



2019 #RealCollege Survey Report

System Report

May 2020



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2019 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY RESULTS

REPORT FOR SEATTLE COLLEGES DISTRICT

Prepared by
The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice
at Temple University

May 2020

OVERVIEW

* Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent by email to approximately 18,100 students from Seattle Colleges District and 1,253 students participated. Thus, the estimated response rate is 6.9%.

* **Overall Basic Needs Insecurity Rates:**

- 41% of respondents experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days
- 51% of respondents experienced housing insecurity in the previous year
- 19% of respondents experienced homelessness in the previous year

* 62% of students in the Seattle Colleges District experienced at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year.

* There is substantial variation in basic needs insecurity across subgroups.

* 23% of food insecure students utilize SNAP benefits and 10% of homeless students utilize housing benefits.

For more information on the research methodology and survey participants, please refer to the online appendices for the 2019 National #RealCollege Survey report (available at www.hope4college.com).

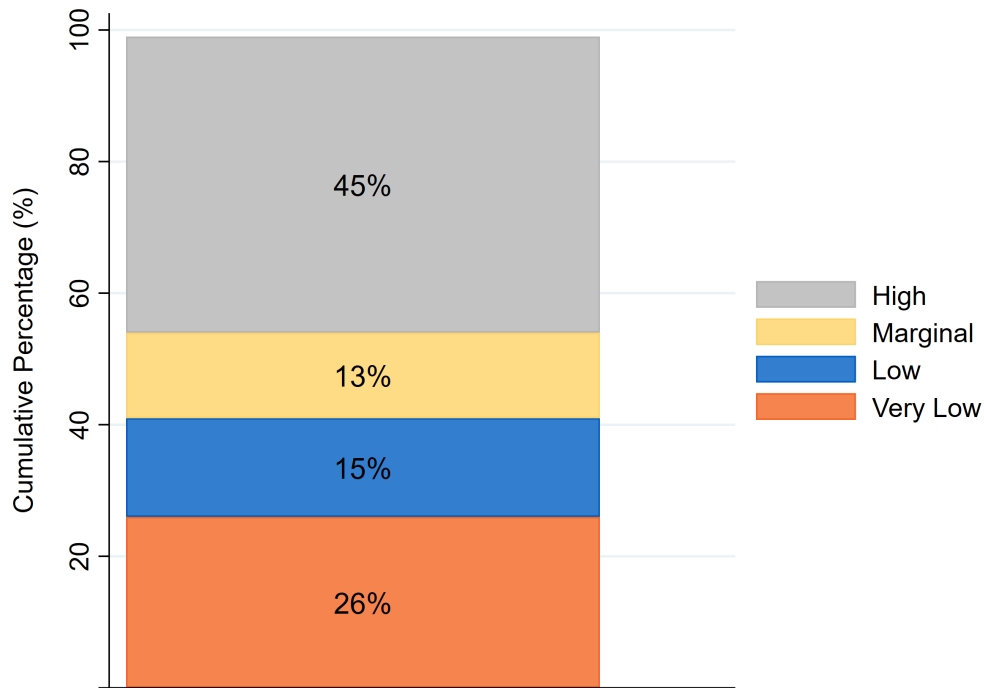
PREVALENCE OF BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner. The most extreme form is often accompanied with physiological sensations of hunger. We assessed food security among students using the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 18-item set of questions.

During the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 41% of survey respondents in the Seattle Colleges District experienced low or very low levels of food security (Figure 1). Moreover, 45% of survey respondents cannot afford to eat balanced meals and 45% worry about running out of food before they have money to buy more (Figure 2).

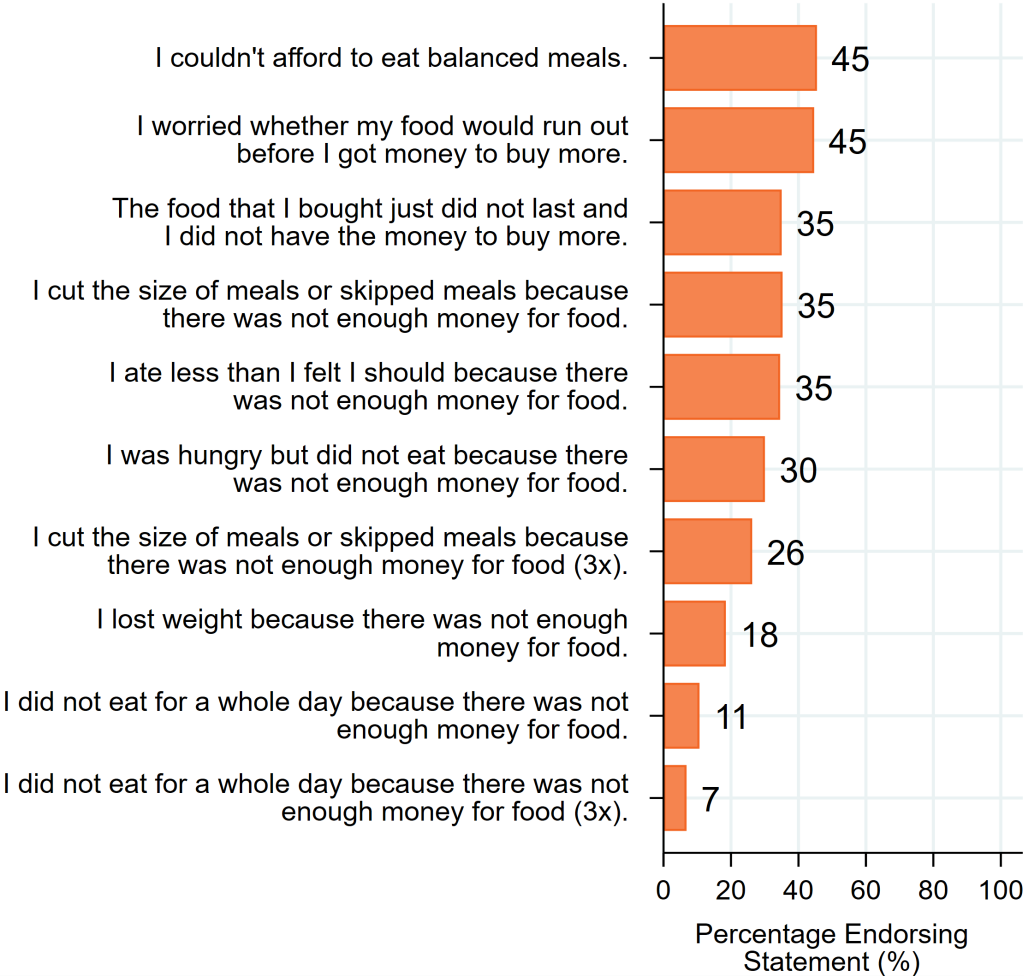
Figure 1. Food Security Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: According to the USDA, students at either low or very low food security are termed food insecure. For the full list of questions used to measure food security, see our full report available at www.hope4college.com. Cumulative percentage may not add up to 100 due to rounding error.

Figure 2. Food Insecurity Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



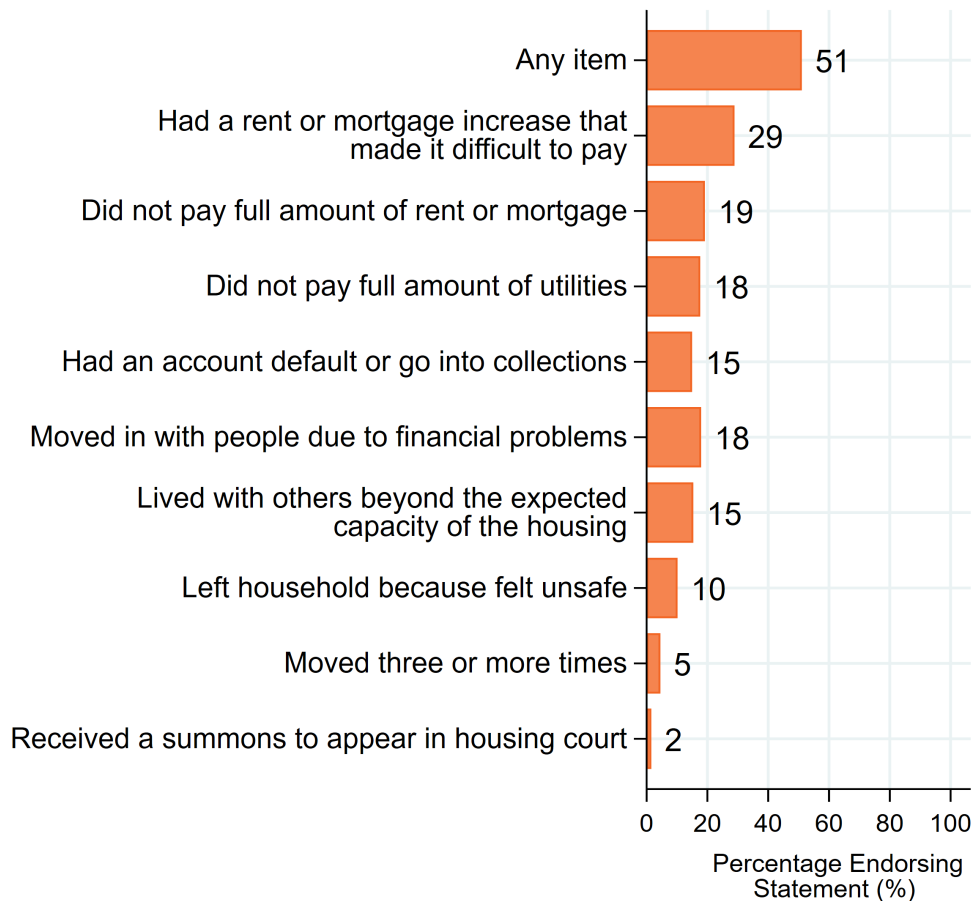
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Housing Insecurity

Housing insecurity includes a broad set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently. All of these challenges affect students, and results suggest they are more likely to suffer some form of housing insecurity than to have all their needs met during college. Housing insecurity among students was assessed with a nine-item set of questions developed by the Hope Center. Students are classified as housing insecure if they answered affirmatively to experiencing at least one of those items in the previous year.

How prevalent is housing insecurity in the Seattle Colleges District? As displayed below, 51% of survey respondents are housing insecure (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



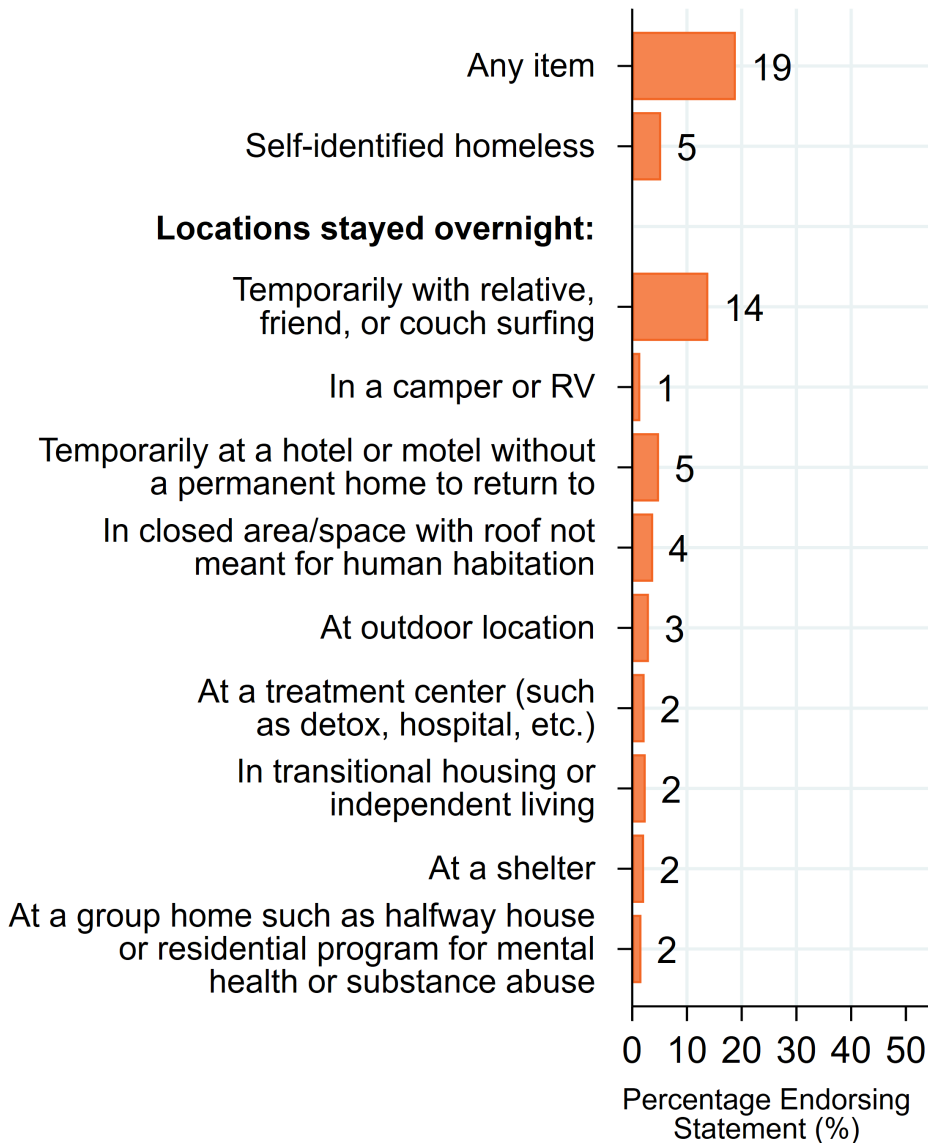
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Homelessness

Homelessness means that a person does not have a stable place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they experienced living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness in the previous year. Homelessness among students was assessed with a tool developed by California State University researchers.

How prevalent is homelessness in the Seattle Colleges District? As displayed below, 19% of survey respondents experience homelessness (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Homelessness Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District

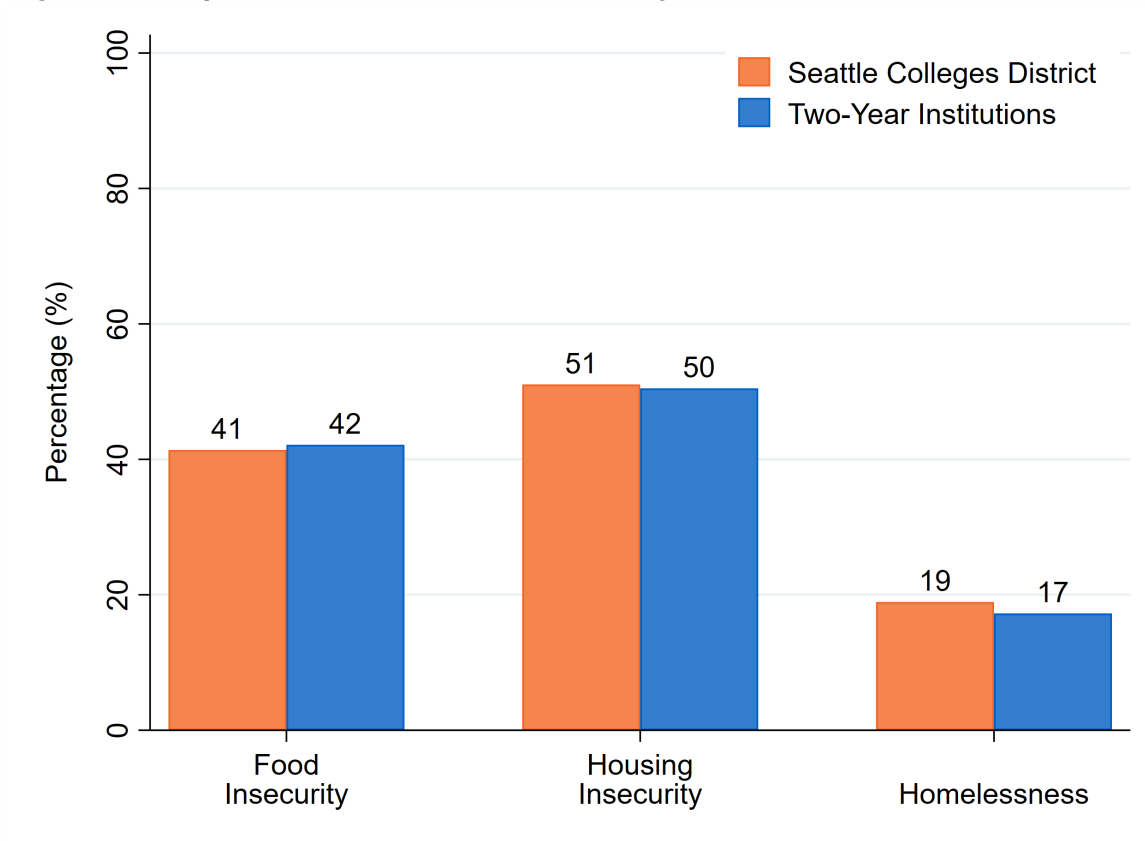


Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

COMPARISON TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS ATTENDING TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

In comparison to the rates for all survey respondents at two-year institutions nationwide in 2019, Seattle Colleges District has a lower rate of food insecurity, a higher rate of housing insecurity, and a higher rate of homelessness (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Comparison of Basic Needs Insecurity Rates

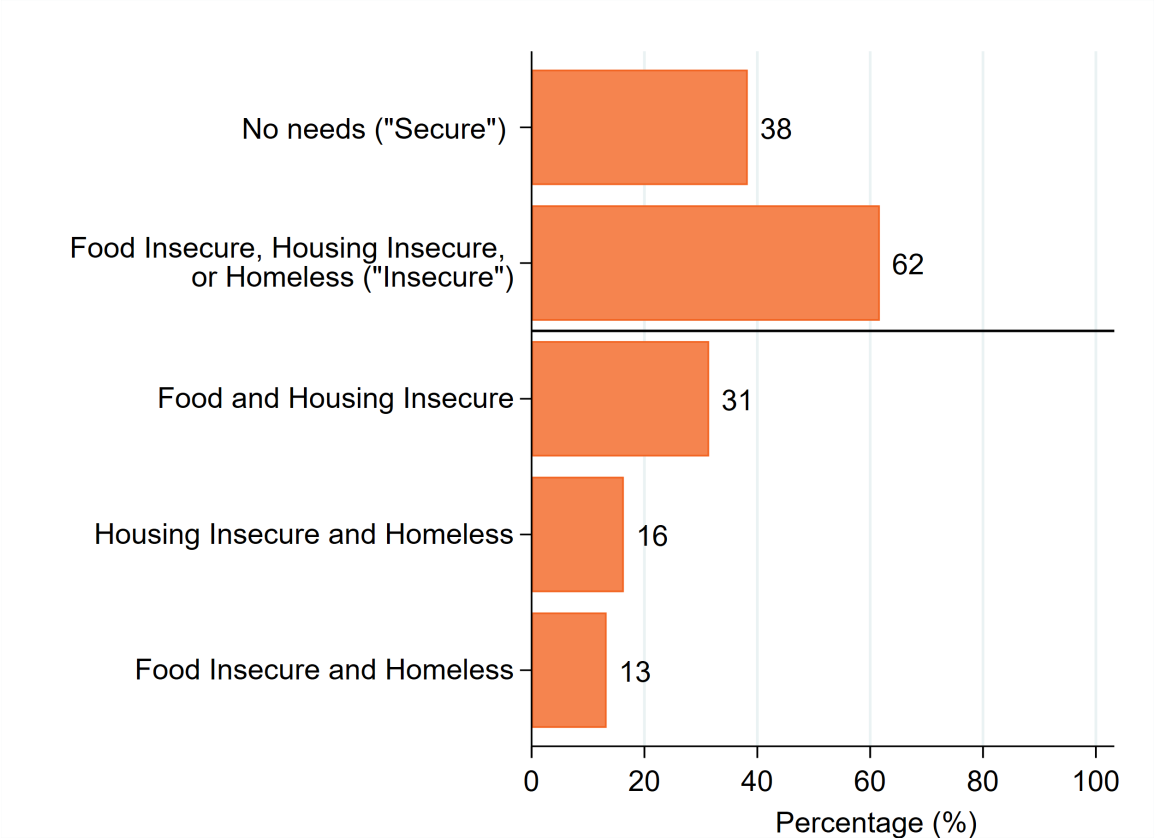


Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

OVERLAPPING CHALLENGES

Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are overlapping concerns, with 62% of students in the Seattle Colleges District experiencing at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

DISPARITIES IN BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Some students are at higher risk of basic needs insecurity than others. The tables in this section present rates of food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness according to students' demographic, academic, and economic circumstances, as well as their life circumstances.

By Demographic Background

Table 1. Demographic Disparities in Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
GENDER IDENTITY				
Male	330	37	43	21
Female	545	41	53	17
Non-Binary/Third gender	38	61	66	39
Prefers to self-describe	18	44	50	28
TRANSGENDER IDENTITY				
Identifies as transgender	28	64	61	21
Does not identify as transgender	862	39	49	18
SEXUAL ORIENTATION				
Heterosexual or straight	615	39	46	18
Gay or lesbian	81	43	58	22
Bisexual	117	40	57	13
Prefers to self-describe	49	53	59	43
HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARENTAL EDUCATION				
No high school diploma	98	45	49	18
High school diploma	150	46	50	22
Some college	275	48	60	20
Bachelors degree or higher	339	30	43	16
Does not know	39	41	33	21

Table continued on next page.

Table 1 (continued). Demographic Disparities in Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND				
White or Caucasian	478	37	50	19
African American or Black	113	49	56	14
Hispanic or Latinx	112	51	57	21
American Indian or Alaska Native	28	54	61	25
Indigenous	18	44	28	11
Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American	28	54	68	21
Southeast Asian	119	34	45	19
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	32	50	47	19
Other Asian or Asian American	160	41	41	21
Other	71	52	63	20
STUDENT IS A U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT				
Yes	753	40	49	18
No	133	45	49	24
AGE				
18 to 20	277	36	36	17
21 to 25	213	40	57	21
26 to 30	127	43	53	19
Older than 30	266	45	58	20
STUDENT IS AN ATHLETE				
Yes
No	890	40	50	19

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table. The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number respondents to our measures of food and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Classifications of gender and race/ethnicity are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

By Student Academic, Economic, and Life Experiences

Table 2. Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Student Life Experiences Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
LEVEL OF STUDY				
Undergraduate	643	45	56	20
Graduate	104	47	64	25
Non-degree	298	30	36	15
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATUS				
Full-time (at least 12 credits)	656	45	55	21
Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)	389	35	45	15
YEARS IN COLLEGE				
Less than 1	374	40	44	21
1 to 2	414	45	58	21
3 or more	256	37	50	14
DEPENDENCY STATUS				
Dependent	178	37	40	17
Independent	569	41	53	17
Does not know	147	40	46	24
STUDENT RECEIVES THE PELL GRANT				
Yes	238	59	69	24
No	639	34	43	17
RELATIONSHIP STATUS				
Single	445	40	46	20
In a relationship	268	49	58	22
Married or domestic partnership	150	25	43	11
Divorced	19	42	68	16
Widowed

Table continued on next page.

Table 2 (continued). Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Student Life Experiences Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
STUDENT HAS CHILDREN				
Yes	133	53	63	18
No	881	40	49	19
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN FOSTER CARE				
Yes	28	71	75	43
No	865	39	49	18
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN MILITARY				
Yes	40	35	58	25
No	855	41	49	18
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Employed	257	45	55	19
Not employed, looking for work	58	38	47	28
Not employed, not looking for work	126	33	40	17
STUDENT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME				
Yes	43	63	79	42
No	904	39	48	17
DISABILITY OR MEDICAL CONDITION				
Learning disability	172	52	58	24
Physical disability	76	57	57	29
Chronic illness	146	49	59	28
Psychological disorder	355	48	59	27
Other disability or condition	26	38	54	27
No disability or medical condition	421	33	45	14

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table. The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number of respondents to our measures of food and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Survey questions about employment status were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents. Classifications of Disability or Medical Condition are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

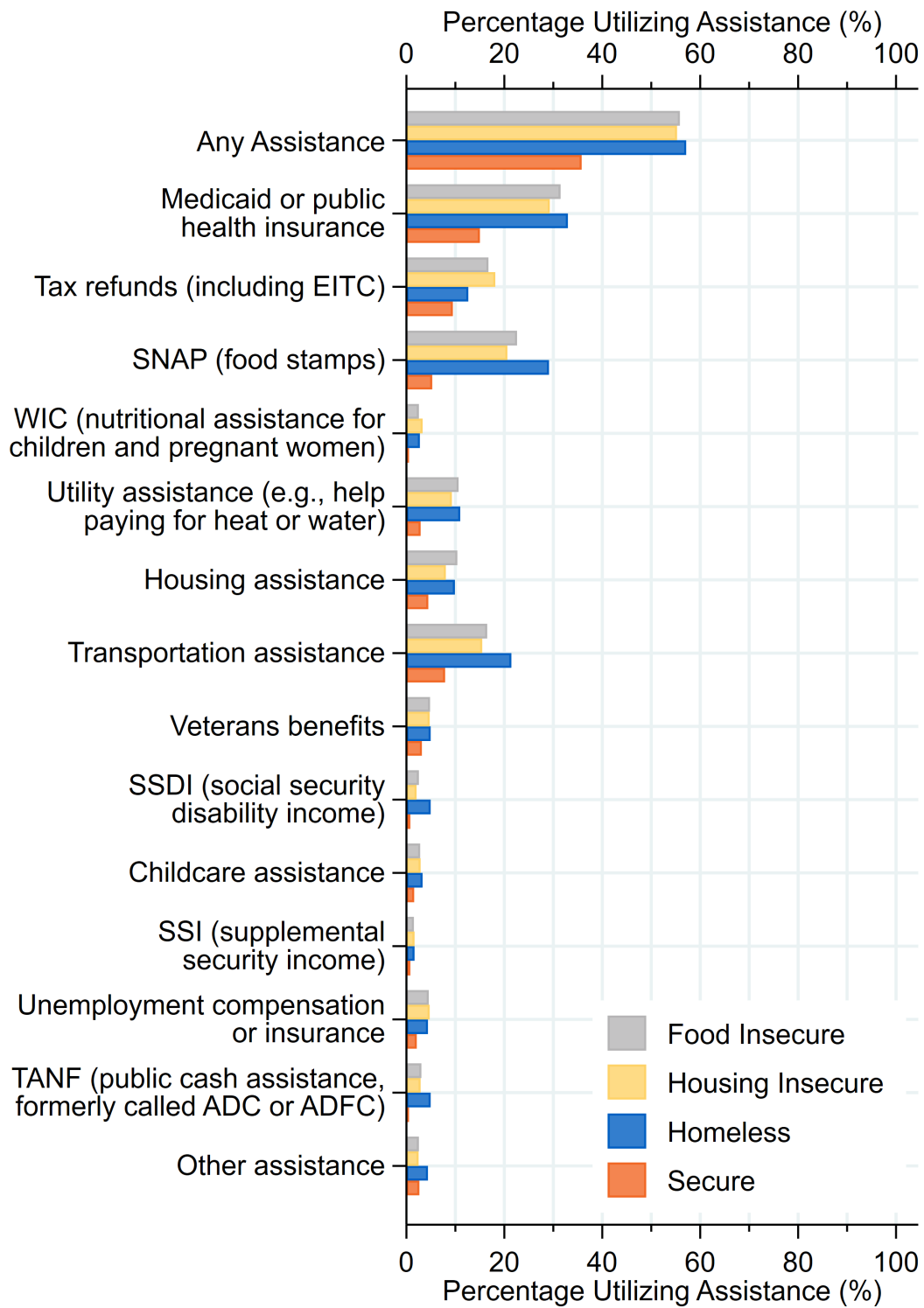
UTILIZATION OF SUPPORTS

Many students in the Seattle Colleges District who experience basic needs insecurity do not receive public assistance (Figure 7). Among food insecure students, 23% receive SNAP benefits. In addition, 10% of students who experience homelessness receive housing assistance. It is also worth noting that students who are secure in their basic needs are still accessing public benefits, albeit at lower rates (36%) than their peers.

A growing number of on-campus supports are being offered but again, only some students are accessing them (Figure 8). Of the students experiencing basic needs insecurity in the Seattle Colleges District, only about 33% use on-campus supports.

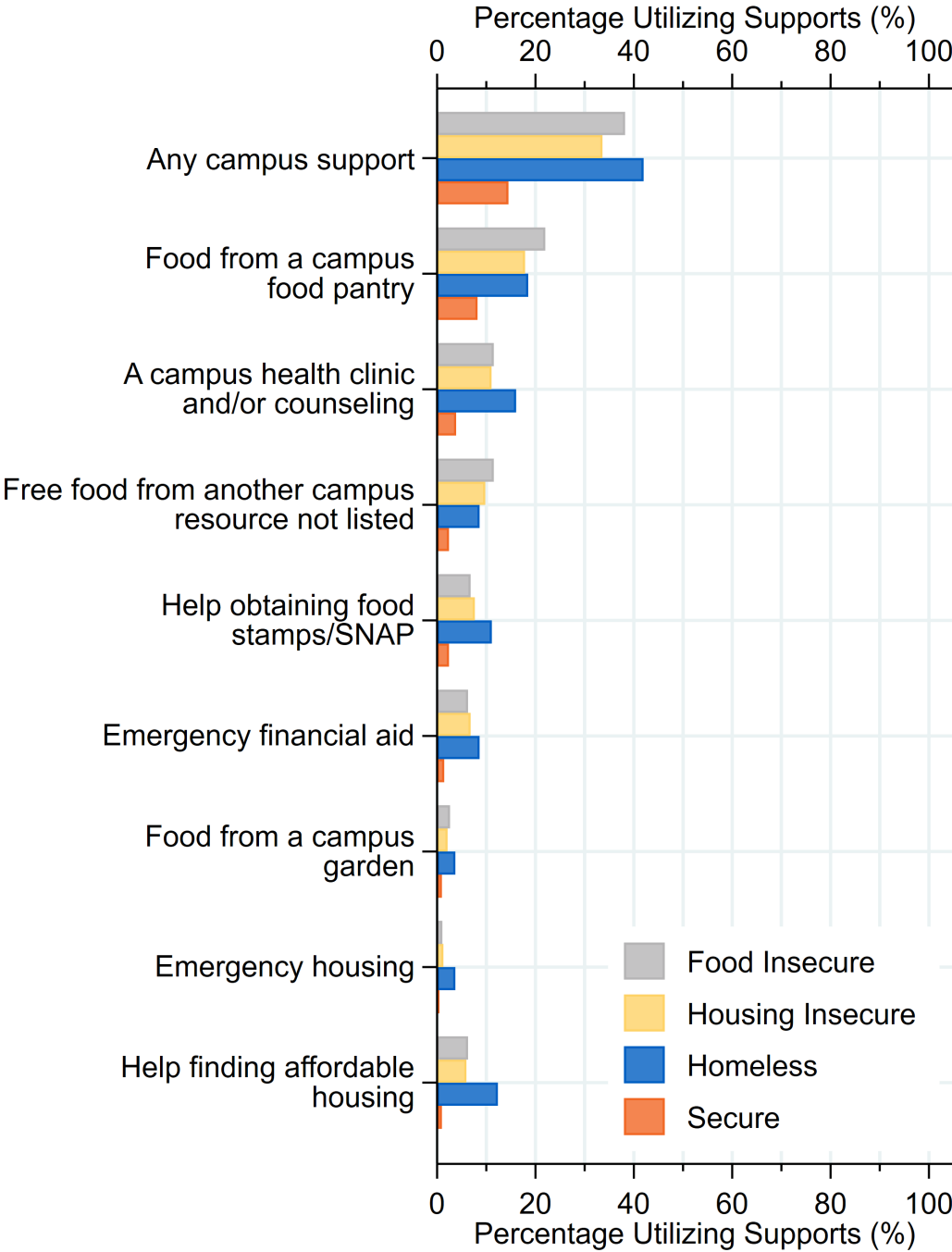


Figure 7. Use of Assistance Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Figure 8. Use of Campus Supports Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey
 Note: Survey questions about campus supports were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents.

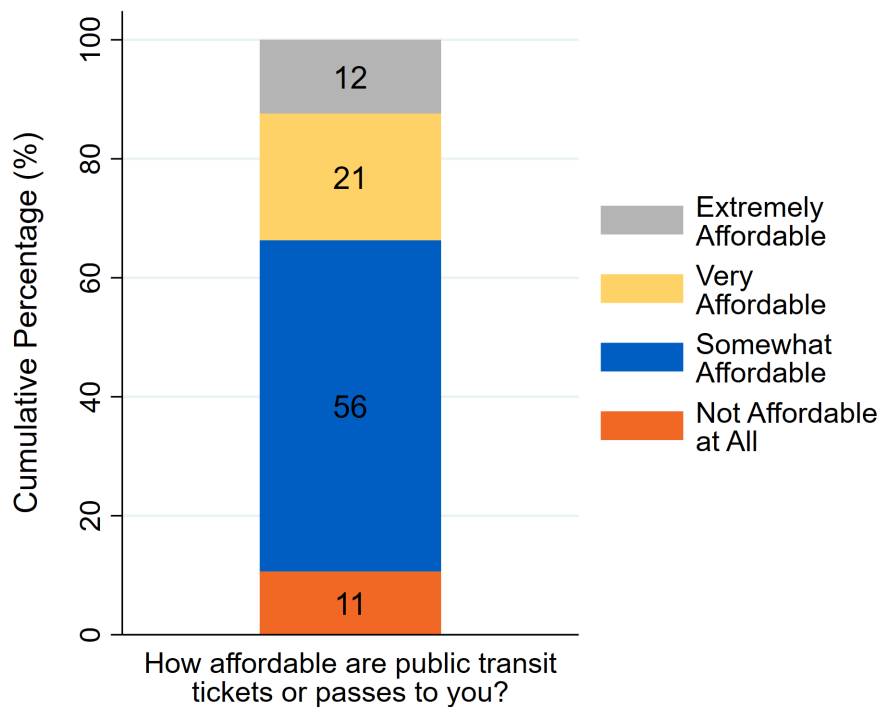
TRANSPORTATION & CHILDCARE

TRANSPORTATION

In order to succeed academically, students need affordable, reliable transportation between home and campus. Currently, the College Board estimates that transportation costs make up approximately 17% of an average postsecondary student's budget who commutes to school. It is therefore critical to ensure that students, especially students who are already making difficult choices about how to spend their money, are able to secure transportation to campus.

Approximately 54% of survey respondents in the Seattle Colleges District say they use public transit in order to get to their college campus (not shown). When those students were asked about the affordability of public transit tickets or passes, 11% said those transit tickets or passes were unaffordable, and another 56% said they were only somewhat affordable (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Affordability of Public Transit Tickets or Passes Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



(Among those who take public transit)

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Survey questions about transit use and affordability were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents.

Paying for public transit is related to students' experiences with basic needs insecurity. About 72% of survey respondents in the Seattle Colleges District who experience basic needs insecurity and use public transit report that public transit tickets or passes are unaffordable or only somewhat affordable (Table 3).

Table 3. Transit Affordability Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District Who Take Public Transit, by Basic Needs Security

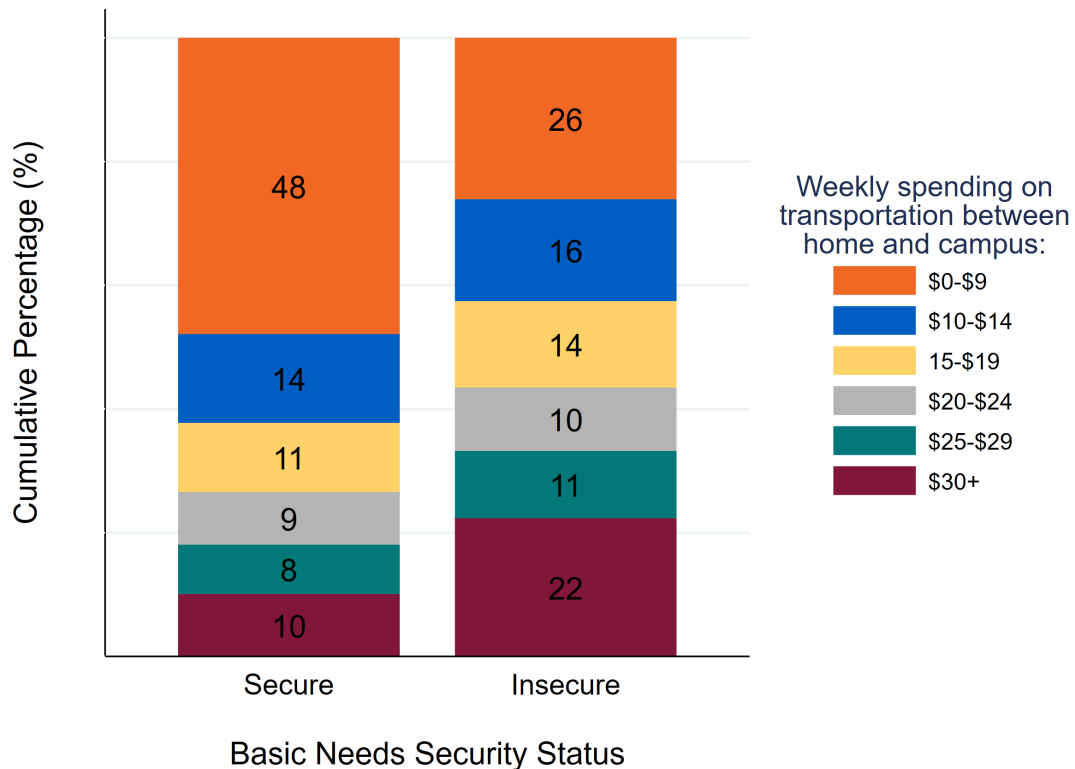
BASIC NEEDS SECURITY STATUS	Number of Students	Not Affordable at All (%)	Somewhat Affordable (%)	Very Affordable (%)	Extremely Affordable (%)
Secure	103	3	51	24	21
Insecure	179	16	56	21	7

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table above. Survey questions about transit use and affordability were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents.

High transit costs are a problem for some of these students. About 22% of survey respondents in the Seattle Colleges District experiencing basic needs insecurity report that they spend at least \$30 per week on transportation to and from college (Figure 10). Conversely, 48% of students whose basic needs are secure said they spend \$0-9 per week on transportation, while 26% of students who are basic needs insecure did.

Figure 10. Weekly Amount Spent on Transportation to College By Basic Need Security Among Survey Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

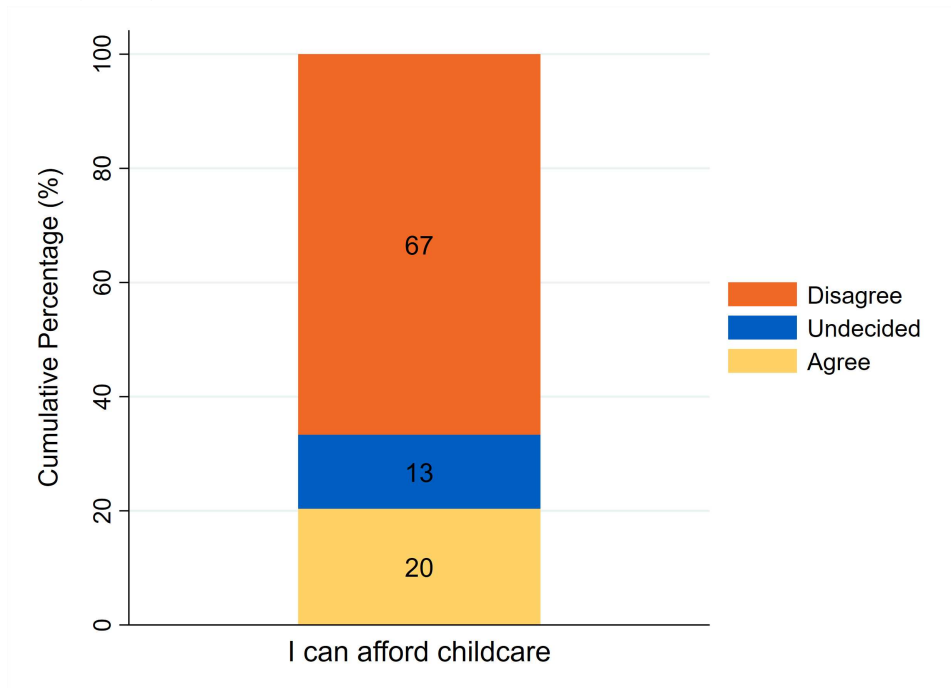
Note: Survey questions on transportation costs were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents.

CHILDCARE

Supporting the success of #RealCollege students means covering the basic needs of food, housing, and transportation, while also meeting the childcare requirements of parenting students. However, for many parenting students, finding affordable and dependable childcare is challenging.

In the Seattle Colleges District, 13% of survey respondents were parenting students and among those parenting students, 45% said that they need, use, or plan to use childcare (not shown). However, just 20% of parenting students who need or use childcare say they can afford the associated costs (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Childcare Affordability Among Respondents in the Seattle Colleges District Who Need, Use, or Plan to Use Childcare



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: The survey question on childcare affordability was only administered to parenting students who need, use, or plan to use childcare.

CONCLUSION

The #RealCollege survey affirms what has been evident to college administrators, faculty, staff, and students for years: basic needs insecurity is a condition challenging many undergraduates pursuing credentials. The scope of the problem described here is substantial and should be cause for a systemic response.

ABOUT US

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice is redefining what it means to be a student-ready college with a national movement centering #RealCollege students' basic needs. In order to advance the necessary systemic changes to support those needs, our work includes four pillars: action research, engagement and communication, advocacy, and sustainability. For more information, visit www.hope4college.com.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this report, please contact the Hope Center Research Team at hopesrvy@temple.edu.



APPENDIX A. Participating Colleges

North Seattle College

Seattle Central College

South Seattle College