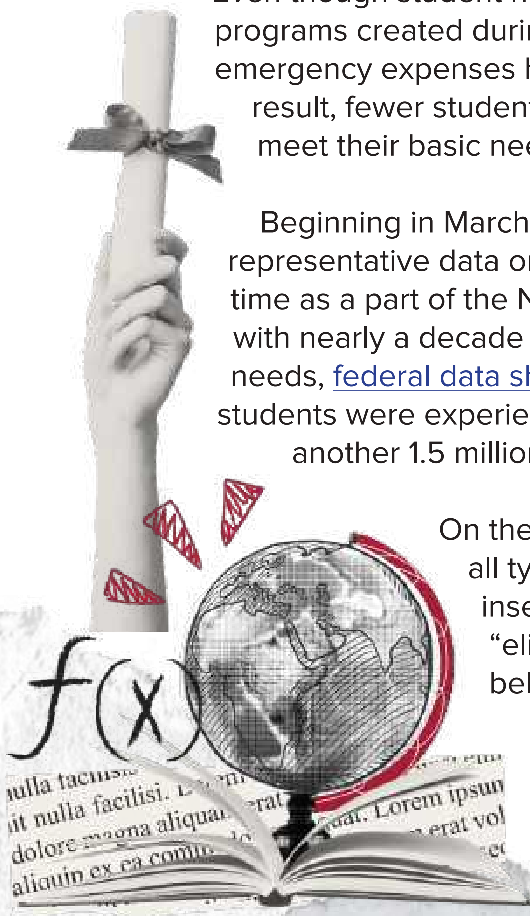
Introduction

When students face hunger, lack stable housing, or struggle to access essential resources like transportation, child care, and health care, their education is profoundly compromised. Basic needs security is foundational to learning; without it, students are unable to fully engage in their studies—undermining their academic success and their ability to achieve economic security.

The costs are not just personal, they are collective. Basic needs insecurity weakens our socioeconomic fabric by preventing students from fully reaching their potential.

Unfortunately, students and families face difficult economic and financial challenges that make succeeding in college more difficult. The cost of everyday goods and services, particularly food, has spiked in the aftermath of global supply chain disruptions. Living costs—especially rent and utilities—have risen sharply; homelessness has risen to record levels in the United States. Growing mental health challenges among students—which began before the pandemic and were accelerated by it—are a top reason students consider leaving higher education and can be a direct result of the stress and anxiety of experiencing basic needs insecurity.

Cost pressures have also contributed to an alarming decline in undergraduate enrollment. In the fall of 2023, in the midst of collecting The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey data for this report, undergraduate enrollment remained down by nearly 1 million students compared to the fall of 2019, with community colleges facing particularly steep declines.



Even though student needs, costs, and concerns have risen, many policies and programs created during the pandemic to address food and housing insecurity and emergency expenses have expired and reverted to their insufficient norms. As a result, fewer students are making it to college, and those who do are struggling to meet their basic needs.

Beginning in March 2020, the U.S. Department of Education collected nationally representative data on food insecurity and homelessness among students for the first time as a part of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey (NPSAS). Consistent with nearly a decade of national, state, and institutional surveys on student basic needs, federal data showed that nearly 1-in-4 undergraduates and 1-in-8 graduate students were experiencing food insecurity, representing 4.3 million students, while another 1.5 million were experiencing homelessness.

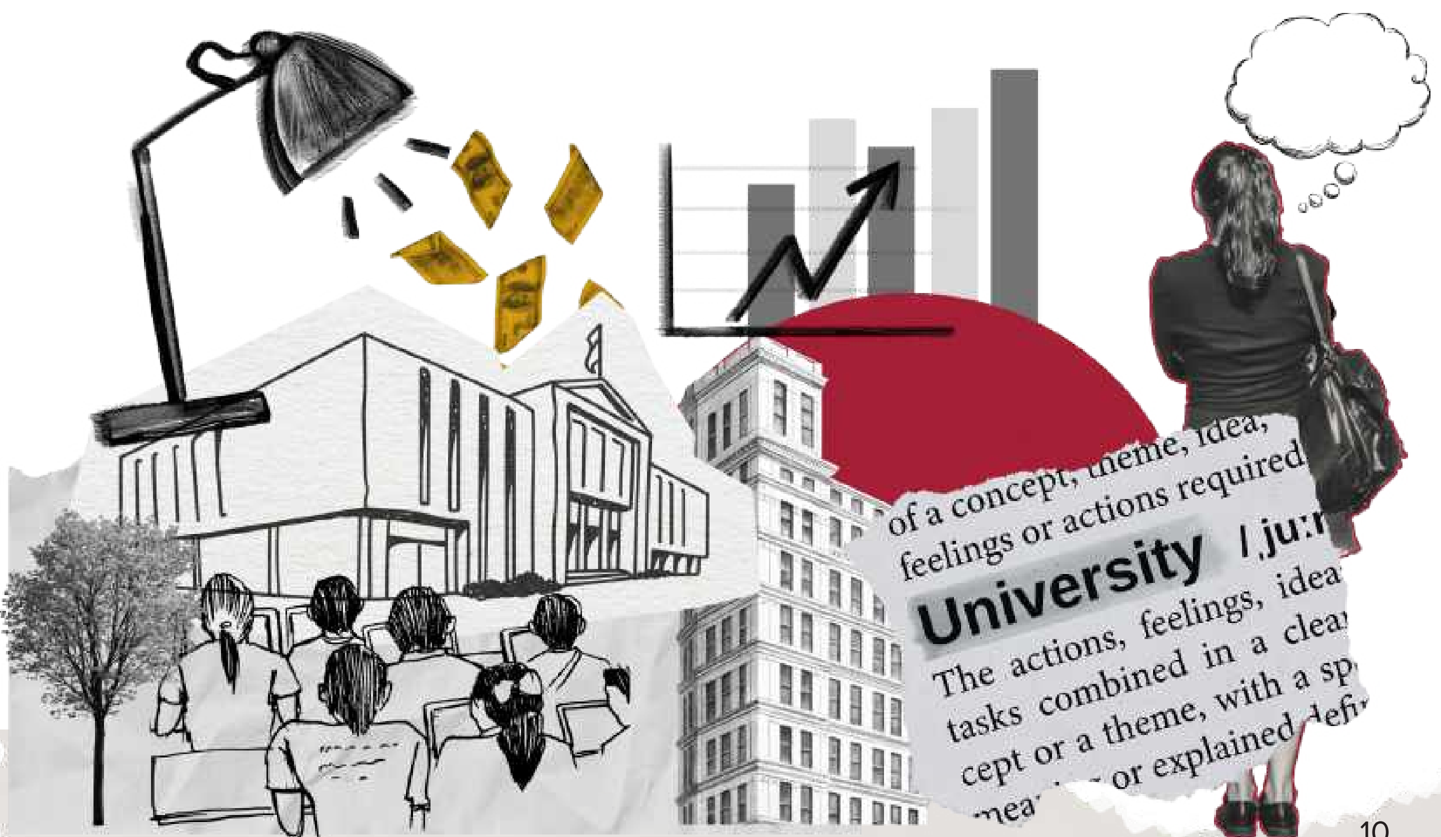
On these two measures of basic needs, federal data affirmed that all types of colleges and universities have significant basic needs insecurity on their campuses—even the wealthiest and most "elite." In addition, consistent with The Hope Center's findings below, the data reflect an unjust and inequitable landscape, especially for non-White students, low-income students, and other systemically marginalized groups.

In the face of these worrisome trends, The Hope Center works to improve the lives of college students within systems that hold too many people back. We will only advance equity, health, and well-being in higher education and beyond by working *together* to repair the harms of those systems. We are honored to be co-conveners in a movement doing just that, including the National Coalition on College Student Essential Needs.

For more than a decade, we have documented and raised awareness of the prevalence of basic needs insecurity in higher education. As the importance of addressing students' basic needs has become increasingly apparent, we responded to a growing number of colleges and states looking to enhance their ecosystems of support and reduce student basic needs insecurity. Reflecting our ongoing dedication to *expanding* beyond *documenting* basic needs insecurity to *eradicating it*, we created Hope Impact Partnerships (HIP)—an initiative combining our Student Basic Needs Survey, our new Data Dashboard, coaching, peer learning and support, Learning Modules, technical assistance, and other resources to assist colleges as they work to secure student needs, provide support, and enhance success.

We collaborate with colleges and universities within a particularly uncertain and volatile climate for students. Policymakers at the state and federal levels have enacted policies that target already vulnerable populations, including transgender students, Black and other non-White students, undocumented students, and pregnant and parenting students. These policies often exacerbate student basic needs insecurity by creating unwelcoming campus environments that increase students' mental health struggles, housing instability, and financial precarity. The compounded stress from discrimination—and real or perceived loss of institutional and community protection—threatens students' ability to meet their basic needs and negatively impacts their success.

We envision a world where basic needs insecurity is not a barrier to college access, student success, and degree attainment. We are committed to creating a world in which basic needs insecurity is eliminated—a world in which educational attainment and self-actualization are not just individual pursuits but deeply tied to community and collective well-being. We are committed to ensuring that higher education serves, rather than fails, those who stand to benefit the most.

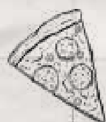


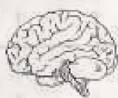
Defining Basic Needs Security

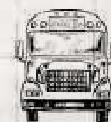
Basic needs security refers to the consistent ability to meet the fundamental requirements necessary for individuals to function physically, emotionally, and socially. While conversations about students' basic needs often center on food and housing—critical areas frequently measured by food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness—those represent just part of the broader picture.

The Hope Center defines students' basic needs "security" comprehensively as safe, secure, reliable, and adequate access to:

- nutritious and sufficient **food;**
- **housing**;
- physical, mental, and reproductive **health and health care**;
- **internet** and **technology**;
- **transportation**;
- **personal hygiene products**;
- **child care**;
- and other essential resources.







It is crucial to understand that basic needs insecurity—when students and families lack sufficient resources to afford or obtain these necessities—is not an individual failing but a reflection of systemic shortcomings. This insecurity arises from a mismatch between the structural supports and resources available and the actual needs of students. Too often, institutions and policies fail to address these challenges, leaving students to navigate the gaps on their own.

"Being a college student is exhausting, challenging, and demoralizing at the worst of times. I have spent the last year working for free so that I can graduate with my degree. I need the world to understand how suffocating and unjust student debt is and will continue to be if unchanged."

Student from Pennsylvania

Mismatches between needs and supports can occur in several ways: an inadequate ecosystem of support, systemic barriers, and administrative burdens to accessing those supports, and insufficient outreach around those supports.

Supports for student basic needs security can include:

- local or regional infrastructure and supports (e.g., availability of public transportation, grocery stores, childcare facilities and options, reliable broadband, affordable and stable housing, community health and mental health services),
- campus and community supports (e.g., food pantries, shelters, emergency aid grants, basic needs hubs), and crucially,
- public policies and supports (e.g., need-based financial aid, public benefits, anti-poverty programs, tax credits, and health coverage).

What is The Hope Center's Basic Needs Survey?

Over the last decade, The Hope Center has partnered with colleges and universities to raise awareness about the types and prevalence of student basic needs insecurity on college campuses and advocate for improved services. The Hope Center Basic Needs Survey was designed to provide institutions with actionable data on their students' basic needs, college experiences, utilization of benefits and supports, and barriers to accessing those benefits and supports. More than 600 colleges and universities and around 600,000 students have participated in the survey since 2018, making it the country's largest and longest-running basic needs survey in higher education.

Until 2021, the survey was known as the #RealCollege survey. Based on student and institutional feedback, it was revised to include more types of basic needs (e.g., technology and transportation), factors influencing students' enrollment decisions, improved mental health measures, expanded questions about barriers to accessing services, and a more comprehensive and inclusive demographics section than in previous years. We look forward to continuing to strengthen the survey to best reflect the dynamism of today's college students.

The updated survey is now known as **The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey**. Furthermore, beginning with the 2023 survey administration, the survey was integrated into the Hope Impact Partnerships (HIP) program, where in addition to fielding the survey, colleges and universities participate in learning communities, receive coaching and other resources, and engage in action planning.

Some aspects of basic needs insecurity have standard measures that have been developed by other experts and government agencies. These include the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) measure of food insecurity, the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) Adult Well-Being Module's measure of housing insecurity, Crutchfield and Maguire's (2017) measure of homelessness, and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) and Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) for mental health. Other aspects of basic needs insecurity (e.g., transportation, technology, child care) do not have standard measures, and for these, we use indicators that we developed internally with feedback from experts and participants. You can see a full list of survey items used for this report in the web appendices.

Assessment of student basic needs security has become more common since the survey's inception a decade ago. We are thrilled to be a part of a dynamic community that assesses college students' basic needs. Last year, the federal government released the first nationally representative data on students' experiences of food insecurity and homelessness from the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) survey data collected in 2019-2020. Many other common surveys in higher education—such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Trellis' Student Financial Wellness Survey, and the Healthy Minds Study (HMS)—have also included measures of basic needs insecurity (at least related to food and housing) at least once.

Like most other basic needs-related surveys (except NPSAS, which measures only food insecurity and homelessness), The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey's sample is ***not*** nationally representative—it includes only institutions that voluntarily enrolled to participate. The rates of basic needs insecurity in our survey data are similar to those of other common higher education surveys assessing student basic needs (e.g., Trellis, HMS, CCSSE) and higher than the nationally representative NPSAS data.

We hypothesize that these differences may be due to differences in the sample of institutions (e.g., institutions who elect to participate in surveys related to student needs vs. nationally representative), the sample of students (e.g., students with basic needs insecurity might be more likely to respond to a student needs survey from their college than their peers) and the measures (e.g., The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey measures homelessness over the last year, whereas NPSAS measures homelessness over the last 30 days). The sample size and response rate for The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey are similar to those of other common higher education surveys (e.g., Trellis, HMS, CCSSE).

The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey is the most comprehensive in the field: it uniquely offers insight into a wide range of student basic needs (food, housing, homelessness, mental health, child care, transportation, and internet/technology); the utilization of campus and public supports, barriers to utilization of supports, and additional aspects of the student experience (e.g., affordability, employment, enrollment patterns, belonging).

The results we share in this report are a snapshot of the landscape of basic needs insecurity at 91 institutions across the United States. Our sample consists largely of institutions that are investing in students' basic needs and leading in the basic needs movement: community colleges and minority-serving institutions. Although the findings are not representative of *all* colleges and universities, they do represent the challenges that *many* institutions are seeking to address.

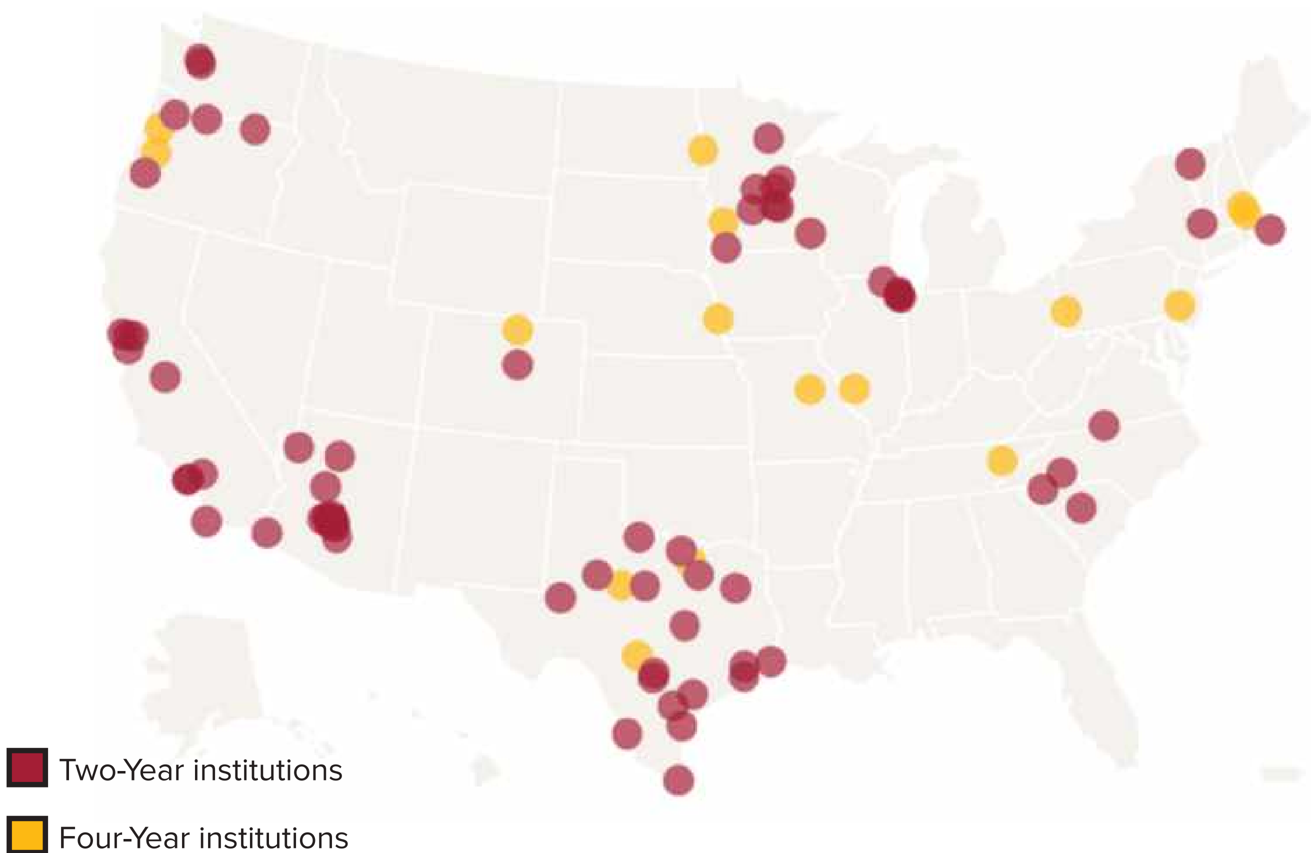
Participants

As part of the HIP program from Spring 2023 to Summer 2024, The Hope Center partnered with 173 colleges and universities—collectively serving more than 2.2 million students—to assess students' needs and enhance the colleges' capacity for providing comprehensive services that secure students' basic needs and help ensure student success. Based on this partnership, partners fielded The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey, accessed asynchronous learning content, participated in learning sessions, received 1:1 coaching, and engaged in action planning to advance basic needs services on their campus.

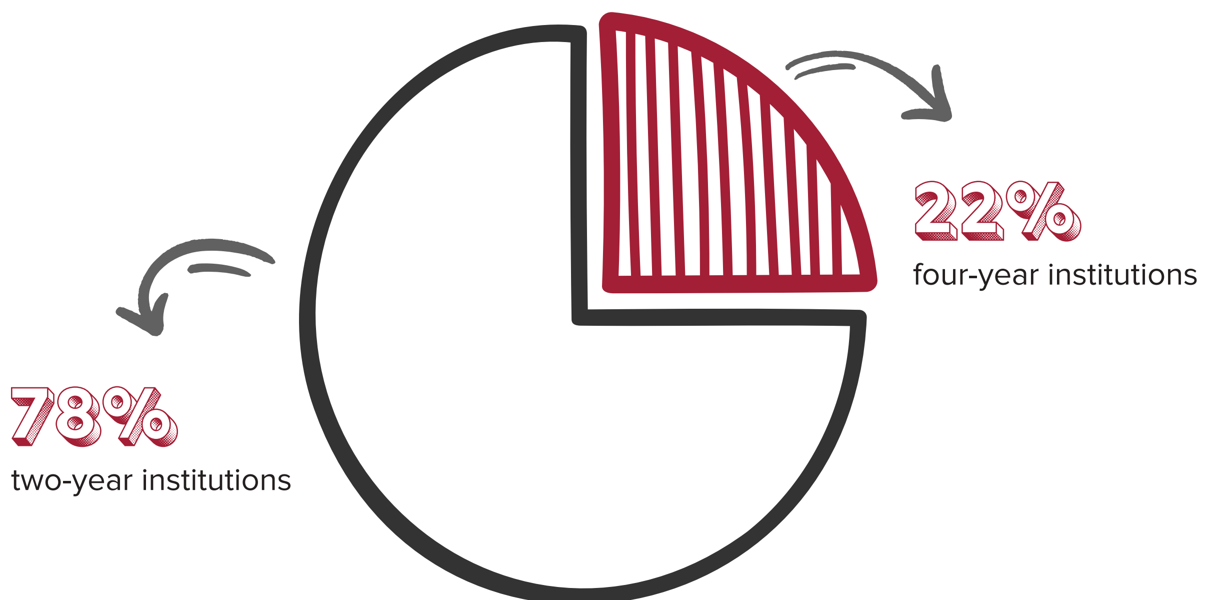
This report presents the **aggregate findings from 91 colleges** across 16 states that participated in The Hope Center Basic Needs Survey from January 2023 to July 2024 and met the inclusion criteria for this research. Our results include ***74,350*** students who responded to the survey, with ***53,978*** from two-year institutions and ***20,372*** from four-year institutions.

The survey sample was diverse: **55% non-White**, **53% first-generation college students**, **38% Pell grant recipients**, **42% over the age of 25**, **23% parenting students** and **21% disabled** students.See web appendices for methodological details and a full description of the sample characteristics.[3]

The map below provides an overview of the states represented in our survey sample, with Arizona, Minnesota, and Texas having the greatest number of schools. See web appendices for details on how institutions were classified.



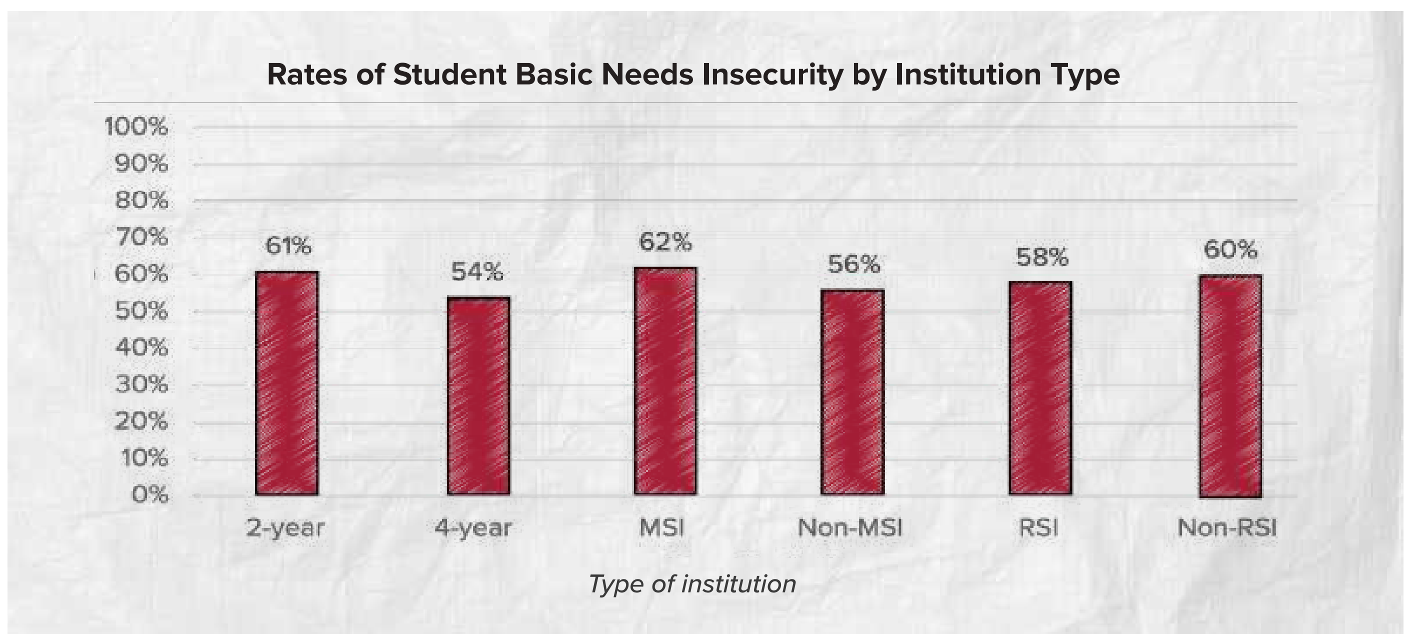
As indicated below, an overwhelming majority of colleges that participated in HIP and The Hope Center's Basic Needs Survey were two-year institutions. Of all the colleges that participated, 78% were two-year institutions and 22% were four-year institutions. As a result, our aggregate findings are more representative of two-year institutions. The Hope Center was also able to partner with a significant number of Texas colleges and universities thanks to funding from The Prentice Farrar Brown and Alline Ford Foundation and a partnership with The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.



Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness

As noted above, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are core indicators of basic needs insecurity. In our sample, **41% of survey respondents reported experiencing food insecurity in the previous 30 days, 48% reported experiencing housing insecurity in the previous year, and 14% reported experiencing homelessness in the previous year** (see Figure 2 below). Considered together, **59% of survey respondents reported experiencing food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness.** This rate has been consistent across the years that The Hope Center has been collecting basic needs data. Comparing 2-year and 4-year institutions, we see that the rates were somewhat higher at 2-year institutions (see Figure 1 and Tables 3 and 4 in the web appendices).

Figure 1: Basic needs insecurity is prevalent across all types of institutions



NOTE | Students were classified as experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing if they reported one or more of the following: food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness.

In addition, we also examined basic needs insecurity rates at minority-serving institutions (MSIs, based on federal designations) and rural-serving institutions (RSIs, based on the Alliance for Research on Regional Colleges' RSI Score). In our sample, there are 51 MSIs (*n*=40,987 survey respondents), 40 non-MSIs (*n*=33,363 survey respondents), 31 RSIs (*n*=14,449 survey respondents), and 60 non-RSIs (*n*=59,901 survey respondents).

In general, **MSIs have higher percentages of students reporting basic needs insecurity compared to non-MSIs** (e.g., 62% experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing at MSIs vs. 56% at non-MSIs, respectively). Additionally, RSIs have a slightly lower percentage of students reporting facing basic needs insecurity compared to non-RSIs (e.g., 58% experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing vs. 60%, respectively).

The differences among institution types reported in Figure 1 are all statistically significant (ps < .001). However, the differences were not large. (See Tables 3 and 4 in the web appendices for comparisons of all indicators of basic needs we measured by institution type).

It is important to note that even for institution types with "lower" rates of basic needs insecurity, the rates are quite high. This is consistent with the pattern of findings in the nationally representative NPSAS data: rates of food insecurity and homelessness are unacceptably high across institution types, and the differences among the institution types are relatively small.

Racial Disparities in Standard Measures of Basic Needs Insecurity

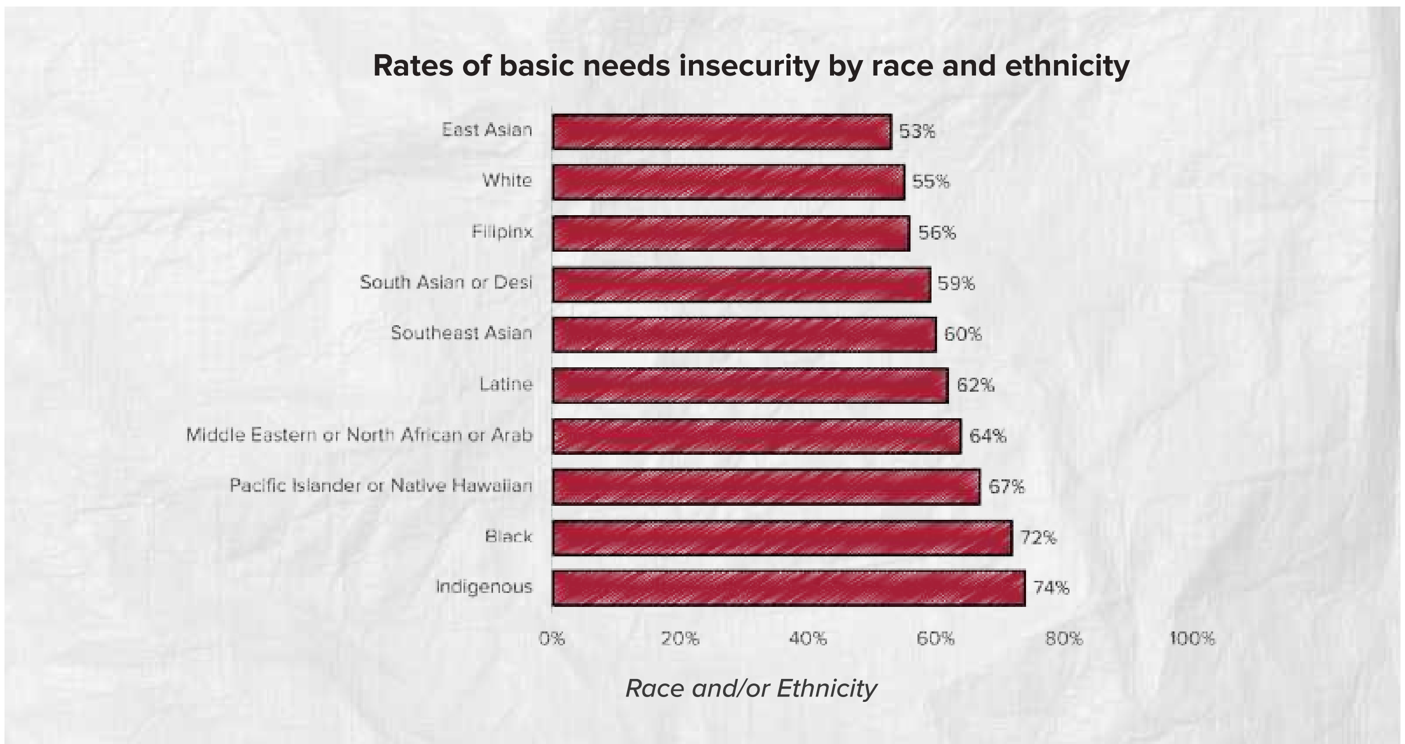
Disparities in basic needs insecurity are evident for many student populations that have historically been excluded from higher education and continue to face multiple intersecting challenges while trying to obtain a college credential. This section (and woven throughout many of the sections below) focuses on disparities as a function of students' race and ethnicity. In later sections of the report, we focus on disparities as a function of parenting status, part-time and employment status, Pell recipient status, gender, LGBTQIA+ identification, carceral system involvement, former foster youth status, and disability status. See **Exploring Specific Student Populations** for a discussion of why we chose to focus on these particular groups.

Nearly 3 in 4 Black and Indigenous students reported that they experienced basic needs insecurity (see Figure 2 on the next page). Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness were elevated for these students, but disparities in rates of homelessness were particularly stark: nearly 1-in-5 Black students and 1-in-4 Indigenous students experienced homelessness in the previous year, compared to 1-in-8 White students.

We also observed higher rates of food insecurity (51%) and homelessness (21%) among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students compared to White students (36% food insecurity, 13% homelessness). Homelessness rates were also higher among Middle Eastern, North African, or Arab students (18%) and among South Asian or Desi students (17%). Although our subsamples for these groups are small, the disparities warrant further research and particular attention from campuses that serve these students.

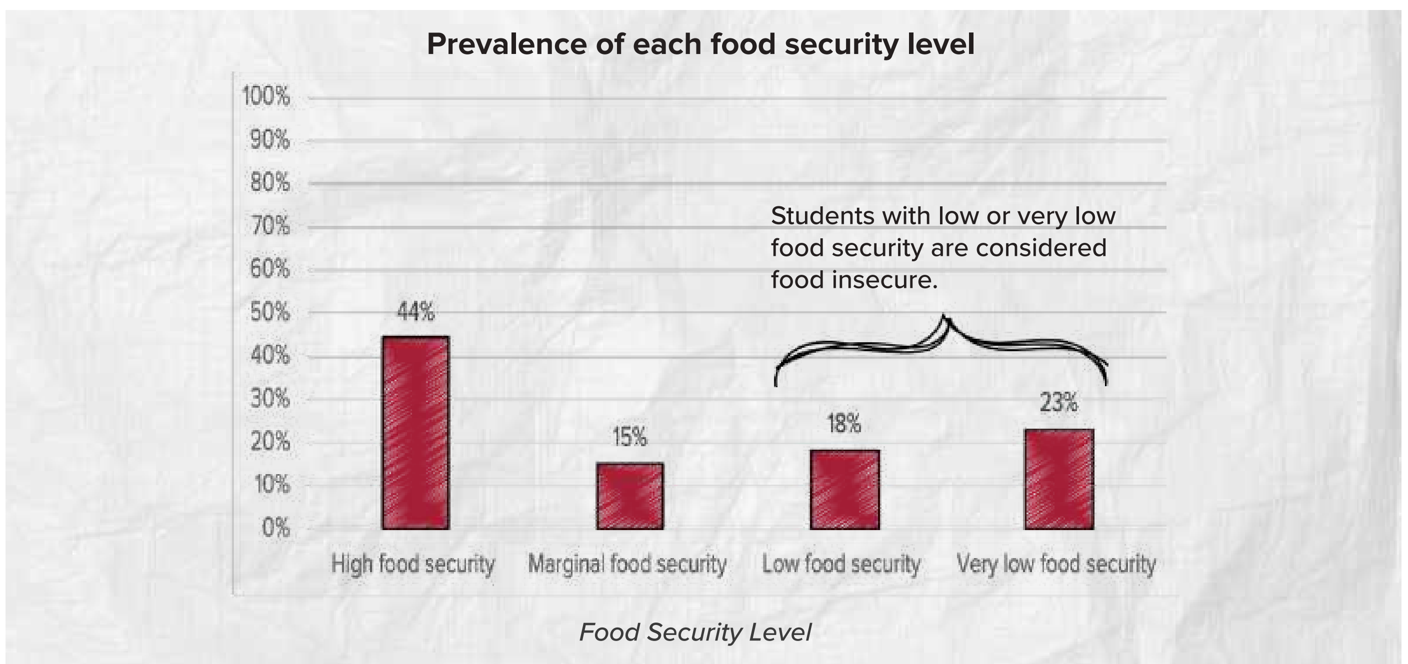
Racial disparities are not limited to food and housing. Additional types of basic needs insecurity that are discussed on the next page (mental health, transportation, internet/technology, and child care) are also experienced at higher rates among marginalized racial and ethnic groups (see Tables 5 and 6 in the web appendices).

Figure 2: Nearly 3 in 4 Indigenous and Black students experience basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing.



NOTE | Students were classified as experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing if they reported one or more of the following: food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness. Race and ethnicity categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g., a student who is Black and Latine is included in both categories).

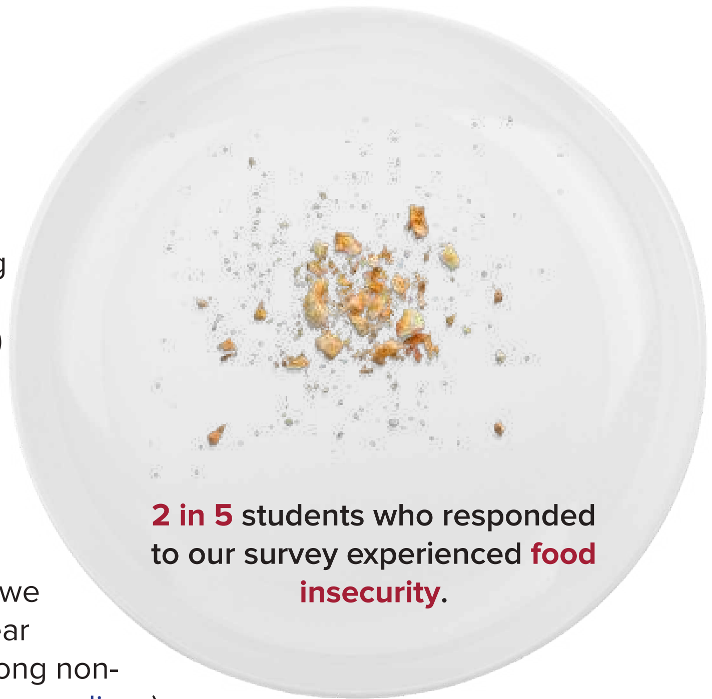
Figure 3: Less than half of students report high food security.



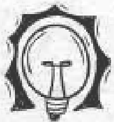
NOTE | Displayed are the proportions of survey respondents who reported experiencing each level of food security in the previous 30 days. Consistent with USDA measures, students are classified as experiencing food insecurity if they reported low or very low levels of food security.

Food Insecurity

Two-in-five survey respondents reported experiencing food insecurity. "Food insecurity" is categorized using USDA measures as having low, or very-low food security. Students with only marginal food security (15% of our sample) may also occasionally find it difficult to have reliable and sufficient access to nutrition (Figure 3). Thus, less than half of survey respondents reported that they had consistent and sufficient access to nutritious food.



As with overall rates of basic needs insecurity, we find higher rates of food insecurity among 2-year schools and MSIs, and slightly higher rates among non-RSIs (ps < .001; see Tables 7 and 8 in the web appendices).

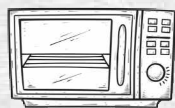


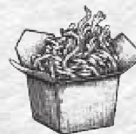
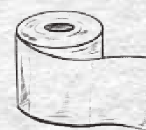
Institutional Example:
Bunker Hill Community College

Many institutions now have a food pantry, but that often is not enough to significantly reduce food insecurity on campus. As noted in **Use of Public Resources and Campus Supports**, awareness is a major barrier to students accessing support. To effectively reduce food insecurity on campus, colleges should ensure that their resources are robust and promoted widely. Bunker Hill Community College's DISH Food Pantry provides an excellent example of both.

The DISH Food Pantry provides students with refrigerated lockers, increasing accessibility for students who cannot visit during operating hours. The pantry also partners with Food for Free to provide students with Heat-n-Eat meals—microwavable meals—to make the resource accessible to students without a kitchen.

Not only is direct support provided in the form of food and clothing, but other resources are provided to prevent students from becoming food insecure in the first place. For example, they partner with Single Stop to connect students to a broader network of campus and community resources. (If you're part of an institution interested in more information on effectively communicating your basic needs resources, check out our guide).



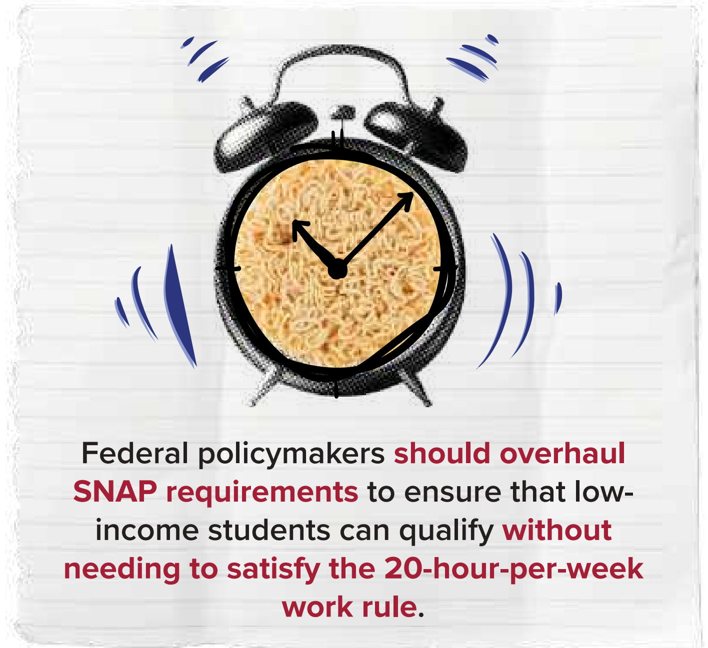



Policy Recommendations

Remove Student Barriers to SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our country's largest anti-hunger program, and it has proven successful and durable in reducing household food insecurity. Yet, due to an incredibly complex and counterproductive set of eligibility requirements for students to access SNAP, very few students who experience food insecurity can enroll in the program.

In addition to meeting standard eligibility criteria, low-income students in higher education must meet one of a series of exemptions (most frequently working 20 hours per week on top of their courseload) in order to gain access to support. Due in part to the complex requirements and administrative burdens created by the program, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently found that **two-thirds of students who are likely eligible for SNAP, and 6-in-10 students who are *both* food-insecure and likely eligible for the program, do not report receiving benefits.**



Federal policymakers **should overhaul SNAP requirements** to ensure that low-income students can qualify **without needing to satisfy the 20-hour-per-week work rule**.

Federal policymakers should overhaul and simplify SNAP eligibility rules and ensure that all students with low incomes (who are at high risk of food insecurity) are able to seamlessly qualify for benefits. Congress should streamline SNAP eligibility by allowing enrollment in higher education to satisfy activity and participation requirements and putting students with low incomes on equal footing with other individuals who are eligible for SNAP, or by simplifying the student exemptions to ensure all groups of low-income students at risk of food insecurity can qualify without needing to satisfy the 20-hour-per-week work rule.

Improve Outreach to Students About Public Benefits

In addition to overhauling the inequitable, inefficient, and burdensome student rules, federal policymakers should expand awareness, outreach, and enrollment in SNAP and other support programs that could reduce basic needs insecurity among students who qualify under the current rules.

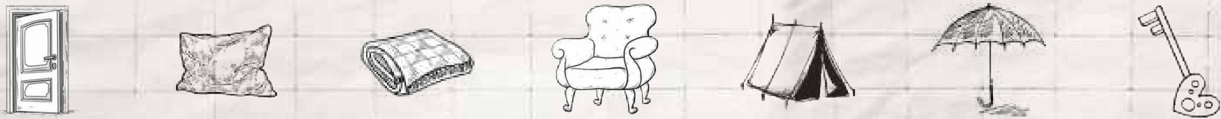
For example, federal agencies should build on a recent interagency Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Departments of Education and Agriculture to strengthen SNAP outreach and issue additional guidance clarifying that many students with low incomes could be eligible for SNAP under the current exemptions without needing to qualify through the 20 hour-per-week work exemption, such as students enrolled in community college and other career-focused programs that result in high employability, as well as those who are anticipating receiving federal work-study. The USDA, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, should also issue regular guidance and resources that promote data-sharing and outreach strategies to reach students who may be eligible for benefits but are unaware that they may qualify.

Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

The national housing crisis has deeply impacted higher education. Many students are experiencing housing insecurity (challenges that prevent them from having a safe, affordable, and consistent place to live) or homelessness (the most severe form of housing insecurity—not having a fixed, regular, and adequate place to live). **Nearly half of the students who completed our survey reported experiencing some form of housing insecurity** (e.g., not being able to pay their full rent/ mortgage or utility bills).[4]

Housing insecurity is defined by challenges that prevent someone from having a safe, affordable, and consistent place to live.

Homelessness is the most severe form of housing insecurity—not having a fixed, regular, and adequate place to live.



We also observed some of the starkest differences between 2-year and 4-year schools and between MSIs and non-MSIs related to students' housing insecurity and homelessness. For example, rates of housing insecurity at 2-year campuses (51%) and MSIs (52%) are about 10 percentage points higher than their 4-year (40%) and non-MSI (43%) counterparts ($ps < .001$; see Figure 4 and Tables 3 and 4 in the web appendices).

The already high (and increasing) cost of housing—primarily rent and related fees—is one of the more difficult student basic needs to address. As we explore in **Intersecting Needs**, basic needs insecurities are also deeply interconnected, creating a cascading effect that magnifies challenges for students. When a student faces housing insecurity, they are more likely to experience other insecurities, such as lack of adequate food, transportation, and health care access.

For example, the financial strain of housing often forces students to make impossible choices—sacrificing meals or foregoing medical care to pay rent and utilities. These intersecting insecurities compound one another, amplifying stress and creating significant barriers to academic success and personal well-being. Addressing basic needs holistically is essential—resolving one area without addressing others often fails to break the cycle of hardship that many students face. A comprehensive approach recognizes that no basic need exists in isolation and that solutions must account for the complex, interconnected realities of students' lives.

One of the best ways to target the interconnected nature of basic needs insecurity is by creating a comprehensive, coordinated office (a "basic needs hub") to help students navigate the wide variety of programs and ensure they receive all possible support. HIP partner Lee College's Student Resource and Advocacy Center provides a good model for other institutions to start this work.

To learn more about creating a campus basic needs taskforce, check out our guide.

Figure 4: Students at two-year institutions and MSIs were the most likely to experience housing insecurity.

Rates of housing insecurity and homelessness by institution type

Type of institution	Housing Insecurity	Homelessness
All institutions	48%	14%
4-year	40%	11%
2-year	51%	15%
MSI	52%	15%
Non-MSI	43%	12%
RSI	46%	13%
Non-RSI	48%	14%

Type of institution

NOTE | Displayed are the proportions of survey respondents who reported experiencing housing insecurity in the previous 12 months and the proportion of survey respondents who reported experiencing homelessness in the previous 12 months.

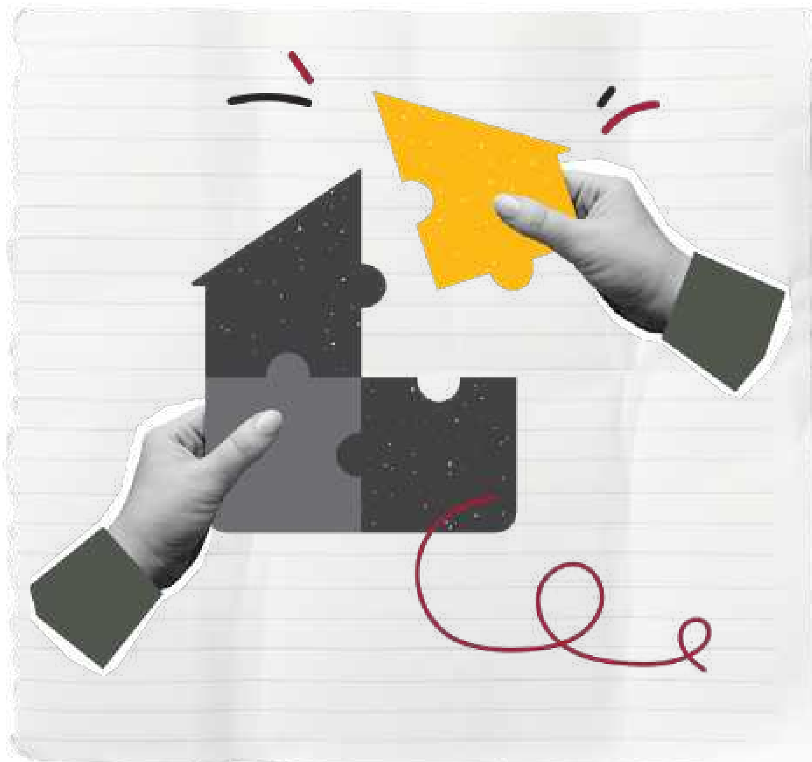
"It's all too expensive and there is limited affordable housing in any college town. The American Dream does not exist."

Student from Oregon

Policy Recommendation

Remove Student Restrictions to Federal Housing Supports

Students are often subject to severe federal restrictions that limit them from most federal and state housing assistance. Since 2005, U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) public and assisted housing programs and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) have contained rules that prevent the vast majority of college students under age 24 from receiving support, based on the mistaken assumption that all college students have access to on-campus housing or are otherwise financially supported by their family. Congress should remove a damaging policy routinely included in the HUD appropriations bill, which denies housing access to students, and also pass the *Housing for Homeless Students Act*, which would allow students to live in LIHTC housing if they've experienced homelessness within the last seven years.



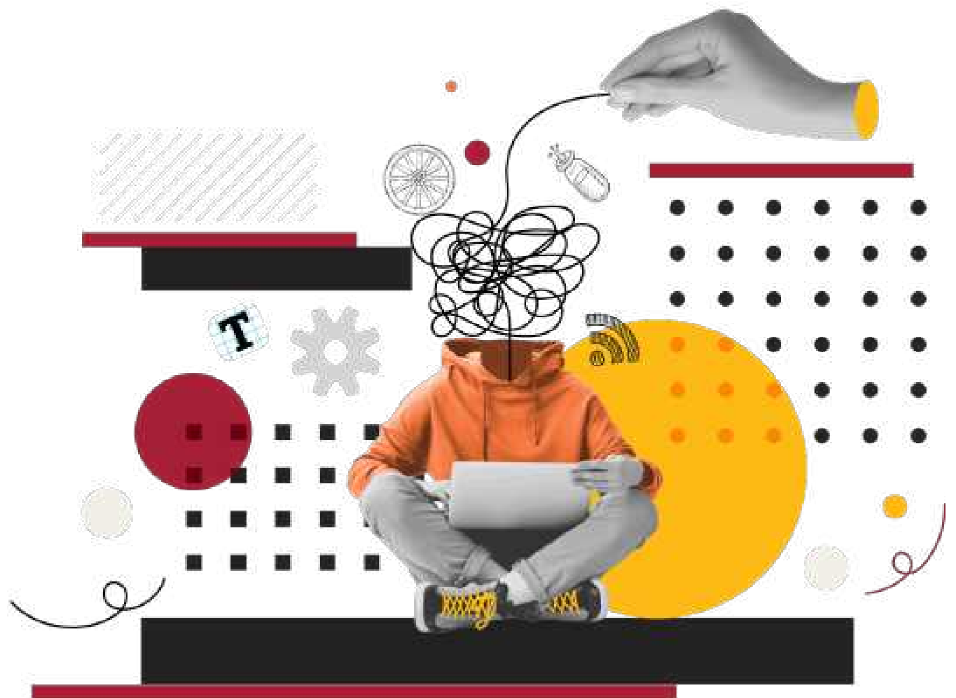
Additionally, financial aid received by students for non-tuition costs is generally counted as "income" for determining a family's HUD program eligibility, which significantly and unfairly disincentivizes students in supported families from seeking higher education. Congress should remove these restrictions in HUD programs and exclude all financial aid from being counted as income.

My struggle with finding affordable housing means I have had to take out more loans than I can afford and am often on the brink of homelessness.

Student from Vermont

Basic Needs: Beyond Food and Housing

Food and housing are foundational needs, but students need more than food and a place to sleep to fully engage in higher education. When we take a broader—and essential—view and consider mental health, transportation, internet and technology, and child care in addition to food and housing, we see that **73% of students—about 3 in 4—experienced challenges with at least one of the types of basic needs we measured.** In other words, **for the vast majority of students who took our survey, their structural environment was insufficient to support their basic needs** (see the web appendices).



In our sample,

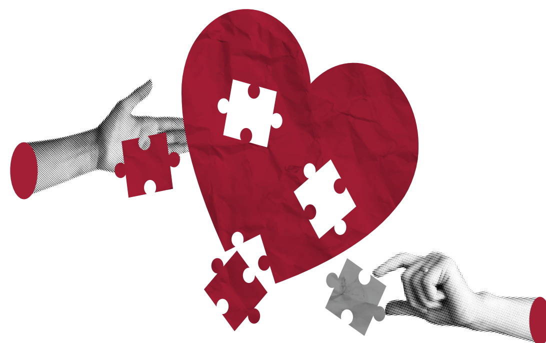
- **44% of students indicated experiencing clinically significant symptoms of anxiety and depression** in the previous two weeks.
- **12% reported that they had missed class or work because of a transportation problem** during the current academic term.
- **12% reported that they had missed assignments or been unable to fully participate in academic activities due to a lack of internet or technology access** during the current academic term.
- Among parenting students, **18% reported they had missed three or more days of class in the previous term because of problems with childcare arrangements**.

These issues affected students across institution types. However, mental health and childcare access concerns were both more common among students at four-year schools than two-year schools and mental health concerns were more common at non-MSIs than MSIs (see Tables 3 and 4 in the web appendices).

Mental Health

Basic needs insecurity can cause mental health challenges and vice versa, creating a cyclical and often compounding effect. When students face barriers to essential resources like food, housing, and financial stability, they become more stressed and anxious, which can exacerbate or even trigger mental health challenges like depression, chronic stress, and burnout.

At the same time, mental health symptoms can hinder a student's ability to maintain income and affect focus, energy, and decision-making, making it hard to secure stable housing and access nutritious food. This vicious cycle can lead students into deeper states of insecurity and distress, making it difficult for them to achieve their academic goals and thrive. Indeed, **among students experiencing anxiety or depression, 71% were also experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing**. Breaking this cycle requires holistic solutions that address both basic needs and mental health as integral to student success and well-being.



In terms of racial differences in students' mental health challenges, we found that Indigenous students (52%), White students (48%), and Filipinx students (48%) had the highest rates of anxiety and/or depression (see Table 5 in the web appendices). Unsurprisingly, because Indigenous students also had higher rates of other types of basic needs insecurity, this group also experienced the highest degree of overlap between mental health and other basic needs. Eighty-three percent of Indigenous students experiencing anxiety and/or depression were also experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing (see Table 9 in the web appendices). Especially in the context of our nation's provider shortage, states and colleges have an opportunity to move beyond focusing on treatment alone and address basic needs as a key strategy for improving student mental health.

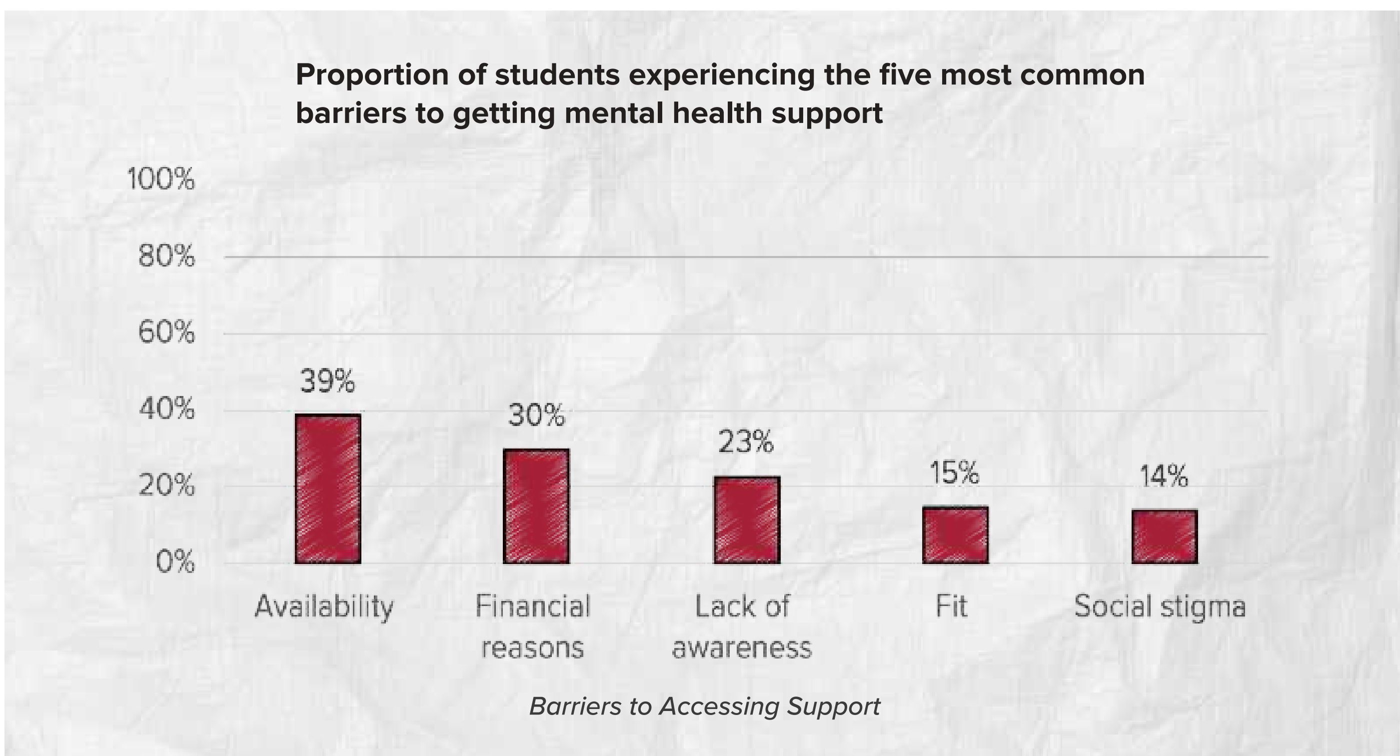
Addressing students' basic needs and mental health together will make a difference in persistence. Among students who had previously stopped out (stopped attending college without completing a credential and subsequently re-enrolled), **a majority of students (54%) reported that mental health was one of their reasons for stopping out. Furthermore, 39% of students who had previously stopped out reported that improvement in their mental or physical health was one of the reasons they were able to re-enroll.** (For more information, see the **Implications of Experiencing Basic Needs Insecurity** section).

"I have to do school work while at work. I can't miss work because I need to pay my rent, food, medical bills, electrical bills, and I still owe my roommate money. Many times I've suffered from mental health problems because I feel suffocated. I feel like I have no time for myself anymore."

Mental health is important for students' persistence, but there are barriers to students accessing support. The top three barriers students reported were availability (having difficulty finding an appointment, having other obligations when services are available, and/or not having enough time; 39%), financial concerns (services are too expensive, not covered by insurance; 30%), and awareness (not being sure where to go; 23%). (See Figure 5 below and Tables 10 and 11 in the web appendices).

Colleges that offer their own health services on campus must ensure all such costs of care, not just insurance premiums, are included in their estimates. For example, if students have a copay, they should be afforded at least a few visits per year. Transportation to and from health care services could be included in either the transportation component of COA, or alongside health care expenses in the miscellaneous category. Federal guidance should address these options.

Figure 5: Mental health resources are often unavailable or too expensive.



NOTE | We asked students about what factors prevented them from receiving more mental health support than they currently do. Displayed are the proportions of survey respondents who selected reasons related to availability (difficulty finding an appointment, having other obligations when services are available; lack of time), financial reasons (too expensive, no insurance), lack of awareness (of where to go for support), fit (preferring to deal with issues on their own or with family/friends), and social stigma (fear of being mistreated, being misunderstood, or how others might view them). See appendices for full results and category descriptions.

"It's impossible to work full-time and dedicate myself to school full-time while looking for housing and battling depression. However, if I quit school I'm stuck in my dead-end job and if I quit my job I'll starve."

Student in Vermont

Preferences for mental health support varied: 64% of students reported they were somewhat or very likely to use in-person counseling if they were struggling with their mental health, and 61% reported they were somewhat or very likely to seek informal support (e.g., from a friend, family member, religious figure, colleague, or professor). About half of students reported they were likely to use their primary care doctor or teletherapy supports for their mental health (see Figure 6 below and Tables 12 and 13 in the web appendices). Together, these results suggest that a multipronged approach including both formal and informal mental health supports could be effective.

Figure 6: Most students would use in-person counseling services if they were struggling.

Percentages of survey respondents who said they were likely to use each form of mental health support.

Type of Support	Percentage
Crisis hotline	21%
Group therapy	28%
Peer counseling	28%
App/online program	32%
Teletherapy	51%
Primary care doctor	53%
Informal support	61%
In-person counseling	64%

NOTE | Displayed are the proportions of survey respondents who reported being “somewhat likely” or “very likely” to use each form of support if they were struggling with their mental health.

"My constant anxiety is what leads to my depression, and I feel like no one is helping me and I have to suffer by myself. The personal wellness department needs to have more appointments available...And they need to have more therapists available, especially in-person. I don't want to have phone calls or virtual meetings, it has to be face-to-face."

Student in California

Policy Recommendation

Federal Policy Recommendation: Dramatically Expand Funding and Resources for Student Mental Health

Mental health challenges do not exist in isolation; any solutions must address the close link between mental and behavioral health challenges and financial or material basic needs insecurity. **Unfortunately, very little federal funding exists to specifically target college students' mental and behavioral health challenges.** Nearly all federal funding for student mental health has been limited to K-12 students.

The Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Campus Suicide Prevention Grant is the only federal program currently dedicated to supporting college students' mental and behavioral health and has received a paltry $8.5 million per fiscal year through FY 2024. This tiny program only reaches a few dozen institutions each funding cycle out of nearly 3,600 public and private nonprofit institutions nationwide. The scale of the problem, and the cost of providing care, will require substantially more federal and state funding and coordination than currently exists. Congress could overhaul and dramatically expand the GLS campus grant, or fund a large federal program capable of meeting the severe needs of students in higher education and preventing student mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, and suicide.

Congress **should fund a large federal program capable of meeting the severe mental health needs** of students in higher education.

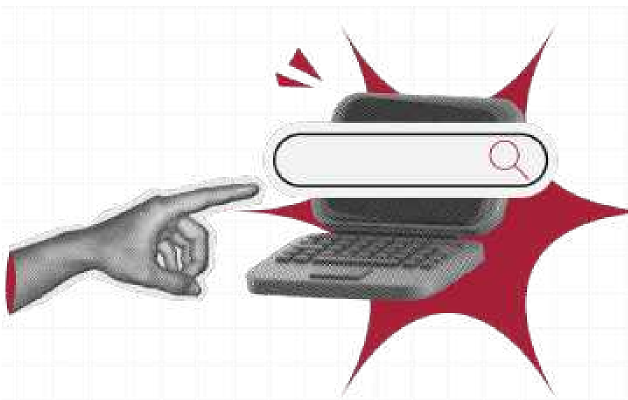
For institutions hoping to learn more about how they can bolster their work in this area, explore our briefs in collaboration with the American Council of Education "Investing in Student Mental Health: Opportunities for College Leadership" and "What Works for Improving Mental Health in Higher Education."

Transportation and Internet/Technology Insecurity

Students require support and infrastructure to get to campus or classes and stay engaged in their coursework. For example, students need reliable transportation to and from school (for in-person classes and events), work (to support themselves financially), and other obligations.

Studies show that **99% of community college students commute to campus**. While having access to reliable transportation may not always prevent students from missing class when other parts of life get in the way, it is an essential need. Students without reliable transportation options are constantly spending time and energy figuring out how to get to and from class while sorting out their other responsibilities like working jobs or internships, grocery shopping, childcare responsibilities, and more. While just over half (57%) of community college campuses have transit stops within walking distance, an additional 25% of community colleges could become accessible simply by extending existing public transportation infrastructure; that benefit naturally extends to other types of colleges and universities while also making other intersecting needs more accessible.

In our sample, **93% of two-year students and 55% of four-year students who regularly went to campus relied on a vehicle or public transportation to get to class** (see Tables 14 and 15 in the web appendices). Unfortunately, about 1 in 8 students reported that they sometimes, often, or very often missed class or work that term because of a transportation problem.



Students also need reliable internet and technology access for online classes, assignments, educational materials, and course websites. Online classes are still a popular option after the pandemic—in fact, studies show most students are taking at least one class online. Some classes may only be available online, and some in-person classes require online tools for completing or submitting homework or accessing supplemental materials. Additionally, as shown in our data and other studies, students' access to sufficient technology is deeply inequitable.

"Tuition continues to increase for the same level of education. You are expected to have computers, internet, and smartphones (iClicker) to complete college. Every year it gets increasingly inaccessible. Housing prices rise, inflation increases, all while most of us work 2+ jobs for minimum wage."

Student in Colorado

In our sample, **17% of students completed their assignments on a device other than a personal computer** (e.g., 5% relied on a smartphone; 8% borrowed a computer; 2% on a public computer). Surprisingly, this was true even among students with technology-heavy majors: **15% of STEM majors and 13% of computer science and technology majors also completed their assignments on a device other than a personal computer** (see Tables 14 and 15 in the web appendices).

Less frequent but perhaps even more problematic in today's day and age, **8% of survey respondents reported that they did not have reliable internet access at home**. Again, this was even true among students with technology-heavy majors: **8% of STEM majors and 8% of computer sciences and technology majors lacked reliable internet access at home** (see Table 16 and 17 in the web appendices). Given these challenges, it is unsurprising that **12% of survey respondents reported that they sometimes, often, or very often missed assignments or were unable to fully participate in academic activities due to a lack of internet or technology access**.

Policy Recommendations

Secure Funding to Improve Student Access to Public Transportation

Transportation costs for students continue to increase, particularly for students at public 2-year institutions, the vast majority of whom commute to class. In addition, bus and other public transit infrastructure and schedules are often not aligned with the needs of students in their service area. Federal policymakers should facilitate greater coordination between local public transit agencies and institutions of higher education to design transportation options that meet students' needs—which could be accelerated by the PATH to College Act.

Revive the Affordable Connectivity Program

During the pandemic, Congress acted on a bipartisan basis to create the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which provided substantial discounts on monthly internet service to 23 million low-income people—including over one million students who received Pell Grants. Funding for the ACP expired in 2024. Federal lawmakers should restore funding for the ACP and extend the program, as suggested by the *Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act* of 2024.

"There is only fast food and gas stations on campus. The closest grocery store is a Publix a mile away which most of us cannot afford. Still, when my car broke down, I walked a mile each way to get groceries and could only buy what I could carry back across campus in one trip. I did this for over a month. Thank you for doing this survey. Much change is needed."

Student in Tennessee

Intersecting Needs

Our findings and data reveal that different types of basic needs insecurity frequently overlap and intersect; students who are experiencing one form of basic needs insecurity are likely to be experiencing multiple other challenges as well.

For example, **78% of students experiencing food insecurity were also experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness**; **53% of respondents who were experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food or housing were also experiencing anxiety and/or depression**; and **28% of parenting students who missed three or more classes due to childcare access had also missed class or work due to transportation access** (see Table 9 in the web appendices).

These data make clear that addressing student basic needs insecurity comprehensively and holistically is crucial.

Through our Hope Impact Partnerships program, we support many institutions working to bridge the different types of services and supports available to students through approaches such as:

- centralizing information about all types of basic needs supports in a single website or physical location (e.g., benefits hubs);
- cross-advertising the counseling center or housing services in the food pantry and other locations where basic needs supports are provided; and
- establishing or designating single points of contact, such as a "basic needs coordinator" or case manager, to coordinate basic needs services.

Several states (California, Illinois, Kentucky, Oregon, and Washington) have passed legislation or led statewide efforts to establish benefits navigators on their campuses. These institutional practices and state policies help to ensure that students' overlapping needs can be addressed without students having to seek out each service separately.

"I'm trying to break generational curses and be the first college graduate in my family and it seems I'm swimming upstream and I know I can do this with the right amount of knowledge, resources, and support! SEND HELP!"

Student in Minnesota

Implications of Experiencing Basic Needs Insecurity

We examined the implications of basic needs insecurity for enrollment and persistence decisions in three ways. First, we asked students who were not completing a credential in the current term (n = 37,916) about their likelihood of continuing to take classes in the subsequent academic term. **Students experiencing food insecurity, housing insecurity, and/or homelessness reported that they were less likely to continue their studies in the next semester** (p < .001, see Table 18 in the web appendices).

Second, we asked students who had previously stopped out (temporarily quit school without obtaining a credential and subsequently re-enrolled; n = 15,981) what factors had contributed to their decision to stop out. **Over half of these students (57%)** reported that **emotional stress and mental health were factors in their decision to stop out**, and **over one-third (34%)** reported that **not having enough money for living expenses (food, rent, utilities, etc.) was a factor in their decision to stop out** (see Figure 7). When we consider all of the reasons related to basic needs, **80% of students reported that basic needs were factors in their decision to stop out** (see Tables 19 and 20 in the web appendices).

Finally, we asked students who previously stopped out but had subsequently re-enrolled about factors influencing their decision to re-enroll in college. **Fifty-four percent indicated that they wanted to finish their program** and **48% indicated that it was to get a higher-paying or more rewarding job**. Being able to complete their program matters to these students. Changes related to students' basic needs security were also important factors (see Figure 8). When we consider all of the reasons related to basic needs, **59% of students reported that basic needs were factors in their decision to re-enroll** (see the Tables 21 and 22 in the web appendices).

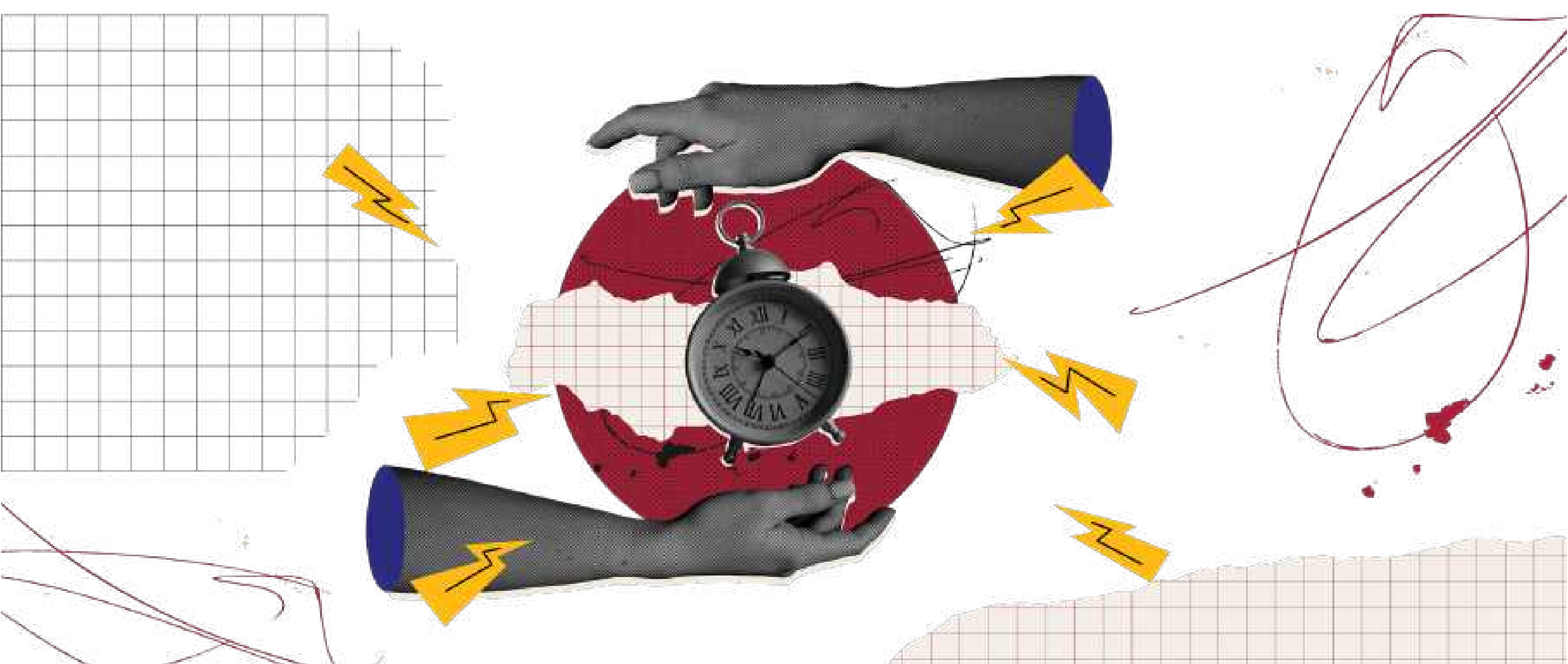
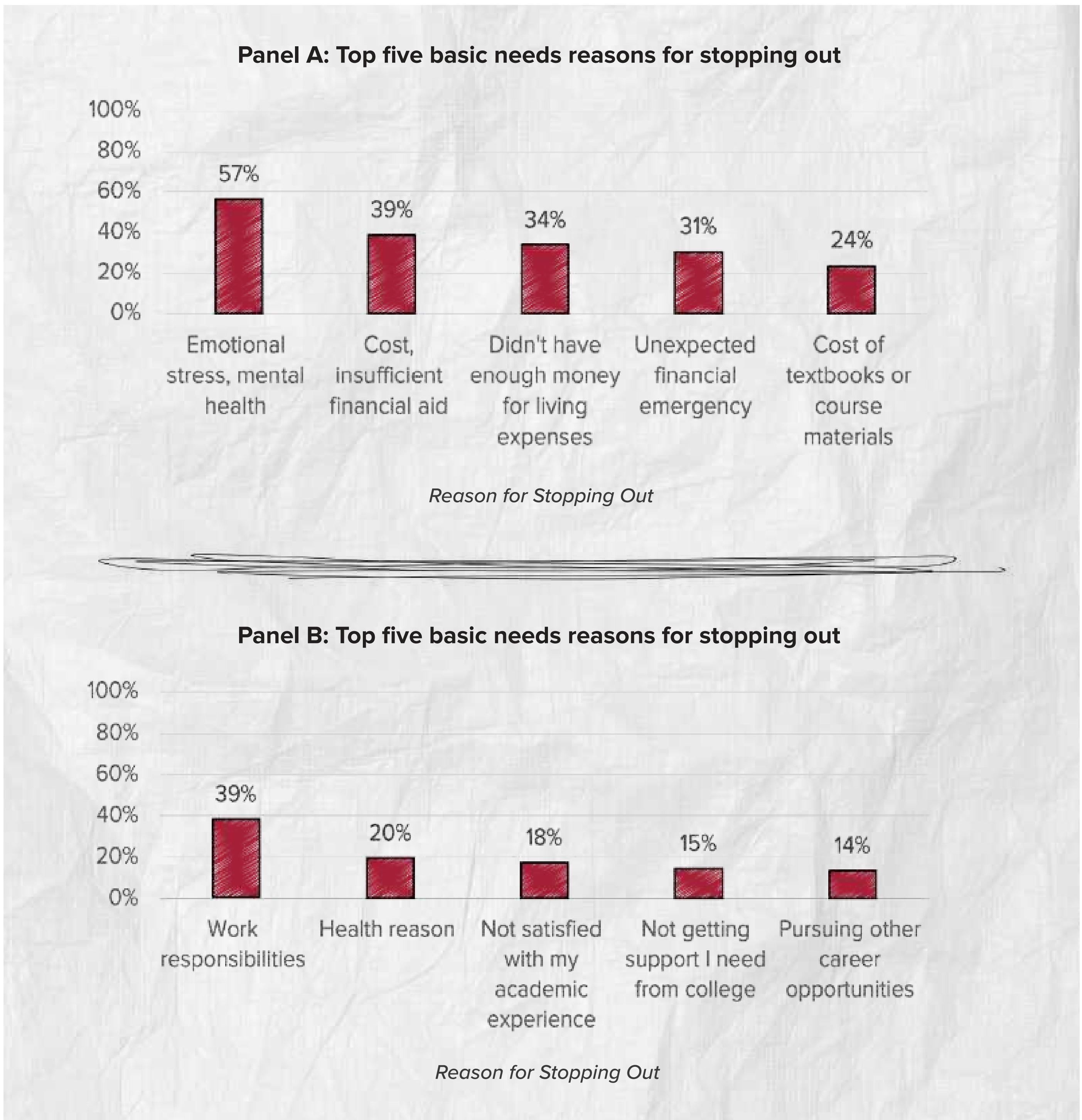
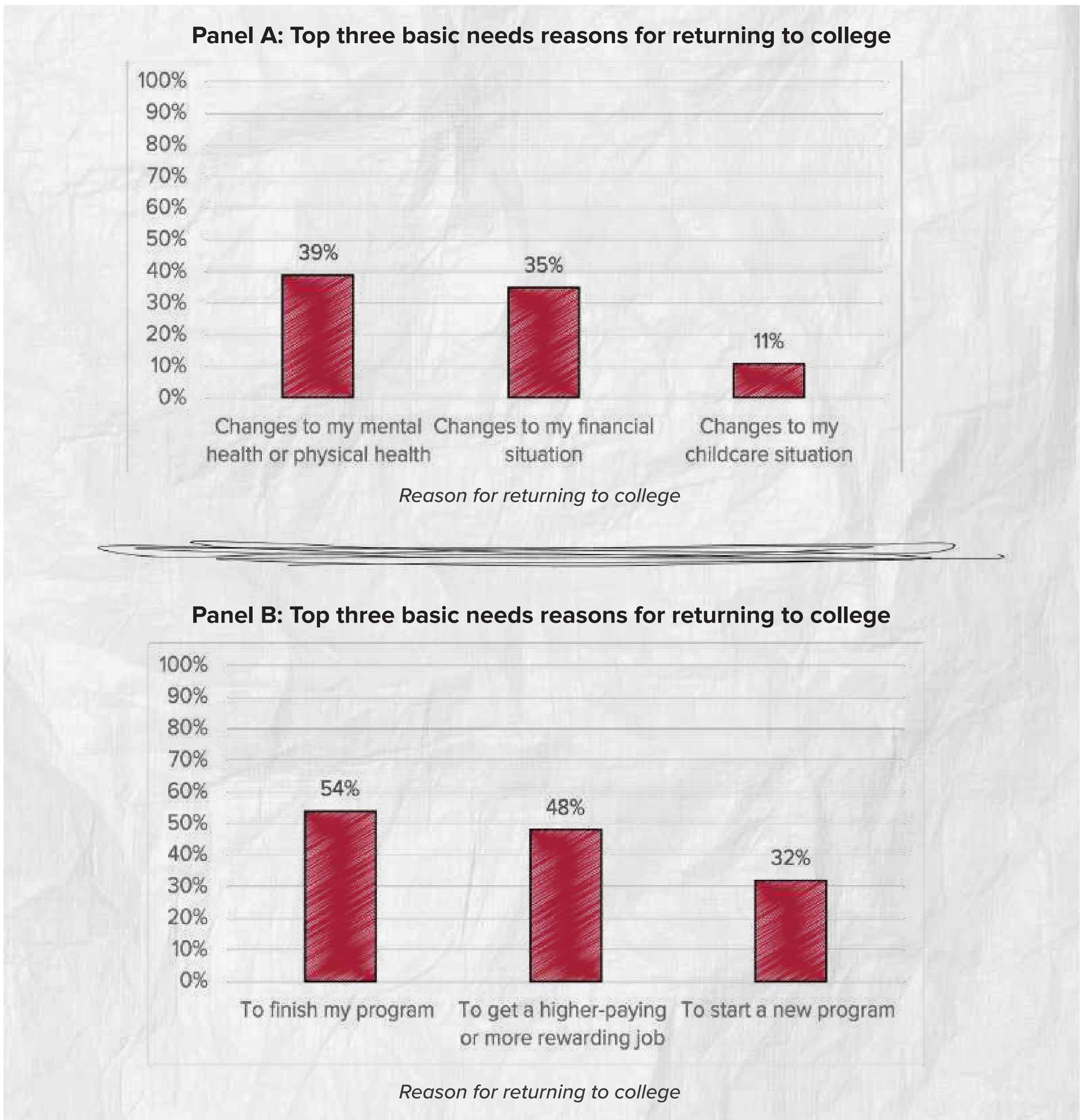


Figure 7: Most students reported emotional stress and mental health were a factor in their decision to stop out of college.



NOTE | Students were asked, "Which of the following describes why you previously stopped taking classes before finishing your program? (Please check all that apply.)" See Table 19 in the web appendices for full results.

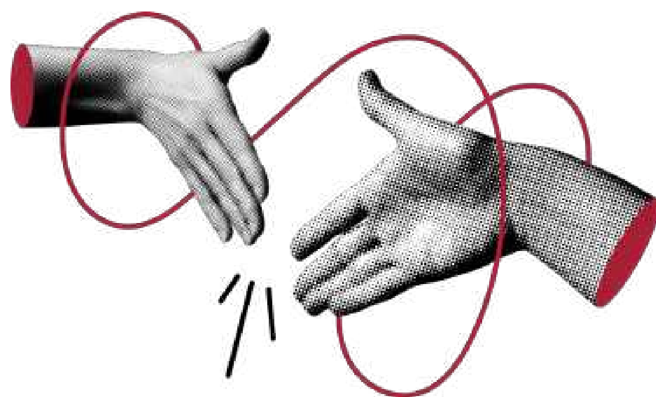
Figure 8: Most students reported that finishing their program was a factor in their decision to return to college.



NOTE | Students were asked, "Which of the following describes why you previously stopped taking classes before finishing your program? (Please check all that apply.)" See Table 21 in the web appendices for full results.

Use of Public Resources and Campus Supports

Public benefits are programs intended to ensure that those with financial hardship can meet their basic needs. For example, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides money for food and groceries to those under a certain income threshold. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) helps subsidize access to child care for those with dependent children.



Most public benefit programs, however, have strict and confusing eligibility requirements that often unfairly limit access to actively enrolled students or make potential recipients unsure of whether they can apply in the first place. The purported reason for such requirements is that they better "target" those in need, but more often than not, they are based on harmful and discriminatory assumptions and narratives of deservedness.

Our survey found that:

- Most students who faced basic needs insecurity did not access any of the public benefits we asked about in the survey (SNAP, TANF, WIC, Medicaid, etc.)[5] **51% of students who experienced at least one type of basic needs insecurity did not receive any public benefits**. Few students accessed public resources aligned to their needs. Only 27% of students experiencing food insecurity accessed public food assistance benefits (SNAP and/or WIC).
- Just **12% of students facing housing insecurity or homelessness utilized public housing or utility assistance** (LIHEAP, utility assistance, housing assistance, and/or shelters and other services or support from community-based organizations or nonprofits).
- Lastly, merely **8% of students who missed classes due to transportation issues accessed public transportation assistance** (see the Tables 23 and 24 in the web appendices).

These findings are consistent with a Government Accountability Office's (GAO) report on student usage of SNAP, which found that two-thirds **(67%) of potentially eligible students were not receiving SNAP benefits**. The reason is clear—confusing eligibility requirements and unnecessary barriers create significant confusion that stymies potentially eligible students and individuals from accessing programs that could support their basic needs. The more complex a program is, the more likely it is to exclude those who need it the most.

Utilization of support and assistance on campus was also low. **Among students who experienced at least one type of basic needs insecurity, our survey found that 48% did not use any of the campus supports** we asked about.[6] Meanwhile, 25% utilized one form of campus support, and 27% accessed two or more types of support from campus resources (see Tables 25 and 26 in the web appendices). Few students accessed campus supports that were aligned to their needs.

- **Only 36% of students who faced food insecurity used campus supports related to food**, including food pantries, food scholarships/vouchers, or help obtaining SNAP benefits.
- Just **4% of housing insecure or homeless students used campus support for housing** (campus emergency housing or help finding affordable housing.

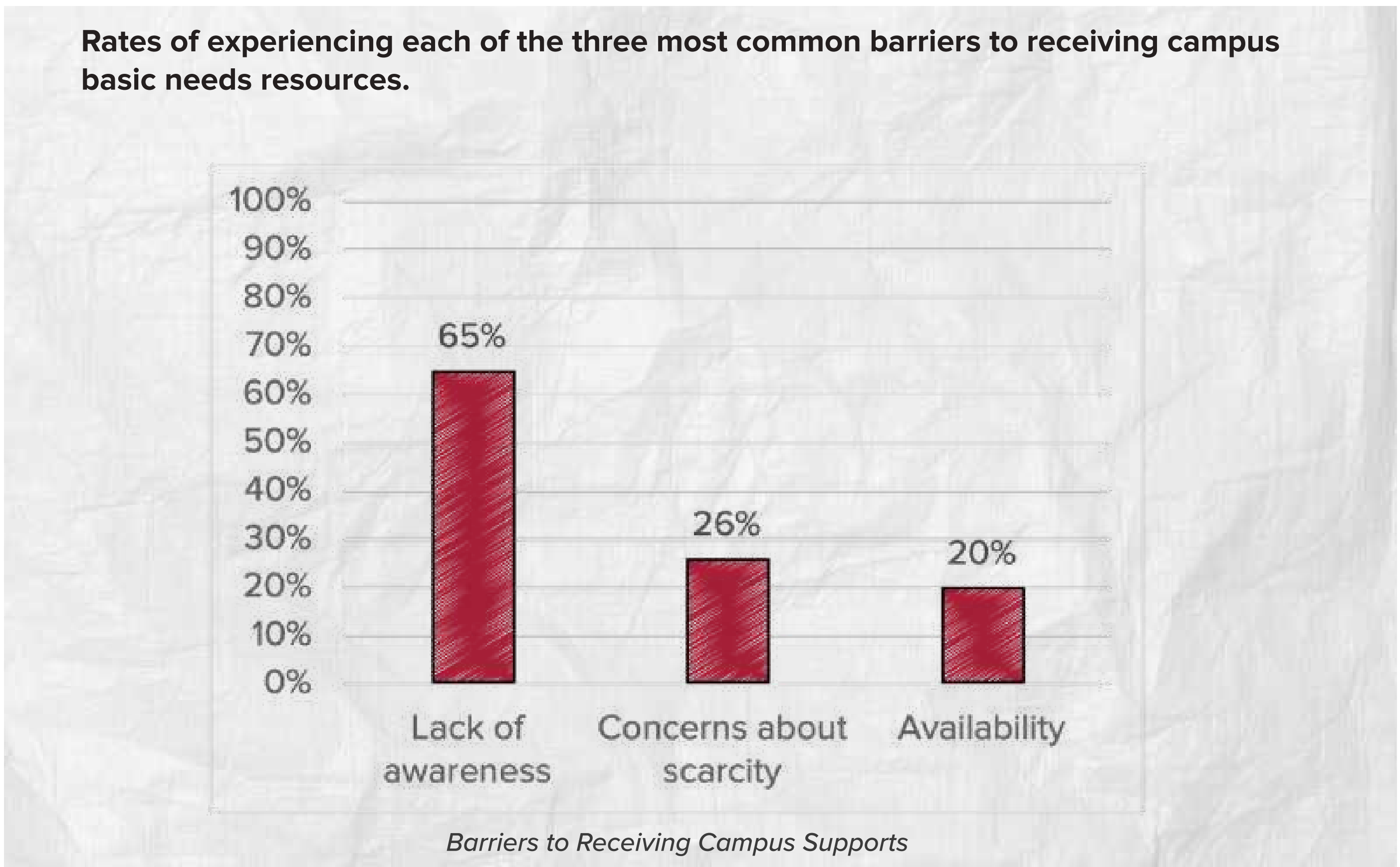
Fifteen percent of students who faced food insecurity had never heard of campus support related to food. More alarmingly, **51% of students who experienced housing insecurity or homelessness never heard of campus support for housing** (see the Tables 25 and 26 in the web appendices).

We also asked students about barriers to accessing supports. **Almost 2 in 3 students (65%) reported that awareness is a barrier** (see Figure 9 and Tables 27 and 28 in the web appendices). Most of the students (86%) reported that they prefer emails as a method of outreach to them about supports (see Figure 10 and Tables 29 and 30 in the web appendices).

It feels like the college world plays so many mind games. There are so many scholarships and ways to receive aid, but an unreasonable amount of hoops to jump through to get them. There are so many job openings, but barely any are posted online and these websites are so hard to navigate. It feels like you are a circus animal that can only get food if you learn all the proper tricks.

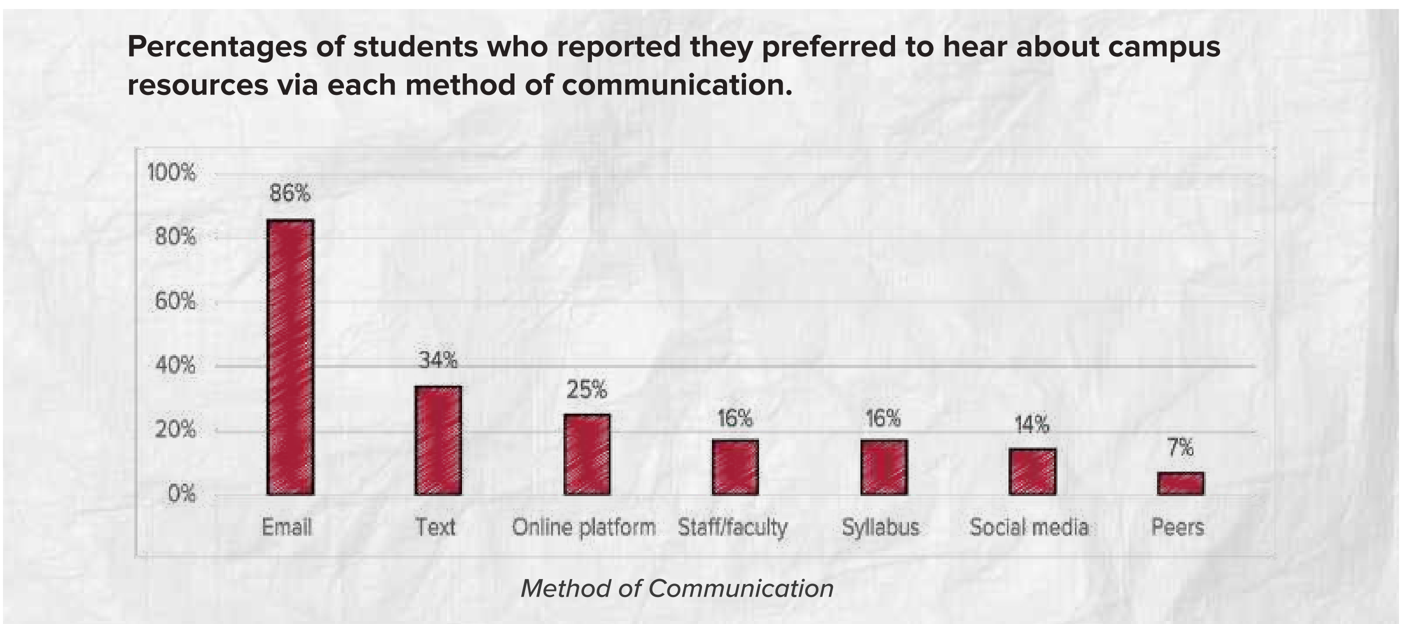
Student in Oregon

Figure 9: Students were not made sufficiently aware of the supports available to them.

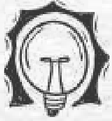


NOTE | We asked students about what factors prevented them from receiving more mental health support than they currently do. Displayed are the proportions of survey respondents who selected reasons related to lack of awareness, concerns about scarcity, and availability. See the Table 27 in the web appendices for full results.

Figure 10: Students want to hear about campus resources via email.

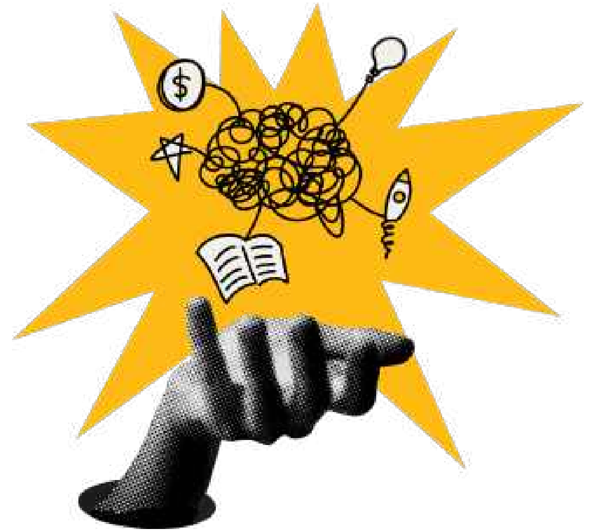


NOTE | Students were asked, “How would you prefer that [institution name] reach out to you about resources that are available to you as a student? (Please check all that apply).” Percentages do not add to 100 because students could select multiple options.



Institutional Example:
Community College of Vermont

Our partners tell us that one of the most effective ways to connect students to public benefits is to connect them to someone with experience navigating the system. For example, the Community College of Vermont partners with United Way Working Bridges to pair students with a resource coordinator to help them apply for benefits. This addresses both the information barrier and the administrative burden placed on the student.



Policy Recommendation

Invest in Emergency Aid for Students

During the pandemic, Congress provided nearly $40 billion for emergency aid for students to help them survive and stay enrolled in college. These flexible funds were made available at every institution of higher education and operated outside of traditional Title IV financial aid like Pell Grants and student loans. Because the grants were designed to be flexible and minimize eligibility restrictions, they were essential to helping students meet their basic needs during the public health emergency period. More than three in five recipients say they used emergency funds to purchase food, and around half of students used these funds for housing. Studies show that students who received emergency aid persisted and graduated at higher rates compared to students who were unable to access the funds. To replicate the success of the pandemic-era emergency aid program, Congress should revive flexibility for the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) to be used as emergency aid for students' unexpected expenses. Such a move would allow this longstanding, locally administered financial aid program to fulfill a successful and evidence-based practice at no cost to the federal budget.

Exploring Basic Needs Within Specific Student Populations

Choosing Student Groups to Highlight

The “traditional” college student is no longer the norm. That is, students attending college are no longer overwhelmingly fresh out of high school with parents financially supporting their postsecondary education. Many students today are either parents themselves or caring for elderly family members and loved ones while juggling homework, school assignments, and job responsibilities. Many (50%) college students are first-generation.

Today’s students hold many intersecting identities. The likelihood that students will experience structural economic challenges and basic needs insecurity—and the ease with which they can access supports—is inextricably linked to their race, gender, sexual orientation, class, nationality, and other factors.

We seek to honor students by highlighting their experiences related to their positionality within a society that is not designed to support them. We chose to highlight groups based on our experiences, expertise, and conversations with our colleagues and partners in basic needs research, policy, and practice. We acknowledge that many groups are not included in this report, and we strongly encourage our partners and fellow researchers, policy advocates, and practitioners to use their platforms to lift the voices and experiences of students. We also invite others to use our data to highlight more intersecting student populations.

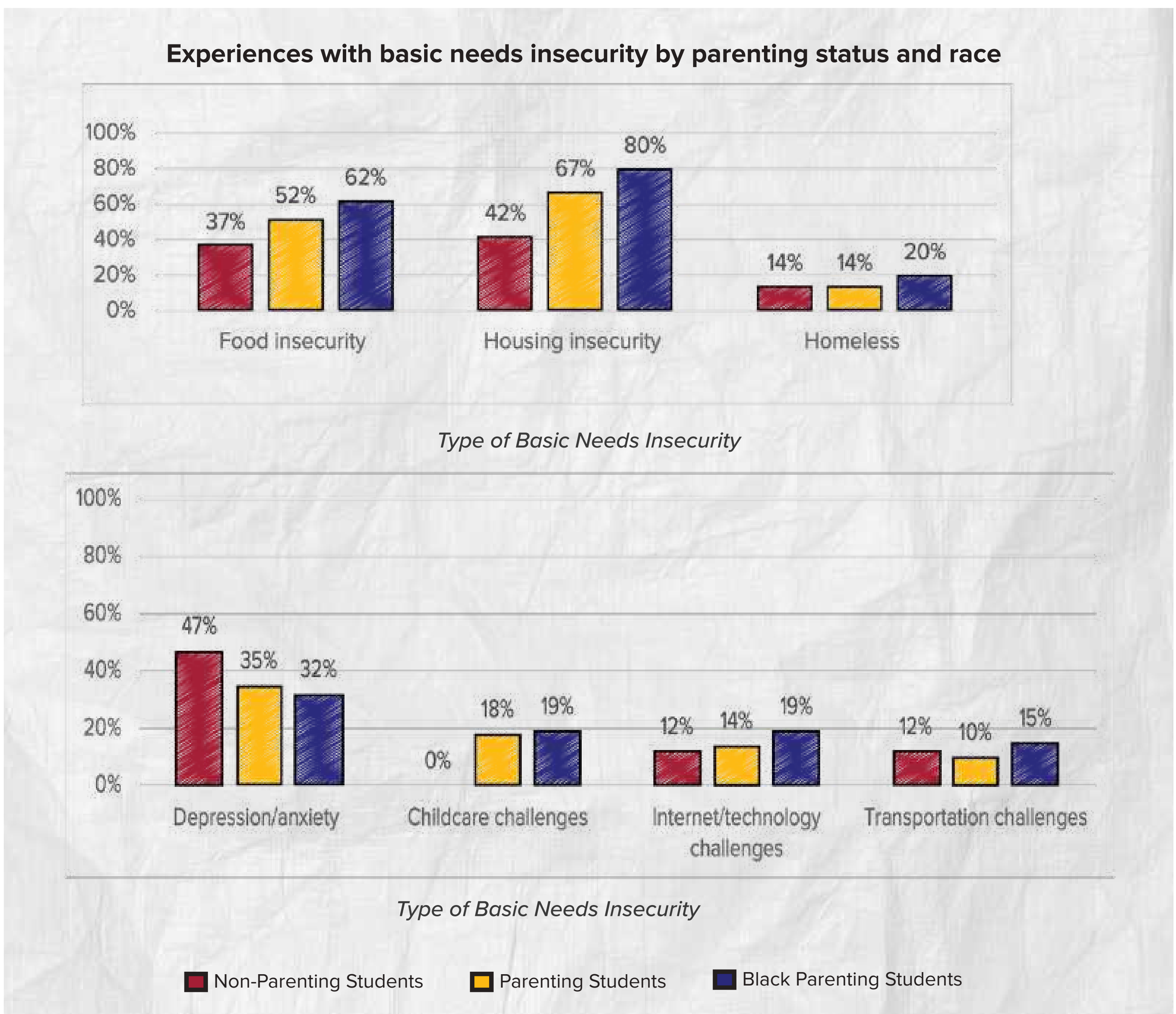
In the following sections that examine a particular group of students, we provide examples of how institutions are supporting these students. Contextual factors change the type of support that students need and the type of support a college can provide. We hope that the examples inspire college changemakers to create programs that work best for *their* students.

"It’s really hard that sometimes, or most of the time, we are not treated like humans and like we don’t have a life out of school.”

Parenting Students

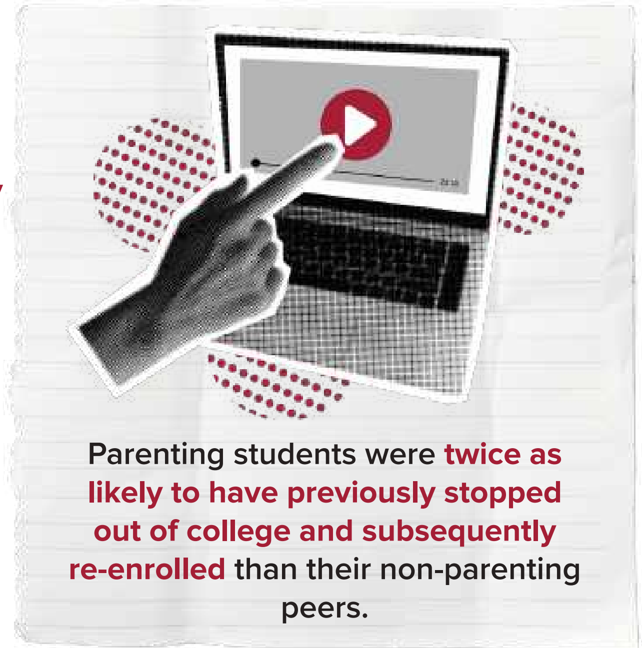
Of the students that responded to the survey, 23% (*n*=12,654) reported they are parenting students (i.e., are the parent, primary caregiver, or legal or informal guardian of at least one child). **A higher percentage of parenting students (74%) than non-parenting students (55%) reported facing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing. This percentage is even higher for Black parenting students (85%).** Black parenting students were also more likely to experience at least one form of basic needs insecurity across food, housing, mental health, technology, and child care than other parenting students (see Figure 11 below and Tables 31 and 32 in the web appendices).

Figure 11: Black parenting students experience some types of basic needs insecurity at higher rates than their peers, especially homelessness.



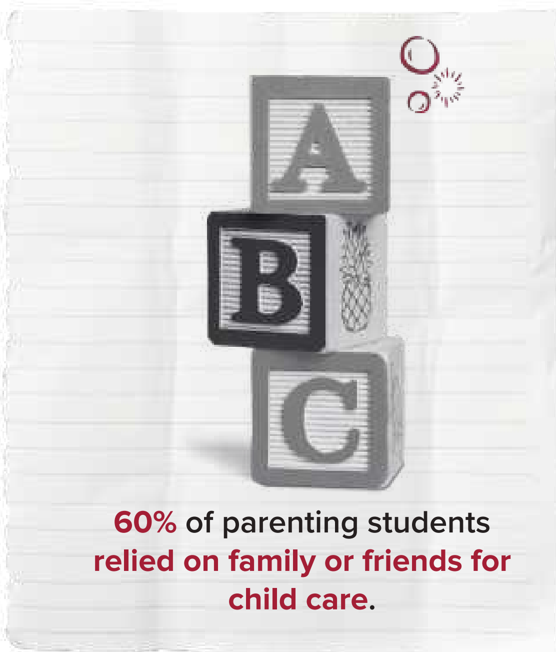
For many American parents, the cost of child care is crushing and contributes to financial instability and hardship. In September 2023, federal relief funding put in place to support more than 220,000 childcare programs during the pandemic abruptly expired. This steep drop-off in investment, which has been termed "a child-care cliff," is impacting families.

An **overwhelming percentage of parenting students (86%) report that child care is not at all affordable or only somewhat affordable**. Furthermore, **parenting students were twice as likely to have previously stopped out of college and subsequently re-enrolled** (41%) as their non-parenting peers (20%; see the web appendices). Unsurprisingly, among parenting students who had previously stopped out and subsequently re-enrolled, **43% reported that one of their reasons for leaving college was due to childcare and/or other caregiving responsibilities** (see the Tables 31-33 web appendices). It was evident in our survey data that there was little and inconsistent support available for parenting students to secure child care for their children. Indeed, **nearly 1 in 5 parenting students reported that they had missed class due to childcare issues three or more times in the previous academic term**, and this rate was somewhat higher at non-RSIs (see Tables 3 and 4 in the web appendices).



Parenting students were **twice as likely to have previously stopped out of college and subsequently re-enrolled** than their non-parenting peers.

We also asked parenting students about their available childcare options. **A third of the parenting students (33%) reported that their college did not provide child care or a subsidy to help with child care**, and **half of parenting students (51%) were unsure whether their college provided child care or childcare subsidies**, suggesting a severe lack of outreach and information for parenting students (see Table 34 in the web appendices). Most of these **parenting students (60%) relied on family or friends for child care while only a small percentage (10%) relied on on-campus child care**. The cost of child care has been rising faster than inflation in recent years.

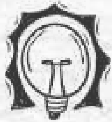


60% of parenting students **relied on family or friends for child care.**

For colleges and universities, the resources required to maintain childcare supports—including on-campus childcare centers—can be daunting. Amidst the rising cost of providing child care and stagnant or declining state support for higher education, our analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education reveals that there has been a decline in the number of campuses offering campus-based child care over the last two decades.

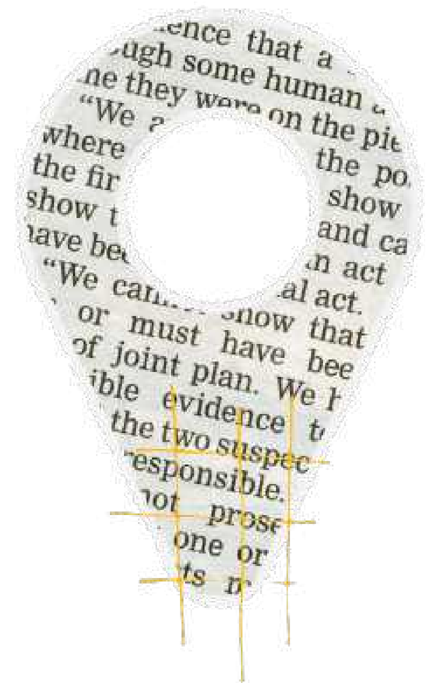
The decline in childcare availability at public 4-year and community colleges is particularly alarming, given that public institutions enroll a large majority of students in higher ed. Yet these schools, and community colleges in particular, have faced tight budgets for decades despite serving students with high levels of need.

Several innovative partnerships have sprung up across the country, including a promising model spearheaded by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the National Head Start Association, but more federal support is essential in order to ensure that any parent attending a community college (or other school) has access to reliable, quality care for their children.



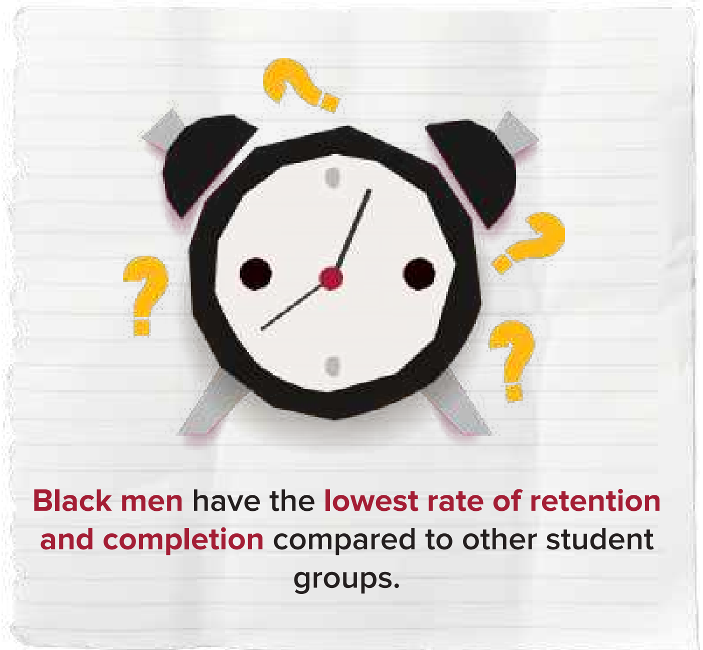
Institutional Examples: Dallas College and St. Catherine University

HIP partner **Dallas College's Family Care Program** and **St. Catherine University** both provide good examples of how institutions can meaningfully address parenting students' basic needs. In addition to direct support like food pantries, both provide wraparound services including individualized coaching, case management, peer support groups, and connections to parenting supplies and basic needs resources. Dallas College also has an inventory of free Family Care items, such as car seats, diapers, formula, and smoke detectors.



Black Fathers

In our sample, 4% of respondents are fathers, and 1% are Black fathers. A higher percentage of Black fathers (85%) experienced basic needs insecurity compared to fathers overall (67%). Black fathers experience basic needs insecurity at rates similar to Black mothers (86%) but higher than mothers overall (75%). (See Tables 35 and 36 in the web appendices).



Black men have the **lowest rate of retention and completion** compared to other student groups.

Despite rising interest in the field to support Black fathers, few known examples exist of institutions materially and directly supporting them. This is particularly notable because, even though Black mothers and fathers experience similar rates of basic needs insecurity, **Black men have the lowest rate of retention and completion compared to other groups**. Our partners suggest expanded childcare access would be particularly beneficial to Black fathers. While federal investments are sorely needed, we also encourage colleges to expand their childcare offerings and create programs to connect Black parenting fathers to other childcare resources and proactively include them in their messaging.

Policy Recommendation

Support Parenting Students through Affordable On-Campus Child Care and Greater Financial Support

The four million parenting students in higher education experience basic needs insecurity at substantially higher rates than non-parenting students, and parents of color struggle even more. Parenting students routinely report that finding affordable, high-quality, and convenient child care is among their largest barriers to enrolling and succeeding in college.

Congress should dramatically increase funding for programs like Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS)—the only federal program dedicated to helping parenting students. While we laud increases in federal funding for the program since 2018, it remains funded far below the amount needed to support parenting students, and the number of colleges with on-campus childcare facilities has declined by double digits over the last two decades. **Congress should also pass the *CCAMPIS Reauthorization Act***, which would help federal investments in CCAMPIS reach more students and improve wrap-around services for parenting students.

Congress should also reinstate the successful monthly and expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC), which dramatically reduced child poverty before it was allowed to expire at the end of 2021. Many parenting students benefitted from the financial support of the expanded CTC, lowering food insecurity for themselves and their children and allowing them to seek education and training opportunities.

In addition, **Congress should remove the substantial restrictions for students in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program**, such as work requirements, time limits, and program-of-study limitations, which all limit the pursuit of education that leads to family-supporting jobs. Finally, the **Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) should be updated** to ensure that all states provide parenting students with low incomes access to subsidies to afford child care.

Part-time and Working Students

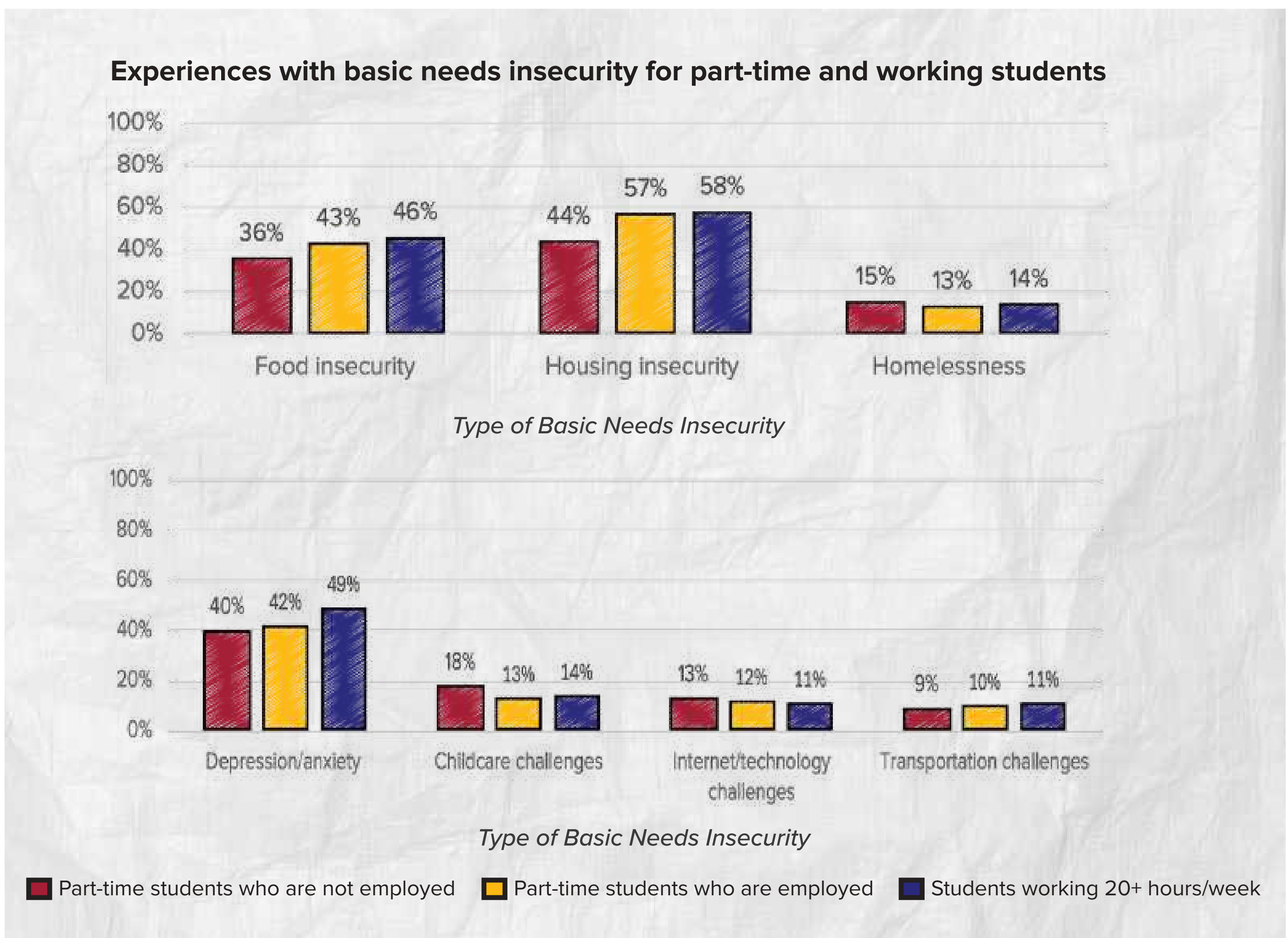
Not all students attend college full-time. In fact, increasingly few students do. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2021, 27% of undergraduates at four-year institutions and 65% of undergraduates at two-year institutions were enrolled part-time.

> “Some people don't have to work and be in school so they do better. I wish I was a nepo baby.”
>
> *Student in Tennessee*

Although most students work while enrolled, some students are effectively working full-time in addition to their course load. Fifty-two percent of students surveyed reported having one job, and 16% reported holding two or more. In fact, 32% of students who responded to questions about their time use reported that they worked more than 20 hours a week (*n*=11,739; see Table 27 in the web appendices). Rates of employment and of working more than 20 hours per week were both higher among part-time students than full-time students (*p*s < .001), but even so, 1 in 4 full-time students in our sample worked more than 20 hours per week (see Tables 37 and 38 in the web appendices).

Part-time students and students who work long hours while enrolled in school share many of the same challenges in balancing school and other responsibilities. It is not surprising that for students who worked more than 20 hours per week, a majority of them reported conflicts between job and class schedules (see Table 39 in the web appendices). The same was true for part-time students who were employed, even with the lower course loads. Despite having jobs, **68% of students who worked more than 20 hours per week reported that they still faced basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing**. Although some might expect that employed students would experience less basic needs insecurity, this is not the case in our sample (see Figure 12 below and Table 40 in the web appendices). It appears that students who are working are doing so because it is necessary for them, and even so, the majority struggle to make ends meet. These students would clearly benefit from additional supports.

Figure 12: Part-time students who are employed, as well as students working more than 20 hours per week, experience food and housing insecurity at higher rates.



Policy Recommendation

Ensure Funding Formulas Prioritize the Needs of Part-Time Students

State and federal funding formulas for higher education programs often allocate resources based on full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment. This measure treats part-time students as a fraction of full-time students and inaccurately assumes that those attending part-time require fewer resources to educate, utilize fewer campus services, or require lower levels of basic needs support. As a result, institutions like community colleges often receive inadequate investments despite enrolling students with higher levels of need. Policymakers should ensure that public higher education funding, grant aid programs, and basic needs supports are based on total student enrollment or headcount, rather than FTE formulas.

"It's the meme of that dog sitting in a fire and saying 'it's fine.' You have to get a degree to get a damn job but can't get a degree without having a job to pay for the damn degree."

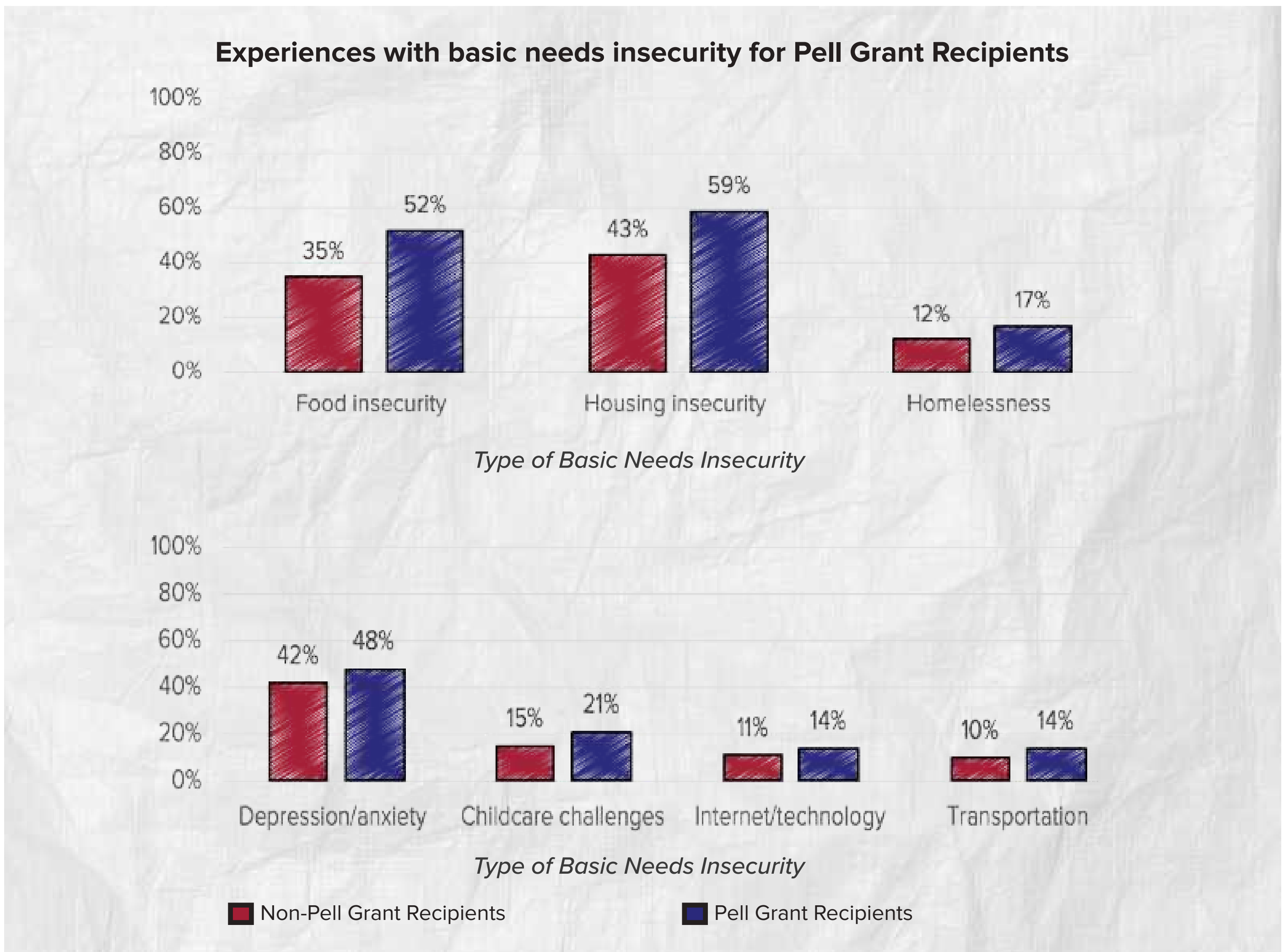
Student in Tennessee

Pell Grant Recipients

Federal Pell Grants are the foundation of federal need-based financial aid and are awarded to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need and have not yet attained a degree. In our sample, 35% of students indicated receiving the Pell Grant (n=20,768), compared to 32% who received it nationally. These students often have substantially lower wealth and financial resources.

Unsurprisingly, a higher percentage of Pell Grant recipients (70%) reported facing food or housing insecurity or homelessness as compared to non-Pell Grant recipients (54%) (see Table 41 in the web appendices). However, it is important to note that even among non-Pell recipients, basic needs insecurity rates are quite high. Basic needs insecurity is not limited to those students who are typically labeled as "high need" by institutions. **Indeed, almost 70% of non-Pell Grant recipients reported at least one type of basic needs insecurity** when other types of essential needs beyond food and housing were considered (see Table 41 in the web appendices). This data suggests that institutions need to expand their views of which students are likely to be experiencing basic needs insecurities; the majority of "low need" students would benefit from basic needs supports.

Figure 13: Basic needs insecurity rates are higher for Pell grant recipients.



Policy Recommendation

Continue to Expand and Simplify Access to Pell Grants and Federal Financial Aid

Today, **the Pell Grant covers a lower percentage of college costs than any time since its inception in 1972**. In addition, many low-income students and those facing basic needs insecurity also face eligibility restrictions that can prevent them from receiving Pell Grants. To remedy this, Congress should continue to remove eligibility restrictions from financial aid programs by allowing students and families who receive means-tested benefits to automatically qualify for the maximum Pell Grant and make students who are undocumented, including Dreamers, eligible for federal financial aid. Congress should pass the *Pell Grant Preservation and Expansion Act* to substantially increase the maximum Pell Grant, allow students more time to use their federal aid, and reform inequitable Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policies that exacerbate basic needs insecurity and take away aid from students when they often need it the most.

Additionally, students who receive Pell Grants or any other grants or scholarships are taxed on the amount of that financial aid they apply toward necessities like food and housing—often triggering a surprise tax bill. Congress should pass the bipartisan *Tax-Free Pell Grant Act* to provide relief to working students with low and middle incomes and allow them to keep more of the aid they need to succeed in higher education.

"I recently separated from the father of my children and suffered emotional and mental abuse during the process and it affected my grades causing me to fail the term. My financial aid has been terminated and I am going to be kicked out of my apartment with my 3 kids because I no longer have that extra money I was counting on to help me pay for my rent. The college is taking their time reviewing my SAP appeal and I am afraid they will not work with me on the situation"

Student in California

Gender Identity and Sexuality

In this section, we examine basic needs as a function of gender and LGBTQIA+ status.[7] Although the experiences of gender and sexual minorities are regularly considered together in quantitative research, it is important to note that these concepts should not be conflated. Gender and gender identity are different from sexuality and sexual orientation.

Gender identity/gender is ***who you are:*** cis man, cis woman, non-binary, trans woman, trans man, etc.

Sexual orientation/sexuality is about ***whom you are attracted to*** (bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual, etc.), reflecting individuals' attraction to one or more genders, or not feeling sexual attraction at all.

"A large number of teachers are not adequately trained to manage classrooms with gender non-conforming people in them, and there are not enough gender-neutral bathrooms on college campuses, which is literally dangerous and affects the mental health of students like me."

Student in California

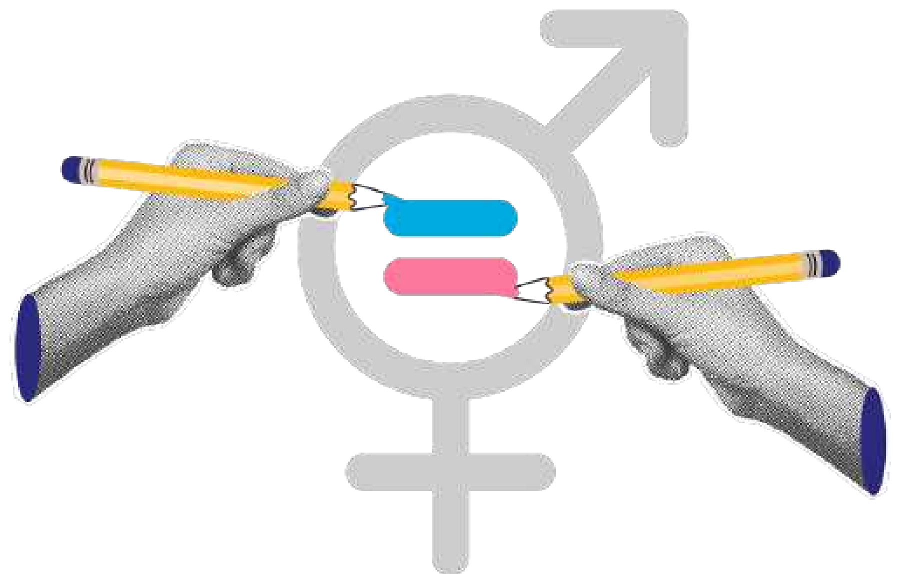
Gender Identity:

New policies at the federal and state levels have severely restricted the rights of trans people and reproductive health freedom, making this a crucial moment for addressing how student basic needs insecurity and gender identity intersect. In the current policy and political climate, researchers must contend with institutions and state entities that decide it is unsafe for students to report their gender identity, or for publicly-funded institutions to ask students about their gender identity. Higher education leaders are forced to balance student safety concerns and fear of legal repercussions against the harm of failing to ask these questions, which may be experienced by students as an erasure of their identities.

The Hope Center is unwilling to include only a binary measure of gender (e.g. exclusively man/woman) in our survey, but ultimately decided to accept the request of some of our partners in Texas to remove gender identity items entirely from their surveys. As such, results reported in this section exclude 701 students whose surveys did not include questions about gender identity.

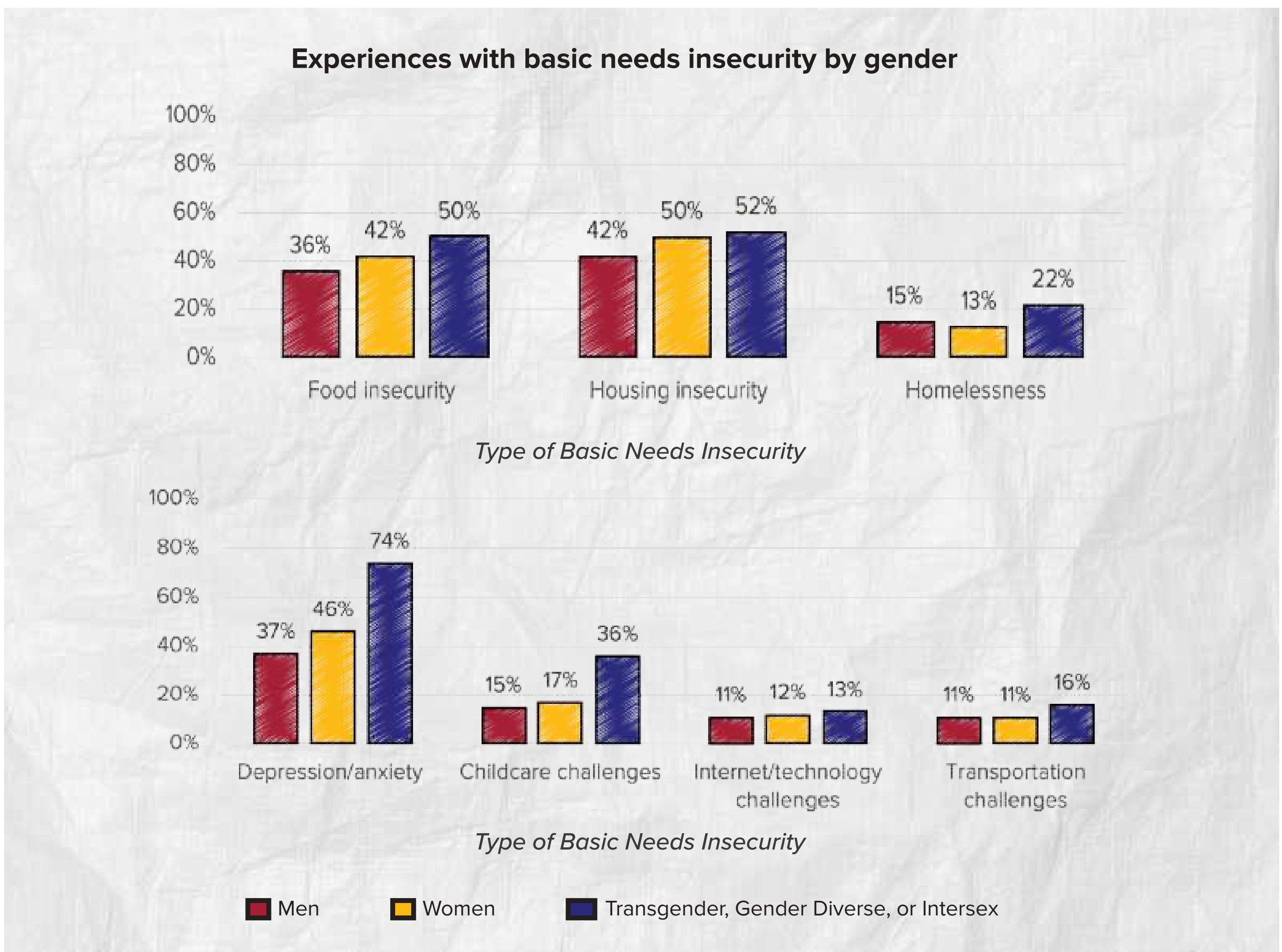
As is typical in survey studies, women are overrepresented in our sample, with more than twice the number of women (67%) responding to our survey than men (27%). Three percent of respondents were transgender, 3% were nonbinary or agender, 2% were gender non-conforming or genderqueer, and less than 1% were intersex, questioning, or another self-identified gender.

Due to the low numbers of survey respondents in some of these groups, we combined transgender, gender diverse (non-conforming, genderqueer, nonbinary, or agender), and intersex students into a single category. Although collectivizing student groups in this way does not allow us to examine the differences within the group, our sample size was not large enough to analyze their data separately. In addition, descriptively speaking, basic needs insecurity rates among these groups were very similar in our sample.



More women (61%) experienced basic needs insecurity related to food or housing than men (54%). Far more transgender, gender diverse, and intersex students experienced basic needs insecurity than cisgender students, with over two-thirds (67%) experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food or housing, and 89% experiencing at least one of the types of basic needs insecurity we measured. **Particularly troubling are the high rates of homelessness (nearly 1 in 4) and mental health challenges (nearly 3 in 4) among transgender, gender diverse, and intersex students.** Parenting students in this group were also twice as likely as their peers to report missing class due to issues with child care (see Figure 14 on the next page and Tables 43 and 44 in the web appendices).

Figure 14: Basic needs insecurity rates are higher for Pell grant recipients.



NOTE | The gender categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g., a student could be in both the Women category and the Transgender, Gender Diverse, or Intersex Students category). Making the categories mutually exclusive has a negligible effect on the estimates. See web appendices for details.

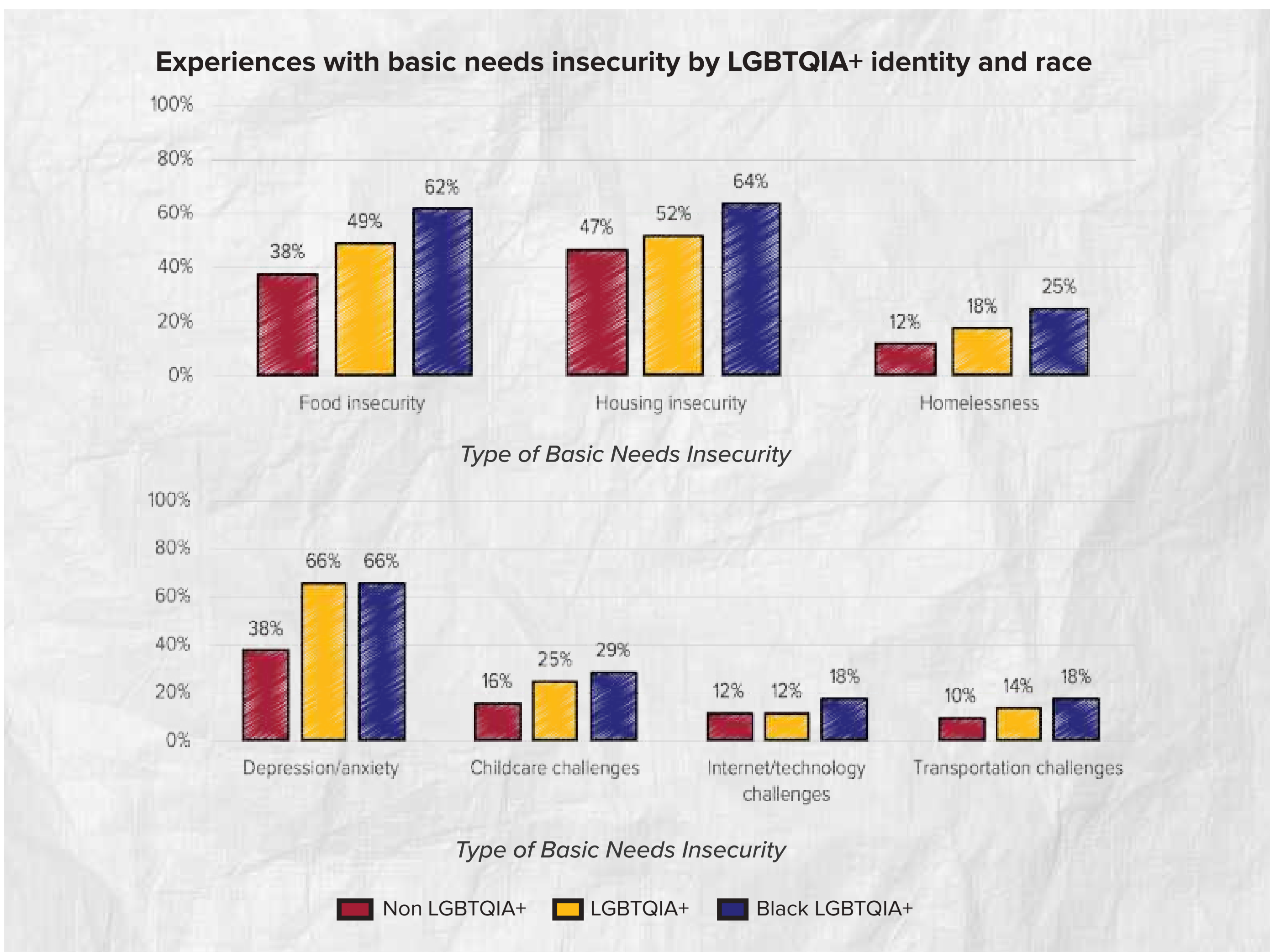
LGBTQIA+ Students:

The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey asks students to *self*-report whether they identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. All institutions included this question in their survey.

Among students who completed the question, 21% identified as LGBTQIA+ (*n*=10,246). **Compared to non-LGBTQIA+ respondents, more LGBTQIA+ students faced each form of basic needs insecurity (*ps* < .001), except for internet/technology issues** (see Figure 15 on the next page and Tables 45 and 46 in the web appendices).

Furthermore, **Black LGBTQIA+ students face basic needs insecurity at higher rates than their non-Black LGBTQIA+ peers** (all *ps* < .001 except for depression/anxiety and childcare issues; see Figure 15 on the next page and Tables 45 and 46 in the web apppendices). Particularly concerning were the high rates of homelessness (18% for LGBTQIA+ students overall, 25% for Black LGBTQIA+ students) and mental health challenges (66% for both LGBTQIA+ students overall and Black LGBTQIA+ students).

Figure 15: LGBTQIA+ students, and especially Black LGBTQIA+ students experience basic needs insecurity at higher rates.



Institutional Recommendations on Supporting Gender Equity in Student Basic Needs

Institutions of higher education can play a critical role in advancing gender equity by addressing the specific needs of women and gender-diverse individuals. While many colleges already provide vital resources—such as dedicated communities and scholarships—there are additional strategies that can bolster these efforts and ensure more comprehensive support. First and foremost, institutions should make efforts to protect students from discrimination through expanding nondiscrimination policies to include gender identity and expression.

Additionally, two especially impactful approaches are **expanding access to reproductive care** and **providing gender-affirming care for all students**.

1. Ensure Access to Reproductive Care

Students face more challenges than ever in obtaining safe and legal abortions—a necessity for reproductive care, and a basic need. When and where possible, colleges and universities should stand behind students' right to bodily autonomy through advocacy and practice.

Reproductive care, including access to affordable or free period products, is fundamental to supporting students' physical health and academic success. When students have reliable access to contraception, period products, reproductive care, and related resources, they are better equipped to focus on their studies. Innovative partnerships like the one between Swipe Out Hunger and The Organic Project (TOP) offer a roadmap. TOP provides campus pantry partners with discounted period products and guidance on becoming "Period Positive," ensuring menstrual health needs are met with dignity and respect. Oklahoma University's food pantry demonstrates another successful model. By collaborating with the campus Women's Health Advocacy Office, they distribute period product kits directly to students, addressing an essential need in an accessible way.

2. Provide Gender-Affirming Care and Resources

For gender-diverse students, inclusive and affirming resources are essential. Gender-affirming care typically refers to the medically necessary and evidence-based practices to help a person transition their gender but on a college campus it can also include mental health support, accessible facilities, the clothing in the free career closets, and policies that respect names and pronouns. By ensuring all students feel seen, supported, and included, institutions can help prevent suicide and create campuses where gender equity thrives.

Efforts like George Mason University's Trans Clothing Closet and Oklahoma University's **Queer Closet**, in partnership with the university's Gender and Equality Center, provide avenues for students to express themselves freely. This may make them feel more accepted and foster belonging. General basic needs supports and services are needed for gender diverse/LGBTQIA+ students as well, and some tailored approaches may be useful. For example, Ithaca College is trying to provide access to more inclusive trans and nonbinary housing through its Open Pages Residential Learning Community.

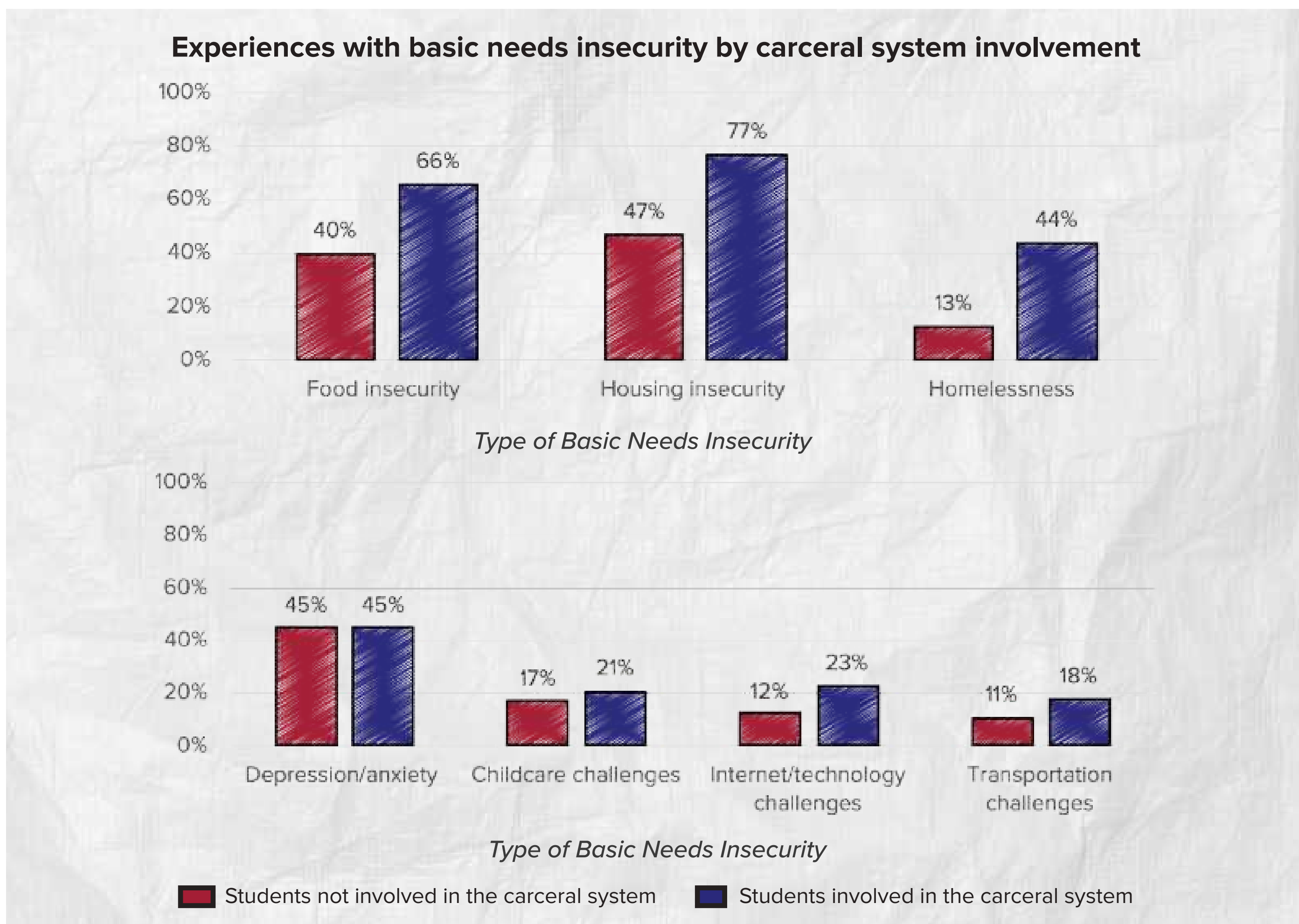
Trans students with supportive families and/or friends experience lower rates of basic needs insecurity. We can, and must, go beyond support alone and build supportive communities for these students on our campuses. By investing in reproductive and gender-affirming care, institutions can address critical gaps in student basic needs.

Students Who Have Been Involved in the Carceral System

Students who have been involved in the carceral system made up 2% (n=874) of students in our sample who responded to the question about incarceration history. The percentage of students in this group who reported experiencing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing is **much higher (86%) than students who have not been involved in the carceral system** (59%; see Tables 47 and 48 in the web appendices).

These students are especially prone to experiencing basic needs challenges because not only does having a criminal record prevent them from accessing scholarships, housing, and jobs, but the added stigma of being classified as a “felon” has lifelong repercussions on their mental health and feelings of acceptance. Students involved in the carceral system were significantly more likely ($ps < .001$) to experience all types of basic needs insecurity except for mental health challenges and childcare issues. Particularly troubling are the high rates of housing insecurity and homelessness: **over 3/4 of students involved in the carceral system experienced housing insecurity, and nearly half experienced homelessness** (see Tables 47 and 48 in the web appendices).

Figure 16: Students involved in the carceral system experience most types of basic needs insecurity at higher rates, especially housing insecurity and homelessness.



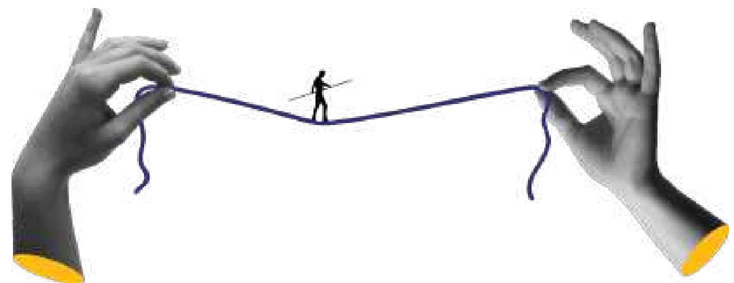
Ithaka S+R explored several institutional partnerships that connect students who have been involved in the carceral system to food, housing, mental health, and other support during reintegration. Programs that link access to higher education within the carceral system to on-campus supports when students go home seem particularly promising for addressing these students' unique challenges. Cal State LA's Prison Graduation Initiative is paired with Project Rebound to provide educational opportunities for students both during and after incarceration. Given that each student case is highly contextual, the most important step in supporting these students is ensuring good cross-departmental communication within the college and cross-organizational communication with other support networks to aid successful transition into college.

Former Foster Youth

In our sample, 3% (*n*=1,479) of students who responded to our question about foster system involvement reported they were former foster youths. For this group of students, a drastically higher percentage reported facing various basic need insecurities compared to students who are not former foster youths (all *p*s < .001; see Figure 17 on the next page, and Tables 49 and 50 in the web appendices).

For example, the percentage of former foster youths who reported facing basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing is 82%, as compared to 59% of students who are not former foster youths. Particularly troubling are the high rates of housing insecurity and homelessness: **nearly 3/4 of former foster youths experienced housing insecurity, and 1/3 experienced homelessness** (see Figure 17 on the next page and Tables 49 and 50 in the web appendices).

Maricopa Community Colleges support former foster youth through its Bridging Success program, which connects students who have experienced foster care to basic needs, academic resources, and campus champions who can help them navigate the college environment. Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride program provides success coaches and mentors for former foster youth and helps to connect them to campus and community supports. Connecting these students to resources that make the transition to college easier can alleviate the equity gaps in college access and completion between them and students who have direct familial support.



Few former foster youth earn a higher education credential. Only around 3% earn a bachelor's degree, and estimates put the number of former foster youth that attain an associate's degree around 2-6%. Because these students face a myriad of intersecting challenges, it is going to take a collaborative, systemic effort to ensure they are supported. To learn more about supporting former foster youth as they pursue higher education, check out our blog.

Figure 17: Students involved in the carceral system experience most types of basic needs insecurity at higher rates, especially housing insecurity and homelessness.

Experiences with basic needs insecurity by foster system involvement

Type of Basic Needs Insecurity	Students not involved in the foster system	Students involved in the foster system
Food insecurity	40%	65%
Housing insecurity	47%	72%
Homelessness	13%	33%

Type of Basic Needs Insecurity	Students not involved in the foster system	Students involved in the foster system
Depression/anxiety	44%	52%
Childcare challenges	17%	26%
Internet/technology challenges	11%	23%
Transportation challenges	11%	20%

Students with Disabilities

Note on the disability question: The question asking students if they had a disability was added in March 2023, after the survey had already been administered at some institutions. This was in response to the request from a student who had taken our survey to include a question on disability. Therefore, the total sample of students who responded to this disability question was much lower (N=21,712).

A total of 4,466 (21%) of students who completed questions about disability status reported that they had a disability. Overall, a higher percentage of students with disabilities than students without disabilities reported facing various insecurities (all *ps* < .001; see Figure 18 on the next page and Tables 51-53 in the web appendices). For instance, **69% of students with disabilities reported facing food insecurity, housing insecurity, and/or homelessness while 56% of students without disabilities reported facing such basic need insecurities**.

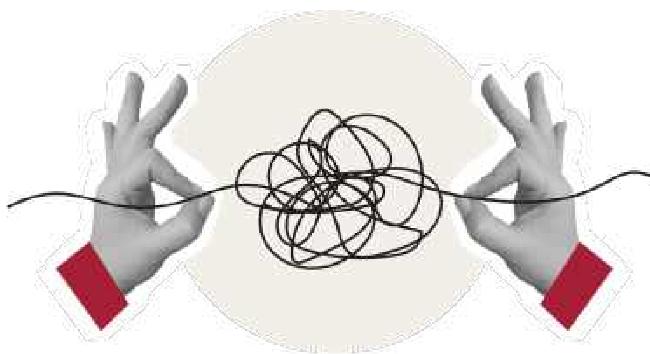
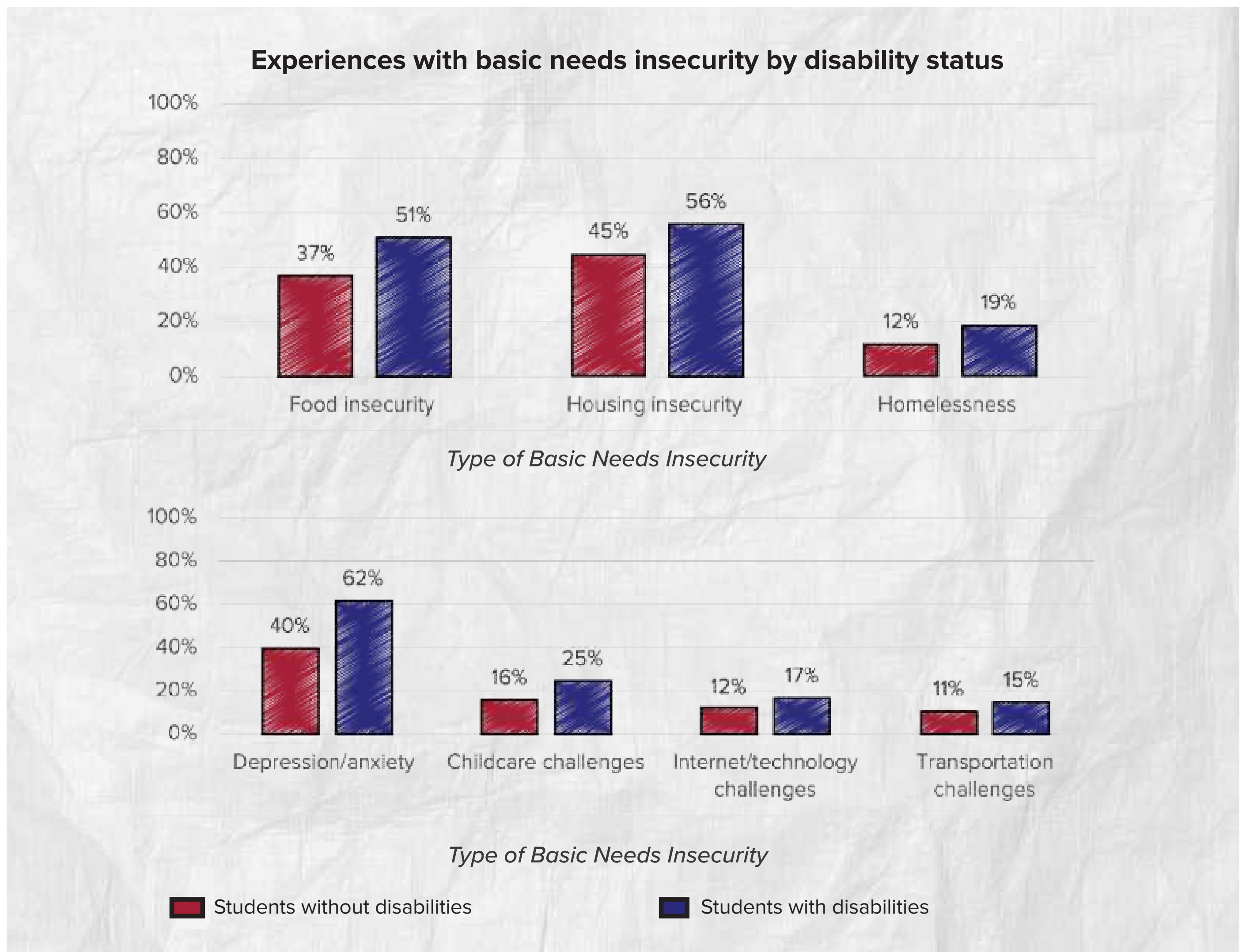


Figure 18: Students with disabilities experience basic needs insecurity at higher rates, especially mental health challenges.



Few programs directly designed to support the basic needs of students with disabilities exist—despite their experiencing basic needs insecurity at substantially higher rates. This is notable—and reprehensible—not only because of that disparity but also because students with disabilities may disproportionately experience the negative effects of challenges like poor nutrition. More support designed for these students is necessary, and the design of that support should start with what they report as particular basic needs challenges.

Conclusion

The persistence of basic needs insecurity among college students remains alarming. However, this crisis is not due to a lack of effort from institutions. Across the country, we are inspired by the innovative work, passion, and resilience of student basic needs practitioners and college and university leaders. Through our Hope Impact Partnerships, we see daily evidence that their efforts make a profound difference in students' lives.

Basic needs insecurity is not an uncontrollable phenomenon, like a storm rolling in without warning. It is a systemic issue—one we have the power to address through evidence-based policymaking, intentional institutional interventions, and unwavering student-centered supports. Improvements in physical/mental health, financial situation, caregiving or child care, transportation, or technology access were credited as facilitating re-enrollment by most (59%) of the students in our survey who had previously stopped out but later returned to college. These are tangible, solvable challenges.

Our findings show that many students are not receiving the supports they need, and a lack of awareness is often the first barrier. Structurally marginalized students bear the brunt of this crisis, facing the highest rates of basic needs insecurity. If we are serious about helping students enroll, persist, and graduate, **we cannot remain mere observers**.

In addition to specific examples of institutional practice and policy recommendations outlined throughout the report, we find three critical themes in support that works for students:

1. **Centralized, wraparound resources** are essential. Students' needs are interconnected, and comprehensive support systems are the most effective way to address them.
2. **Proactive communication** is key. Ongoing, tailored, and accessible outreach ensures students receive timely, relevant information to navigate resources.
3. **More data is urgently needed**, particularly about the effectiveness of resources designed to support structurally marginalized student populations.

To achieve meaningful change, we call on federal and state policymakers to:

- Reform public benefits programs to better address students' basic needs;
- Increase funding for public colleges and universities, especially community colleges and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs);
- Equitably design and implement financial aid programs; and
- Expand programs and grants that support and evaluate comprehensive basic needs interventions.

Beyond the steps that institutions and policymakers can each take, coordinated efforts have great potential to facilitate transformational change. We are particularly inspired by the steps that several states, including California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania, have taken to improve students' basic needs security at a more systemic level. This includes efforts to standardize the collection of student basic needs data, educate faculty and staff about students' needs and available resources, and increase student awareness and utilization of existing resources. These states have also pursued key legislative, state agency, and institutional reforms to eliminate common barriers that students face in obtaining support while also expanding the network of resources available to them.

A future where no student is held back by basic needs insecurity is not just aspirational—it is achievable. Together, with bold action and sustained commitment, we can turn this vision into reality.

"Being a college student can be challenging at times between balancing school, work, and general life activities and/or stressors but taking charge of your education and career path in life is both liberating and inspiring."

Student in California

Endnotes

[1] An additional 69 schools participated in programming through HIP during this time period but did not field the Student Basic Needs Survey.

[2] We use the phrase "basic needs insecurity related to food and/or housing" to describe the experiences of students who report at least one of the following: food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness.

[3] Of the 173 partner institutions, 104 fielded the survey between January 2023-July 2024. Thirteen schools (4250 respondents) were excluded because the school did not reach the minimum response rate threshold of 5%, resulting a sample of 91 institutions. See web appendices for methodological details and a full description of the sample characteristics.

[4] Signs of housing insecurity assessed in The Hope Center Student Basic Needs Survey include not being able to pay their full rent/mortgage or utility bills, receiving a summons to appear in housing court, having accounts default or go into collections, moving in with other people because of financial problems, living with others beyond the capacity of the house or apartment, leaving an unsafe household, moving 3 or more times, or experiencing an unaffordable rent or mortgage increase (see web appendices).

[5] We asked students, “In the past 12 months, from which of the following programs did you receive assistance?” Students could select all categories that applied to them, including food resources (SNAP and/or WIC), direct financial resources (TANF, SSI, SSDI, unemployment, and/or tax refunds), healthcare resources (Medicaid or public health insurance and/or health services from an income-based organization or community health center), transportation resources, community resources (from a local nonprofit/nongovernmental agency), veterans benefits (GI Bill education benefits, disability compensation, or VA health care), housing or utility resources (LIHEAP, utility assistance, housing assistance, and/or services or support from a housing community-based organization or nonprofit including emergency shelters or domestic violence shelters).

[6] We asked students about the following campus supports: (a) emergency grant, (b) campus food pantry, (c) help obtaining food stamps/SNAP, (d) help applying for other public supports, such as unemployment benefits, WIC, TANF, etc., (e) food scholarships, meal vouchers, or another source of free food, (f) emergency housing, (g) help finding affordable housing, (h) transportation resources, such as a bus pass, (i) a campus health clinic and/or counseling, (j) loaned or free Wi-Fi hotspot or laptop.

[7] By LGBTQIA, we mean individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, agender, and asexual. We add the + to signify inclusion of the full diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations, which cannot be described by this (or any) combination of letters.

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