

Mental Health & Substance Misuse Knowledge, Beliefs & Behaviors: Community Stigma Baseline Survey

San Mateo County

Executive Summary

Prepared for
San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services –
Office of Diversity and Equity

April 2020

Strata Research, Inc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services – Office of Diversity and Equity, sought to gain the community’s perceptions of mental health and substance misuse issues in San Mateo County. The results provide a baseline measurement of perceptions, which can be tracked over time if and when programs and/or community outreach and educational programs are deployed.

In order to achieve these research objectives, Strata Research Inc. (Strata), an independent research firm, was commissioned to implement a baseline survey among San Mateo County residents, who are at least 18 years of age. Strata conducted the 15-minute online survey among 450 residents of San Mateo County during March 2020.

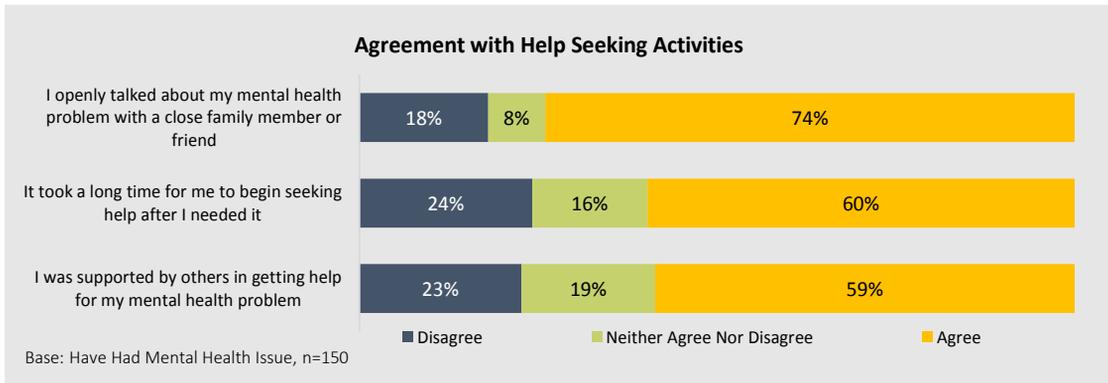
This document provides a summary of the findings and is meant to be a supplemental resource to the full report. For more information and further details, please see the full report.

MENTAL HEALTH

EXPERIENCE WITH MENTAL HEALTH & HELP-SEEKING

One-third of San Mateo County adults (36%) have had a mental health issue. Among those who have had a mental health issue, almost two-thirds (72%) sought treatment. Among adults who did not seek treatment for their mental health issue, most felt they could handle it on their own (63%).

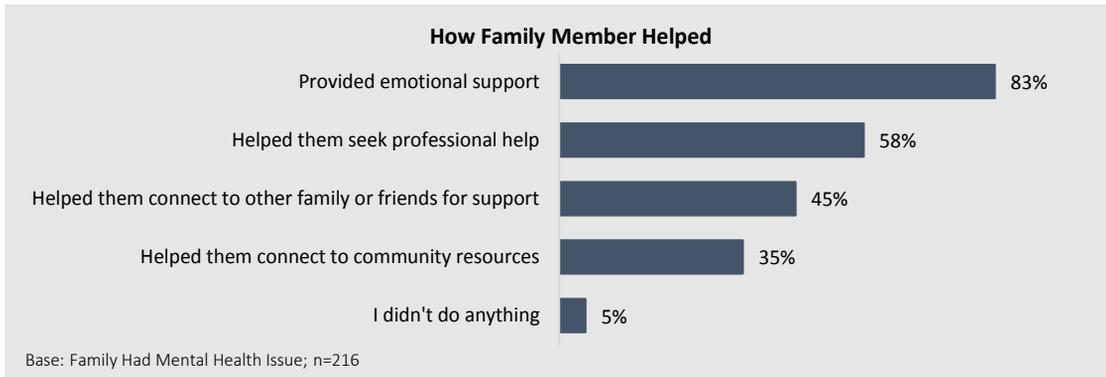
The majority of San Mateo County adults (74%) who sought treatment talked openly about their mental health issue with a close family member or friend. More than one-half agreed that it took a long time to begin seeking help (60%) and felt supported by others in seeking help for their mental health issue (59%).



HELP FOR FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

One-half of San Mateo County adults (52%) have a family member who has had a mental health issue.

Almost all San Mateo County adults (83%) provided emotional support to help their family member with their mental health issue. More than one-half (58%) helped their family member seek professional help. Only very few (5%) did nothing to help their family member.



MENTAL HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE

To compare overall knowledge and attitudes about mental health, scales were developed by combining and averaging individual survey items within three domains.

Mental Health Knowledge

Knowledge about mental health and treatment

- › Experiencing a mental health issue
- › Experiencing a physical issue (reverse scored)
- › Caused by bad character (reverse scored)
- › Experiencing life's normal ups and downs (reverse scored)
- › Will improve with treatment
- › Will improve on its own (reverse scored)
- › A person can recover from a mental health issue
- › Suicide is preventable
- › Talking about suicide can cause suicide (reverse scored)
- › Don't have skills to talk about suicide (reverse scored)
- › Can identify places or people to refer someone thinking of suicide
- › Is a danger to others (reverse scored)
- › Unlikely to contribute much to society (reverse scored)
- › More likely to experience prejudice and discrimination (reverse scored)

Mental Health Inclusive Behavior

Willingness to be socially connected to people with a mental health issue

- › Willing to spend time socializing
- › Willing to have as a neighbor
- › Willing to have marry someone in family
- › Willing to work closely

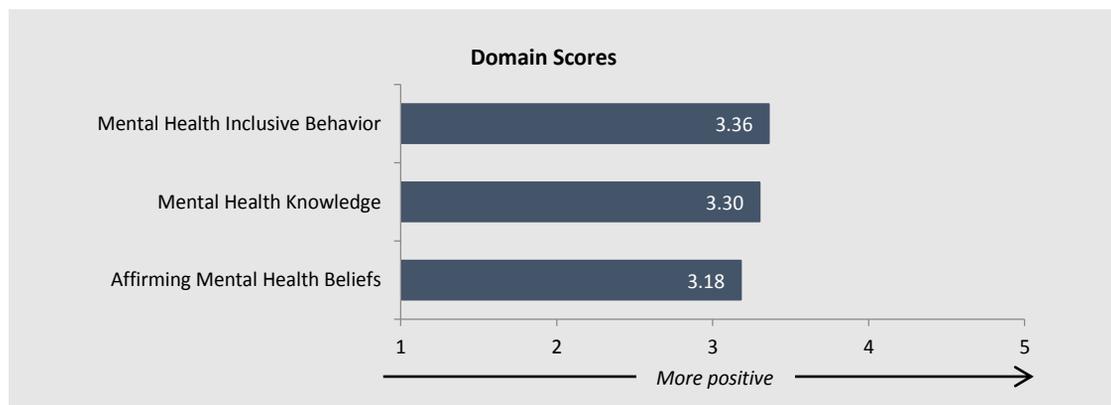
Affirming Mental Health Beliefs

Measures openness to disclosing mental health issues

- › Opportunities would be limited (reverse scored)
- › Reflects poorly on family (reverse scored)
- › Better off a secret (reverse scored)
- › Would lose friends (reverse scored)
- › More likely to be dangerous (reverse scored)
- › Makes me nervous or uncomfortable (reverse scored)
- › Are as productive as others
- › Should be hired just like others
- › Shouldn't care for children (reverse scored)

DOMAIN SCORES

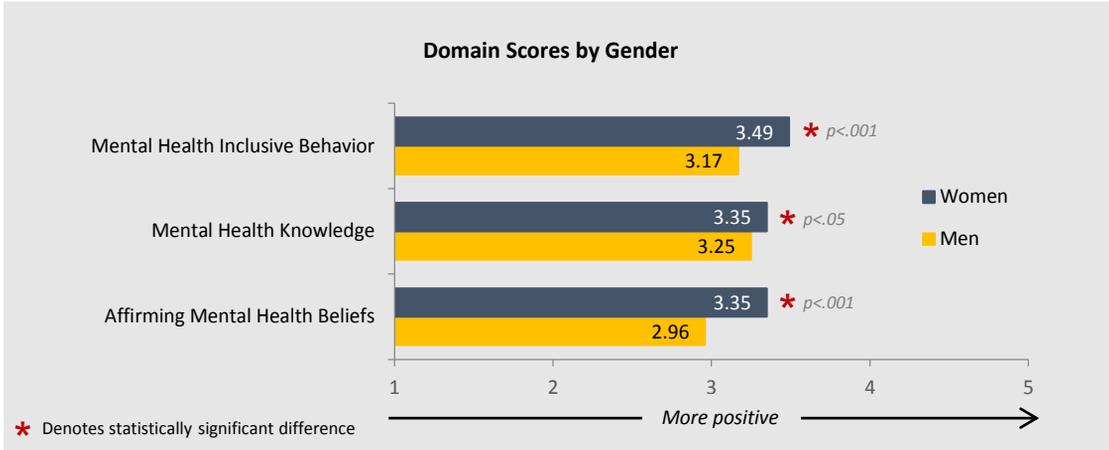
San Mateo County adults scored highest on Mental Health Inclusive Behavior across the three domains, followed closely by Mental Health Knowledge.



MENTAL HEALTH

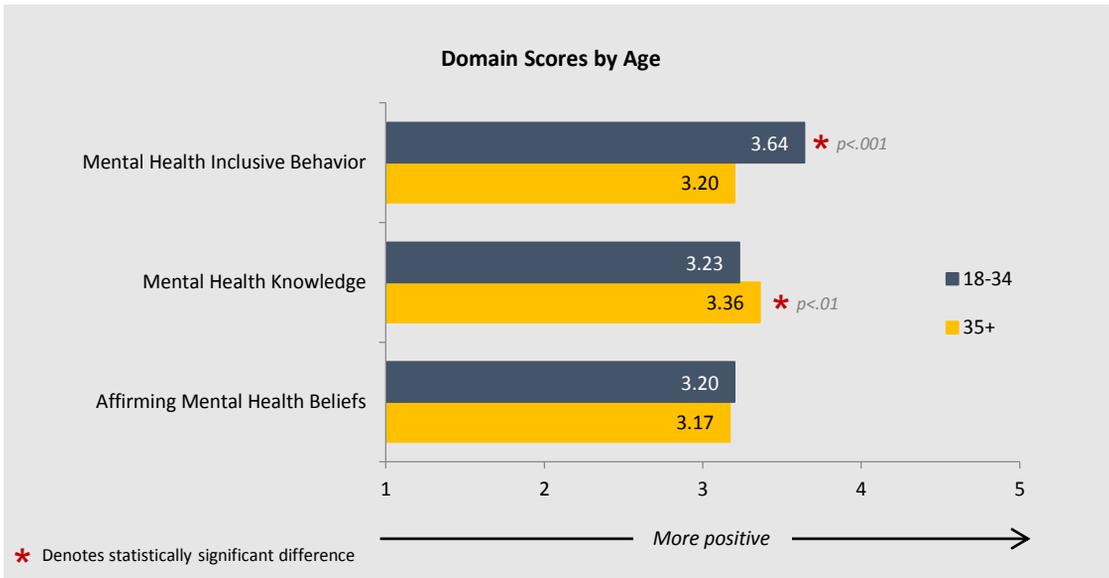
DOMAIN SCORES BY GENDER

Women were more likely to score higher on all three mental health domains compared to men.



DOMAIN SCORES BY AGE

San Mateo County adults 18-34 were more likely to score higher on the Mental Health Inclusive Behavior domain than those 35+.



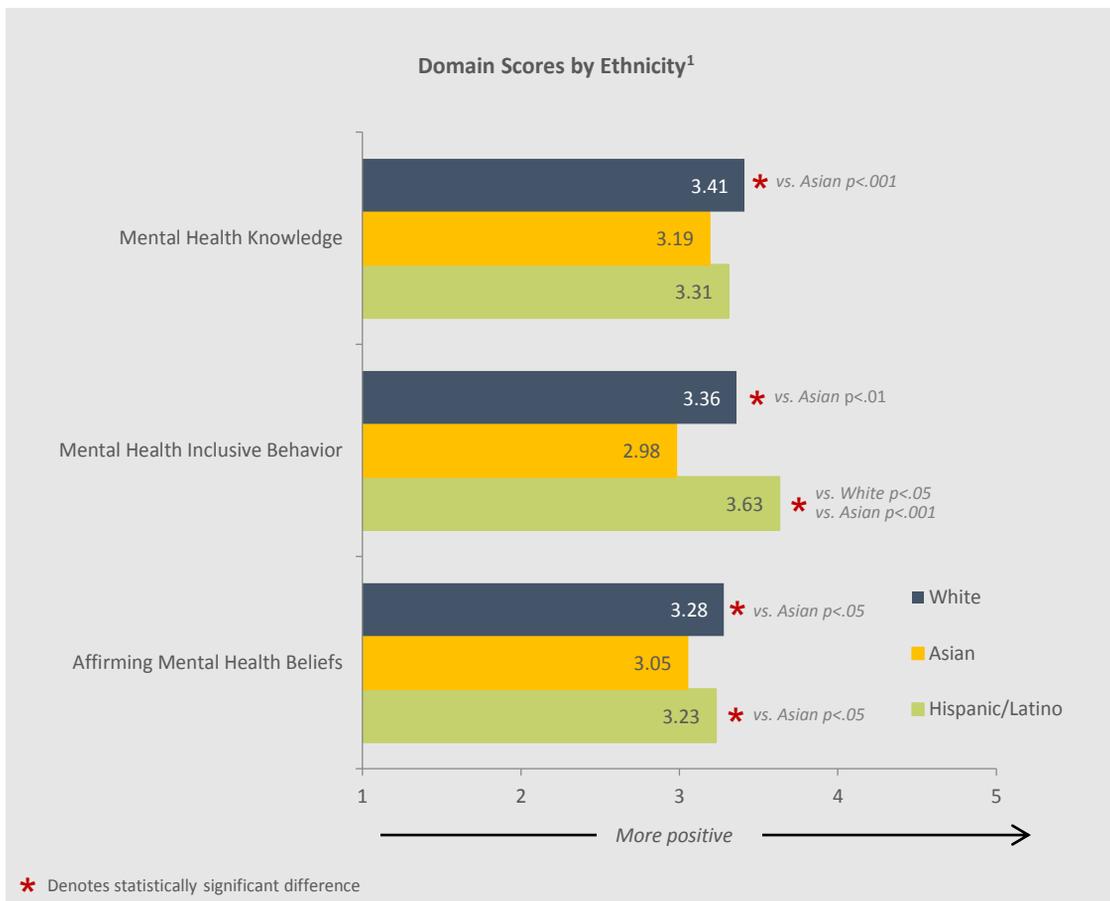
MENTAL HEALTH

DOMAIN SCORES BY ETHNICITY

White adults were likely to score higher on the Mental Health Knowledge domain compared to Asian adults.

White and Hispanic/Latino adults were likely to score higher on the Mental Health Inclusive Behavior and Affirming Mental Health Beliefs domains compared to Asian adults.

Hispanic/Latino adults were also likely to score higher on Mental Health Inclusive Behavior compared to White adults.



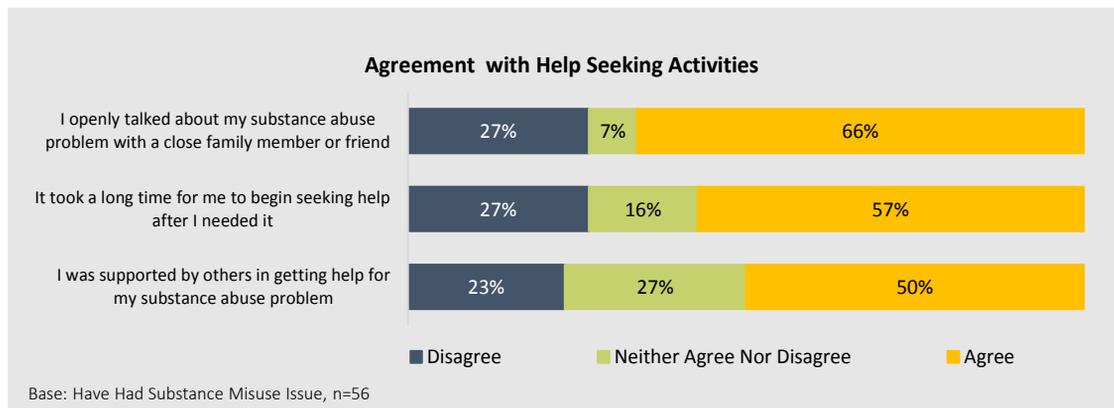
¹ White and Asian respondents categorized themselves as that race but not identifying as being of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity; Hispanic/Latino respondents identified as being any race and having Hispanic/Latino ethnicity

SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUE

EXPERIENCE WITH SUBSTANCE MISUSE & HELP-SEEKING

One in ten San Mateo County adults (13%) have had a substance misuse issue. Among those who have had a substance misuse issue, one-half (55%) sought treatment. Among those who did not seek treatment, most felt they could handle it on their own (directional finding due to low base size).

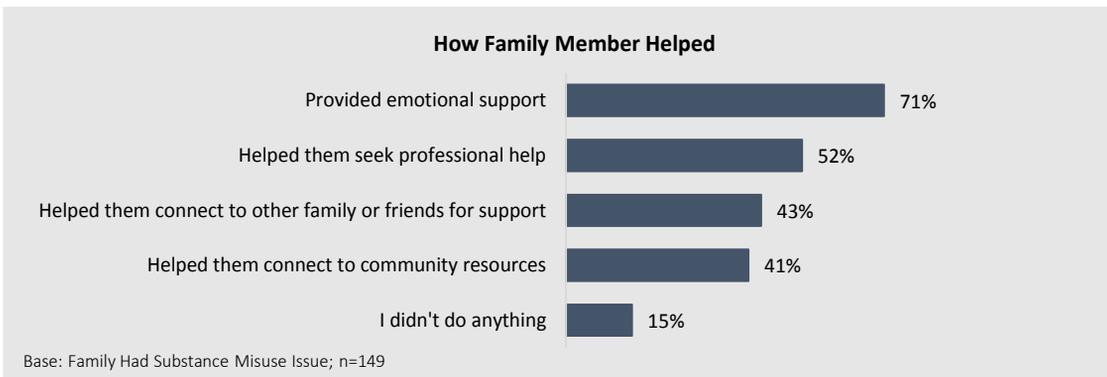
Two-thirds of San Mateo County adults (66%) who sought treatment talked openly about their substance misuse issue with a close family member or friend. More than one-half agreed that it took a long time to begin seeking help (57%) and one-half felt supported by others in seeking help for their substance misuse issue(50%).



HELP FOR FAMILY SUBSTANCE MISUSE

One-third of San Mateo County adults (36%) have a family member who has had a substance misuse issue.

The majority San Mateo County adults (71%) provided emotional support to help their family member with their substance misuse issue. And one-half (52%) helped their family member to seek professional help. More than one-third also helped connect them to other family or friends for support (43%) or helped them connect to community resources (41%).



SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUE

SUBSTANCE MISUSE ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE

To compare overall knowledge and attitudes about a substance misuse issues, scales were developed by combining and averaging individual survey items within three domains.

Substance Misuse Knowledge

Knowledge about substance misuse and treatment

- › Experiencing substance misuse issue
- › Experiencing a physical issue (reverse scored)
- › Caused by bad character (reverse scored)
- › Experiencing life's normal ups and downs (reverse scored)
- › Will improve with treatment
- › Will improve on its own (reverse scored)
- › A person can recover from a substance misuse issue
- › Is a danger to others (reverse scored)
- › Unlikely to contribute much to society (reverse scored)
- › More likely to experience prejudice and discrimination (reverse scored)

Substance Misuse Inclusive Behavior

Willingness to be socially connected to people with a substance misuse issue

- › Willing to spend time socializing
- › Willing to have as a neighbor
- › Willing to have marry someone in family
- › Willing to work closely

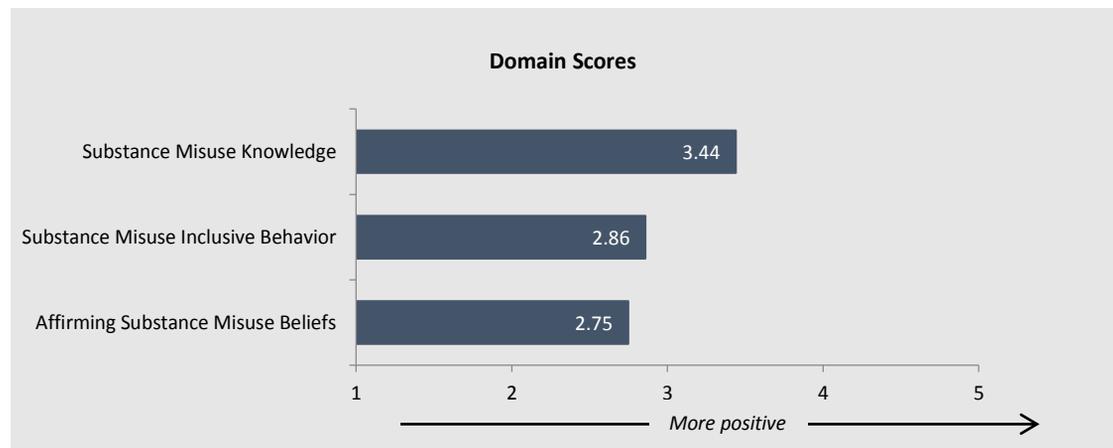
Affirming Substance Misuse Beliefs

Measures openness to disclosing substance misuse issue

- › Opportunities would be limited (reverse scored)
- › Reflects poorly on family (reverse scored)
- › Better off a secret (reverse scored)
- › Would lose friends (reverse scored)
- › More likely to be dangerous (reverse scored)
- › Makes me nervous or uncomfortable (reverse scored)
- › Are as productive as others
- › Should be hired just like others
- › Shouldn't care for children (reverse scored)

DOMAIN SCORES

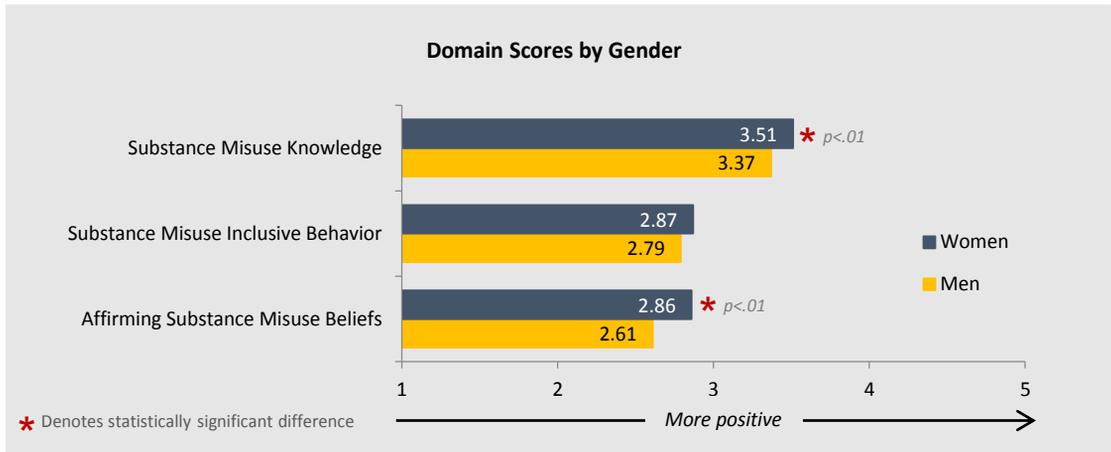
San Mateo County adults scored highest on the Substance Misuse Knowledge domain



SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUE

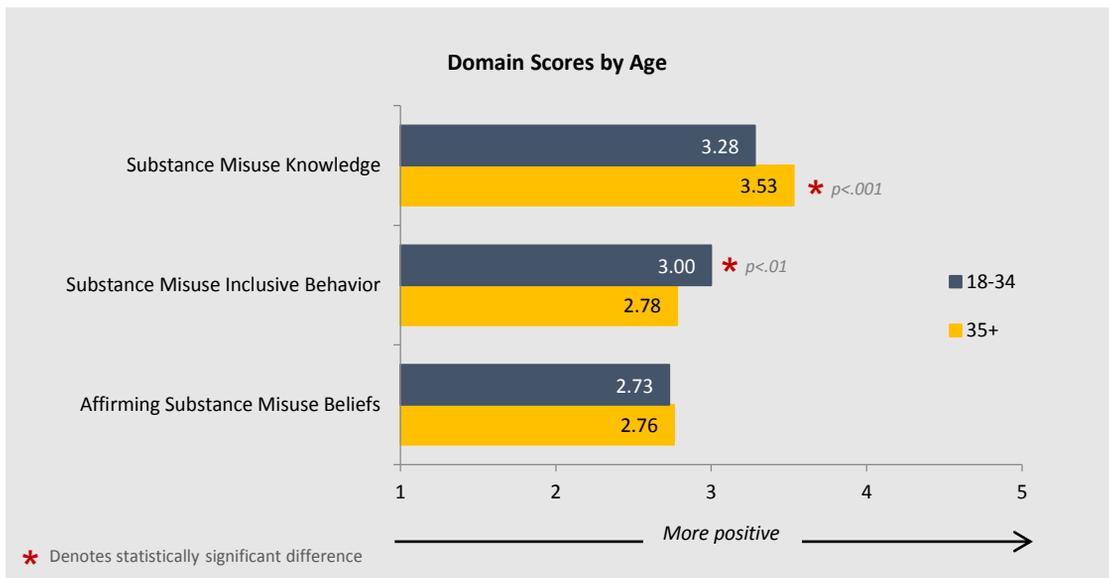
DOMAIN SCORES BY GENDER

Women were more likely to score higher on Substance Misuse Knowledge and Affirming Substance Misuse Beliefs than men.



DOMAIN SCORES BY AGE

Adults 35+ were more likely to score higher on Substance Misuse Knowledge, while adults 18-34 were more likely to score higher on Substance Misuse Inclusive Behavior.



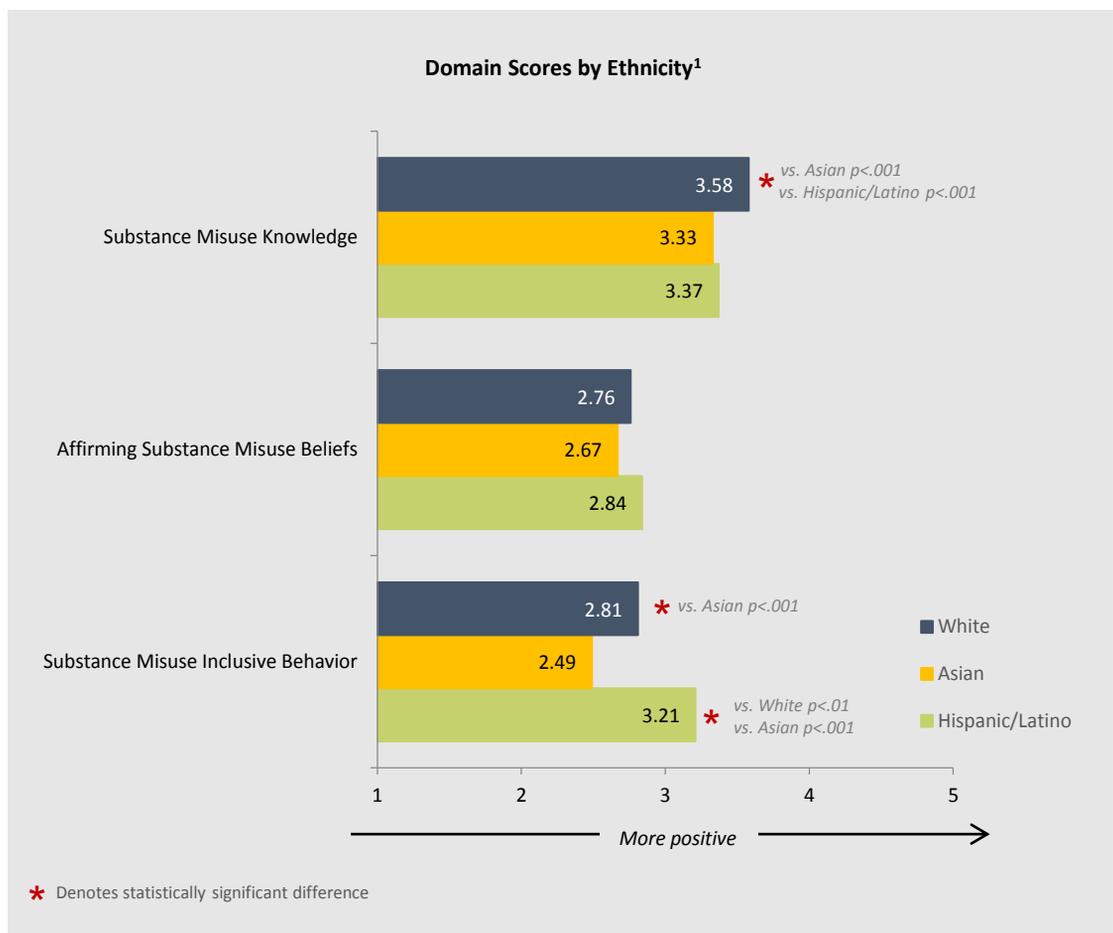
SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUE

DOMAIN SCORES BY ETHNICITY

White adults were more likely to score higher on Substance Misuse Knowledge compared to Asian and Hispanic/Latino adults.

White and Hispanic/Latino adults were more likely to score higher on Substance Misuse Inclusive Behavior compared to Asian adults.

Hispanic/Latino adults were also more likely to score higher on the Substance Misuse Inclusive Behavior domain compared to White adults.



¹ White and Asian respondents categorized themselves as that race but not identifying as being of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity; Hispanic/Latino respondents identified as being any race and having Hispanic/Latino ethnicity