

NAMI 988 CRISIS RESPONSE RESEARCH

November 2021

GAME CHANGERS



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METHODOLOGY

This Ipsos poll was conducted October 22-25, 2021, on behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), using the KnowledgePanel®. This poll is based on a representative sample of 2,049 U.S. residents, age 18 or older. The study was conducted in English. The data were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race/ethnicity, education, Census region, metropolitan status, household income and race/ethnicity. The demographic benchmarks came from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) except for the metropolitan status, which is not available from the 1-year ACS data, were obtained from the 2020 March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS).

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59, and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other or 2+ Races NonHispanic, Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West) by Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)

The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, for results based on the entire sample of adults. The margin of error takes into account the design effect, which was 1.16 for all adults. In our reporting of the findings, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given table column may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. In questions that permit multiple responses, columns may total substantially more than 100%, depending on the number of different responses offered by each respondent.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Americans are not happy with the current state of the mental healthcare system in the United States. Many say there is significant room for improvement for mental health and suicide crisis emergency response at the national and local level.

- Three quarters of Americans (75%) say they are not content with the state of mental health treatment in this country. This is particularly true if they have been diagnosed with a mental health condition (84%).
- Discontent reaches across the political aisle, although Democrats (79%) and independents (76%) are more likely to be discontent than Republicans (68%).
- Fifty-four percent of Americans say there is significant room for improvement in addressing mental health and suicide crises, which is far lower than other medical emergency responses - where only 26% of Americans report significant improvement is needed at the macro level. Democrats (64%) and independents (56%) are far more likely than Republicans (42%) to feel significant improvement of mental health emergency responses is needed.
- At the local level, 44% of Americans say that significant improvement is needed in their local area or state, which is on par with the level of concern for violent crime emergency responses (44%), which Americans report as a top priority issue. Just 22% say other medical emergency responses need significant improvement at the local level.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Though concerned about their own mental well-being (and even more so about their loved ones), Americans lack awareness about the mental healthcare system in this country. At this point, practically no one has heard of the 988-emergency number.

- One in three (31%) say they think about a loved one's mental well-being often, and 40% say they think about it sometimes. This compares to 25% who say they think about their own mental well-being often, and 35% who think about it sometimes. Black and Hispanic Americans (32% each) are more likely than white Americans to say they think about their mental well-being often (22%). All racial and ethnic groups think about their loved ones in equal proportions.
- Four in five Americans say that when someone is having a mental health or suicide crisis, mental health professionals should be the first responders. Despite current practice, just 19% say they want police to respond.
- Eighty percent say a mental health or psychiatric facility would be their first choice for help if they or a loved one was considering suicide or self harm, while just 1% say they should be taken into police custody or into jail.
- Americans are almost completely unaware of the 988-emergency number. Just 1% say they are very familiar with it, and 80% report they have never heard of it.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Americans are almost completely unaware of the 988-emergency number. Just 1% say they are very familiar with, and 80% report they have never heard of it.

- Education and awareness of the 988-emergency number is needed before it's roll out in July 2022.

Additionally, many Americans are willing to fund the 988-emergency number.

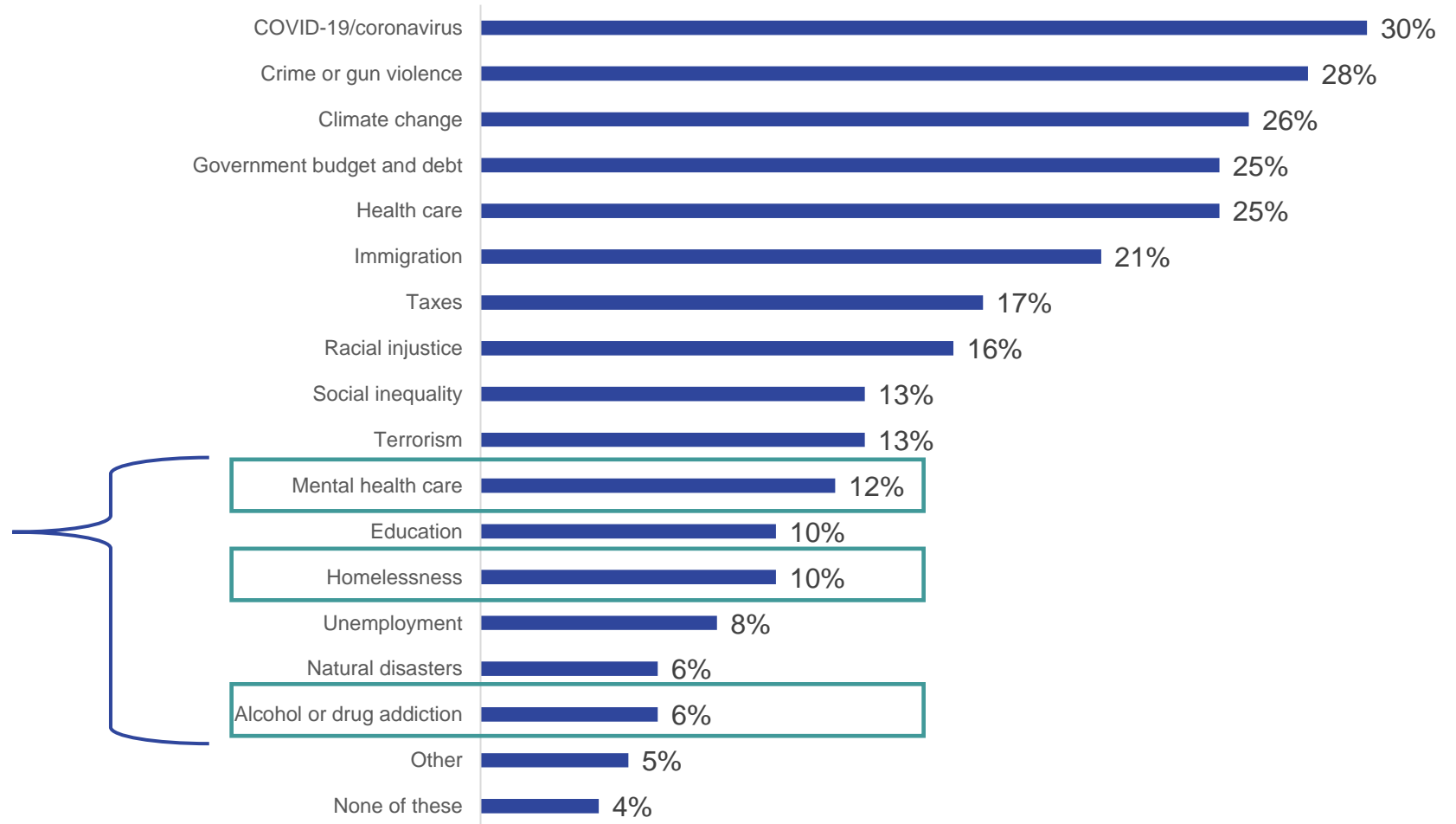
- About three in five indicate they are supportive of monthly feed/service charges to phone bills, but willingness to pay increases to 78% when given specific dollar amounts and explaining that 911 emergency service call centers are also funded as fees on monthly phone bills.
- The 20% who report they are unwilling to pay a fee report in verbatim responses that they do not object to funding the 988 emergency service call centers in principle but feel the funding should come from other areas of the government's budget as they indicate they already pay enough money in taxes.

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS

Which three of the following issues do you find most worrying?

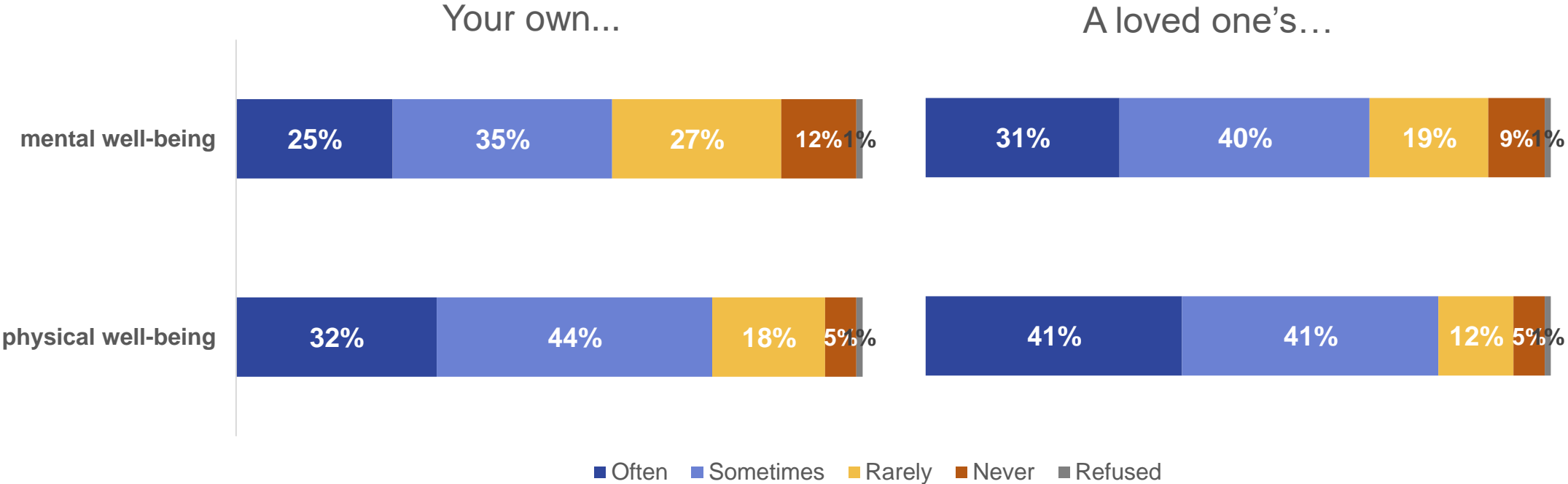
25%

Say issues related to the complexities of mental health are top of mind concerns.



Q. Which three of the following issues do you find most worrying? Select up to three. Base: Total (n=2,049)

Americans are thinking about the mental well-being of themselves and their loved ones, but less often than their physical well-being. One in three think about their loved one's mental well-being often.



Q. In general, how often, if at all, would you say you think about.... Base: Total (n=2,049)



60%

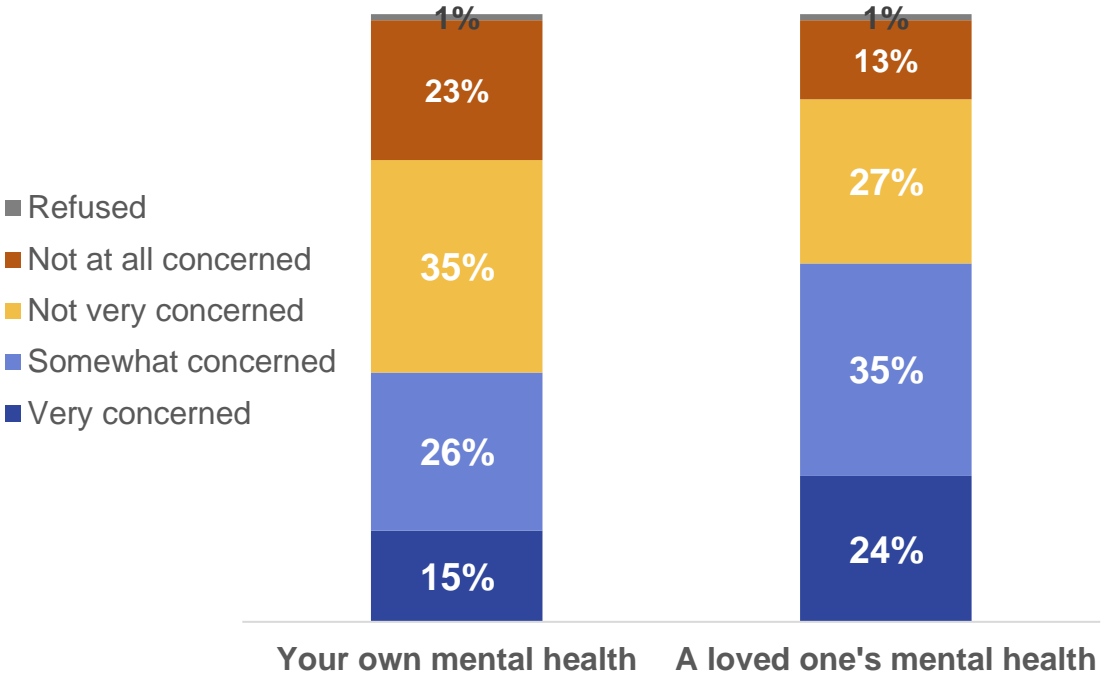
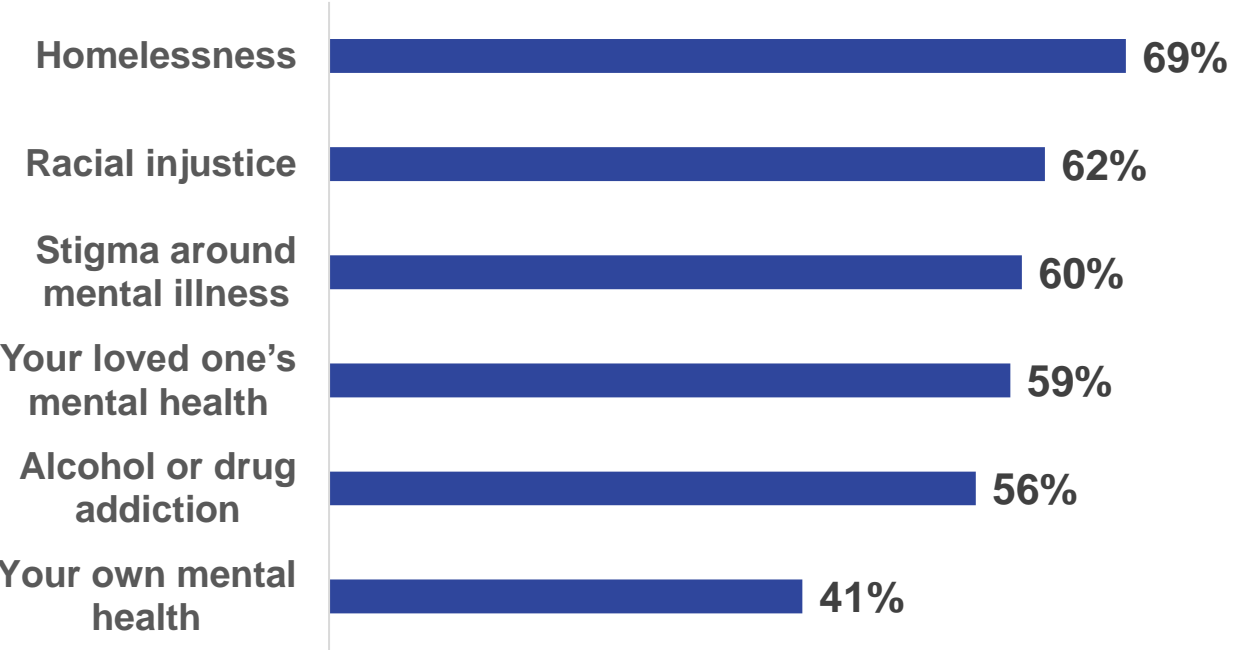
**Are concerned
with the
stigma around
mental illness.**



Americans are concerned about the stigma of mental illness, the mental health of a loved one, and alcohol and drug addiction.

How concerned are you, if at all, about the following issues?

% somewhat + very concerned

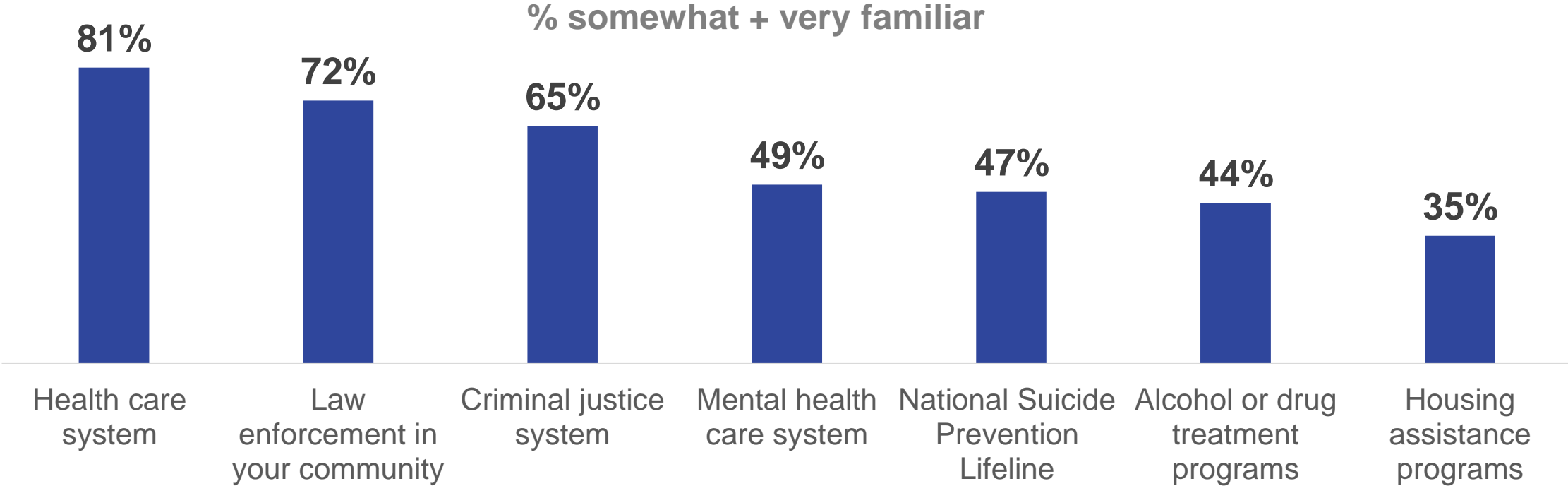


Q. How concerned are you, if at all, about the following issues? Base: Total (n=2,049)



A majority of Americans are not well-versed in the mental health care system, and just 47% consider themselves aware of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

How familiar are you with the following in the United States?



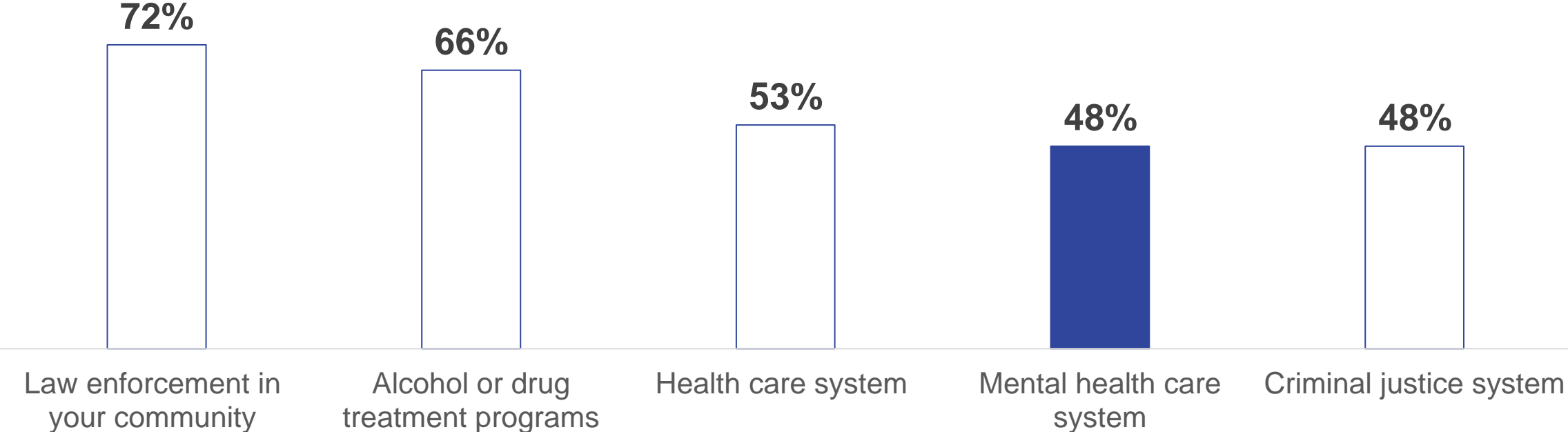
Q. How familiar are you with the following in the United States? Base: Total (n=2,049)



Fewer than half of Americans view the mental health care system favorably. Many view local law enforcement positively.

Consider the current state of the following in the United States. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of the following?

% somewhat + very favorable

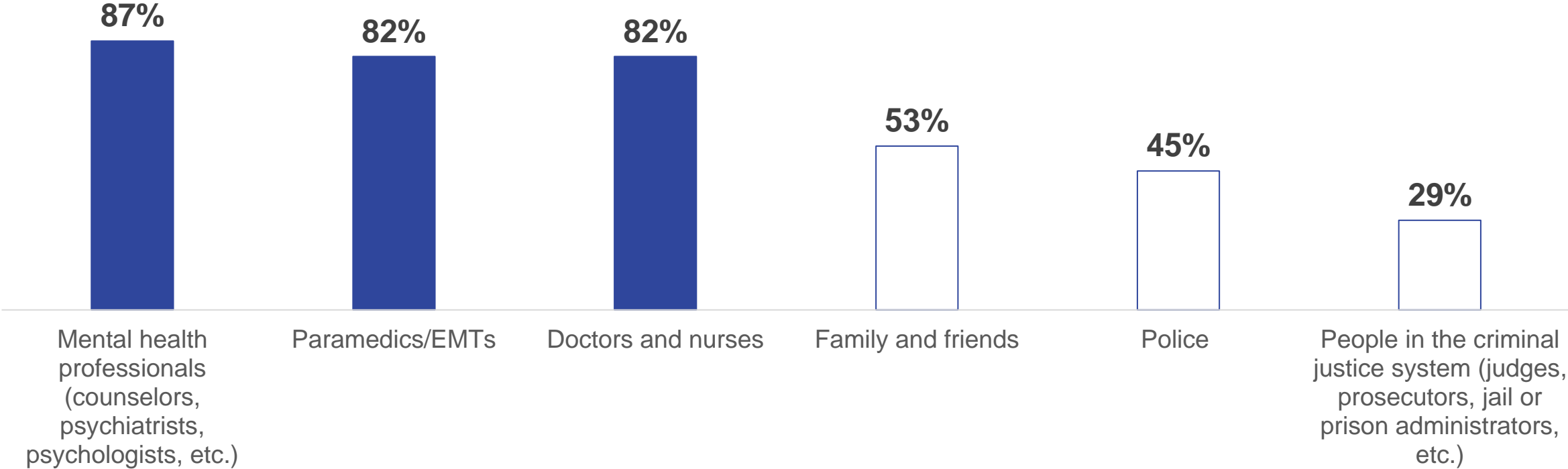


Q. Consider the current state of the following in the United States. Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of the following? Base: Those very familiar, somewhat familiar, not very familiar with each system: Mental health care system n=1,863; Health care system n=1,958; Criminal justice system n=1,934; Alcohol or drug treatment programs n=1,771; Law enforcement in your community (n=1,957)



CRISIS RESPONSE IN AMERICA

While 7 in 10 Americans view law enforcement in their community favorably, they believe other professionals respond better to mental health, drug/alcohol and suicide crises.



Q. How well, if at all, do you think the following groups typically handle responding to mental health, alcohol/drug, or suicide crises? Total (n=2,049)





76%

Believe that improvement is needed in emergency responses to a mental health or suicide crisis nationally.

46%

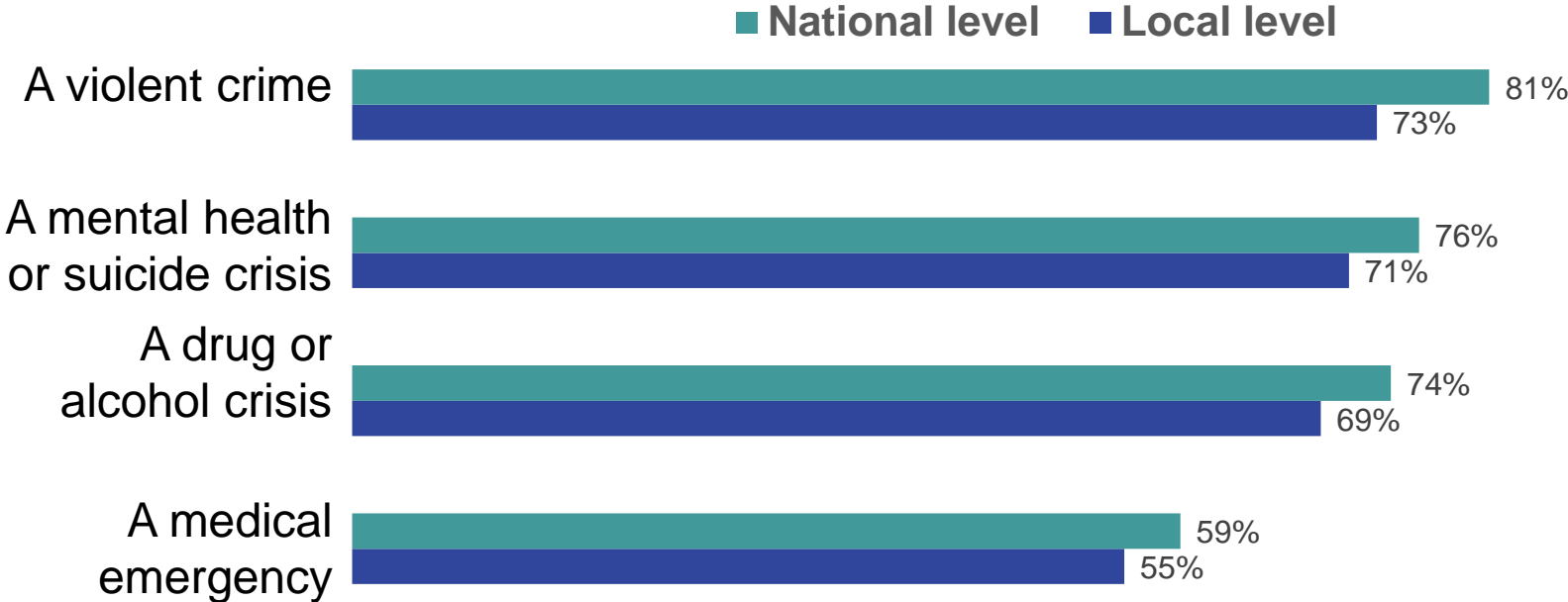
Would not feel safe calling 911 for help if their loved one were experiencing a mental health or suicide crisis.

Americans agree that emergency responses to mental health and suicide crises need improvement.

60%

living in urban areas report that **significant** improvement is needed to respond to mental health and suicide crises at the national level

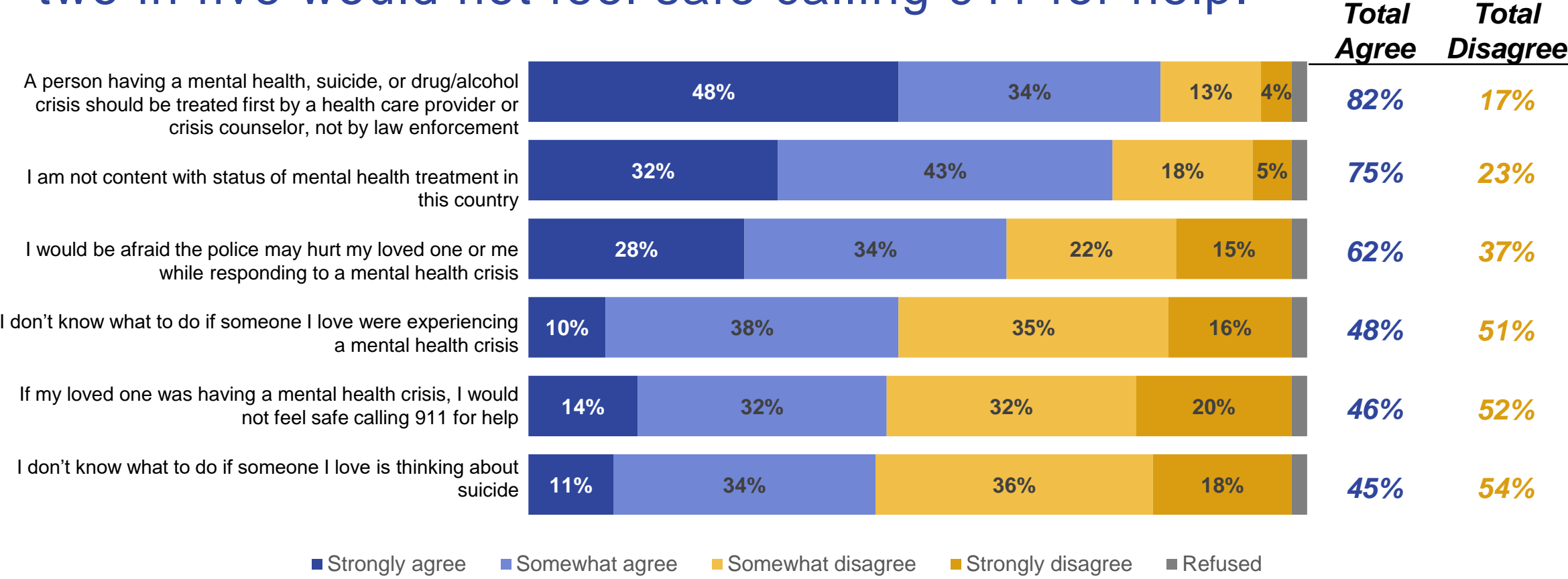
% significant + slight improvement is needed



Q. Consider the following emergency situations. How much improvement, if any, is needed in your state/in your area when it comes to the following emergency responses? Total (n=2,049)
Q. Consider the following emergency situations. How much improvement, if any, is needed at the national level when it comes to the following emergency responses? Total (n=2,049)



Many are unaware of what to do in the event of a mental health or suicide crisis. Many are not content with the status quo, and two in five would not feel safe calling 911 for help.



Q. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Base: Total (n=2,049)



Racial/Ethnic minorities and those with a mental health condition are more likely to agree that they would not feel safe or may feel afraid calling current emergency services (911 or the police) if a loved one needed help during a mental health crisis. Republicans are less likely to agree on nearly all statements.

	Total Agree	Republican	Democrat	Independent	White	Black	Other	Hispanic	Those with mental health condition
A person having a mental health, suicide, or drug/alcohol crisis should be treated first by a health care provider or crisis counselor, not by law enforcement	82%	74%	90%	81%	81%	79%	90%	82%	86%
I am not content with status of mental health treatment in this country	75%	68%	79%	76%	77%	68%	74%	72%	84%
I would be afraid the police may hurt my loved one or me while responding to a mental health crisis	62%	45%	76%	61%	55%	74%	78%	72%	72%
I don't know what to do if someone I love were experiencing a mental health crisis	48%	53%	48%	53%	45%	50%	57%	54%	62%
If my loved one was having a mental health crisis, I would not feel safe calling 911 for help	46%	31%	58%	45%	42%	53%	55%	53%	58%
I don't know what to do if someone I love is thinking about suicide	45%	45%	48%	42%	43%	45%	62%	47%	37%

Q. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Base: Total (n=2,049) Shading indicates statistically significant differences



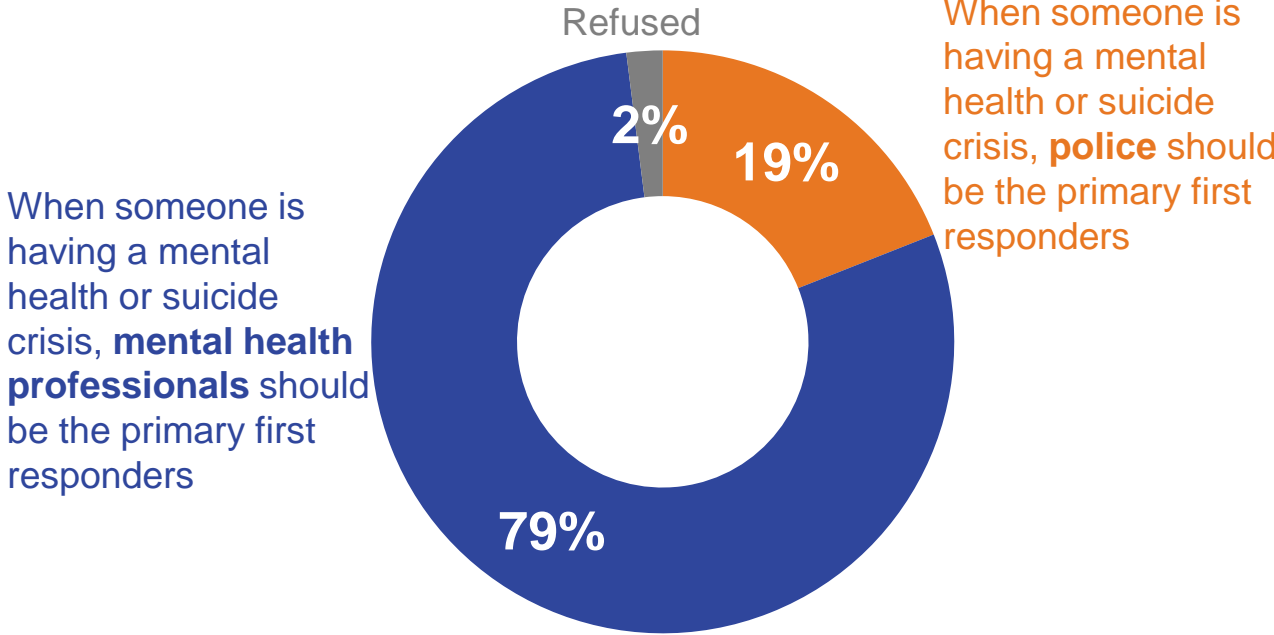
4 in 5

Believe mental health professionals should be the primary first responders for a mental health or suicide crisis.



Four in five Americans, especially Democrats, women, racial minorities, and those with a mental health condition, want mental health professionals to be the primary first responder to a mental health or suicide crisis.

Which statement comes closest to your opinion, even if neither is exactly right?



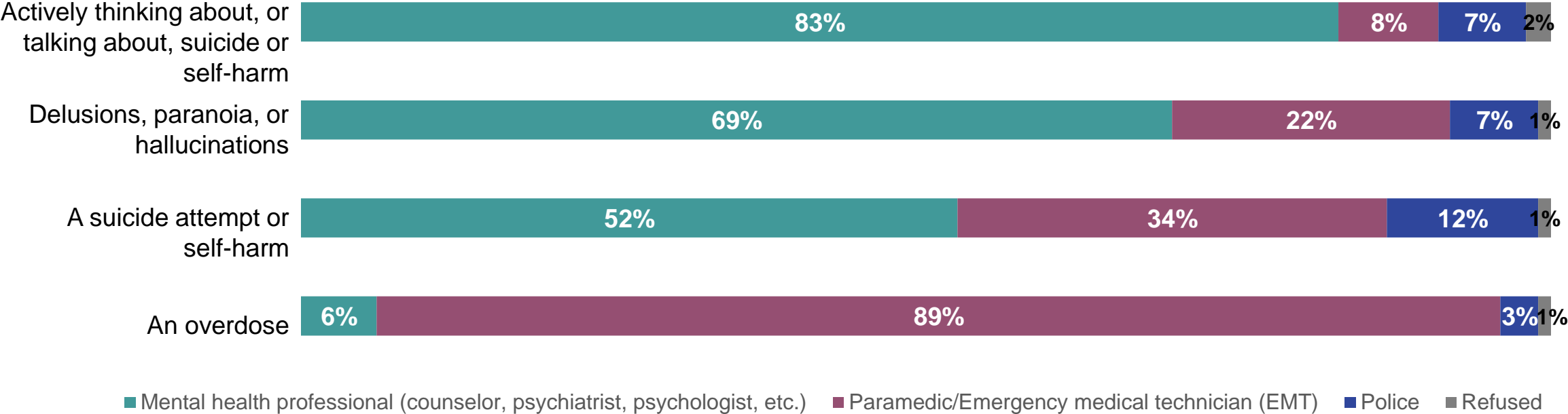
	<i>Mental health professionals</i>	<i>Police</i>
General Population	79%	19%
Republican	68%	31%
Democrat	88%	10%
Men	74%	23%
Women	84%	15%
White	79%	20%
Black	83%	13%
Other	90%	10%
Hispanic	75%	22%
Those with mental health condition	84%	15%

Q. Which statement comes closest to your opinion, even if neither is exactly right? Total (n=2,049) Shading indicates statistically significant differences



Given the choice, Americans overwhelmingly want mental health professionals to be the first responder in a mental health or suicide crisis.

Preferred First Responder

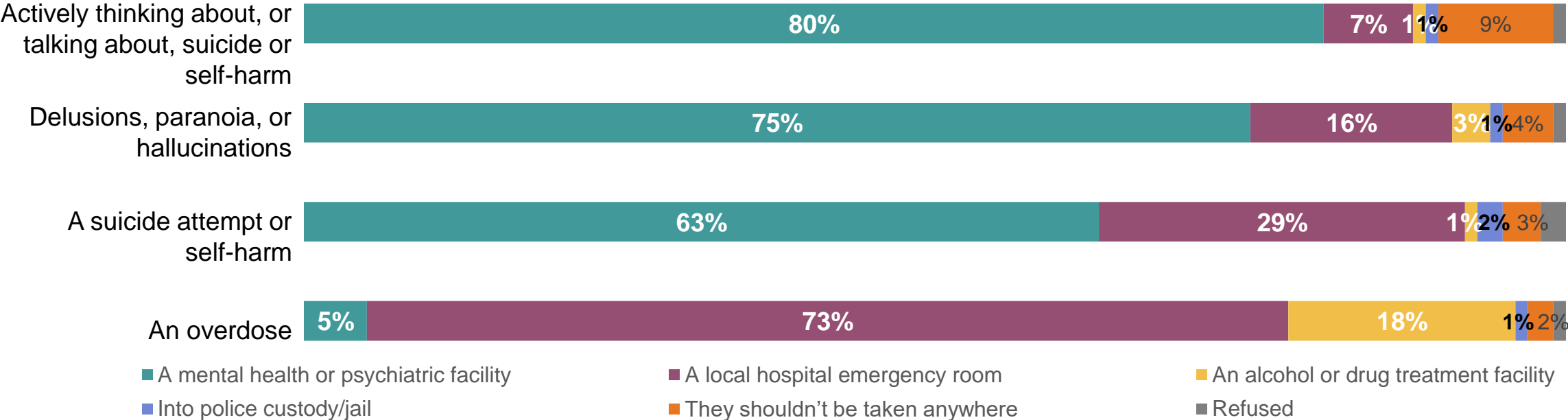


Q. Consider the following situations, which type of first responder would you want to show up if you or a loved one was experiencing any of the following? Base: Total (n=2,049)



Despite current practices, Americans do not believe those having a mental health crisis should be taken to jail or into police custody for help.

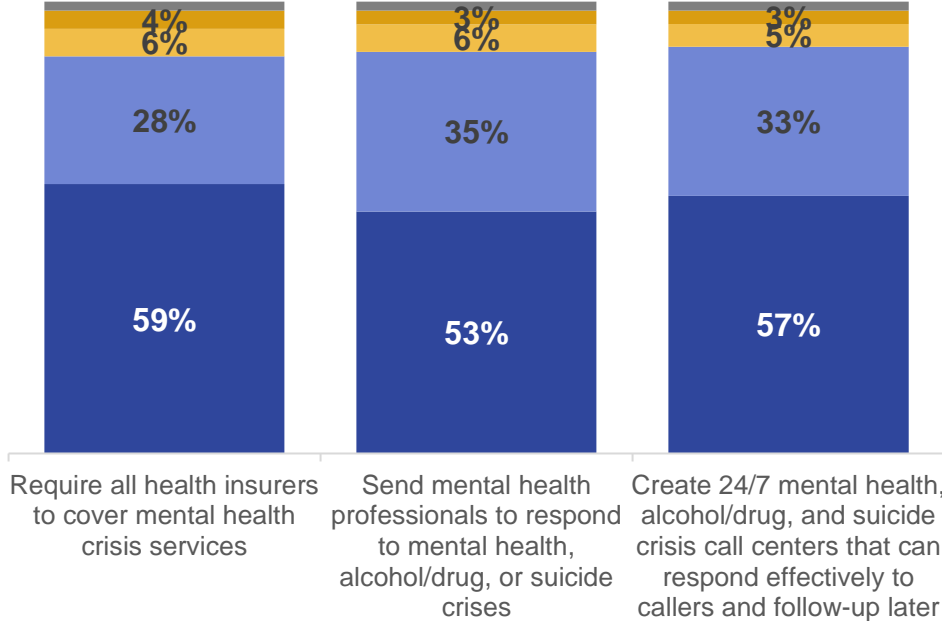
Preferred Treatment Location



Q. Now consider the same situations, if you or a loved one were experiencing any of the following, what would be your first choice for where you/they should be taken for help, if anywhere? Base: Total (n=2,049)



Strong majorities - especially women, Democrats, and those with a mental health conditions - are supportive of the solutions proposed by NAMI to help address problems with the emergency response system for mental health crises.



% Total Support

	General Population	Men	Women	Republican	Democrat	Independent	White	Black	Hispanic	Those with mental health condition
Create 24/7 mental health, alcohol/drug, and suicide crisis call centers that can respond effectively to callers and follow-up later	90%	88%	92%	87%	93%	91%	91%	83%	91%	91%
Send mental health professionals to respond to mental health, alcohol/drug, or suicide crises	88%	85%	91%	82%	93%	90%	88%	87%	88%	91%
Require all health insurers to cover mental health crisis services	87%	84%	90%	82%	92%	88%	88%	84%	87%	90%

■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Refused

Q. Taking into account everything you know about mental health, alcohol/drug problems, and suicide crises, would you support or oppose policies that... Base: Total (n=2,049). Shading indicates statistically significant differences



Many believe that mental health care services should be available to those following a crisis, regardless of their ability to pay.

What type of follow up care, if any, do you think should be provided regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay?



Q. Following an emergency intervention for someone having a mental health, alcohol/drug, or suicide crisis, what type of follow up care, if any, do you think should be provided regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay? Select all that apply.
Total (n=2,049)



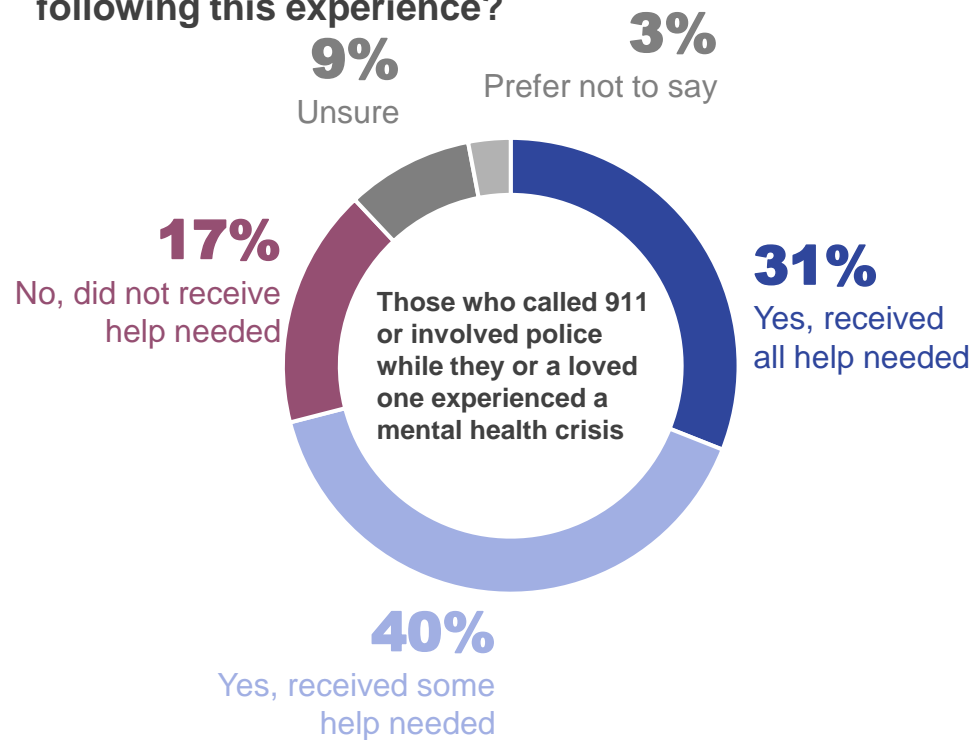


Just 31%

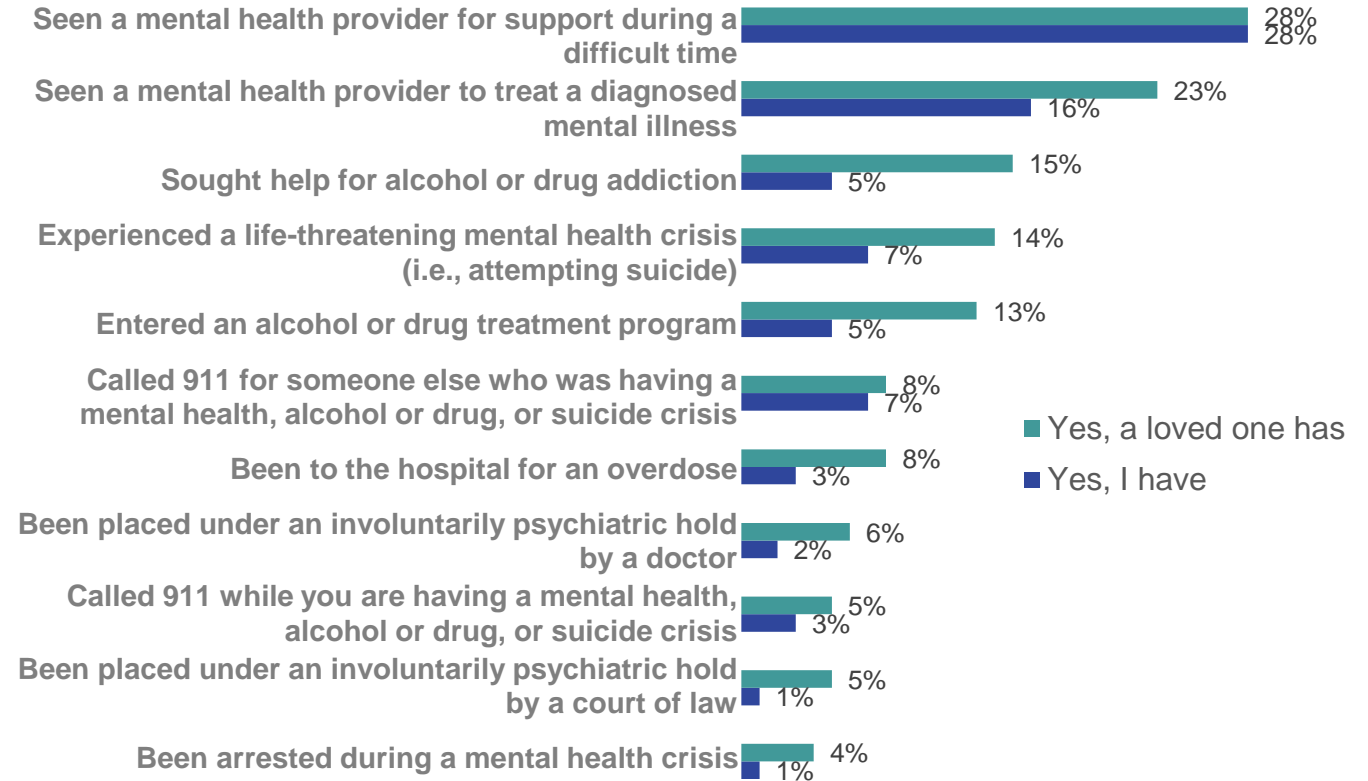
Of those who called 911 or had police involved in the emergency response to a mental health or suicide crisis say that they or a loved one got all of the help they needed following the event.

Three in five who have had a mental health emergency involving the police or 911 did not receive all of the help they needed.

You mentioned that you or a loved one had a mental health, alcohol/drug, or suicide crisis that involved 911 or the police. Did you or your loved one receive the help needed following this experience?



Have you or a loved one ever done or experienced the following?



Q. Have you or a loved one ever done or experienced the following? Total (n=2,049)

Q. You mentioned that you or a loved one had a mental health, alcohol/drug, or suicide crisis that involved 911 or the police. Did you or your loved one receive the help needed following this experience? If there was more than one experience, please think of the most recent experience. Base: those who called 911 or involved police while they or loved one experienced a mental health crisis (n=361)

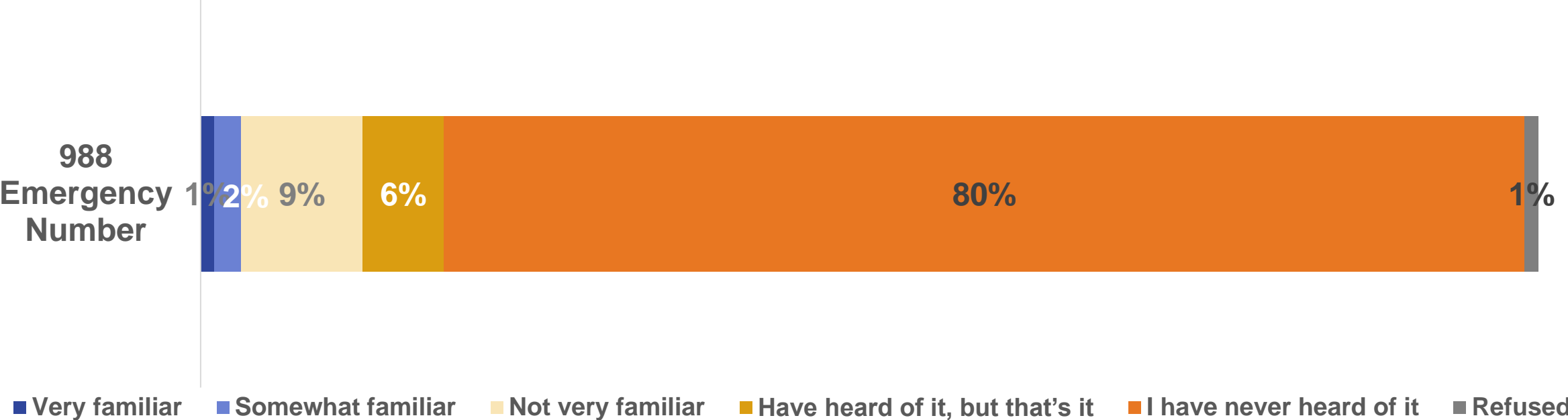
988 AWARENESS

Just 4%

are familiar with the
988-emergency
number.

Most have never heard of the 988-emergency number as a solution to mental health and suicide crises, including those who have a mental health condition.

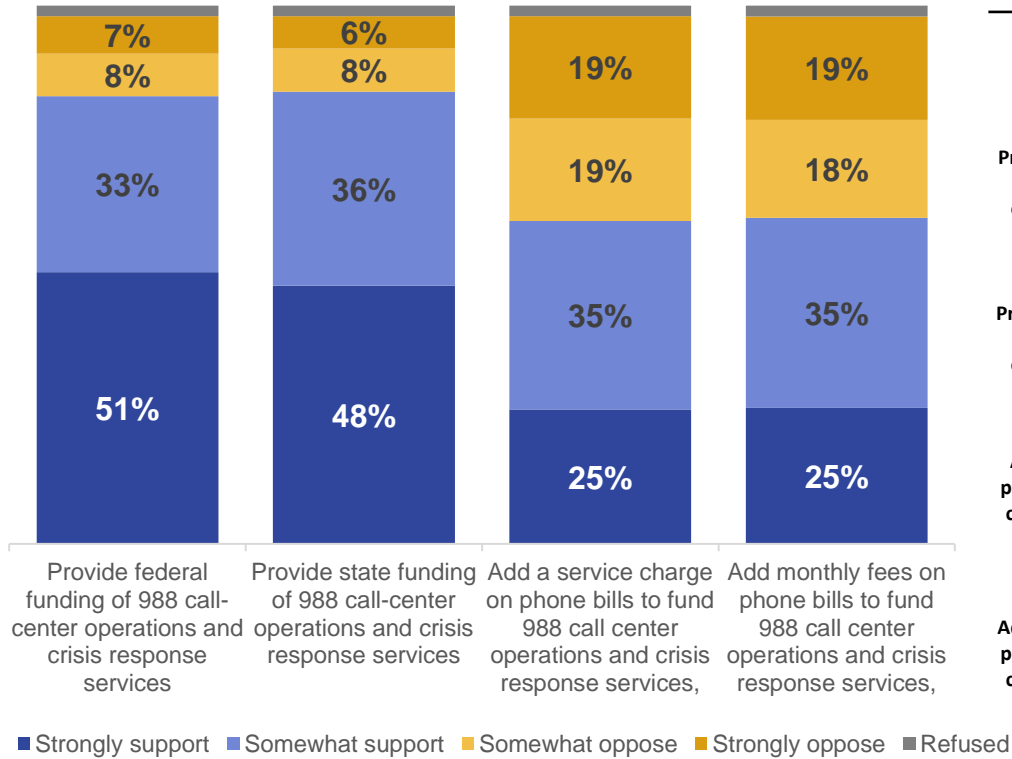
How familiar are you with the 988 emergency number?



Q. How familiar are you with the 988 emergency number? Base: Total (n=2,049)



Many are supportive of funding for 988 call centers and related crisis response services, especially women, Democrats and those with a mental health condition. A majority are supportive of adding fees/charges to phone bills, but support drops compared to less specific language.



	% Total Support									
	General Population	Men	Women	Republican	Democrat	Independent	White	Black	Hispanic	Those with mental health condition
Provide federal funding of 988 call-center operations and crisis response services	84%	80%	87%	75%	91%	85%	84%	81%	85%	90%
Provide state funding of 988 call-center operations and crisis response services	84%	81%	89%	76%	92%	86%	85%	84%	82%	91%
Add monthly fees on phone bills to fund 988 call center operations and crisis response services,	61%	57%	64%	48%	71%	62%	61%	57%	60%	69%
Add a service charge on phone bills to fund 988 call center operations and crisis response services,	60%	59%	62%	50%	70%	58%	61%	62%	58%	64%

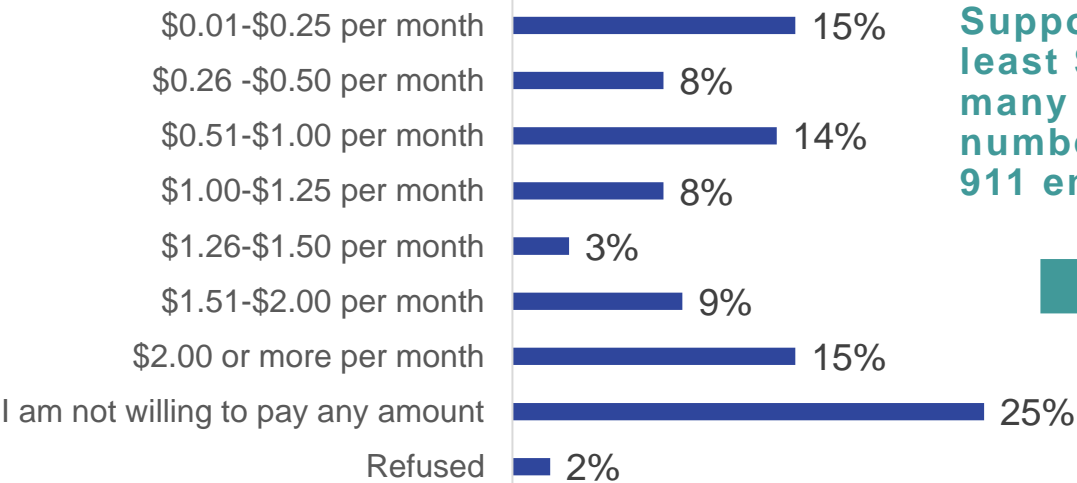
Q. Taking into account everything you know about mental health, alcohol/drug problems, and suicide crises, would you support or oppose policies that... Base: Total (n=2,049). Shading indicates statistically significant differences



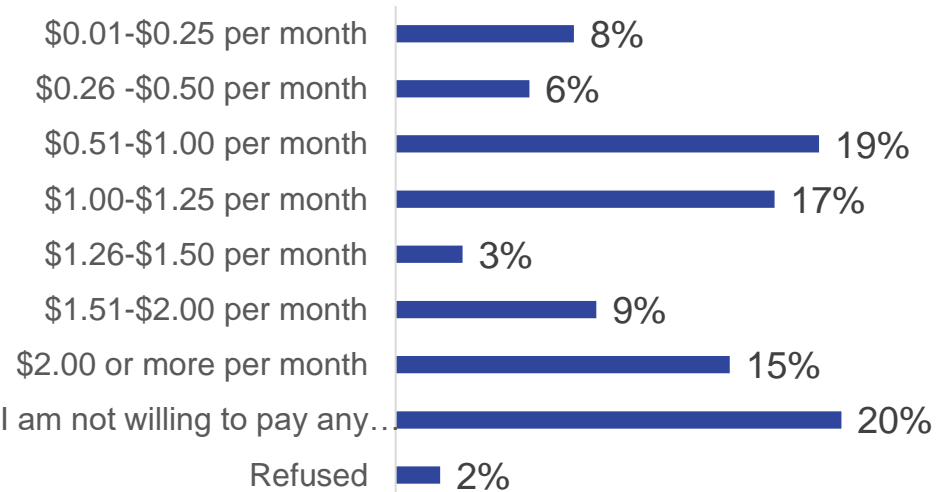
Most support funding 988, many are more supportive when informed of how the funding proposal is similar to 911 funding mechanisms. Women and Democrats are willing to pay the most, while men, Republicans and Black Americans are most likely to be resistant to fees on phone bills.

How much, if any, in fees would you be willing to pay on your monthly phone bill to fund 988 call-center operations and associated crisis response services?

Americans pay an average of \$1.00 on their monthly phone bill for 911 services...How much, if any, in fees would you be willing to pay on your monthly phone bill to fund 988 call-center operations and associated crisis response services?



Support for paying at least \$1 grows, indicating many prioritize the 988 number at least as high as 911 emergency services



Q. How much, if any, in fees would you be willing to pay on your monthly phone bill to fund 988 call-center operations and associated crisis response services? Base: Total (n=2,049)
 Q. Americans pay an average of \$1.00 on their monthly phone bill for 911 services...How much, if any, in fees would you be willing to pay on your monthly phone bill to fund 988 call-center operations and associated crisis response services Base: Total (n=2,049)



THANK
YOU

GAME CHANGERS

