

Nearly 1 in 3 California adolescents has serious psychological distress

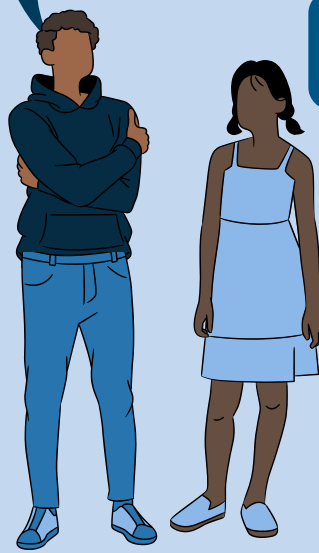
A new policy brief looks at adolescents ages 12–17 who are most vulnerable to serious psychological distress (SPD), an indicator of needing mental health treatment. Main study findings, based on 2019 data, are shown below.



Nearly **1 in 3** adolescents reported having SPD in the past year.

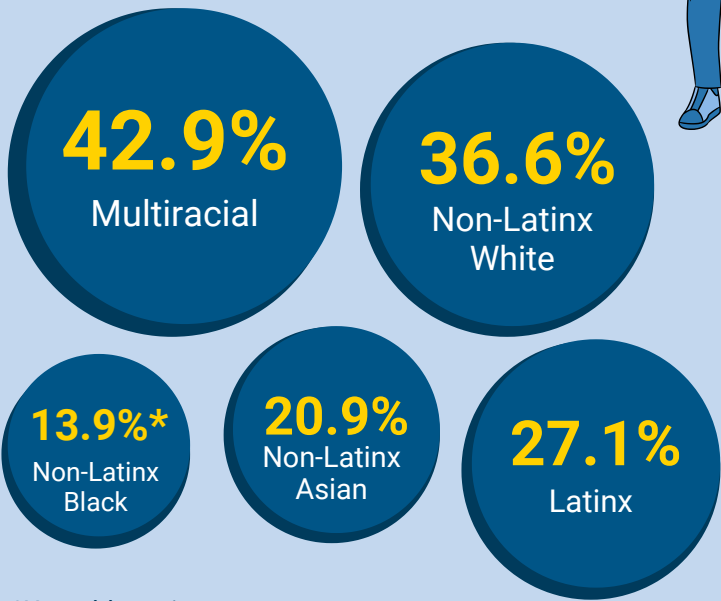
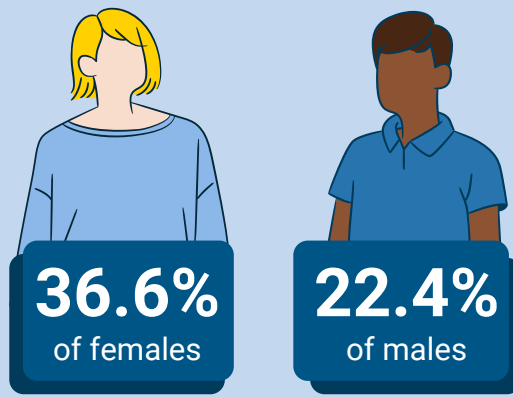
Older adolescents, ages 15–17, were 1.5 times more likely to report SPD (35.9%)...

... than younger adolescents, ages 12–14 (22.9%).



Females were **1.5 times** more likely to report SPD than males.

2 out of 5 multiracial adolescents reported SPD.



*Unstable estimate

Rates of SPD among adolescents, by various measures

Amount of time spent on social media

39.1%
Almost constantly

VS.

18.7%
Only a few times a day



Ate less than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day

Yes: **32.2%**
No: **21.2%**



Ever tried marijuana or hashish

Yes: **47.6%**
No: **26%**



Engaged in binge drinking

Yes: **41.3%**
No: **28.3%**



Among adolescents who identify as gender-nonconforming,



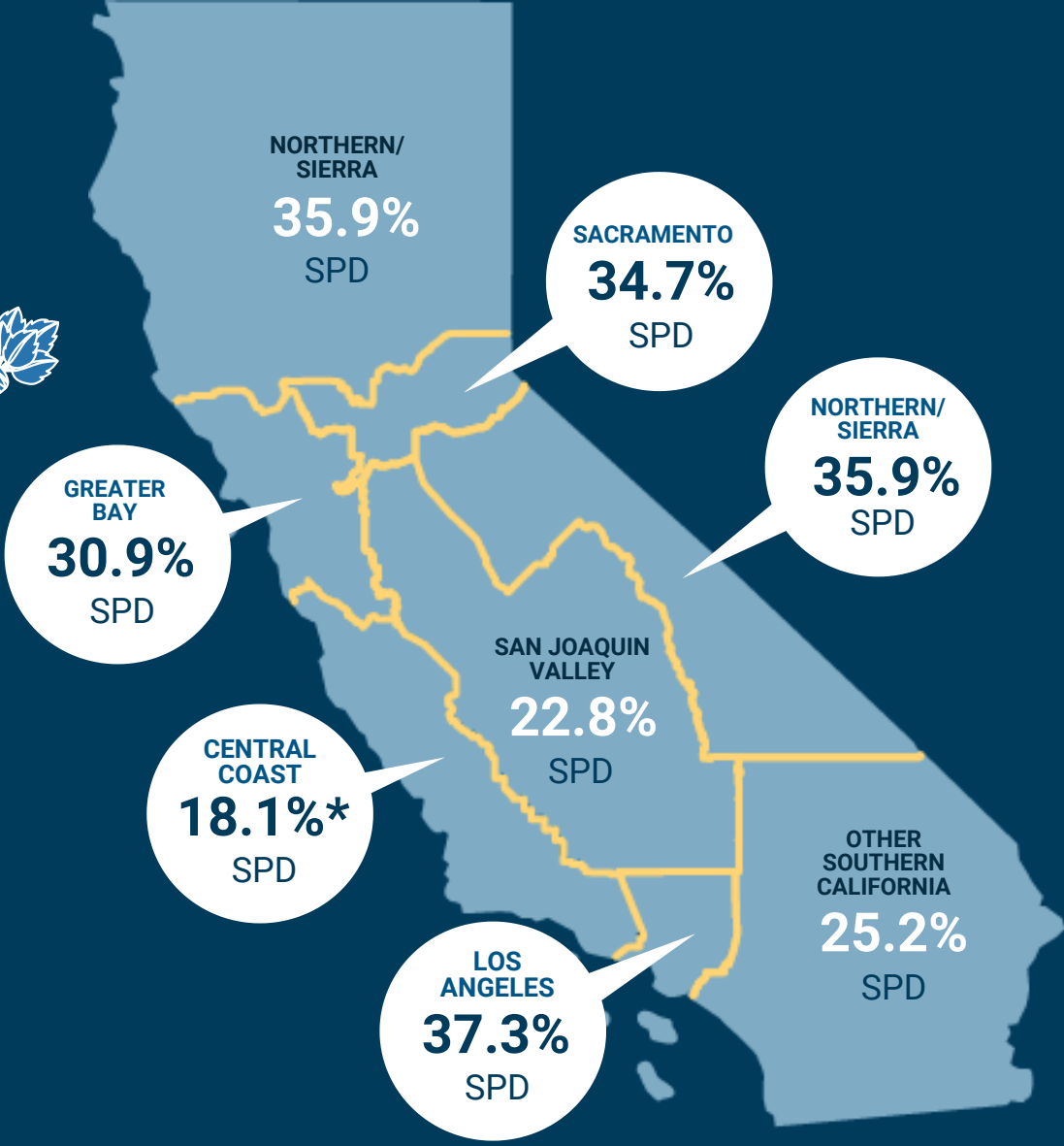
nearly **2 out of 5** reported SPD.

SPD among adolescents, by federal poverty level (FPL)



30.6% 0%–99% FPL	37.5% 200%–299% FPL
22.9% 100%–199% FPL	29.9% 300% FPL and above

Proportion of adolescents who reported SPD, by region



*Unstable estimate

NOTE: Northern/Sierra region includes two areas separated by the Sacramento region

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